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EDITORIAL

WHEN John Barrett became our Chairman two years ago, we published a message from him in the *Fraternal*, in which he called the B.M.F. to do some "constructive thinking about the future of ministerial service among us". This brought a stimulating article from William Spiers, which we published in April last year. There also has been discussion of the subject in many places where ministers forgather. But it now looks as if one particular aspect of the matter will soon come before the denomination in a more public way. There has been growing concern lately at the decline in the number of accredited ministers actually serving the Churches and a fear that before long we may be facing a serious shortage. As a result the B.U. Council has set up a commission to investigate "supply and recruitment for the Ministry". It is possible that their report may be presented to the March meeting of the Council and be known before these words are read. It can hardly fail to open up deeper and wider issues. We are likely, for example, to be confronted with the fact that the shortage of ministers is due, not only to inadequate supply at the source but also to increasing leakage in mid-stream.

The life of a minister today is very different from what it was fifty years ago. The whole pattern of our social life has undergone extensive changes, and among the results has been a lowering of the prestige of the Church, a lessening of the number that attend, a devaluation of the services of the minister and a depreciation in value of his stipend. Few young men leaving college would be prepared to consider a job at so low a level of remuneration. Yet, praise be, a considerable number of young men in our Churches are so prepared and make no trouble of it. But it is another matter in mid-life when family responsibilities increase and the shoe begins to pinch. Even then men can persevere if they feel they have a worth-while job. But all too often the pastoral care of one smallish Church hardly seems to give that feeling. On the other hand the Welfare State opens up fresh opportunities of religious work which can come as a real calling. There are chaplaincies in the forces and the hospitals; there is welfare work in factories offering a unique opportunity for pastoral care; there is religious instruction in schools, the only contact with religion many youngsters today get; and there are, too, many societies, ancillary to the Church, where men with ministerial training are a real asset. Some of these jobs can be combined with a pastorate. But some cannot. They are whole-time jobs in themselves.

For those, however, who have been truly called to the ministry, unless they come to a time when they have to confess they have mistaken their calling, it must be a sad day when they have to acknowledge to themselves that no Church offering a "worthwhile job" appears to want them, and that it may be the best thing to seek one or other of these alternatives.

And yet! When the call first came did we not dedicate ourselves to Christ for life service as ministers in His Church? Unless we were mistaken in our calling, can we ever be anything else? On what grounds do we conclude the time has come to quit?

The low stipend? Well, His was not princely. Nor is the denomination unaware and unashamed of it. Our people have made and are making considerable efforts, through the H.W.F., to make it less inadequate to the standards of today.

The small numbers? Well what is the root motive of our itch for the crowd? Jesus spent much of his time eluding crowds. It gave him more time for the individual and the special training of twelve.

The unresponsiveness? The lack of depth? The preoccupation with worldly things? But that's a most common phenomenon, well-known to the Lord who called us. The parable of the sower was surely told out of his own experience. It was all in the contract when we entered His service.

But "we have so little support from those who profess to be Christians. They let us down when we count on their help". Well, what did Peter do? And Judas? Yet the Lord held to his course and finished the work he had been given to do, though it took him to the Cross.

No man, when he is under the weather, disappointed, disillusioned, disheartened, sees clearly. The eye of faith is dim. He craves a light, and no light is vouchsafed. Who that heard it will ever forget the voice that came over the wireless in the nation's darkest hour, encouraging us to stand fast and persevere through all our trials? "Put your hand into the hand of God," it said, "That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way." Sometimes that hand will lead us forth to fresh fields. But sometimes it will lead us again round the same village, into the same pulpit, among the same people. Sometimes, too, it will touch our eyes.

OUR ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting. J. O. Barrett presides at Bloomsbury, on Wednesday, 30th April. Business at 2.15 includes the election of a Secretary to follow J. H. G. Adam who has just been appointed General Superintendent, Eastern Area. The Rev. J. R. W. Stott, M.A., Rector of All Souls', Langham Place, speaks at 3 o'clock, and the meeting will close at 3.50 to enable men to attend College Re-unions.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICALS AND THEIR FELLOW CHRISTIANS

THE publication of the book "Fundamentalism and the Church of God" (S.C.M. Press 15s., cheap edition 7s. 6d.) by Dr. Gabriel Hebert, focuses attention upon a difficult but vitally important problem in contemporary church life. The division between conservative evangelicals and other Christians, while difficult to define, runs very deep, and is in some respects more serious than our denominational divisions. It is of special importance to us as Baptists, for we find this sharp cleavage within our own denomination. In the work among students, many of us are painfully familiar with the chasm, or at least lack of co-operation, between the S.C.M. and the I.V.F. And now the "International Council of Christian Churches", a rival of the "World Council of Churches", has appeared, to organise the division on a global scale. It is maintained by many that this cleavage has actually widened during the last decade; in any case, it is high time something constructive was done about it. What can be done?

It is recorded that Nelson once came upon two of his sailors fighting on deck. Pointing to the Spanish ships in the distance, he said to them "Gentlemen, the enemy is over there". It is surely tragic that Christians should spend so much time and energy fighting one another as enemies, in an age when all Christians are confronted by many mighty enemies. The fight should be called off by both sides, since all involved in it are Christians, fellow-members of the one Body of Christ, who has given to us the new commandment that we should love one another. This is the outstanding merit of Dr. Hebert's book. It is written throughout in a positive, appreciative, irenic spirit. He is not engaged in a verbal battle with conservatives, but makes a sincere and usually successful attempt to understand their convictions, and to carry on a discussion as between brethren in Christ.

To call off the fight and to carry on the discussion as between brothers is then the basic necessity. The advice often given that we should simply drop all our differences is neither possible nor desirable. They must be faced, with all the painful tensions and the "agonizing reappraisals" involved. But they can be faced only if Christians establish the habit of listening to one another. And it must be a real listening on both sides. If we merely argue, "banging our ideological heads together", simply attempting to defend and vindicate our already established positions, we shall get nowhere fast. Real listening implies that the other person is accepted as a Christian, and has or at least may have, important insights into the truth which I may need to correct or supplement my own insights. We should do all in our power to encourage such friendly and humble exchange, whether by the spoken or written word, between conservative evangelicals and other Christians. In this connection it is

surely a big mistake merely to read the books which support one's views, or mix only with the Christians with whom one is already in complete agreement. A new creative synthesis can come only from the voluntary acceptance of tension, from an honest and thorough attempt to understand and evaluate the truth on the other side.

If there is to be such a fruitful discussion, an attempt to grow together through understanding, it is necessary that the practice of imputing the worst possible motives to the other side, should be completely abandoned. Or if not the worst possible motives, at least the worst possible opinions.

Have not many of us sinned against each other in this respect? Here we might well follow Dr. Hebert's good example. He does not normally use the word "fundamentalist" because of its now derogatory associations. He does not accuse conservatives of "obscurantism" or attribute to them doctrines, such as the dictation-theory of inspiration, which they do not hold. While subjecting them to positive criticism, at times severe, he has taken the trouble to find out what they really believe and why they believe it. Is it too much to require the same of conservative evangelicals? Is it not quite absurd to label all other Christians not accepting that particular theological position as "liberals" and "modernists", with the suggestion that they are not loyal to the faith, or even to the Lord? Of course, there have been "liberals" who were heretical, just as there have been "conservatives" who were obscurantist. Perhaps both types still exist. But that is no excuse for attaching labels and attributing motives to whole groups of people, most of whom are loyal and orthodox servants of Christ.

In the discussion between evangelical conservatives and others, it is important that truth should not be surrendered for the sake of unity—on either side. Such a discussion should have the effect of clearing away misunderstandings and all those irrelevant issues which do but darken counsel. This would bring the parties to those fundamental matters which lie beneath all secondary differences. Two of these may be mentioned here.

One of the basic difficulties in interpreting the Holy Scriptures is to distinguish between the literal and the symbolical. Conservatives are sometimes accused of taking everything literally, but of course that is not the case. Dr. Hebert quotes the conservative "New Bible Handbook" as saying "that in the Fall-story it is impossible to draw the line between the literal and the symbolic". All Christians have to draw that line, however, and many of our differences arise from the fact that we draw it in different places. The conservative, for example, insists upon the historicity of Adam and the literal interpretation of the Book of Jonah, whereas other Christians regard these as parables. While the conservative does not take everything literally, he tends to take far more of the Bible literally than his more liberal brother. Why is this? Dr. Hebert believes that it is because the conservative has a materialistic notion of what truth is. "Truth

seems to us to be first of all the truth of material fact, such as that which science studies. It is for this reason that it seems so plausible to think that if the Bible is true, it must be literally and factually true". This is the reason why the I.V.F. "New Bible Commentary" is so concerned to establish the factual truth of so many of the stories, including the creation narrative. There is little appreciation of the fact that truth can be expressed in many other ways—through symbol, imagery, legend, fable, myth, parable, poetry and other literary forms. This is a valid and searching criticism of much in the conservative outlook, but it raises a difficulty which Dr. Hebert ignores. He does not, for example, believe that the stories of Balaam and the ass, Hezekiah and the sundial are literally and factually true. But he does believe that the Exodus, the Return from exile, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection took place, literally as historic events. A distinction is being made, therefore, not only between symbolical and literal, but between professedly historical facts and actual historical facts. But who is to make the latter distinction and by what criterion? Was not the conservative reaction to some of the older liberals due to this very marked tendency to undermine faith in the historical accuracy of so much of the Bible? Is there not a legitimate fear of allowing spiritual truth to be divorced from history? May we not end up, like the gnostics, with a system of spiritual truth severed from history? We may find ourselves making the distinction between "tales" and historical events, as did some of the older liberals, on the basis of unexamined presuppositions, derived from an unbiblical philosophy of what is possible and impossible. There is a problem here for both sides.

