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incorporating the Transactions of the
BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EDITORIAL

“IN the New Testament Adult Baptism is the norm, and it is only in the light of this fact that the doctrine and practice of Baptism can be understood.” This comment is taken from the Introduction to *Baptism and Confirmation* which is a Report submitted by the Church of England Liturgical Commission to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in November, 1958, and published this summer. It is a comment with which Baptists would, of course, agree. And there is more in the Report which appears to come close to Baptist beliefs—though not to our practice. The principle adopted by the Commission was that set forth in Resolution 74(c) of the Lambeth Conference of 1958: “A chief aim of Prayer Book Revision should be to further that recovery of the worship of the Primitive Church which was the aim of the compilers of the first Prayer Books of the Church of England.”

However much we may feel that the compilers of the first Prayer Books missed the mark in regard to baptism, the present Commission has made a laudable attempt to redeem the situation. The Commission took as its starting point the quotation at the head of this Editorial. From there the group goes on to say that it treats the Baptism and Confirmation of Adults as the archetypal Service and therefore prints it first. Then follows, in second place, the order for Infant Baptism. It could be suggested that such ordering of services creates the impression that the Commission thinks Infant Baptism should now be regarded as a less desirable

alternative to a normal practice of the Baptism and Confirmation of Adults. This is not stated in the Report, but that the suggested Services even lend themselves to such a possible interpretation is remarkable enough.

Reaction in the Anglican Communion to the Report has not been particularly rapid. The comments we have heard in conversation with members of the Church of England may perhaps be best summed up in the remark: "They will never get away with it!" Probably they won't, but there are several particular points which—in addition to the general emphasis of the Report—call for comment.

First, there is, in the Baptism of Infants, the substitution of *St. Matthew* xxviii 18-20 (the Great Commission) for *St. Mark* x 13-16 (the blessing of the children) as the Gospel to be read. The reason given is that the Marcan passage "has no obvious connection with Baptism." Paedo-baptist apologists such as Oscar Cullmann in Switzerland and his followers in Scotland and elsewhere would perhaps beg to differ from this distinguished Anglican Commission.

Secondly, there is in the proposed Services an absence of explicit emphasis on the individual sinfulness of the candidate for baptism. This is most significantly so in the proposed Service of Infant Baptism and especially when the new rite is compared with the present Prayer Book Service. This is not wholly unexpected as the doctrine of the Original Sin of the individual and certainly his Original Guilt, appears to be on the retreat in much Anglican theology. This was made clear in the report *Baptism and Confirmation To-day* (1955) which spoke rather in terms of there being in man an inherited spiritual weakness and infirmity—a tendency towards evil rather than good which needs God's grace and power for its remedy. In baptism there takes place incorporation into the redeemed and forgiven society of the Church Universal and here God's power becomes operative. All of this poses the question as to the state of the child before baptism. This was quite clear if Original Sin and Guilt are accepted; but what now? Is there any distinction to be made between those children born into Christian families and those not? There are a number of such questions which Anglicans have now to answer. The Methodists, to some extent, and the Congregationalists, to a much greater extent, have, long ago, begun to answer them. But what do Baptists say? Baptist statements on such question are none too frequent and none too clear when they are made. The 1948 Statement says: "Baptists believe that from birth all children are within the love and care of heavenly Father and therefore within the operation of the saving grace of Christ." This may be thought to pose as many questions as it answers! Questions, for example, concerning the age of com-

ing to faith, the necessity of baptism and the meaning of the fellowship of the Church. We hope to return to these matters in an article shortly.

Thirdly, and following on from the last point, although we find the word "regenerate" used in the new Service, the usage seems to demand some such meaning as "reborn into the realm of grace where God's power is operative to deal with sin." One of the prayers after the baptism runs: "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate these children with the Holy Spirit, to receive them for thine own children by adoption, and to incorporate them into thy holy Church." Regeneration is the beginning of a process—not the whole process. The prayer continues: "And humbly we beseech thee to grant that, confessing the faith in which they have been baptized, and renewing the promises made in their name, they may be confirmed with thy holy and life-giving Spirit. . . ." With the disappearance of the extreme Augustinian baptismal theology, what is meant by "regeneration" may well need to be re-stated clearly by Anglicans and understood afresh by others.

