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EDITORIAL

WE regard it as a function of the *Fraternal* to stimulate discussion of issues that deeply affect Baptist Churches at home or overseas. We try to supply relevant facts and responsible criticism. A case in point is Church Reunion in Ceylon. Ever since the historic conference at Edinburgh in 1910, generally regarded as the cradle of the Ecumenical Movement, the re-union of Christendom has been widely and seriously mooted and in many lands union has taken place. What is happening in Ceylon is of special significance for us, however, because it is the first union to be negotiated in which Baptists and Paedo-Baptists are proposing to unite. In this land, individual United Free Churches, including Baptists, have come about, but this is something different. If the scheme goes through, the Baptist denomination in Ceylon dies as such, and lives again as an integral part of the United Church of Lauka (as it will be known). It raises issues of the greatest moment for Baptists everywhere. For this is clearly but a beginning.

In our October issue we published an outline of the scheme by the field secretary of the B.M.S., R. C. Cowling. In January we followed it with a trenchant criticism from Angus McMillan, a leader of that school of thought among us that views all such schemes with deep misgiving. In this issue we print a lively reply from Hugh Martin, who has played a prominent part in the promotion of Christian unity. We are also glad to have an authoritative account of the reasons which have impelled our brethren in Ceylon to enter on these negotiations and to contemplate entering the United Church. This has been supplied by S. J. de S. Weerasinghe, a distinguished minister, secretary of the Ceylon branch of the Bible Society and secretary of the Negotiating Committee for Church Union (and incidentally a member of the B.M.F.—one of us). No one could write with more inside knowledge or a stronger claim to be heard as the representative of our Baptist people in Ceylon.

We hope, now, that the matter will be discussed in *Fraternals*. Great issues are at stake. They may not be much alive in this country among the rank and file, though the Free Church Federal Council is getting active about them again and Anglicans and Methodists are having serious talks. On the Mission Field they

are burning issues in which our people are involved. A similar scheme to that in Ceylon is being negotiated in N. India, and it will not be long before Africa follows suit. There are bound to be repercussions in the Baptist World Alliance, and our future relations with our churches on the Mission Field that enter a United Church will need some thinking out. It is not too early to start doing it.

An aspect of ecumenical life about which there can be no controversy is in the hands of Edwin Robertson, who is taking up residence in Geneva as the focal centre of the work of the National Bible Societies. We are grateful for the inside knowledge of the use and spread of the Bible through the world which he gives us in his present series of articles.

We are grateful to Speirs for his comments on the challenge thrown out by our chairman for "constructive thinking on the future of Ministerial Service". Here again is a very live subject, one we hope to pursue in a future issue.

A PRAYER

Give us the faithfulness of learners and the courage of believers in Thee; give us boldness to examine and faith to trust all truth; patience and insight to master difficulties; stability to hold fast our tradition with enlightened interpretation . . . and alike from stubborn rejection of new revelations, and from hasty assurance that we are wiser than our fathers, save us and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord.

From Bishop Ridding's Litany.

WHY BAPTISTS NEGOTIATE FOR CHURCH UNION IN CEYLON

A NATIONAL'S POINT OF VIEW

INTRODUCTORY

The movement towards Christian Reunion is a significant fact of our time. It is a movement which is gathering momentum in many lands. A Faith and Order Paper, which briefly surveys this movement, shows that fifteen Organic Unions have been already achieved; that Full Intercommunion has been achieved in four different areas and that negotiations towards Organic Union are in progress in sixteen other areas of the world.

The full visible unity of the Church of Christ upon earth must still be regarded as a distant vision, but surely we as Christians and Churches must make it our goal, and we should prayerfully and steadfastly move towards it even though, in our march towards that goal, we might have to experience some tensions and several perplexing problems.

KEY PRESUPPOSITION

Our starting point or presupposition in our thinking on the subject of Church Union will always be the words of our Lord Who said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" (John xvii, 20-21). It is, therefore, vitally connected with the Life and Mission of the Church and cannot be regarded as secondary, peripheral or merely desirable. It is fundamental, primary and vital. To put forward the argument that the Lord of the Church has blessed the different Branches of the divided Church and their ministries with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit and made the different Confessions His instrument for the establishment of His Church in so many lands, and in consequence, to think that the visible unity of the Church is not a matter of such vital importance, is to deceive ourselves.

CHIEF IMPULSE FOR CHURCH UNION

It is now generally acknowledged that the movement towards Church Union received its chief, powerful impulse from the "Churches of the Mission Field", such as the Ceylon Church represents. While in some respects this fact is significant, it is not really surprising. The Church on the Mission Field, the Young Church, eager to express her loyalty to her Lord and His commission to evangelise, finds herself in an unfavourable and indeed in a hostile environment, and begins to look at things from a different perspective. When her loyalty to her Lord is deeper than her loyalty to her parent Church or Churches, she desires with all her being that the unity of the Church should be her top priority.

ANTAGONISTIC ENVIRONMENT

The Younger Churches of the Mission Field, which are the outcome of the Missionary Expansion of the West are in a small minority, facing ancient, well-established and powerful religious systems in their countries. This powerful challenge of an antagonistic environment makes them desire unity and the Younger Churches are more inclined to emphasise the things which profoundly unite them rather than the things which divide. It should be mentioned that, even if we are not surrounded by a hostile environment, we should seek to underline the fundamental beliefs which unite us rather than the differences which keep us apart. But even so often we seem to lay stress on the things which divide us, forgetting the things which bind us together in the greatest and richest fellowship which the world has known.

CEYLON CONTEXT

The present situation in Ceylon renders Church Union, not merely highly desirable but absolutely imperative. Among the factors which create this imperative necessity, there are three which deserve special emphasis. They are:—

(1) Freedom from Colonial Rule with its repercussions on the national, social and religious aspects of our people, with its possible consequences that foreign Missionaries may find it difficult to come to work here.

(2) The resurgence of ancient faiths in Ceylon, especially of Buddhism, at present celebrating the 2,500th Anniversary of its birth in Asia, with a predominantly pro-Buddhist Government, giving official patronage to the Buddhist revival.

(3) The fact that the Christians are in a small minority (Roman Catholics, 507,418, Protestants, 95,813 out of a total population of 8,098,637). (1953 Census figures.)

The contemporary situation in Ceylon in this new context brings home vividly and powerfully the sense of urgency in regard to the unity of the Church. In this difficult situation, as we seek to bear our witness and preach the Gospel of our Lord which is committed to us, we find how inadequate we are, not merely because the total non-Roman population is such a small minority, compared with the total Christian population, including the Roman Catholics, but because we Baptists are again a very small minority within a minority. We feel ourselves driven to the conclusion that we must unite or perish.

THREE POSSIBLE APPROACHES

In regard to Church Union, broadly speaking, Baptists can adopt one of three possible approaches. These alternatives are as follows:—

(a) We might claim that ours is the right interpretation of the New Testament concept of the Church and Its Ministry and therefore, in any Church Union Scheme, others must come round to our

point of view and on that basis alone shall we agree to Church Union in Ceylon. We are the Church as the New Testament expounds the Doctrine of the Church and others who have erred must return to the true Church. That is the Roman Catholic attitude also and for them there is no problem regarding Church Union, for they believe that the Church is not divided. Only some have deserted it. I suppose that no Baptist Church in Ceylon will adopt this extreme point of view.

(b) The second attitude is that the only unity which is worth seeking is a spiritual unity and that spiritual unity exists even now. The spiritual unity is the only unity we must seek and all true Christians are in fact united already. An outward unity of organisation, such as the Ceylon Scheme envisages, is not of the essence of the Church and this kind of unity belongs to a lower category of spirituality. It is reasonable to suppose that our Baptist Churches will reject this point of view also, remembering that the spiritual and the eternal must express itself in the material and the temporal. For ours is the Religion of the Incarnation.

(c) The only other point of view for us Baptists to adopt would be this. Our Baptist pioneers from the West who came to Ceylon in 1812 and in the ensuing decades, were men and women whose lives were dominated by the idea of Mission, by an inescapable sense of obligation to preach the Gospel. It is true to say that Evangelism was their life-blood. We as a Younger Church in the Mission Field and in a pagan environment must follow their example in preaching the Gospel. Evangelism must be our life-blood too. The only way in which we in Resurgent Ceylon can more adequately preach the Gospel and evangelise would be to unite with other Christians whose primary obligation is also to evangelise.

The recognition of this need to unite and to work together in the task of Evangelisation has been partially reflected in the missionary methods of the Church. The principle of Comity has been introduced as a guiding principle in selecting specific areas in which different Missionary Societies will work in order to avoid overlapping, competition and unjustifiable waste of resources.

DISTINCTIVE BAPTIST INSIGHTS

One other point must be mentioned in conclusion. Those who are not favourable to Church Union, argue that we Baptists have certain valuable distinctive theological insights which must be preserved and transmitted to the great heritage of the Church Universal. How can we make our distinctive contribution if we go into Church Union in Ceylon?

The two-fold answer to this question is found in the following quotation from an article which appeared in "The Ecumenical Review" of January, 1953:—

"In one respect the problem in Ceylon is more complicated than that of South India: for in Ceylon the Baptists are included in the

Scheme, and Baptists are accustomed to administer 'believers' baptism' to many who, in the view of the rest of us, have been baptised already. Here Dr. Payne, the English Baptist, made a valuable statement, to the effect that Baptists had their own very important insights on the subject of Baptism, but that they were conscious that other Christians were becoming more and more alive to the points which they themselves felt so sharply, and that from the beginning there had always been Baptists who had scruples about the rightness of erecting a separate Church in order to guard those insights about Baptism."

The Baptist Church in Ceylon must cease to be "an introverted religious club interested only in its own survival" and join with other fellow Christians of differing Confessions in the supreme task of evangelisation. That is the only way in which she can truly be a Church of God in Ceylon.