The fundamental issue, however, between conservative evangelicals and their fellow Christians, concerns the nature of Biblical *authority*. The conservative identifies the Word of God in scripture with the words of scripture. He does not usually accept the dictation-theory of inspiration, but he does believe that God inspired the actual words, which are therefore without error and infallible. While it is admitted that the Old Testament is not perfect in the sense of complete, yet there is a strong tendency to treat the whole of scripture as if it were on a level. No attempt is made to distinguish between different levels of the apprehension of God's will, or to judge the lower (not necessarily the earlier) in terms of the higher. This failure to distinguish between the Divine and the human in scripture is, according to Dr. Hebert, akin to the old monophysite heresy. But we must uphold the truth of the two natures. "The Bible consists of words of men; hence there must be literary and historical criticism of the Bible. But through those words of men the Word of God has been spoken and still speaks".

But this distinction itself raises big problems. Dr. Hebert does not subscribe to the view that revelation consists solely of the Acts of God in history, and that scripture is but the human record and interpretation of those events. "If scripture is inspired at all, it

must be its words that are inspired; much as in a poem, the words which the poet has used are those he has chosen to express his meaning, and it is only through the words that we know the poet's mind". It follows that, just as we may not in Nestorian fashion separate the two natures in the Christ, so we cannot in scripture separate the Word of God from the words of men. On the other hand we must not confuse them. Perhaps we should be helped at this point by a closer study of our Lord's attitude to the Old Testament. Does he not, for example, judge the words of Moses in scripture about divorce by the original intention of God for marriage, also quoted from scripture? Is there not within scripture itself the Living Word of God, hidden in the Old Testament, revealed in the New, by reference to whom all scripture must be judged? The crib is necessary—because of the baby who lies within it. "Christ is the Lord and King of Scripture".

These are but two of the issues raised by Dr. Hebert's book, and upon which a friendly interchange of thought between conservatives and others would be fruitful. It is evident that there are values and truths on both sides which need to be conserved. Fellowship is the vital necessity. For in contending for the truth, is it not important to realise that love, fellowship and unity are an important part of the truth for which we contend? Why should we always be ready to sacrifice these for some other truth? The discussion of this problem in the spirit which pervades Dr. Hebert's book cannot do anything but good. Even more than discussion, if we can meet to pray and worship together, to embark on the common enterprise of evangelism together, and learn to love one another according to the Saviour's commandment, then He who has already made us one through the blood of his cross, will manifest our unity to the world.

S. F. WINWARD.

ISSUES AT THE I.M.C. GHANA ASSEMBLY

REPORTS on the Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council have been made in articles elsewhere, and rather than duplicate information already accessible, I am venturing here to give, albeit briefly, a purely personal account of some of the major issues raised.

Much attention was given to the setting up of a Theological Education Fund of no less than U.S. \$4 million. Half of this was granted by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., on condition that Mission Boards in America would pledge to contribute an equal sum over a period of five years. Nine Boards had made the necessary undertaking, and so this phenomenal Fund came into existence. Much discussion centred on the best ways in which this money could be used. It was agreed to devote some \$3 million to assisting approximately twenty seminaries throughout the Younger Church areas, "on the basis of their strategic location, the excellency of their

present work, and their plans for development". The other one million dollars are to be used in improving the condition of libraries of theological schools generally, and in translating theological texts of major importance. Many policy considerations lay behind this bold decision to concentrate; it was probably a wise one, although tremendous difficulties will be faced in the listing of seminaries to be thus helped. Behind all this, however, lay other issues.

A Fund of such magnitude inevitably raised questions of ecclesiastical power politics, and also a query as to the wisdom of so large an amount of undiluted American money being thrown *en bloc* into the arena of I.M.C. enterprise, especially in view of stock Communist criticisms that the Ecumenical Movement is a tool of Wall Street. What was to be the relation of this Fund to the I.M.C.? Everyone agreed that Dr. Charles Ranson, to whose labours the Fund owes its existence, and who has for very many years shown a notable concern for the Christian Ministry, would make an admirable Director. But what impression would be given if the General Secretary left the I.M.C. to give full time to the administration of this Fund? Anyway, the appointment was made. It was very natural, in the circumstances, that just over half the members of the international committee set up to administer the Fund should be Americans. But would it not have been wiser either to run the Fund as a completely independent project, simply seeking I.M.C. advice as to its wise use, or else to go the second mile and have far fewer Americans on an ecumenical Administrative Committee? All may agree that this application of very considerable resources is being made at a most strategic point, and fitly follows upon the many surveys of theological education in different areas made by the I.M.C. in recent years.

Of late, increasing attention has rightly been paid to the need for a fresh study of, and encounter with, the great non-Christian faiths. Earlier predictions of their waning power in the modern world have proved premature, for they are undoubtedly showing a resurgent vitality. Although for the most part this should probably be understood in terms of cultural renaissance, rather than of religious revival, the time is nevertheless ripe for a real encounter between Christianity and these other faiths at the deepest theological level. At Ghana, U Kyaw Than warned delegates against conceiving of this in superficial terms. We are now being challenged to the most difficult, yet the most rewarding, part of the Christian missionary enterprise. It was pointed out, however, that similar attention needs to be paid to two other rivals of evangelical Christianity—Roman Catholicism as actually experienced in many countries such as the Philippines and Colombia, and secular materialism, the unexamined assumptions of which need to be more effectively exposed and controverted.

A whole range of issues lay behind the proposals for I.M.C./W.C.C. integration. Many who advocate integration do so on

theological grounds, believing that Unity and Mission not only equally belong to the Church's essential being, but are related in the deepest way one to the other, and that this truth should be made manifest in the organisational structure of the Ecumenical Movement. On the other hand, some delegates at Ghana made it plain that they were prepared to support integration proposals, provided they were put forward for reasons of administrative convenience and not of theology. In the event, the Ghana Assembly accepted in principle, by 58 votes to 7, the integration of the two Councils (74 being the maximum number of voting delegates).

It is important for Baptists to recognise that their stress on the autonomy of the local church places them in a different position from that of denominations organised as single Churches. If the Baptist Union is fundamentally only an administrative expediency, then Baptists may well choose other organs through which to carry out their missionary purpose. They cannot, however, expect their Presbyterian or Methodist brethren to view matters in the same light. Is the Baptist Union, however, merely an administrative expedient, or is it an expression, necessarily imperfect in the present divided state of the churches, of the fact that Christ's Body is one, and that members of the one Body, whatever their differing functions, have no *raison d'être* apart from their cohering in the whole? Here, as at many other places, our denomination should seek to clarify its theology.

Opposition to integration frequently arises from misrepresentation of the W.C.C. or misunderstanding of the I.M.C. Just as the W.C.C. denies all intention of becoming a super-Church, so it is equally false to speak of the I.M.C. as if it were some kind of super-Mission. The constitution of both bodies makes it perfectly plain that each exists to promote ecumenical interests without having any mandatory authority whatsoever over its members. Much of the fear of concentrated ecclesiastical power is thus seen to be illusory. It is true, however, that in future some missionary projects may best be carried through by ecumenical machinery. The real questions must be faced in realistic terms of the actual functions of the W.C.C., and of a new Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, if such results from integration.

Some believe that the lessons of history demand that missions keep their cutting edge through independence from all other entanglements. Others rejoice that, at long last, the Churches *qua* Churches are everywhere now publicly acknowledging World Mission to be of the essence of the Church. They therefore believe that every effort should be made, as laid down in the Plan for Integration already drafted, to make clear that "missions belong to the heart of the Ecumenical Movement", and to bring "missionary forces into closer relationship with all phases of the Church's witness in the life of the world". "Whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it." Dare the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die?

Have we suffered already from pursuing in separation ends which ought always to be held in a unity of purpose and planning? The irony is that those who resist integration for fear the prophetic spirit be restrained may, in fact, be proponents of that "institutional self-affirmation" which always stifles the prophetic voice, and is the greatest obstacle to fresh obedience in changing situations.

The existence of Evangelical churches all around the world has long been recognised as the achievement of the great century-and-a-half of Protestant missionary endeavour. What has now to be realised is that these new churches are hearing God calling them to engage themselves in the Church's world mission. We shall have to learn to think no longer of missions as an activity of churches in the West, but as becoming more broadly based upon the whole of the emerging world Christian community. The churches founded by missionary effort see Mission as essentially a Church activity, and have an increasing desire for inter-Church relationships across all national boundaries. This is the new vision which will demand expression in intricate patterns of new relationships. Its clearest expression as yet has come from the newly formed East Asia Christian Conference, which at its inaugural meetings at Prapat placed evangelisation and mission in the forefront of its concerns. There was a marked difference at Ghana between the voice of Asia and the voice of Africa. It was manifest, however, that this was because it is the voice of missions which we still hear from Africa; the African churches are, for the most part, not yet ready or able to make their own voice heard. What one or two of their representatives said, confirmed the view that, in time, Churches in Africa may certainly be expected to follow where the older churches of Asia are now leading.

Christians in the West, habituated by conditions here, seem slow to grasp that Gospel truth which is self-evident to Asian Christians—that what a sinful and divided world needs to hear above all things is the Gospel of the reconciling power of Christ, Who through the power of His Cross breaks down all "walls of partition". The reality of that power must be made manifest within the life of the Church, if the Church is to bear a faithful and effective witness to the world. This predetermines no organisational structures, but it does demand a visible unity among all Christ's followers. The Church's mission can be fully prosecuted only in unity.

That mission is Christ's, not ours. Just as He alone can give unity to His Church, so He alone can give unity amid the complexities of the present-day missionary situation. Perhaps our mutual criticisms arise from the fact that we have long separated things which should never have been put asunder. Should not Mission and Unity inform all the Church's life? No one can claim a monopoly of the missionary task, nor can anyone tell another in what way his obedience to Christ's call to Mission is to be expressed. But together we could seek His guidance—and obey.

VICTOR E. W. HAYWARD.

BAPTISTS AND THE WELFARE STATE

IT is time that Free Churchmen did some serious thinking about the Welfare State and the changes it is effecting in some of our traditional practices. This article attempts to describe the financial benefits of the Welfare State as they concern students for the ministry.

THE TRAINING OF THE MINISTRY.