Fourthly, although it is still quite clearly stated that infants by baptism are made members of the Church, there is again a pointing forward to the developing membership. This is illustrated in the quotation already given concerning regeneration and also in the opening sentences of the exhortation delivered to parents and sponsors with which the Service of Infant Baptism begins: "You have brought these children to our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that, by an act of divine power, he will give them a new and heavenly birth, and will receive them into his family the Church. It is our duty to ensure that they are brought up within that family, and that they come to understand what our Lord has done for them in Baptism." No doubt the faithful sponsors and parents together with the worshipping community will see to the child's Christian upbringing just as carefully as any Baptist parents. The Anglican will bring his child for confirmation; the Baptist will lead his towards baptism. Anglicans and Baptists may have different theologies about the child, but the path the child follows in the life of the two communities is much the same. The child is treated as though there is no difference in its status. We may well ponder on what the Anglicans mean by saying that the child is made a member of the Church at baptism and what Baptists mean when they talk of the crisis of encounter with God in Christ normally occurring within or because of the young person's life in the Christian Community.

Baptists and the Ministry

THE MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

“EVERYTHING is what it is and not another thing,” wrote Joseph Butler. And, in thinking about the Ministry in the local church or in the denomination, it is important to remember at the outset that the Ministry is different from, and far greater than the minister. The minister is one of the agents and instruments of the Ministry; the Ministry itself is nothing less than the service offered by the whole Church to Jesus Christ and His Cause, whether those engaged in it have been ordained or not. This was finely expressed by a former Bishop of Winchester, who wrote: “Do not take clergy to be meant when Church is said, nor say Church when you mean clergy. Church work is Church work, not clergy work . . . The powers and promises and privileges of the Church are assured to the Church, and not to the clergy. The healthy life and activity of the Church belong to the Church, not to the clergy. So also do the abuses of the Church and the backward shortcomings of the Church belong, not to the clergy but to the whole Church . . . Church work is that living contact of spirit with spirit in which the whole Church is necessarily engaged.”¹ Indeed, if we are to see the matter in its true perspective, we must go further still and say that the ministry of the Church, imperfect though it must always be in its human aspect, is really the ministry of the Living Christ Himself who has chosen to accomplish His purposes through the agency of men and women dedicated to His Cause. The ministry of the Son of God when on earth was his offering of love and obedience to his Father in Heaven—an offering that was finally consummated in the gift of himself upon the Cross. When the time came for Jesus to be “exalted above the heavens” (as the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it) he committed this ministry to his people. But the ministry remains one ministry on earth and in heaven, and its author and inspirer is still the Living Christ, who, by His Spirit, guides and empowers all who seek to do His will and extend His kingdom. Its pattern is that set by Him who “though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant” (*Phil.* 2^{8f}).

The corporate ministry of Christ’s people is the truth which is

¹George Ridding. *Life*, p. 207.

expressed in the phrase "The Priesthood of all Believers." The meaning of these words has often been misunderstood, as if they merely affirmed the "priesthood" of every individual believer. This is undoubtedly a part of what they signify; but, taken in isolation, this interpretation may easily be used to justify a proud individualism which is in strange contrast to the spirit of Jesus. In fact, a study of the relative Scripture passages shews that the "priesthood of all believers" is really a description of the work of Christ's people taken in its corporate aspect². It is the ministry of the whole Church, in the sense indicated by Bishop Ridding's words quoted above, and the phrase is consequently meaningless unless charged with the spirit of brotherly affection and mutual subordination under the Lordship of Christ.

