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Editorial Notes

OF many statements made during the recent Annual Assembly of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, the one which would appear to have the most immediate practical significance was uttered by the General Secretary when presenting the B.U. Council Report:—"Before many months have passed we have, I believe, to decide whether we shall seek to raise a new Church Extension Fund or Funds, or whether we shall enlarge the scope of the Home Work Fund."

The movement of population which has left high and dry in the centres of our cities and large industrial towns spacious church buildings—now little more than monuments to their former greatness and popularity—has by the same process brought into being innumerable housing estates and several whole new towns. These constitute obvious and challenging fields of evangelism. Unless the challenge is taken up all denominations are likely to decline. To set up Baptist buildings for worship and witness in these populous areas and provide an adequate ministry there is a task which can be effectively tackled only by the concerted action of the entire denomination. This seems to us to be the paramount need of our time and, ultimately, the most fruitful form of Baptist advance at this present juncture. If the denomination is to be summoned to raise very large sums for Church Extension then, in the first place, pressure must be brought to bear upon central churches whose day is done to sell their premises and sites and contribute the proceeds to the common fund for the sake of expansion in those districts where there is need and opportunity. In the second place, other claimants upon the denomination's pocket must recognise the need to go slow for a period, seeing that our resources are not unlimited. Given these, among other conditions, Baptists can turn decline into increase if they follow promptly, whole-heartedly and generously the lead given by Dr. Payne and set out with determination to claim these new areas for their Lord.

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Under the chairmanship of its President, Mr. Seymour J. Price, the Baptist Historical Society held its Annual Meeting on 27th April in the lounge at Bloomsbury Central Church, London. A report on the unspectacular but valuable work of the Society during the year was presented by the Secretary, who also announced that during the past twelve months the accumulated deficit

had been reduced by the surplus of £63 on the 1952 accounts. Members listened with close attention and great appreciation to a fine address (printed in this issue) on "The Theology of Baptism in Baptist History" by a distinguished Civil Servant and Presbyterian, Mr. J. M. Ross, M.A. Altogether it was a well-attended and successful meeting.

* * * * *

It is good to know that fellow-Baptists in other lands are increasingly aware of the need to preserve materials relating to denominational history and of encouraging research. Canadian Baptists have been active in this way for some time, while in 1950 the Baptists of New Zealand formed a Historical Society, which now issues a periodical *Bulletin*. Their example has been followed in Australia, and we learn that the South African Baptist Union is also taking steps to gather historical records. Our own Society is in touch with American counterparts both in the South and the North. The cultivation of closer relationships between all these organisations would be of common advantage.

* * * * *

Meanwhile, to the American Baptist Historical Society we extend our congratulations upon attaining its centenary. Its formation in Philadelphia on 5th May, 1853, was largely due to the enthusiastic advocacy of John Mason Peck. The contrast between his train journey that week from St. Louis through a populated countryside with its numberless churches and the arduous 128-day trek by lumbering wagon across a wild country when, thirty-six years earlier, he had first gone to St. Louis fired in Peck's heart the resolve to do what he could to procure for posterity the recording of the remarkable story of Baptist expansion. The foundation of the American Baptist Historical Society was the immediate result. Its first act was to establish a library which, today housed under the care of Mr. Edward C. Starr at Crozer Seminary, contains many treasures. The second step was to stimulate research, and a great deal of invaluable work has since been done. In 1938 *The Chronicle*, its quarterly journal, made its first appearance and, under the distinguished editorship of Dr. R. E. E. Harkness, continues to flourish. This eminent Society we salute as it enters its second century and we wish for it a continuing success. We share the belief of its founders; "Any people not interested in their past are not likely to be much concerned over their future."

* * * * *

By the death, on 24th September, 1952, of H. L. Hemmens, the Baptist denomination suffered the loss of one of the most

versatile, devoted and beloved of its sons. On 20th May, 1907, as a young man of twenty-three, he entered the doorway of the old Mission House in Furnival Street, London, for the first time as a member of the home staff of the Baptist Missionary Society. During the ensuing forty-five years the extent and the variety of his services to the Missionary Society, the Baptist Union and kindred causes—and, no less, the character of the man himself—gradually won for him an almost unique place in the life and the affection of the denomination he loved. The story of it all he has modestly told in *Such Has Been My Life*, completed shortly before he died and recently published.¹ All who knew H. L. Hemmens personally and many others to whom his name was familiar will want to read it. They will find that it is not only the well-told narrative of one man's life but, because of the part played by the author in denominational and other developments and also the pen-pictures he provides of notable personalities, a valuable contribution to the history of the Baptists during the past fifty years. Placed in the hands of the young, this story could hardly fail to stir up resolves to labour strenuously for the kingdom of God, in the service of which Harry L. Hemmens spent himself and, in so doing, found freedom and happiness for his own soul and glorified his Master's name on earth.

* * * * *

The Seventh Day Baptists' *Year-Book* for 1952 (published by the American Sabbath Tract Society at Plainfield, N.J., price \$1.50) gives a detailed account of the General Conference held at Denver, Colorado, last year and includes full reports of the various activities engaged in by the denomination, along with financial statements, statistics and directories of churches and ministers. Strongest in the U.S.A., they have churches in Africa, British Guiana, Jamaica, Holland and New Zealand, while Shanghai, Berlin and London each have one church. Constituted in 1617 the Mill Yard church meets on the premises of our Upper Holloway church. World membership totals 6,460 and there were 104 baptisms last year. The Conference is in membership with the World Council of Churches and "ways and means of presenting the Sabbath truth to the Council" are contemplated.

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"Outstanding Literary and Human Factors of My Life," by the late Dr. Witton Davies will be concluded in our next issue, in which we also expect to include an important article on the Anabaptists by Prof. F. Blanke of Zürich University.

¹ Carey Kingsgate Press, 10s. 6d.

The Theology of Baptism in Baptist History¹

IT is an open secret that among paedobaptists at the present time there is much uncertainty and discussion as to the meaning of baptism and the persons to whom it should be administered. What is the relationship of baptism to grace, to faith, to regeneration, to church membership, to confirmation? Does baptism make any difference to the person baptized, and if so, what? The present inquiry is an attempt by a paedobaptist to discover what answers Baptists have given in the past to the above questions. The task has not been altogether easy, because the doctrine of baptism does not occupy a central place in Baptist theology. This is a fact which always comes as a surprise to paedobaptists. For instance, of Spurgeon's three thousand sermons, only five are on baptism; or to take another illustration from an earlier age, when in 1674 Thomas Hicks, with the approval of Hanserd Knollys and other leading Baptists, made thirty-one accusations against the Quakers, he did not think it necessary to make any mention of the Quakers' disregard of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper². When Baptists do write of baptism, they have been much more concerned to prove the impropriety of the sprinkling of infants than to define what happens at the immersion of believers. The evidence for the present inquiry, therefore, has had to be collected chiefly from incidental references, sometimes even from writers taken, so to speak, off their guard.

The many theories of baptism held by paedobaptists fall broadly into three main categories. In the first category are those which regard baptism as purely symbolic and as incapable of effecting any change either of character or of status in the person baptized; under this view infants are baptized in order to demonstrate the love of Christ for children as well as adults. The second type of theory holds that baptism, whether or not it has any symbolic value, is primarily the act which admits into membership of the visible Church, or which solemnly ratifies an existing membership; under this view infants are baptized on the ground that they ought not to be denied membership of the Church. The third type of theory maintains that, in addition to any symbolic or initiatory value that baptism may have, its chief purpose is to be the means whereby God confers a gift or benefit of some kind on

¹ A lecture delivered to the Baptist Historical Society in April, 1953.

² Crosby, *History of the Baptists* (1738), II. 296-306.

the person baptized, whether that gift be described as regeneration, or forgiveness of sin, or grace, or the Holy Spirit, or a "seal" by which the person baptized is assured of his inclusion in the Covenant; under views of this third type, infants are baptized because it is thought that they ought not to be deprived of the benefits of the sacrament. It will be convenient to consider the views of Baptists under the same three heads. (In order not to complicate unduly a sufficiently complex subject, the inquiry will be mainly confined to the English Baptists from 1610 onwards).

Baptism as a Symbol

The first question, then, for our consideration is whether Baptists have regarded baptism as having symbolic value only, and what it has been held to symbolise.

The question whether Baptists consider baptism to be anything beyond a mere symbol will be answered more fully under the second and third heads of this inquiry; let it suffice at this point to state that from about the middle of the 17th century until quite recent times the main tendency of Baptist thought has been to regard this ordinance as having no more than a symbolic value. For instance, the Confession of Faith of 1677, which was modelled on the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians, deliberately omitted all reference to the efficacy of baptism, its conferring of grace by the Holy Ghost, its being a seal of the Covenant, and its admission of the party baptized into the visible Church;³ instead it merely declared that—

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death and resurrection; of his being engrafted into him; of remission of sins; and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.

Typical of 18th century thought is Joseph Hart's hymn⁴—

Water no man denies;
But, brethren rest not there;
'Tis faith in Christ that justifies
And makes the conscience clear.

Even more pointed is Upton's hymn revised by Spurgeon⁵—

No trust in water do we place,
'Tis but an outward sign;
The great reality is grace,
The fountain, blood divine.

Prof. Matthews, writing on behalf of the American Baptists

³ Chap. xxviii, sections i and vi.

⁴ Gadsby's Collection, Philpots Edition (1850) no. 863.

⁵ *Our Own Hymn Book* (1866), no. 923.

in 1937 in the Faith and Order volume *The Ministry and the Sacraments*, stated that—

Baptism is considered only an outward sign of an inner experience, a symbol in which the individual pledges himself to a newness of life.

It is only very recently that any noticeable tendency in the contrary direction has appeared, and Principal Underwood was perhaps still representing only a minority view when in the same volume he wrote (p. 223)—

While many Baptists would regard Prof. I. G. Matthews's paper as an adequate expression of their opinions of the Ministry and the Sacraments, there is an increasing number of Baptists in both England and America who cannot give their consent to Prof. Matthews's virtual reduction of the Sacraments to *nuda signa*.

If, then, the sole or main value of baptism is symbolic, what does it signify? The early Arminian Baptists were not of one mind on this point. The Mennonite Confession of 1580 had confined its attention to the washing away of sins, but the Twenty Articles of John Smyth define baptism as "the external sign of remission of sins, of dying and of being made alive." A similar statement is in Helwy's Amsterdam confession of 1611, but Smyth's followers in 1612 preferred to speak of baptism figuring the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire.⁶ The Arminian Confessions of Faith of 1651 and 1660 make no mention of any symbolic value of baptism, while the "Orthodox Creed" of 1678 is similar to the Calvinist Confession of 1677, and doubtless influenced by it. These early Arminian Baptists seem to have practised believers' baptism simply because they held it to be the divinely-appointed door of entrance into the Church and not because of any particular symbolic significance. Immersion is not mentioned until the Confession of 1660, and this may have helped to retard the discovery of the symbolic importance of baptism.

The Calvinistic Baptists, on the other hand, were from the first more interested in the symbolic than in the initiatory significance of baptism. This was natural, because if our acceptance by Christ depends entirely on God's eternal decree, it cannot have any real connection with baptism.⁷ The Calvinists practised immersion as early as about 1640, and the Confessions of 1644, 1646, 1656, 1677, and 1689 all declare the symbolic connection between baptism and (to use the words of the two earliest) "the interest the Saints

⁶ *Propositions and Conclusions concerning True Christian Religion . . .* no. 71.

⁷ Calvin himself did not admit this conclusion, but sometimes claimed that baptism admits to Church membership and begins the life of grace. See *Inst.* IV. xv. 10, 12, xvi. 3, 22, xvii. 1. Karl Barth seems to have overlooked this in his famous lecture.

have in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ." The same point is made by Tombes,⁸ d'Anvers,⁹ and Bunyan.¹⁰ Most of these sources give also some other significations of baptism: according to the 1644 Confession it signifies also the washing of the soul in the blood of Christ and the final resurrection of the bodies of the Saints; according to the 1677 Confession it signifies the believer's engrafting into Christ, the remission of his sins, and his dedication to God; according to Tombes¹¹ "perhaps the primary end of baptism" was "that it should be a sign that the baptized shows himself a disciple, and confesseth the faith in which he hath been instructed." All these interpretations are to be found together in d'Anvers *Treatise of Baptism*. But throughout this period the central emphasis is on the connection between baptism and the death of Christ.

Later writers, such as Abraham Booth¹² and Spurgeon¹³ seem to have concentrated almost entirely on the symbolism of dying and rising with Christ, and this alone seems to have been alluded to in the Basis of the Baptist Union,¹⁴ and in the Statement for the Faith and Order Commission which was approved by the Council of the Baptist Union in 1948.¹⁵ A similar process has taken place in Baptist hymnody: an older generation could sing at a baptismal service—

⁸ *An Examen of the Sermon of Mr. Stephen Marshall . . .* (1645), p. 168. "And for Baptism, it seals dying with Christ, and rising with Christ, *Rom.* vi. 3, 4, 5. *Gal.* iii. 27. *Col.* ii. 12. *1 Pet.* iii. 21, and therefore not only the first work of conversion, but also aftergrowth and exercise of holiness."