S. J. de S. WEERASINGHE.

CHURCH UNION IN CEYLON

WHO IS BETRAYING WHAT?

MR. ANGUS McMILLAN is right in being vigilant as to the possible betrayal of vital principles. He has put his finger on one very real difficulty in the Scheme, about which I share his concern. But I cannot feel that his article shows a due appreciation of fundamental features in the total situation, nor can I accept his description of the Scheme and its implications as being either fair or accurate. Other people, who are perhaps as anxious as Mr. McMillan to be loyal to the Gospel, have arrived at a different judgment.

I do not believe that Baptist witness is likely to disappear in Ceylon because of this Scheme; it might even be given a wider opportunity. But no one can dogmatise about that. I confess, however, that I am even more concerned for the fundamental Christian witness than for the Baptist witness. We are dealing here with larger issues than even the proper meaning and form of a Christian sacrament. The difference between Christian and non-Christian is infinitely more important than the difference between Baptist and Paedo-Baptist. I believe a closer measure of Christian unity would be of great service to the cause of Christ in the island. I recommend a rereading of Mr. Cowling's article in the October *Fraternal*, which sets the whole matter in proper perspective.

Baptists are *not* being asked to accept infant baptism as the true form of baptism, nor are they being asked to deny any of their fundamental beliefs. It is meaningless for Mr. McMillan to ask rhetorical questions about ceasing to reprint Wheeler Robinson or Henry Cook. Nobody is suggesting it. Nor is there anything in the Scheme about baptismal regeneration, and there is much that is

inconsistent with it. "The grace of Christ conferred in baptism is appropriated unto salvation by repentance and faith" (II, 5(a) 2). Full church membership is attained only through the public confession of personal faith.

What the Baptists of Ceylon are being invited to do is to join a Christian Church in which there are Paedo-Baptists, and to acknowledge our common Christian faith and witness. Does Mr. McMillan deny that Paedo-Baptists are Christian? Does he now carry his views to the logical conclusion of refusing any support to undenominational or interdenominational societies?

The most serious difficulty from our point of view is the present absence from the Scheme of any opportunity for the administration of believer's baptism to anyone who in later life feels conscientiously troubled as to the validity of his earlier infant baptism. We must recognise that this would raise great difficulties for the Paedo-Baptist; for one cannot receive Christian baptism twice. But if we recognise their rights of conscience, and the fact that they are sincerely seeking to follow the will of Christ in practising infant baptism, though we cannot agree with their judgment, then they ought to allow a similar liberty to those with Baptist convictions, though they do not share them. I feel sure that some such arrangement as is contemplated in the Scheme for North India will sooner or later be essential in Ceylon.

I dispute Mr. McMillan's contention that the United Church is to be essentially Anglican and episcopal, any more than it is going to be presbyterian or congregational. It is stated explicitly in the Scheme that it is intended to be all three (II, 7), and elements of all three forms of polity are in fact embodied in it. As to bishops, it is agreed that "no one particular theological interpretation of episcopacy shall be demanded from any minister or member". The bishop is elected by the Church as a whole and exercises his functions within it (not over it) in accordance with the constitution, which clearly delimits them. I just do not understand what Mr. McMillan means by asserting that the bishop (once appointed) is supreme—even though he puts it in italics. The ultimate authority in the Church rests, and is stated to rest, with bishops, ministers and laity all together, voting in the Synod.

Mr. McMillan has also read into the Scheme all kinds of theories about sacerdotalism and that "salvation depends upon the mediation of a priest". I can find no trace of these in the Scheme, and much that contradicts them. For example, "All its members are called in virtue of their union with Christ to a priestly ministry . . . No individual and no one order in the Church can claim exclusive possession of this priesthood", and so forth. That seems pretty explicit. Again, "The uniting churches believe that God Himself calls men into the ministry through His Holy Spirit, and that their vocation as ministers is to bring sinners to repentance, to lead God's people in worship, prayer and praise, and through pastoral

ministrations, the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, to assist men by faith to receive the saving and sanctifying benefits of Christ and to fit them for service (II, 6). Does that sound like "sacerdotalism"?

It would take more space than the editors would allow me to track down all Mr. McMillan's misunderstandings. I am sure he is not intentionally misrepresenting the Scheme, but he has most certainly gravely misunderstood it. In any united Church the constitution and ways of conducting its affairs will inevitably not be precisely what they were in any one of the uniting churches. The united Church will not follow the pattern of present Baptist practice at all points, any more than it will follow the Anglican. There are features of the Scheme which I do not like. But that it "betrays Baptist principles" I entirely dispute.

Very large issues are raised by the Scheme and the Baptist churches in Ceylon face a difficult decision. We ought to try to understand their position and to pray that they may be guided to decide aright. But the issues are nothing like as simple as Mr. McMillan makes out. I wish all our ministers would study the Scheme for themselves and form their own judgments.

HUGH MARTIN.

THE USE OF THE BIBLE

II. PRIVATE BIBLE READING

FROM all countries there comes news of private reading of the Bible. This has been true since the earliest days of the Church. The Bible has been used in worship, whether in Church or in the home, but has also been used for the private devotion of a Christian seeking to come near to his God.

The pattern of private Bible reading, however, has varied from generation to generation, and it is noticeable that in countries like Britain, recent years have shown a considerable increase at a time when attendance in Church has decreased, also family prayers. The reason may lie in the more attractive Bible notes prepared recently, or in a desire for people to find out for themselves what the Bible really says. Before looking at the material itself we will examine some of the current movements of thought, against which Bible reading has developed.

In Europe and America, two opposed movements have been affecting the lives of ordinary Christians and many outside the Church. On one hand, the results of so-called higher criticism have really penetrated, often in an exaggerated and distorted form, to the general public. There is an uneasy feeling, which is not so much proved as accepted, that the Bible is no longer true, that it has been shown to be inaccurate and unreliable. Many scholars would maintain that the result of higher criticism has really been to strengthen and enrich our understanding of the Bible, but little of

this has penetrated to the level of the ordinary man. It still remains a treasure of the few.

The other movement which may have gathered strength from the existence of the first, is an increased fundamentalism. The Churches attracting great crowds, whether in Britain or the southern States of America, are those rejecting most of the results of higher criticism, dismissing many of the doubts about the Bible, and accepting it by means of what someone has called "the labour-saving device of verbal inspiration".

These two movements have had their effect on Bible reading. The first has led some to demand more commentary on the Bible passage, believing that guidance is needed in order to know which words can be taken as authoritative, and which need to be dismissed as later additions. The second has stimulated the reading of the Bible as the one great source from which texts can be culled and used as weapons.

These two movements have both changed their earlier form. The first has become largely an attempt to renew what remains and to try to relate it in a living way to the world in which we live. The second has examined closely some of the less liberal views of higher criticism, and slowly accepted what can be accepted without any loss of authority for the Bible. Both have had their effect on those outside the Church: one has weakened the authority of the Bible, the other has tended to make it a book of the minority and the enthusiastic.

Meanwhile, as Edwin Barker has pointed out as the result of his observations among technicians and operatives with a background of technical education, the Bible has become a dead letter for quite different reasons. Although discussion has gone on about belief in miracles and the scientific accuracy of the Bible, the main issues have been of a quite different kind. There has grown up in a technical civilisation the feeling not so much that the Bible is not true, but that it is irrelevant. Whether or not you read the Bible depends upon your taste: some prefer Shakespeare, others the Greek classics, some the Bible. In the following passage Barker summarises this attitude in a powerful way:—

"This death of God in the hearts and minds of men was, in a measure, due to the character of the science with which these men were dealing, and to the atmosphere that scientific enquiry up to the turn of this century had created. God was not in the earthquake: no, that was a matter for geology. God was not in the wind: that was meteorology. God was not in the fire: that was first of all chemistry and now atomic physics. But even more significant, God was not in the still small voice either: that was psychology. God has been moved right out of His world. He had been moved into the position of the first cause in a series of causes . . . so far removed as to be inessential."

Another reason given why people have lost vital contact with the Bible, is that science has encouraged belief in the importance and

significance of ideas. The Bible, of course, is not without ideas, but this stress upon experience of life has tended to make it sound as though it were upside-down from a scientific point of view. The scientific ideas have in this way undermined religious feeling, and particularly the feeling of a belief in a living personal God. The third fact is, presumably, that God has become remote in most people's experience. Things can be described without God, and He is at the best the First Cause who no longer interferes. God is thus used as a name to cover that dark area of life and experience where the human mind has not yet penetrated. As the process of human knowledge is pushed further and further, so God goes further out too.

Edwin Barker, however, points out that these things are changing, and the very uncertainties, and limitations which are becoming evident in science, have made men look for other sources. This may account for the return to a habit of Bible reading. It is, however, a frantic and chaotic need, and men may not find what they want in the Bible, and reject it as they would an old textbook. It is in this period of trying that the greatest opportunity for Bible comment lies and we may never have it again.

There are numerous ways of helping people who want to read the Bible regularly. Several organisations have schemes of daily reading, letting the reader easily into the Biblical material. Not many people today will start from page one and burrow through to the end. Careful selection of material, however, can make it easier to sustain Bible reading. Most countries of Europe have a variety of Bible notes. These may be in book form, or in the daily calendar which is popular in Holland, France and Germany. It summarises the Bible passage, points out one or two words to note, and then puts personal and stimulating questions. More elaborate notes are prepared for Church members who wish to be built up in their knowledge of the Bible. The Old Catholic Church in Holland for example has a detailed study of the Bible, recommending the reading of selected passages and giving background notes similar to lectures delivered at a theological seminary. Other organisations, particularly popular in Britain, bring out one essential idea in the passage, developing it in such a way that the reader may be led to prayer after his Bible reading.