At the end of the war a grateful country initiated the Further Education and Training Scheme which assisted ex-service men and women with generous grants from the National Exchequer as they underwent courses of vocational training. The men who entered our theological colleges 1945-1949 benefited considerably, as did the colleges indirectly. From 1949 onwards Government policy has been to leave to Local Education Authorities to determine what grants shall be made, as the money comes from local rates. The Churches have a national standing committee, "The Central Advisory Council of Training for the Ministry", on which Baptists are represented by Principal R. L. Child. The Council has from time to time made representations to the Association of Education Committees, as well as separately to all the L.E.A., detailing the procedure in selecting and training candidates for the ministry. It has asked that "the recommendation of any of our Selection Boards should carry a substantial measure of support for a Local Education Authority grant".

As soon as College accepts a man, he is advised to apply to the Local Education Authority in his own area for an educational grant to cover the cost of tuition in a specific course, and to meet maintenance and other personal expenses. L.E.A. response varies widely. Some pay what they are asked, and have even been known to find reasons for giving a bit extra. Some make a partial or token grant. Others refuse. There may be maintenance grants for dependants. Some L.E.A. pay the whole grant to the student on his undertaking to pass an agreed sum to the college, but others remit the appropriate portion direct to the student and the rest to College. There are State Scholarships for meritorious distinctions, awarded out of National Exchequer; County Scholarships which apply to certain University Honours Degree students, and Further Education Awards made through the L.E.A.

Anyone with knowledge of the grants received by men in theological colleges is likely to be disturbed by the inequalities and anomalies which exist. Four colleges have given figures which make it safe to say that approximately one student in every three has no grant at present, and some are not likely to have one. Yet others receive as much as £250 gross per year. This I have discussed with sympathetic administrators. Here are some possible explanations.

1. It is important to note that L.E.A. are "permitted", not "obliged" to make grants for further education in theology. Each

Authority is responsible for its own policy. As an example, I am told that "until recently many L.E.A. in Wales would not give a grant to a theological student, but there has been an improvement this year, and we hope before long all the Welsh counties will have come in line".

2. There is no national scale of needs or grants binding on all Authorities.

3. Consider the difficult and vexed question of what is theological education, and what are reasonable academic standards. Imagine we are members of a L.E.A. interviewing three applicants. The first comes with an excellent Grammar School record and is sure to go straight to a Degree Course. The second has not even sat G.C.E., but has manifest gifts of character which appeal to a Baptist College Committee. He also goes to College. The third man's academic record is not brilliant, but is better than the second's. He belongs to a sect whose orthodoxy is suspect. The College he intends to enter has strange notions of what constitutes education for the ministry.

We are there to administer public money, and the rules have deliberately been framed to allow a wide discretion. We shall not find it easy to reach a decision. Those with experience say that such problems have influenced certain Authorities to an unfriendly attitude to all theological students. They turn all applications down. Others make their own academic standard, "so many G.C.E. passes" or "taking a Degree Course". Some pay a token grant until the standard is reached and then reconsider the application.

4. The call to the ministry quite commonly is heard by men who have already fitted themselves for another profession. But a Ministry of Education ruling states that public funds should not be used to equip a man for more than one profession.

5. The amount of available public money varies from place to place. In this connection, if the fears of educationalists about the Bill to provide Exchequer Block Grants materialise, ours is one of the fields most likely to suffer.

There are two directions in which as ministers we might use our influence helpfully.

(a) Should we happen to know members of L.E.A. or senior administrators, let us show them how interested we are. Dr. Dakin advised his students to preach an occasional sermon about Paul and Barnabas agreeing to differ about John Mark. But, said he, "Don't preach it when there is a row on". By the same logic, one would think it wise for a minister to use his influence with the L.E.A. when there is not a promising youth from his church applying for a grant. Let us learn the facts, and if we live in an unsympathetic area, let us describe the practice elsewhere, and tactfully suggest that our L.E.A. adopt it.

(b) We may know of Local Charities which are having difficulty in giving away their money because the Welfare State has made them

redundant. An example is of a Trust which used to pay for the indentures of apprentices. Such a Trust might be glad to know of deserving theological students. In one College, students benefit by hundreds of pounds a year from such sources.

Since the war the cost of running the Colleges has risen steeply. Income from endowments and church subscriptions is up only slightly. The money coming from L.E.A. has saved the situation. The 1956-1957 Reports of two Colleges show a third of the income on General Account derives from this source. This is not intended to convey the impression that Baptist Colleges are well off. Quite the reverse. They live a year at a time, and the future is wholly uncertain. The effects of the Re-rating Act have yet to be seen. The present Bill before Parliament about Block Grants may cut off L.E.A. grants. A year's intake of students may come from areas which make no grants, and that could immediately put a College in the red. The Colleges do not make ability to pay for tuition or maintenance a condition of entrance.

Now we come to an issue which has greatly exercised many in thinking through this subject. Since the war, have we quietly accepted a complete *volte face* from our traditional position of "No Denominational Teaching on the Rates"? The writer's answer is that the surrounding circumstances have so changed in this post-war world that we cannot put the question in traditional terms. He agrees with a college tutor who says: "I do not think that the present system conflicts with the nonconformist principle of 'no state subsidy', although I should be happy if I could feel independent of all such help. The fact is that these figures do not represent grants to the College as such, but to individual students. If the State is prepared to help young people with the cost of training for their life's work, whatever form that work may take, I cannot see any good reason for discrimination against those who happen to be in training for the ministry".

Since this article was written the Ministry of Education has sent out to L.E.A. a circular appealing for economy. Our guess is that cuts may be made in grants to theological students on non-degree courses. In that event the men and the colleges would suffer.

C. SIDNEY HALL.

PACKAGES

WHEN the Queen and Prince Philip visited President Eisenhower at the White House, they attended in the afternoon a football game between the University of Maryland and of North Carolina, and afterwards visited a super market where they noted the variety and attractiveness of many articles and packages.

Every person who enters a food store receives an impression of colour. Rice may be bought in small brightly striped boxes. Cheeses nestle together, variously shaped and carefully wrapped. Shelves set

aside for cereals, cookies, cake mixes are a riot of colour. Bags of candy are irresistible in their cellophane coverings, and striking pictures illustrate the product. Names are significant, too, spelt out in bold letters. No package as yet says, "Buy me, I am just what you are looking for." but the suggestion is there. Every effort is made toward creating product acceptance.

I can remember when utility was the only factor that mattered. My father manufactured potato barrels, fruit baskets, and small veneered containers for berries. No thought was given to making these containers smaller or more attractive. The chief question was, does our product keep the contents fresh? In the modern world something has been subtracted, something added. The barrel has largely disappeared and the container, the package, the box—have been dressed up, and colour is the chief additive to give that extra appeal.

All this is by way of getting at a field related directly to ministers. They also have a product to distribute, and the way in which we deliver it is of primary importance. Pressing the analogy I suggest that sermons can be compared to packages—packages in which we express some truth of the Gospel message. The content of these sermons will vary somewhat from one denomination to another, but all bear upon the central theme of our faith. The chief variation will be in methods of presentation.

First, there is the label or sermon topic. In America there are three ways in which we publicize the title of a sermon—the bulletin board outside the church, the church leaflet, the Saturday newspaper. These are widely used; in fact, practically all churches employ at least one of these methods and most churches all three.

Ministers may give considerable thought to the sermon topic. I myself do. I feel it should have some appeal, should even arouse curiosity and interest. It must always, of course, be in good taste. In a sense, the sermon topic is more than a label, it is an invitation to come and hear and worship. It should promise something worthwhile. We might even learn something from the moving picture industry in this connection. The industry has often learned that sometimes the difference between a successful picture and a failure is a difference in name or caption.

Dr. E. McNeill Poteat once preached on "Honesty in Rags", a suggestive title for interpreting Matthew v, 33-37. A friend of mine recently announced "Keeping Your Ohs", a sermon on the wonder and mystery of the Gospel. I recall once travelling several miles to hear a minister speak on the announced topic, "Water from an Old Well", ii Samuel xxiii, 15. Other Bible emphases I have tried to express in such titles as "Love Yourself a Little More", Mark xii, 31; "Let's Fight the Wrong Things", 1 Peter v, 8-9; "What on Earth Is God Doing?", Romans viii, 28 R.S.V.; "The Best of the Second Best", Colossians iii, 23; "The Man Who Tied the Colt", Mark xi, 2; "Some Freedoms We Can Do Without", Galatians v, 13; "Living with Your Decisions", Mark i, 13.

There is a place for an occasional sermon in which numbers appear, such as: "Four Qualities Worth Having", 1 Corinthians xvi, 13, 14; "Three Philosophies of Life", Luke x, 30-37; "The Three Giants", Judges i, 20; "Three Little Words", 1 Corinthians xiii, 13.

This publicizing of the sermon may be peculiarly American. There are no statistics to prove or disprove its value. A good friend of mine came to his present pastorate three years ago from London. We were discussing publicity methods, especially the announcement of sermons. He observed that it is not done in England, that such a practice would be frowned upon. His church bulletin board, therefore, lists no topic, instead, the hour of service and a Scripture passage, on which he plans to speak. Since he is one of our ablest preachers and always has a large congregation I cannot argue too strenuously for my position.

A good case can, nevertheless, be made for making colourful, inviting announcements of the Gospel. The Gospel is good news, it is thrilling, it is the answer to human need. We want people to "buy" it in the best sense of that word. Let us package it and proclaim it as attractively as possible.

So much for the outside of the package, the part that has eye appeal. Next there is the inside, which has ear appeal, and which is even more important. Obviously the most inviting topic is of no value unless there is something good in the sermon. A seminary professor once advised his students, "Never promise more in the topic and in the introduction than you can fulfil in the rest of the discourse".

But what food is a good sermon? Is it one that deals largely with the contemporary scene, very up to date? or one that presents primarily some Biblical truth set in historical perspective? Is it one perfectly constructed homiletically? It may be all of these, but, of course, much more. A good sermon is one that speaks to human need and moves individuals to positive action in relation to the Gospel and its implications.

Recently I set a project for myself. It was the reading, in one week, of every word that Jesus spoke, as recorded in the Gospels or quoted in other New Testament writings.

