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The Fraternal

JANUARY, 1958

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EDITORIAL

MINISTERIAL ORDINATION

- I. D. S. RUSSELL, M.A., B.Litt., Principal, Rawdon College, Leeds.
- II. HUGH MARTIN, C.H., D.D., Vice-President, British Council of Churches.
- III. THEO. M. BAMBER, Baptist Minister, Rye Lane, Peckham.
- IV. M. F. WILLIAMS, B.A., B.D., Baptist Minister, Bradford.

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

NORMAN GOODALL, D.Phil., Secretary, Joint Committee World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE

J. CROWLESMITH, co-Founder and Secretary, Marriage Guidance Council.

THIS FREEDOM

C. N. W. HARRISON, Baptist Minister, Bourton-on-the-Water.

MY FIRST PASTORATE

J. F. V. NICHOLSON, M.A., Baptist Minister, Harlow.

OF INTEREST TO YOU

THE WIDER CIRCLE

BOOK REVIEWS

EDITORIAL

HIS SWAN SONG

THE EDITORIAL BOARD is profoundly grateful that Dr. Aubrey yielded to importunity and wrote the Editorial for the October *Fraternal* and, overcoming his modesty, allowed his initials to be appended. Little did anyone anticipate that within a few days his able pen would be for ever laid aside. The words of dying men enforce attention and we may well scan the article again, noting some of its suggestions, offered by the writer "with humility".

Under the general heading of Planning, Aubrey first refers to Preaching. "With a regular congregation to serve we may not live from week to week trusting to the inspiration of each day as it comes and looking for help to the last book acquired. We have the opportunity of a teaching ministry—a privilege too wonderful to be frittered away." Our suggestion is, that in this first month of the year, a course of sermons be planned dealing with the Great Events leading up to Trinity Sunday; further, that together with topical subjects we try to give our people some idea of the Christian fundamentals and show their practical bearing on daily life.

The Article proceeds to deal with planned pastoral work. "The best preaching is no full substitute for personal contact. There are the men at home only in the evenings, the young people, the children. All have a claim upon the minister. Oh! to save these!" "Carefully arranged, with forethought and a determination that the minister's call shall be one of God's means of grace, it is a way of opening doors into hearts as well as homes." Pondering the importance of this we content ourselves by quoting one of the author's most striking phrases. "The member's open door may be the minister's triumphal arch."

There follows a third aspect of our work—one not often featured—Correspondence. "A letter from the pastor's desk which can be read and re-read by some youth or girl, or a man facing a crisis may change a life's whole direction—as some of us have found." May we so labour, as to be included in that blessed company indicated by the pregnant words—"as some of us have found". The price of postage goes up, but a priceless blessing may come down.

Aubrey speaks concerning the allocation of a minister's time. "We should have our own scale of values. What are the really important things? The 'one thing' we have to do may mean setting aside calls and opportunities relatively trivial." Here surely is a healthy New Year exercise—to adjust, or re-adjust in their relative order, the countless demands upon our time and strength.

And now let us draw near with hushed footsteps and listen to his prayer, as he speaks of his brother ministers. "I cannot see so much of them as before, but I keep them constantly in mind and think of them with gratitude and affection at the throne of grace." Listen also to this solemn word. "Prayer and meditation must be woven into the web of our lives in every part. Only the minister who is stern with himself can be fair to God and faithful to his own people, as he waits, listening, to pass on what has been given to him in the quiet of the room with the shut door." From that quiet room with the shut door there comes his final word. "The inspired builder is one who has penetrated and captured for himself, the purpose and plan of the Master-architect and is consciously striving to follow in the plain, the pattern shown him on the mount. God grant we achieve it."

In this our beloved brother's Bequest, there is revealed, as the watermark in a treasury note, his heart and soul; behind his message there glows and burns a rare and beautiful spirit.

The New Year dawns and the manner of Aubrey's passing reminds us of the uncertainty of earthly things. Any sermon we preach, any letter we write, any visit we pay, may prove our Swan Song, but this thought, so far from depressing, should move us to value the present God-given opportunity. Let us greet each returning morn with the inspiring thought: This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. A happy New Year.

THE MEANING AND PRACTICE OF ORDINATION AMONG
BAPTISTS — I

(A Summary of the Report together with questions for discussion)

IN May, 1954, a small Group was appointed by the General Purposes and Finance Committee of the Baptist Union to consider "The Meaning and Practice of Ordination Among Baptists, together with an Order of Service". The Report of the Group, which was presented to the Council in March, 1957, and again in November, 1957, is an attempt to sift certain evidence, Biblical and historical, and to make certain judgments on the present day understanding and practice of ordination among Baptists, in the hope that it will both stimulate the thought of the churches and provide some guidance as to present practice. This article consists of a brief summary of the Report, chiefly for the benefit of those who as yet have been unable to acquire a copy, and is supplemented by a list of questions useful for discussion.

I. The revived interest in theological studies which marks our own day, together with a movement away from the sometimes excessive individualism of the 19th century, has led many of our ministers and others to examine afresh the doctrine of the Church and the Ministry and to see questions of Church order in a new perspective. For many years it has been recognised by Baptists that there was virtually only one kind of ministry, namely, that of the pastoral office. But in more recent years there have grown up many other kinds of ministries performing functions other than that of the pastoral office and in many cases outside the province of the local church. Moreover, there has been a growing conviction on the part of many that a man who is minister in a local church, by virtue of his being a minister of Jesus Christ, is a minister within the total life of the Church. It is against this background and in response to these promptings that the present Report is presented.

II. A study of ordination of this kind requires a primary study of the *New Testament evidence* concerning the *nature and function of the Church*.

The nature of the Christian community can be expressed adequately only in a double way, as a living organism sustained by a common life (cf. metaphors of the body, the vine, the family) and as a fellowship of free responsible persons. Hence the New Testament writers can speak of the Church in a locality or of "the Churches". Each visible and local community possesses its own characteristics, yet all are manifestations of the Church.

The function of the Church is also two-fold. It exists to be the people of God by expressing the glory of God in fellowship and in worship which has its centre in the Lord's Supper. It exists also to bear witness to the acts of God; this it does in the preaching of the Word and in its proclamation in the act of baptism.

This leads on to an examination of *the ministry and ordination* for, although the functions to which reference has been made are functions of the whole Church, they are actually exercised by certain individuals who have been called and appointed by God to exercise forms of ministry on its behalf. Such forms of ministry are ministries of the whole Church and have an authority within it which is derived not only from the Church itself but from the divine appointment. All gifts of ministry are to be exercised under the Spirit for the edification of the Church. From the earliest days a regular pattern of ministry began to emerge to fulfil the two supreme functions of the Church, revealing itself in the leadership of the fellowship in its worship and proclamation, including the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. For the sanction of this ministry solemn acts were observed, in which prayers were offered by the Church frequently accompanied by the laying on of hands (in Appendix 3 an interesting account is given of this practice).

III. The Report then turns to a consideration of *ordination among Baptists* and deals with the historical evidence (supplemented and illustrated in Appendices 1 and 2) and present practice. The evidence shows that the practice of ordination was held in very high regard by Baptists during the 17th and 18th centuries. It took place at a solemn service in which only ordained persons took part; the appointment was to a specific pastoral charge and was held to be for life. Generally, the pastor was already a member of the local church before his invitation to the pastoral office. If he moved to another church, he was re-ordained. Throughout the greater part of the 19th century, however, a more atomistic view of the Church and the Ministry was adopted and with it a more haphazard approach to ordination. Indeed, by about 1885 Ordination and Commissioning Services had given place to Welcome Meetings. As the 20th century advanced the practice of ordination became much more widespread, ministers being ordained only once and not at the beginning of succeeding pastorates. Today the matter is taken very seriously in most countries, but the great diversities of practice indicate considerable varieties of interpretation.

IV. In the light of this evidence an attempt is then made to explain the *meaning of ordination*. A suggested definition is given in the following words: "Ordination is the act wherein the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, publicly recognises and confirms that a Christian believer has been gifted, called and set apart by God for the work of the ministry, and in the Name of Christ commissions him for this work".

Ordination signifies the setting apart of a man to the work of the ministry both by Christ and the Church. It has been customary to interpret the word "Church" in this connection as referring to the local church; but in so acting it must work in the closest fellowship with all its sister churches. Indeed, it is desirable that members of other denominations should be included as a witness to the inherent

unity of the Body of Christ. A man's ministry will normally be exercised within a local church, but he may well exercise ministerial functions within the total life of the Church in other spheres of service.

Ordination does not confer upon a man a status which belongs to him of right for life. It is for him an occasion of blessing in which he is acknowledged as being called of God to the work of the ministry, the exercise of which is recognised throughout the churches. This acknowledgment and recognition give him the right to be regarded as one set apart for the work of the Christian ministry.

V. The *practice of ordination* is then examined and answers given to some questions of a practical nature. It is the considered opinion of the Group that the Service of Ordination should take place immediately after the satisfactory completion of a man's College course when he has accepted an invitation to his first pastorate; in the case of non-collegiates it should take place when his name is placed on the List of Probationers, i.e. when he has completed a time of testing and preparation roughly equivalent to that undertaken by a collegiate candidate. The place where the Service of Ordination is to be held may depend upon individual circumstances, but where the man is entering upon the work of the pastorate it is commendable that the place should be the church to which he is called. The imposition of hands in association with ordination may be supported by Scriptural passages and by frequent custom among Baptists of the 17th and 18th centuries, though there is no indication there that the practice is to be regarded as an essential element of a Service of Ordination.

VI. *The Order of Service* at the end of the Report implies that the Act of Induction is necessary for the completion of the Act of Ordination and that the person to be ordained should have already accepted some specific sphere of ministerial service, be it the pastoral office or some other work. Such an Act of Induction normally accompanies the Act of Ordination in one service, but there should be no objection to their separation by a short interval of time.

A FEW SELECTED BOOKS

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|-------------------|---|------|
| J. B. Lightfoot | "Dissertation on the Christian Ministry" (in his Commentary on Philippians) | 1868 |
| C. Gore | "The Church and the Ministry" | 1888 |
| | (Rev. 1919 & 1936) | |
| C. A. Scott | "The Fellowship of the Spirit" | 1921 |
| B. H. Streeter | "The Primitive Church" | 1929 |
| R. N. Flew | "Jesus and His Church" | 1938 |
| K. E. Kirk. (Ed.) | "The Apostolic Ministry" | 1946 |
| T. W. Manson | "The Church's Ministry" | 1948 |
| D. T. Jenkins | "The Gift of the Ministry" | 1948 |
| E. A. Payne | "The Fellowship of Believers" | 1944 |
| | (Rev. 1952) | |

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Study One: THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE.

