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A table of contents for *The Fraternal / Baptist Ministers Journal* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bmj-06.php

The Fraternal

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EDITORIAL

THE RESTLESS SPIRIT OF GOD

T. F. KEYTE, L.Th., Baptist Minister, Ivanhoe, Victoria, Australia

A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

THEODORE ROBINSON, D.Litt., D.Th., D.D., sometime Professor, Semitic Languages, University College, Cardiff

COMMENTARIES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. S. HERBERT, M.A., B.D., Professor of Old Testament Studies, Selly Oak, Birmingham

COMMENTARIES ON NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

S. I. BUSE, M.A., B.D., Lecturer, Biblical History and Literature, University College, N. Wales

SOME PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

G. D. LANT, LL.B., Baptist Minister, Edinburgh

THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY IN A WELFARE STATE

J. T. HOUGH, B.A., Secretary, Lay Preachers' Federation and B.U. Diploma

A CANADIAN ORDINATION

E. WILLIAMS, Baptist Minister, Newfoundland

A MINISTERIAL EXCHANGE

C. A. ARRINGTON, Baptist Minister, Due West, South Carolina, U.S.A.

THE UNION OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN-BAPTISTS IN THE U.S.S.R.

ALEXANDER KAREV, General Secretary

OF INTEREST TO YOU

WIDER CIRCLE

BOOK REVIEWS

EDITORIAL

IT'S A GOOD TIME TO BE ALIVE

WE could not always say this. Those of us who lived and exercised our ministries during the two wars, and perhaps even more during the two immediate post-war periods, knew what it was to encounter cynicism, bitterness and despair, all formidable enemies of deep religious faith. It is in many ways a miracle that, in spite of disappointments and disillusionments, our churches kept going so well, and the greatest service some of us rendered was that in Job's words (Moffatt's translation): we "kept men on their feet".

Now we face an entirely new day. The shadows are lifting and we can plan for peace. Philosophically and scientifically the climate of opinion is changing. Rationalism is dying or dead, and it is no longer fashionable to regard philosophy as opposed to vital religion. Indeed, it could be said that among serious thinkers today there is perhaps a larger proportion of believers than for some time past. Even Bertrand Russell, perhaps the most brilliant of materialists, confesses that "the new philosophy of physics is humble and stammering where the old philosophy was proud and dictatorial". Science has, in fact, become less and less the ally of materialism. How could it be otherwise when, in place of the hard material atoms supposed to be the basis of things, we now have flashes of energy whose presence we know only by the results they produce? Behind the physical is the mental and spiritual, and, as the Bible suggested long ago, God "covereth Himself with light as with a garment".

The climate of opinion philosophically is changing. And it is not otherwise politically and socially. We are entering on a great new era of human history. War as an instrument of policy has been abandoned. That is clearly the message of the Geneva conference. Instead, the nations are groping their way forward to a closer integration of their economic and cultural resources. The age-long barriers are breaking down, and the Christian ideal of international and inter-racial brotherhood is no longer a dream. Statesmen are beginning to take it seriously, and, though the road may be long, and age-long prejudices will try to prevent advance, we can actually see as Robert Burns said long ago :

" It's coming yet for a' that
When man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that."

The devil may do his best to clog the movement of the Kingdom of God, but at the moment he is gnashing his teeth as the vision splendid grips the minds of men on an ever-widening scale.

And religiously? We think of the recent Baptist World Congress. What a triumph it represents! Behind the meetings were vast multitudes of praying, devoted people; more than 20,000,000 of them; and allowing for three people to every actual member, it means that a colossal multitude is ranged on our side. Add to that the similar hosts of the faithful in other communions, and we begin to see our allies. And over them all is the Living Lord, never ceasing to pray and work for the fulfilment of His purpose.

True, we have had lean days in Britain. But the recent Billy Graham campaigns have heartened us all. The Gospel is still the most exciting news in the world, and given the messenger it still attracts enormous interest. There is nothing anywhere to take its place, and the Church today has a new confidence in its testimony.

Does not all this constitute a challenge to us as Ministers? Perhaps we have failed to take prayer seriously; perhaps we have lacked vigour and imagination in our methods; perhaps—or assuredly rather—we lack the truly dedicated spirit that gives us no rest till we let God have His perfect way. Let us take heart and hope, and let us in the old, great watchword, expect great things from God, and attempt great things for God.

OUR POST-BAG

As a lay reader of your excellent journal, and a missionary to the Church overseas, I hope that the reference in your July editorial to our unity in fidelity to the Evangelical “as against the Sacerdotal interpretation of the Gospel” was a slip.

We are not united “against” any interpretation of the Gospel that has been a help to many millions of fellow-Christians, and brought them into as real an experience of blessing as we claim. It would be true to say that we are united in fidelity to the Evangelical in preference to the Sacerdotal, but we do not thereby establish enmity with our fellow-believers.

No doubt the phrase was a slip of the pen, but the writer draws attention to it because he fears that it does actually state the attitude of some Baptists.

Surely only God can say which of differing approaches to Himself enable Him to bless us—and we ourselves are the last (as Baptists) who should venture to express that opinion.

(We thank Dr. E. W. Price for his letter and assure him that “against” indicated comparison, not opposition.—ED. BOARD.)

THE RESTLESS SPIRIT OF GOD

Excerpts from the Presidential Address delivered before the Baptist Union of Victoria, by the Rev. T. F. Keyte, L.Th. By courtesy of the Editor of *The Victorian Baptist Witness*.

A. E. WHITHAM has an article in one of his books entitled "The Restless Spirit of God". That is the general theme of what I want to say to you. Across the history of the Church it has appeared that new movements of the Spirit of God have been unpredictable, often unwanted, and even strongly resented and opposed. They have not been confined to the rules and traditions of the existing institution. In fact, it would seem that part of the work of the Holy Spirit is to break up an institution which has had its day. For an institution, by its very definition, is a society for the prevention of change.

This restlessness of the Spirit is a major theme of that thrilling book, *The Acts of the Apostles*. In a little room, unnoticed by the festive crowds who thronged the streets, a few people met and waited. Suddenly their hearts were on fire, and their lives were charged with power. From the very beginning, that Divine Thing overleaped the frontiers of race, language and tradition. It began in that small upper room, just like a stone flung into a pond, and the ripples of it have spread until they have lapped earth's farthest shore, and no sphere of human life has been left quite untouched by its influence.

So it has always been. A humble home in Nazareth, where a Carpenter made common things for God. A cell in Erfurt, where a monk named Luther sought peace with God. A meeting-house in Aldersgate Street, London, where a proper little Church of England clergyman felt his heart strangely warmed. An after-church meeting at Kettering, following a sermon preached by an unknown, named Carey. And what world-shaking consequences have followed from those small beginnings! That is what makes a church service such an adventurous thing. Why a meeting like this has almost frightening possibilities. You never know when, in the deadiest church, under the dullest preacher, some spark of the Divine fire will touch some heart, and some chance word break up the habits of a lifetime. And you never know where it will end! It is a serious thing to pray for revival. The real seriousness comes not in the possibility that the prayer may not be answered. The appallingly serious thing is that God may answer it, and we be let in for more than we bargained!

For one thing about the Holy Spirit of Truth and Power is that you cannot tame Him; you can never hold Him for yourself, and limit Him to your own comfortable gait. He is free, wild, untameable, restless. The men in that upper room never dreamed then of the lengths to which He would go, and compel them to go. Peter, for instance, was quite horrified to find Him breaking down sacred

walls and fences, and was not at all sure that the whole business was quite respectable. "Eat with Gentiles? Not so, Lord; I have never done that." Here is Saul of Tarsus, praying his synagogue prayer, "O God, I thank Thee that I am not a Gentile, a slave, a woman," with no inkling then that one day he would write the quite unthinkable words, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, male nor female, bond nor free, but all are one in Christ Jesus".

GOD'S SPIRIT DISTURBS US

And so it has gone on. He never knows when to stop. He insists on disturbing us before we can get properly settled down. No sooner do we get our walls up, forgetting that we are tent-dwellers, than He is breaking them down again, and driving us out, lest our souls be stifled in our fancied security. God in His mercy broke up the security of that first Church in Jerusalem by the instrument of persecution. Isn't it a salutary exercise to ask ourselves where some of the liveliest Churches in the world are to be found today? Aren't they in places like Kenya, where to declare yourself a Christian is almost like signing your own death warrant at the hands of the dreaded Mau Mau? Ask Dr. Rajah Manikam, Asian secretary of the W.C.C., where the most virile Church in Asia is to be found, and he will tell you that it is the suffering, poverty-stricken Church in war-torn Korea. Whitehead, the philosopher, reminded us that the disturbed ages of the world's history have usually been the creative ages. It is all part of the ministry of the restless Spirit of God.

When the Church springs into new life, as I have no doubt it will, it will be on no stereotyped pattern. We may miss the new awakening, and be left behind by it, if we expect it to be cast in the familiar mould of what we have known hitherto. We must be ready for that. We must not fall victim to a kind of "Maginot Line" psychology, trying to sit tight behind prepared defences in a war of movement. That is always a tendency of the Church when the going is hard, and too many Baptist Churches today are singing the *Gloria Patri* over the ways we have done things through the years: "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen."

Many of our old defences are no longer adequate to meet the new onslaughts being made upon them today. All too often Christians are found defending positions the enemy simply is not bothering about, and letting the foe in through breaches in the wall they didn't even know were there. We must not be found clinging to ways of thinking and acting which are no longer relevant to the needs of the present situation. The very genius of our Baptist position is freedom to act as the needs of the current situation demand, and not to be tied for ever to a rigid system devised in times quite unlike our own. "The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from His Word."

The answer to that is not contempt for the past. We are the inheritors of a tradition of which we may be justly proud. Our forefathers won certain gains and insights from bitter experience, which are not lightly to be disregarded. Baptist history has some very pertinent things to say to us now, and, unless we heed them, this generation could well witness the crowning irony of our Baptist history, in that, in a day when others are coming nearer to our position than ever before, we ourselves should be found departing from it. Freedom of conscience, freedom to follow the truth wherever the Spirit of Truth leads—do you find that in Baptist Churches today, when it is vanishing from national life? Or do you find people with narrow views of truth and the grace of God, and narrow charity towards those who differ from them? Voltaire was an atheist, but when he said, "I disagree with every word you say, but I will fight to the death for your right to say it", he was being more Baptist, in that respect, than many who bear the name.