⁹ *A Treatise of Baptism* (1674), p. 14.

¹⁰ *A Reason for my Practice in Worship* (Works, ed. Ofor, II. 604 b). "Touching shadowish, or figurative ordinances; I believe that Christ hath ordained but two in His Church, viz., Water baptism and the supper of the Lord: both which are of excellent use to the Church in this world, they being to us representations of the death and resurrection of Christ; and are as God shall make them, helps to our faith therein. But I count them not the fundamentals of our Christianity . . ."

¹¹ "An Exercitation presented to the Chairman of a Committee of the Assembly of Divines (1645), p. 33.

¹² E.g. the quotation from his *Apology for the Baptists* on page 67 of Robert Hall's *Terms of Communion*. "In submitting to baptism we have an emblem of our union and communion with Jesus Christ, as our great representative, in His death, burial, and resurrection." Cf. also his *Paedobaptism Examined*, 1829 edition, I. 438.

¹³ *Sermon* 1627.

¹⁴ "Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and rose again the third day'."

¹⁵ *The Nature of the Church* (Faith and Order, 1952), p. 166. "Baptism of believers by immersion . . . is an 'acted creed'. We value the symbolism of immersion following the Pauline teaching of the believer's participation in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord (*Rom.* vi, 3.).

Our souls he washes in his blood
 As water makes the body clean,
 And the good spirit from our God
 Descends like purifying rain.¹⁶

but the hymns in the Baptist Church Hymnals of 1900 and 1933 are almost wholly concerned with personal profession of faith and participation in the death of Christ.¹⁷

Baptism as Initiation

We turn now to our second main question: is baptism the door of entry to the Church?

John Smyth several times gave an affirmative answer to this question,¹⁸ and in this he was followed uniformly by the Arminian Baptists for the next fifty years. The letter intercepted in 1620 says that believers "are made God's house, or church, through being knit together by the Spirit of God, and baptized into his body, which is the church."¹⁹ Similar statements appear in the Confessions of 1651 and 1660, the latter of which distinguishes between the *necessity* of baptism to the gathering of churches, and the *duty* of those who have been constituted church members by baptism to receive the laying on of hands and to join in church fellowship and worship. Not until the 1678 Confession is there any perceptible weakening on this point: Calvinistic influence is traceable in this Confession, and it goes no further than saying that baptism is a sign to the believer of, among other things, his ingrafting into the body of Christ, which is his church; "And orderly none ought to be admitted into the visible church of Christ, without being first baptized." Similar language is used in the Articles of 1770 of the General Baptist New Connexion: "No person *ought* to be received into the church without submitting to that ordinance."

It was different with the Calvinists. It is true Collier in *The Font-Guard Routed* (1652) asked: "Where is the Scripture that saith baptism is only for *Initiation*, and not for *Confirmation*; it's a fancy of your own brain; may not baptism be initiation and confirmation too?" And the Somerset Confession, for which he was largely respon-

¹⁶ General Baptist New Connexion Hymn Book (1830 edition), no. 501, by Isaac Watts.

¹⁷ A statistical analysis of some representative hymn-books is given as an appendix to this paper.

¹⁸ E.g., in *The Character of the Beast*, p. 59 (Works, 1915, p. 150) baptism is described as "the door of the Church", typified by the laver at the door of the Tabernacle. See also p. 150, item II(1) of reply to Clifton's *Plea for Infants*; and p. 757 in his *Retraction*. "It is not lawful for every one that seeth the truth to baptize, for then there might be as manie churches as couples in the world and none have any thing to do with other."

¹⁹ Crosby, I, 135.

sible, states that believers are by baptism "planted in the visible church or body of Christ . . ." (*Acts* ii. 41). But none of the other Calvinistic Confessions of the 17th century makes baptism the initiatory ordinance; the nearest approach is in the Appendix to the 1646 Confession which makes baptism a precondition of church membership.²⁰ Tombes went so far as to say that "The Church of God may consist without baptism, as in the crucified thief, etc."²¹

The subsequent history of Calvinistic thought on this point follows these early precedents. A few have regarded baptism as the door to the Church, but the prevailing view has considered baptism to be simply a highly important duty of those who have already entered the church invisible by faith and the church visible by vote of a church meeting. It is tempting at first sight to suppose that the advocates of strict communion thought of baptism as admitting to church membership; but this is not so. It was common ground between Bunyan and his opponents Paul and Kiffin that baptism was not the entering or initiating ordinance:²² their objection to Bunyan was based simply on the ground that lack of water baptism is a gross breach of good order, and that admission to the Lord's Supper would be a condonation of it.²³ Yet among Bunyan's opponents d'Anvers took the minority view that baptism is the door into the New Testament Church, as circumcision had been into the Old Testament Church.²⁴ A similar view appears to have been taken by Denne.²⁵

More than a century later the majority view was held not only by Robert Hall, the champion of Open Communion, but also by Abraham Booth and Joseph Kinghorn, who advocated Strict Communion. Alone among the champions on the strict side at that time, Andrew Fuller held baptism to be "the initiatory ordinance of Christianity."²⁶ After his death this view survived in one or two 18th century hymns sung by the General Baptists of the New Connexion. Thus Deacon had written—

Read your Bible for instruction,
There you find the will of God,
There you find the introduction
To the church is through the flood.²⁷

²⁰ Section XVII: "Believers baptized ought to agree and join together" in doctrine, fellowship, etc. "And a company of baptized believers so agreeing and joining together are a church or congregation of Christ."

²¹ *Exercitation*, p. 22.

²² Bunyan's *Works*, II, 606^a, 619^a.

²³ "You object" (said Bunyan, *Works*, II, p. 626^a). "That this putteth the whole of God's instituted worship . . . to the highest uncertainties." Bunyan was in his opponent's view indulging the unbaptized in the sin of infant baptism (p. 631^b).

²⁴ *A Treatise of Baptism*, p. 20.

²⁵ Bunyan, II, p. 650^a.

²⁶ *Letter to a Friend* . . . (1814), p. 16.

²⁷ Hymn Book of the General Baptist New Connexion (1830), no. 517.

And a baptismal hymn by Fellowes had contained the line—

Come to his church, enter his gates.²⁸

A similar conception appears in Ingham's *Hand-book on Christian Baptism*, published in 1865. Ingham was a General Baptist of the New Connexion and, like the old Arminians, seems to have been more interested in the initiatory than in the symbolical significance of baptism. For him it is "the law of the Christian dispensation . . . that all be admitted to the church on earth through water"; "we regard baptism . . . as the divinely appointed way of entrance into the body of Christ."²⁹

Spurgeon, on the other hand, was much more interested in the symbolism of baptism, and would go no further than calling it "the avowal of faith; the man was Christ's soldier, but now in baptism he puts on his regimentals."³⁰ Even further from initiation is the constitution drawn up by John Clifford for the New Connexional Chapel at Westbourne Park in 1877, which treats baptism merely as the privilege of the believer which every applicant for church membership is urged to consider but is not obliged to undergo. "The whole question is left to the individual conscience."³¹

The minority view has been revived again in recent times by Dr. Wheeler Robinson, who on page 84 of *The Life and Faith of the Baptists* stated that "We become members of the living body of Christ by being consciously and voluntarily baptized in the Spirit of Christ"; but he had to admit in a footnote to page 98 that according to the Baptists "Entrance into the Church is regarded as distinct from baptism, though in practice usually combined with it." In consonance with this distinction, the reply returned in 1926 by the Baptist Union Assembly to the Lambeth Appeal stated, with reference to membership of the church—

We believe that this holy society is to be found wherever companies of believers unite as Churches on the ground of a confession of personal faith.

There is no reference here to baptism. Similarly the 1948 Statement says that—

The basis of our membership in the Church is a conscious and deliberate acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord by each individual.

The Statement goes on to describe baptism as the expression and safeguard of this vital evangelical experience, but not as the means of entry into the Church. The majority view still prevails.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 495.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 9, 11.

³⁰ Sermon 573, vol. x., p. 326.

³¹ For the full text see Underwood, *A History of the English Baptists* (1947), p. 210.

Baptism as a Means of Grace

The third question for our consideration is whether, in Baptist thought, baptism is regarded as conveying anything from God to the person baptized, or effecting any change in him. This is really a very complex question, and must be further subdivided. There is first the question whether baptism is in any sense the sacrament of regeneration; secondly, if it is not that, is it still in some sense a means of grace to the recipient? and thirdly, if not a means of grace, is it at least a seal or assurance to him of his being in a covenant relationship to God?

Almost without exception, Baptists have treated the idea of baptismal regeneration with an emphatic repudiation. It is true that in the heat of their righteous indignation they have not always clearly stated what it was that they were rejecting; for the term "regeneration" can mean a number of different things. From God's side, it can mean His election of the individual to salvation; or His forgiveness of all his past sin; or His ingrafting of him into Christ; or His conferring on him the Holy Spirit; or His creation in him of that eternal life which begins on earth and continues after death. Further, from man's side "regeneration" can be thought of as the awakening of the soul to the claims of Christ; the change of heart known as conversion; or the changed life that issues from the change of heart. But Baptists have been unanimous that in one or other of these senses, if not in all, baptism is neither the means nor the occasion of regeneration.

It would be easy to produce an impressive catena of quotations from Baptist writings, from 1620 to the present day,³² in which baptismal regeneration is repudiated; but it is perhaps more to our purpose to notice some instances of a contrary tendency. It has been claimed³³ that a vital difference between the Churches of Christ and the English Baptists is that the former maintain that baptism, if conjoined with faith in the person baptized, is the means through which the new life in Christ is begun; whereas the latter allow it no such efficacy. But the distinction is not absolute. Alexander Campbell, the Father of the Churches of Christ, in his fascinating book *Christian Baptism, with its Antecedents and Consequents* (1853), did indeed contend that baptism was designed for remission of sins, and that adoption and justification were among

³² E.g., Crosby, I. 134; Tombes, *Exercitation* (1645), pp. 24, 30; Booth, *Apo:gy for the Baptists* (1778), pp. 2, 6; Hall, *Terms of Communion*, p. 79; Kinghorn, *Baptism a Term of Communion* (1816), p. 31; Spurgeon, *Sermons* 130, 381, 573; Tymms, *Evolution of Infant Baptism*, Preface; Underwood, *Conversion*, pp. 109, 112, *History of the English Baptists*, p. 269.

³³ E.g. by Dr. William Robinson in *What Churches of Christ Stand For*, Chap. vi.

its consequents ; to grace, faith, repentance, and baptism, he said,³⁴ must all be assigned "a concurrent efficacy in the rescue and delivery of man from sin, misery and ruin." But similar sentiments can be found among Baptists. Henry d'Anvers (if Bunyan did not misrepresent him)³⁵ held that in baptism believers put on Christ by their baptismal vow and covenant. A baptismal hymn by Fellows in the following century seems to imply remission of sins in baptism :

Come to His Church, enter His gates ;
For you His gracious presence waits ;
Here peace and pardon are bestowed ;
Great gifts ! and worthy of a God.³⁶

Similarly an anonymous hymn of the New Connexion declares that "in the baptismal laver"—

Bath'd in repentant tears,
The sins which you deplore
Dead in your Saviour's grave shall lie
And shall be seen no more.³⁷

More emphatic is Rawson's hymn in the *Baptist Church Hymnal* of 1900 :

Baptized into the Father's name,
We're children of our God :
Baptized into the Son, we claim
The ransom of His blood :

Baptized into the Holy Ghost,
In this accepted hour
Give us to own the Pentecost
And the descending power.³⁷

About the same time, Ingham was writing as follows :

We also believe that baptism is meant when we read of being born of water ; but we do not believe that the Scriptures say that "to be saved by the washing of regeneration" is "to be baptized". The words of Paul to Titus are : "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing (or bath) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The words refer to baptism *and* to the renewing operations of the Divine Spirit. Mr. Stacey here puts asunder what God has joined together, as do some on *Acts* ii. 38, attributing remission of sins to baptism, as if the Apostle had not equally directed everyone to *repent AND be baptized*.³⁸

Here the argument is precisely Campbell's—that while baptism alone is useless, it has a concurrent efficacy with the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration. This line of thought has been taken up again in the present century by Dr. Wheeler Robinson :

³⁴ *Op. cit.* p. 255.

³⁵ *Works*, vol. II. p. 655^a.

³⁶ Hymn Book of General Baptist New Connexion (1830), no. 495.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 515.

³⁸ *Hand Book of Christian Baptism*, p. 564.

To be baptized into Christ is to put on Christ, i.e., to enter that realm of the Spirit over which Christ is Lord . . .