(i). "The problem of the origin of the Christian Ministry will be rightly approached only if we bear in mind that there was a stage at which all the members of the Fellowship were Ministers." (C. A. Scott.) What has Jesus' teaching to say concerning Christian Community? What patterns of Church life and order developed in the first century?

(ii). What place did the Twelve have in the Ministry of the Church? What was the intention of Jesus in this regard?

(iii). The variety of ministries in the New Testament is more evident than any pattern of ministry. Can we find any specific form of ministry in the New Testament which can be regarded as the pattern of all future Church ministries?

(iv). What evidence is there for a Service of Ordination in the New Testament and what forms did it take?

Study Two: THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

(i). "The Baptist Conception of the Ministry is governed by the fact that it is a ministry of the Church and not of any class or caste within the Church." How far is this true in Baptist history particularly in relation to preaching and the administration of the ordinances?

(ii). What is the relationship between "the priesthood of all believers" and the acceptance of a separated ministry? Is it true to say with Hercules Collins (1702), "There are necessary ordinances to be administered in the Church of Christ till the end of the world; therefore ministers are necessary"?

(iii). What, historically, have been the recognised functions of ministry among Baptists?

(iv). What reasons can be given for the change of attitude towards ordination among Baptists in the nineteenth century?

Study Three: MEANING AND PRACTICE.

(i). What is conferred by ordination? In what sense does it authorise the exercise of one's ministry in the churches?

(ii). In what sense is the minister of a local church to be recognised as a minister within the total life of the Church?

(iii). The situation in our churches has changed greatly during this present century with the steady growth in influence of the Baptist Union. What is the relation between ordination and ministerial probation, the connection between ordination and accreditation, and the respective responsibilities of the local church and the Baptist Union in this regard?

(iv). The growth of the oecumenical movement has made the various Christian bodies look again at their conceptions of the Church and the Ministry. Is our form of ministry "sacrosanct"? What can we learn about the meaning of ordination and the nature of the ministry from other branches of the Christian Church?

D. S. RUSSELL.

MINISTERIAL ORDINATION—II

THE Report on *The Meaning and Practice of Ordination Among Baptists* has rendered the denomination great service. As one would expect from its membership, the committee has discharged its task with Biblical scholarship, historical knowledge, and insight into the living needs of our churches today. Many among us will find convictions at which they have arrived independently set out cogently and authoritatively. Others may be surprised and perhaps even disturbed by its findings. For in some quarters there has been a tendency to regard our present day practices and attitudes as being, beyond argument, in full accord with the New Testament and as being essential and immemorial "Baptist principles". The dispassionate and fully documented examination of the evidence set out in the Report should make us think again. While there has been a notable and welcome change in recent years in many parts of the denomination, too many of us still sum up our position about the ministry by affirming that there is no difference between a "minister" and a "layman", and by quoting the phrase "the priesthood of all believers", as if without examination and definition that settled the whole question.

I am sure the committee are right in insisting that the denomination turned away from its own past tradition in the middle of the nineteenth century in reaction to the Oxford Movement. In a very necessary protest against its excesses we committed ourselves, by over-emphasis on certain aspects of the truth, to positions which it would be difficult to square with the New Testament, and which would certainly have been unacceptable to our Baptist forefathers, who showed a deeper insight into many matters than the Victorian Baptists. One useful feature of the Report is the reprinting in Appendices of Baptist statements not generally accessible or forgotten.

The Report inevitably begins with a consideration of the teaching of the New Testament and puts its finger at once on the central issue, the nature of the Church. That is where the New Testament starts. Its doctrine of the ministry arises out of, and is indeed part of, its doctrine of the Church. The ministry is part of the Church and the servant of the Church, not set over it as a separate and superior order, as in some forms of episcopal teaching. It is there to perform representative functions on behalf of the Church as a whole—to "minister", not to govern. The existence of the Church, the gathered company of believers, is part of the Christian Gospel and is rightly in the historic creeds. It is the Church which preaches the Word and ministers the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. It is the Church which nurtures and trains its members. It is the Church which witnesses to the world without. It can appoint any member whom it deems to have the requisite qualifications to perform on its behalf any of its functions. But no man can take it upon himself to preach the Word in its pulpits or to administer its sacraments, or to guide

its spiritual life and teach its children. (See B.U. Assembly statement, 1923. *Report*, p. 35.) The Church may choose any man or woman for these high privileges, temporarily or as a life-time calling. And each and every member, in the home, in the office, the factory, the council chamber, or wherever life takes him or he adventures to go, should be engaged in the service of the Church, in carrying the banner of Christ.

The New Testament knows of no exclusive priestly order, set over the Church, through whom alone God's grace is transmitted, and without whom the Church cannot function. In Christ all Christians alike have access to the Father. (Ephesians ii, 18.) It is not the possession of a ministry with "valid orders" which gives the Church authority. Rather, it is the authority of the living apostolic Church which gives authority to the ministry. As the Letter to the Hebrews declares, Christ alone is the perfect priest. In derivation from Him, the whole Christian community, in the words of 1 Peter ii, 5, is a holy priesthood. "The priesthood of all believers" is a corporate possession. No individual Christian, ordained or lay, is described as a priest in the New Testament.

But it does not follow that there is no difference between a minister and a layman. The New Testament declares emphatically and frequently that it is of God's plan for His Church to have a ministry of men and women set apart for specific functions and duties. The ministry is a gift of Christ: "His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ". (Ephesians iv, 11f. RSV.) God calls and endows some to act in His Church as preachers and as representative leaders in its worship and pastoral care. We have not said everything when we say that the minister represents the Church: he is also chosen for his task by Christ. "The authority of the minister comes from Christ through the believing community". (B.U. Council. March, 1948. *Report*, p. 38.) The New Testament has indeed more to say about the authority of the ministry within the Church than most of us like to recognise. (See *Report*, paragraph 20.) And our Baptist forefathers held very definite views on the subject going beyond what almost any of us would support today.

The *Report* defines ordination as "an act of the Church, wherein the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, publicly recognises and confirms that a Christian believer has been gifted, called and set apart by God for the work of the ministry and commissions him for this work". These are carefully chosen words and each clause is worth pondering. The call of God is first and fundamental: "It is given by Christ and derives its sanction from Him who is Himself the Head of the Church". Further, ordination is an act of the Church. "The work of the ministry is not personal service rendered by the individual in his own right, nor is a minister a free-lance 'prophet' exercising his ministry in a private capacity He speaks in the

name of God; but in so doing he speaks within the witness of the Church and in its name; and so his work of ministry must be an act of Christ and of the Church. Ordination signifies the setting apart of the minister by Christ as a messenger of God to men, and his setting apart by the Church as a messenger of the Church to men." (Pars. 48f.) Before the Church can so commission a man it must assure itself of the reality of the divine call and endowment; of the candidate's Christian character, and of his intellectual and other equipment for his exacting task.

One of the most searching and helpful sections of the *Report* is its discussion of what is meant by "the church" in this setting. It is commonly understood among us to mean the local church, but this is an inadequate conception, not fully in accord either with the New Testament or with our Baptist tradition. The local church is dependent no less than independent. The Great Church is prior. The local church is the representative of the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church. In the solemn act of ordaining, the local church is not an isolated group, and it ought not to act without the presence and concurrence of representatives of the wider Church. Such representation has been customary when we have been true to our traditions.

It is not really a "Baptist principle" that any group of Christian men and women can get together, constitute themselves into a church and call a man as minister, without reference to anybody else, and that he can then call himself "reverend" and put on a clerical collar. That is a travesty of independency. The local church is the local manifestation of the one Church. It should have been created by formal dismissal from an existing church or churches, as a new "cell" in the Body of Christ; to use a biological metaphor which is worth further thought. The local church cannot properly act in disregard of its obligations and responsibilities and representative character. Both in theory and in practice the denomination as a whole is very much concerned, and it is right that it should have a say as to the sphere within which the local church exercises its choice and it should be represented at the ordination. (See pars. 21 and 50—though the committee might well wish to disclaim the way I have expressed myself!)

All this is further emphasised by the fact that the Church is not merely ordaining one of its own officials. It is, or ought to be, ordaining a man to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in Christ's universal Church—to exercise his ministry "wherever God in His providence shall call him", as the Olney church said in commissioning William Carey: it was their customary formula and implied no foresight of his future career. (*Life* by Pearce Carey, p. 50.) In our present divided condition in the Christian Church no denominational ministry is fully authoritative, because it is only partially recognised. But the principle is important and must be respected to the limit of our power.

The *Report* contains an admirable suggested Ordination Service, which I should like to see widely used forthwith. It embodies and expresses the wise words of the *Report* as to the nature and meaning of ordination. I am glad to see that it includes the scriptural and meaningful symbolic act of the "laying on of hands". In the service God's call and God's enabling, the candidate's own humble dedication, the recognition and authorisation of the local church and the share of the Great Church, all meet in one solemn act.

Once more it is right to emphasise that in the committee's recommendations there are no innovations. All that is included here can be justified by reference to New Testament doctrine and to the practice of our Baptist churches. "The nature of the Christian community according to the New Testament indicates that the community will possess both adaptability and continuity." (Par. 35.) This *Report* displays both in a most healthy fashion.

HUGH MARTIN.

MINISTERIAL ORDINATION — III

THERE is much in this report with which one agrees, and sincere thanks are due to the members of the Commission for the careful thought they have given to the subject. As space is limited one is obliged to stress the points at which there may be divergence.

The Commission's terms of reference were to report on The Meaning and Practice of Ordination among the Baptists. In the course of their enquiry they found themselves obliged to say something on the Church. One would have liked to have seen in the report no less a close examination of the New Testament relative to the essence of a valid call to ministry. On this matter the New Testament is clear, and being clear on that, there really is no need to be too specific on ordination procedure.

It will be inevitable that some who read the report will have in their minds the issues concerning episcopacy. True, this was not in the terms of reference, but when one sees that British Baptists are not giving a strong lead to Baptists overseas to resist episcopal erosion, any consideration of ordination awakens fears. Our Lord never turned to the house of Aaron for ordination, and Paul never asked Peter for the laying on of hands. In the result it was the ordained religious leaders who wreaked their hatred on our Lord at the Cross, and in the same spirit pursued Paul.