A WORLD CHURCH

It does seem to me self-evident that one direction of our new advance must be a new tolerance and willingness to work with and learn from those who differ from us. Out of the ferment of the world today is emerging what Archbishop Temple called, "the great new fact of our time," a world church. I know Baptists are divided in their attitude towards it. I know the dangers of it; the attempt to create a sort of super-church, the submerging of all our convictions and distinctive witness in a common mush of undenominationalism, like the child who thought to produce a super-colour by mixing together all the colours in the box, only to find that it turned out a dirty brown; the dangers of submitting to the modern cult of largeness, and of winning political victories rather than victories of the Spirit; the dangers of attempting to impose on the church of the living Christ the methods of a modern chain store. But, since when have Baptists been afraid of danger in the face of an opportunity for extending the Kingdom of God? One of the most dangerous doctrines ever preached is the doctrine of liberty, to which we Baptists have clung so tenaciously through the years. I feel that one of our great duties today is to find ways of demonstrating that unity which already exists in our common loyalty to Christ. To that larger demonstration we are committed by reason of our own Baptist doctrine of the Church, a fact which our Baptist forefathers were not slow to recognise. What a contribution the Baptists of the world have in their power to make to the W.C.C.! What are we afraid of? Of God? This new ferment in the world cannot be contained in the wineskins of self-centred, fenced-off denominations. God is not a Baptist! And if this movement is of God, and we resist Him, we shall die out, and we shall deserve to die out. "He that would save his life shall lose it", is a principle which applies to churches and denominations, as well as to individuals.

I am not pleading for a slackening of our Baptist convictions, but for an intensifying of them, and for the kind of confidence that believes sufficiently in their truth and relevance to believe that they can stand on their own feet in any company, as indeed they can.

I want to come now to the other end of the scale, the local Church. This is the level at which most of us can serve the world Church, and I believe that the local Church is still the key to the situation.

Let us recognise that there is a changed situation, a change from a pastoral to a missionary situation, in the home country. The Church is always pastoral, and in an imperfect world it must always be missionary, but the emphasis changes from time to time. In ages when Christianity is dominant, the pastoral function receives the greater emphasis, but in times of waning influence it is the missionary function which comes to the fore. Have we sufficiently recognised that we have again passed over to a missionary situation? Churches still regard the minister solely as a pastor, and make demands on him which, legitimate in the earlier situation, begin now to appear somewhat trivial in a set of conditions which demand that both minister and people shall together be missionary. It is not enough that the Church should have missionaries; she should be missionary. The mission field today is hard up against our own front doorsteps. In a sense, that almost stuns us, because it is so literally true; the Church once more is a "colony of heaven", yet with the difference that the Church is not quite in the exhilarating position of the first disciples, a vivid community offering to man's obvious need a new and compelling answer. Perhaps we are too well known.

FELLOWSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

This emphasis on the local Church should, I suggest, be at least a two-fold one. First, I put the emphasis on **Fellowship**, in the rich New Testament sense of the word, which means far more than the getting together of a few cronies. "The Fellowship" is the name given to a new thing, which came into being as a result of the saving mission of Christ, a new sort of group, quite unique, of people who belonged to each other, not because of anything they found in each other, but because of what they had all found in Jesus Christ. People of the most diverse temperaments and capacities were welded into a unity, not by mutual attraction, but by a common attraction to their Lord. Much could be said along this line, but I content myself by saying that, in days when the crowds pass us by, and we seem powerless in the circumstances to do many things we want to do, there is one thing the Church can do, and I can think of few things more important for her to be doing just now in our torn, divided world, and that is to present an object lesson in brotherhood, a sample of redeemed community, the family of God. "See how these Christians love one another", said the Roman Emperor, and

he was not being ironical. If that were the most obvious thing about our churches, they would make their impact.

And let me say that people who deliberately disrupt the fellowship of a church in the name of orthodoxy are doing a wicked thing. This is the devil's work.

RANK AND FILE EVANGELISM

The other emphasis is on **Evangelism**—the evangelism, not of the specialist, but of the rank and file. Central evangelistic missions have their place, but evangelism must be the vital breath of the local Church. There is no escaping this obligation. The thrilling story of Azariah of Dornakal, the first Indian bishop, is a story of the amazing growth of the native Church in that diocese as a result of personal evangelism. When people joined the Church, he had them say after him, "I am a baptized Christian. Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel."

The Rev. W. D. Jackson told us of a meeting of a Rotary Club to which young people from a neighbouring school were invited to speak on world affairs. One boy of 17 concluded his speech by saying: "The only answer to the world's need is in Jesus Christ, and I urge you all to give yourselves to Him, as I myself have lately done". He said that it was as if a breath of God's Spirit moved over the assembly, and was still. "This was real. This was the Church, no longer circling Jericho at a safe distance, blowing trumpets, but coming in over the wall with a sword in its hand."

REVIVAL IS GOD'S WORK

I have no new and startling programme to lay before you. You cannot stage a revival. That is God's work. But neither does revival come to an unprepared people. I know God will use us if we are willing. I am making a plea that the local Church will not become an end in itself; that the Baptist Union will not become an end in itself. That sort of end is always a dead end. I am making a plea that we be true to the best traditions of our Baptist forefathers in being open to the leading of the Spirit of God, wherever it takes us, and whatever it costs us. And if, for instance, it should shake us loose from our fetish of independency for the sake of a larger usefulness, what of it?

In the district to which I was first appointed, it fell to my lot one day to drive a former minister about the circuit on my motorcycle. He had the most elementary ideas about riding pillion. He placed his hands firmly on my shoulders and allowed his legs to swing free. When we came to a bend, he was quite unable to yield his body to the movement of the machine as we leaned to take the curve, and tried to steer me straight on. It might have been worse! We escaped with abrasions. That is to me a parable of the way we tend to resist God. We must not try to harness Him to our familiar methods and preconceptions, and resist Him when He tries to make

us change direction. "Not so, Lord." By what right do we call Him "Lord", to whom we reserve the right to say "Not so"?

There is one sure clue to the shape of things to come. Every new stage of progress in the Church has begun with a new discovery, or a re-discovery of something in Jesus Christ. Because I believe with all my heart that somewhere in the story of the life, death, resurrection and continuing ministry of Jesus Christ our Lord is the answer to every human need, it is at His feet that I leave you, that, in utter devotion and loyalty to Him, we may know, in these years of the world's great foreboding, the way He would have our beloved Denomination go.

A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

IT was in 1947 that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland decided that the time had come for a completely new translation of the Bible, which might meet the needs of the modern world as even revision of the older versions could not do. The main non-Roman religious bodies in England were approached, and a Joint Committee was set up, in which various denominations were represented in the same proportions as they are in the British Council of Churches. Thus the Church of England had six delegates; Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists and Scottish Presbyterians two each. English Presbyterians and the Society of Friends each send one delegate, and all the Churches in Wales unite to nominate a single member. The British and Foreign Bible Society and the Scottish Bible Society also supply one member each, while the Oxford and Cambridge University Presses, which have undertaken financial responsibility for the project, are always represented at meetings of the Committee. The first Chairman was the late Bishop of Truro, and the first Secretary the Rev. G. S. Hendry, who had been largely instrumental in originating the movement.

The early meetings of the Committee laid down certain general principles. The work is to be a totally new translation from the original languages, neither deliberately excluding nor deliberately adopting the language of the older versions. As far as possible it is to be in the English commonly spoken and written today, preserving dignity and at the same time making a direct appeal to the modern mind. In the Old Testament poetry is to be printed in such a way as to show the structure and to retain, as far as may be, the essential character of Hebrew verse. Throughout, the aim is to bring home the message of Scripture to the average English reader of our own time.

From the first it was clear that the Joint Committee itself could not hope to undertake the work. Only two or three outstanding New Testament scholars had been selected by their denominations, and there was only one who had the slightest claim to have specialized

in Old Testament studies. Accordingly the Committee instructed Professor C. H. Dodd and myself to nominate six scholars in each section of the Bible for the Committee's approval, and, if they agreed to serve, to convene them as Translating Panels. Two other Panels were added, one for the Apocrypha and one of Literary Advisers whose task is to see that the language conforms to the highest possible standards of modern English. The then Bishop of Durham (since translated to Winchester) was appointed Convener of this most important Panel.

It was two or three years before the machinery got into full working order and the Panels settled down to their task. The Bishop of Truro was removed by death and his place has been taken by the Bishop of Winchester, who thus combines two offices. Dr. Hendry now holds a chair in an American University, and the present Secretary is the Rev. Prof. J. K. S. Reid. Each of the main translating Panels has suffered grave loss through the death of distinguished scholars. It became clear that the whole work needed a closer method of co-ordination by the appointment of a single officer, and the obvious choice for the position of General Director was Professor Dodd. He was retiring at that moment from his chair at Cambridge, and has been able to continue both as General Director and as Convener of the New Testament Panel. The Old Testament Panel has been increased from three members to ten. Of these, it may be remarked in passing, four are Baptists; a significant fact, since denominational representation on Panels is wholly ignored.

There is no slovenly haste in the work. First a draft of a book or section of a book is prepared by a scholar who need not be a member of the relevant Panel. In the case of the Old Testament the draft is submitted to one of the world's leading Semitic philologists (a member of the Panel), who makes comments and suggestions. With these he returns it to the draft translator, who modifies his work in the light of the contributions made by the philologist. The newly revised form becomes the official "First Draft" and is considered by the full Panel; the draft translator, if not a member of the Panel, is always present while his work is under discussion. As revised by the Panel, the draft goes to the Literary Advisers, who always accept the sense indicated by the language of the draft, but in many cases improve it from the literary point of view. Alterations thus made are once more checked for accuracy by the translating Panel, and when agreement between the two is reached the whole is presented to the Joint Committee, which meets twice a year. In the New Testament the procedure is similar, except that there is no need for special philological revision. It should be remarked that the utmost harmony and sympathy mark the relations between the translating Panels and the Literary Advisers.

Many problems have to be faced and solved. First there is the actual text to be translated. This is much more difficult for

the Old Testament than for the New. In the latter the choice lies between readings found in a large number of ancient MSS. In the former there are few differences in the Hebrew authorities; even the "scrolls" recently discovered in the Jordan valley do not greatly differ from the traditional text. But frequent and often important alternatives appear in the text from which some of the ancient versions, particularly the LXX, were translated. In these cases readings underlying the versions are freely adopted if they are felt to be the better. Not infrequently, however, no sense can be made either out of the Massoretic text, or that of an ancient version, and the Panel has to resort to conjectural emendation. In both cases any variation from the standard edition of the Hebrew text is indicated in the margin.

Much more serious is the problem of representing accurately the meaning of words and phrases. Perfection here is unattainable; indeed, the first and most important of the qualifications required of a translator is that he knows his task to be impossible. His aim is to reproduce in his public an experience comparable to that of the original hearers or readers. Again and again words and phrases are used which have no exact equivalent in English. They can be explained, but explanation is not translation. Words carry with them overtones and undertones which defy reproduction. At times a Greek or Hebrew word will express a complex idea or feeling; some aspects will be represented by one English word, some by another, some by none at all, and the translator has to be content with the nearest thing. Here the Literary Advisers are invaluable, for they often get closer to the exact meaning of the original than the translating Panel has done. But even they, with full explanation, cannot always reach the ideal. A writer or speaker who aspires to exegesis *must* soak himself in the language of the original if he is to achieve his aim.

These are but a few of the difficulties that have to be faced. Our great scholars are all busy men, holding important academic posts, and the twenty-five days a year asked of them mean a big sacrifice. Yet they give freely of their time and learning, and though it must be some years before their work is completed, we have good ground for hoping that their labours will impart a keener edge to that Sword of the Spirit with which God has armed His evangelists.