Having recognized this, we must now go on to say that the fellowship of Christ's service is an *organised* fellowship. This is one of the points at which the "Catholic" conception of the ministry differs from that of the Reformed tradition to which Baptists belong. To a Catholic (whether Roman or other) the word "organised" is totally inadequate to express the act by which the Christian Ministry is constituted. He believes that a specific form of ministry was established by Jesus Christ as part of the structure of the Church which He created, and that, apart from this "ministerial priesthood"—as it has been called—with its authenticating apostolic succession of bishops, there can be no true Church. It is not necessary to state here the objections to this view, which are felt not only by Free Church scholars but also by others who, although belonging to the episcopalian tradition, nevertheless do not accept this account of the relationship of the Ministry to the Church. For our present purpose, it is more important to recognize that, in repudiating the Catholic conception of the Ministry, Free Churchmen must resist the temptation to fly to the other extreme and abandon altogether an "organic" view of the Ministry. For, while the Christian Church is indeed a fellowship or family of God's people, yet it is also a Society which has been commissioned by Jesus Christ to undertake a specific task, namely, to make disciples of all peoples and train them to do His will (*Matt.* 28.19). And the New Testament tells us that for this purpose the Church has been divinely equipped with appropriate officers.³ Ministers are therefore not to be regarded merely as a useful addition to the life of the Church which could actually get on very well without them. Nor is the orderly provision of ministers for the Church a matter of expediency or convenience which may be omitted at will.

²Cf. 1 Peter 2, 5-9; Revelation 1, 6; 5, 10; 20, 6. The subject is discussed at length in *B.Q.* XVI, 3 (July, 1955) and XVII, 7 (July, 1958).

³1 Corinthians 12, 28; Ephesians 4, 11f.

It is a duty which the Church owes to her Master, and which is essential to her life in the service of the Gospel. The Ministry, like the Church, rests upon the Will of Jesus Christ, and while individual ministers may prove incompetent, or morally unfit to occupy the office that they hold, such human frailty is no justification for trying to dispense with Ministers altogether, but only a further reason why the Church should take very seriously the task of choosing and training them.

This has always been the practically unanimous view of the Church, and it was shared by our Baptist forefathers. For example, in a sermon delivered by Dr. Samuel Stennett at the ordination of Abraham Booth in 1769,⁴ the preacher said :

“The office (i.e. of the Ministry) then is not of political invention, no, nor an institution merely of wise and good men; but it is, I will be bold to affirm, of divine appointment. This, I think, everyone who believes his Bible must acknowledge.”

(The whole sermon is a most earnest and affectionate exposition of the duties of a church to its minister :

“The grand thing is the having a real, cordial, prevailing affection for him.”)

With this may be compared Article XXVI 8 of the Baptist Confession of 1677⁵ (which McGlothlin describes as “the most influential and important of all Baptist Confessions”):

“A particular Church, gathered, and compleately (*sic*) organized according to the Mind of Christ, consists of officers and members; and the officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the Church (so-called and gathered) for the peculiar administration of Ordinances and execution or power or duty . . . are bishops or elders and deacons.”

From this view of the Ministry derives the importance attached in most Christian Denominations to the Service of Ordination in which the setting-apart of ministers for the work of the Church is specifically related to the Will of Christ for His people. This divine authority holds good even when the Church chooses its ministers by popular election—witness the opinion of Isaac Watts in his *Letter to the Church of Christ assembled at Mark Lane* (1702):⁶

⁴*A Charge and Sermon . . . delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Abraham Booth, 1769, p. 66.*

⁵*Baptist Confessions of Faith, W. J. McGlothlin.*

⁶*Baptist Register, Vol. III, pp. 515ff.*

“Though the pastor be named and chosen to this office by the people, yet his commission and power to administer all divine ordinances is not derived from the people, for they had not this power in themselves, but it proceeds from our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only King of his Church and the principal of all power; and he has appointed in his Word that the call of his Church and solemn ordination shall be the means whereby his Ministers are invested with this authority.”