Having finished the assignment I sought to classify the subjects Jesus had considered. I found that His teachings fell into three categories. He talked about *material things*—houses, land, barns, food, rocks, sand, clothes. He discoursed on *people*, rich and poor, wise and foolish, sick and well, proud and humble, hypocritical and genuine. He spoke of *God*, His nature, His influence, His nearness, His love. Then as He discussed the abundant life He said that man discovers it only to the degree that he is in right relationship with things, with people, with God.

Preaching, then, must deal with all aspects of the abundant life and especially with how to find it. In all the pews of all the churches there are those who desire the abundant life. For that matter there are even more outside the churches who want it too but who do not know

the how of it. The themes of this fuller, richer life, and of Him who taught us how, are so meaningful and so significant that they merit presentation in the most attractive and winsome manner.

Topical preaching is more the vogue in America on Sunday morning than textual preaching. I personally strive for a combination of the two. Exegetical studies and interpretations seem to belong more to the mid-week service. Three things, among others, contribute to making the package content good and effective.

One is a text that continues to speak or to inspire long after the sermon is over and even forgotten. By that I mean such familiar and encouraging verses as: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God . . .", ". . . In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength . . .", ". . . Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world", "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me", "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me", "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us".

Many present day translations give a new emphasis that makes for interesting presentations. Consider: "Never let the sun set upon your exasperation", Ephesians iv, 26 (Moffatt); "He must take a sane view of himself", Romans xii, 3 (Moffatt); "Let no one look down upon you because you are young", 1 Timothy iv, 12 (Goodspeed); "God is utterly dependable", 1 Corinthians i, 9 (Phillips).

A second factor has to do with organisation. I grew up in a church where the minister prided himself on having made little preparation, contended that the Lord would tell him what to say. Perhaps that is the reason I attach so much importance on preparation. I have never spoken without having organised the material. The inevitable "points" may be two or three, occasionally four. It is my belief that the more carefully a sermon is ordered the easier it is for people to follow and understand it. Parenthetically, I may say that the outlining of prayers is also helpful. It gives them intelligent direction and tends to eliminate the "circular" and the "random".

This is the place to speak of the size of the package. The manager of a food store said to me that the tendency is toward smaller packages. "It is the trend of the times." The trend of the times in America, in terms of preaching, is toward shorter sermons. The forty-five or sixty minute sermons, which apparently characterised the preaching of another generation, has gone. Half an hour seems now to be the top limit. Some church members say they cannot listen for more than twenty minutes. Our present way of life, our radio and television, have contributed toward shortening the attention span of people. Sustained interest is difficult. This means that the minister cannot afford the luxury of travelling into too many by-paths or exploring the country-side of his theme. It is said that a magazine like *Time* has for each article a great deal more material on the subject than it uses. It is as important to know what to omit as what to include.

The third factor is illustration. One can illustrate this by simply studying the Gospels. Jesus spoke in parables, "... Without a parable spake He not unto them". The attention of people is caught and held not so much by argument and logic as by picturesque comparisons and by vivid analogies. This is true the world over.

One day in 1955 I was in Odessa. Four of us from America were on a preaching mission in the Soviet Union. At an evening service in the Baptist Church each of us brought a message to a tightly packed and attentive congregation. After we had finished, Alexander Karev, concluded the service with a brief sermon.

"Now," he said, "what can you do about all that our guests have said? What can you do about the great truths on which they have preached—you with your limited resources, your lack of knowledge, your calloused hands? Let me tell you.

"A man had three sons and gave to each of them a coin. The coins were of equal value. The father said, 'Each of you go out and buy something to fill the house'. One boy sought to buy grass to cover the floor but the coin was not large enough to make the purchase. Another boy sought to purchase paper to cover the wall. His coin likewise was inadequate. The third boy bought a candle, placed it in the centre of the room, lighted it and the light from the candle filled the house."

Then Karev made the application, "You too can be as lights in the communities in which you live. By your manner of living you can be an inspiration to those around you, by the quality of your lives you can illustrate the way of Jesus Christ".

If one day the Queen and the Prince should worship in the church where I am the minister I would hope that the Gospel message would be attractive and appealing. I would hope too that the memory of it would linger long, not because of him who packaged it, but because of Him about Whom the package was prepared.

V. CARNEY HARGROVES.

THROUGH THE EYES OF A STRANGER

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

LIKE much modern art these impressions are private and personal and, perhaps, of little value. In any case the writer would hesitate to draw conclusions let alone offer advice. Life in Britain is so varied that to generalise would be foolish if not dangerous.

It is inevitable that visitors from overseas should come with preconceived ideas. Many factors contribute to forming these ideas, radio, films, journalism, and not the least visitors from Britain. Needless to say those who control these means of moulding public opinion must do so with a sense of constant responsibility, and many preconceived ideas require to be revised on the spot.

One of my first impressions has remained unshaken. I refer to the spontaneous kindness of the people, wherever I have gone. Kindness

to me personally, as well as acts of kindness by people to each other with whom they live and work. It is this which has made life tolerable for many men and women, especially lonely visitors from the younger countries.

I have been amazed also at the constant cheerfulness of people here, often in conditions of depressing drabness that would seem to rule out all possibility of cheerfulness. This reveals a quality of character that is more important and enduring than the ability to produce Sputniks. I believe that, situated as she is between two great but less tried nations, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., Britain with all her maturity and experience has much to offer that will be of benefit to East and West.

A SENSE OF HISTORY.

Moving about many ancient buildings it is impossible to escape a sense of history. Coming from a country where most things are colourful, and comparatively new, conditions in Britain at first appear drab and dull as if these old grey buildings had all served their purpose. One wonders how any new ideas can be born in such dismal surroundings. It is something of a surprise to find that often behind an ancient exterior men are planning for the atomic age.

All this concentrated history, particularly in London, is a salutary reminder that this life is a very transitory thing to be used well for our Lord.

ABOUT THE CHURCHES.

It has been my privilege to visit a large number of churches. Some have been flourishing while others have a struggle to keep alive. On the whole, I found the church life healthier than I was led to anticipate. I formed the greatest admiration for the men in the ministry, many of them working with equipment that is out of date and inadequate.

A number of little churches close to each other took, I thought, the unrealistic attitude of refusing to combine to make one strong fellowship. It is not sufficient to look back on the past. The forward look is necessary to life, for where there is no vision the people perish. Many new church buildings I found exciting, combining dignity with imagination and creating a deep sense of reverence. What did surprise me, however, coming to Britain with its long Baptist tradition was to find so many open membership churches. It is difficult to understand why people should want to be members of the Baptist Church if they were unable or unwilling to accept the Church's teaching on Baptism. Also I found it a little paradoxical that some churches with open membership had no interest in the ecumenical movement. What confused me most, coming from a situation where every aspect of our work comes within the Baptist Union was to discover that the B.M.S. and the Colleges are all separate from and independent of, the Union and appeared at times to be competing with each other for the support of the churches.

I was given the historic reason for this independence but more than once I sensed a feeling that a closer liaison is necessary between these agencies of Baptist work and witness.

CONFLICTING VIEWS.

It was interesting to encounter conflicting views on a number of issues relating to the church's place in the community. There were those who said that the church had lost its grip on the "Working Classes", while others maintained that their congregations were chiefly composed of these very people the church was supposed to have lost. I was glad to meet men who held that the church should, and did, have an influence on public affairs. Others held the opposite view that the church did not influence public opinion and furthermore it was not its business to do so. On the Temperance issue I was dismayed when told that only about half the church members were teetotallers. Temperance enthusiasts quickly challenged this figure as too low. There were also conflicting attitudes as to the part the Baptists should play in the ecumenical movement. Most people I asked, believed we had a definite contribution to make to ecumenical encounter and that Baptists should take a more active part in the ecumenical conversations. From most of the conferences and meetings which it was my good fortune to attend I came away convinced that in this country Christian leaders are determined to come to grips with problems that are long overdue for attention. I thought the speeches and sermons I heard were of the highest order.

GRATITUDE.

As I set off for my long journey home it is with the deepest gratitude for all the help and patience shown to me during my sojourn in this great country. I hope that some day I may be given a chance to return the overwhelming kindness I have everywhere encountered.

J. T. CROZIER.

MY FIRST PASTORATE

FROM the city of Leeds with its population of over half a million and the ever growing Harlow New Town area of Potter Street we turn our attention to a first pastorate in a quiet fenland village. Upwell parish, reputedly the longest in England, straggles over seven miles of rich fen country, and is divided by the old course of the River Nene so that part lies in Norfolk and part in the Isle of Ely. Spiritually Upwell is served by three Methodist, an Anglican and a Baptist church, and in things secular by two Parish Councils, a Village Hall, a Public Hall, the Parish Rooms, two County Primary Schools, one Secondary Modern School, three doctors, two District Nurses, a Police Sergeant and a Police Constable.

I was called to serve as the Baptist Minister within this family group in 1954. Every newcomer to the village is regarded with a

degree of suspicion and the attitude that "he is not one of us" is difficult to overcome. People who have lived in the village for thirty years and more are still regarded as outsiders. In his review of Archibald Lang Fleming's book, "Archibald the Arctic" (*Exp. Times*, January, 1958), William Barclay refers to what Fleming considered the greatest honour that ever came to him. One night after evening prayers the Eskimo told him that he was no longer to be called "the young teacher" but In-nook-tah-kaub, which means "One of the family". That is the task of the village minister, to be acknowledged as "one of the family", and not as a young teacher or even a young preacher. Titles that may savour of honour but are in effect "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal".

Ingratiating smiles or a "hail fellow well met" approach make no impression on the stolid fenman and even a passionate assurance that the minister is concerned for the spiritual wellbeing of every villager will evoke little response. To be acknowledged as one of the family the minister must be prepared to act as a member of the family and contribute to every aspect of its life. It is for this reason that I serve as a Parish Councillor, a School Manager and a member of the Parish Rooms Committee. In council, managerial and committee meetings I sit alongside the farmer and the fruitgrower, the doctor and the Rector, the schoolmaster and the smallholder and together we work for the "good of the village". I have been amazed at the willingness with which such men give generously of their time and their money for the good of the community. Men who make no profession of faith show a spirit of dedication to their task that is inspiring. I know that such a spirit of dedication may be extinguished when it is not renewed by the Spirit of God, and that the dedicated person can become bitter and disillusioned when he does not draw his strength from Christ, but for as long as it is there the spirit of dedication is a challenge to somnolent Christians.