The simple truth is, for the Church of the Body, which is the only true Church, all commission, call and appointment, proceed exclusively from the Exalted Lord in heaven. It is one of the ministries, vested in the omnipotence, which has been conferred upon Him as Man. Undoubtedly human ability in thinking and speaking is valuable, but not essential. The gifts of the Ascended Lord are communications of capacity to the born again spirit of the

believer. It is this that makes the ensuing ministry spiritually vigorous and eternally fruitful. If this spiritual capacity be not communicated by the Living Lord as Head of the Church a man may be educated, trained and ordained, but his ministry will be formal, carnal, earthly, temporal and dead. In such circumstances ordination, howsoever and by whomsoever performed, will make the angels weep.

Paragraph 54 is disturbing. It declares that the ordinand, after the service of ordination, has a "right", but surely a true ordination commits a man much more to responsibilities than rights: "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel". Probably the Commission would agree but the report proceeds: "Thirdly, this acknowledgment and recognition give him the right to be regarded, both by other Christian communions and by secular authorities, as one set apart for the work of Christian ministry." What is meant by "right" in this connection? Clearly, it is a happy circumstance if other local churches recognise the particular ministry, but why does the report link on the secular authority? How can the secular authorities recognise a spiritual fact? Did our Lord ever seek such a recognition? Did Paul? How can the local mayor as such know anything of the sovereign commission of the Ascended Lord? The minister is ordained for the supreme purpose of leading men and women out of darkness into light. He is set apart to plead with people to flee from the wrath to come. The office of mayor does not preclude the possibility that beneath the civic robes is a soul dead in sin, and therefore utterly incapable of acknowledging what are termed the "rights" of the ordinand. Was Paul wasting his time when he wrote "the natural man perceiveth not the things of God"?

The commission to ministry, therefore, finds its beginning and end in the sovereign call of the Ascended Lord. He is the Alpha and Omega of this as of everything else. Anything done by anybody in the absence of the edict of the Head of the Church, is not merely negatively meaningless, but Satanic! The report refers to Spurgeon's attitude to ordination, but it must be remembered that in his day he was regarded as a spiritual misfit, while the hunting parson, more interested in foxes than souls, was supposed to be exercising a valid ministry! Such are the dangers of thinking on ordination without first insisting that validity resides in our Lord alone.

It appears, therefore, that as the Ascended Lord communicates the gift in spiritual capacity, so the local believers may, if they will, be persuaded by the same Lord that the individual concerned has been called to exercise ministry in their midst. While the solemn responsibility of discernment is primarily upon them, they may well confer with other of the Lord's people who are one with them in the bonds of the Spirit, but once the conviction is in their hearts that this one is designated by the Head of the Church the matter is finally determined. A solemn service is fitting, vows may be suitable, there may be some external act in which the edict of the Lord is most

humbly and devoutly embraced in submission, but there must be no question whatsoever that all that must be done, has already been done in heaven.

The ministry that matters springs from the Lord, and as the individual thus honoured keeps low before the Lord, he will be used to bring forth men and women and boys and girls as born again believers. The rest of the ordinands move in an orbit of carnality, cluttered up with earth issues, accomplishing much in the energy of the flesh, applauded often by men in their sin, but without authority from the Lord, and so never moved to agonise with God for the souls of the perishing.

Let me add, not without much personal heart searching, that the power of the Lord's commission is dependent on daily and continual obedience to Him. If, in the multitude of temptations that afflict those who seek a walk with the Lord, the minister be sidetracked into disobedience to his Lord, the heavenly power will depart. He may be praised by men but God will be silent. The hungry sheep will look up and know they are not being fed. Sinners will listen without being brought under conviction of sin. There are no exemptions from this spiritual principle.

While, therefore, one is sincerely grateful to the Commission for many excellent things in the report, one feels that the more the emphasis is placed on the sovereign position of the Head of the Church, in giving the call and bestowing the capacity to the spirit for ministry, the less will consideration be given to the details of ordination. Conversely, the greater the emphasis on ordination, the more likely the sovereignty of our Lord will be obscured.

Baptists should count it a high privilege to preserve the balance of truth in this important matter.

THEO. M. BAMBER.

The Report makes clear that the Act of Ordination has values, one of which is that it enables all to whom we minister in Christ's name to know that those so Ordained are accredited as having had, so far as can be judged, the authentic divine Call. It also entitles the minister to speak and act as the accredited representative of Christ's people.

This is quite different from seeking the acknowledgement of the secular authority for the validity of our ministry. Such would be as unacceptable to the writers of the Report as to Mr. Bamber himself.

ED. BOARD.

MINISTERIAL ORDINATION — IV

THIS report for consideration by the Baptist Union Council and, one hopes, discussion throughout the denomination, is a most important document, in that after marshalling evidence from the New Testament and our own ecclesiastical tradition it offers answers to the following questions:—

Who should be ordained?

When should the service of Ordination be held?

Where should the service of Ordination take place?

Should ordination be with the laying on of hands?

Such matters deserve close attention, if the Church in its Order is to express itself worthily as a worshipping and witnessing community.

A brief but careful review of Ordination among Baptists, past and present, reveals a wide variety of practice. This may well be the result of attempting to apply New Testament principles to different local conditions, but on occasion it may equally be significant of a lack of interest in true Churchmanship. For example, a "loosening of tradition" accompanied the rapid growth of Nonconformity in the nineteenth century, and this report, whilst recognising it as in part a "protest against the excesses of the Oxford Movement" also speaks of "the sometimes excessive individualism" of that period. A special sub-Committee enquiring into the Ordination of ministerial candidates for missionary service could not find a uniform practice in the denomination, and submitted its recommendations to the B.M.S. in April, 1953, stating that it had deliberately avoided a definition of Ordination. Instead, its work was based on "generally existing practice".

The present statement makes a laudable attempt at such definition in the following words:—

"Ordination is an act of the Church, wherein the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, publicly recognises and confirms that a Christian believer has been gifted, called and set apart by God for the work of the ministry and commissions him for this work."

The weakest point in the elaboration of this is the admission that "It is not possible to define precisely what is conferred by Ordination", words that in an official denominational publication do not inspire confidence. The close link between Ordination and Induction is noted, and the customary practice of combining the occurrence of these acts is apparently commended. It seems, however, to the present writer that such a custom is often confusing to the average Church Member, and that it were better to keep them separate. The liturgical structure of every Induction service could then include a reference to the significance of the Minister's Ordination and its relevance to the particular ministry into which he is now to be installed.

The longest section in the document deals with Ordination in the New Testament, forming a general introduction to the whole. It is well argued that God brings into being such individuals as will exercise the functions of ministry under the Spirit on behalf of the whole Church. "Christian ministry is to be exercised in and on behalf of the Church, but it is always ministry in the Name of Christ." This reminds us of K. L. Schmidt's contention that "for Paul, for those who followed him, and for the Fourth Evangelist ecclesiology and Christology are identical".

The conclusion from this examination of the New Testament is as follows: "The evidence of the New Testament suggests that in the early decades of its life the Christian fellowship possessed neither

a clear conception of ordination nor a regulated order for an ordination service". Yet these were "emerging". "Until many Churches were established with an organised life questions of the external forms of the Church's life did not emerge." This is one interpretation of the data, but there are others. For example, Professor Schweizer of Zurich declares the New Testament knows of no special ministry with special privileges regarding baptism, the eucharist or preaching, and indeed that the New Testament writers studiously avoided the words in current use for official ministry or ministers. (cf A. S. Clement's report in the *Baptist Times* for 8th August, 1957.) On the other hand, A. M. Ramsey maintains that "the same truth lies behind the Lord's commission to the Twelve, the episode of Peter and John laying hands on the Samaritans, the dealings of Paul the Apostle with the Corinthians and the episcopate which prevailed from the second century". Perhaps all of us, Baptists as well as Anglo-Catholics, tend to read into the New Testament what we already believe!

It is generally agreed that conceptions of the ministry belong to an understanding of the nature and function of the Church. Our document accepts this, and quotes certain passages which require the consent of the local community in the appointment of ministers. But Ramsey, referring to Acts viii, 14f, observes that "when the Samaritans become Christians they are not to think of themselves as initiated into a Samaritan fellowship with its own isolated experience and spiritual life. They are to know that to be Christ's is to be included in the one life of the one people of God which sprang from the historical events at Jerusalem." J. K. S. Reid supports this, and maintains that "the real issue concerns the nature of the oversight that is here exercised, or again the nature of the ministry which Peter and John discharge". (But Reid is not very sympathetic towards Baptists and Congregationalists!)

In view of the ambiguity of the facts presented in the biblical records—or at any rate of the assurance by Christians of differing traditions that they each have the right interpretation—it is surely our immediate task as a denomination to strive for a clear understanding of the essential meaning of those conceptions of the Church and ministry which are found in the New Testament, being ready to hear the judgment of the Word of God on our own polity as well as on others, and then to express these in the most appropriate form for today. As surely as we believe the Holy Spirit still guides the *ekklesia* of God, we may hope that this statement prepared for the Baptist Union Council will awaken the urgent desire for such an understanding and such an expression, as its contents are discussed in Fraternals, in Church meetings, and in the Associations. Many may think that already we are reproducing with substantial fidelity the New Testament pattern; but there are not a few who are verily persuaded the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His holy Word.

Certain conditions which obtain in our day but have no real parallel in the Apostolic Age will need careful thought. Among them will be the following:—

Baptists now express their fellowship with one another through the Union, which, since 1896, has possessed a Committee concerned with Ministerial Recognition. The current practice is to "recognise" a man as a Probationer, and then after three years to account him a Minister through a special service at the Assembly. The relation of this service to his Ordination is by no means easy to formulate. Likewise, ministerial candidates for the mission-field have a Service of Commission, and their Ordination can either be separated from this or included in it. Indeed, our document has it that "all forms of ministry thus appointed are ministries of the whole Church": might we not approximate a little more to that wholeness if B.U. and B.M.S. were one?

Long ago John Robinson spoke some powerful words when taking leave of his friends at Leyden. "I cannot sufficiently bewail", he said, "the condition of the Reformed Churches, who are come to a Period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their Reformation. The Lutheran can't be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw . . . and the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things . . . I beseech you . . . that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written Word of God." If his description of Lutherans and Calvinists may be an indirect hint to modern Baptists, his appeal could be for us a direct challenge.

MAURICE F. WILLIAMS.