We notice next that not merely is there room in the Church for a diversity of officers or ministers, but that, without such diversity, the whole corporate life of the Church would lose its peculiar meaning and effectiveness. Thus, in his well-known metaphor of the Church as a “body,” St. Paul says: “As in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ” (*Rom. 12^{ff.}*. Cf. *I Cor. 12^{ff.}*: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one”). Such variety is essential, for “if all were a single organ, where would the body be” (*I. Cor. 12th*). Whether anything is to be gained by discussing what ministers, if any, are more “essential” or “necessary” to the Church than the rest, is a doubtful question. There is a story told of Florence Nightingale that, when she and her band of volunteer nurses were approaching the Crimea, some of her helpers were indulging in romantic speculations about what they were going to do for the poor wounded soldiers; whereupon Miss Nightingale remarked grimly: “The strongest of you will be wanted at the wash-tub.” No doubt some of those deputed to that work were tempted to regard it as a poor reward for the sacrifices they were making. Yet who shall say that the ministry of the wash-tub was not as honourable in the sight of God and as necessary to the success of the whole undertaking as that of the Lady of the Lamp herself, though doubtless she got most of the praise? There are functions in the Church in the discharge of which all Christians, however modest their gifts, may have some share, while there are others which only a minority are capable of undertaking. Yet he would be a bold man who would maintain that none but the latter are “necessary” to the life of the Church. Indeed, to many Free Churchmen, there is something perilously near blasphemy in the notion held in some quarters that the episcopate, in particular, constitutes an “Essential Ministry” or sacred Order, without which the Church simply cannot exist. To repudiate this idea is not in any way to denigrate the episcopate as such,

nor to prejudice consideration of its value as part of the structure of the Church. It is simply to insist that no amount of special pleading must be allowed to obscure the truth that, while the New Testament gives priority to certain forms of ministry, it does not justify us in attributing absolute value to any of them. For that would be to put in question the special place and work of the Holy Spirit in the ongoing life of the Church, and weaken the immediate responsibility of all God's people to the sovereign authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This having been said, the importance to the Church of having a properly trained and constituted Ministry can hardly be exaggerated. In a recent article⁷, Dr. E. A. Payne grouped the functions which the Church expects its ministers to perform under the following five heads :

- The guardianship and proclamation of the Faith.
- Leadership in worship and administration of the Sacraments.
- Witnessing to, and safeguarding of the unity, continuity and universality of the Church.
- Shepherding of the flock.
- Setting of a personal example as "men of God."

To recall these functions is a sobering experience. None of them—in our Baptist view—is reserved exclusively to the ordained minister. All are shared in a measure by his people, and may be discharged at any time by a layman should the Church deem it right to call upon him for this purpose. Yet they are the peculiar responsibility of the minister as the one specially set apart and trained for this work. And they require for their regular and efficient discharge unusual abilities and skills of a high order. They also imply a representative activity of the Minister in relation both to his people and to God which is deeply costing, and makes great demands upon character. That in these circumstances the Church should attach unusual honour to the office of the Ministry is not therefore surprising, but is a fitting reflection of its prime importance in the life of the Church and the economy of Salvation.

This brings us to the important question of the authority of the Ministry, about which a great deal might be said—far more, in fact, than can be considered in a short article such as this. The basic principles seem to be two. First, the source of all authority for Christian people, whether considered individually or corporately, is none other than Jesus Christ. The phrase "The Crown Rights of the Redeemer" which was dear to our Free Church fathers, is no mere slogan to be chanted when the Church is faced with some unwarranted claim on the part of the State. It is a summary

⁷B.Q. XVII, 6, *The Ministry in Historical Perspective*, April, 1958.

statement of the truth that Jesus Christ alone is Lord over His people, and that, under the rule of His Spirit, the Church is empowered not only to guide her own life in peace and freedom, but also to act and speak with confidence in relation to the world outside. The Church belongs to Christ absolutely, and her holiness and usefulness depend upon her being under His authority alone.