My first pastorate in a village has taught me that I must get to know people and be interested in them as persons and be acknowledged as one of the family before any effective work can be done. I have learnt that it is not sufficient to be just a leader, a minister must also be a friend. It is not enough to stipulate, a minister must also be prepared to co-operate.

The parochial and independent spirit of the village fenman has indirectly influenced my outlook. Because of his independent spirit the village Christian has little or no interest in anything outside his own church circle. Upwell church is self-supporting and therefore has no link with Baptist Church House. It is an open membership church with the three church officers and five-sevenths of the membership unbaptised, so that there is no Baptist emphasis. I was brought up in a closed membership church and had little knowledge of and even less sympathy with open membership. Faced with the situation at Upwell I had to think again and over the years I have endeavoured to inculcate some knowledge of Baptist history and principles. As I

THE BAPTIST INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
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To the Members of the Baptist Ministers' Fellowship.

Dear Friends,

THE TRAGEDY OF UNDERINSURANCE

I hope you do not feel that "tragedy" is too strong a word to use in this context for I am not seeking to press a point by over-emphasis. Look at the following figures which have come before me, and all in the week in which I write.

	<i>Estimated 1958 Rebuilding Cost</i>	<i>Present Fire BUT Sum Insured</i>
A country church in Hampshire . . .	£9,000	£1,500=17%
A town church in Monmouthshire . . .	£32,000	£7,650=24%
A country church in Yorkshire . . .	£90,000	£16,000=18%

These sums insured are hopelessly inadequate. I know many diaconates say "We should never rebuild on the same scale again", but to consider the problem only from that angle pre-supposes that a complete and total loss by fire will be experienced. That utter destruction does occur is well-known to us all, but substantial partial losses can equally be experienced.

Benjamin Franklin once said: "The most exquisite folly is made of wisdom spun too fine". This is amply borne out in the three instances I have cited for in each of these cases a fire causing damage involving a third of the building and contents would place the deacons in a very embarrassing position—a damaged building costing more to repair than a full fire loss payment, but not sufficiently damaged to warrant its demolition.

Economic safety from damage by fire can only lie in an adequate sum insured on an up-to-date basis. (If a 1939 sum insured was £10,000, the 1958 figure must be £37,500 to secure the same measure of material protection.) Should deacons in their wisdom feel that something less than a full 1958 sum need be insured then the figure must not be "spun too fine". It should be nearer, very much nearer, the full figure than the examples I have quoted.

Overheads are a mounting problem but can churches afford to disregard this matter of adequacy? Similar considerations apply to business and personal insurances.

Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN,

General Manager.

have taught others so I have taught myself and in the teaching have found my own beliefs strengthened, but at the same time tempered with a tolerance and understanding of others that I previously lacked. (And if I can point to no other success at the end of my ministry I can at least claim two new readers for the *Baptist Times*!)

Just as the village church is cut off from denominational life, so it knows nothing of the Free Church Federal Council and the World Council of Churches. Inspired by such ignorance I determined to teach, and again I was probably the greatest beneficiary from the teaching!

Paradoxically, therefore, my first pastorate is an isolated village has strengthened my beliefs and broadened my outlook in a way in which a church in a busy area might never have done.

At a time when satellites circle the earth and men traverse the wastes of Antarctica it may seem incongruous to suggest that distance can have any vital effect on the work of the ministry in England, but distance has been another contributory factor to the course that my first pastorate has followed. The members of the church and congregation live at varying distances in all directions from the Manse. It is not unusual to find a member living at the end of a tortuous fen drove, where there is no other house to visit. For many living in such circumstances visitors are few and far between. As a consequence of these two facts there is a tendency to prolong the duration of pastoral visits. On many an afternoon or evening only one visit has been possible, but, providing the minister does not overstay his welcome, there are several advantages in this.

The experience of a country pastorate has convinced me that time spent in long pastoral visits is time well spent and that such visits are of more value than half a dozen "just looked in" appearances.

The visiting problem becomes more acute when members are taken to one or other of the hospitals that serve the area and round trips of anything from twenty to sixty miles become a necessity. On several occasions I have been very grateful to be able to take advantage of an offer by a busy Cambridge minister to visit regularly any of my members in the Cambridge hospitals. Such an offer is a reminder of the spirit of fellowship and thoughtfulness that best serves the church of Jesus Christ.

The Upwell church is linked with Stowbridge Baptist church. This is a very small village church situated on the towpath of the River Ouse about ten miles distant from the Manse. Members of the congregation come from Stowbridge and the surrounding fens. Founded in 1817 the Stowbridge church has never known the value and privilege of a resident minister, but has had to rely on the interest and "spare time" of neighbouring ministers.

My first pastorate has therefore been a dual pastorate and I have had to face the question as to the effectiveness of dual pastorates. At present I doubt the efficacy. The larger church, in the same village as the Manse, is bound to take the majority of the minister's time.

The other church will have a certain amount of oversight but how can a minister be a true pastor to people the nearest of whom is nine miles away and the farthest twelve miles with a church building midway between? There is no opportunity for him to become "one of the family". In the case of Stowbridge there are three churches, a Methodist, an Anglican and the Baptist, but none of them has ever had a resident minister, so none provides a real spiritual centre. A dual pastorate or a circuit system may keep churches open but they are ineffective churches and in consequence country ministers today face a rural paganism that is shattering when first encountered.

If we conclude that dual pastorates are not the answer to the problem of the small village churches, what other ways are there of revealing Christ to the rural areas? There are two other possible ways. There is the hope that trained lay leaders will accept responsibility in country churches and provide the required initiative and guidance. It is only a hope and there are very few signs of it ever becoming anything more! Nevertheless there are possibilities within such a course if it is thoughtfully planned.

The other course is Church Union, at least within our villages. For example, if the three churches at Stowbridge united they could support a resident minister, a spiritual centre would be established and the village would have the spiritual guide and leader which every community requires. This, you will say, is daydreaming, but it is the only daydream that bears any relationship to reality. Those of us who have to face the sheer paganism of village life and stand by virtually impotent whilst the church dissipates her strength and her glory can only arrive at such a conclusion. A minister can only work effectively in one village and he must watch villages around him, with numerous moribund churches, struggle on without any true spiritual leadership. It surely need not be?

As I review my first three years in the Baptist Ministry I have a feeling that I have learnt more than I've taught. At times I have fumbled, not quite sure what action to take or what course to follow or what a minister's task really is. Now I step with firmer tread as I realise the magnitude and the possibilities of ministerial work implicit in such words as "minister", "pastor" and "the word of reconciliation".

B. W. O. AMEY.

"THE CHURCH ON THE GREEN"

STOKE GREEN is the oldest Baptist church in Ipswich and the second oldest in Suffolk. It was founded in the neighbouring village of Woolverstone in 1757 and moved to the outskirts of Ipswich in 1773. Its out of the way position was the result of a compromise between those who wanted it in Ipswich and those who wanted it to remain in the country. Compromise rarely works, and the unsatisfactory location of the church caused a problem that was not solved for 182 years. Two attempts during the last century to

move it were both unsuccessful. The first, in 1842, resulted in the formation of Turret Green, and the second in 1888 had no result at all.

In 1946 the old problem cropped up again. During the intervening years the neighbourhood of the church had changed, first from rural to residential, and then from residential to industrial. Houses around were being demolished and the engineering works of Ransome and Rapier, which had hitherto kept its distance, now began to spread until it reached the church boundary. The Manse, which had once looked out over the river, now enjoyed an uninterrupted view of factory yards, and the minister in his study, who had formerly to contend with the singing of the birds, now fought a losing battle with the clanging of heavy machinery. Greedy for more land Ransome and Rapier viewed the premises with a covetous eye and approached the church with an offer to buy.

At the same time a new estate of some 700 council houses was springing up within three quarters of a mile of the old buildings, presenting the church with an unmistakable challenge. At first it was planned to keep the old premises and build a branch mission on the estate, but as the impracticability of this scheme became obvious the church committed itself wholeheartedly to the project of selling the property and transferring to the heart of the Maidenhall estate. A good site was obtained near the shopping centre, and the new building, which consisted of a church to be used exclusively for worship, and two small vestries, was opened in June, 1955. In 1956 a Manse was built in a quiet position just off the estate, and in August, 1957, a hall was opened behind the church, as a memorial to Rev. L. A. Lewis under whose leadership the move was planned, and who died suddenly while the church was being built. The completed scheme cost almost £15,000 of which only £5,000 resulted from the sale of the old premises.

It is significant that no church member was lost in the move, and so the church was in the unique position of being able to face the challenge of the new estate with an established membership of 112, plenty of willing workers, and a good solid Baptist foundation on which to build. The opportunities were great, for there was no other church on the estate.

It was soon discovered, however, that moving premises was not enough. It was one thing to build a church for the people, but quite a different thing to persuade the people to use it. The gulf between the church and the neighbourhood had to be bridged. The first step was to keep the people informed of the activities of the church and its interest in them, and to try through the printed word to get the Christian message into their homes. In February, 1956, the first issue of the *Maidenhall Messenger* appeared. This is an attractively duplicated four-page leaflet produced in two colours, and distributed free to every home every month. Its form varies. The current issue, for example, carries on the front a drawing of the open doors of the

church (unmistakable since everyone must pass them on their way to shop or bus), and underneath, the words "The Doors of our Church are open to Everybody. To all who are in trouble and need help. To all who are lonely and want friendship. To all who are worried and anxious and want peace. To all who want to find life's deeper meaning." The two inside pages are taken up with an imaginary conversation "overheard at the grocer's" about the church, its interest in the people, a forthcoming service at which a local doctor is to be the guest speaker, and a Baptismal Service. The back page clearly advertises these two services. Few words, easily read, and understandable in their simplicity.

At about the same time it was felt that "Stoke Green Baptist Church, Maidenhall" was rather a mouthful and meant nothing to folk living around, and so the phrase "The Church on the Green" was coined. Everyone knew the church on Maidenhall Green and now "The Church on the Green" is our accepted title. This phrase, together with the church's "trade mark" (a line drawing of the building) appears on the *Messenger* and on all publicity material.