THEODORE ROBINSON.

SERMON SERIES II

WALTER BOTTOMS' article in the July *Fraternal* must have set younger men on a useful homiletical journey, while older hands have rummaged in their barrel of sermons preached long ago. All would agree with the writer's contention for doctrinal and biblical sermons for, at least, the morning diet of worship, but for evening or week-day services the preacher may

be forgiven for providing lighter fare, and it is with this latter that the present contribution is offered.

Suitable for Advent would be a Course on the four- or five-fold Name of the Messiah in Isaiah ix, 6. Another might be prepared on Jesus Christ—His Parents—His Home—His Trade—His City. In view of R.C. extravagances there is need for a series on Mary. Mary in Nazareth (the lovely scene in Luke i, 26-36, shows pre-natal preparation indeed); Mary in Bethlehem, in Cana, at Calvary and the final glimpse of her in Acts i, 14.

Passiontide personalities should include Peter, Pilate, Joseph, Nicodemus. Nicodemus might well form a separate study in spiritual development as seen in the three references: John iii, 1; vii, 50; and xix, 39. Eastertide, in addition to the main teaching, gives scope for an imaginative treatment of Christ's appearances to Individuals—Mary Magdalene, Cleopas, James, Cephas (connect this with John xxi, 17), Saul.

Some things that Christians ought to know are set out in 1 Cor. vi: "Know ye not?" The six blessings named in the General Thanksgiving provide solid ground for thanksgiving, very suitable in a time when there are so many troubled hearts. Thanksgiving leads to Song—some Bible Hymns. The Hymn they sang after Supper. The Hymn which could not be sung, Psalm cxxxvii, 4. The Hymn in Early Christian Worship—Eph. v, 19. The Song of Moses and the Lamb, Rev. xv, 3; while Psalm xcvi supplies the notes making its opening verse possible. As an illustration again of how one text suggests another, if in this series is included the Hymn that Paul and Silas sang at midnight, there come at once to mind half a dozen Midnight Scenes, each one of which is capable of useful application. "Some Scriptural Suppositions" would include Luke ii, 44; Acts xiv, 19; 1 Tim. vi, 5; while in Luke iii, 23, there are three words in brackets which give rise to useful teaching on the Person of Christ. In this series would be included, with due acknowledgment to Spurgeon: Luke xx, 15. Again, three texts often mis-applied, when taken in their context, provide helpful sermons. "Other Vineyards have I kept, mine own have I not kept". "The Soul that sinneth it shall die", and "Search the Scriptures". Is the preacher a Man of Letters? Then let him tell of the Letter Hezekiah laid before the Lord. The Letter Saul was carrying to Damascus. The Letter that saved the Early Church from Schism (Acts xv, 23). The two Luke wrote to Theophilus which have been a blessing to countless generations. The Course might well conclude with the Letter which every Christian ought to be (2 Cor. iii, 3). With some thought and the exercise of pardonable imagination two or three Courses of four or more sermons on Paul's friends, from Gamaliel, his schoolmaster, to Carpus, who kept his Cloke—all of real interest and useful application.

Expository preaching as known fifty years ago is not in favour today, but a preacher might, with advantage, take one and another

of the shorter O. and N.T. Books and tell of the Writer, the Occasion and the Theme. Reading between the lines of Philemon there is The Man Who Wrote the Letter. The Man About Whom it was Written and the Man to Whom it was Written. By all means tell the congregation of the vivid story of Jonah and press home the author's teaching in this great Missionary Tract. Given time and trouble for study, the congregation would be well rewarded by the minister who, with two or three modern versions before him, wrote out, say, The Prophecy of Amos, or the Epistle to the Galatians. Give a Sunday morning session to the work, dividing the reading into sections interspersed with suitable hymns and read with thoughtful emphasis. The congregation will be interested and as a reward for the trouble taken the minister will glean many texts for future treatment.

In rescuing the above-named suggestions from his barrel of sermons the writer is fully aware that they are mostly on the lighter side, but, as already stated, this article is an appendage to the weightier themes discussed by Walter Bottoms. Further, in making this selection justice has not been done to the O.T., the wealthy spiritual material of which it is a great error to neglect.

The present writer's object will be attained if he has helped in any measure to remove the fear with which many a student, at the commencement of his life work, regards his slender stock of College-made sermons. With a quiet and prayerful spirit let him reflect on the priceless pages of Holy Writ and by God's help he will there find treasure, new and old, wherewith to bring sinners to the Saviour and to build up Christian people in their Holy Faith.

AN OLD HAND.

COMMENTARIES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE work of Old Testament scholarship never stands still. In part this is due to the nature of the material, the Old Testament itself. For while "the word of the Lord shall stand for ever", man's understanding of it can never be complete. Thus the "assured results" of each generation need constantly to be re-examined and tested. New understanding of the Hebrew language, new discoveries of the archæologist throwing light on obscure periods of history, cultus and ways of life, new insights into the thought-forms of the ancient world, all serve to expound the Scriptures. The present century, perhaps especially the last thirty years, has been a time of creative thinking in the field of Old Testament study. That does not mean that the work of scholars of previous generations has been discredited. Indeed, it has been their patient work that has made possible the understanding of today, even when the conclusions of present-day scholars differ from those of an earlier generation. Nevertheless, the commentaries of the earlier years of this century can hardly give a fair picture of the insights gained from the study

of the Old Testament today. The older commentaries are still valuable; but they need to be supplemented by some further reading.

The conviction that animates and stimulates Old Testament study is that here we read "the lively oracles of God". That has always been true, although that phrase has been understood in various ways, because it is obvious that they have been spoken by human tongues. Perhaps it is our appreciation of the human element that gives rise to the variety in our approach to the Old Testament. There are those who would ignore that element. Then, since there are obviously many passages in the Old Testament which have no apparent relevance to, or accord ill with, twentieth-century Christian life and faith, they must either be explained away, or allegorised. That comes dangerously near to making the Word of the Lord subordinate to our presuppositions. Again, the human element may be fully recognised, and the "difficulties" may be eased by saying that they belong to a crude, unworthy, pre-Christian understanding of the divine purpose: the phrase "progressive revelation" has been used to cover a great deal of superficial thinking on this subject. It is perhaps not surprising that many justify their neglect of the Old Testament on these grounds. The Christian faith derives from the New Testament (it is said), and therefore the Old Testament can be ignored except for an occasional illustration or text. But the Old Testament may be seen as the foundation of the New—so our Lord and His Apostles received it. We may read it as the Word of the Lord given to His people, with whom we are continuous. We may see how in "its divers portions" it was received and tested by their life and quickened them to new insight and strength; so that both the divine Yea and the human Amen are heard throughout the Old Testament. It is possible to recognise this as characterising Old Testament scholarship today, and older commentaries may be read in the light of it.

Before we consider individual commentaries, it is as well to ask ourselves what we look for in a commentary. Obviously we all need help in understanding the plain meaning of the words that we read, and their significance both for those who first heard them and for the community of the people of God, continuous with, and organically related to, those first hearers. If this is the Word of the Lord, then it must be heard by the Lord's people, and heard in such a way that they make the right response. There can be no doubt about the magnificent English and simple vocabulary of the Authorised Version. But equally there can be no doubt about the obscurity of many passages (e.g., Isa. x, 28-32; Zech. iv). Obviously one function of a commentary is to explain the meaning of the passage and to relate it to the life of the people of God.

But this, though of very great practical importance, is dependent on a great deal of patient scholarship. It can come only from a study of the language and thought forms, and a knowledge of the cultural and religious background, and of the processes by which the "word"

has been transmitted and recorded. Much of this knowledge may seem but little relevant for preaching or the instruction of twentieth-century Christians. But he who expounds the Bible and its living faith may well feel that he wants to know all that can be known about that "word".

To provide all this in one commentary would be to make it unwieldy, and certainly unhelpful for the beginner. It may be necessary to provide two kinds of commentary: one for general and homiletic purposes and another for the student, whether he be in the college or the manse. The former can satisfy only if it is based on thorough and patient scholarship, while the latter must always conduce to the "building up of the body of Christ".

One-volume commentaries are useful, but perhaps hardly adequate in their scope for the average minister. A new and revised *Teachers' Commentary* has recently been issued, and those who use Peake's Commentary will need the Supplement. Somewhat similar are *The Concise Bible Commentary*, W. K. Lowther Clarke, S.P.C.K., 1952, 30s., and *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, Nelson, £4 4s. 0d. Although they are not commentaries, there are two books that are valuable for Bible study: *Companion to the Bible*, ed. T. W. Manson, and *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, ed. A. Richardson. The older commentaries, such as the Cambridge Bible, Century Bible and Westminster Commentaries, are still valuable, but most of these must be obtained second-hand. The Clarendon Bible, I-VI, although selective, is good and has excellent illustrations. The Torch Commentary, S.C.M., is not complete, but the books already published make good use of recent Old Testament study. For those who wish to continue their Hebrew, The International Critical Commentary, though still incomplete, is a standard work, and of the same order are *Judges*, C. F. Burney, and *Amos*, R. S. Cripps (2nd ed., 1955, 25s.). There is great need of a new commentary on the Psalms. The Cambridge Bible is still valuable, although old. Perhaps the best of the recent commentaries is that by Kissane (2 vols.).

In conclusion, it may be added that a great deal of help may be obtained for an understanding of the trends of recent Old Testament scholarship from such books as: *The Re-discovery of the Old Testament*, H. H. Rowley; and the same author's *The Relevance of Apocalyptic; The Old Testament Against Its Environment*, and *God Who Acts*, both by G. E. Wright, and *The Relevance of the Prophets*, by R. B. Y. Scott. And for a careful appraisal and analysis of recent Old Testament scholarship the best book is *The Old Testament and Modern Study*, ed. H. H. Rowley, 1951, O.U.P.

There is a very useful book on Hosea by N. H. Snaith called *Mercy and Sacrifice*. The Commentary on Isaiah by G. W. Wade in the Westminster Commentaries (2nd Edition, 1939) is a book that would prove helpful to a minister leading a Bible Study group on Isaiah, and in view of the prophet's profound insights into

international politics, and the immensely satisfying interpretation of history in the latter part of the book, the book of Isaiah is particularly timely for our generation.

Perhaps the greatest study of Jeremiah in English is that by J. Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion* (Cambridge University Press). It is not always easy reading, but no effort is too great if it leads to an understanding of this most spiritual and sensitive prophet. Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson wrote three small books, published by the S.C.M. Press: *The Cross of Job*, *The Cross of Jeremiah* and *The Cross of the Servant*. These have now been gathered together and published as *The Cross in the Old Testament* (S.C.M. Press, 1955). This is emphatically a book to read and use. Also very valuable is the same author's *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament* (Duckworth). Of a more general nature is Fleming James' *Personalities of the Old Testament* (Scribners, 1939), a popular study but based on sound scholarship.