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL: THEIR RELATIONSHIPS

THE ecumenical movement is not merely an organisation. Nor is it a creation of our own time. It is a movement of thought and spirit as old as the New Testament. It was part of that ferment of the Spirit which created the apostolic age, giving to primitive Christianity its world-wide vision and to the Christian Church its consciousness of a world-wide unity. The Greeks had a word for it and in some parts of the Church the word *ecumenical* has been in common usage all through the centuries. Although it rings new to many of our ears its return to currency is a recovery, not an invention. It reflects a renewed apprehension of the spiritual unity of Christians throughout the world and the common obligation and privilege of all Christians to make the world their parish. In this recovery of some of the classical and central notes of the faith many different organisations have been used by the one Spirit; no monopoly can be claimed by any instruments of a Spirit which still bloweth where it

listeth. The standard *History of the Ecumenical Movement** inevitably presents a crowded canvas on which the Student Movement, the Evangelical Alliance, the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, the Bible Societies and a host of other agencies and movements appear. All these have contributed to men's understanding of the calling of the Church to mission and unity.

Within this comprehensive picture the two organisations now known as the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches have been related with special intimacy, through their history, composition and purpose. The older of the two is the I.M.C. which virtually took shape in 1910 as the Continuation Committee of the historic World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh. Ten years later this Continuation Committee was reconstructed as the International Missionary Council with a membership based on national or regional councils. These councils were at first composed mainly of the representatives of missionary societies (such as the Conference of British Missionary Societies) but from an early date those which were formed in the lands of the younger churches included representatives of churches as well as missionary societies and such agencies as the Bible societies or the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., etc. (The Congo Protestant Council happens to have been an exception to this general trend, for it was only at a very late date—in 1956—that African church leaders became members of what had hitherto been a missionary body.)

Edinburgh, 1910, was not only the source of the I.M.C. It was a meeting place from which other parallel developments took shape. Notable amongst these was the Faith and Order movement. In preparing for Edinburgh it had been agreed that questions of church order should not be brought within the agenda of the meeting: it was held that authority for the discussion of these questions must rest with the churches themselves, and Edinburgh, 1910, was not a representative meeting of churches as such. For many people at Edinburgh, however, it was already clear that some of the deepest issues affecting the world missionary movement were emerging within the area of Faith and Order and would more insistently demand attention from this standpoint. Edinburgh, 1910, thus sharpened the necessity for the Faith and Order movement and the period of missionary history which followed—a period characterised (almost dominated) by the emergence of the younger churches—has shown repeatedly that the question of church relationships is inseparable from the business of the Church's obedience to its mission.

After the first world war there emerged what became known as the Life and Work movement. This brought representatives of the churches together to work at the implications of the Christian faith

**A History of the Ecumenical Movement* by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill (London, S.P.C.K., 1954).

in the realm of social and international relationships. The Life and Work movement did not directly stem from the world missionary conference of 1910 but it clearly arose within that growing experience of the ecumenical nature of the Gospel and the Church which lay at the heart of the earlier missionary conference. Many of the leaders and organisers of Edinburgh, 1910, shared in the initiative which led to successive Life and Work conferences and they did so under the same sense of concern for the world mission of the Church. It was, indeed, widely recognised that the kind of questions confronting men in modern society—in whatever part of the world—arose from situations which constituted a front-line missionary challenge.

When the World Council of Churches was launched at Amsterdam in 1948 the Faith and Order and Life and Work movements were incorporated within it. In the ten years "process of formation" which preceded Amsterdam many of the leaders (and permanent staff) of the I.M.C. played an active part in this whole process. This was specially true of the redoubtable Chairman of the I.M.C., Dr. John R. Mott, who became one of the first Presidents of the new W.C.C., and of the British secretary of the I.M.C., William Paton, who was an associate general secretary of the "W.C.C. in process of formation" until his untimely death. Had Paton been spared to bring his vision and abilities to this further shaping of instruments of the ecumenical movement, it is difficult to imagine that he would not have continued to embody the integral unity of all these interests, World Mission, Faith and Order, Life and Work, within his own person and activities.

The question of the relationship between the I.M.C. and the W.C.C. was, of course, often discussed prior to Amsterdam. One outcome of the discussion appears on the official note-paper of both bodies. The W.C.C. is there described as "The W.C.C. in association with the I.M.C.", and I.M.C. note-paper bears the heading "The I.M.C. in association with the W.C.C.". This special commitment of the one body to the other was given formal acknowledgement by the First Assembly of the W.C.C. and by the I.M.C. Within this formal "association" there has been a growing integration of the day to day work of the two Councils. For more than ten years such questions as religious liberty and missionary freedom have been handled by a single organisation responsible to both bodies—the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. For more than seven years there has been a single secretariat in East Asia maintained jointly by I.M.C. and W.C.C. In emergency relief and inter-church aid, the W.C.C. acts for the I.M.C. The I.M.C.'s special concern for research into missionary problems and the regular study of critical missionary situations is carried on within the Division of Studies of the W.C.C. which is served by a secretary of the I.M.C. As far back as 1939 the two Councils (one being in process of formation) set up a Joint Committee to work at matters of common concern and to assist in their developing relationships. It was this

Committee, in a reconstituted form,* which in 1956 was authorised by the I.M.C. and W.C.C. "to undertake the formulation—in the fullest possible consultation with all concerned—of a draft plan of integration" of the two bodies. This plan has been sent for consideration to member churches of the W.C.C. and to the member councils of the I.M.C. Even if it receives approval—or is amended in a form which is acceptable to both councils—action on it cannot be taken until the end of 1960. By the time this article appears the I.M.C. Assembly will have met in Ghana and the action of the Council will be known.

What is the fundamental reason—beyond organisational or administrative convenience—for the step which is now under consideration?

I believe it can be summed up as the inherent logic of the ecumenical movement and of the historical process just summarised. At no point since Edinburgh, 1910, has it been possible, in fidelity to all that the word *ecumenical* signifies, to disentangle from one another the great responsibilities and concerns which have come within these overlapping movements of World Mission, Faith and Order, Life and Work. Their bearing upon each other, their vital spiritual relation to one another, has increased rather than diminished with the years. This fact is of special and critical importance for the younger churches. These churches are, under God, the product of the missionary movement: only as, in turn, they participate in the world mission of the Church will they really be *living* churches. These younger churches are rightly entering into fellowship with other churches throughout the world, through the opportunities provided (not exclusively, of course) by a World Council of Churches. It is of enormous spiritual importance that in this relationship of churches one to another, whether younger or older, the "togetherness" should be togetherness in missionary vision and obedience. Again, nowhere are the questions of the nature of the Church and the nature of its unity more pressing or crucial than on the great missionary frontiers. Mission and unity cannot be kept apart without detriment to both. Yet again, in no areas of the world is the question of Christian responsibility in society more serious than in the lands of the younger churches.

The perennial issue of Church and State confronts the emerging churches of Asia, Africa and elsewhere, with life-and-death seriousness. All that Life and Work attempted in its own day needs to be

*It may be of interest to record the membership of this Committee. I.M.C. representatives are: Dr. C. G. Baeta, Mr. G. Baez-Camargo, Dr. J. W. C. Dougall, Dr. W. Freytag, Rev. E. H. Johnson, Dr. Helen Kim, Dr. C. T. Leber, Dr. J. A. Mackay, Dr. D. G. Moses and Dr. Eugene L. Smith. W.C.C. representatives are: the Bishop of Chichester, Dr. A. Eeg-Olofssen, Miss A. L. Fransz, Dr. Franklin C. Fry, Rev. Henrik Hauge, Metropolitan James of Melita, Dr. R. C. Mackie, Bishop R. B. Manikam, Dr. E. A. Payne and Dr. Roy G. Ross. The Chairman is Dr. H. P. Van Dusen.

furthered ecumenically today for the sake of the mission of the Church. Here, for example, lies the relevance to the I.M.C. of the current studies of the W.C.C. concerning Christian responsibility in areas of rapid social change; some of the most important and timely of these studies are being carried out in co-operation with younger churches in Asia and Africa.

This inner logic of the ecumenical movement is due to more than the pressure of events. It lies in the integral relation to one another of manifold aspects of the Christian faith and of Christian discipleship. Those who have framed the draft plan of integration believe that there is at work in these processes a pressure of the Spirit which makes the present moment a critical one in the life of both W.C.C. and I.M.C. A World Council of Churches cannot be true to its calling unless its life is permeated with a sense of mission. As this mission of the Church is fulfilled in the contemporary scene it needs to be discharged in deep continuity with the great achievements of "missions" in the historic connotation of the term. And if the historic missionary societies are to perceive the full significance of the Christian mission in this new day and adequately relate their service to the vision and resources of all the churches—especially the younger churches—this calls for the deepest possible commitment of churches and missions to one another and to their common, unifying calling. It is in the light of such convictions as these that the quest is being pursued for the right relationship of W.C.C. and I.M.C. to one another.

NORMAN GOODALL.

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE

MARRIAGE Guidance has now come to be accepted as one of the established social services of the country. This is a surprising thing in our present history for the Movement has been in existence only since 1938. It goes back for a little over 19 years, which is not long for such inspirations to develop.

In 1938 a group of men and women, of various vocations, were working together as the "Marriage Committee", of what was then the British Social Hygiene Council. They were all people whose daily life brought them into contact not only with the problems of marriage, but of family life as a whole. Ultimately, this group separated from the parent body and in February, 1938, a new independent group of about twenty people, calling itself "The Marriage Guidance Committee", started work. Everyone was concerned not only with the widespread prevalence of marriage difficulties, but believed also that such problems should be approached from a fundamentally religious standpoint. The Eugenics Society gave the Group a generous gift of £200: Dr. Herbert Gray became its Chairman and Mrs. Hume its Secretary.

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To the Members of the Baptist Ministers' Fellowship.

Dear Friends,

Non Nobis Solum

Barry is a twelve-year-old in my Sunday School class. Quite suddenly he asked, "What does *non nobis solum* mean?" Now this had nothing to do with the subject under discussion, but Sunday School teachers are accustomed to such bolts from the blue. So I told him that its usual meaning was "Not unto us alone", but that it could be also translated as "Not for us only". Clearly his subconscious mind had been working on the title of special Christmas music which his Secondary Modern School had been practising.