Our biggest problem was to make folk feel that we really wanted them, that it was no longer our church but theirs as well. Letters were sent to new arrivals on the estate welcoming and introducing them to the church; "Guest Nights" were started with provocative subjects, guest soloists and guest speakers; and follow up letters were sent to all newcomers; in January, 1957, the church embarked on a house to house visitation scheme to mark bicentenary year. Each home has been visited with a booklet introducing not only the history of the church, but also its work today. This, too, was attractively duplicated with several drawings. We have found that good duplicating is the answer to rising printing costs. All our work is backed by a well-attended prayer meeting and a prayer fellowship of those unable to attend the meeting. The result? A sizeable congregation at both services on Sunday including some from the estate. The barriers are beginning to break down.

The climax of our bicentenary celebrations was an exhibition held in the church and the hall for a week in November. It consisted of fourteen stands, each constructed from trestle tables suitably covered, behind which were placed white ceiling board panels, each telling the story of a different period in the history of the church. Use was made of old minute books, letters, posters, photographs, bills, programmes, Baptist Union handbooks (showing membership statistics and obituaries of former ministers), and booklets. Each stand was clearly headed with a printed title summarising the period from "Beginnings 1757-1773" through "Years of Growth 1814-1842" to "The Outward Look 1948-1955" and "The Challenge of Maidenhall 1955—". Smaller typewritten sheets linked the exhibits and unfolded the church's story. One stand displayed a map showing the formation of twelve other churches from Stoke Green, with streamers of red wool leading to photographs of the churches as they

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Before the Annual Assembly, Ministers, Sunday School teachers and leaders should read:—

“SUNDAY SCHOOLS TODAY”

*An investigation of some aspects of Christian Education
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AND

“GROWING CHRISTIANS”

*A Report on the Church's Work among children in the
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may be obtained from the Baptist Union
Young People's Department, price 1s. each**

During Assembly week there will be a display of books and teaching material suitable for Sunday School teachers and youth leaders in the Young People's Department, Room 13, at The Baptist Church House.

are today, and cards with their membership statistics. Another displayed a booklet published in 1819 by James Sprigg, a former minister, telling of the execution of a young man for stealing four silver spoons. Another, an old minute book with a record of baptisms in the ice-covered River Orwell, and another, requesting that prayers in prayer meeting should be shorter, a footnote adding that the member who made the suggestion cut his own down to thirty-five minutes as an example! The stricter discipline of the early nineteenth century was illustrated by a minute book recording the suspension of one member for "walking with a worldly companion on a sabbath evening", one for baking muffins on a Sunday, and another for attending a "fighting match".

A tape recorder was used effectively. Recordings made of interviews with some of the older members telling of their early memories of church life were played back during the exhibition. The choir and organist recorded suitable music, played in the background, helping to create a reverent atmosphere, as folk wandered round.

The exhibition had a more practical value than merely drawing attention to the past. Having by means of photographs told the dramatic story of the move to the estate, it concluded on the last stand with a picture of the life and work of the church today. On the white panel above the table were some fifty different cards, printed in various colours and from these, streamers of red wool led to photographs and literature on the table, depicting present-day organisations and activities. The label lettered "Girl Guides", for example, led to photographs taken at a Guide meeting, those lettered "Baptism" and "Communion" led to photographs of a baptismal service (these aroused great interest) and the laid Communion table.

There is no doubt that as an experiment in evangelism the exhibition was a success, for over five hundred people, many of them from the estate, passed through and several useful contacts were made. The aim of the exhibition was summed up in the words of the poster at the door which invited folk to wander round in the hope "that our faith will seem to you more relevant and our God more real". It is in our mind to expand the last stand into a whole exhibition on a future occasion, and so present a complete picture of the church at work and worship.

The old church building is now a paint store. The baptistery, in which so many confessed their faith, is filled in. The pulpit from which the Word of God was proclaimed down the years is demolished. Heavy machinery covers the spot where the Communion Table stood. But the real church remains. Its work continues, ever adapting itself to the changing situation and the new opportunities that face it. We are creating a new church out of the glories of the historic past. We retain our old name, and it is right that we should, for it reminds us of our heritage, but we have added another name—"Maidenhall". We are learning to lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes.

DAVID GARDENER.

THE TERJUBILEE OF THE BAPTIST UNION

IN four years' time the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland will be celebrating its terjubilee. At a meeting in London, in June, 1812, it was decided to form a "General Union of the Particular Baptist Churches in the United Kingdom" and the first assembly took place a year later.

The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary will be an event of considerable significance. The original objects of the Union were the support of home and foreign missions, the theological colleges, the education of ministers' children, Sunday schools and new building projects; but John Rippon, one of the leaders in the project, saw its concerns as "*whatever* relates to the real interests of the denomination at home and abroad".

Within thirty years of its formation, the Union began to attract the support of the churches of the New Connexion of the General Baptists and in 1891 the two groups of British Baptists formally joined forces. By then the Union had itself become the agency for home missions and had launched schemes for nation-wide ministerial recognition, sustentation and superannuation. Closely linked sister-unions had come into existence to serve the interests of the Baptist churches in Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

In addition to all its other activities, the Union has now important representative functions on behalf of its member churches. It is affiliated to the Free Church Federal Council, the British Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. The story of the steady development of its responsibilities is one of great interest and it is hoped that a volume telling the history will be published in 1959. Plans are being prepared for the celebration of the terjubilee and will be announced in detail next year.

From early days the Baptist Union interested itself in the Baptists of the continent of Europe. It welcomed—and in many cases aided—the formation of Baptist Unions in Commonwealth lands. The first General Convention of American Baptists was held in 1814 and our brethren across the Atlantic are already engaged in preparations for the celebration of the terjubilee of this important event.

The years 1962-63-64 should be significantly marked in every Baptist calendar.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

BAPTIST UNION DIPLOMA IN RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

THIS scheme has a three-fold purpose: to promote among Baptists an enlarged understanding of the Christian Faith; to help them to equip themselves for various kinds of Christian service, and to enable day school teachers to train for religious instructions in schools.

Persons of at least eighteen years of age may take the examinations in May, 1958. This will be reduced to at least seventeen years of age

in May, 1959, and subsequently. The course is in three Parts, each containing four subjects. Part I consists of four papers, in General Knowledge of the New Testament, St. Mark's Gospel, the History of the English Bible and Baptist History and Principles. Part II includes the Old Testament and two others chosen by the candidate from a list of seven, namely the Acts, New Testament Greek, Preaching and Worship, Sunday School Principles and Methods, Youth Leadership and Church Organisation and Administration. Part III requires a candidate to study Romans, Church History and Christian Doctrine, together with one of five optional subjects including Christian Ethics, Christianity and other Faiths.

Examinations are held in May in centres near the homes of candidates. Arrangements are made for candidates living abroad, including National Servicemen, to sit the examinations. There are exemptions for those who have passed examinations arranged by the Lay Preachers' Federation, or who hold a University Certificate in Biblical Knowledge or Theology. Correspondence courses are arranged and text books set. Copies of old examination papers are obtainable, price one shilling per set.

This course has been devised with the average church member in mind, and those keen to equip themselves for service in the Church, and prepared to submit to the discipline of interesting and worthwhile study will find immense value in this course.

Several Ministers have held study groups in their churches and in some instances a group of churches in one district have combined. Rev. Arthur Liston has incorporated a series of lectures at Heaton Church, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Rev. Lionel Floyd at Carshalton Beeches. Rev. Colin Weller at Ilford, and the Rev. Matthew Francis in Shrewsbury. An ambitious scheme has been organised in Leicester by the Rev. W. J. Grant. Weekly meetings are arranged, and local ministers form a team of lecturers. These schemes are admirable and there is no reason why they should not be extended.

Further details or advice may be obtained from Mr. John Hough, Baptist Church House, 4, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1.

OF INTEREST TO YOU

Ministerial Changes. R. C. Bolton, West Leigh; T. J. Budge, Measham; D. E. Burne, Ilkeston; I. Cameron, Girvan; P. G. Clark, Leicester; W. T. Coffin, Liverpool; S. Goodall, Keighley; T. J. Lewis, Ramsgate; T. O. Morgan, Cloughfold; F. C. M. Perkins, Henley; J. Robertson, Kirkcaldy; S. A. Rooke, West Bromwich; W. C. Spooner, March; R. W. J. Webb, Oadby; R. H. Wheatcroft, Shepshed; K. D. Wyatt, Usk. From our Colleges: Bristol, S. Fuller, West Ham. Cardiff, R. I. Davies, Mountain Ash. Manchester, G. J. Miller, Liverpool; A. K. McCall, Didsbury. Rawdon, A. Hellowell, B.M.S.; D. Highton, Bradford; R. Middlemiss, Hunslet; E. C. Seddon, Leicester; M. Walker, New Southgate. Regent's,

R. G. Edwards, Stafford; M. Purdy, Wythenshawe. Spurgeon's, K. D. Sobey, St. Alban's.

Our prayerful thoughts surround these brethren, especially the students commencing their life work.

The following resignations from our ministry are reported: D. J. Daniell and K. S. Tames.

Obituary. The passing of W. H. Gaussen severs an association going back to within six years of the death of the great C.H. During the Principalship of Son Tom our brother was appointed Tutor at Spurgeon's College, a position he held for forty years. He had as successive colleagues—McCaig, Usher, Hackney, Taviner and Percy Evans. Impressive in physical and spiritual personality, he was respected and loved by the Staff, the students and the churches. Regular in attendance at College Council, his last speech was a chivalrous plea for charity and patience in the matter of Principal Worstead's resignation. In his death at 87, a great soul is taken from us.

By the death of Ralph Holme the number of surviving Midland men is reduced to 22. For twenty-four years he served our churches in England, for five years at Bloemfontein, for five at Bombay and for a further five as C.F. He entered College in 1891 and, together with T. G. Chapman, had much to do with the founding of what is now known as the Commonwealth and Colonial Society. His varied experience qualified him as a wise counsellor, and throughout the 87 years of his life he maintained keen loyalty to our Denomination and fervour in the service of Jesus Christ.