The recipient of baptism in the New Testament times normally expected to be the recipient of the spiritual powers of the new life which he entered by his baptism. There could be no risk of encouraging the idea of "baptismal regeneration" (in the modern sense), because all who were baptized were already believers, i.e. the moral and spiritual conditions of their personal faith became the real channel of the Spirit's highest energies.³⁹

I have given these quotations because of their inherent interest, but few Baptists have gone so far in attributing an efficacious connection between baptism and the new birth. Yet there have been some who, while attributing the beginning of the new life to faith alone, have nevertheless not denied to baptism a sacramental efficacy as a means of grace, or as a channel through which the holy Spirit is received, either for the first time or in greater measure than before. In theological terms, they have accepted baptism as a means of sanctification, while denying it any part in justification. This appears to be a quite recent development. For instance, apart from Rawson's hymn already mentioned, I have not found earlier than 1925 any claim by a Baptist that there is a bestowal of the Holy Spirit at baptism. The Arminian Confession of 1660 does refer to the Holy Spirit, but promises it *after* baptism, through prayer and the laying on of hands. Dr. Underwood, however, in his study of *Conversion* (p. 110) points out that the Apostle Paul "does not view baptism simply as an outward sign of an inward repentance, but connects it closely with the gift of the Spirit and union with Christ." About the same time Dr. Wheeler Robinson wrote: "I am pleading for the connection of water baptism with the Spirit in exactly the sense in which all Baptists plead for its connection with faith. If the New Testament teaches the latter, it assuredly also teaches the former; and Baptists are really committed to both."⁴⁰ Dr. Underwood, however, does not appear to regard baptism as the occasion for the first bestowal of the Holy Spirit, but rather, like the Lord's Supper, as an occasion for the enhancement of an already existing possession. These are his most recent words :

The baptism of believers . . . is an unforgettable experience of the first rank, in which God does something for them in response to their repentance and faith. They receive from Him a *further* endowment of the Spirit and *further* power to walk in newness of life. It makes their surrender to Christ *more* absolute and enhances their union with Him. It *quickens* their sense of responsibility to Him as Lord, *deepens* their sense of pardon and of sin forgiven, and brings them a *profounder* experience of that Divine grace they had already embraced by faith at their conversion.⁴¹

³⁹ *The Life and Faith of the Baptists* (1927), pp. 176-7. ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁴¹ *History of the English Baptists*, p. 269; italics mine. Cf. also his article in *The Ministry and the Sacraments* (1937), pp. 225, 227.

Dr. Underwood and Dr. Wheeler Robinson have not been alone in regarding baptism as a means of grace. Dr. Payne has admitted that the meaning of baptism is not exhausted by its being a dramatic representation of the believer's conversion, but that "incorporation into the new Israel, appropriation by Christ and the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit are other and inseparable elements" in it.⁴² Dr. Hugh Martin has remarked that "Baptism is at once an acted parable and a means of grace."⁴³ Indeed this view seems to have reached the point of orthodoxy, for the Statement of 1948 declares: "We recognise the two sacraments. . . . We hold that both are 'means of grace' to those who receive them in faith."⁴⁴

I promised finally to say something on the question whether baptism, if not the means through which the new birth or the gifts of the Spirit are received, might yet be described as "a sealing ordinance." This not altogether clear expression has been much resorted to by paedobaptists fleeing from the lion of sacramentalism, in an attempt to avoid the bear of mere symbolism. But Baptists have not found this a necessary refuge. John Smyth, it is true, did once describe baptism as "the seal of the covenant,"⁴⁵ and Tombes admitted "that baptism is in its nature a seal of the righteousness of faith," but immediately pointed out that "God doth not seal this to everyone that is baptized, but only to true believers."⁴⁶ One or two modern hymns pray that in baptism we may be sealed by Christ for his own,⁴⁷ but Robert Robinson had already been baptized when he wrote—

Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it from thy courts above!

Collier refused to attach any sealing virtue to baptism:

Whereas you conclude Baptism to be a *Seal of the Covenant of Grace* . . . where is your Scripture for it? Did you ever read of any New Testament seal, besides the Spirit of Christ? *Eph.* i, 13, iv, 30.⁴⁸

This protest is repeated in the Appendix to the 1677 Confession of Faith. Thereafter the controversy disappears from view.

⁴² *Scottish Journal of Theology*, III. 53.

⁴³ *Baptist Quarterly*, XIV. 221.

⁴⁴ This view—that baptism is a means of sanctification but not of justification is almost precisely that maintained by Gorham a hundred years ago and upheld as lawful within the Church of England by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council: see Nias, *Gorham and the Bishop of Exeter* (1951), especially the final chapter.

⁴⁵ Burgess, *Smith the See Baptist* . . . , p. 150.

⁴⁶ *Examen*, p. 164.

⁴⁷ *Baptist Church Hymnal* (Revised), nos. 470 and 480.

⁴⁸ *The Font-Guard Routed*, p. 4.

If a brief summary may now be attempted of all this evidence, it may be said that broadly the earliest English Baptists thought of baptism primarily as the Scriptural mode of entry into the Church. Under Calvinistic influence this was replaced by a conception of baptism as merely a symbolical way in which the believer, for his part, testifies to what Christ has already done for him otherwise. In the present century, under a more objective study of Scripture, baptism is being increasingly regarded not only as something the believer does but as a means through which God acts upon him.

At the time of the Reformation one of the great evils of the Roman Church was its attribution of spiritual effects to merely material acts. The logical opposite to this was to abandon the sacraments altogether, or if this was going too far, at least to refuse to administer the sacraments except to those who, at the time of receiving them, could receive also God's spiritual gifts in the only way in which they can be received, that is to say by faith. But, said the good Reformers, this is Anabaptism, and Anabaptism implies the grossest heresy, immorality, and anarchy:⁴⁹ the excesses at Münster had closed the door to fair consideration of the Baptist solution.⁵⁰ Consequently the Reformers felt that they must continue to baptize children and find non-Roman reasons for doing so. Some of these reasons will not bear examination.

Now it was common to both Roman and Baptist views of baptism that they implied a separation between spirit and matter. Either one becomes a Christian by baptism, or one becomes a Christian by faith, and Baptists chose the second alternative. Separation of spirit and matter, however, is not final truth, but was part of the philosophy of the time, an inheritance from Ancient

⁴⁹ Alexander Ross, writing his *View of All Religions* in 1653, makes no reference to contemporary Baptists, but describes the Anabaptists of the previous century as follows: "Their tenets were that Christ was not the Son of *Mary*, nor true God; that we were righteous not by faith in Christ, but by our own merits, and sufferings. They rejected original sin, baptism of Infants, communion with other Churches, Magistracy among *Christians*, Oaths, and punishments of Malefactors. They refused to swear allegiance to Princes; and held that a *Christian* may have many wives, and that he may put away his wife if she be of another Religion, and marry another. That no man must possess anything in proper; that re-baptization may be used; that before the day of judgement the godly should enjoy a Monarchy here on earth; that man had free-will in spiritual things; and that any man may preach, and give the Sacraments.

⁵⁰ "Whether the English Baptists held at first any part of the wild and seditious sentiments of the German fanatics it is difficult to say . . . One feature or resemblance, however, joined to an identity of name, was sufficient to surmount in the public feeling the impression of all the points of discrepancy or of contrast, and to subject them to a portion of the infamy attached to the ferocious insurgents of Munster."—Hall, *Terms of Communion*, p. 178.

Greece. In recent times the philosophical background has changed, and we are able to see certain things in Scripture to which we were formerly blind. It is possible for writers like Mr. Fleming-ton⁵¹ to show us that the Bible treats spirit and matter as a unity, and is full of symbols which effect what they symbolise. It is no longer necessary for us to fear that we are sinking towards Rome if we follow Scripture in joining baptism with faith as the instrument of our salvation. It is no longer necessary for us to explain away expressions such as "Except a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"—"Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling upon his name"—"You are all sons of God through faith, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ"—"As eight souls were saved (in the ark) through water, so now its counterpart, baptism, saves us." Thus the whole baptismal controversy is thrown into the melting-pot again. It remains to be seen whether the result will be to turn all Baptists into paedobaptists, or vice versa, or to permit both practices to continue as expressions of the same doctrine within a reunited Church.

APPENDIX

ANALYSIS OF CERTAIN HYMN BOOKS

- (1) Hymn Book of the General Baptist New Connexion, 1830 Edition.
- (2) Gadsby's Collection, revised by Philpot, 1850.
- (3) *Our Own Hymn-Book*, Ed. Spurgeon, 1866.
- (4) *Baptist Church Hymnal*, 1900.
- (5) *Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised)* 1933.

The hymns analysed are those, and only those, which the hymn-book specifies as appropriate to baptismal services.

	(1) New Connexion	(2) Gadsby	(3) Spurgeon	(4) B.C.H.	(5) B.C.H.R.
Total of baptismal hymns	37	24	16	17	16
Number containing no direct reference to baptism	4	1	3	9	9
Baptism as obedience to—					
(a) Christ's example	10	7	3	—	—
(b) Christ's precept	6	4	—	—	—
(c) primitive practice	4	—	—	—	—
Baptism associated with—					
(i) death and burial of Christ	14	16	10	5	5
(ii) final resurrection	1	—	1	—	—
(iii) washing of sin	4	4	1	1	1
(iv) pardon of sin	3	—	—	—	—
(v) descent of the Holy Spirit	1	—	—	1	—
(vi) entrance into the Church	2	—	—	—	—
Baptism as a demonstration of the believer's faith	5	3	2	10	8

J. M. Ross.

⁵¹ *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, chapters 6 to 9.

A Voyage to Fernando Po

(Concluded)

In these days when the Cairo to Cape road is as thronged as our Great North Road, and visitors to Africa seem to seek only game-reservations and gold and diamond mines and snake-parks and tribal dances and pygmy villages, the giant Watusi or the white rhino of Hluhluwe, John Clarke's diary is a refreshment.

One of the many interesting things about him is his thorough preparation for this journey. So well had he read all the printed material he could lay hand upon concerning this coast it was as though he had visited it before. Thus he was prepared for the age and solidity of the forts and the size and shape of the settlements. And no diarist ever took greater care to record exact shade and tint of sky above and earth beneath, of forest or garden tree and the fruit thereof, the ebony of Negroid, dark-brown of Aku, golden hue of Mandingo, the manifold creole complexion and feature and the ashen leper and the blotched albino. It was an honest to goodness desire to inform.

Illustration of this is in his seeking the graves of L. E. L.¹ at Cape Coast and Lander in Fernando Po.

"Called upon Captain MacLean, brother to the Governor. He came from Perthshire in Scotland about nine months ago, and still retains the appearance of one who has not long suffered the heat of an African sun, or the still more fearful heat of an African fever. Dr. Prince asked which was the grave of Mrs. MacLean, and a black soldier pointed out two rows of yellow brick set on edge surrounding twelve red tiles. There is no marble monument,² no inscription to mark the spot where are deposited the ashes of the once gay and admired L. E. L.³ By her side are the remains of an officer's wife, and those of the Rev. Philip Quaque,⁴ both with inscriptions."

"I preached in the afternoon from 2 *Cor. v.* 14-15, interpreted by Mr. Smith, a young man of colour who teaches school

¹ Laetitia (Letty) Elizabeth Landon, 1802-37, minor poetess of London, the rejected by Forster (the biographer of Dickens) who suddenly married George MacLean and accompanied him to Cape Coast, where she died eight weeks later.

² One now on wall of great hall of fort.

³ It would be interesting to know if Clarke had read any of Miss Landon's very slight contributions to English literature.

⁴ Fantee native of Cape Coast, 1741-1816, took degree at Oxford, appointed Chaplain of Gold Coast and held the office fifty-years.

in the fort, and once acted as secretary to Governor MacLean."

"Dined with Mr. Smith, son of the late governor,⁵ who showed us the bedroom in which Mrs. MacLean died. He is a gold merchant. At his home tasted "Relish" and examined Loddgis and Son's celebrated work on flowers."

George MacLean had been given, for services rendered in Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast governorship after the death of Sir Charles McCarthy in the First Ashanti War, and held office 1830-1837 (?) for a London Company of Merchants. A man of some character who spent a £4,000 annual grant in creating a virtual protectorate over considerable area of the Fantee country,⁶ blending native with European justice and teaching love of soil in a Garden of Experiment.⁷

This bit of the coast with its beautiful lake and garden and inviting landscapes pleased Clarke. "Walked to Fort William, where a lighthouse is erected, for which each vessel entering the harbour pays a small sum to the Governor. Several native soldiers were on guard. They cleaned our shoes and seem filled with gratitude on receiving a shilling among eight or ten of them. From the Fort a fine view of the country is afforded, the road to Coomassie on our right, and to the west that to El-Mina, a white fort seen in the distance."

He was pleased also with some he met there, the young man of colour, Mr. Smith, who had been "accomplished for his position (schoolmaster) by being sent to England," and Sam Quamina, head canoe-boy of the Governor, "far advanced above his countrymen in intelligence and civilisation."

As interpreter of sermons Sam "took fifteen minutes to translate five minutes." "When he became concerned about his soul he sent away Tanawah his younger wife and was lawfully married to Parabah, the other and elder. He keeps a most respectable lodging-house for sea-captains. Instead of asking me for anything he made me a handsome present of mats of native workmanship" . . . "Went off to ship in canoe put at our disposal by Sam Quamina."

A couple of other portraits follow. A man "dashed by the King of Ashanti to Mr. Freeman when he visited Coomassie, now called Isaac Freeman. He looks happy, contented and well. He was a prisoner taken in war, and was expecting each day to be put

⁵ MacLean's predecessor.

⁶ See Stephen Gwynn's *Life of Mary Kingsley* (28-9 pp., Penguin Edition).