This happened a week or so ago and since then my subconscious mind has been playing on some of the legal maxims which are used in our insurance and commercial work. For instance, one of these *consensus ad idem* is the basis of all agreements, for those who are contracting together must be of one mind and intention. This is not a product of our modern age—back in the days of the Old Testament the prophet Amos said, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" I hope, therefore, that you and your Church Officers will freely and fully consult us on all points of insurance so that knowing your minds on these matters we may advise you. If you or your deacons can call to see us when you are in London, then a welcome awaits you in our offices in Baptist Church House.

This will be the New Year issue of the Fraternal. It is the time of new resolutions and we shall renew the old resolution *non nobis solum* for we seek to carry on our work here not for ourselves alone but for the benefit of the whole denomination.

Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN.

General Manager.

From this pioneer band of people has come the National Marriage Guidance Council of today. In the autumn of 1938 plans were discussed at a public meeting held in the Caxton Hall, in London, which resulted in the formation of the Council. As soon as the news was known people began to ask for help, but when the second world war broke out, the rudimentary organisation had to be suspended. But in 1942 some of the workers were able to get together again and the Council was restarted, with Dr. David Mace as its Secretary, then a comparatively young Methodist Minister working in London.

After much searching and as a considerable venture of faith, three rooms were rented at 78, Duke Street, London, W.1, where the Headquarters of the Council still are. There was little money. We went on believing that God had given us a work to do on behalf of our fellow men. The belief was justified. Money came in and "patients" again began to arrive, this time in increasing numbers. Branches were formed in various parts of the country. An Education Committee was established in 1944, which began to organise lecture courses for young people and to undertake what is now a vast and specialised programme of education for family life. Marriage Counsellors were organised and trained after careful selection. The first Selection Conferences took place in 1945, and the first training course was held in London in 1946.

In 1948 the Government accepted the principle of giving grants in aid to the Movement. That is now an accomplished fact, though the aid is trifling compared with the sums spent on legal aid for divorce. Today, there are 80 Councils at work in this country, Scotland has its own M.G.C., and the Movement has spread abroad to Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere within the Commonwealth. All this has come in a short space of time from the moment when that small group launched out on the great deep, without money or premises, or even prospects, with only faith and hope to lead it.

The services the Councils render may be summed up under the following headings. First of all, there is the work of conciliation in the often difficult differences that at times beset husband and wife, which may lead directly to the break-up of the marriage. This is entirely confidential and without fee, though "patients" are asked, if possible, to contribute a little to the expenses of the local Council. Most of these cases demand many interviews and skilled and sympathetic treatment. To enable them to cope satisfactorily with these intimate and often intricate problems the Counsellors, though remaining a voluntary service, without pay, are carefully trained. Counting a year of probationary Counselling, the training takes two years. The Movement claims that this is one of the most rigorous disciplines that any body of voluntary social workers has imposed upon itself. There is a constant stream of distressed people seeking help in all kinds of marital difficulties which range from the purely physical to the psychological, economic, and often spiritual. It is

difficult to say how much success attends this service, nor would it be wise to attempt to do so, but experience shows that rarely do people leave our Counsellors without having been helped in some way.

Secondly, the National Council is spending much time and thought on education for marriage. Each local Council, which is an autonomous unit affiliated to the National, does its own work in that respect. Constant courses on Preparation for Marriage are run throughout the year for young people getting married, which are widely attended; lectures are given to professional groups, and many couples are prepared privately. It is better to put a fence at the top of the cliff than run an ambulance to the bottom when people have fallen over, and there are many who believe that the only real answer to marriage breakdown and the divorce figures lies in proper education about what marriage means. This educational work is being widely extended and appreciated. Many local Education Authorities up and down the country are supporting it.

Thirdly, the Movement is publishing much excellent literature on Sex, Marriage and Family Life. It has established its own Book Room at 78, Duke Street, W.1, and its book lists are accepted as authoritative for this particular field.

Fourthly, we have found ourselves often involved in family problems that do not involve any possibility of marriage breakdown. Many happily married people at times have difficulties they want to discuss with some confidential and knowledgeable person. Their doctor is often too busy to be able to give them much time: they have no minister or lawyer, so they come to us. It is an attempt on their part to get expert and sympathetic help to which Counsellors are gladly responding. It should be said that Counsellors do not seek to give advice or tell people what to do. Our aim is non-directive counselling, helping our clients to understand the true meaning of their difficulties, and thus to find their own solution.

We are at all times glad to have the help of clergy and ministers of all denominations. Many are taking our training courses and becoming Counsellors. For others, who inevitably in the course of their work come across marriage problems, but who do not feel able to become Counsellors, the Movement is providing courses of lectures by experts, particulars of which can be obtained from the Education Secretary, N.M.G.C., Duke Street, W.1.

Such is a short account of one of the most interesting and progressive social services of our time. It is now assured of Government approval and is receiving every year more public appreciation and support. It is interdenominational and indeed inter-religious. On the Councils Jews, Christians and non-Christians work together to build up family life. It is a Movement worthy of the support of the Churches and especially of the Ministry. It is rooted in a deep conviction about the spiritualities of marriage which should commend it to all Christians, whether ministerial or lay.

JOHN CROWLESMITH.

THIS FREEDOM

IT has often been claimed that of all branches of the Christian Church the Baptist Denomination has been in the forefront of the fight for freedom and that of all people Baptists have the most clear and logical conception of freedom. It can be fairly asserted that here lies the basis of the faith which was the inspiration of our forefathers and is a fundamental requisite to us still. Freedom in Christ. The glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

But this freedom in the sense that Paul understood it was not simply freedom from external sanctions or laws but freedom to achieve progress and growth in a new-found relationship in Christ. Freedom in this sense implies the authority of that new relationship—the authority of Christ. As Paul sought to work out the implications of this gospel in the early Church and to escape the bondage of the law and Judaism, so our Baptist forefathers sought to work out the same gospel in their day and endeavoured to escape the bondage of ecclesiastical dogma and the authority of the secular rulers over the spirit of man.

Freedom for Paul, as for the early Baptists, was not the freedom of the individual to do as he might wish, for freedom in Christ is freedom under the authority of Christ. What he called freedom, was in fact acceptance of a new authority, without which there was no freedom. We need at times to remember that we are Baptists not simply because we believe in Believer's Baptism, but also because we believe in the necessity of individual freedom, and further believe that this does not exist without authority. Our task is to make certain that the freedom we claim today is made effective in that essential authority.

Here surely lies the answer to many of the denominational problems of our time.

So great is the need for answers to some of these problems that it would require something in the nature of a "Royal Commission" of Baptists to study and present them to the Churches.

Consider for example the problems of our denominational finance. Already some of our probationer ministers have been making revolutionary suggestions. It is alien to our Baptist faith that the finances of the Churches should be centralised, and that the use of our funds (including the stipends of all ministers) should be directed by the authority of the whole Church, rather than by the local Churches in some instances and by the Grants Executive of the Home Work Fund in others. For many Churches there is but partial financial freedom, while for others the "freedom" amounts almost to careless irresponsibility in everything. Is the Home Work Fund the genius or the expedient of the Baptist Denomination? Would not the granting of a rightful authority to the B.U. bring a greater measure of real freedom to ministers and Churches alike?

This is a problem that arises out of a deeper and more urgent matter, the whole conception of the Baptist ministry and the precise

definition of the authority of that ministry. And from this emerges the question of the real meaning of Ordination among us. Dr. Payne points out (Fellowship of Believers, 36-37), that for the early Baptists the idea of authority was by no means absent. What is wanted is a clearer conception of the exact status of the ministry. The implications of spiritual freedom are often denied us because there is no body of reference beyond that of the leadership in the local church. There are instances where the life of a Church is conditioned by a group of its spiritually weakest and most awkward members. The growth of the Church in the spirit of freedom is hindered because the status of the ministry is undefined. More than this, the psychological effect of this lack of definition is often noticed in contrast to those Churches which acknowledge an authoritative ministry.

At present a minister often falls hard between two stools. Tacitly he is divided from his congregation by the aura of distinction and respect with which people invest him, yet when he wishes to guide his congregation he finds that this represents nothing he can refer to. Whether he is trained or "lay" he is worse off than a wise layman. For he is set apart and yet less able to be a "pastor" than, say, a Presbyterian minister in that he has no clearly defined status.

The trained minister who often finds himself in grave uncertainty as to his precise position. What do his years of training count for? It often seems a matter of local expediency or even of finance that governs the choice of a man who fills the office of minister. Is there no distinction between the trained Baptist minister and the untrained lay pastor? And what do their offices involve?

This lack of definition leads to an incomplete conception of the ministry as well as of the minister. Either the training and ordination mean something or they do not. This meaning must surely involve some understanding of the implications of the Churches setting aside the minister in the name of Christ and what this involves for the man himself by way of training and fitness for the task.

If ordination means nothing, surely in consistency we should ask ourselves why we have an accredited ministry at all. The existence of an accredited list implies that Baptists do recognise an ordained ministry; the trouble is that we are afraid to commit ourselves to a too close definition and it is this that so frequently limits the effectiveness of our ministry.

Is it necessary to our Baptist conception of freedom, for example, to regard our Superintendents as acceptable only when they have no authority? How often these brethren would be able to effect a God-guided settlement of a church and minister but are powerless because we treasure our independence more than our freedom. In choosing a minister it is an open question whether the Church meeting of a large, influential Church is more truly guided by the Spirit than the Superintendents, who should know the whole picture of the Church and by reason of their office have a truer knowledge

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of the real worth of the ministers in their care. Is the small group of Christians meeting in some country village more capable of acting in accordance with the mind of Christ than the Superintendent who might guide the situation with more wisdom because of his knowledge and understanding? It has been said of the country Churches today that they are dying from the very independence our forefathers died to give them.

The organisation of the B.M.S. is presumably no less Baptist in principle than that of the Baptist Union. Yet the B.M.S. through its committees assumes a central authority which our home Churches would reject as being un-Baptist.

The development of our Baptist tradition was largely nurtured in the social life of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when, in town and village, large influential families not only ruled the Church, but were the centres of responsibility and the spiritual and material reservoirs of the Church's life. In such a social life the Baptist tradition was "at home". That social life has changed, the families have gone, the responsibility for our Churches is spread among all the members in a constantly fluctuating population. We had in the past contained within our congregational system an "aristocratic organisation" which devolved from the wisdom and influence of families and individuals by virtue of their long service in the Church. This centre of responsibility has now largely decayed owing to our present social revolution. In order to remain a living system this must be replaced. If it cannot be found within the Church meeting then cannot a case be made for seeking it elsewhere? To find the equivalent we need to think in terms of an accepted authority in the whole Church based on the theocratic conception of freedom which is so vital a part of our faith.