A. S. HERBERT.

COMMENTARIES ON NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

RECOMMENDING commentaries is almost as difficult as writing them. Different people look for different qualities: some demand painstaking detail, others an inspiring grasp of a whole argument; some want scholarly caution, others daring novelty; some expect sermons ready-made, others merely a key to the correct understanding of the written word. Any choice of commentaries must be, in consequence, to some degree subjective, and when space is limited, as it is on the present occasion, a writer cannot hide his prejudices in a complete catalogue that will suit all tastes.

In dealing with the New Testament we naturally turn first to the study of the Synoptic Gospels. The acceptance of the priority of St. Mark by the great majority of Protestant scholars has led to much concentration on its sixteen (or fifteen and a half!) short chapters, with the result that we have so many extremely good commentaries that the difficulty is not to find an adequate one to suggest, but to decide which of a number of really satisfactory volumes to omit. Our wisest procedure is probably to confine ourselves to mentioning four that appeal in different ways: A. E. J. Rawlinson's classic contribution to the Westminster series, the detailed and exhaustive treatment of the Greek text by Vincent Taylor (Macmillan), the interesting presentation of St. Mark's story by B. H. Branscomb (Moffatt New Testament), and (though some may be surprised to find too slight a book in such august company!) A. M. Hunter's concise, live volume in the Torch Bible Commentaries. Perhaps the amount of attention given to St. Mark has hindered as adequate a treatment of the other two Synoptic

Gospels. At any rate, as far as work in English is concerned, St. Matthew and St. Luke do not present us with the same embarrassment of riches as does St. Mark. Nevertheless we have three small commentaries on St. Matthew, each of which is good in its own way, that of B. T. D. Smith in the Cambridge Greek Testament, that of F. W. Green in the Clarendon Bible, and that of C. E. P. Cox in the Torch series, and Baptists should need no one to remind them of the volume in the Moffatt Commentary written by one of our own best-loved teachers, Theodore Robinson. Hunter has given us a first-rate little commentary on the Sermon on the Mount under the title *Design for Life* (S.C.M.). Of the older works, Plummer's *Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew* will probably be found most useful. On St. Luke we have a first-rate commentary on the Greek text by J. M. Creed, while for those who have little or no Greek there is William Manson's work in the Moffatt series and H. Balmforth's in the Clarendon Bible. Nor must B. S. Easton and Plummer be forgotten. To these works on the separate gospels must be added the invaluable study of the Q material from the pen of T. W. Manson, originally part of the *Mission and Message of Jesus* and now issued separately by S.C.M. in *The Sayings of Jesus*.

While we have nothing in English to equal Bultmann's *Johannes-Evangelium* (despite its faults) in its brilliant union of critical scholarship with intense religious understanding, we are fortunate to be able to use a number of exceptionally fine commentaries on the Fourth Gospel. Here, as in our treatment of St. Mark's Gospel, we may seem to be making an arbitrary selection, omitting some works, particularly older ones, which are more than worthy of mention. We plead limitation of space as our excuse. J. H. Bernard's two volumes in the International Critical Commentary are of great value for their thorough examination of the Greek text, but tend to be rather pedestrian. In complete contrast, *The Fourth Gospel* of Sir Edwyn Hoskyns (Faber & Faber) is a well-stored treasure house in which the discriminating can find endless riches, but from which the less cautious may bring false gems, speculative to the extreme. A safer choice for the average minister would be R. H. Strachan's *Fourth Gospel: its Significance and Environment* (1941, S.C.M.), which, though on a smaller scale and much less suggestive than Hoskyns, is excellent. He might also find helpful the *Gospel According to St. John*, by R. A. Edwards, newly published by Eyre & Spottiswoode. Needless to say, no preacher should overlook William Temple's *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, which at times seems to catch something of the strangely moving quality of the Gospel itself. One more book forces itself into this paragraph and cannot be left out in any discussion of St. John. C. H. Dodd's *Fourth Gospel* is, of course, not a commentary, but is far more valuable than most and will prove a most rewarding study.

Some recent work on the Acts of the Apostles will be found extremely helpful. The little Torch Commentary is of value out of

all proportion to its size: we may be particularly grateful for its insistence that St. Luke's story of the early days of the Christian Church is primarily a religious book. The more detailed and elaborate comments of F. F. Bruce, both on the Greek and the English texts, in spite of what sometimes seems an over-aggressive conservatism, are scholarly and able and serve to balance the monumental *Beginnings of Christianity*, which must continue to dominate all studies of Acts for decades.

Outside the Pauline corpus, the epistles that have been best served in commentaries of the last few years are undoubtedly 1 Peter and the *Johannine Epistles*. E. G. Selwyn has given us a commentary on the Greek text of 1 Peter (Macmillan) which is as good as any ever done on any part of the New Testament, and his work may be supplemented by the smaller but good works on the English version by F. W. Beare (Blackwell) and C. E. B. Cranfield (S.C.M.). As we might have expected, C. H. Dodd's *Johannine Epistles* in the Moffatt Commentary is both profound and readable, an indispensable key to the study of these three letters. A simple, but helpful discussion is that of C. J. Barker (Lutterworth), and we mustn't forget, in our enthusiasm over Dodd, the excellences of Brooke's exhaustive contribution in the International Critical Commentary and of Plummer's comments in the Cambridge Bible and the Cambridge Greek Testament. The view has been expressed that the major epistle of which treatment has been most disappointing is that to the Hebrews. Hunter even goes so far as to suggest that recent work fails to lead us as close to the author's meaning as did A. B. Davidson (Handbook for Bible Classes) and B. F. Westcott, but that may be too pessimistic a judgment. The choice of the present writer would be Moffatt (I.C.C.), Theodore Robinson (Moffatt Commentary), and, despite its date, Peake in the New Century Bible. The discussion of the letter by F. D. Narborough in the Clarendon Bible is good, but very brief. In addition to these existing commentaries, and to demonstrate something of their defects, William Manson's *Epistle to the Hebrews* should be read for a more recent and a promising approach to the meaning of the letter. On the very different Epistle of James we should select Ropes (I.C.C.) on the Greek, and Knowling (Westminster Commentaries) on the English.

In considering the writings of St. Paul we naturally think first of the letter that has had such an influence on the history and thought of the Christian Church, the Epistle to the Romans. To read C. H. Dodd's exposition (Moffatt Commentary) is an exhilarating experience which no student of the New Testament should miss. Those who understand St. Paul's Greek should supplement Dodd's brilliant clarification of the thought of the letter by the use of Sanday and Headlam (I.C.C.) or Denney (Expositor's Greek Testament). Romans, of course, has never been without commentaries that are also theological utterances of the first order. It is

bold to prophesy, but the probability is very real that Karl Barth's torrent of word and thought, translated for us so ably by Edwyn Hoskyns (Oxford), will join their number, and our period is fortunate also in having the superb, if controversial, exposition of St. Paul's thought from the pen of Nygren, recently translated from Swedish. While much of the best work on the Pastoral Epistles has been done in this country, the finest of the commentaries are those from the other side of the Atlantic; for in addition to the excellent Moffatt Commentary by E. G. Scott we now have the outstanding contribution of B. S. Easton (S.C.M.), written with that scholar's typical thoroughness and clarity. Space forbids more than a list of recommendations on the other epistles: on Galatians, Duncan (Moffatt), and the new short volume by J. A. Allan (S.C.M. Torch Commentary); on 1 Corinthians, Robertson and Plummer (I.C.C.) and Moffatt (Moffatt); and on 2 Corinthians, Plummer (I.C.C.) and Strachan (Moffatt), with Denney (Expositor's Bible); on 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Neill (Moffatt); on Philippians, Michael (Moffatt) and Maurice Jones (Westminster); on Ephesians and Colossians, E. F. Scott (Moffatt) with (for Ephesians only) J. A. Robertson (Macmillan).

There remains, apart from some minor letters, only the Book of the Revelation. Here the folk in our churches need guidance perhaps more than anywhere else. The greatest single work, of course, is the International Critical Commentary by R. H. Charles, a work of great erudition and authority, written by one who was an expert in this particular field. But we are singularly fortunate at the moment to have at our disposal a number of excellent simple expositions: Kiddle and Ross (Moffatt Commentary), Hanson and Preston (S.C.M.), and the book by E. F. Scott which must be mentioned, although it is not a commentary proper and which cannot be too highly praised as an introduction to the Apocalypse, *The Book of the Revelation* (S.C.M.).

Let it be confessed, before we conclude, that sometimes even the best of the commentaries we have mentioned may seem boring. How often a commentator seems to find great interest in what does not interest us at all! Indeed, there are occasions when a mass of apparently irrelevant detail tends to obscure rather than reveal the living message of the Bible. Yet, when all is said and done, a commentary is only a tool, sometimes quite uninteresting in itself, but indispensable for the making of many an exciting discovery. Without it our sacred book, written centuries ago in a different intellectual clime from our own, would withhold many of its treasures from us. We must never forget that the commentator himself is often more conscious of his failures than are his readers. The preacher, who knows only too well the heart-breaking realisation of how far his spoken pulpit words have fallen short of the inspiring quality of the text they were intended to proclaim, should be the first to appreciate the commentator's difficulty and to accept gratefully what he has

to give; and when, as happens oftener than we realise, the miracle takes place and the word becomes alive, the minister should be the first to see and acknowledge, not only the erudition of the great scholar, but the inspiration of the man whose mind has been illumined by the Holy Spirit.

S. I. BUSE.

CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY

IN our July issue Principal Champion wrote concerning ministerial candidates who seek entrance to a college affiliated with the Baptist Union. The same regulations, of course, apply to the Irish College, Dublin.

Similar guidance should be given to those who intend to sit for the Baptist Union Qualifying Examination. Evidence will be sought of the sense of vocation, aptitude for the high and holy office, and loyalty to the denomination. In addition, the minister should be satisfied as to the adequacy of the reason for not applying to College, and he should stress the fact that nothing can equate the advantages of collegiate training. A full explanation should be given of the serious test contained in the examinations, including a knowledge of New Testament Greek. After securing the blessing of his own Church the candidate should seek interview by the Ministerial Recognition Committee of his local ASSOCIATION. If he is approved there he will then be interviewed by the Ministerial Recognition Committee of the Baptist Union, meeting in London. That Committee will, if it is so led, give him permission to accept a pastorate and prepare for the examinations of the Union for non-collegiates. If he gives satisfactory pastoral service in one Church for three years and passes the required First Examination his name will then be placed on the List of Probationers. After another three years' satisfactory pastoral service and passing the Second Examination his name goes on to the Full List. The man in question is then in every respect on an equality with his collegiate brethren.

For all candidates, collegiate or non-collegiate, the financial aspect should be emphasised. While none is rejected because of inability to meet the considerable expense involved, yet every man is expected to do his utmost to make a fair contribution towards the same. University students during vacation willingly engage in remunerative posts to enable them to bear at least a part of the cost of training, and candidates for the Ministry should be prepared to do the same.

EDITORIAL BOARD.