Notes abound and there are criticisms and suggestions for improvement. Naturally many of the comments about them cancel one another out, because different people want different kinds of notes. Some who want to read the Bible and then have a single idea given to them; others want all the background; others, the original language explained, with the several nuances of Greek or Hebrew words. There is a growing demand for fuller notes and most organisations have provided alternatives. The Church of Scotland has prepared a series of special commentaries for private Bible reading. The idea behind this is that readers should study a book at a time; schemes of Bible reading are arranged so that just

enough is read for study at one session, the book acting both as a commentary and as an inspiration for further study.

In Germany the almost annual Kirchentag, with its long preparations beforehand, has helped people to keep in mind certain specific Bible passages for a long time in preparation. This has the value of concentrated study. Many who are not attending will join in Bible Study groups and hear sermons, and plan their private Bible reading according to the passages chosen for the next Kirchentag. This particular kind of study makes greater demands on the reader than the normal daily reading with a few notes: it requires that he shall study the passage in detail, to find what it is saying to his own age, and shall use it as guidance in his own decisions. Behind this lies the long experience of the German Church structure. When Naziism took away from the Churches so many of their activities and left them only with their Bible, the Church seemed to be ill-prepared for such a moment. It had behind it the traditions of tried academic study on the one hand, and isolated pietistic groups on the other. These traditions broke their bounds under the guidance of God, and a new form of Bible reading arose. Men expected the Bible to say something about their present-day situation. They searched it desperately; they believed in it partly because it was all they had left to believe in, and it did not fail them. At the moment when they had to decide whether or not they should sacrifice everything before the threat of a Nazification of the Church, the Bible spoke clearly to them. This did not come easily—it came after a hard struggle. No doubt the inspiration for such study came from Karl Barth, who called upon the German Churches to sit under the judgment of the word of God. But for many an ordinary German who did not clearly understand the ramifications of Karl Barth's thought the simple reading of the Bible became the source of clear moral strength. All this is developing today in the Kirchentag, where Germans expect the Bible to have something to say about their present situation.

Either from this source or independently, the same thing is happening in a less dramatic way in other countries. In Britain it is leading to considerable Bible reading, and a growing interest in broadcast programmes which are simple Bible reading and comment. In Holland it has led to a nation-wide campaign for the reading of the Bible called "The Great Trek". In South Africa it has led to the sharpest division within the Dutch Reformed Church on what the Bible says in relation to Apartheid. Neither the followers of Dr. Strijdom nor of Professor Keet, believe that the Bible is irrelevant: they both expect that the Bible shall say something about the relation between Black and White in the Union of South Africa.

The two areas of study that emerge from an increased Bible reading, are the relations of the written word to private life and public life. They are both well-illustrated in recent years. There is a long tradition of Bible reading in private life. Not all periods of

the Church's life have admitted that the Bible should influence the whole of man's private life, but generally speaking it is accepted as a code of behaviour for that part of his life over which he has complete control. Indeed the intensification of this side of Bible study has led to the pietistic groups in many countries. They have often been over-concerned with the Bible's teaching on the details of behaviour. There have been long discussions and quotation of texts on how the sabbath should be observed; on the virtues and vices which do not change with changing civilisations. Allied to this have been concerns with building up a spiritual life as a kind of private life. So the groups have become inward looking; they have produced great sons, and some of these, because of their moral stature and their firm grasp of spiritual truths, have been models of public life. The groups have also produced those whose inner spiritual concern was with private life, effecting no transfer from the Bible group or the private Bible study to the conduct of commerce or public affairs. This has been the most serious breakdown in the relevance of the Bible. When the Bible means nothing at all to a man, then clearly something is wrong and needs to be put right. When the Bible means a great deal, but only in a limited area of his life, then it is not so obvious that something is wrong and it is very rarely put right. The efforts of the last two generations to see that the Bible speaks not only to private life but also to the public conduct of affairs have been fitful and uncertain in their development. There have been great moments when the Nazis attacked the Church, or when the South Africans sought to develop the Bantus as an inferior kind of creature, but mostly there has been danger of developing the relation of the Bible to public affairs on sectarian lines: that is to say, texts have been quarried from the Bible to support the observance of the sabbath, or to attack some particular kind of vice in the Government or the people. This negative approach, which has earned for the Western Churches the title of "No"-Churches has been the undoing of much of the work to make the Bible relevant. There is, however, a welcome sign that something is developing in Britain and in the U.S.A. which will be more than the attempt to make a text relevant to the situation which has already been judged beforehand. The greatest danger is that you force it upon the text rather than find it there. In this connection Professor Keet's book "Suid Afrika Waarheen?" has a valuable chapter showing how certain ideas about Apartheid could not have been found in the Bible unless they were first in the reader's mind. One of the greatest needs is to provide notes that will help distinguish between what the Bible really says and what he wants it to say.

There is a serious concern among those who read the Bible about the transporting of ideas into its passages. They tend to suspect some Bible notes as starting with certain ideas which they are determined to prove from the Bible. They also suspect their own judgment and wish to approach the passage objectively. Notes can

do a great deal here by making quite clear where the idea comes from, and showing when it really is fundamental and not incidental to the passage. Preachers who write notes have to restrain themselves in a matter of this kind. Years of practice of taking a text and developing three points from one's own imagination, have made it difficult for regular preachers to take a passage and find out what it really says, yet it is this which is most needed in present-day Bible notes for personal reading.

E. H. ROBERTSON.

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

DR. GRAHAM SCROGGIE told us as students, that every year on a certain Sunday he announced as his text, "The Bible", and then proceeded to outline its message under the title, "The Unfolding Divine Drama of Redemption".

I have never dared to preach on the whole Bible on one occasion but have, in two previous Churches, preached right through the Bible on successive Sundays. When the Metropolitan Tabernacle has to remove to temporary premises for about two years during the work of rebuilding I intend to begin preaching through the Bible once again, for it has proved to be so worthwhile to myself and to the churches in which I have ministered.

My aim, therefore, in this article is not to be profound but to give practical help to those of us who have the responsibility of edifying and establishing Christians that they might become more useful members of our churches.

The idea is to begin at the Book of Genesis and each Sunday take a whole book, giving in simple, concise, graphic language the background, authorship, history and message, at the same time choosing a typical verse that expresses in a nutshell the main theme and teaching. This my congregations have come to know as the "key verse" and a "key word" has also been chosen as the title of each book. Since the Bible was made a book at a time surely the only "scientific" method of studying it is book by book, and by approaching each book in the light of its background and authorship; each chapter and verse in the light of their context; certain words in the light of their meaning and association; and then, comparing scripture with scripture, present our people with a scheme of study that is full of fascination as well as laying down a solid foundation for all future exhortation.

Preaching through the Bible is thus admirable for the building up of young converts; it also educates many of the pillars of the church (in one of my churches a deacon was seen looking for THESSALONIANS in the Old Testament! By the time I had preached through the Bible it is to be hoped he at least knew the order of the books!); and it is also helpful for all those seeking to do personal work of a "counselling" nature. For instance, when speaking with a backslider and wondering what word from the

Bible to pass on to him the personal worker's mind recalls that Sunday morning when the Book of Jeremiah was dealt with and the Key Word was announced as "Backsliding" and the Key Verse as chapter iii, verse 22. Actually, where a church magazine is run it is easy to print the Old and New Testament scheme of key-words and verses so that members can detach the page and stick them to the fly-leaf of their Bible. Perhaps the enquirer's difficulty is Christian service; then "Service" is the theme of the Book of Numbers (key-verse xviii, 7). Or maybe someone else is troubled about suffering; then that is the key-word of 1 Peter (key-verse v, 10).

The scheme is not binding however, which will allay the fears of those who may think that the leading of the Holy Spirit will be hindered in giving a message to the preacher each week. There must be a break for special occasions such as Easter, Whitsun and Christmas, and there can be a break whenever the Holy Spirit lays some special subject upon our hearts for delivery the following Sunday. Taking out holiday Sundays, special occasions, then the sixty-six books will need about eighteen months to progress through.

Will the congregation not grow weary? I have not found it so. In fact the reverse has been true. More Bibles, notebooks and pencils have appeared in church as the weeks have gone by. In any case, some subjects are more suitable for the morning teaching ministry and some for the evening evangelistic service which makes for variety. The advantages for preacher and people are so great that perhaps we would do well to list them.

For the preacher it means that the subject is given rather than chosen. And thus in coming to certain subjects which are not our pet themes we cannot pass over them. Many preachers avoid wide areas of the Bible altogether. Many passages our forefathers gloried in expounding, we often neglect. Sometimes our texts are mere pretexts or pegs upon which we hang a few thoughts. No wonder our congregations show little interest for mid-week Bible study when their Sunday fare is so ordinary. We are thus prevented from having theological bees in the bonnet and our horizon is widened. As someone has said, "It enables a minister to preach on many a subject without causing people to ask, 'Who is he getting at?'" How many would preach on Christian Hospitality unless in going through the Bible he came to that important theme in 3 John v. 8? The four gospels, taken one after the other, give our people the four aspects of our Lord Jesus Christ, His Regality, Humility, Humanity, Deity (Matt. i, 1; Mark x, 45; Luke vii, 34; John xx, 31). Great themes we sometimes overlook will thus all be dealt with: Redemption (Exodus xii, 23-24), Prayer (1 Sam, xii, 23), Worship (Psalm xxix, 2), Salvation (Isaiah liii, 3), The Church (Eph. v, 30), The Second Coming (1 Thess. iv, 16, II, i, 10), Forgiveness (Philemon v. 15), Fellowship (1 John i, 7), and Apostasy (Jude 3). At long last we shall preach on the Book of Revelation, so often feared and neglected by us!

As a result of dedicated scholarship, thrilling excavations, and recent discovery of documents, there is on the market quite a flood of books about the Bible. Yet with all this emphasis upon the world's "best seller" many congregations are still in ignorance of some of the simplest facts about the Bible and its message. The emphasis should be upon the pulpit ministry rather than upon the press, correspondence studies, evening lectures, and so forth. Preaching through the Bible Sunday after Sunday seems to me to be the answer.