C. N. W. HARRISON.

MY FIRST PASTORATE

POTTER STREET until 1953 was a small hamlet on the main A.11 road between Epping and Harlow. The Baptist Church, built in 1756, had in recent years been kept open only by the loyal devotion of about a dozen people. Between 1953 and 1955, 1,100 new houses were built in the immediate vicinity of the church as part of Harlow New Town.

Three years in such an area as this has brought home to me the stark realities of the present situation in this country as it affects the Christian religion, the church and the ministry.

My first task was to visit the newcomers. I found that the only relevance of the church for most was when a baby was born; and the superstitions surrounding infant baptism have appalled me, and convinced me of the need for our Baptist witness. One mother said: "This one's not growing as fast as the others did; I'm sure it's because he hasn't been done"! Some wanted their children to go to the

nearest Sunday School, but experience has shown that the majority of these parents make no effort to see that their children maintain a regular attendance. For the past two years our Sunday School has remained constant about the 250 mark, and although we get new children every week, we lose an equal number. Of the 1,100 new families about 20 are regular worshippers with us or with a Free Church elsewhere, about 100 are Roman Catholics, and not more than that number have any direct link with the local Parish Church. Most worship mammon in the form of a T.V. set or a car, but I am sure that there is a void in the hearts of many, caused by loneliness and the aimlessness of modern life, which only Christ and His Church can fill. I thank God for the one couple with no previous church connection who responded to the initial visit, offering them friendship and fellowship within the church, and who now know and love and serve the Head of the Church.

In the task of building up the church I have found three major difficulties. The first was to link up with us existing church members, who had moved to Potter Street, and of whom only the very keenest came along regularly from the start. All too few ministers and churches in the London area, from which most come, have bothered to send names and details, and I would beseech my brethren to help those of us in new areas in this way by telling us of members of the church or congregation, who are moving out. Those who do not set out definitely to come to church every Sunday as soon as they arrive in Harlow soon get out of the habit of coming, owing to having children, or to visiting relatives on a Sunday, or to the distance involved. Many Free Church folk fail to join any church because the one of their own denomination is too far away, and they seem loath to link up with another denomination. The policy in planning church sites in the New Town has been to have one Free Church in each housing area, but in the area of Tye Green, which borders Potter Street, there will be by 1960 a population of 17,000 with no Free Church. It is a great sorrow to me that attempts to create some form of united Free Church witness in that area have so far failed. I am convinced that the extension of a narrow denominationalism into new areas is a hindrance to the building up of Free Churches of any kind.

The second difficulty in creating a strong church fellowship has been due to our traditional pattern of church life, where we have weekday organisations for every age group in the community, and as a result tend to split up both the church and the families we are seeking to win. We are trying to remedy this weakness by stressing that the morning service on a Sunday is for the whole family (with a crèche and Young Worshippers' League), and by arranging Family Evenings once a month on a Saturday during the winter. The heavy demands made on a few very willing workers in the Sunday School and Youth Organisations cause a weakening of the fellowship of the Church both on a Sunday and at the week-night meeting for Bible

Study, discussion and prayer. I am convinced that we have a lot to learn from the Family Church approach.

The third difficulty is caused by the poor quality of our own Christian lives, and here I would point to the beam in my own eye as well as to the mote in others. The hardest problem I have found in the ministry is to establish Christian personal relationships between the minister and his members, as well as between members themselves.

It is easy in such a situation for the minister to become a jack of all trades and a master of none. There have been many occasions when I have been envious of the opportunities for teaching given to the R.I. day-school teacher, and for pastoral counselling afforded to the doctor, midwife, health visitor, probation officer, or school enquiry officer. I still often wonder whether our pattern of the ministry is right.

Yet as I look back over the past three years I give thanks to God for three of His gifts to His Church. The first is the devoted loyalty and service of a few saints, many of them widows. The second is the promise of young lives growing up to know and serve the Master. The third is the wider fellowship of the Church. A full-time ministry has been possible at Potter Street only through the help of the Home Work Fund. When in 1955 the church was faced with restoration work amounting to £1,750, the Essex Baptist Association came to our assistance with a loan of £1,000, gifts totalling £600, and a temporary wooden building for youth work.

The writer on this subject in the July issue of *The Fraternal* was able to say that his first pastorate had been both happy and fruitful. I cannot honestly apply either adjective to mine so far. As I said at the beginning I have become aware of certain realities, but the greatest of these is of the guiding presence of God, and perhaps no minister can ask for or expect more than that.

J. F. V. NICHOLSON.

OF INTEREST TO YOU

The items recording the various experiences of our members are inserted as some evidence of Fellowship and with the suggestion that, if readers would spend threepence or even twopence-halfpenny in personal communication, it would be an investment well worth while.

Pastoral Changes. The following have accepted new charges: Maxwell Berry, Huntingdon; W. H. Batstone, Nottingham (Chase); E. R. Brown, Maldon; E. Buckley, Kingston-on-Thames (Bunyan); R. Drake, Longford; A. E. Easter, Huddersfield (New North Road); T. H. Elwyn, Walgrave; E. A. Follows, Canada; F. A. Glover, Ventnor; V. Greenwood, Louth; N. L. Harris, Breachwood Green, Herts; G. H. Johnson, Darlington; F. T. Keightley, Luton (Limbury); T. R. Lewis, Leeds (Harehills); D. J. Maguire, Newark; Rex Mason, Cardiff (Albany Road); A. G. Mendham, Barnstaple; G. McCabe,

Thornaby; E. H. Morrish, Plymouth; K. J. Norman, Downton; G. C. Ottaway, Pinner; R. H. Rowland, Liverpool; J. Saunders, Bridgwater; G. Weston, Lumb.

From our Colleges: Cardiff—K. J. Jones, London (Dalston Junction). From Manchester—J. G. Ambrose, Tring; N. Bruen, Walthamstow.

Retirements. W. Emberson, T. E. Sims Davies, W. M. Tristram after long years in the active pastorate. D. Montgomery has resigned; H. J. Andrews has accepted a teaching appointment and T. G. Winter has joined the Church of England.

The intimation that Townley Lord has resigned the Bloomsbury pastorate to take a teaching appointment at Furman University, U.S.A., came as a sad surprise. His departure means a loss to our Denomination and to the religious life of the country. His practical pulpit messages with their evangelical emphasis proved a means of grace to many hearers; his genial disposition made him a brother beloved; his books and articles were widely read and his broadcasting flair carried his resonant voice and influence far and wide. It is good to know that Dr. Lord has every intention of returning after a period of six months.

The Superintendency. Charles Hardiman succeeds A. J. Klaiber as Superintendent of the West Midland Area. After six years in Scottish pastorates and four as Tutor in Glasgow B.T.I., he came South to Co. Durham in 1951. A recognised leader in Association affairs, he was made Secretary of the N.B.A. (Northern Division). F. C. Bryan closes his seven years in the Eastern Area and is to be succeeded by J. H. G. Adam, who is no stranger to the Area, having filled two successful pastorates in Essex, before coming to Balham in 1948. These two appointments will sustain the high level of the Office and will carry the confidence of the Denomination.

B.M.F. Secretariat. Our Fellowship is indebted to J. H. G. Adam for the fine work rendered as our Hon. Sec. We greatly regret that his appointment as Superintendent involves his resignation of the Office.

Spurgeon's College. After two years as Principal, following eight years as Tutor, our brother Eric Worstead has resigned his charge. In accepting the resignation, the Council expressed sincere regret, and placed on record its deep appreciation of the "services rendered to the College and respect for his character, integrity and academic ability". The Denomination generally, will unite prayerfully for our friend in this crisis in his career and for the College, in the necessary arrangement concerning his successor. Meanwhile, additional responsibility rests upon W. Charles Johnson and Geoffrey Rusling, Chairman and Secretary of the College Council.

Regent's Park. Regent's is to be congratulated on securing as successor to R. L. Child, G. Henton Davies. A powerful personality, great in scholarship and preaching ability, he will fully maintain the high tradition of his predecessors.

B. M. S.

Your prayers are requested, especially during the first three months of 1958, for the progress of the work overseas and for worthy support from the churches at home.

. . .

By 31st March, 1958 (when our accounts for the year are closed), we require £298,156 to meet essential commitments.

. . .

364 missionaries sent out by our Home Churches look to us for support in prayer and in giving.

We must not fail them.

. . .

For we are labourers together with God.

1 Corinthians iii, 9.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

93 GLOUCESTER PLACE

LONDON, W.1

British Sailors' Society. D. N. Clarkson Piper becomes Port Chaplain at Rotterdam. His upstanding figure, cheery voice and warm-hearted approach, will make him a power for good amongst our seamen at Rotterdam, even as was the case in London.

The Commonwealth and Colonial Society. F. C. Morton, in once again responding to the call of duty, is visiting Freetown, Sierra Leone, where his experienced advice has been solicited. This is indeed an unselfish service and we trust that, as before, his presence will be a source of strength and blessing to the church and community to which he has gone. We shall welcome his return in January.

Moderator. The choice of G. T. Bellhouse as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of England will be widely welcomed. His highly successful ministry at Eastbourne has made him a worthy successor to the famous James Reid. Our B.M.F. remembers him as a welcome speaker at the Annual Meeting and Lecturer at the Summer School. We wish him a great year of Office.

B.M.F. Annual Meeting. It is a pleasure to announce that we have secured as speaker the Rev. J. R. W. Stott, Rector of All Souls', Langham Place. Widely known as an Evangelical leader, he takes every opportunity to establish a better understanding between Christian people holding different theological ideas. The subject of his address is—"The Conservative Evangelical Position". The meeting will be held at Bloomsbury, Wednesday, 30th April, at 2.15.

Laid Aside. Concern has been evinced by the illness of our esteemed Treasurer, Charles Bullock. His absence from Sidcup and from our Fellowship Council was greatly regretted. We are glad to know that he has made a good recovery. E. G. Smith, of Westbury Leigh, and H. J. Warner, of Tunbridge Wells, are seriously ill; L. E. Addicott is suffering from the result of an accident; C. H. Cleal and L. R. Floyd have each had a period in hospital following surgical operation. We think of all these with prayerful interest and hope that in the near future they may be restored again to home and service.

The Library. A. J. Westlake writes—Ask your local Librarian for the slip giving a list of books which may be borrowed, in addition to those contained in the box circulation. Particulars of books on sale may also be obtained from him. Westlake asks for offer for purchase of Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (final volume missing).