A. J. Billings, born in Brisbane, 1878, came to England in 1907, and for three years was associated with Rowntree Clifford at West Ham. During a pastorate at Oxford he gained the M.A. degree. For twelve years, covering the period of the second World War, he rendered yeoman service to our church at New Road, Camberwell. He retired in 1955. A warm-hearted friend and faithful minister, he will be held in grateful remembrance.

William Roberts filled an influential pastorate at Inskip for sixteen years. The cause which perhaps lay nearest to his heart, was that of the Evangelical Union of South America in which country he laboured for 25 years amongst the Welsh-speaking population. Together with loyal service to his own church he ever stressed the claims of this wider work. He was born in Neath and died at the age of 85 years.

Keith Preston was trained at Calabar and Bristol and served, with much acceptance, churches mostly in the West of England. He was a preacher of considerable ability but it may be said that his most impressive sermon was the manner in which he met his death. When, in little more than middle life, he was struck with a painful malady, he accepted and bore it, with supreme courage and undiminished faith. Throughout this period he was attended with unflinching devotion by Mrs. Preston. A touching evidence of his love for the brethren was furnished by his request that money, which might have

B. M. S.

Your prayers are requested for the progress of the work overseas and for worthy support from the churches at home.

. . .

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

been expended upon flowers for his funeral, should be given to the Superannuation Fund.

Warm sympathy is extended to friends thus bereaved and also to others whose homes have been darkened by the loss of dear ones. Mrs. A. J. Hallworth died after much suffering bravely borne. Mrs. Richard Fry passed away at the early age of 46, leaving four children bereft of a mother's care. H. R. Cripps, within four months of his Golden Wedding, lost the partner of his happy wedded life and, after 58 years of equally happy union in life and service, Mrs. E. E. Attwood died at the age of 80.

Personal Memoranda. His five year appointment with the B.M.S. having terminated, George Metcalfe has accepted a post at the Teachers' Training College at Leamington. Two recent additions to the Church House Staff are: R. W. Thomson of Loughborough, and W. David Jackson of Histon. Mr. Parsons is shortly retiring, after long service with the C-K Press, and the Psalms and Hymns Trust. Mr. L. Strugnell has had to undergo a course of medical treatment, and is greatly missed from the House. Henry Bonser has retired from the Chairmanship of the Board of General Superintendents, a position filled with his customary efficiency. R. L. Child has consented to be his successor, a decision which gives satisfaction to the Board and the Denomination generally. At the February meeting of the L.B.A. Council it was resolved warmly and unanimously, to nominate W. D. Jackson for a further period of service as Superintendent of the Metropolitan Area. Clifford Cleal has borne, with cheerful courage, the effects of a painful operation. A welcome awaits him when he returns to his work in the Christian Citizenship Department.

Ministerial Matters. Kenneth Parkinson, R. E. Cooper, Rowland West and J. M. Williams have been somewhat seriously ill, but progress toward recovery is thankfully reported. The prolonged illness of F. G. Missen has caused widespread anxiety, but we are glad to know that he is now out of hospital and recuperating at home. Ernest Brown is surely a Baptist Minister in all but the name, and in his sudden breakdown in health we pray for him, and the others named, a full recovery; meanwhile, we think of Mrs. Ernest Brown in her added anxiety. Graham Hughes, Editor for many years of the *Baptist Quarterly*, has handed over this work to Dr. Morris West, of R.P.C. Our best wishes to the new Editor, and success to the Magazine. Congratulations to H. Dermot MacDonald, Tutor at the London Bible College, on his taking the degree of Ph.D. The Northern Baptist Association has appointed, as Secretary, S. D. Cutbertson of Darlington, in succession to Charles Hardiman who vacated that office on becoming Superintendent of the West Midland Area. James Davidson of Arbroath is now Superintendent of the Robertson Rest Home, Newport-on-Tay. Leslie Stokes is Secretary of the Liberation Society, combining the duties with those of his Tottenham pastorate. C. H. Radford has retired

from the Thomas Cooper Memorial Church, Lincoln. He entered upon this charge in 1923 when the church was in parlous condition, but by his diligent labour as pastor and preacher, he raised it to a leading position in the City. We trust his health may be restored, so that he is able to continue his service to the churches in the City and the County. A. E. Willmott has concluded twenty-one years as minister at West Ealing. At an enthusiastic anniversary meeting he received many evidences of the love and loyalty of his people. Our congratulations! After forty years in the ministry, nineteen of which have been spent in Camberwell, E. E. Peskett shortly retires. His activity will, however, certainly not cease as, following his L.B.A. Presidency, he becomes Chairman of the Missionary Society. In addition to this, he serves on more Denominational Committees than possibly any other minister. Long may his bow abide in strength.

Spurgeon's College. George Beasley-Murray has accepted the Principalship, and will be welcomed at the forthcoming Speech Day. A former student, and subsequently Tutor at the College, he has recently been a member of the Faculty at Ruschlikon Seminary. Highly qualified academically, gifted as preacher and writer, he will be missed by the Seminary and in the Swiss Churches, but may be relied upon to take a leading part in Baptist and religious circles in Britain. Congratulations to Spurgeon's.

Bereavements. One of a family of ministers and missionaries, O. P. J. Smith has died, aged 80. For twenty years he laboured in China where his proficiency in Chinese language increased his usefulness. Returning in 1924, he filled pastorates at home and supplied many pulpits. We thank God for this good and faithful servant. Our sympathy is tendered to the bereaved family, and to F. W. Rose of Stafford, in his sorrow consequent upon the death of Mrs. Rose.

An Appointment with Mars. Under the above heading, Edwin Foley tells the interesting story of his work in Guernsey during the German Occupation. The booklet is published by F.C.R., 29, Great James Street, W.C.1. Price 1s. Foley is one of Dr. Clifford's boys and now a recent addition to our "Eighty Club". His fellow Midland College, men and others, will be interested in this publication.

Christmas Carols. On 22nd December, the sweet voices of the Spurgeon's Homes' children rang out over the B.B.C. Arnold Clark introduced them, and "Uncle Mac", beloved of all children, was their guide. There was no financial appeal but we trust that such support was forthcoming. Baptist Churches everywhere should surely give "Spurgeon's" a prior claim over all similar Institutions.

The Boys' Brigade. This year the B.B. celebrates its Diamond Jubilee. Among the Special events is the visit of eighty Officers and boys to the International Camp in Jamaica, and on 2nd and 3rd May, there are special displays at the Albert Hall. Here again, we would advocate Baptist support of a Movement which has as its foundation principle, identification with the local church.

THE WIDER CIRCLE

U.S.A.

Our thanks to H. Carney Hargroves for his article: "Packages". May continued blessing attend the work of his great church in Philadelphia. A. B. Martin, President, Kansas Baptist Convention—with its 350 churches and 7,500 members—sends us welcome additions to our membership. We are also indebted to L. R. Elliott, Librarian, Midwestern Theological Seminary, Texas, for similar support. We reciprocate their brotherly greetings. E. P. Y. Simpson of Berkeley, will be visiting London in the course of his Sabbatical Year. He will receive a welcome from our B.M.F.

CANADA

Dr. Burns of the Ontario and Quebec Convention, sends a list of 17 new members, for which we are most grateful: we welcome also Dr. Judson Levy of St. Catherines, Ontario. Thanks also to MacLeod for his liberal subscription. May blessing attend his new ministry at Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. Another friend now living in Nova Scotia is S. P. Shields, 204, Temperance Street, New Glasgow. We commend him to the local ministers.

RHODESIA

Baptists in Rhodesia have constituted a new Baptist Union, to foster fellowship between churches separated by wide distances from each other, and still more so, from the Cape. At the opening Assembly J. Poorter was elected President. Faith in the future was evident in the launching of an Extension Fund. R. H. Philpott was one of the promoters of the new scheme. Greetings to him and to his son, Dr. Hugh, working so effectively in Nigeria.

SOUTH AFRICA

J. N. Jonsson is maintaining the reputation of Spurgeon's through his successful pastorate at Durban, where he is gathering around him an increasing number of young people. We thank him for acting as our Correspondent and for the cheering list of members.

Jonsson has suffered the loss of both parents within six months. They were pioneer missionaries in Zululand. Best wishes to Hugh Graham of Port Elizabeth who takes charge of a Bible Training School in Lambaland. Also to Roger Voke, brother of Stanley, in his forthcoming Evangelistic Mission to our South African churches. Graham Swift, now in his second year at Wale Street, Cape Town, has launched a re-building scheme, toward the cost of which £2,000 was promised within a few weeks.

N. McIntosh, Reg. Codrington and Robert Baston are entering upon new pastorates and, fresh from College, C. Goetsch commences his life work at Germiston. At the October Assembly, Maurice Darroll became President of the Union, and Arthur Spann of Durban, Vice-President.

NEW ZEALAND

Thanks to J. T. Crozier for his "impressions", printed elsewhere in this issue. He returned hurriedly, owing to the illness of Mrs. Crozier, whom we are glad to know is making progress towards recovery. He received a warm welcome from his church and he left behind, in Britain, many friends who will recall his visit with pleasure and profit.

The following students have completed their College Course and settled in pastorates: T. W. Cadman, P. G. Buchanan and E. H. Hildreth. The death has taken place of William Hay, a Spurgeon's man, who ministered in New Zealand, 1903-13, and subsequently for many years in England.

AUSTRALIA

N.S.W. H. E. Evans, as Secretary, Home Mission Board, is covering great distances in N.S.W. and Victoria, telling of Baptist Mission work in Central Australia. His "loving greetings" are reciprocated. A. J. L. Neate is "Director Religious Education" at Ashfield. His work among the different Age Groups is being abundantly blest. At the Annual College Meeting, Principal Morling spoke in glowing terms of the present position and future prospects of the College, making gracious reference to Vice-Principal Wright. He welcomed to the Staff an additional Tutor, John Thomas. Eight students were Ordained at the Graduation Service. The following, on entering new pastorates, have our interest and prayer: C. D. Baldwin, J. S. Butchard, K. Sweeting; D. R. Burton removes to Perth. Victor Willis writes an exhilarating letter from Cronulla, telling of his happy settlement. During his eighteen months pastorate membership has greatly increased. He is a member of several B.U. committees and is now B.M.F. Correspondent in succession to H. E. Evans.