Preaching through God's Word also presupposes reading through it—yet another distinct advantage to both minister and church. Many of God's greatly-used servants have been inveterate readers of the Bible from cover to cover. D. L. Moody, George Muller, Hudson Taylor, Spurgeon and many others used to read the Bible through, then immediately began again. Dr. John Sung read the Bible through forty times whilst in a hospital in America for 193 days! When I first preached the Bible through I read it in Moulton's "The Modern Reader's Bible"; the next time it was the Authorised Version and now I am beginning again using the Revised Standard Version. I have also always made it a practise to get the young people of Bible class age and upwards to covenant with me during my Through-the-Bible-series, to read the Bible through in their own homes. For this purpose the Scripture Gift Mission publish an attractive two-penny leaflet called "My Reading Record". The chapters of every book are set out and can be ticked off as they are read. Surely most of us should be able to read through the Bible once a year and many of our congregation with us. It is possible to read it through in sixty hours if we read it aloud at normal public reading speed, or in two months at one hour a day!

A further result will be that week by week as we seek material for our introduction (authorship, etc.) we shall be driven to serious research work. The gaps in our libraries will appear as we notice our lack of commentaries on certain books, and our delving into various Encyclopaedias will be greatly beneficial. It will also surprise us as we read how many other texts leap up to be filed for future reference and sermon-making.

Above all, the Bible's inherent beauty and spiritual worth will possess our minds and souls so that our feet shall be guided by its light and our hands will the better wield it in our spiritual warfare. And like Martin Luther, who, being "steeped" in the Letter to the Romans, was used of God to bring about the Reformation, might not we, under the Holy Spirit, be used to bring about the revival we long to see.

The three requirements have been listed thus: an open mind, a devoted will, and a determination to work. Ought we not to add another—a prayer to the Holy Spirit that He might "open . . . mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of (His) law".

ERIC W. HAYDEN.

APPENDIX

<i>Book</i>	<i>Key-word</i>	<i>Key-text</i> <i>ch. v.</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Key-word</i>	<i>Key-text</i> <i>ch. . v.</i>
GENESIS	Beginnings	3 15	ECCLES.	Vanity	6 12
EXODUS	Redemption	12 23-4	SONG OF	Love	8 6
LEVITICUS	Communion	16 34	SOLOMON		
NUMBERS	Service	18 7	ISAIAH	Salvation	53 3
DEUT.	Obedience	11 26-8	JEREMIAH	Backsliding	3 22
JOSHUA	Possession	1 3	LAM.	Destruction	3 22-3
JUDGES	Anarchy	21 25	EZEKIEL	Visions	12 27
RUTH	Kinsman- Redeemer	4 14	DANIEL	Dominion	2 22
1 SAMUEL	Prayer	12 23	HOSEA	Return	6 1
2 SAMUEL	Sin	12 13	JOEL	Visitation	2 25
1 KINGS	Glory	8 10-1	AMOS	Punishment	4 12
2 KINGS	Downfall	17 23	OBADIAH	Restitution	— 17
1 CHRON.	Sovereignty	29 12	JONAH	Commission	3 1-2
2 CHRON.	Seek	30 19	MICAH	Censure	6 8
EZRA	Reconstruction	6 14	NAHUM	Doom	1 3
NEHEMIAH	Restoration	4 9	HABAKKUK	Justice	2 4
ESTHER	Providence	4 14	ZEPHANIAH	Jealousy	3 17
JOB	Testing	13 15	HAGGAI	Consider	2 4
PSALMS	Worship	29 2	ZECHARIAH	Consummation	2 8
PROVERBS	Conduct	9 10	MALACHI	Declension	3 10

MATTHEW	Christ's Regality	1 1	1 TIMOTHY	Order	3 15
MARK	His Humility	10 45	2 TIMOTHY	Loyalty	2 15
LUKE	His Humanity	7 34	TITUS	Ideal	2 14
JOHN	His Deity	20 31	PHILEMON	Forgiveness	— 15
ACTS	Witness	1 8	HEBREWS	Better	12 24
ROMANS	Righteousness	3 26	JAMES	Ethics	1 27
1 COR.	Lordship	1 9	1 PETER	Suffering	5 10
2 COR.	Ministry	3 6	2 PETER	Corruption	1 4
GALATIANS	Liberty	5 1	1 JOHN	Fellowship	1 7
EPHESIANS	Church	5 30	2 JOHN	Truth	— 4
PHILIPPIANS	Joy	4 4	3 JOHN	Hospitality	— 8
COLOSSIANS	Pre-eminence	1 18	JUDE	Apostasy	— 3
1 THESS.	Coming	4 16	REVELATION	Finale	1 19
2 THESS.	Coming	1 10			

OUR MINISTRY AND THE MINISTRY OF ST. PAUL

II CORINTHIANS

THIS is a good letter for a minister to read on each anniversary of his ordination, for it gives a moving and searching revelation of St. Paul's own ministry. No other letter gives such an insight into the spirit which inspired all his work. It also tells us much about what one may term the externals of his service. Apparently he did not possess the assets of an imposing presence or of eloquent speech (x, 1, 10; xi, 6), and one cannot read "in labours more abundant", etc. (xi, 23-33), without realising how fragmentary is our information about him. The object of this study is to examine the spirit and purpose of his ministry that we may profit thereby in our own work.

It is true that his calling as an Apostle far exceeds the ministries we are exercising in scope (xi, 28) and in authority (x, 8, 13; xiii, 10; cp. vii, 15; xiii, 2), yet we too have the care of at least one Christian community and are entrusted with the preaching of the Gospel and the building up of the Church. Even his call to be an Apostle, impressive and dramatic though it is, follows familiar lines. It did not come to him as the unmediated word of God to his soul but through the mediation of a Christian disciple (Acts ix, 15; xxii, 12-15). His acceptance of the call may have been immediate (Acts xxvi, 19) or at some later date, but several years elapsed before it was confirmed by the Church, at Antioch, and his feet set upon the apostolic way. Members of College Candidate Boards will have often heard a similar experience recounted.

Let us then examine the picture which this letter gives of his spiritual experience, his conception of the ministry and of Christ and the life He gives.

HIS SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Most impressive is the way his whole thought and activity are centred on God in Christ. At Damascus he had been brought into a relationship with Christ which had grown closer and stronger with the years. His thinking and action spring out of that relationship. He knew himself to be "in Christ", words which are impossible to paraphrase. They certainly mean more than 'in communion with Christ'. Elsewhere he claims that "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii, 20). Here his emphasis is "I live in Christ". He shares in Christ's dying and in His living (i,5; iv, 10-11). When he forgave it was as though Christ were forgiving (ii,10). Out of this unity of life he triumphed (ii, 14), he spake (ii, 17; xii, 19), and pleaded (v, 20). He does not think of this as an experience peculiar to himself. In it all believers share (i, 21).

Out of this unity with Christ issued his rich experience of the divine grace. He shared the sufferings, and in so doing knew the comfort of Christ (i, 3-11). He was vividly aware of his weakness and limitations, but in his weakness discovered the strength which God can give (iv, 7-11; xiii, 4). All through the letter runs the triumphant experience that there is no difficulty, suffering and ignorance which the grace of Christ cannot illumine and transform (xii, 9). The word of God is not bound nor His work necessarily made ineffective by our deficiencies and limitations, for being "in Christ" brings to our aid all the resources of Christ.

Also out of this unity springs the Apostle's humility. He knows that all he has achieved is of God and not of himself. As an Apostle he has an authority to uphold and he asserts it trenchantly and with vigour, not that he himself may be exalted but that God may be glorified and the Church profited (i,24; x, 8). When he asserts the validity of his apostleship he adds "though I be nothing" (xii, 11), and immediately after claiming that the changed lives of the

Corinthians are a proof of his apostleship, "Ye are our epistle", he adds "Ye are the epistle of Christ ministered by us" (iii, 2-3). The status and achievements of a ministry give no occasion for self-glorying. All is of God. His manner of life among them was due to the grace of God (i, 12). It was God who made his work effective (ii, 14). The weapons of his warfare were not human but those spiritual weapons which are mighty through God (x, 3-4). It is God's grace alone which can supply all that the Christian needs and enable him to abound in every good work (ix, 8). All his springs are in God.

HIS CONCEPTION OF THE MINISTRY

The minister, in common with all believers, is a fellow-worker with God and he must not fail to use the grace of God so freely offered to him (vi, 1). He is an ambassador of Christ (v, 20), declaring the mind and will of his Master. His task is not to assert himself but to exalt Christ Jesus the Lord (iv, 5), pleading with men as though he were Christ himself (v, 20). It is the sweet savour of the knowledge of God which is made manifest by us (ii, 14-16).

The ministry is one of reconciliation, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (v, 18, 19). Those who comment on these words often point out that God's loving-kindness towards men is unchanging and it is only the attitude of men which needs alteration, but this is only partly true. In Christ God expresses His love in a new and unprecedented way, committing Himself to human existence and there bearing in His own Person the consequences of human sin (cp. Phil. ii, 5-11). "He made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin" (v, 21). He stood in the place of sinners. In the Resurrection He revealed sin broken and powerless, and in His risen life a new life becomes possible. "He died for all that they which live should live unto Him which died for them and rose again" (v, 15). The unchanging love of God had been revealed in saving power in His mighty acts in Christ. It was this love of God in Christ which constrained Paul and was the driving force of his ministry as an ambassador of Christ (v, 14).

The atoning, reconciling death of Christ was the gateway which opened into the life "in Christ", the life in which Christ was all in all. To this the Apostle turns again and again. The death and resurrection life of Christ, and of the believer, are his constant theme. It is worthy of note that when he is appealing only for a contribution to help a sister Church (chs. 8-9) he should base his appeal not on the urgent need or on their generous impulses but on the self-giving of Christ in His Incarnation and Death. "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (viii, 9), and should end his appeal with "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (ix, 15). To the simplest Christian duty he brings the profoundest Christian truths.