In Memoriam. S. P. Goodge, an earnest and evangelical preacher, also a gifted writer, did good work for twenty years at Aldershot. A breakdown in health compelled resignation, and there followed a long period of personal anxiety and nervous exhaustion. His death occurred in tragic circumstances.

Wilkinson Whiteley, on leaving Manchester College, entered upon the pastorate at Carey, Preston, 1910, and served in successive churches until retirement 1950. His final charge was Paignton,

where for twelve years he ministered greatly to the benefit of church members and holiday-visitors. Apparently in good health, he passed away in his sleep. He left in all his churches those who are thankful to God for his personal friendship and helpful preaching.

William Lonsdale died at the age of 75. A Rawdon man, he spent 32 years in active service from 1912 onwards. Joining the Forces, he was made Chaplain in recognition of his influence in the ranks—a position he held for five years. He was a man of deep devotion, a Nathaniel indeed, in whose spirit there was no guile, and was everywhere regarded with widespread esteem.

W. D. Ross, on leaving Spurgeon's in 1899, after a brief initial pastorate, maintained a great ministry at Worthing, Liverpool, Sutton and Brighton, spending a decade in each place. As Master of Science, his sermons bore evidence of his scholarly mind. An influential member of the Kent and Sussex Association, he served a term as President. His retirement was spent at Worthing where, after failing health, he passed away. A wise counsellor, a trusted leader, a faithful friend, we thank God for his memory.

R. C. Griffin, Horfield, Bristol, his one and only church, stands as a memorial to Griffin's consecrated labour. Here he erected a splendid pile of church-premises and filled them with overflowing congregations. His pastorate extended from 1895 to 1925. For a further nine years he was General Superintendent Eastern Area. Bristol had no more loyal son, and the name of his College was written on his heart. A man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, he died, honoured and beloved by all who knew him.

A. J. Klaiber. Regent's Park Brotherhood loses a notable member in the death of A. J. Klaiber. Soldier, he was awarded the M.C. Student, he won the B.D. Historian, he wrote the History of Baptist Suffolk. Pastor, he exercised ministries of increasing importance at Markyate, Ipswich and Upper Holloway. Revealing powers of leadership, he was for twelve years Superintendent of the West Midland Area and, as Secretary of the Superintendent's Board, he took a leading part in the policy of the Baptist Union, especially in the work of church extension. Courage on the battlefield was equalled by the grace and strength with which he triumphed over illness. He passed away with startling suddenness on the day before he was to have received a public recognition of the regard in which he was held throughout the whole Association, leaving behind the memory of good work well done.

M. E. Aubrey. Worthy tributes were paid in the Religious and National Press to the life and character of Melbourn Evans Aubrey, and in the *Baptist Times* to his devoted labours as Union Secretary, 1925-51. Son of the Manse, he was educated at Taunton and later at Cardiff College where he graduated B.A. Proceeding to Mansfield, Oxford, he took the Oxford M.A. For twelve years at St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge, his preaching attracted and influenced generations of University students. His Secretariat of the Union covered the

critical years of the War and its aftermath, throughout which he exercised notable leadership both in financial matters and organisation. He was successively President of the B.U. and the F.C.F.C. He also served as a member of the Royal Commission on the Press, and for his many services was awarded the high distinction of the Companionship of Honour. His intellectual ability was matched by his deeply spiritual nature, and while all and sundry praise the varied talents of this great man, our ministers will remember him as a brother and a friend. His death constitutes a loss indeed. To all friends thus sorely bereaved we send an assurance of prayerful sympathy, remembering also W. E. Booth Taylor on the death of his wife, who passed away after prolonged illness, bravely borne. May God's blessing and comfort rest upon all hearts.

THE WIDER CIRCLE

AUSTRALIA

N.S.W. His many friends in England will be glad to know of the success of the ministry of Victor Willis at Cronulla, where an increasing congregation makes necessary church extension. His influence is extending through wider circles in the State. Greetings to him and every good wish.

Victoria. In a letter to W. H. Tebbit, Milton Lee, of Nurrumbeneo, kindly refers to the Fraternal Magazine as constituting "a valuable link with men on the other side, helping us to know what they are thinking on problems common to us both". We may add that we also are glad to receive from members Overseas, news of their doings and short articles suitable for the Magazine.

Queensland. We thank Frank Varnes, of Rockhampton, for his kindly letter and reference to the Magazine, and send a greeting to the five brethren of his local Fraternal, one of whom travels twenty miles to attend the meetings. Hailing from Guildford, Surrey, he will be interested to know that our Baptist Church there is very much alive under the ministry of Clifford Smallman, also that the Cathedral, in course of erection, at the top of the hill, now assumes impressive proportions.

South Australia. F. C. Morton, Beasley-Murray, W. D. Jackson, Townley Lord and Theo. Bamber, are names in a welcome letter from T. J. Cardwell, of Port Adelaide. He draws an alluring picture of the eight-mile double road to Adelaide, with its centre of lawns and gardens, dotted with palm trees. Even more engaging is the story of his church, with its modern equipment and a membership of 100-plus, and a revenue last year of nearly £3,000. May blessings continue.

NEW ZEALAND

John Pritchard, Auckland, sends a gracious letter to Frank Bryan on his retirement from the Eastern Superintendency in succession to "our greatly beloved W. H. Tebbit". He speaks

happily of his work at the Tabernacle and his contacts with the N.Z. ministers, and thankfully reports baptisms, which have cheered his church. While missing the fellowship of loved ones at home, he has no doubts about God's leading, nor regrets concerning his acceptance of the Auckland pastorate. He may be sure that his memory here is as a fire glowing in many hearts.

Annual Assembly. The programme of the meetings—29th October-6th November, is just to hand. Best wishes to N. R. Wood as he enters upon his Presidential year.

We shall say goodbye to J. T. Crozier with genuine regret, and wish him a safe and happy return to his faithful people. Luke Jenkins, with others, has ministered to the church during their pastor's absence.

His people at Rotorua gave a great welcome to R. E. Bullen on his return after serious illness. We join them in thanksgiving for the restoration of one to whose unfailing support our B.M.F. is indebted.

The Billy Graham film has been used with much success in many of our New Zealand churches. The Evangelist is expected to visit New Zealand and Australia in April and May, 1959.

U.S.A.

Ralph Mitchell was warmly welcomed as he toured Great Britain during his month of "rest"! We are glad to report his complete recovery, as indicated in letters—from his home in Minneapolis. We send affectionate greetings to our good friend John Pitts, as he commences ministry at Nassau, Bahamas. May God's blessing rest upon him in his new sphere of labour.

Basil Malof, better known as Pastor Fetler, has passed away. Founder of the Russian Missionary Society and builder of the Baptist Church in St. Petersburg and others in Latvia, he bequeaths the memory of a man of amazing energy and successful endeavour.

Thanks to Glenn Hamer, of Willows, California, for his subscription, paid in advance, and for his kindly references to the work of our Fellowship. We warmly reciprocate his good wishes.

CANADA

Dr. D. A. Burns, Superintendent Home Mission Board, Ontario, Quebec Convention, is rendering great service as our Correspondent, and in his endeavours to interest the Associations under his supervision. Similar help comes from Dr. Andrew Martin, President, Ottawa University, Kansas, U.S.A.

Ministerial changes are reported as follows: M. Sinfield goes to Rosalie, Queensland; W. H. Nelson to Arncliffe; D. F. Crowhurst proceeds to the Baptist Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A., for three years; A. H. Brooks, Home Missions Superintendent in Australia, to Aberdeen, Geelong; A. H. MacLeod, of Whitley Bay, Northumberland, England, shortly proceeds to a Pastorate in New Zealand; A. Loudon assumes the pastorate of Royal Oak, New Zealand.

B.U. NOVEMBER COUNCIL

Mingled feelings moved the hearts of the 150 members attending the November Council. Memorial resolutions concerning such leaders as M. E. Aubrey, A. J. Klaiber and G. D. Hooper, brought home the loss sustained. On the other hand, new members, ministers, business and professional men, gave evidence that future leadership is secure while the application of 13 new churches cheered the Council. Subjects of unusual importance provoked deep interest and first-class debates. The Report on Ordination was "received". It will be published by the C-K Press, price 2s. 6d. The budget which envisaged an expenditure of £134,000 was accepted. When to this is added the B.M.S. budget of £300,000, then it is clear that Baptists form a "Faith Mission" indeed.

Home Work Fund revealed a substantial increase and if further augmented, it will be possible to increase ministerial stipends in Aided churches by £50. The status and financial support of our Deaconesses received earnest consideration. Our Secretary, in a masterly speech, explained the implications of the proposed integration of the I.M.C. with the W.C.C. The Ter-Jubilee of the B.U. 1962-3, and proposals for its worthy celebration, were outlined. We lay upon the conscience of every minister the duty of leading his church in the study of vital matters implicit in these foregoing subjects. We further suggest that the church meeting is the place where they should be carefully and prayerfully discussed. Two vacancies in the Superintendency were filled and R. W. Thomson of Loughborough was appointed to augment the H.Q. Staff.

Miss Webb retires from Office after 39 years of talented and self-sacrificing labour, of the value of which the Council showed its warm appreciation. Rev. Clifford Cleal and Mr. Leonard Strugnell were absent through illness and messages of sympathy sent.

The Council was in almost continuous session from 10 a.m. on Tuesday to 6 p.m. on Wednesday. H. H. Rowley presided, and proved that a great scholar can be an efficient Chairman; his kindly consideration was further seen, in ready acquiescence of the general desire that members might be allowed a night's sleep when the first day's business was over.

EVANGELISM

Special efforts in Evangelism will continue during the coming year. In London, the Taylor brothers will visit six of our churches. The L.B.A. proceeds with its four-year plan to stimulate the local church as a centre for spiritual advance. In Bournemouth, under the leadership of our fellow-member, Barry Blake-Lobb, 67 churches are uniting in a Campaign conducted by two young Canadian Presbyterian ministers. Meetings will be held in churches around the Borough, 8th January to 30th November, the Mission concluding with a month of services in the Town Hall. We pray God's blessing on all these endeavours.

BOOK REVIEWS

God the Holy Father. By Rev. P. T. Forsyth, M.A., D.D.
The Independent Press. Price 9s. 6d.