Secondly, all authority in the Church is delegated authority—delegated first of all by Jesus Christ to His people, and then delegated by them, in appropriate ways, to others. Christians disagree upon the precise meaning of the words which Jesus used to Peter after his confession at Caesarea Philippi: "I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church" (*Matt.* 16¹⁸). Yet in one sense or another, Jesus indubitably committed to His people both the responsibility and the right to speak and act in His name.⁸ There is indeed a note of special urgency and passion about this which breathes through the scriptural accounts of the closing stages of the earthly ministry of Jesus, and his last conversations with his disciples. He has finished, he says, the work which was given Him to do and is returning to his Father. But he is sending his disciples out to greater work still; they are to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. Yet they will not be going alone; for, in the power of his Spirit, he will continue to be with them, and whatever they ask in his name God will give them.⁹ These and the like declarations are of the greatest importance, for they testify to the confidence which Christ reposes in His people, and the far-reaching authority which He delegates to them to interpret His mind and execute His will.

The difficulty, as we all know, is how to translate these high and solemn assurances into the stuff of our common Christian life. And at no point is this more apparent than in the sphere of the Ministry, since it is there that, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Church delegates to others some of the authority with which she has been invested. The most notable example of this is in the Service of Ordination. Ordination is the act by which the Church solemnly and publicly designates a particular person in the Name of Jesus Christ for the work of the Christian ministry. There is considerable diversity in the forms used, which vary according to the denomination concerned. But all forms imply a certain transmission of authority, and point to the truth that no one may rightly act on behalf of the Church merely on his own initiative. He must first have been authorised to do so by the Church, however that word is understood. This is not to assert—I hasten to add—that nobody may open his mouth to preach the Gospel unless he has

⁸*Matthew* 18, 18ff; *John* 20, 22f; *I Corinthians* 2, 15ff.

⁹*John* 17, 4, 18: 14. 12ff. *Luke* 24. 47f. *Acts* 1, 8. *Matthew* 28, 20.

first received permission from the Church. St. Peter himself settled that notion once for all when he said to the ecclesiastical authorities at Jerusalem: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard" (*Acts 4^{19f}*). There is, as Dr. Wheeler Robinson said, a "prophethood of believers" no less than a "priesthood of believers"; and the Church should do everything in its power to encourage suitably gifted persons to take their share in the ministry of the Word. But it does not follow, because an individual is a Christian, that he may assume without further ado that he is entitled to speak and act *in the name of the Church*. To do that, he needs some sort of authorisation from those whom he claims to represent; and this is what ordination, among other things, purports to give.

This argument, if pushed to its logical extreme, might seem to require that all Church officers, whatever their functions, ought to be ordained. Indeed, at one period in our Baptist life, it was not unusual for elders to be ordained at the same time and in the same way as ministers; and, in principle, there is no reason why we should not continue this practice still. But conditions have changed; and, today, the service of ordination is usually confined to candidates for the regular ministry, as being a form of authorisation specially suited to those who are dedicating themselves to whole-time Christian service and who, as we have seen, are being charged with responsibilities of more than ordinary importance on behalf of the Church. That is no reason, however, why other appointments such as, for example, to the Diaconate, should not also be made the occasion for a suitable service in which attention can be directed to the significance of the office concerned in the life of the Church.

In case it may be thought that there is something novel in the idea that persons appointed by the Church to act on its behalf are entrusted with some measure of authority, it will be well to recall how Free Churchmen have regarded this matter in the past. For example, the distinguished Independent, Dr. John Owen, whose book *The True Nature of a Gospel Church and its Government* (1689) is a classic in this field, laid down that

"the rule of the Church is, in general, the exercise of the power or authority of Jesus Christ given unto it according unto the laws and directions prescribed by himself unto its edification. This power in *actu primo*, or fundamentally, is in the church itself; in *actu secundo*, or its exercise, in them that are especially called thereunto."

Owen draws a sharp contrast between what he calls a "ministry

unto edification” and the “usurpation of a dominion over the persons and consciences of the disciples of Christ”. The latter, he says, always involves “coercive jurisdiction” and “exaltation above others”. The basic principle is that

“there is no rule of the church but what is ministerial, consisting in an authoritative declaration and application of the commands and will of Christ unto the souls of men, wherein those who exercise it are servants unto the church for its edification for Jesus’ sake (2 Cor. 4⁵).”