⁷ Other such gardens were planted by William Waddy Harris, a Liberian, in his own country, and Sir Samuel Lewis, a second generation Repatriated African and first of his race to be knighted by Queen Victoria, at Waterloo in Sierra Leone.

to death. His country is a long way to the north, and his numerals different to any I have yet collected."

"At Tabou saw one of the men picked up at sea mentioned at page 348 in Dr. Oldfield's Journal. He knew Captain Irving⁸ again. He was one of the two tried at the Old Bailey, on Friday the 6th of March, 1835, for the murder of Captain Glasscott. He and the other were acquitted, but the mystery was never solved."

A procession of native kings crosses these pages of the diary.

"King Baffo of Cavelly is a tall, athletic personage, forbidding in appearance, but the American (mission) station three miles away meets with no sort of interruption or annoyance. He was dressed in black hat and blue and red handkerchief."

"King Pay is the chief of the place (St. Andrews), but does not visit ships. King George came to represent him. He was ornamented with the brass drops from an umbrella."

"Another king, whose name sounded like Queer, presented figure to suit name. He wore blue coat of marine as skirt, tied by pieces of blue cloth, (and) one of a corporal above (with) white handkerchief and black hat. His beard was plaited, as was that of another monarch named Jambla."

He is never too busy to note things in native houses, like the fifteen wash-basins at Cape Palmas and the many clocks in home of neighbouring village. The buildings, also, "swish, balls of clay that harden in the sun and last a long time and keep out insects." The walls were erected in layers "2 foot thick and 3 in height," each layer allowed to dry before the next was added.

Prices interested him, the bullock bought for under 4/- and the other for "some powder and a gun," and peculiarities of some of the animals. "Took on board an African sheep with hair instead of wool." "Bought sheep that measured 21¼ inches in girth, height 20½, length 23½, tail 9, head from crown to tip 6 inches." And he never misses ornament of odd character, tobacco-pipe, snake-bone or skin, bits of calabash, fowl-beaks, bird-claws, hawk and parrot feather, monkey tails, belt of wooden bells with teeth as rappers, skulls of small dogs in hair. Also aggrry beads.

"One of his (Big Tom's) followers (at Adonay river) had sixteen rows of blue and white beads as wristlets and sixteen or eighteen on each leg as anklets, below the knees large square (hanging) pieces of bone, with mixture of beads, and round his neck other beads, some of them agra (aggrry) and jsopoe. Agra beads are valued at their weight in gold.⁹ Dr. Prince took his photograph. He was called Anthony Toby, Yaggragna in native

⁸ Master of the *Golden Spring*.

⁹ The five in the British Museum are valued at £1000 each.

tongue, and came from Three Towns. He was one of the few who had survived the red-drink (red-water) ordeal."

"Rich boys wear yellow beads, sometimes mixed with the more valuable agra species. The way of finding agra beads is not clear. Some say they are dug from the earth.¹⁰ A person who had a large one said it cost him five akeys of gold dust. They are of varied colours, are pretty, the colouring going through their entire substance. Some are holed. Imitations, made in England, are easily detected. The popoe beads are long and of a blue colour."

He then goes to trouble of compiling table of values—8 tacoes equal akey, 16 akeys equal one ounce, etc. Maize, he says, is used for tacoes, liquorice-seed (small, red, with black eye) for half tacao. The tacao being valued at 3d., akey at 2/-. "Some of the merchants will not trade for anything less than 5/-. 10 heads of tobacco are given for an akey of gold dust, which at 1/6d. is 24/- an ounce."

Wonderful man, one murmurs, looking up from the fading pages packed with such details as those just quoted and others like—"Cape Palmas has teeming population and the colonists are increasing. . . . Grand Drewin men were athletic and noble in appearance. . . . So curious, they put their hands in my pockets . . . the native cloth worn is strong and looks well . . . cords of goat and ox skin . . . plaited hats perched above hair and kept in place by large nail . . . waist-bands of yellow money-tails . . . wristlet of monkey-teeth . . . ivory rings on thumbs . . . hair tied in tufts, a work of great patience, skill and time."

He writes at some length of early coastal evangelists, mostly Liberated Africans¹¹ like William de Graft, who released by Mixed Commission Court in Freetown was helped back to Cape Coast as he had ambition to preach to his own folk, one of the many assisted down the coast by Captain Potter the Wesleyan skipper of Bristol. William de Graft was bluff hearty man of great mental and physical strength, as his fellow-students at Richmond testified when he was sent there for training.¹² He preached the enforcement of the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament, and had strange mesmeric power over his disciples.

Jasper Smith,¹³ also helped home by Captain Potter, was

¹⁰ They are often uncovered during the Rainy Season.

¹¹ Repatriates, taken off captured slave-ships, hospitalised, christened, given new start in Freetown and Sierra Leone villages and down coast. Like most of the First Generation of Sierra Leoneans those met by John Clarke were of endearing character or possessed characteristics making them individual.

¹² He was twice in England, the second time in 1841.

¹³ The Repatriates were named by the C.M.S. from the list of their £10 subscribers.

another preacher. He preceded de Graft by a few years and had quite a congregation in his house for prayer and Bible study, when "the son of Boanerges" arrived preaching his Mosaic Gospel. There followed clashes, almost riots, until 1834 when Captain Potter brought along yet another Repatriate, the Rev. Joseph Dunwell, to do something about it. And Dunwell, a lean but tireless man, between planting "stations of his faith and order" along the coast from Accra to Axim, reconciled Smith-ite and de Graft-ite by merging them into his Cape Coast "station."

One would like to know more of James Acra, who kept his head shaven save for wiry tuft in centre, and had spent some years in England, and now travelled the coast and some of the inland countries collecting gold-dust for a Bristol firm. And Jack Massey who had lived in Liverpool and London and claimed to have been an 1781 Repatriate but sometimes got his story of masters and skippers mixed, he also having been a sailor. "He spoke English well," says Clarke. "When I challenged him regarding Church attendance he readily described all the routine of a service and some of the things he had heard ministers say in sermons. He offered, if a teacher was sent (to Grand Bereby) to interpret for him and to build him a new house and see that the children attended for instruction."

The Krumen not only had Clarke's sympathy, they troubled his conscience. Those shipped as crew he took for granted, but as the *Golden Spring* drifted down the coast others appeared who had no duties aboard and were suspiciously cooped below.

"Dec. 13. Lord's Day. Therm 86. 6 Krumen were shipped. I quite believe the poor boys have next to nothing to do with the matter, for they are put below and strict guard set lest they jump overboard."

"Dec. 14. Came to anchor for night at St. Andrew's, called King George Town on the map by McQueen and Sasandria by the natives. . . . The river here was once a great place for slave trading, and they say is not altogether free of it yet. . . . Three of the new Krumen have deserted, one of them distinguished by his yellow skin and his ability to speak English. He had been made head-man over the others, and was highly valued by the Captain."

"Dec. 17. Opposite Gold Coast. Have now 85 Krumen aboard. These poor creatures live on rice and palm oil, sleep under a sail-cloth, and upon the whole are quiet in their demeanour."

"Dec. 22. 8 of our Krumen managed to escape during the time we had been ashore. 80 are left, to be employed as wood-cutters at Fernando Po." "Dec. 23. Teaching wood-cutters their

letters, Dr. Prince and the Congo boy and the two Mates helping." "Dec. 24. One Kruman knows all his letters. His father is a fetich-man of Cavelly and he dances amazingly, jumping and turning in the air."

"Dec. 29. Teaching Krumen respecting the Creation (our first parents) and Sin and Jesus. The Drewin people listened, one who knew English interpreting."

At last they reached Fernando Po, an island in Bight of Biafra twice the length of the Isle of Wight and about seven miles broader. Its shores are steep, its sea-strand narrow, its mountains volcanic. From distance it looks beautiful tropical hill, but near it is heart-breaking, with unpathed peaks, one 10,000 feet, impenetrable forests and unfordable torrents. It is one of the West Coast's worst malarial centres.

Its people the Bube (Bube, Ediya) are Bantu, and in Clarke's time unclothed hunters bringing down game with stone axes. The Bube¹⁴ have the mountains and the Repatriates and their descendants the plains. The few European traders¹⁵ dealt in cocoa, coffee, sugar, tobacco, vanilla and kola. Quite soon John Clarke presented the language of these Bantu folk to the outside world in his *Adayah Vocabulary* and *Introduction to the Fernandian Tongue*.

The island has been Portuguese, Spanish, British, Spanish again to 1900 when handed over to French. John Becroft, a man of mystery to John, was Governor for the Spanish from 1844 to 1854 and British Consul from 1849.¹⁶ Port Clarence is the capital.

"In the bay beyond Clarence lay the steamer *Quorra*, mentioned in Laird's Journal ('112 ft. beam 15, depth 8, horse-power 40, begun March 1832, launched 29 May, sailed from Liverpool 19 July'), and beyond are the remains of the *Alburkeh*, the old packet *Hope*, a Portuguese hulk and another. Many mournful reflections are connected with these, especially those that ascended the Niger in 1832-3. Two small slave ships are also here, formerly engaged in the Trade from the main to the Island of Princes, carrying 25 to 50 each voyage, but now used as cattle and goat boats."

"The *Ethiope* (is) at (Clarence) wharfe in which Captain Becroft (Beecroft) had been up the Niger, he being one of the first with whom we shook hands. He had nearly reached Bousaa, but had lost four men. In a previous voyage to Idda he had been

¹⁴ See Mary Kingsley's *Travels in West Africa*, 1897.

¹⁵ About 500 in the 80's, now 1000.

¹⁶ Followed by T. J. Hutchinson, who wrote *Impressions of Western Africa*, 1861, and whose ameliorative work there is still effective, and Sir Richard Burton (*Wanderings in West Africa*) from 1861 to 1865.

only four months absent. Saw also Dr. King, his surgeon. The *Ethiopia*, 40 horse-power, was taking in supplies for Bimbia, Cameroons and Calabar."

The first entry after landing shows the courage with which Clarke and Prince faced their task. "Took house at 10/- per week, furnished with 2 beds, 3 tables, sofa, chair, and removed into it. Well fitted for our purpose. It is like Jamaica work, only my dear fellow labourer there is not here to share the work with me. Feelings too painful to express came over my mind, at other times I am filled with joy by the assurance that I am in the path of duty, where God wishes me to be and where He has appointed I should be."

The "gnawing query" (as he said in letter to friend) he had known coming down the coast "if apprentices are slaves" became more persistent on the island. After reference to some 700 or 800 Liberated Africans¹⁷ and other free people, he writes: "In an adjoining town are 200 Krumen, the wood-cutters who are bound apprentice for 2 or 3 years. Some escape inland, being discontented with their lot. Some have been stranded here from palm-oil ships and have no chance of returning home."

"In the cut between the sea banks lies the dungeon called the Guard House, its roof level with the surface of the earth. No windows for light, no grating for air, the great door closed and fastened with bar and pad-lock. At one side was long bar with shackles for hands and feet."

"Saw again the dungeon, from which singing proceeded! A hymn being sung in that dismal place!" . . . The man I heard singing in the Guard House, and whom the keeper says is always praying and singing, sent us a letter. He has been in confinement a long time. Had been shop keeper to John Scott¹⁸, was accused of taking goods to amount of £20, and compelled to pay this sum by loss of wages and property." . . . "Called on Mr. Thompson¹⁹ to ask release of poor Brew, who has been in close confinement since the 15th of September."

"Jan. 9. Saw three poor men chained together in (Mr. Thompson's) garden.²⁰ The chains were heavy. While we were at morning prayer the soldiers or constables tied up a black man to two posts, on which a bell is hung, about 300 yards distant from our window. After worship Dr. Prince and I spoke to Mr. Scott

¹⁷ The Repatriation scheme that flourished in Sierra Leone was failure here.

¹⁸ A leading Clarence trader.

¹⁹ Agent for principal Trading Company and acting Governor whilst Captain Beecroft was in Cameroon.

²⁰ The Portuguese in Angola still chain their prisoners whilst walking and working.

(the man's master), quoting the words "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." "Soon the flogging began, and I hurried to the Governor, who had gone out. Captain White²¹ said it was useless to proceed further. Several men were whipped, one with 70 stripes, the others with 20 each, for neglect of duties forced upon them, they being free men, therefore not supposed to work without compensation."

"Mr. Thompson is exerting himself to obtain a residence for us in the town. He is very kind, but alas, I already perceive he wields despotic power. It is lamentable that Great Britain gave up her authority over this rich, beautiful and important island."

The two missionaries worked splendidly together, Dr. Prince overcoming a natural diffidence in some of the situations. "The devil-house was wattle-walled. Bees had just swarmed and settled on one of the beams, and the nests of blue-winged hornets hung near. The 'offerings' were sticks dressed with feathers, an old wooden shield, broken pots, etc. The footpath to the town led through this building."

In the quest for information of Lander the Explorer, however, the Doctor needed no urging. "Found grave of Mr. R. Lander with difficulty, few here being acquainted with the spot." . . . "With Dr. Prince visited Lander's grave, a flat-topped covering marking the place."²²

"Houssa men, with Mina, the interpreter mentioned by Clapperton, Lander and Laird, visited us. (He) is in the *Ethiophe* with Captain Beecroft. He wears a white robe bought at Rabba, in appearance like a bishop's gown in the large sleeves and partly like a wagoner's smock-frock in the working of the material. He is intelligent but hard to understand."