Recent years have seen a re-awakening of interest in the writings of P. T. Forsyth, partly due to, and partly the cause of, the re-publishing of his books. In the present volume, under the general title of *God the Holy Father*, we are given three small books of sermons, re-arranged in such a way as to form a theological sequence, passing from *God the Holy Father* through *The Divine Self-Emptying* and *The Taste of Death to The Living Christ* and *Christian Perfection*. All these belong to the earlier years of Forsyth's ministry, and were preached and published before his larger and better-known books were written. Perhaps for that very reason they might well serve as an introduction to the study of Forsyth's theological teaching.

The revival of interest in Forsyth's writings is timely. Our age has witnessed a reaction against the theological liberalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unfortunately the reaction has sometimes found expression in extravagant and ill-balanced forms; but in Forsyth can be found a revulsion from all that is superficial and lacking in a proper sense of the supernatural, without that disregard of scholarship which is all too common on the part of certain writers of our time.

As is only to be expected in such a volume, the chapters are not all of equal value. Yet in every part is found the scorn of all that is shallow, while every page makes heavy demands upon the reader; when those demands are met there is a rich reward. In addition we often come upon phrases which startle and stab, which well repay a patient consideration, even should the verdict be "Surely not" or, more probably, "Yes, but . . ."

The Divine Self-Emptying seemed to at least one reader to be just about the best thing he has ever come across on the doctrine of the Incarnation or the Christian virtue of humility.

On page 134, by what is surely a *printer's* error, the words "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say" would seem to be attributed to Christ instead of to Paul.

D. G. WYLIE.

The Theology of the Sacraments. D. M. Baillie. Faber & Faber, 155 pp. 16s.

This book represents a collection of essays and papers. It opens with a biographical essay by John Baillie—a word portrait of his late brother. It closes with two chapters on *The Freedom of the Will* and *The Preaching of Christian Doctrine*. Between them stands a course of lectures under the general title of *The Theology of the Sacraments*.

The appeal of this volume stems from the gifts and graces of its author. There is here little or nothing that is new, little or nothing that has not been said before and said frequently. But Donald

THE BAPTIST HOME WORK FUND



***Ministers are asked to pray
that the Home Work Fund
may achieve what it sets out
to do***



**The General Secretary,
The Baptist Union, 4 Southampton Row, London, W.C.1**

This is the Year of Jubilee!

In the Royal Albert Hall on Thursday, 1st May, 1958, the Jubilee of the Baptist Women's League will be celebrated.

At the

Afternoon Session, 2.30 to 4 p.m., and
Evening Session, 6.30 to 8 p.m.,

the Denomination will praise God for fifty years of service and achievement and commission its women to go forward to greater things in days to come.

At both Sessions a Women's Choir of 1,000 voices will lead the singing and the total of the Jubilee Thank-Offering will be announced.

Jubilee Brochure—1s., plus postage; Slides, Film, Tape Recordings, and full information obtainable from the Baptist Church House.

Baillie possessed the rare gift of being able to bring matters of high theology down to earth, of translating technical jargon into terms that the ordinary man can understand. About his writing there is a deceptive simplicity. It is the result of the alliance within him of pastoral heart, lucid expression, and clear, incisive thinking. So it is that everything that is touched is illumined.

Naturally enough, the weight of the book resides in its middle section. We are not offered any systematic treatment of sacramental theology, but are asked to direct our attention to certain important contemporary problems in this field. Chapter headings amply indicate the nature of the ground to be covered: "Sacrament, Nature and Grace", "The Sacraments and Sacred History", "The Sacrament of Baptism", "The Real Presence", "The Eucharistic Offering". Throughout, the treatment is irenic. All the time we are conscious that we are listening to the heir of a rich liberal tradition, who has learned much both from biblical theology and from the ecumenical movement.

Readers of *The Fraternal* will find special interest in the discussion of the Sacrament of Baptism. It reveals D. M. Baillie's great theological strength; it also hints at his weakness. Here is a sustained attempt to lay down the guiding lines which a theology of childhood must follow; and Baptists, who possess no such theology, might well learn from this exposition. Here is a bold endeavour to defend infant baptism on the ground of its proleptic nature, to see it in a clear eschatological perspective; and Baptists should be generous enough to recognise this important lacuna in so much of their own thinking. But the systematic theologian falters on biblical interpretation. It is here that the issue must and should be joined. "Christian civilisation" is still a meaningful phrase north of the border. Perhaps this chapter of "sweet reasonableness" from Scotland would benefit from a cold blast of New Testament air! N. CLARK

Into the Same Image. R. E. O. White. Marshall, Morgan and Scott. 12s. 6d.

Mr. White, our minister at Birkenhead, is to be congratulated upon his first publication. He describes it, accurately enough, as "a book of expository studies designed for devotional use"; it is intended for serious reading, and will repay all who approach it as such. Its theme is the goal of the Christian Life as disclosed in the New Testament, and is unfolded under three main headings: "The Purpose", "The Process" and "The Portrait", each of which is clearly sub-divided. The final brief section, somewhat strangely entitled "Evangelical Ethics", summarises the Christian goal as Christlikeness, unattained until at last, in St. Paul's phrase, "Christ be formed in us".

It is perhaps hardly fair to comment that the writer confines his attention almost exclusively to the individual believer as if he were in isolation from all others; there is scarcely any reference to

the fact that the Christian is born again into a new and redeemed community, and that that community is something more than the mere sum of its individual members. Perhaps one day Mr. White will give us an equally careful study on the nature of the Church, as the New Testament reveals it. When he does so, we shall be the more in his debt.

H.V.L.

The Unfinished Task. Stephen Neill. Edinburgh House Press. 12s. 6d.

“The Gospel was given as an explosive force. It was the intention of its Founder that His Church should enter into conflict, never to be ended as long as time shall last, with every system of human thought and conduct that will not surrender to its power.”

This sentence is typical of the prophetic fire which glows throughout this fine book. The Church is always tempted to settle down as an institution, forgetting its call to be also a missionary society. Incidentally, Bishop Neill thinks that the word “missionary” is probably outmoded. He seeks to bring before his readers the continuing responsibility of the Church in world-wide witness. In doing so he faces problems involved in such a work, and has sections on care of the young, the winning of industrial man, and the significance of the Welfare State. He insists on the need for greater use of the lay resources of the Church, and appeals for preaching that is rooted and grounded in the Bible.

This is a book which ministers in any country will read with profit.

J.O.B.

Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan. Third Revised Edition 1957. Obtainable from B.M.S. Bookroom, 93, Gloucester Place, W.1. (1s. 6d.)

This is an important document for Baptists. It is the product of years of negotiation between the Christian Churches in these regions which is now presented in its final form to the participating churches for acceptance or rejection. And Baptists for the first time have been participating, as they have in similar discussions in Ceylon. Churches brought to birth and nurtured by B.M.S. missionaries from the days of Carey onward are being asked to say, within the next year or so, whether they are coming in to the United Church as set forth in this document or staying out. Issues of the greatest magnitude are at stake. It is important that ministers in this country as well as in India should know at first hand what is actually proposed, and grasp the scheme as a whole. The chief difficulties for our brethren centre round bishops and baptism, especially the latter. The decision rests with them. But we can help them greatly by our understanding and our prayers. And for understanding we need to go to the fountain head if we can. If we get hold of this document, we can.

F.C.B.

An Architect Preaches. H. H. Kent. Independent Press. 10s. 6d.

In this book the author, a British-born Canadian Architect and Minister, gives 24 sermons picked, as he says, at random, from 21 years of Ministry in one Toronto Church. If these sermons are typical then his preaching is obviously of a high standard. It is no mean achievement to minister like this for 21 years to any Church; and to do so while at the same time holding a responsible position in the business world is something of a triumph.

There are certain things these sermons lack. There is no attempt at style and no eloquent oratory. The preacher uses few adjectives. His illustrations are simple, even sketchy, his quotations short and spare. On the other hand each sermon is packed with matter, meriting quiet attentive reading. He is very much in earnest—too much, perhaps, to take trouble always to sustain his readers' interest. Occasionally one's interest flags, but there is ample reward for any effort that may be demanded in reading the book all through.

Three things stand out. First, he grapples with really great subjects. "What is Sin?", "The Trinity", "All Things are Yours", "Expressing the Inexpressible"—these are some of his sermon titles. Inevitably his very earnestness lands him into difficulties on such topics, but he faces them squarely. Perhaps he does little more than take us over well-trodden ground, but he is a sure guide and always takes us in the steps of the Master. Second, he has a happy way of expounding Scripture passages, and provides much material for sermons. Thirdly, he *preaches*. His aim is always to secure a verdict. He works within the framework of a clear Theology, and is fundamentally a man with a message for the times. This is neither a modern nor an out-of-date book. It is a contemporary restatement of the timeless Gospel, and cannot fail to bring a blessing to those who read it.

H. H. PEWTRESS.

HELPFUL EXCHANGES

With great relief and gratitude to God, we hear from Overseas of the improved health of Sir Herbert Janes. In Australia and New Zealand the simple goodness and unaffected friendliness of Sir Herbert and Lady Janes won all hearts and they have left a deep impression on Baptist folk across the seas. A similar tribute may be paid concerning the visit to Britain of F. C. Aldis and J. T. Crozier. Dr. W. L. Jarvis has secured from the B.W.A. a promise of a score or more American ministers to conduct Evangelistic services throughout Australia in 1958. Notwithstanding the greater distance, we hope that the number of British Baptists, ministerial and lay, visiting Australia and New Zealand will increase, thus deepening the bond between these countries and the land so many of them still think of as—Home.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, PLEASE

Subscriptions for 1958 are due on 1st January. Kindly pay the Correspondent of your local Fraternal or remit to our Treasurer, Charles Bullock, 1, Cornwallis Avenue, S.E.9.

The minimum requested is 4s., but, please note that no membership is cancelled because of inability to subscribe the whole, or indeed any amount. Prompt payment will be appreciated. One hundred-and-seventy members have, so far, overlooked their dues for 1957.

" THE BAPTIST TIMES "

The Chairman of The Baptist Times Company Ltd. reports an encouraging year. Sales have considerably increased, resulting in a substantial profit for B.U. funds. We underline the message of congratulation sent to the Editor, Walter Bottoms. Our ministers should advocate the claims and the values of *The Baptist Times*. It is surely anomalous that in some churches sales should be encouraged of religious weeklies which own no allegiance to, and show little interest in, our own Denomination. We trust that the coming year will see the paper nearer to the ideal of—" *A Baptist Times* in every Baptist Home ". Attractive terms are offered to churches purchasing a number of copies.