The minister of the Abingdon Baptist Church, the Rev. Daniel Turner, in his *Compendium of Social Religion* (1778) held it to be one of the duties which church-members owe to their ministers

“cordially to receive and submit to their administrations in doctrine and discipline, so far as is consistent with true Christian liberty, and the due preservation of the rights of conscience and private judgement.”

The ground for this exhortation is thus stated :

“Nothing can be more evident than that in every church rightly constituted, there must be (under Christ) some one at least appointed to rule; consequently the rest must be ruled. The rulers are such by office—to them pertains the regular execution *only* of the laws of Christ. And so far as their administration agrees with the Word of God, the rest are bound to obey (*Heb.* 13¹⁷)—though not to the prejudice of the rights of conscience and private judgement. For no church officer has any absolute, legislative or imposing power given him by Christ.”

This is strong language, drawing, as it does, upon a vocabulary which is strange to modern ears. Yet it will be observed how carefully it is guarded, and how firmly both writers repudiate any arbitrary exercise of power in the Church. The authority which both have in mind is not “magisterial” but “ministerial”; that is to say, it carries with it no power of coercion, but is based solely upon the sovereignty of Christ over His people. And although, in a democratic age, such ideas are not popular, we shall do well to ask ourselves whether some of the weaknesses of our Baptist life today may not be traceable to a too facile acceptance of secular assumptions which have little support from the Word of God.

Be that as it may, there is reason for thinking that a fresh examination of the place and purpose of authority in relation to the Church and its ministry is overdue. Among many of the younger

men in our Baptist ministry today there is no little uneasiness about their standing as ministers of Jesus Christ. Until fairly recently, a minister who had been invited by a Baptist church to become its pastor and had been publicly and solemnly "recognized" by his people, was able to exercise his ministry in complete confidence that his commission was from God as well as from the Church. He felt entitled to regard himself, and to be regarded by others, as a minister of Jesus Christ set apart for service in His Church. It is very doubtful, however, whether this holds good to the same extent today. For one thing, there is now in existence the Baptist Union "Accredited List". And although the Union expressly acknowledges that "others whose names do not appear on the List may rightly be designated Baptist ministers",¹⁰ the fact remains that a distinction is officially drawn between ministers who are "accredited" and those who are not. Nor is that the real difficulty. What the present generation of candidates for the ministry is increasingly asking is that a minister shall not merely be recognized as the pastor of a local Baptist church but also be commissioned in some way by the Whole Church acting in the Name of Jesus Christ. And this request raises issues which are, in two respects, of quite crucial importance for Baptists.

First, it is not too much to say that the future of the Baptist ministry is at stake. For, as the pressures of various kinds upon the ministry today grow heavier, it is likely to become increasingly difficult for men to resist invitations to alternative forms of Christian service unless the Church can in some way reinforce their sense of vocation. In the last resort, what makes and keeps a man a minister is his call from God. But it is often through the voice of the Church that men find God speaking to them most clearly. And the ultimate question for not a few ministers today is not whether the ministry is well or ill paid, but whether, in view of the way in which the ministry and its work seem often to be regarded, a man can still believe that, notwithstanding all the discouragements of his calling, he is where God would have him be.

The future of the local church is at stake, too. The *Statement on the Doctrine of the Church* issued by the Baptist Union in 1948 declared:

"It is in membership of a local church in one place that the fellowship of the one holy catholic Church becomes significant To worship and serve in such a local Christian community is, for Baptists, of the essence of Churchmanship."