SOME PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

THE Lord's Supper is the central act of Christian worship and it is a great loss to Protestants that the Reformation did not leave us with a Church life where it had its rightful place. Some of the Reformers battled hard to make it the chief service of Sunday, but lost the battle, and left us with a form of service which is not an adequate vehicle for Christian worship. Similarly the Church of England inherited a form of morning and evening prayer compiled from the Breviary, and, while the liturgical hours were an excellent form of devotion for the religious houses, who centred their worship in the Mass, a truncated form is not adequate as the central act of worship for Christians on a Sunday.

Our Baptist forebears therefore deserve great praise for having made the Communion central. In the early days of our movement in England they would not have thought of any form of morning service except the Lord's Supper. To our great impoverishment this tradition has been lost in most of our churches with the consequence that we are left with a serious situation in our Sunday worship.

The problem which caused the Communion service to lose its central place with us seems to have been that of the uncommitted worshipper. In early days the Communion was jealously guarded as the service of committed Christians. The pagan was, of course, outside and his attendance at Christian worship was unthinkable. Those under instruction, the catechumens, came to the first part of the service but had to leave before the actual Communion. The "Mass of the Catechumens" came to refer to a recognized part of the Mass and the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom still retains the break between the "Mass of the Catechumens" and the "Mass of the Faithful".

How simple the conduct of worship must have been then! The priest knew exactly what he was aiming at. The faithful had their Communion service, jealously guarded for them, alone; those under instruction had the first part of the service in which they heard the Scriptures read and heard the homily; and the pagans were preached to by purely mission efforts, nearly always in the open air.

Nowadays we have a sort of free-for-all in which we try to minister to the converted, convert the unconverted, teach the catechumens and attract the children all in one shapeless mass. No wonder that in our desperate efforts to do everything at once the converted often go away feeling that they have not been ministered to, the unconverted are not converted, those under instruction do not receive teaching and the children unconsciously feel that they are tolerated in a service which is really for grown-ups and in which they are given a talk and a hymn on sufferance.

This problem has led to the dropping of the Communion service as the central service or its retention as a sort of epilogue

to the "real" service. If we try to restore the Communion on Sunday mornings we shall find ourselves faced with the question of the uncommitted, the children, and the casual visitor. The Church of England has launched a "Parish Communion" movement, by which all the Parish are invited to a sung Communion with sermon at about 9.30 a.m. The service is sung by the whole congregation, books are provided which explain the liturgy simply, with a special children's edition, well illustrated. Those who wish to communicate do so, and the others feel that they are welcome and have a right to be there.

Our system could work well if it were adapted. Our ordinary service takes the place of the "Mass of the Catechumens" in which the Scriptures are read and the Word preached. Then comes the break at which the uncommitted withdraw, and those whose lives are committed to God in Christ enter into the full Communion. For these latter the first service has been the preparation for Communion, when they have heard the Word as a preparation for the Sacrament. Obviously in this case the first service must be shortened and pointed. It must be shortened because no one (certainly not the housewife) can worship with an eye upon the clock, and pointed because it must all point to and culminate in the Communion. In the first service we hear God's word challenging our lives, and in the Communion we respond to the challenge by giving ourselves to Him, "our *reasonable* service", because He gave Himself for us.

But what of the first service without the Communion? Here indeed we have a problem, because we have challenged our hearers through God's Word, and there is no opportunity for them to respond. Our ordinary form of service contains singularly little material in which a man can respond, and as all the Primary Sunday School teachers know, "No Impression without Expression". A remark of an Anglo-Catholic priest is always in my mind when I consider this aspect of our worship. He told me that he had been to a Baptist service and I enquired very curiously what he thought of it. His answer was devastating, for he replied that the minister had got between him and God. He went on to explain that he was used to a service in which the worshipper had the form of service before him and knew that he was expected to join in. Quite apart from the Psalms and Canticles, which gave the worshipper a greater direct part than the hymns alone, there were responses for him to make and prayers which were said all together. He complained that the Baptist service was a monologue by the minister and that the congregation sat back and listened respectfully, without even saying "Amen" to the prayers. He felt that he had no part in it except as an onlooker.

There is too much truth in that report for us to attribute it all to strangeness or prejudice. In how many churches do our people say "Amen" at the end of the prayers with unanimity and conviction? In how many churches is the Lord's Prayer said clearly and firmly?

It is the one and only prayer in which our people can join, yet many churches have taken to singing it because they can't get their congregations to say it audibly. These considerations lead me to ask myself sometimes if our forms of service are not growing more priestly than those of the Catholics, who now have "dialogue Mass", in which, in many instances, the congregation say all the prayers together excepting only the prayer of consecration.

What then are the main problems in our form of worship as we face our congregations on Sunday? As I see them they are four:—

(1) To weld together a very mixed company of people into one worshipping whole and to prepare them for prayer.

(2) To pull them into the prayer so that they want to pray themselves and not merely listen to us praying.

(3) To provide adequate means by which they can respond to the challenge presented.

(4) To provide as much opportunity as possible for adoration, in which our service is characteristically weak.

Space will permit only short notes on each of these points.

(1) Our private prayers mostly fail before we have said a word. We do not realize what we are about to do and Who God is. To commence a service with prayer is often a meaningless thing because the congregation are not yet ready for prayer. A strong objective hymn of worship helps to bind them together, and to direct their thoughts away from themselves. Then try to ground their thoughts in the power of God and His ability to answer prayer. For example, suppose that the hymn has been B.C.H. No. 62: follow it up with Psalm cxxv, verses 1 and 2, and then Psalm cxxi, verses 1 and 2. Take plenty of time about it, so that it sinks in. Don't be afraid to say "Let us pray" before you read the verses, for, with heads bowed, the people will more readily regard the verses as part of the prayer, whereas read beforehand they may easily think of them as another kind of preliminary before the actual business starts. Or in the evening if you have started with B.C.H. No. 558, read St. Luke iv, verse 40, and after a pause follow it up with "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever". Then after a pause read verses 2 and 8 of the hymn.

(2) The most obvious way to get people to pray with you is by responses, but this necessitates a liturgy. The impromptu "When I say, 'Lord, hear our prayer', please reply 'And let our cry come unto Thee'" is an uneasy compromise which may lead to many nervous mistakes. It may, however, be used with a number of small disconnected intercessions, e.g., "We are asked to pray for . . . Lord, hear out prayer". Biddings are useful but can easily be overdone. Silence is the method best fitted to our form of service, but here we sometimes encounter a *damnosa hereditas* from the "old-fashioned prayer meeting" as it has come to be called. There

silence was so often looked on as an uneasy pause when nothing was doing, rather than a time to be busily used in prayer. To break the silence is a responsibility and not a duty. To train a congregation in the right use of silence, so that it becomes a living experience is one of the most valuable things we can do. "We pray for those who are ill in their homes and in our hospitals and institutions, especially those known to us by name. . . . And for all who nurse them and are anxious for them . . ." A time of quiet for individual prayer is always appreciated provided it is long enough to be of use and is not encroached on by the minister.

(3) In view of the scarcity of material by which our people can make their response, the Lord's Prayer should be carefully kept until the need for a response is felt. To use it at the beginning of the service is to lose an opportunity, for so early in the service it is almost certain to be said perfunctorily. Probably its best place is at the end of the second prayer when there has been an opportunity to build up a desire to respond. There are times when it might come better after the sermon. But by far the most usual channel of response for our people is in the hymns, and they should be chosen with the utmost care. Probably our form of service impels us to choose them liturgically, e.g. (a) worship, (b) children, (c) personal devotion, (d) invocation, generally to the Holy Spirit, (e) response to the sermon. It is often possible, however, to choose a hymn which will bring out a response to the thought of the Scripture lesson. The utmost effort should be made to choose the last hymn so that it can form a real response to what has been said in the sermon.

(4) The spirit of adoration is one of wordless looking, longing, and self-giving:—

"See, Lord, at thy service low lies here a heart,
Lost, all lost in wonder, at the God Thou art".

This mood can sometimes be suggested at the beginning of the service by the singing of, say, B.C.H. No. 29, followed by the reading of Revelation v, 11-13, followed by a prayer inspired by the majesty and wonder of God. Usually, however, this mood comes later in the service, and may close the second prayer: after the petitions have been dealt with it is easy to introduce some verses from Isaiah vi (say *1b*, *2a* and *3*) and then to follow on with "Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious name: evermore praising Thee and saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high". This prepares for that particular silence, the silence of adoration.

DENIS LANT.

THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY IN A WELFARE STATE

AN enterprising venture has recently been described by Canon Roger Lloyd*: Two Anglican bishops selected about a dozen younger clergy to form a working party which under the guidance of a senior clergyman meets for a whole day each month to study the nature and administration of contemporary social services. Senior officials of statutory and voluntary agencies, for instance in services concerned with health, National Insurance and Assistance and deprived children, are in turn invited to explain their duties and problems to this group of clergy. The whole course covers a period of two years, and represents the attempt of the Church to keep abreast of recent developments in our powerful and influential so-called Welfare State machinery. Growth, in this country since the beginning of the century, of social services, and also quite recently of social work as a profession, and particularly since the publication in 1942 of the Beveridge Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services, must urge clergy and laity alike to re-appraise the relative responsibilities of Church and State for the provision of material human welfare.

Combination within recognized groups for mutual safety and general social betterment is naturally as old as humanity itself. What is new is the vastly increased willingness and power of the State to champion the cause of its more unfortunate and needy members. Before the death of the first Elizabeth financial or material assistance for the needy was largely the concern of ecclesiastical philanthropy. In this respect the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII aggravated an existing problem of destitution in our society. A good deal of welfare work was also done through the medieval gild system, whose features have to some extent survived in friendly societies and trade union organizations today. For centuries destitution was considered a direct effect of indolence and general irresponsibility, and the State until comparatively recently saw no reason to provide for its members more than the minimum requirements of defence and the administration of justice.

At the turn of this century a significant phase in the history of statutory social services began when a Liberal government pledged to a programme of social reform was returned to power. Those were days when denominational allegiance was still to some extent coterminous with party political sympathies, and throughout the modern concern for under-privileged and unfortunate persons Nonconformists have played no small part. The successful attempt of Lloyd George and others to introduce non-contributory old age pensions in 1908 and the passing of a National Health Insurance Act in 1911, constituted the thin end of the wedge as far as statutory

*In an article, "The Church in the Welfare State", in *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 3rd February, 1955.

**A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER OF
THE BAPTIST INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED**

My dear Friends,

No Baptist fund is in greater need, or does more good with its limited resources, than the Baptist Union Home Work Fund. Its gracious influence pervades the whole country. But for its beneficence, various churches would be closed and some new churches could not be planted in the developing areas and satellite towns; some ministers would need to seek other callings and many deaconesses would have to be withdrawn; the allowances to superannuated ministers, to widows and for children would not be more than the minimum; and so one could continue. Take away, or even decrease this fund, and the work in the Homeland would be impoverished beyond measure.