"Mr. Dick the schoolmaster was with Mr. Lander in the boat when he was shot. We conversed (with him) about building a chapel for the inquirers."

Between visiting the sick and bathing and sketching and taking pictures with his "much too heavy" camera, the Doctor prepared his lectures ("had three-hour lecture on anatomy this afternoon from Dr. Prince") and his sermons.

"Jan. 10. Had worship in the open, about 80 present,²³ expounded 1 Tim. 6 ch. Dr. Prince speaking from John 4 ch. . . . "This morning's effort of Dr. Prince a talk merely; this evening he preached his first sermon, from Matthew iv. 17, making a

²¹ Of the *Golden Spring*.

²² They afterwards found this was the grave of an American Captain, that of Lander, some distance away, being marked by head and foot stone, with an oil-nut tree growing between.

²³ A small audience. Mostly they preached to two or three hundred.

judicious and good discourse. The appearance of a harvest of souls is very cheering."²⁴

Thus we take leave of John Clarke, or of this chapter of his life, remembering him riding on back of powerful negro through the surf, his keeping a giant monitor as pet, admiring his resolution, his patience and his descriptive genius.

"A poor wretch, with withered body, lying on the ground, in his mean hut, dashed me an egg."

"The chief wife of the King of Bassa visited us on way to Calvelly to sell smoked shell-fish. She was young and pleasing and her colour was light for an African."

"The wife of the (Clarence) headman, a tall woman somewhat forbidding of look, adjusted her small portion of shell attire (and) put out her hand filthy with clay and oil. I put delicacy aside and all sorts of squeamishness, and cordially shook hands."

With children he was always happy. "Mr. Smith the headmaster (Cape Coast) had 166 scholars on the roll, from 4 to 20 years of age. 114 were present and 26 read moderately well. They acquitted themselves far beyond expectation, and their singing was to us a Song of Zion in benighted land."

At the end of the month he boarded the *Jonathan*, 15 tons, for Cameroon, there to attempt the second part of the mission, "the banks of the Niger, if practicable, as high as Egga, Rabba and Bonassa." But that is another story.

Before leaving Fernando Po both he and the doctor determined to recommend the B.M.S. to begin work there as soon as possible. It was started in 1843 (two years after) and continued until 1858, when opposition²⁵ forced the missionaries across the twenty miles of sea to the mainland, where they built for the Liberated Africans the town of Victoria in Ambas Bay, Cameroon, for ever to be associated with the name of Alfred Saker.²⁶

The last entry in this Diary of John Clarke is dated Jan. 31, 1841. "What is before us we do not know: but God has wonderfully preserved us and blessed us hitherto. The work is His, for life or death, our trust is in Him. We hope to accomplish still more for this land and for Africa, and pray fervently from day to day that the glorious kingdom of our Lord may come, and all nations fear before Him. Amen."

F. W. BUTT-THOMPSON.

²⁴ Afterwards there was a wedding, the first of several recorded. "Jan. 25. Married 2 couples large company present." "Jan. 26. Married 3 couples."

²⁵ The Jesuits took over, but since 1870 the evangelization of the island has been in the hands of the Primitive Methodists. It has never been a fruitful field.

²⁶ Alfred Saker, 1814-1880.

An Association Letter, 1857

Below we reproduce, in abbreviated form, the Circular Letter of 1857 of the Monmouthshire Baptist Association, a rare copy of which was kindly made available to us by Mr. W. Nefydd Lewis (a descendant of its writer). The letter was written by the Moderator, Rev. William Roberts, LL.D. who, popularly known by his bardic name, "Nefydd," was in his day one of the best-known men in Wales. In addition to being a celebrated preacher and author he was for many years editor of the Welsh Baptist journal, *Seren Gomer*. In 1864 he set up at Blaina a printing press, printing and publishing a periodical *Y Bedyddiwr (The Baptist)* and the writings of young authors whom he wanted to encourage. It has been claimed that during his life time he did more for education in Wales than any other person, particularly during the eleven years when he was agent for the British and Foreign School Society. His activities as a book-seller afforded him both the means and the opportunity to become a collector of rare Welsh books, pamphlets and manuscripts and his library contained numerous treasures. A historian of some distinction, Roberts was one of the founders of the Hanserd Knollys Society and also of the Liberation Society. Born in 1813, he died in 1872 and a national monument marks his grave at the old Blaenau Gwent (Abertillery) burial ground.

THE BAPTISTS

THEIR HISTORY AND CLAIMS AMONG THE RELIGIOUS
DENOMINATIONS OF WALES IN PAST AGES

A LETTER

from the

MINISTERS AND MESSENGERS

of the Churches in the

MONMOUTHSHIRE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

Assembled on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 26th and 27th, 1857

AT SALEM, BLAENAU GWENT.

Believing the scriptural doctrines of three co-equal Persons in the Godhead; the proper Deity and real humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; eternal and personal election; original sin; particular redemption; free justification through the imputed righteousness of Christ; effectual grace in regeneration; the law a rule of life to all believers; final perseverance; the resurrection of the dead; the last judgement; the everlasting happiness of the righteous; the endless punishment of the wicked; together with the whole system and discipline of the New Testament Church.

AND ADDRESSING THE ABOVE CHURCHES AND OTHERS.

Dear Brethren and Sisters in the Lord,

It is now a well-known fact that the denomination to which we belong has existed, and has worked well, in this kingdom, as well as abroad, for a great number of years.

Notwithstanding all this, the Baptist denomination has been partially hidden, and in some instances, ignored and treated with contempt even by good men among our dissenting historians. We might enumerate many instances of this,¹ but our letter must necessarily be limited. We shall only draw the attention of the churches to the subject, trusting that our young historians will enlarge upon it at some future time, so as to lead the ignorant to the knowledge of the truth. The subject we therefore propose to introduce to your notice is :

The State and influence of Dissent in Wales, before the commencement of the Calvinistic Methodists.

A number of authors, in writing the histories of the Reverends Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, Howel Harris, of Trevecca, Daniel Rowlands, of Langeitho, and the History of the beginning of the Calvinistic Methodists, and the *Causes of Dissent* in Wales, or some such subjects, have stated that morals, education and religion were lower in Wales, at the period when Methodism commenced, than it had been in almost any previous age since the Protestant Reformation, and that true religion was scarcely to be found, either among Churchmen or Dissenters, at that time—that the religion which had existed at the time of Wroth, Erbury, Cradock, Powell, etc., had almost dwindled into nothing. Whether Dissent found itself under the garb of Puritan, Presbyterian, or Independent (the Baptists of the time are but seldom mentioned) in the seventeenth century; it was almost ready to die, from 1720 to 1730. We have noticed that the above opinion is spreading abroad rapidly, and we find historians following each other in reiterating the same thing over and over, and what seems to be more wonderful still is, that they are allowed to proceed without contradiction.

To some it may appear presumptuous that we should doubt the correctness of the views of so many eminent historians, lecturers, prize-essayists, etc. But if this letter will only answer the purpose of instituting an enquiry into the subject, we shall consider it a step in the right direction towards obtaining a correct knowledge of the real state of religion in Wales, from the Reformation up to 1736. We would seriously and emphatically ask all the above authors, whether the dissenting efforts that had existed for six or seven scores of years, before the dawn of Methodism, were scarcely worth noticing? Was not the dragging before magistrates, the persecuting, the forfeiture of goods and chattels, the imprisonments, the narrow and dangerous escapes for lives; yea, the persecuting even unto death, in maintaining religion

¹ We have instances of this in the works of Neal, Calamy, Palmer, Brooks, Bogue and Bennet, &c.

and a clear conscience before God, which took place with many Independents and Baptists in the seventeenth century, not of importance to be recorded? Speaking of heroes, were not those heroes who prepared England and Wales, who preached the gospel, who met in the verdant groves, or in the dark caves of the rocks, hiding themselves from their enemies, and succeeded and multiplied under those disadvantages through the blessing of God, in spite of all the grievous and oppressive acts of Parliament passed in the times of the two Jameses and the two Charleses, up to the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689. We ask again, were not these religious heroes? Are they to be forgotten, and even the memory of them to be neglected or persecuted, as they were personally when alive? No! No! They will not be forgotten. God did not forsake them. His Spirit consoled them in caverns, prisons, and dirty cells. His holy angels ministered to their wants. They were multiplied in the midst of their struggles. Although some would fall under the oppression of the persecutors, others would rise up to fill the rank. Some scores were compelled to escape to America and other parts of the world, for their lives, and to enjoy their domestic comforts with religion, yet they were not all driven out of the land. Although obliged to meet on rainy and frosty weather, among the trees, or on the tops of mountains, or in the deserted nooks and creeks, to worship God, some of them acting at those times as watchmen for fear of being taken by their enemies and persecutors, who were following them like bloodhounds; yet they denied not the faith; they worked on so as to keep nearly the same in number during the reign of Charles II; yes, they were working, courageous and strong in the grace of God, scores of years before the worthy men, Griffith Jones, Howel Harris, and D. Rowlands appeared in the world.

Let it not be supposed that we would assert that knowledge, morality, and religion were, in the beginning of the last century in Wales, what they ought to have been, or what they came to be after that time. But our assertion, in opposition to the above and other such authors, is, that the state of knowledge, of morals, and of religion in Wales, was in 1736 far above what it ever had been before. We are ready to prove this at any time. And as to the causes of the deficiency that existed relative to these matters in Wales as well as in England (but which existed to a far greater extent a hundred years, or fifty years, previous to that time, under the two Charleses) they must be traced to the cursed laws respecting the "declaration of sports," read in the churches by order of the Kings, Archbishops, and Bishops of those times, which were like the fire of hell blazing over our country—and breeding all sorts of immoralities. Quarrels about baptism exhausting their strength, indeed! Had disputations on baptism and other subjects

such influence upon them, they would have been extinct more than eighty years before 1736; for they carried on their discussions and disputations on religious subjects with boldness and zeal, publicly and privately. Some of the reports of their disputations were published, and are to be seen this day. But these were no hindrances to their success. Howel Harris, Daniel Rowlands, and others could not have done half nor quarter the good that was effected in the last century, had it not been that the Independents, Baptists, Quakers, and Presbyterians prepared the way for the Gospel in Wales, because they were with the Government like the woman in the parable with that other unjust judge "which feared not God, neither regarded man"; they *troubled* and *wearied* the Government with their importunities and petitions, with great earnestness, and urged it to grant them their liberties. That, with the favour of God in his providence, caused the Toleration Act to be passed. What would Howel Harris do outside the Church, or Rowlands inside or outside of it, more than some other men, while the Conventicle and Five Mile Acts were in force, in addition to the Act of Uniformity under Charles II?

Dissent in the 17th Century

Now we shall briefly glance over the success and prosperity of Dissent in the seventeenth century, and the beginning of the following one, so that it may not be supposed that we want to make assertions which we are not able to prove, and we invite any one or more of the authors above-mentioned to show us our mistakes; or if not, we earnestly hope that we shall not hear any more of the decline of religion in Wales, and the increase of immoralities and sins from 1680 to 1730.

One way adopted by many in taking the statistics of Dissent is to state the number of their chapels: perhaps that may answer some purpose in our days, but it would not have answered a hundred and fifty years ago, when large churches, containing some hundreds of members were formed in farm-houses, and some of them with several branches meeting in various directions, without any chapel.

The Baptists held their Associations nearly every year from 1650 until the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662. The old books of some of the churches, several of which were in existence when Joshua Thomas published his *History of Baptists in Wales*, contained some of the minutes of resolutions, and of the subjects discussed at these meetings, and other circumstances relating to them. The progress of the Baptists in Wales continued firmly though gradually during the above period, and even from that time to the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, so far as to keep up nearly to the same number, notwithstanding the number

of natural deaths, emigrations and deaths by persecution, that took place during that time. In the year 1650, only three churches formed the Association which was held at Ilston in Gower, near Swansea. This was the first Baptist Association of which we have an account in Wales. In 1653, the number of the churches were five, meeting at the Association held at Abergavenny in May of that year. In the Association of 1656 at Brecon, eight churches were represented.

Soon after this came Charles II, who published the third edition of the Book of Sports. The Sunday Sports to be held in the churchyards after the services of the churches every Sunday, when a quantity of ale was to be distributed at the expense of the parishes, were first established by James I in 1618. The declaration was renewed and enlarged by his son Charles I in 1633, and it was for the third time established by his son, Charles II, immediately after his being enthroned, with strict orders to the bishops and clergy to carry them into effect. Thus were the bishops and clergymen in the hands of the King instrumental to spread all sorts of vanity, foolishness, and immoralities through the length and breadth of the land, on the Lord's Day.