He has no doubt as to the kind of men we ought to be who are entrusted with such a ministry. Every phrase in vi, 3-10, merits our meditation, "that the ministry be not blamed".

CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

At the heart of his life and preaching stood the majestic figure of the risen Lord. "We preach Christ Jesus the Lord" (iv, 5). He is the Son of God (i, 19). In Him all the promises of God are fulfilled (i, 20). He is the image of God (iv, 4) and in His face we see the glory of God (iv, 6). Through Him we are able to trust in God (iii, 4). The Christ whom He preached was not the Jesus of History. He has but little interest in the life of Jesus before the Crucifixion. "From henceforth we know Him no more after the flesh" (v, 16). He does not estimate Christ as we once knew Him as a man, by the grace and wisdom of His earthly life, but as the one Who, by the Resurrection, has been declared the Son of God with power. In like manner he now knows no man after the flesh (v, 16). We no longer judge a man by what is external, for Christ has made a new life possible for every man (v, 15). When a man is in Christ he is a new creation (v, 17) and all things have become new. The Christian is not chiefly the possessor of a new set of ideas or morals, but a new person in Christ.

He lives a supernatural life, a new order of existence. The will of God is not revealed to him in a fresh code of laws, which he must try to obey, but in a Person. To be a Christian is not to do one's best, to be kindly, tolerant, decent, but to be united with a living Person and to live in His life.

Paul is a realist. He knows that this new life is lived in the world and in "the earthly house" of our human bodies. "We have this treasure (i.e., the light of the Gospel) in earthen vessels" (iv, 7). The power which vitalises comes from God (iv, 7). For our part, life must be kept open to God (iii, 18), for we are the temple of the Living God (vi, 16). There must be a deliberate separation from "All incongruous ties" (Moffatt, vi, 14; vii, 1). On God's part we can have entire confidence that all the needs of our new life in Christ will be met, and met abundantly. We may be "handicapped, but not frustrated; perplexed, but not despairing; suffer persecution, but never left to face it alone; knocked down, but not knocked out", and all to the glory of God (iv, 7-11).

There is, of course, in this letter much more that is relevant to our ministry, but here is enough to set us thinking yet again of the vital elements in the Christian life and ministry. Our task is the Apostle's task, "to preach Christ Jesus the Lord", and only "in Christ" are the resources which can make that ministry effective.

FRANK BUFFARD.

A NEGLECTED DOCTRINE?

IN 1950 Dr. H. H. Rowley published his Louisa Curtis Lectures on "The Biblical Doctrine of Election", in which he showed that divine election is never through merit or favouritism but for the service of God. Thus Israel was chosen to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and within Israel individuals were chosen for that wider

work. When Israel failed to fulfil her election she was rejected, and the privileges and responsibilities of her election were passed on to the Church as the New Israel of God. In the Anglican magazine "The Churchman" (Sept., 1950) Dr. Rowley was strongly criticised on the grounds that his emphasis was too much on the Old Testament material, and also because he had deliberately ignored the vital issue of predestination. Quoting the Westminster Confession the reviewer maintained that election and predestination are inseparably linked in orthodox Protestant thought.

At that time I was studying Calvinism. Calvin's teaching on this subject seemed too severe, yet he could always show a scriptural basis for what he wrote. Clearly there was a doctrine of predestination in the Bible. But how was it to be interpreted? Was Calvin right? If not, what are we to believe and teach? Does it matter? What follows is an attempted answer to some of those questions.

First let us establish the fact that predestination is a Biblical doctrine. Such passages as Jeremiah i, 5; xviii, 6; Proverbs xvi, 4; Psalm cxxxix, 16; Mark xiii, 20; John xv, 16; Romans viii, 28-30 and ix, 11; Ephesians i, 3-5, 11, and I Peter ii, 8, are relevant. These will be seen to represent a fair cross section of the Bible. But for all this Biblical material how often do we preach on it? Have we neglected it because in interpretation it has so often resulted in controversy and distortion? One has only to read about the Pelagian and Arminian controversies, or to recall Fuller's struggle with the Hyper-Calvinists, to see how Biblical emphases are distorted, lost and neglected. The modern search for a Biblical Theology makes a reassessment of this doctrine necessary.

As commonly understood it means that some are elected to salvation and others to damnation according to the eternal decree of God. This furthers God's glory by showing His mercy and justice; mercy in that all should be damned but some are saved, justice in that the damned get what they deserve. Calvin and Augustine certainly taught that, though only in later writings when driven to extremes by controversy and logic. Calvin always claimed that his main aim was to stress God's mercy and to give assurance to the elect. But at heart this teaching has a radical contradiction in its conception of God. It shows God in Christ, acting by grace, and God apart from Christ, fulfilling an apparently arbitrary will. T. H. L. Parker in his "Portrait of Calvin" argues that Calvin made the mistake of trying to work into all his theology a doctrine which he found in Romans, instead of working outwards from Christ as the centre of his thought. Luther was on sounder lines when he said that predestination cannot be considered apart from the mediation of Christ. This is a vital principle. Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father". I John iv, 16 and John iii, 16, establish the unique love of God, and John iii, 18 puts salvation and condemnation into the context of Christ. No interpretation of predestination can be inconsistent with such verses.

John Oman in his "Grace and Personality" gives a valuable line of approach. If God is Father, a divine person dealing with persons in a fatherly way, He cannot be considered as working in any way that violates personality. The basis of any personal relationship is the interplay of approach and response, an I-Thou relationship. Theologically this raises the problem of grace and free will. These are not mutually exclusive. Both must find a place in our reassessment.

Anything which turns on the ability of man to settle his destiny is uncertain and humanistic. In one sense man is responsible. "According to your faith be it unto you." But if that is all there is to it, our dependence is on man and not on God. Faith itself, however, is a gift of God. "By the grace of God I am what I am." God is seen to act according to His own plans even before we make any move. "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us". Thus it may surely be argued that we never make a completely free response. We are constrained by the grace and Spirit of God. Augustine ("Original Sin, 34") said, "No one, no, not one, has been delivered, or is being delivered, or ever will be delivered, except by the grace of the Redeemer". What then is grace? Not the Augustinian irresistible power treating man as a helpless puppet, nor the Pelagian attractiveness which exerts no pressure and leaves man entirely free, nor the Hyper-Calvinist's fiat of a capricious God. Grace is the operation of divine love in giving, seeking, saving. God sent his Son to save not to condemn, and if we take I Corinthians xiii as an exposition of God's love the reference is never to self but always to others. Thus, as I believe John Oman points out, Calvin and Augustine started with a conception of grace which was fundamentally ungracious. Their God was concerned solely with his own glory, often without reference to the personality and destiny of man. Grace is the love of God acting freely for the salvation of men, initiating divine-human relationships, offering new life to all and withholding itself from none.

What, then, are we to say about such passages as Romans ix, 17-23 or xi, 8? These must surely be attributed to the Hebraic insistence on monotheism. We read, for example, that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, because in their efforts to avoid dualism Hebrew writers became deterministic. Yet if we are to retain the sovereignty of God something like that must be said. We cannot say that God damns a man from eternity for we have seen that a human response is essential. Yet, unless we are universalists, we must account for the fact of the lost in a way that leaves God sovereign. Salvation or condemnation are determined both by human response and divine will. Wesley, who was an Arminian, put it like this, "Election cannot stand without reprobation. . . . I believe the eternal decree concerning both is expressed in these words: He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned. And this decree without doubt God will not change and man cannot resist".

There is an element of paradox in all this which is inevitable. All theology, as Kierkegaard said, is paradox. We can no more say where grace ends and free-will begins than we can say how the divine and human unite in Christ or how eternity breaks into time. Tennyson was right when he said "Our wills are ours, to make them thine". But so was Harriet Auber "And every virtue we possess, and every victory won, and every thought of holiness are His alone". While we must "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" we must realise that all is of God; "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God". Thus "unto you who believe he is precious"; but he is also "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they are appointed".

So stated I can see tremendous gains to our preaching and theology. The main stress is where it should be, on the divine initiative of grace. It cuts the nerve of humanism by stressing human responsibility without complete self-determination. It destroys sentimentality about God in his love and judgment. It makes for a real assurance in the sovereignty of God, by which the destiny of the believer is firmly embraced in his eternal purpose. Add to this Dr. Rowley's emphasis on the responsibility as well as the privilege of election and on the Church as the New Israel, and we have a doctrine which adds point to our Church membership and urgency to our evangelism, while at the same time lifting us from the perils of individualism and planting us firmly in the context of the redeemed community. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

BERNARD GREEN.

THE CHURCH ON THE NEW ESTATE

"**W**E'VE been fourteen years on the Housing List!" the new tenant on the estate told me, and hers was no unique experience. Thousands of couples have never had a home of their own, spending the early years of married life in rooms, sharing the kitchen, bathroom, and often clothes line; keeping the baby quiet and trying to build up family life amid cramped, unsuitable surroundings.

Now they have found a home of their own, and, having waited for it so long, it is understandable that the house has become the be-all and end-all of life.

But there are still complaints voiced by the estate dweller—no buses, few shops, no telephone, no cinema, dance hall, pub—or Church!!

Yes, surprisingly, even people who have seldom attended a place of worship feel that there should be a Church nearby. Somehow,

**A MESSAGE FROM MR. SEYMOUR J. PRICE TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE BAPTIST MINISTERS' FELLOWSHIP**

My dear friends,

For over ten years it has been my privilege to write this advertisement letter in the *Fraternal*. Now I come to the last, for, when you read this, age will have necessitated my retirement from the position of General Manager of the Baptist Insurance Company. I shall still, however, be able to give service as a director and deputy-chairman.

In connection with my retirement I have had to get out figures covering the fifteen years during which I have held the office. I think they will interest you.