This emphasis upon the local church has always been characteristic of Baptists, and it has enriched our history with some of its finest

¹⁰ *The Baptist Handbook*, 1959, p. 62.

examples of sacrificial devotion and loyalty to the Cause of Jesus Christ. In the local church, as P. T. Forsyth used to say, the Whole Church becomes visible. As a Fellowship of the Spirit, the local church is a standing protest against all barren institutionalism; and its place in the pattern of Christian churchmanship is the more vital today because of the steady drift of modern life in the direction of mass-organization and standardization. But the question which many of our laymen and ministers are now asking is, whether faith in the local church is enough. It is not merely that the greatly enlarged scale of life today puts in question the competence of a small and often isolated group adequately to represent and promote the Christian Faith in the modern world. The Baptist Union has already answered that question, in principle, by the establishment of the Sustentation Scheme and the Superintendency. The real problem is whether the actions of the local church, whether in ordaining its minister or in any other significant decision, can be taken to be acts of the Whole Church unless they are based upon a relationship with its sister-churches which is capable of mediating the judgement of the Whole. That is not primarily a practical question but a theological one, and so may be regarded by some people as relatively unimportant. Yet in all probability it is upon the answer to that question that the future pattern of our Baptist life will ultimately depend. And it is high time that we began thinking about it.

The moral of all this is, that authority is not something to be feared and distrusted, but rather to be understood and used in the service of the Gospel. For it is the condition upon which alone men are set free to act together in society. Without it, there can only be either tyranny or chaos; and in neither of these states can we permanently live and be happy. Authority in the Church witnesses to the fact that the Church is not a mere collection of individuals loosely linked to one another, but is a society of persons inescapably bound together in mutual love by their common dependence upon Jesus Christ, and their responsibility to Him as the Lord of life. And it is His decision and not our desires which must finally determine the part which any of us is called upon to play in the intricate texture of Church life. The Christian who is always grasping at power—be he deacon or choir-master or lay-preacher or what not—will be a perpetual source of frustration and distress both to himself and to his fellow-members, because he is seeking to do what, as a servant of Christ, he ought not. The minister who uses his authority to serve his personal ends is abusing it, for he is arrogating to himself a freedom which does not belong to him as the servant of Christ. The Church which does not honour and support its officers to the utmost of its power is stultifying itself

and dishonouring its Master, for it is undermining the relationship which binds the whole body to the One who is the only source of its power. But let minister, church-officers and members encourage each other in brotherly love and willing obedience to Christ, and the authority which binds them to one another and to Him will have the character which He Himself ascribed to it when He said: "My yoke is easy and My burden is light".

To sum up: the minister in the local church bears a dual responsibility under God because of the office which he holds. In the first place, as one called to leadership, it is his privilege and duty to set an example to his people, and to interpret by his own life and actions the gospel of the Grace of God. He is to be the "parson" or "persona" who gathers up and embodies, as it were the spiritual aspirations and activities of the community under his care. Finally, he is also to help his people by relating their corporate ministry to that of the Universal Church to which every local church belongs. The more emphasis we place upon the responsibility of the local church to direct its own life, the more necessary is it for us to be reminded that, in Christ, we are all members of a life that knows no frontiers, and that claims from us all a love and service to which no limits can be set. To the minister, more than to anyone else, is committed the task of becoming the channel through which the life of his people is kept in touch with and refreshed by those currents of the Spirit which sustain and renew the Whole Church of God to the praise and glory of His Name. "The ultimate aim of the Christian minister, after all, is to produce the love which springs from a pure heart, a good conscience and a genuine faith" (1 *Tim.* 1⁵).¹¹

R. L. CHILD

¹¹ J. B. Phillips's translation.

Baptism and the Church

(continued)

III. BAPTISM AND THE CHURCH IN THE BAPTIST MOVEMENT OF TODAY

If the account given so far is in accordance with the New Testament witness of baptism and the Church, how does Baptist practice of today correspond to the New Testament pattern? Some questions and problems of current interest will first be pointed out, and in a concluding chapter three standpoints will be described, which include different Baptist answers to certain questions raised in this chapter.