Here we must notice that the Dissenters had not only to withstand the immoral effects of the Book of Sports, but also to suffer the violence and cruelties of various kinds by their persecutors, who had the Act of Uniformity to back them. Then, to make it still worse, we find that act after act came into existence, to increase their sufferings, and with a view to eradicate the Dissenters altogether from the land. The Conventicle Act in 1664, which made any five persons assembled anywhere to worship God liable to a penalty of £5 each, or three months' imprisonment; and for the second offence £10, or six months; and for the third offence, £100, or 7 years of transportation. This was to be settled without a trial by jury, only the oath of the accuser, who was to have one-third of the spoil as a reward for his accursed work. This was an inducement to unprincipled men to follow the children of God, and even to make false statements if the truth would not answer their purposes. Then was renewed an old Act made in the time of Queen Elizabeth, making a person liable to be transported for not attending Church. Then in 1665, the Five Mile Act. In 1670, some additions were made to the Conventicle Act, making it more strict—the Test Act in 1673—the new rigid order of the King in 1681, to carry out the Conventicle Act to the letter of the law, to imprison, and enforce the full penalties without mercy.

After the death of Charles, James the second began to persecute in 1685. O! hard times for Zion! The dear and innocent believers in Christ like lambs in the midst of wolves, who

committed all sorts of depredations upon them, and upon their families and possessions. Yes, they were hurled from prison to prison, and incarcerated in dark and damp cellars and cells, without the necessaries of life, and with only a bed of straw! and in such places often breathing their last. It was a wonder that such treatments and such enactments by such rapacious tigers were not effectual to extirpate the dissenters altogether. They often met in secret places to return their thanks to God for some providential escape, or to mingle their tears in weeping for some good brother that had fallen a prey to their cruel persecutors. We have to thank the Lord for keeping his dear ones from denying their principles, or sacrificing their religion for the sake of peace and quietness. Had they been inactive during these troublesome times, of course, their number would have been greatly diminished, to say the least, for 28 years bring forth a new generation of people, that is from 1661 to 1689.

The author of the Memoir of Daniel Rowland knew of but five preachers in Wales in 1660, according to his table. Of course he knew nothing of John Myles, of Ilston, who went soon after to America, with nearly all his church; nor of two good men of the same name, that being Morgan Jones, also of Ilston; or W. Thomas, who laboured at Carmarthen and Llantrisant, or Jenkin Jones, sometimes called Captain Jones, because he had been in the army. He was brought up at Oxford, and was an eminent preacher, and laboured in several counties of Wales, but as he was a Baptist, he was not known to the above authors; nor Henry Williams of Newtown; nor Hugh Evans of Radnorshire; nor Anthony Harry of Abergavenny; nor Thomas Proude, another of the ejected ministers; nor Thomas Joseph and Thomas Jones, of Llantrisant; nor Howel Thomas and David Davies of Gelligaer; nor Walter Prosser of Hay, nor of Howell Vaughn of Olchon, and Evan Bowen of Llanafan. Almost all the above, and those who will be named hereafter, as well as Vavasor Powell, are accounted for in the works of Drs. Calamy and Walker. The whole of the above 16, and some other Baptist ministers, and several assistant preachers, died during the time of the fierce persecution from 1661 to 1689.

The following also survived that grievous time:—Dr. Christopher Price and William Prichard of Abergavenny, Thomas Watkins of Hay, Lewis Thomas of Swansea, Robert Morgan of Carmarthen, Griffith Howells and William Jones of Pembroke-shire, Thomas Quarrel of North Wales, Thomas Evans and Henry Gregory of Radnorshire, Francis Giles and John Edwards of Llanwenarth, Thomas David Rees of Cardiganshire, Thomas Parry and William Milman of Llangwm, etc. It is probable that the above 15 and two or three more had laboured as preachers

and ministers of the Gospel from before 1660 up to 1689, and several of them long after that time. We have also a list of about 12 ministers who commenced their ministry during the troublesome and fierce reign of Charles II, viz.. James James, George Jones, Samuel Jones, John Jenkins, Richard Williams and Morgan Griffiths, all of the Western part of South Wales; N. Morgan, A. Morgan, Evan David, Jos. Price, David Thomas, and Evan Llewelyn, of the Eastern Counties of South Wales.

In the year 1689, after the Toleration Act was passed, a large Assembly of Baptists was convened in London, to arrange matters relating to the body of Baptists throughout the Kingdom, and to congratulate the churches respecting the liberty obtained by the passing of the Toleration Act. In this meeting, seven² Welsh churches were represented. By this time, holding Associations in Wales was a strange thing, inasmuch as above thirty years had passed without such meetings. Only one church had emigrated to America. This was the most flourishing of the eight: that at Ilston. The minister and nearly the whole of the members went together, and established themselves at Boston, and that church is there still, and in a flourishing state. The other seven churches that were left in 1656, had not only lived, but thrived, during the time of persecution.

After this time we find the Welsh churches sending messengers to the English Associations, to Bristol, Taunton, etc. Up to 1695, the Baptists had no chapel in Wales, excepting some sort of building at Hay,³ prepared in 1649. All the seven churches (some of which had several preaching stations), were fostered and edified in farm-houses. In this year (1695), Llanwenarth Chapel was built. In 1700, the first Association was held after the times of persecution. It was held at Llanwenarth, when eight churches were represented in it. After this, they were held every year regularly, from place to place. Although the Occasional Act, and the Schism Act were passed in the time of Queen Anne, that is, in 1711 and 1713, with a view to curtail religious liberty, yet he that is able to turn the wrath of man to his own praise, and to restrain the remainder, took Anne off, and liberty was more extensively enjoyed under George I.

During the following twenty years revivals of an extraordinary character took place in several of the churches—those which were strict communion Baptists, as well as those which were mixed; and that at various times. In the year 1736, when the Calvinistic Methodists date their commencement, the number of Strict Baptist

² The Rev. D. Peters says six, but in that he was mistaken.

³ As Hay was a Market Town, surrounded by many of the Members, a meeting house was prepared there, probably the first in Wales, therefore it was called Hay Church, and not Olchon Church, at that time.—Josh. Thom., p. 68.

Churches were sixteen, with branches and stations, and those which were mixed, from five to eight congregations. Thus we find the number of Strict Baptist Churches in 1689, seven; in 1700, eight; and in 1736, sixteen, without taking into consideration the mixed churches. We ought also to observe that the increase of members in nearly all these was accordingly. We shall take, for instance, some particulars relating to one of these sixteen churches, and that a young church at that time, viz.—Blaenau Gwent. This is by no means the most successful church, nor the most unsuccessful, but it may be considered one of the best to give us an idea of the average success. This church was formed in the year 1696, when there were 64 members. In the year 1717, a circumstance happened which evidently shows that the dissenting churches and hearers of those days were not a handful of the lowest and most uninfluential in our country. The following memorandum was on the Blaenau Church book, and quoted by Joshua Thomas in his History (1778).

“The Government required (in 1717) that all ministers should take the number of all their hearers, and their political state in the country. It was done. The hearers in Aberystroth (Blaenau), in Rhassau,⁴ and in the house of Isaac Daniel,⁵ as follows:—County Voters 123, Burgesses 26, Farmers 98, Tradesmen 55, Labourers 246. All these, with their wives and daughters, etc., about one thousand.”⁶ Be it observed, that two years previous to this time there was no chapel in either of those three places. The church had only been formed 21 years previous to 1717, when there were 64 members. In 1725, about 80 were baptized here and at Hengoed. In 1729 a branch of this church at Pontypool was formed into a church. Fifty of the members were dismissed for this purpose, nearly all from Blaenau, and yet we find the number of members soon after this in Blaenau, 210. We might follow the same course as we have taken with this church with many more of the sixteen Strict Baptist Churches, and also with the mixed churches, but we must draw to a conclusion.

Independents and Presbyterians

We should also keep in view that we have not touched the state of the progress which attended the Independents and Presbyterians. This is left to be done by some of themselves; but we may state that they had to experience the same persecutions at the time of Charles II, and that they were put to death by being incarcerated in cells and damp cellars, the same as we described the Baptists. And we might also allude to remarkable revivals which took place in many of their churches from 1689 to 1720 or

⁴ A branch of Blaenau Church between Beaufort and Sirhowi.

⁵ Another branch at Lanhiddel.

⁶ It seems the children are not reckoned.

1730.⁷ When we consider that the number of churches of Independents (including Presbyterians) amounted at that time to several more than those of Baptists in Wales; a person must have a strong and strange sort of resolution, or a great want of information, to say that Dissent in 1736 was declining in Wales, and nearly finishing its course. It should also be remarked that the Baptists had an Academy established at Pontypool in 1730, where young men were educated for the ministry, which was continued until the Bristol Academy was established in 1770; and that the Independents had one at Brynlywarch, and another at Ystrad Wallter, and afterwards at Carmarthen and Abergavenny, besides those in Tewkesbury and Shrewsbury, where several Welshmen were educated. We are also of opinion that the "new printing press" which was at Pontypool about 1736, was in some way connected with the Baptists. The account of revivals at Capel Isaac, Carmarthenshire, and the following quotation, may be seen in that excellent publication, the *Adolygydd*. We quote from the diary of that eminent man Edmund Jones, of Transh, who lived at the period under consideration, and was an eye-witness of the "Times" of Griffith Jones, Rowlands, and Harris, and even before their times. The quotation shows that the idea of the decline of religion before the break-out of Methodism in Wales, originated with these great reformers themselves.

"Mr. William Williams, the Methodist Clergyman, says that there was no clergyman or any minister awaken (or alive to the work) when Howel Harris commenced his labours. This is a shameful untruth to be published, because there were some clergymen awakened before him, such as Mr. Griffith Jones, Mr. Thomas Jones, Cwm Iau, and several others, and many dissenting ministers, such as Mr. John Thomas, Carnarvonshire, Mr. Williams, Tredwstan, Mr. Morgan of Llanafan-fawr, Mr. Vavasor Griffiths of Radnorshire, Mr. Palmer of Henllan, Mr. William Maurice, and Mr. Phillip Pugh, of Cardiganshire. James Davies has been also very lively at Merthyr Tydfil, and I was myself the means of bringing Mr. Howel Harris first to Monmouthshire to preach at the time of the revival. It is very strange that this man should

⁷ We have a similar instance of such groundless assertions in our own days. On the 18th of August, 1857, the Bishop of Llandaff, at the opening of Penmaen Church, in reply to the toast of Sir Thomas Phillips, says that: "He believed that the system of Dissent was well nigh worn out in the Welsh districts. Welsh dissent unquestionably originated in the pious feelings of the people, but had now become a wealthy, and he much feared, too much of a political organization . . . He believed the time had arrived when the people were prepared to receive the doctrines of the Church of England, and be again restored to her communion . . . He had little doubt but the delusion of the Welsh dissent would soon entirely disappear from amongst them." See *Star of Gwent*, Aug. 22.

make such statements, and he having been bred and born among dissenters."—Diary for 1773.

This old brother might have mentioned many more even of his own brethren, the Independents, and Presbyterians, that were alive at that time, and very successful; such as Simon Thomas of Cilgwyn, in Cardiganshire, the author of the *History of the World and the Times*, and other books. The above is one of the best books in our language. Thomas Williams, Mynydd-bach, author of *Oeslyfr*; Howel Powel of Maesglettwr, translator of E. Cole's work in 1711. Mathias Maurice, the author of *Social Religion Exemplified*, in ten dialogues on religion in Caerludd; and other ministers. But we scarcely could expect Mr. Jones to mention the Baptists, he would not have taken a reward of some importance for doing that, for he never was able to love them well after the great debate that took place between him and Miles Harry, in Blaenau Gwent, in 1727 or 1728, when both were young. It was on Baptism. The above quotation alludes to what the Rev. W. Williams of Pantycelyn had written and published concerning Howel Harris, at that time.

We trust that we have, by the above few remarks, succeeded to show that religious movements in Wales among dissenters were gradually and steadily on the increase from 1680 to 1730, or 1736. And we hope that our young brethren will not be misled on this important period in our history. We yield to none in loving and respecting and wishing every success to the body of Calvinistic Methodists, and in thankfulness for the great good effected by them through Rowlands, Harris, and their successors; and we readily acknowledge that the establishment of this active body of dissenters, and its wonderful prosperity greatly stimulated all the Dissenters of Wales, and accelerated their revivals. On this point we are not at variance. But let a woman forget her suckling child before we agree to neglect the memoirs of those that laboured and suffered during the persecutions of Charles II, some of whom sacrificed their lives in the cause of God, and others of them proceeded with renewed vigour after obtaining the Toleration Act, which their adherence to their principles wrung out of the hands of the Government; and, under the blessing of God, they succeeded wonderfully before 1736. No, they shall not be forgotten! They should be indelibly engraven on our memories, as examples of faithfulness, and kept on the pages of history for the edification of future ages.

The sixteen churches above-mentioned were Dolau and Pentref in Radnorshire; Olchon, on the border of Herefordshire; Swansea, Hengoed, and Penyfai, in Glamorganshire; Llanwenarth, Llangwm, Blaenau, and Penygarn, in Monmouthshire; Rhydwylym, Newcastle in Emlyn, and Llanelly, in Carmarthen-

shire; Moleston and Cilfowyr in Pembrokeshire; and Maesyberllan in Brecknockshire, besides several others, which were churches to all intents and purposes, excepting that they were not regularly formed, such as Llangloffan, Penycoed, Aberduar, Basseleg and Castleton, Ffynon Henry, Ffynon, etc., for the ordinances had been administered among them for many years.⁸

We might also give a list of ministers who were actively engaged in the work of the Lord among this denomination from 1700 to 1736. In the western part of Wales we have the following:—John Jenkins, Griffith Howells, David James, Samuel John, Thomas Mathias, Philip John, Griffith Williams, John James, Evan David, James James, Nathaniel Jenkins, Rees Jones, David Owen, Enoch Francis, John David Nicholas, Thomas David, Griffith Thomas, David Richard, Evan Thomas, Thomas David Evan, James Williams, John Richard, Daniel Garnon, David Evans, etc.