We have read, with imaginative sympathy, accounts of the devastating holocaust which raged through parts of N.S.W., thinking especially of Baptist Churches and members who suffered loss.

Queensland. A kindly letter from A. J. M. Howard tells of his happy settlement at Brisbane. J. F. Sullivan has been appointed "Business Manager" and assistant to F. T. Smith, of the Tabernacle. V. C. Bowering becomes Superintendent of the Home Mission Board. A. T. Braby, R. A. Beeston and H. J. Watts enter upon new pastorates, C. Davies and J. C. Ward, on the completion of their College-course, have each received an invitation to a church. These names, together with those elsewhere, are mentioned as evidence of our personal interest. Probably each has heard by post from Sidney Hall.

Victoria. P. N. Simmons pulls the leg of the writer of these Notes for hopelessly muddling certain names and places in Australia. To this charge we plead guilty, and will gladly receive other such letters provided they also enclose a 10s. subscription! Meanwhile,

we have now a clear idea of the City of Warrambool, and we rejoice in the encouraging state of the church over which Simmons presides.

South Australia. J. D. Williams has been appointed General Secretary, Australian B.M.S. We wish him every blessing as he undertakes his important and widespread task. We thank him for his service to the B.M.F. as S. Australian Correspondent. We are mindful of G. C. Cook, R. Leitch, W. A. McKay and L. Reece, who have entered upon new pastorates. May all blessing attend them.

SIERRA LEONE

F. C. Morton has completed his second mission to Freetown where he has helped in re-building the church, materially and spiritually, and, by God's grace saving the situation for the Baptist Cause. It has meant sacrificial service, and credit is due for his wise counsel and leadership. The Commonwealth Society abundantly justifies its existence and is worthy of all support. T. Victor Jones, who has already rendered good service, is returning to Sierra Leone as Secretary of the Christian Council of Churches.

JAMAICA

Welcome home to Keith Tucker and Leslie Larwood, who have rendered fine service in their respective spheres, as Principal, Calabar College, and minister, East Queen Street, Kingston. Our pleasure is mingled with regret as we realise the loss sustained by Jamaican Baptists. Greetings to our brethren on that island, especially to the veteran—Cowell Lloyd.

BOOK REVIEWS

One Finger for God. Stuart B. Jackman. Independent Press. 12s. 6d.

Mr. Jackman here offers a series of interesting stories indicating some of the opportunities and difficulties which face the Church today. It makes stimulating reading and opens the eyes to the needs of our fellow-Christians in different parts of the world. Any Minister in need of some stories to tell to his Youth Club will be glad to have a copy of this book.

R. BROWN.

Why Integration? E. A. Payne and D. G. Moses. Edinburgh House Press. 2s. 6d.

The proposed integration of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council is a project on which all Baptists should be well informed.

This clear statement of the case for integration has been written by two distinguished leaders in the ecumenical field, Dr. Ernest Payne, Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, and Dr. David Moses, Principal of Hislop College, Nagpur, and a Vice-Chairman of the International Missionary

Council. It is indispensable reading for those who wish to make an informed judgment on the matter. J.O.B.

Truth for our time. Geoffrey R. King. Lutterworth Press. 6s. 6d.

As we should expect, this book by Geoffrey King is Evangelical and Biblical. Generally the texts are thoughtfully considered and carefully expounded. This is good Biblical preaching, and the sermons are fresh and simple, positive and alive. In every sermon there is the good news of God, with the call for a verdict. Oftentimes the preached word must have been deeply moving and uncomfortably penetrating. There is meat in these sermons, tastefully and attractively served. Frequently fresh light is thrown upon well-known passages, and few preachers are likely to read these sermons without getting some new ideas and being stimulated in heart and mind—even if sometimes because of disagreement. There is no carping criticism of those not agreeing with the preacher, nor of any scolding of the congregation. The purpose all through is to exalt the Glorified Lord and to bring men to His feet. Running through every utterance is clear evidence of the preacher's own devotion to his Lord and Saviour.

Certainly there is here "Truth for our time" because the Gospel is here. The one criticism we have is that the truth appears to be offered only to believers and within the narrow confines of a Church, with little attempt made to declare the message to those without any Christian background and unused to our way of thinking. There is, however, the frequent call to the congregation to go out and witness to the Christian faith, and, after all, this may be the most effective way of solving the "problem of communication". LESLIE J. MOON.

The Baptists in Norfolk. C. B. Jewson. Carey Kingsgate Press. 7s. 6d.

One of our needs is for the story of our cause in this country to be told region by region. To the few such regional studies already issued the present volume is a welcome and valuable addition. In these enlightening pages Mr. Jewson sets out to trace the origins of Baptist life in his native county, to trace its development to the present day and indicate the contribution made by Baptists to the county and the nation. He has done his work well and many will be grateful to him. Norfolk Baptists are not a large community but they have nurtured in their midst not a few great men. Through these pages walk Thomas Grantham, Joseph Kinghorn, the Colmans, Judge Willis, J. H. Shakespeare, George White and others who have left behind them a memorial. Not the least valuable feature of Mr. Jewson's work are the pages he devotes to public worship, church life, social and educational service and the place occupied by Norfolk Baptists in industry and agriculture. Is he being quite fair, however, in stating that some Labour leaders abandoned their church allegiance and made a religion of their politics without saying, at the same time, that many Liberals and Conservatives have done precisely the same?

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.

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

BAPTIST DEACONESSES

MINISTERS!

There are more than fifty Baptist Deaconesses serving the churches in England and Wales.

Do your church members know about them? Have you a suitable candidate in your church?

Please do not hesitate to write for information or for a speaker to:—

Miss D. M. FINCH (*Organising Secretary*)
4 SOUTHAMPTON ROW
LONDON, W.C.1

Stories of your Stamps. A. M. Granger. Nelson. 5s.

This book, written by one of our English Baptist ministers, is just the gift for a boy or girl who has begun to be interested in stamp collecting. It may also encourage other children to begin the hobby. The book is well illustrated and is exceptional value for the price.

Life from Above. John F. Holliday. Marshall, Morgan and Scott Ltd. 10s. 6d.

The author of this book, after a long and varied experience, sets out to remedy a defect in the modern presentation of the Gospel—the insufficient attention devoted to the New Testament conception of the “new birth”. Though based on an analysis of a questionnaire on regeneration, the book is, in the main, the drawing together of a number of sermons on the Nicodemus incident in John iii. The author belongs to that group of Christians which places great emphasis on the knowledge of the “time and place” of conversion and since the questionnaire was limited to evangelical believers it is rather surprising that only 93 per cent of them could identify the place and approximate date when they were born again. Holding firmly to the instantaneous nature of this divine act, he takes Brunner to task for considering it to be a process. To one who knew A. C. Underwood it seems strange that Pastor Holliday should quote the late Principal of Rawdon’s book “Conversion: Christian and Non-Christian” in support of his thesis. It is difficult, apart from absolute fundamentals, to see what, theologically speaking, these two could have in common. With this book the writer does something to remedy the defect of which he complains, but in so doing produces a work which caters only for those of his own theological outlook.

J. BREWER.

Nature into History. Leslie Paul. Faber and Faber. 21s.

I am too young to have experienced the horror with which the doctrine of evolution lingered in the minds of the orthodox, but old enough to remember, from an early day, that serious issues were involved. Is there a line to be drawn between the specifically human and the universally natural and, if so, where? It came as a shock recently when a gifted young man told me that he had solved this problem years ago! Some readers may be relieved to know this, for we shall hear much of Darwin, and the problems he raised, during the next few years.

Leslie Paul distinguishes between natural endowments and the things created by men out of nothing. Man obeys the call of nature but in the act of circumcision or the horror of incest he is not obeying any conceivable natural demand. He seems, rather, to be set upon the mutilation of nature and the purging of natural man. Neither man’s conception of society nor of “the sacred” can be explained simply in terms of evolution. Mr. Paul finds the notion

of one Hominoid blundering into the realm of the specifically human a thing incredible, and is persuaded that "man was *called* into it, or even commanded into it, by Divine act".

The detailed examination of initiation rites and incest taboos is full of interest and tender sympathy. He finds in the most brutal religious practices of primitive man a hunger for an ordered society and a yearning for a living God. He is anxious to avoid theological terms but the reader who fails to see the theological implications is blind indeed.

The book is marked, as one would expect, by a clear attractive style and many adventurous arguments. Occasionally he seems unnecessarily harsh in his treatment of Darwin but he is supported in his criticisms by W. R. Thompson, F.R.S., in his introduction to the 1956 Everyman Edition of "Origin of Species".

It is to be hoped, however, that informed criticism will not encourage ignorant anti-Darwinian sermonising!

The view of man given here will not only help us to understand the past but will give us new insights into the plight of man in our own day.

H. HOWARD WILLIAMS.

They Teach us to Pray. R. E. O. White, M.A., B.D. A. James, Evesham, Worcs. 12s. 6d.

Dynamite is in this book. It blasts our dug-outs of enervating "devotions" and thrusts us into the heroic adventure of sincere prayer. It will do much to revive virile Christianity. Believing that "prayer is best learned through fellowship with those who pray", Mr. White shows us what prayer meant to sixteen godly men in Israel, men of like passions with ourselves and in similar human situations.

Here is Abraham inspired by the graciousness of God to plead for the salvation of his fellow-men. Shrinking Moses is matched with his hour and his task by communion with the Almighty God. Joshua and Gideon show the obedience and daring of prayer, and Samuel its fidelity.

The story continues until the book reaches its climax in two penetrating studies of the prayer life of our Lord, showing the quality and the reward of prayer.

Baptist ministers, unlike Anglican priests, are not taught how to pray. We have to learn it as best we can. But we thank God for spiritual guides like Mr. White who show us the way.

The Deacon: his ministry in our churches. Independent Press. 1s. 6d.

In recent years fresh attention has been paid to the duties of the important office of deacon. This booklet, written by the Congregational Union Moderators, provides an excellent starting point for discussion of this theme.