Nothing connected with this Company has given me greater pleasure than the growth of its contribution to this ever-blessed Fund. For the year 1945 the amount, with returned income tax, was £3,000; for 1950, £3,181; and for the current year, 1955, £3,650. This is easily the largest single gift to the Fund, and increases the total voted to the Baptist Union since the formation of the Company to approximately £75,000.

This magnificent result has been achieved because of the unfailing loyalty of the vast majority of our churches and ministers. They have placed their church and personal insurances with the denominational office. I should much like to see the amount further increased, for the need is great and likely to grow still more clamant. I, therefore, make an earnest appeal to the minority of churches (which includes a few of our largest and wealthiest) and ministers whose insurances are placed elsewhere to transfer them to the "Baptist". All with inside knowledge know that the denominational office is the best for a Baptist Church. We have practical experience of the needs and circumstances of our churches, and we seek to meet them. Where it is desired that the insurance should be placed through the agency of a local broker or agent it can readily be arranged. Many churches prefer that their Church treasurer should be the Agent, in order that the Church funds may benefit from the commission.

As I write the rain is pouring down *but* we have had a glorious summer. When you read this the autumn days will be with us, *but* they can be days of rich blessing. I trust that this will be the experience of all of you, of your deacons and of your Churches.

Gladly I am,

Your friend and colleague,

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

intervention on a large scale for human welfare was concerned. The statistical investigation and assessment of social problems, in which Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree were pioneers at the end of the nineteenth century, gave fresh impetus to the movement for social reform. The Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission published in 1909 also brought startling social facts to light, largely as a result of Beatrice Webb's consistently accurate investigations. The revolution continued until it reached a new climax in the torrent of legislation which began with the Education Act of 1944. The significant part which ecclesiastical spokesmen have played in the modern education movement, and particularly in the 1944 Act, is well known. Since the Church influenced in so large a measure the early schemes which have formed the basis of our contemporary social services, the question arises whether its concern in this respect should lapse or be directed elsewhere. Has the State arrogated to itself more functions than it should rightly possess? If not, then what must be the Church's sphere of influence in the Welfare State as such? What now, as far as welfare services are concerned, must be the respective roles of social practitioners, ministers, deaconesses and other church workers, and officials of voluntary and statutory bodies?

Not all Christians have welcomed what they feel has become too extensive an incursion of the State into individual human concerns for which formerly the Church alone was considered responsible. But this view is not wholly satisfactory today. The late Archbishop of Canterbury claimed that "when the Christian principle has taken possession of men's minds sufficiently for the public authority of any nation or race to begin occupying this ground itself, it is probably wise that the Church should withdraw from a great deal of its activity and become rather the focus and source of inspiration, in the power of which the secular community undertakes activities which, without that Christian inspiration, would have been neglected"*. Temple's successor takes a similar view. Recently he said†: "We have moved into a much closer-knit pastoral society, and within a corporate society there must be pastoral work of every kind. For centuries the Church did this alone. Now, thank God, the community has recognized this pastoral duty."

A consideration of the respective functions and historical development of voluntary and statutory associations will help to clarify the present position. Social evils have always first been recognized, investigated and ameliorated by philanthropic, sensitive private individuals who have established voluntary bodies which have been organized entirely independent of statutory control to deal with specific problems. Lord Shaftesbury, John Howard,

* Temple, *The Church and its Teaching Today*, page 19.

† In an address delivered in Birmingham Cathedral, 8th July, 1955.

Thomas John Barnardo, Benjamin Waugh and Elizabeth Fry are a few outstanding examples of many such social pioneers, and the organizations they founded are equally well known. Some voluntary associations founded in this way fortunately still remain. But through the pioneer work of a few gifted individuals glaring needs became sufficiently widely recognized for the State acting for the nation as a whole to organize measures to deal with social problems. In some cases voluntary bodies now work satisfactorily side by side with the State; both the N.S.P.C.C. and Local Authority Children's Departments established under the Children Act of 1948, for instance, serve the needs of deprived children. Yet there will always be a place for voluntary enterprise. New needs arise, gaps remain in statutory provision, voluntary associations clearly can be more sensitive to individual requirements and can readily undertake research and experimental work. Their scale of activity makes failure less disastrous, and, furthermore, much social legislation itself assumes the maintenance of voluntary services. Finally, of course, many continue in their own right. It would be intolerable indeed if trade unions, local clubs, or even the Church herself, were subject to State direction.

Their increasingly scientific methods of work and their sharpened techniques have encouraged many social workers now to seek professional status comparable to that of doctors, teachers and clergymen. Admittedly there are dangers here lest much good neighbourliness and "help" should be frowned upon or squeezed out by professional workers. As long as people choose to live together in communities, and since man is made for life in society, there must never die the lively practical concern of one man for his neighbour. On the other hand, human relationships and problems are above all else at once the most fascinating and dangerous of all interests. Misapplied goodwill, and an interest in other people which regrettably sometimes deteriorates into nosey-parkerism, often causes more harm than we realize. Everyone has problems, but some people, albeit through no fault of their own, constitute problems both for themselves and for society. We make a mistake if we believe, as many people with complex problems say and do, that money or some other material assistance is really all they need. Rarely is this so. Many problems of individuals and groups are material for specialists such as psychologists, psychiatrists and social case- or group-workers of all kinds who regard social problems as diseases, have received specialist training, compile relevant facts in case histories, diagnose causes and prescribe appropriate treatment.

Of course, the heart of the matter is that many of these social diseases are the product of sin, and sin is the rebellious cancer in the living tissue of human society. Man cannot deal with it himself in isolation from "sin's incinerator", Christ's Cross and His Church. What, then, must be the attitude and function of the Church and

ministry in the particular sphere occupied by the social service ramifications of a Welfare State?

Firstly, the Church must surely be prepared to co-operate fully in the work of voluntary associations. Much hard thinking and planning is already being done through the Central Churches Group, which was formed in 1941. It consists of representatives from the National Council of Social Service, the Roman Catholic Church, the Jewish Community, and Anglican and Nonconformist representatives of the member Churches of the British Council of Churches.

This Group has a four-fold aim:—

- (a) To provide for continuous co-operation in matters of importance and urgency in the social field between the Churches and the National Council of Social Service.
- (b) To encourage church members to participate more fully in voluntary community services which are organized outside Church life.
- (c) To secure that these community services develop in a way which is not inimical to the life and work of the Churches themselves and that the Churches have opportunity to make their distinctive contribution.
- (d) To these ends to promote the appointment of suitable Church representatives on national and local committees for various kinds of social service, and to assist in the distribution of essential information for the guidance of those responsible for Church action in this field.

The formation of a "Churches Group for Community Service" as an integral part of the organization of a local Council of Social Service is a useful starting point. A most successful experiment on these lines is now proceeding in Cornwall in response to the initiative of Mr. John Pearce, the Secretary of the Cornwall Council of Social Service, which is seeking to bring together all the voluntary organizations engaged in social service with the local authorities, and helps to co-ordinate their work and make provision for needs that remain.

Secondly, in the normal course of their pastoral work ministers and deaconesses discover and are consulted about problems individuals or families are unable to solve without outside help. Besides assessing the nature and extent of the problems, many of which are not immediately or readily diagnosed, an equally skilled task is making the decision whether the minister himself should wholly handle the problem with any help he may secure from his church members or organizations, or whether specialized help from elsewhere should be sought. Since the major proportion of social workers at present are women, the question of the respective functions of social workers on the one hand, and ministers and

deaconesses on the other, is particularly difficult in relation to deaconesses. The clergy is required to know just what the various social services provide and where appropriate help can be obtained. Elementary teaching on the content and administration of voluntary and statutory social services may profitably be given in theological colleges.

There are, in the third place, a host of practical things members of local churches can do by visiting and performing odd jobs for old or handicapped people whose chief problems often are not financial but those of loneliness and frustration; by taking on outings or holidays, or into private homes for days or week-ends, deprived children from approved schools and local authority or children's homes; by visiting men or women in prison as recognized Prison Visitors; by giving special help through clubs or other church organizations, to children or young people as well as older people who, for example, are on probation or who need special care in other ways; or by making, as many did for members of the Forces during the war, simple things which may be given away or sold cheaply (I know of one boys' club which makes specially designed household gadgets for the disabled and elderly).

Fourthly, it may fairly be stated there is room for the Church to take a much more realistic and balanced view of social problems as a whole. Certain selected social problems, like drink and gambling, have long been singled out by certain sections of the Church for particular attention. Such problems rightly cause grave concern, but there must be an equally live concern shown for other problems which may in some circumstances become even more serious: prostitution, child deprivation of all kinds, and marital disharmony with its attendant serious implications of separation, divorce and family breakdown. Members of different religious traditions manifest considerable varieties of ethical judgment concerning Christian behaviour. Possibly a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of social problems generally might make some contribution to the settlement of these non-theological factors which perpetuate Christian disunity.

Finally, might not the soundest way of tackling social problems and the sins from which they stem be for the Church, rather than concentrating its attention upon this evil or that, to nurture the true Christian citizen in all his wholeness? When they are honest with themselves, social practitioners admit the patchwork nature of their service. Most of their time is absorbed in curing what they have unfortunately not been able to prevent. The aim of Christian citizenship is to strike at the very roots of social irresponsibility and to point positively to what God has done in Christ and what through Him the individual can become. Augustine was right in believing that if we truly love God, we may rightly do as we like. The State must be shaped, governed and empowered by God working through men from within. Are there not signs that modern man is beginning

to recognize the chink in the armour of a Welfare State? It cannot alone heal the fundamental diseases of society. It is at this very point that the Church and ministry in a Welfare State has something pertinent to say.

JOHN T. HOUGH.

A CANADIAN ORDINATION

“ALL right! I'll go!”

ALL We all say that at some time or other, but this was not one of the times at which I expected to say it. For one thing, it meant driving almost seven hundred miles in two days over roads still suffering from the effects of winter. And who knew what surprises Old Man Winter still had up his sleeve? Did we not have the heaviest snowfall just a week or two before? To arrive back home on Saturday night, weary, would not be a good preparation for Sunday services. First, then, I said “NO”. However, the thought of a fellow Spurgeon's man newly settled in Quebec and seeking a fellow graduate's companionship and message at his ordination service prepared the way for the renewed request of Roger Birgé, backed by a letter from his Church clerk. I became a committed man.

Thus at 7 a.m. I backed the car out to Highway No. 2, which leads past our house to regions at that time unknown. It was a beautiful morning and Spring was evidently busy beside lovely Lake Ontario. Seven miles east and my second field of labour appeared, but there was no time for more than a fleeting glance at the new Church Hall of which we are so proud. The car was warming up, and Trenton showed up in no time at all. It is wonderful to think that we may be able to plant a new Church here shortly. Belleville next, thirty-two miles from home; scene of my first evangelistic campaign in Canada, but no time to stop for a crack with Keith Daniel, for beyond was the road leading to the unknown.

The sun was shining brilliantly by the time Kingston was reached. From there onwards most of the road ran beside the great St. Lawrence River, with the U.S.A. on the other side and “The Thousand Islands” in between. Indescribably beautiful, it is no wonder that the islands have fascinated people. Some are so small that a house perched on the top sticks out over the side! Others are big and to their fortunate owners must seem like kingdoms carved out of fairyland.