In the eastern part of South Wales, including the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan, during the same period, we find William Meredith, Joshua James, Roger David, John Harray, Nathaniel Morgan, Griffith Jones, Morgan Jones, William Davies, Griffith Davies, Lewis Thomas, John Davies, Miles Harry, Caleb Evans, John Evans, Richard Williams, Thomas Lewis, Roger Walker, Nathan Davies, etc., making altogether from forty to fifty ministers, who have laboured among the unmixed Baptists from 1700 to 1736. It would be desirable, we think, to make the above names as household words to our children, to form a new table on the plan of those of Messrs. Johnes and Owen, containing all the dissenting ministers and good men within the Church in Wales from 1560 to 1736.

WILLIAM ROBERTS.

⁸ The number of Baptist congregations, must be therefore considered, in 1736, from 20 to 30, in addition to from 40 to 50 preaching stations, they had, at that time, without the mixed congregations.

Nantwich Baptist Church, 1653-1953 is an illustrated tercentenary brochure (price 2s.) by W. S. Shaw which briefly sketches the history of the cause, which was probably planted in the old Cheshire town by Col. Hy. Danvers. One of its members married John Milton, while an early pastor was Isaac Kimber. Obtainable from the church.

Short History of Rowley Baptist Church. This illustrated booklet by F. G. Twitchett describes the origin in 1652, and subsequent history of one of our oldest churches. Containing considerable information, it makes a useful contribution to the history of the Baptists in Co. Durham from Thomas Tillam's day onward. Obtainable from the church, price 3s.

The Origin of the Home Counties' Baptist Association

NO Association has been so misrepresented, in the matter of its origins, as that of the Home Counties. It is often said that this Association arose as an expression of a denominational cleavage, on a theological difference, as a result of the "Downgrade Controversy." In actual fact, the Downgrade Controversy began in a letter published by C. H. Spurgeon in the August, 1888 number of *The Sword and Trowel*. The Home Counties Association was formed in October, 1877—ten years earlier. It could not possibly, therefore, have originated as part of the Downgrade Controversy.

What actually happened was that when C. H. Spurgeon, the prime mover in the Downgrade Controversy, felt led to take the grave step of leaving the Baptist Union he found already in existence an Association which, not being affiliated to the Baptist Union, provided a convenient resting-place for those who felt as he did. He joined, but did not create, that Association.

There was no theological cleavage in the year 1877, when the Association was formed. A study of the background of the times reveals that the denomination had bigger things to think of. One issue constantly before the Baptist Union was a deep concern regarding the rural churches. What are now familiar to us as suburban areas were then country towns and rural villages, widely separated, difficult to reach, isolated as independent communities. The churches within them had little or no fellowship with one another, and many were weak, and some were perishing, for that reason. In his report to the Baptist Union in April, 1877, the Secretary of the Union, Rev. J. H. Millard, B.A., said: "The serious problem is to save our village churches from extinction." At the Autumn Assembly in the following October he read a moving paper on "The Evangelisation of Cities and Villages," in which he said that in some parts of the country the churches were so few and so remote from each other that they had formed no Association at all. "It should be the aim of the Baptist Union in all its departments," he continued, "to secure the enrolment of every Baptist Church in the land in an Association; and therefore to promote the formation of Associations where needed, and to strengthen the hands of the weak to propagate the Gospel, which is surely the proper and highest purpose of an Association's existence?"

But in rural Surrey and Middlesex the challenge had already been anticipated and taken up. A few weeks after Mr. Millard's earlier reference, in his report at the Spring Assembly, three earnest young ministers discussed the matter, in May, 1877. They were the Rev. E. H. Brown (younger brother of Archibald) whom it was my privilege to know in his later years, Rev. Henry Bayley, and Rev. J. Hunt Cooke. Their respective spheres of labour were at Twickenham, Kingston-on-Thames, and Richmond; all, at that time, country towns. Their thoughts turned to the rural areas, the small towns and the little villages and the humble Bethels within them. They brought forth the Baptist Handbook, and a map of the area, and they marked the places where the churches stood. They were alarmed at what they saw revealed, and deeply concerned for the welfare of these isolated struggling little Baptist fellowships, so remote from each other, geographically and in other ways. The three young men met again, a few weeks later, and determined to embark on a systematic visitation of all the churches they could reach. Mr. Jeremiah Cowdy, a deacon of the Kingston church, assisted by taking them in his chaise. (There were no motor cars, 'buses, and, as Mr. Brown recalled, few bicycles in those days!) One or other of the three visited churches as far apart as Haslemere, Wallington, Harlington, Alperton. They found that some welcomed the idea of an Association, notably the Rev. John Perrin of Esher, the Rev. Cornelius Slim of Guildford, the Rev. T. Keen of Redhill, and Mr. J. C. Woollacott of New Malden. Some of the Surrey churches were of the High Calvinistic standpoint, and many were of the Strict Communion type, and thus not all who were approached were attracted to the proposition.

However, a circular letter was sent round to the churches, proposing the formation of a "Surrey and Middlesex Association." On the 6th June, 1877, nine ministers and twelve other delegates met at Kingston Baptist Church, and it was resolved that the Association be formed. The doctrinal basis would be definitely Calvinistic, and one firm rule would be: "No discussion as to the terms of communion shall ever be introduced." This enabled a wide variety of churches to seek fellowship within the Association, and many did. "Surrey and Middlesex" was defined as "beyond the London Postal District." It is of interest to note that in the early years of the Association no churches in the Metropolitan area were ever in membership therewith.

The Surrey and Middlesex Baptist Association was formally constituted at a grand meeting held at Guildford on October 2nd, 1877. The first Moderator was Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, pastor at West Croydon. The first Secretary was, of course, one of "the three mighty men," that youthful enthusiast Rev. E. H. Brown.

Mr. Jeremiah Cowdy had the honour of being the first Association Treasurer.

The Baptist Handbook of 1878 shows the nine churches which formed the Association in 1877. They were, in Middlesex, Pinner (Rev. W. Trenemen), Twickenham (Rev. E. H. Brown); and in Surrey, Addlestone (Rev. E. W. Tarbox), West Croydon (Rev. J. A. Spurgeon), Esher (Rev. John Perrin), Guildford (Rev. C. Slim), Kingston (Rev. H. Bayley), New Malden (Rev. G. Simmons), Richmond, Parkshot (Rev. J. Hunt Cooke). Of these, two churches have maintained a continuous membership throughout the 75 years since—Addlestone and Guildford.

One of the main objects of the Association, evangelisation, was promptly put into operation. Mr. H. Beddow went about among the little churches, and broke new ground in villages where there was no Baptist witness, "preaching in a tent in summer, and in halls, barns, and cottages, in winter." He received a stipend of 10/- per week, and his travelling expenses.

In 1889 and 1890 the Association began to feel what may be perhaps described as the beneficial (whatever it may have been in other directions) effect of the Downgrade Controversy. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon was the preacher at both the spring and autumn Assemblies of the Association in 1889, and great crowds gathered to hear him. In the following year Mr. Spurgeon was again the preacher, and again a large congregation gathered. Many churches which were, strictly speaking, outside the area of the Surrey and Middlesex Association as defined by its constitution, now expressed a desire to join themselves with the Association. The name was therefore changed to "The Home Counties Baptist Association." The year 1890 saw the Metropolitan Tabernacle, with its 5,354 members, 130 evangelists, 26 mission stations, 30 Sunday Schools, 644 teachers and 8,513 scholars, in membership with the Home Counties Association. Other churches from the Metropolitan area, and also from Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, and counties on the other side of London, found a spiritual home within the H.C.B.A.

In 1943, following a series of very amicable discussions between representatives of the Home Counties Association and of the London Baptist Association, concerning the accumulated anomalies arising from the overlapping of their respective territories, it was resolved to reorganise the H.C.B.A. entirely. It then had two "Districts"—Northern and Southern. It was resolved that the "Southern District" (the churches south of the Thames and outside the Metropolitan police area) should now constitute the Home Counties Association; the churches of the "Northern District" being left to join themselves with that other Association which was most convenient to them.

The title "Home Counties Baptist Association" was retained by the reorganised association, for historic and for legal reasons. It now consists of less than twenty churches; but it is not lacking in spiritual life, and it fulfils its original function of being a definitely country Association, covering an area in which are no cities or very large towns, and therefore possessing no very large churches, but nevertheless linking together a number of country causes in a warm and intimate fellowship as seen in vision by those three young men 75 years ago.

About the time of its jubilee the H.C.B.A. decided to strengthen its links with the denomination by affiliation with the Baptist Union. It did not re-enter the fold; it came in as another sheep not of this fold. In October, 1952, it celebrated its 75th Anniversary. Its centenary year will no doubt see a great expansion outward from the Metropolis, and many of the Home Counties' green fields and pleasant woodlands will have been swallowed up by housing estates and model villages, and the scenes of Jeremiah Cowdy's rural rides will have become sadly urbanised. Let us hope that the Home Counties Association will at heart remain truly rural, and steadfastly resist all threatened engulfments.

S. P. GOODGE.

Advance Series of Pamphlets: 1. *The News No One Knows*, by G. R. Beasley-Murray. 2. *Who are the Baptists?* by Walter W. Bottoms. 3. *Why Baptize Believers Only?* by Henry Cook. 4. *What is a Baptist Church?* by Lionel R. Floyd. 5. *Into All the World*, by Victor E. W. Hayword. 6. *What Are You Here For?* by W. E. Whilding. (Carey Kingsgate Press, 3d. each.)

This useful and attractive series of 8 to 12 paged pocket size pamphlets have been issued in connection with the Baptist Advance movement. On the whole the writers have done their work quite well. One or two would have done better to have streamlined their sentences and made their paragraphs shorter. We hope the series will be continued (the meaning of infant Dedication, the work of a Deacon, the duties of church membership and Christian giving are among many subjects that could well be dealt with), and that writers will remember, as Dr. Farmer has pointed out in a recent lecture on preaching, that our task is to make our meaning clear to "the teen-age typist in the choir who tomorrow will be tapping out invoices in a drab city office"—and others like her.

Reviews

Action in the Liturgy: Essential and Unessential, by Walter Lowrie. (Philosophical Library, New York, \$4.75.)

In this book, completed in 1946, Professor Walter Lowrie, who is well known to English readers for his translations of Kierkegaard's works, has gathered together a number of addresses delivered to various audiences over a period of years on the subject of the Eucharist. He divides his material into two main parts entitled respectively "Essential Action in the Liturgy" and "Important Non-Essentials." In the former, the author, after discussing the setting of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament, considers various aspects of the Sacrifice of the Mass as that theme is unfolded in the Liturgy. This is followed by a treatment of various elements in the Action of the Liturgy such as the reading of Scripture, the Sermon, the Offertory, the Eucharistic Prayer and the Proclamation of the Gospel. Part I ends with a discussion of the themes of Sacrifice, the Breaking of Bread, Early Communion and Catholic Action. In Part II the subjects discussed are, as the author's title indicates, of lesser import. They cover such things as the position of the altar, the type of vestments used, the practice of genuflection, the methods of prayer, and so on. The text is supported by a Select Bibliography, a Glossary of Liturgical Terms, an Index and six plates depicting a variety of liturgical illustrations from early Christian art.

The book, although somewhat discursive and repetitive in its treatment, as the Preface frankly admits, is obviously the fruit of long experience and of ripe, scholarly reflection upon the relevant themes. Its eirenical temper will commend it even to readers who may be unsympathetic to the Catholic background from which it springs.

The Free Churches and the State, by Ernest A. Payne. (Carey Kingsgate Press, Ltd., 9d.)

This lecture, delivered to the Congregational Union at its Annual Assembly in 1952, bears the characteristic marks of Dr. Payne's clarity of thought and power of expression. After a rapid but pregnant survey of the history of the relations of Church and State from the earliest days, the author touches briefly on some of the issues involved. He begins with Freedom of Conscience in matters of religion, and shows how this idea finds expression in the assertion of the need for freeing the Church

from State control, as also in the rejection of the idea of a National Church. The latter principle does not, in Dr. Payne's opinion, necessarily involve the refusal by the Churches of all State help as offered, for example, in connection with hospital chaplaincies, etc. Nor does it relieve the Christian Church of the duty of offering counsel to the State upon religious and moral issues. But the basis of their relationship must always be the final responsibility of both Church and State to the authority of God. The lecturer does not think that the present is an opportune time to press for the disestablishment of the Church of England, but he warns the Free Churches of the great importance of the issues involved in this question, especially in the light of modern tensions and the need for setting their own house in order. In any reprint, the omission of the word "essay" in Note 3 on page 15 should be repaired.

R. L. CHILD.

The Man of Sorrows, by Marcus L. Loane. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 7s. 6d.)