	1941	1956
Reserves, etc.	£71,192	£104,282
Book Value of Investments	£74,467	£115,649
Gross Premium Income	£26,776	£52,374

The figures which give most satisfaction are those connected with denominational grants:—

Baptist Union	£33,151	£82,033
Scottish Union	550	3,434
	£33,701	£85,467

As we think of the cheer that our Grant to the Home Work Fund takes to Baptist Manses throughout the land we rejoice unfeignedly.

Please do not commiserate with me on my retirement, as, firstly, I do not feel my age, secondly, I hope still to serve on various denominational committees, thirdly, at Ceylon Place, Eastbourne, I am a member of a fine forward-looking Church, and sitting under the ministry of Rev. J. C. Rendall, M.A., who is giving us wonderful inspiration, and fourthly, I have many interests to occupy any leisure that remains. I may not now be able to climb the Alpine giants like the Matterhorn, Schreckhorn, Finsteraarhorn and others, but I have an idea that I shall still be able to walk among the lower Alps.

I thank you all for the support you have given the Company through the years, and commend to you Mr. Colvin, whom I anticipate the directors will appoint my successor.

I hope still to remain,

Your friend and colleague in the great work,

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

there is deep within the inborn recognition that the Church should have its proper place in society, and perhaps the dim realisation that its teachings make sense of life and death.

Years ago many of our Churches were built first and in towns and villages alike the houses came later, the inhabitants accepting the Church as the focus of life.

On the new estates houses came first, then schools, community centres and public houses. Sites were earmarked for Churches, but often years have elapsed before these have begun to rise and take their place in the life of the tenants. Those years when their witness was lacking have cost the Church dearly.

Responsibility for the delay belongs to all denominations, but there have been numerous obstacles, notably the rising cost of building and the shortage of helpers. Problems too have arisen concerning upkeep of premises and all the numerous expenses which must be borne by others until the newly formed Church can become self-supporting. Other difficulties have been encountered like that of finding amongst an almost entirely working class society, persons with initiative and ability to take positions of trust and responsibility in the handling of finance and affairs.

However, through the Grace of God these hurdles can be surmounted. Churches of simple and even beautiful design are now to be seen on many new estates. The Church is back again amongst the people.

* * * * *

There is a common fallacy that people flock to Church on new estates—how far from the actual case this is. People there are no more eager to attend Church than those who live elsewhere. Indeed, because they have lived so long without the Church, they have filled up their days with other things, and present all manner of excuses when asked to come to God's House.

There are, too, many strange notions as to why the Church exists—as the provider of bazaars, treats, outings—a place for children, or old folks, or those “inclined that way”. It is sometimes a humbling experience to discover also how little the true nature of the Church has dawned upon those who have passed through our Sunday Schools, or other organisations.

How then is the task of carrying the Gospel to the new estate to be tackled? Although so similar in appearance, no two estates are alike; therefore there can be no broad answer to this question. Inevitably local conditions affect the situation.

On some estates the day schools can be hired for Youth Organisations often free of charge, a great help when facing limited accommodation. Elsewhere authorities charge high rents, prohibitive to the struggling new cause.

Again, sometimes the Anglicans and Free Churches co-operate, working side by side at the task of winning the district for Jesus Christ, fitting in with each others' programmes and on special

public occasions presenting a united front. Unfortunately, on others, this is not so, and there is a policy of active opposition; and to the bewildered outsider the divisions between the Churches seem more sharply defined than ever. This latter course must surely be deplored, as it strikes at the very roots of the Christian message. The vital thing is that the claims and message of Jesus Christ should be to the individual, rather than that efforts should be made to fill one Church at the expense of another.

However, here may come a word of emphasis on the place of Baptist Principles in new areas. Invariably there is only one Free Church, should we seek then to endeavour to preach acceptably to all Free Church Denominations at all times! We certainly may need to welcome into full membership those of other Communion. Let us however be unafraid to proclaim ourselves—a Baptist Church. Free Church can be misleading; one Sunday School lad thought that meant no collection!

What a pity too, when, as an economy measure no baptistry is incorporated in the building, for how often has the witness of a Baptismal Service been the means of bringing others to the point of decision. On the new estates we face more ignorance and apathy than hostility, but may not the cry of the Early Church “Repent and be baptized” present some challenge to the masses around our doors today?

Where must the Church stand in relation to the people outside? My conviction is that it must be a centre from which the spirit of Christianity flows forth in love and friendship. We must make people believe that we need them, and that they need us, that we care about them, and can offer them something that can be found nowhere else. It must become again the centre of daily life, where the young can receive vision, the aged hope, and all, the peace which the world can never give or take away.

The Church is not there merely to provide a social centre or to “keep the young off the streets” but to be through its leaders and all its members reaching out constantly to draw to itself and its Living Head all who live round about. They are our responsibility, and may one day be laid to our charge—a solemn thought.

Thus far we have tended to think of the people on the estates collectively and truly Jesus Christ looked upon the multitudes with compassion. However, Christ knew that the shepherd never treats his sheep as a mass, he knows them by name, and cares for them individually. So must those who would be His shepherds. There must always be the desire to know each one personally, becoming interested in their interests, their pleasures and successes, bewilderingments and sorrows, not in any superficial way but with heart-felt feelings, seeking always to allow the Holy Spirit free course with His transforming Power.

People seldom reveal their true needs in any casual conversation, often an aching heart is hidden by a smiling face or “don’t care”

attitude, it sometimes takes much patience before the true state is revealed. Many homes are on the verge of breaking up, or held by the most slender cords. How much nervous tension and distress is there because of insecurity or difficult family relationships. The new house seldom alters these situations! There is the appalling loneliness experienced by many elderly people, perhaps deprived of a life-partner, and now living in strange new surroundings far from loved ones. The loneliness too of many a young housewife, missing the clatter of the factory where she once worked, bored by the quietness at home, or with only the children to talk to. Many a mother has a lonely vigil whilst her husband works the night-shift, and the children are in bed, she cannot leave her home, but when those hours are shared by an understanding friend, it is often then that the deepest needs of the heart are revealed and the way opens up naturally to the things of God. It is the personal touch which brings results. We are individuals and we find our way to God as individuals. We must have our corporate acts of worship, our Sunday services, women's meetings, and youth groups in order that together we may find stimulation and expressions of service; but essentially every heart comes to God on its own and the individual soul constantly needs guidance and sympathy.

That they might see Jesus and come to know for themselves the wonder of His Redeeming Grace, this is the vision which must always be kept clearly before us. It must never become obscured by over-organisation, by undue emphasis on numerous financial efforts, or by anything that merely attracts to the Church building and not to the Church's Living Lord.

This task sometimes, indeed frequently, seems beyond our capabilities—the materialism, the apparent lack of desire for spiritual things, may depress us. The opportunities however are tremendous, ours is a great privilege! Let us remember the work is not ours but God's, His hand is upon us, He opens the doors of hearts that once seemed fast shut. Truly God is at work and we must not limit His Almighty power.

The new estates came into being to answer the cry for homes, places where families might live and receive training and guidance for life. May a deeper cry be answered as through the Church in their midst old and young find the answers to life's deepest needs, and the abiding presence of Jesus Christ.

MARJORIE PERRY.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN DAY AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS TODAY

IN a lecture to his students at Cambridge nearly forty years ago Quiller-Couch claimed that one of the most harmful effects of the Education Act of 1870, in spite of the fact that it did a vast deal of good, was "it's encouraging parents to believe that they could henceforth hand over the training of their children to the State . . ." He recalled Burns's description of "The Cottar's Saturday Night"

when the week's work was laid aside and the Bible reverently read in the family circle. "But you know", continued 'Q', "that the sire bred on the tradition of 1870, . . . does nothing of that sort on Saturday night: that, Saturday being tub-night, he inclines rather to order the children into the back-kitchen to get washed; that on Sunday morning, having seen them off to a place of worship, he inclines to sit down and read, in place of the Bible, his Sunday newspaper . . ."

Thinking of the Education Act of 1944 in the light of their own experiences today, some ministers would say that "Q"'s comment was still relevant; others, that if it was, they would find it encouraging!

Two reports of considerable significance for Christian education today have been published in recent months. "Growing Christians" is a report of the discussions of a group of experienced Anglican and Free Church educationalists on the Church's work among children in the context of English day school practice. It was prepared for presentation to the British Council of Churches at its meeting in April this year. After outlining the present system of religious education in day schools, the report goes on to compare, and in some particulars this leads the group to contrast, Anglican and Free Church Sunday School curricula and techniques. Free Church Sunday School teachers and leaders may read with surprise that nearly all the forty-three Anglican dioceses "have appointed full-time Advisers in Religious Education whose duties are to help with the voluntary religious education in the parishes".

The section on essential ingredients of Christian education echoes views expressed by Professor Victor Murray in his stimulating book, "Education into Religion". Attention is drawn in the report to the purpose of Christian education as defined in the Cambridge Syllabus: "to commend to the growing mind as well as to the heart of the child such faith in the God and Father of Jesus Christ as will bear fruit in service". What aspects of Christian education are fundamental to its purpose? Biblical instruction centred on a religion grounded in history; worship as the means of knowing God (and how many ministers will sympathise with the educationalists' objection to most of our Sunday school anniversary music as "an affront to the scholars' intelligence, ability and musical enjoyment", and their hope that standards of Sunday School worship may be raised by attention to what is best in the daily worship of some day schools); the fact that Christian teaching claims a moral choice, whether or not to embark upon or pursue Christian faith and practice; a keener sense of churchmanship, or as the Lindsey Syllabus puts it, religious instruction should "increasingly lead pupils to become and remain full members of a worshipping community outside the day school"; and finally the realisation that new life in Christ begins with repentance and acceptance of God's offer of forgiveness.