The monotony of a lonely journey began to pall now, and so almost with relief a hitch-hiker's sign from a lady with a child introduced me to one of those people whose homes are going to be drowned by the new St. Lawrence Seaway project around Cornwall. While transporting her to that booming city, the first real rapids I have ever seen came into view.

“ Welcome to the Province of Quebec ” read the signboard in English and French, with admirable forethought for those who can remember “ *Avez vous la plume de ma tante, s’il vous plait ?* ”, but for the life of them cannot remember another French thought! Spring was much farther away here. Ice in the river. Snowdrifts a yard deep still outside some of the houses. Snow on the hills. The main idea now was to spot the bridge that would take me across the water without going into Montreal. What a road! The buffeting these modern cars can take is wonderful. At last Honoré Mercier’s monument took the car in a stream of traffic away from Highway 2 to the less notable roads of Quebec.

After what seemed to be hours of dodging aimlessly about in a wet and monotonous countryside, the signposts definitely mentioned “ Sutton ”. At last, nestling in a valley at the foot of the hills, in a strikingly beautiful setting, the little town came into view. Nine hours after leaving home I took a welcome drink of coffee in the car where I had parked it outside the Church before going in to join the ordination council.

I was not aware of making a lot of noise. Perhaps I did, nevertheless, for my legs felt as legs do when one has been at sea in rough weather for a long time! No sooner had I peeped into the lovely little Church than our alert Home Missions Superintendent, Rev. Dixon A. Burns, was by my side. He led me to his seat, where I was able to listen to the statement of the candidate. It says much for him that I was able to listen to his long and precise theological declaration. I must confess that at question time, however, I did spend some time trying to identify his pretty north-country wife! It was unsuccessful, for I have not eyes in the back of my head! Roger Birgé passed the inquisition with flying colours, and was soon happily shepherding the inquisitors to the Church Hall (which is tacked on behind his parsonage!), where a heavy-weight supper was waiting.

The Church was well filled for the evening meeting. Local members and interested friends were the majority, of course, but Baptist ministers from other parts of the Eastern Association were also present. A delegation from Feller Institute, the Baptist school for French-speaking children (which is a department of the Grande Ligne Mission concentrating on the evangelisation of French-speaking Canada), travelled over sixty miles to share in the event. There was a strange mingling of accents, but also a delightful sense of fellowship in Christ which was heightened by Mr. Burns’ closing ordination address wherein the little Church among the hills of Quebec was linked with the world-wide fellowship of Baptists. It was a deeply moving experience to stand in a semicircle of ministers with such varied backgrounds and experiences, all with outstretched hands setting apart for the ministry of the word a brother who had travelled so far to occupy the pulpit in which he knelt.

All over the world Baptist meetings never end when they close! In the parsonage afterwards the ladies lingered a while before seeking sleep. Mr. Burns stayed a good while longer, but the two Spurgeon's men would not like it to be known just when they ceased to talk!

Morning came all too quickly. A hasty breakfast; a call at the garage for petrol (still talking!) and the long road home. Perhaps it was lack of sleep, perhaps it was sheer carelessness, but Honoré Mercier's bridge didn't seem to exist any more! I found Queen Victoria's bridge at length and had to pay a quarter for the privilege of crossing it in order to bump and crawl through Montreal! It was with a sigh of relief that I took the corner that led to Highway 2. Only some three hundred miles to home! Thoughts kept flying forward and backward as the car droned and lurched along during the succeeding hours. Backwards to a gallant young brother and his wife holding an outpost of Baptist witness amid a people predominantly of another culture and faith. Forward to the gulf that will soon be between us and the Ontario we have learned to love as we become the most easterly ministerial family of the Baptists of Canada when we take up the pastorate of the First Baptist Church, St. John's, Newfoundland. I guess that then I shall be even more anxious than Roger Birgé for the presence of a brother who knows the folk I know and serves the cause I serve. So, if your plane is held up at Gander, don't spend the night sitting up in the waiting room. Come and sit up and yarn in the Baptist Parsonage! And if you cannot leave the little sphere where God has placed you to rove as some of us are called to do, then let your thoughts and prayers take wings and dwell for a while in the outposts of our Commonwealth where men like Roger toil, places of which few have ever heard, places over which the Lord sighed: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?", until He found a man who would say: "All right! I'll go."

E. WILLIAMS.

A MINISTERIAL EXCHANGE

FOR a full twelve-month I have been not a tourist but, for all practical purposes, an Englishman. I have visited in hundreds of homes, eaten English food (prepared, however, by an American wife), ridden a bicycle hundreds of miles, drunk gallons of tea, and spoken to more Sisterhoods than I ever knew existed. Without a doubt this experience has been the richest of my life. Not many—if any—American ministers have had the privilege of being an English minister for a year, but I am certain the experience would be a blessing to anyone, as it has to me.

The Rev. Howard Wheeler, of Weymouth, and I exchanged everything except our personal clothing. We made all the arrangements ourselves after contacting each other with the help of Dr. Payne. It was a rather bold venture it seems, but it has worked

out so smoothly for all involved that we cannot doubt that the hand of God was in it.

The benefits that have come from such an experience are too many to list—indeed I am just realising many influences now that were not apparent at the time. Our four children have had the high privilege of a year in the British school system—and I must say that in general I think it is better than our own. We have not only observed, but to some degree participated in, the quiet, stable British way of life. There is something there difficult to explain, but nonetheless real. And the quiet dignity of your Church services and the seriousness with which you take membership impresses me.

In coming from Southern U.S.A. I found quite a contrast in Church life. There are many areas in which I think we can learn from you. There are also some areas in which I think American Church life is more effective. I shall list several matters that struck me at the beginning and lingered with me as I saw a bit of Baptist life over the country.

(1) I feel that the denomination as a whole is not taking seriously the matter of religious education. I know there is the Sunday School, and other organisations somewhat loosely connected with the Church; but I do not see any serious attempt to teach the doctrinal and ethical and missionary and other aspects of the faith as well as the biblical. I am struck by the lack of adequate literature, and I found it hard to believe at first that all attempts at religious education come to a rather abrupt halt in the mid-teens.

(2) Having come from a section where evangelism plays such a large part in the life of the Church, I am struck by the small part it plays in Baptist life in Britain. I personally feel that we almost take it too far in the Southern Convention in America, and at times we are in danger of biting off more than we can digest; but I feel that in Britain you lean too much the other way. It is further my impression that the people are willing for a more evangelistic approach in the Churches if the ministry will take the lead.

(3) The third thing that impresses me is the lack of emphasis on stewardship and the absence of an integrated financial programme for the Church as a whole. And here again I feel that the responsibility lies with the ministry.

I do not mean these as criticisms; they are simply some observations that I have made during the year. Of course they are to some degree subjective and reflect my own temperament; but I think they are also points of contrast between Baptist life in Britain and in my own country.

C. A. ARRINGTON.

Education for Citizenship

Is this an optional extra, or an essential part of Christian Discipleship? Surely God's people are a witnessing community, and the Christian Faith must be expressed in daily life and work.

That is why the Baptist Union Council is sponsoring a **Christian Citizenship Campaign** throughout our churches between

November 6th (Peace Sunday) and

November 20th (Temperance Sunday)

or whenever convenient.

Write for information to:

THE CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP DEPARTMENT

or

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT

BAPTIST CHURCH HOUSE

4, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1

THE UNION OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN-BAPTISTS IN THE U.S.S.R. AND ITS WORK

THE Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptists in the U.S.S.R. is directed by the All-Union Council of the E.C.-B., which at present consists of the following twelve members and two deputy-members :—

Zhidkov, J. I., President of the Council; Levindanto, N. A., First Vice-President and Senior Minister in the Baltic States; Andreyev, A. L., Second Vice-President and Senior Minister in the Ukraine; Karev, A. V., General Secretary; Ivanov, I. G., Treasurer; Galayev, M. I., Member of the Council and Senior Minister in the Krasnodar province and the Rostov and Kamensk counties; Orlov, M. A., Member of the Council and Senior Minister in the Leningrad, Pskovskov and Kalinin counties; Ponomarchuk, D. I., Member of the Council and Assistant Senior Minister in the Ukraine; Lipstok, I. J., Member of the Council and Senior Minister in the Estonian S.S.R.; Huntz, F. E., Member of the Council and Senior Minister in the Latvian S.S.R.; Tchetchnev, V. N., Member of the Council and Senior Minister in the White Russian S.S.R.; Ter-Avanessov, P. J., Member of the Council and Senior Minister in the Azerbaidjan S.S.R. the Groznen county and Kabardin and North Osertin A.S.S.R.; Karpov, A. N., Deputy-member of the Council and Senior Minister in the Moscow county; Rajevsky, E. N., Deputy-member of the Council and Senior Minister of Eastern Siberia and the Far East.

Locally, the All-Union Council of the E.C.-B. has what are called "Senior Ministers" or Superintendents, who supervise the activities of the Evangelical Christian-Baptist Churches in the counties, provinces and republics of the Soviet Union.

At the present time there are 49 Senior Ministers (Superintendents), excluding the 10 Senior Ministers who are members of the All-Union Council of the E.C.-B.

Senior Ministers (Superintendents) are chosen from the most worthy and experienced workers of the Union of E.C.-B.

The obligations of the Senior Ministers are as follows : (1) Supervision of the activity of every church within his territory; (2) To assist the ministers in the correct fulfilment of their service; (3) To supervise the appointment and ordination of new ministers; (4) Approve (sanction the appointment of) the deacons; (5) Control the finances of the churches; (6) To see that accurate registration is made of all the churches, ministers (pastors) and deacons in his county.

Senior Ministers are appointed, dismissed and changed by the All-Union Council of the E.C.-B., to whom they are responsible for : (a) their activities—in the submission of quarterly reports; (b) finances—in the submission of monthly accounts.

The All-Union Council of the E.C.-B. has rules which are binding upon all members of the Council, as well as the Superintendents and the Ministers.

The Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptists consists of three previously independent Unions : The Union of Evangelical Christians; The Union of Baptists; and The Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith, known as Pentecostalists.

The union of the Evangelical Christians and the Baptists took place in October, 1944.

The union of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists with the Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostalists) took place in August, 1945.

The basis on which the union of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists with the Pentecostalists took place is known as "The August Agreement", which lays down the following two conditions : (1) That the Pentecostalist brethren and sisters should refrain from the use of "other tongues" in general prayer meetings; (2) that they should not propagate their views amongst the other believers.

Thus the long expectation and fervent prayer for unity amongst the children of God in the U.S.S.R. was at last fulfilled, and the Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptists presents a monolithic brotherhood of believers in Christ as their personal Saviour and in baptism upon profession of faith.

In October, 1954, in all the churches of the E.C.-B. in the U.S.S.R., the tenth anniversary of this remarkable union was commemorated.