This is a careful study of the incidents which crowded the brief hours of our Lord's life from His entrance into Gethsemane after the Last Supper up to the end of His trial before Caiaphas. The approach to the Gospel narratives is based for the most part on the Biblical Scholarship of 50 years ago. But it compels us once again to ponder the Scriptures, and brings us face to face with the suffering, majestic Son of Man. The failure of the disciples and the malice of His enemies throw into deeper relief the goodness and greatness of our Lord. It is a devotional study of the best kind—simple, sincere, scriptural.

God's Planning for Mankind, by W. Eric Hodgson. (Independent Press, Ltd., 4s.)

That church is fortunate whose minister gives them week-night addresses of the quality evident in this collection of seven Lenten studies. The author deals with the nature of God and the nature of man, of the divine purpose of redemption through the reconciling work of Christ, and of the divine power which can overcome frustrating evil. His writing is interesting and lucid, with much to feed the mind as well as the heart. Not least helpful are the apt Scripture passages which head each chapter and the abundant and well-chosen Scripture quotations embedded in the addresses. It is a helpful book to give to a thoughtful young Christian.

FRANK BUFFARD.

If Thou Criest after Knowledge, by Sir Aylmer Firebrace. (Allen & Unwin, 25s.)

The author of this book has done notable service in the Navy and London Fire Brigade, and was Chief of the Fire Staff at the Home Office in the newly-formed National Fire Service. He dedicates his book "To mankind seeking a way out of its troubles." The way out is revealed to be Christian Science. We are presented with "an outline of the scientific system of metaphysics as found in the Bible," an interpretation of Jesus by this method, and a doctrine of man and the universe. The student of Church History will find in this volume opportunity for testing his ability to identify heresies springing from ancient times; here in happy juxtaposition are Gnosticism, Sabellianism, Monarchianism, Montanism (only that Mrs. Eddy takes the place of Montanus and his lady friends), Pantheism and an allegorism in Biblical exposition that would have filled Origen with wonder, love and praise. There is a genuine Docetism in the interpretation of Jesus (who did not really die) and even a species of Demiurge in the guise of an impersonal "carnal mind" that was responsible for this material universe. It is a pity that a man of such wide experience of public service should have allowed himself to be beguiled into this fantastic wonderland and there to take up his abode. For any who desire to have a first hand exposition of so-called Christian Science this book may be commended, but it will require no little patience to finish it.

The Fibres of Faith, by A. Norman Rowland. (Independent Press, 10s. 6d.)

This work consists of a paper earlier issued by the author on "The Tension between Religion and Science," followed by two longer treatises, one endeavouring to found an apologetic for the Christian Faith on a sympathetic understanding of the Universe, the other presenting a fresh interpretation of the miracles of Jesus from the standpoint gained in this way. The book is clearly the product of a good deal of reading, and the writer preserves his own individuality, even at times reflecting his admiration for the poetic intuition by expressing himself in poetic vein. He has a gift for arresting statement, as when he affirms that the book of science is in two volumes: "The first (covering hypothesis and experiment up to about 1910) might be entitled *Miracle is Lost in Matter*. The title of its successor should be *Matter is Lost in Miracle*." As to miracles themselves, Mr. Rowland prefers to think of them as the repetition by Jesus of His Father's works,

rather than as due to the suspension of natural laws. Miracle "was not meant to provide a certificate of deity for Christ Jesus with phenomena that broke the continuity of creation. It was rather intended to picture the inevitable radiation of a personality who gave Himself with the understanding and loving obedience of a Son to perfect God's creative work in physical nature by continuing it within the nature that is human." Few will read this book without profit. We hope for it a wide circulation.

G. R. BEASLEY-MURRAY.

Christian Faith and the Scientific Attitude, by W. A. Whitehouse.
(Oliver & Boyd, 12s. 6d.)

The Reader in Divinity in the University of Durham, who is a Cambridge mathematician and Oxford (Barthian) theologian here sets himself the task of probing such questions as whether a scientist has reason to mistrust Christian thinking, whether, on the other hand, Christians should mistrust scientific thinking, what authority the Bible can have for a man who respects the authority of science and whether the God and Father of Jesus Christ can be thought of as Lord and Creator of the universe now revealed by science. To these and other kindred questions Mr. Whitehouse addresses himself with thorough knowledge, with understanding lucidity and candour, and the result is a readable, highly interesting and competent book. He upholds the main contentions of the scientist, and declares that to live without scientific wisdom would be folly, perhaps even sin; scientists have set a standard of intellectual honesty and the scientific attitude may well be a liberating gift of God. On the other hand Mr. Whitehouse expounds the chief dogmas of the Church in a way which is intended to be at once true to the Bible and less irritating to the scientist than some expositions which have been put forward, declaring that the authority at the root of "Church thinking" is the reality of God and His self-revelation. He is concerned to show that Christian thinking is as intellectually honest as scientific thinking. Of course part of the problem is that the Church faces not only the real scientist whose reverence for truth has something genuinely noble about it, but also the ordinary person who has become so gadget-minded and accords to "science" as unquestioning and irrational a devotion as the most superstitious worshipper of idols gives to objects of wood and stone. These camp-followers of science probably represent a bigger problem than the true scientist who, at any rate, is in quest of reality. To those who are concerned about the whole issue of science and Christianity this helpful volume may be commended.

The American Church—of the Protestant heritage, edited by Vergilius Ferm. (Philosophical Library, New York, \$6.)

Twenty-one contributors to this interesting and informative volume describe the chief Protestant denominations in the United States. A historical approach is, in the main, adopted and the European background, American development, the characteristic features of doctrine and polity of each group is outlined and information is given relating to its outstanding pioneers, leaders and theologians, its schools, colleges, journals, headquarters and other matters. Limits of size and space make the treatment necessarily somewhat sketchy but, nevertheless, the whole provides an authoritative and fairly comprehensive account of the main stream of modern American Protestantism which many will be glad to have available and which should serve the editor's purpose of promoting common understanding. The chapter devoted to the Baptists comes from the scholarly pen of Dr. Robert G. Torbet, from whom we learn that the American (i.e. Northern) Convention has one-and-a-half million members, supporting 62 educational institutions, 18 orphanages, 6 hospitals and 22 homes for the aged, while Southern Baptists, with a membership of over seven million, maintain 61 educational establishments, 29 hospitals and 20 orphanages. Negro Baptists number over seven millions—half the Negro population. Smaller Baptist groups exist, of whom not the least interesting are the Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists, representing a diminishing hyper-Calvinism. The chief influence of the Baptists on American life, says Dr. Torbet, has been in the direction of national morality, unsectarian public education, religious liberty, the freedom of the churches from secular control, a spiritual foundation for democracy and their ministry to the common people. Groups having spiritual kinship with the Baptists which find a place in this book are the Mennonites (described by Dr. J. C. Wenger), the Disciples of Christ, the Churches of Christ—both Campbellite—and the Church of the Brethren, which practises trine immersion. This fresh appraisal of the larger Protestant communions of America may be warmly commended, not least because it will minister to what its editor terms "the charity that comes from understanding."

A Companion to the Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised), edited by Hugh Martin. (Psalms and Hymns Trust, 10s. 6d.)

Certainly, as Dr. Martin states in his foreword, greater and more imaginative use could be made of the hymn-book than the average worshipper realises. This new companion to our hymnal

(upon which J. O. Barrett, Frank Buffard, Grey Griffith and J. O. Hagger have collaborated with the editor) undoubtedly meets a need and should make the hymnal more interesting, helpful and enriching in public worship and personal devotions. It provides informative notes on every hymn and its author represented there and, in addition to useful indexes, there are chapters on "Hymnody in the Christian Church" and "Hymns among the Baptists." A comparison with the previous *Handbook to the Baptist Church Hymnal* (pub. 1935) prepared by Carey Bonner and W. T. Whitley shows that notes on composers of tunes have been omitted (for reasons of cost and size) as have also the other book's practical suggestions for hymn-services, etc., and alternative classifications of hymns. In the present volume, however, the notes on hymns and authors are considerably amplified. Much hard work has obviously gone into its preparation and the whole forms a handy, informative and interesting book which if widely circulated—and every church ought to buy a copy or copies for its minister, choirmaster and organist—should stimulate better worship in public and private. It would have made an excellent gift or presentation volume had its jacket been made attractive to the eye. Books need to look—as well as be—worth obtaining.

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.

A More Excellent Way, by L. J. Tizard. (Independent Press, 7s. 6d.)

This is the Lent Book of the Congregational Union for 1953, and it takes the form of an exposition of 1 *Corinthians xiii*, based on Dr. Moffatt's translation. Mr. Tizard's strong point is his interest in, and insight into, human relationships, as his earlier book *Guide to Marriage* showed, so subject and author are well matched in the new book. Mr. Tizard brings to his exposition a knowledge of psychological theory, and through its judicious use he is able to take into account the varied motives behind human behaviour. It is fitting that a book for Lent reading should have a searching and astringent quality, and this one certainly has, especially in the chapters "The Coldness of Charity" and "Envy has no Holidays." The reader who could close this book feeling pleased with himself would be a hard case! Indeed, the author, in his determination to deal honestly with his readers, has perhaps over-emphasised the darker traits in human nature, and insufficiently stressed the positive excellence of the way of love. Mr. Tizard illustrates his theme with many an apt quotation, and his own literary style is both clear and graceful.

These our Prayers, by N. A. Turner-Smith. (Independent Press, 5s.)

This is a new type of book on prayer. The compiler, at the request of the Life and Work Dept. of the Congregational Union, got into touch with a cross-section of lay folk in Congregational churches and asked them whether they would share with him, for the benefit of others, their experience of prayer. The questions put included enquiries about domestic and business circumstances, opportunities for privacy, and how they dealt with such difficulties as apathy and staleness. The replies have been skilfully used.

Readers may find it useful to know what devotional books have proved helpful to others and will be reminded that it is possible to pray anywhere and at all times. It may be questioned, however, whether it would not have been more helpful to the ordinary reader if Mr. Turner-Smith had not himself been invited to write a book on this subject instead of merely acting as a compiler.

The Intimate Life, by J. Norval Geldenhuys. (Philosophical Library, New York, \$2.75.)

This handbook for engaged and newly married Christians is concerned with sexual relationships. It begins with an excellent discussion on the place of sex in human life, and an appeal to parents to teach their children that "the conception and birth of a child is in itself, something pure and beautiful." Sensible advice for engaged couples follows, and the whole idea of marriage is set in a Christian background. The rest of the book, which is much more controversial, deals with birth control within marriage. The author holds that birth control of some kind is necessary for the best spacing of children. He is critical of artificial methods of control on the ground that they are "unnatural" and that they often rob the marriage partners of much of the spontaneity and joy of the sexual act. He goes on to recommend "periodic abstinence" as the best method, claiming on the basis of recent research in Japan and on the Continent that there is an extensive "safe period" during which conception is most unlikely to occur. This is debatable country, and it is doubtful whether confident assertion is yet justified.

Why not have a Drink—if you're a Christian? by John Murray. (Independent Press, 2s. 6d.)

This is a useful little book to put into the hands of young people in our churches. It is written in a racy style, well suited to the particular class of reader in mind, and is cleverly and humour-

ously illustrated. The author, the Congregational minister in Cambridge, was formerly a journalist, and knows how to do this sort of thing. He is a convert to total abstinence, but there is nothing fanatical in his presentation of his case. It is a pity, and somewhat surprising, that his statistics of the amount spent on drink are not more up-to-date. Mr. Murray would render a service to our churches if he would write a similar book on "Why not Gamble—if you're a Christian?"

JOHN O. BARRETT.

The Reliability of the Gospels, by A. J. B. Higgins. (Independent Press Ltd., 3s.)

This little book is an expansion of two public lectures originally delivered in a London church. It sets out to give in simple form the findings of New Testament scholarship on two main themes: (a) the historicity of the Gospel narrative and (b) the relevance of the Old Testament to the Gospel narrative. The field of reference is confined to the Synoptic Gospels. In the first lecture, Dr. Higgins offers a lucid and helpful discussion of the following points: the nature of the Gospels, the text of the Gospels, the evangelists, the sources at their disposal and their value, the oral period and Form Criticism. In the second lecture, the author gives examples of Jesus' use of the Old Testament, and goes on to discuss "the various Messianic titles which are applied to Him by the New Testament writers (Christ, Son of David, Son of God, the Servant, Son of Man, Lord)," and there is a brief conclusion. The argument is well presented, and the book deserves to be widely read by those who are looking for a concise discussion of the matters in hand.

D. R. GRIFFITHS.

William The Silent. A biography for children. By Bernard Martin. (Independent Press, 6s.)

Reading matter for children is always an important concern for teachers and parents, and never more than today when so much unsuitable literature is available. At the same time the encouragement of a lively interest in the problems of freedom, of speech and belief, in religion and politics, must not be overlooked in the education of tomorrow's citizens. Mr. Martin's biography of the Prince of Orange is a valuable contribution toward meeting these two needs. The story is well-told and will make a strong appeal to children's love of adventure and their ready sympathy for the distressed. It will, moreover, like all good books for children, be enjoyed by their elders.

H. GORDON RENSHAW.