1957

ASSEMBLY CONFERENCES

Tuesday, 30th April

4 p.m. Citizenship Conference at the Caxton Hall,
Westminster

Speakers: Mr. A. J. Brayshaw (*on "Building and Rebuilding
Happy Marriages"*)

(General Secretary, National Marriage Guidance Council)

Mr. J. H. Hudson (*on "Licensed Clubs"*)

(Formerly M.P. for North Ealing)

Admission to tea at 3.30 p.m. by ticket

Wednesday, 1st May

3 p.m. Young People's Department Conference at
the Baptist Church House (Council Chamber)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TODAY — with
special reference to Westhill

Speaker: Miss Mary Burnie

(Warden of Westhill Training College, Birmingham)

Tea in the Library at 4.30 p.m. by ticket

BAPTIST CHURCH HOUSE, 4 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1
HOLBORN 2045

The second report, which is complementary to "Growing Christians", is entitled "Sunday Schools Today". It is the outcome of a careful investigation of some aspects of Christian education in English Free Churches, undertaken by the Joint Research Committee of the Free Church Federal Council under the chairmanship of Dr. Lincoln Ralphs, Director of Education for Norfolk. A questionnaire was circulated to representative Sunday Schools, leaders of open youth clubs and investigators who interviewed children and young people who no longer attend Sunday school. The conclusions are summarised in the first half of the report. Loss of interest, boredom, dissatisfaction with slipshod Sunday school organisation, as well as family outings and the changing shape of Sunday contributed to the fall of some 400,000 in the Free Church Sunday school population since 1939, which is now less than half what it was at the beginning of the century. This fall cannot be wholly accounted for by population trends.

Both reports trace the way ahead to a recovery of the conception of the family group as basic to the life of Church and society alike. When the Church is the Church it is a family of God's people. Relationships need to be restored. The contemporary social-service state has tended to interfere with the family as a group and so in its own way has the Church Statistics quoted in an appendix to "Sunday Schools Today" testify to the success of the "Family Church" approach to Christian education.

If both these reports,* together with the report of the denominational survey of children's and youth work, were read by all Sunday School teachers and leaders and made the subject of discussion by Youth Councils, Church, Congregational and Association meetings, the effect would be to lift the whole tenor of thought and action in relation to Christian education today on to a new and exciting level. May the Church have courage sufficient to grasp the immense opportunities which lie ready at hand.

J. E. T. HOUGH.

* They may be obtained from the Baptist Union Young People's Department, Price one shilling each.

NEW ANGLES

IT is said that if you sit in church in a pew different from your usual one, you get quite a different "view" of the sermon; and I believe psychologically that is true. But I know that if you view the preaching of the Word of God from a different angle you certainly get quite a different application.

In the pastorate it has been my privilege for many years to prepare sermons for the Sundays and conduct the usual week-day meetings. Not until now have I realised how nearly all my reading and thinking (yes, and praying) has been centred around this vast output. I visited a conference, and at the back of my mind all the

time, there was being stowed away "Material" that would come in useful. Constantly ideas for series of sermons would come, a note would be made of them, to be found "a very present help in time of need". I received first-hand information from the mission field, and immediately noted it for the week-evening devotional meeting.

Now, two experiences have come to me with an awakening revelation. The first experience is one common, I suppose, to all semi-retired ministers: the second, fortunately, is less common.

For eight months after retiring from the active pastorate it was my privilege to preach every Sunday in different churches. What a thrilling experience that was, so varied, so refreshing!—but how different one's sermon preparation! I do not pretend that a host of new sermons were made, but I did try to carry out a not-forgotten and encouraging word of my Principal (Henderson): "There is no harm in preaching a sermon a second time, so long as it is 'born again'". And how differently one viewed one's ordinary experiences. To attend a "Retreat" without any idea of being a channel to one's own people; to read with no ulterior motive other than that of selfish enrichment or pleasure; to have bursting in on one's mind all sorts of instructive themes without any opportunity of "putting it over"; to attend Association Meetings knowing that the responsibility of passing on their inspiration to the Church was now the Pastors, not mine! Naturally, there was a sense of loss; one felt rather restricted, somewhat confined. And yet it had a strange effect that set its tinge of regret all through the previous years of my pastorates. Let me put it in the form of an example.

I still received from the B.M.S. the quarterly "prayer call"; I always used this at the devotional meetings of my churches. When it came, my first reaction was: "Oh, well, I cannot use this now". Immediately following, there was the pertinent query: "Why not? Is it not for you as much as for the people?" And then came home the self-convicting charge: "Do you mean to infer that you have been using these prayers merely to pass on to others?"—upon which there rests this further solemn thought: "Have you been preaching all these years to others, and have not realised every time the message God had for your own soul? Have you been a mere channel and not an overflowing reservoir?" And I humbly confess that I have often been guilty. If I might ruthlessly cut a text from its context (*pace* A. Gilmore in "Reading the Bible") I feel I ought to have applied to myself more often: "I have a message of God unto *thee*". Even if the shoemaker's children are the worst shod there is no reason why the distributor of bread should be the most famished.

The second experience is, as I say, fortunately, more rare. For some six months now I have been more or less "out of action". This has been teaching me many things for which there is no space now. It has emphasised vividly the fact that God has something to say to me that I have been unable (or unwilling?) to hear in the daily round of life. One has missed, far more than one can say, the

gathering together in the House of the Lord on Sundays, but it is a humbling and exalting experience to realise that God sometimes has a congregation of one—and you are that one! Here is intimacy! Here is challenge! Here is peace!

But from this last angle another viewpoint of preaching has been emphasised to me. I said six months “more or less” of physical inactivity, but not quite, for as the weeks passed into months I have had the interesting experience of patient preaching to patients! As Christmas drew near I ventured to suggest a short Christmas morning service, and offered to conduct it, if the doctors agreed. This was arranged by the hospital authorities. This has been followed by a regular Sunday morning service which it has been my privilege to conduct. Never have I realised before so clearly that the preacher stood on an absolute level with the congregation. It has called to mind Paul’s word at Lystra: “We also are men of like passions with you”. I was one of them, one with them. If they felt aggrieved that they had suddenly been rooted out of daily life for some six months or more they knew that the preacher had the same experience. If they had anxieties concerning their home or affairs they knew that the preacher was in the same boat. If they could see their husbands, wives, friends, normally only twice a week, so did the preacher. If they had to face some unpleasant “routine test” (beautiful euphemism!) they knew that the preacher knew all about it too. I know that I ought to have realised this every time I have entered the pulpit in my ministry, a sinner speaking to sinners, a dying man speaking to dying men, and what is ever more important, a living man speaking to men who have to live! But . . . did I? . . . I wonder!

P. N. BUSHILL.

MINISTERIAL SERVICE

THE Chairman, in his message to *Fraternal* readers published in October, used a phrase which he himself clearly thought important, and to which I have found myself also giving much consideration, not to say expenditure of paper and ribbon. I was surprised to find no follow-up in January, and concluded that so many have responded to Barrett’s invitation to contribute, that a special issue may have to be made.

“The future of ministerial service” is as relevant as that “need to find a clearer pattern of vocation” which Professor H. G. Wood recently diagnosed for Christian scientists. Few of us, I imagine, will question the “call” that originally brought us to offer service to the Church of Christ, yet we all recognise how the pattern of that Church has changed in our lifetime. The social status of Non-conformity, like that of the working classes, improved vastly during the latter part of the nineteenth century, and most of us understood that we must be trained culturally to become elegant as well as forceful preachers; and that—this is the important assumption,

surely—such a ministry would be effective. In fact, the disappearance of the large families with their solid commercial prosperity and intellectual ambitions, leaves us struggling to impress a dwindling group of their successors and an increasing body of casual visitors to our services.

Many experiments are being made to embody these “new” folk into the Church fellowship, and many illusions have been in turn embraced and rejected. Of course, we are not the only fellowships with difficulties, but the future of our ministry lies in finding the answer that fits with our churchmanship—the joint ministry of pastor and people which we express in terms of independent fellowship and self-support. It is futile to imagine that we are as independent as we boast ourselves, and I am going to argue a case for a part-time ministry as being one way out of the present impasse.

First, we must recognise how much our ministry is already part-time. Many men hold chaplaincy and teaching appointments. Some have the help of their wives. The doleful necessity of such economic aids is recognised not least by our congregations, who assure us that we are widening our experience; but they do not disclose to what lengths we might go. There is reason to believe that they still require us to take jobs that are “respectable”. Commerce and labour have not yet arrived at social equality with the professions; at least not in the home ministry. On the mission-field printers are expected to evangelise and ministers to teach and build. At home these occupations are only for our gentlemanly leisure. The homely honour that Jews paid to handicraft as a means of income has been lost to us despite the example of Paul.

It is worth noting that a minister, apart from such extras, might still be giving only part of his pastoral service to the congregation which pays him. There are our duties to denominational committees and associations, and our expected support of the Free Church Federal Council and other organisations. The invitation to serve is accepted by all as a kind of social recognition which was long denied us. Roger Lloyd writes of the enormous amount of time taken up by committees, but no doubt a certain amount of representation is called for, and the minister may suitably be such a figurehead on behalf of his congregation. The operative phrase is the last; a member is useful only if he is either giving expert advice or representing potential action.

Another form of part-time ministry is that of plurality. In this county there have been many faint endeavours to link up village churches with town churches in some kind of fellowship. This is nothing new; some of these same village churches were actually founded as branches of town churches and have simply never managed to become what every Baptist church desires to be— independent. Incidentally all the churches in Derby owe their origin to influences that came from the countryside. The B.U. has given some support to the plan of fellowship and has linked it up with the problem of the support of the ministry.

B. M. S.

“Go ye into all the world . . .”