Churches of Evangelical Christian-Baptists are to be found throughout the vast territory of the Soviet Union : from Archangel and Murmansk in Siberia to Eriban and Stalinabad in the hot south; from the Island of Sackalin in the Far East to the Baltic, and in the Carpathians and Moldavia in the west. At present it would be difficult to find a place in the U.S.S.R. where there is not a Baptist.

In the Ukraine, churches of Evangelical Christian-Baptists are more numerous than anywhere else; there are also many churches in Russia proper, in Moldavia, in the Baltic States, in White Russia, in the Caucasus, in Central Asia and in Siberia.

The latest statistics show that in the U.S.S.R. there are **5,340** churches (communities) of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists, having not fewer than 20 members. The number of baptised believers in these communities is **512,430**. Communities of fewer than 20 members are not included in the above statistics.

The membership of the Evangelical Christian-Baptist churches shows a steady increase, which is borne out by the fact that in 1953, 12,000 newly-converted were baptised.

In accordance with the rules of the Union, only those who have reached their majority, that is eighteen years, are received into membership.

Those wishing to be baptised are put on probation for a period of at least one year. Immersion is the only form of baptism recognised by the Baptists of Soviet Russia.

All the churches of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists in the Soviet Union hold strictly fundamental views on doctrine. Their life and service are distinguished by the spirit of the early Christian (Apostolic) Church, a burning zeal for Christ, and simplicity of faith and worship.

In the Evangelical Christian-Baptists churches throughout the Soviet Union, Breaking of Bread (Holy Communion) takes place on the first Sunday of each month.

All churches are directed by the Church Council, which consists of three persons: President (the minister of the church), secretary, and one other member of the church.

In addition to the minister and deacons of the church, other church members who have special gifts and are able to edify the members of the community are permitted to preach.

These members especially endowed with gifts for preaching, constitute what is called "A Contingent of Preachers", who serve the churches.

All the business of the church is decided by the minister, together with the two other members of the Church Council.

More complicated matters are brought before the church for decision, where this is found to be necessary. For example, the election of elders, or their dismissal, the equipment and decoration of the church buildings, and the election of the Church Council and the members of the Revision Commission.

The All-Union Council of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists is maintained solely by the freewill offerings of believers within the U.S.S.R. Baptists in the U.S.S.R. receive no grants whatever from any other source.

The finance of the churches is derived from the voluntary offerings of believers through plate offerings, envelopes, and also by subscription lists.

The All-Union Council of the E.C.-B. carries on its work with the help of contributions from all churches in the U.S.S.R., which proceed from special collections taken in the churches for the needs of the All-Union Council on the following five occasions during the year: (1) New Year's Day; (2) Easter Day; (3) Whitsun; (4) Harvest Festival; (5) Anniversary of the Union of the three Unions. Up to the present time these contributions from the churches have covered in full the needs of the All-Union Council.

In cases of special need, the All-Union Council sends a special appeal to the churches for financial help.

The Evangelical Christian-Baptist churches always respond generously to the needs of the Lord's work, for from a heart filled with burning zeal for the Lord there springs a desire to render sacrifice.

The official organ of the All-Union Council of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists, the *Bratsky Vestnik* ("Brotherly Messenger"), is published six times a year.

The All-Union Council intends to print Bibles and Hymn-books, and, with God's help, there is hope of this materialising.

The All-Union Council of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists has ties with fellow-Baptists and fellow-believers in foreign countries through correspondence and personal contact. The All-Union Council and the Moscow Church have been visited by many religious leaders from abroad.

Representatives of the All-Union Council have been able, since the war, to visit Sweden three times and once to Finland and Norway.

It is hoped by the All-Union Council that through correspondence and personal contact these ties will become closer in the near future, to the blessing of the work of the Kingdom of God and the strengthening of peace and friendship among nations and the closer fellowship of Christian churches.

The All-Union Council of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists is also very active in the cause of the defence of peace throughout the world. Details of its work were given in the No. 1 issue of *Bratsky Vestnik* for 1953, under the title "The Participation of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists in the Cause of the Defence of Peace", and also in the book entitled *Conference in Defence of Peace of all Churches and Religious Associations in the U.S.S.R.*

From time to time, in all the Evangelical Christian-Baptist churches, sermons are preached on the subject of peace and friendship and brotherhood among all nations, and fervent prayer is continually made for peace throughout the world.

Inspired by the words of Christ, "Blessed are the peacemakers", all Evangelical Christian-Baptists in the U.S.S.R. believe these words are to be applied not only in the narrow sense by the disciples of Christ, in the creation of peace within a small family circle or in the home where they live, but in the creation of peace among countries and nations, the creation of peace for all mankind.

It is the burning desire of the All-Union Council of the E.C.-B. that all Baptists, as many as there are in the world, should become active participators in the Cause of the Defence of Peace and the prevention of another world war, and should decisively protest against the atom, hydrogen, bacteriological, chemical and every other weapon for the mass destruction of human life.

By correspondence and by radio, the All-Union Council of the E.C.-B. has repeatedly made its appeal to all Baptists in the world and to all fellow-believers in the Faith.

The Evangelical Christian-Baptist Union impatiently awaits the time when a powerful voice will be raised by the world-wide union of Baptists in condemnation of the "cold war" which precedes a

Baptist Missionary Society

(YOUR OWN SOCIETY)

While much has been accomplished, much remains to be done.

Our missionaries, their national colleagues, and the churches which they serve witness to the Gospel before great non-Christian majorities :

In India . . . Hinduism

In Pakistan . Islam

In Ceylon . . Buddhism

These religions are very much alive and are striving to increase their power.

Remember our missionaries in your prayers, and support them in every way possible. Theirs is a difficult but most important task. At the call of the Lord Jesus Christ and in your name they have gone forth. With faith and hope in Christ they loyally proclaim the Gospel in word and deed.

B. M. S.

93/97, G'LOUCESTER PL'ACE, LONDON, W.1

“hot war”, and the race for arms and the production and application of weapons of mass destruction.

The plan (outline) of work of the All-Union Council of the E.C.-B. for the near future may be expressed in the following brief phrases:

Greater zeal in winning new lives for Christ!

Greater depth in the spiritual instruction of believers!

More of the spirit of the Early Christian Church in the life and service of our churches!

Greater participation in the cause of the defence of peace throughout the world!

ALEXANDER KAREV,

General Secretary of the Baptist Union in the U.S.S.R.

A. V. Karev merits our thanks for his interesting and informative article, kindly translated by Mrs. Andrews of the B.W.A. Office. We gladly add that, together with our brethren in Russia, we rejoice that the Baptists of the world have spoken with united voice at the B.W.A. Congress, on the vital question of Peace.

ED. BOARD.

POST-CONGRESS

THE Jubilee Congress is history; its memories and impressions remain. The Denominational and Free Church papers—especially our *Baptist Times*—have reported fully and the Congress was by no means neglected by the National Press and the B.B.C. Details here would therefore be superfluous.

Eight thousand delegates now sundered far, will long retain happy memories. The Albert Hall, well filled day after day, and often three times a day: the Indian heat, the ever-moving fans and camera flash-light, showing the keenness of their owners to return to their churches with pictures as well as words: the singing, not quite up to expectation—no fault of Beasley-Murray, the mingling of tongues and colours and the blending of heart and voice in the oft-repeated lines of Fawcett: the smaller sectional meetings—four or five in an afternoon—wonderfully well attended: the greetings from U.S.S.R. delegates, impressive in their content and perhaps even more so in their omissions. Finally, the marvellous Pageant on which Producer A. C. Davies and his helpers are to be congratulated,—a Pageant even better had certain things from the German scene been omitted; and the concluding mighty Rally to which Billy Graham contributed so greatly, these are some of the things that will remain in memory through coming years.

CONGRESS PERSONALITIES

We salute Townley Lord, who served the B.W.A. during his five-year Presidency with whole-hearted devotion. He has travelled the world and cheered our people by message and personality and,

together with his church at Bloomsbury, has placed us all in his debt. Four men only in each generation can fill the Office of President and Dr. Lord has crowned his career by achieving this honour. We salute Henry Cook, upon whom the William Jewell College, U.S.A., has conferred an Hon. D.D. He is to follow W. O. Lewis as Associate Secretary of the B.W.A. for one year. Together with his British Presidency this means a busy year of Office. The Editorial in this issue is from his pen.

We salute W. O. Lewis, who returns to U.S.A. During his long residence in Britain he has won universal respect and affection, and we wish for him and Mrs. Lewis a long and happy retirement in their homeland. We salute Joel Sorenson, who has rendered splendid service as Y.P. Secretary. Everywhere he has infected others with his own enthusiasm, and young people in many countries thank God for his consecrated leadership. We salute Dr. Theodore Adams, of Richmond, Virginia, as incoming President. Pastor of a great church, popular broadcaster and writer, Baptists everywhere will find in him an alert leader and a radiant Christian. He will have, as second in command, the talented help of Arnold Ohrn, who piloted the Congress with such skill. We all regard him as a personal friend, and to him we also offer salutations. Finally we salute our own Union Secretary who, though never obtruding himself, perfected the immense organisation necessary to the success of the Congress. God bless Ernest Payne!

IMPRESSIONS

The social side of the Congress was not the least important. The crowds lingering outside the Albert Hall or covering the green sward around the Albert Memorial, trying the patience of the always friendly policeman. The Congress badge as an introduction to anybody—black or white, wearing a similar token. The many functions formal or informal, the hospitality of Christian homes—all this made a delightful off-set to the more serious engagements.

One general impression only can be recorded. We have beaten the Baptist drum and rightly so. We have thrilled at the thought of our history, our numerical strength and the vital principles we inherit and guard. It would, however, be more than unfortunate if this consciousness should dim the vision of that wider Christian community represented at the opening Session by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the F.C.F.C. President. Strong as we are, the forces of error and evil are stronger still and demand ultimately the united witness and effort of the whole Church of Christ. To such Unity we must endeavour to advance. With this important addition we quote from a leader in the *Christian World* as expressing our own main impression: "We are left pondering the extraordinary strength and confidence of Baptist confessional witness. Not a single word was said in their great meetings which hinted a doubt concerning the Baptist testimony and its necessity. In speech after

speech this was vigorously stressed. The Declaration on Liberty means liberty in religious thought and worship, liberty from State control, liberty of preaching and witness. With this went the characteristic Baptist insistence upon Christ's Lordship in His Church and a theology firmly based upon an essentially orthodox view of His life and work. This must be borne in mind in an age in which all are deeply attracted by the ideal of a single visible Church of Christ. The problem is to relate a convinced denominational confession with this idea of a united church. The only way in which it can be attained is that such a church can be essentially Evangelical. There is no hope of uniting the Free Churches in a Church subservient to the State or deeply concerned to preserve the Catholic tradition. There is a gulf which may be impossible to bridge between the Evangelical and the Catholic conceptions of such a church. A day may come when even this gulf may be spanned, but for the present it is wise in our work for church unity to look no farther than unity between the churches which may be styled—Protestant Evangelical”.

ED. BOARD.