The “marching orders” of our Lord still remain to stir our consciences in relation to our duty to those in other lands who have not heard the Gospel. In obedience, the B.M.S. goes on with its work in India, Pakistan, Ceylon, the West Indies, Congo, Hong Kong, Malaya and Brazil. It relies on your support and your leadership in the churches that

volunteers for service overseas

interest and encouragement

prayer unceasing

sacrificial giving

may continue.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

93 GLOUCESTER PLACE

LONDON, W.1

Let us now turn to the man who enters this situation. As Principal Child reminded us in his articles for the *Baptist Times*, ministers are of necessity "dedicated spirits". He quoted Lightfoot's essay in support of his description, and we are therefore left with a picture of a "spirit" caught up into a divine service of the Amos type, essentially independent of prophetic or priestly schools. Lightfoot develops his description from this anarchic beginning to a suitably ordered ministry, and there is nothing disallowable in that, provided we lay hold upon this direct contact from above. Every Christian community claims the spiritual right to discern the spirit either through its apostolic officers or through its fellowship. But we all assume that the minister, duly vetted and appointed, is of God, a "dedicated spirit". And a condition that we should probably associate most closely with the calling is its irrevocability, once called, always committed. The question therefore as to what a minister may do is more than incidental. The idea of the church itself is involved.

I have mentioned the curious exception of Paul to the run of the Christian ministry. Traditional Christianity has declared the ministry a profession from which ordinarily there is no departing, and one function of the parish system was to ensure that, despite his holy prohibition against worldly occupation, he should be provided for. It is the Old Testament idea of a priesthood living on tithes. Nonconformity accepted this idea despite its passionate denunciation of tithes and church rates. What it was repudiating was not this kind of support for the ministry, but the official secular declaration of what the church should be. We asserted our view of the church, but kept the old idea of the ministry and its sustentation. Now, however, the tithing rests upon the faithful, and the faithful only.

We now can see how precarious a relationship was created. Under an accepted tithing system the ministry of the Word is independent of current circumstances. And there is a sense in which a Conrad Noel or the Dean of Canterbury is "freer" to utter the words of the Spirit than any Baptist minister who must look to his congregation for his living, and is, at the same time, bound by his calling to remain in it.

I feel like a psychiatrist in bringing this matter forward. There is nothing original in the situation, but it is one that we do not want to face. The result is that sense of frustration that one finds in so many conversations, the obverse of our public and official assurance. Having brought it forward I must look at the possible remedies. Undoubtedly one of these is the frank acceptance of a part-time ministry along the lines of the so-called "lay-pastors" who do so much for our churches. It is not an easy solution. The easiest part of it would be the encouragement of that movement which already exists away from the practice of the ministry as an exclusive calling to the acceptance of another, mainly the teaching

profession, as an economic stay. Do not let us for a moment underestimate the great service which ex-ministers, if one may use the term without offence, give to the denomination. Perhaps our colleges could with profit make such preparation deliberate, thus making the home ministry like the missionary ministry, evangelistic plus something else.

It is obvious that a decision of this sort requires more than the polite inclusion in the accredited list of ministers of those now holding "educational appointments". But let us look at the alternative. There is far too much laissez-faire about it. The minister economically sinks or swims. No one really knows. Fundamentally, if we want to retain an exclusive ministry we must, as a denomination and without any further argument, pay an economic wage. It is not likely to be such as will absolve the recipient from his accepted wedding to poverty; but it must enable him to pay his bills. But there is another side to this question which is a matter of principle. One of the first objections to my sweeping statement above, is the simple question, "can we raise the money?" It is always assumed that we can do so, but what I have tried to say is that our conception of the church removes the guarantee that any fixed salary can go on indefinitely. The minister's acceptability to his people is one of the factors concerned. This is where the H.W.F. and the Area Superintendents come in, the one as a sort of ministerial union fund and the other as a kind of unapostolic bishop or shop steward. Both are honourable institutions. But their functions are likely, in my opinion, to become increasingly difficult to fulfil unless the fundamental identity of congregation and minister becomes more of a conscious reality than it mostly is.

The argument for a part-time ministry has thrown up two opposing factors, the idea of a "dedicated" ministry and the apparent inability of congregations to sustain it. Part-time ministry obviously relieves one responsibility, but it is at the expense of the idea. My personal view is that, in contemplating such relief, we compromise our true genius, our claim to be a church rather than a mission-hall. Paul's missionary independence of his churches does not mark Christian maturity. Like modern missionaries he learned that such maturity required his departure. Antioch was the mature Christian church where the Spirit was incarnated, if one can say so, through the believing fellowship. It is surely significant that this incarnation inspired a kind of communism of goods. At least, one observes, it cannot be subsidised from outside the community. Even the missionary cannot permanently subsidise a new church; how much less can it be maintained in Christian health by a state subsidy. Can it, we may ask, be subsidised by a part-time ministry?

I believe that it cannot; and if we argue that the part-time ministry is necessary as a temporary expedient, we are merely diagnosing the present situation as chronic. There is plenty of evidence for such a view; the list of Baptist churches and Baptist

ministries contains too many examples of premature demise. We should mourn for them as we need not mourn for the faithful departed who depart in hope, for these die of despair, the measure of our denominational failure to express what we truly are.

WILLIAM SPEIRS.

OF INTEREST TO YOU

Personal. Certain of our members have accepted new pastorates and some are setting out upon their life's work. The names that follow should be read in the spirit of brotherly thought and prayer: H. P. Bunday, Chipping Norton; A. J. Chandler, Nottingham (Daybrook); G. J. Clifford, Manchester (Sladeland); R. C. Dalton, Cricklewood; J. H. G. Easthope, Bromsgrove; L. A. Fereday, Sevenoaks; K. H. Furlong, Eltham Park; W. J. Griffiths, Stotfold; H. Harcup, Newhaven; R. Hunt, Scarborough (Ebenezer); G. Ingram, Newtown, Mont.; S. G. Jackson, Worcester; J. H. C. Lawford, Magor, Mon.; A. P. Lee, Edinburgh (Branton); A. L. Morris, Brandon; A. Neil, Gillingham (Dorset); H. S. Phillips, South Lee; E. V. Ridyard, Retford; S. G. Skipp, Coney Hill, Kent; T. J. Thomas, Pandy, Mon.; H. T. Thorn, West Bridgeford. From Manchester College: G. J. Corderoy, Kings Lynn; and from Spurgeon's, N. K. Drew, B.M.S.; R. Tucker, Torrington; D. Harper, Dartford.

Adieu. We bid a last farewell to men justly held in honour and affection. The B.M.S. has lost several valued helpers. C. E. Wilson—who, after 11 years in India spent 34 years as Foreign Secretary of the Society. A man of deep spirituality and many gifts. His was a missionary heart and to the end the Society he loved was ever in his thought and prayer. Gordon Wilkins, India, 1892-1923, a great missionary, was preacher, translator, editor and hospital supervisor. A loved and trusted leader in India and at home. He afterwards became pastor at Camberwell and later a helpful member at Beckenham. J. C. Harlow, moved by those who perished in the Boxer Riots, volunteered for China where he served for 28 years. Possessed of literary gifts, in addition to being an evangelist, he exerted marked influence over University students and left behind a great record. In recent years he resided at Liverpool where he died in February last. Another loss is that of Fred Bennett, for 16 years pastor of Cinnamon Gardens Church, Colombo. On his return he filled, with acceptance, a ministry at Workington. We give thanks to God for the memory of a good and faithful servant of Jesus Christ.

Our home ministry owes much to the leadership of T. J. Whittman, who filled important pastorates at Woodberry Down, London, and in the North of England. He was Chairman of the B.M.S. and our own Fellowship gratefully remembers him as President. Latterly he ministered at Truro and on his retirement helped many

churches in the West Country. John Haydon entered upon his life work in 1901 and for 35 years was a well-beloved pastor of churches in the South of England. A. E. Edwards, also used of God to the blessing of many from 1930 until his somewhat sudden passing this year. All these friends were well advanced in age but Callum Patterson and W. E. Whilding died in the zenith of their career. The former evinced conspicuous talents in his ministry at Leslie and Edinburgh and entered upon what was hoped would have been his life work at Harrow in 1948. Similarly, W. E. Whilding, after notable work at West Bridgeford, came to Bristol in 1951 where his ministry in the re-built church at Tyndale marked him as a worthy successor of previous eminent ministers. Each could justly be called brilliant, and from each, years of denominational leadership was anticipated. Great indeed is our loss in the death of these men of shining spiritual gifts.

Mrs. Roland Eldridge, Mrs. L. H. Moxham and Mrs. Stanley Smith have passed away, and for their homes and others, darkened with sorrow, we pray the light and comfort of that Living Christ Whom their dear ones loved so truly and so faithfully served.

Laid Aside. An unusual number of our members are, at the time of writing, seriously ill. When these notes are published we trust they will have been restored, but in their days of present anxiety they are in our hearts' prayers. Some names which have come to our knowledge are those of W. D. Reynolds, Guy Ramsay, E. O. Clifford, C. H. Robinson, T. R. Gardiner, W. J. Back, R. W. Hobling, W. J. Loader and Percy Bushill, whose article in the present magazine bears testimony to influence in the hospital ward. Together with these we have to record the very serious illness of G. I. Thomas. We think also of our greatly esteemed friend Mr. W. H. Ball, whose wife and daughter have been laid aside and whose condition, for a time, caused much anxiety.

Two resignations are, unfortunately, the outcome of prolonged illness. A. J. Klaiber, as Secretary, West Midland Association, and Area Superintendent, and F. G. Missen as minister at Teddington. The former served his Area almost beyond his strength as efficient administrator, organiser of Church Extension and Home Work appeals. He won the confidence of ministers and churches alike. F. G. Missen went to Teddington in 1947. The church demolished, and congregations scattered, he built up the spiritual community which, only a few months ago, took possession of the beautiful sanctuary in which it was hoped he would long be spared to minister. We all hope that, in due course, a return to normal health will enable both these friends to resume some active, if less exacting, sphere of labour. Two ministers have retired from the pastorate: G. J. Johnson, who commenced in 1913 after leaving Rawdon, and E. T. Samuel from Cardiff, who, after two years' war-service with the Y.M.C.A., entered upon the regular ministry. He was for six years General Superintendent, Welsh Sustentation