(1) *Is baptism regarded in Baptist churches as an incorporation into both the local church and the universal Church, the body of Christ?*

According to predominant Baptist theory and practice believers' baptism is looked upon as the gateway of the local church. Briefly expressed, you become a Baptist by being baptized. But is this fact that you are baptized and become a Baptist equal to turning Christian? This is evidently not the case according to current Baptist opinion. A man who has come to faith in a Baptist church is regarded as a Christian in spite of the fact that he will perhaps hesitate with his baptism for years. When he finally is baptized, what does that mean? He becomes a member of a local Baptist church. Is he incorporated into the universal church, the body of Christ, at the same time? If this question is answered in the affirmative, what about his faith before his baptism? Did it not mean his participation in the justification in Christ and by that in his Church? If the question is answered in the negative, this must mean that you can be a member of the body of Christ without belonging to a local church. With such a way of looking at the matter the connection between the local church and the universal one is dissolved, and the membership of the local church becomes purely a matter of form. The solution of these difficulties must be found by a new emphasis in Baptist preaching of baptism. The

indissoluble connection between the local church and the universal one must be stressed in a new way, and if Baptists want to continue preaching baptism in accordance with the New Testament they must seriously actualize the New Testament view of believers' baptisms as the gate both to the local church and the universal Church of Christ. Otherwise the Baptist churches like the churches baptizing infants contribute to making the demarcation line between the Church of Christ and the world indistinct, the demarcation line which water-baptism should be.

(2) *Denomination and Church*

From the Biblical evidence it is clear that by believers' baptism man is incorporated at the same time into a local church and the universal Church, the body of Christ. But does the Bible support the view that by baptism man also becomes a member of a "union," a denomination, a church among many others? Certain Christian movements have tried to solve this problem by pushing aside both the thought of the denomination and of the universal, visible Church. But in doing so they make two fatal mistakes. On the one hand they lose sight of the fundamental Biblical conception of the unity of the Church, since it is the indivisible body of Christ. On the other hand, they do not see the organic conception which existed between the primitive local churches, especially associated with the ministry of the apostles and made clear in the thought of the people of the new covenant. Within different church traditions this organic connection has been preserved in different ways, e.g. by the episcopal form of organization and the synodal one. Congregationalist tradition, to which the Baptist movement belongs, has rightly reacted against exaggerated tendencies to centralization and concentration of power in other ecclesiastical forms, tendencies which have been looked upon as inconsistent with the essence of the New Testament Church. But if by your opposition you are led to abstain from any kind of organizing connection between the local churches, you will lose the connecting link between them that apostles and evangelists formed in the primitive church. They were not bound to any particular local church when performing their services. In our age too the intimate solidarity between the local churches must be brought to an expression; otherwise the consciousness of being *one* people in Christ will vanish. If the denominational organization with its ministries fills the same task as apostles and evangelists in the primitive church it will certainly find support in the New Testament. The proof of its consistency with the New Testament is the question whether by its help the gospel is preached better and the apostolic exhortation "Bear ye one another's bur-

dens" followed more faithfully. The denomination, however, must not obscure the thought of the unity of the whole Christian Church. As the *Church* was split and the *churches* appeared, the unity of baptism as well was split and there developed several baptisms. But historical development cannot and must not nullify the belief in the unity of the Church and of baptism, as we all have one Lord and one God who is Father of all *Eph. iv 4-6*. The yearning and labour for the unity of the Church involves *at the same time* a desire to re-establish the unity of baptism.

The different existing denominations are a result of human imperfection. From the view-point of faith, their existence is deeply unsatisfactory, and they form a constant reminder of the condition of limitation under which we are now living. When the endeavour to overcome and remedy the division of the Church and of baptism is pure and free from human lust for power it is supported by central New Testament conceptions. Such a remedy, however, must not lead to uniformity. Schism and diversity are two quite different things. Schism is sin, but diversity is richness and grace in accordance with the very nature of creation. In practice this must mean that the Baptist churches cannot place themselves outside the ecumenical movement in so far as the latter remains true to its deepest motives. Such an ecumenical commitment involves several problems which will be illustrated in the last part of this paper.

(3) *Baptism, Church and the Lord's Supper*

In the primitive church baptism directly entitled a person to full church-fellowship and participation in communion at the Lord's table. The breaking of bread was the deepest form of church membership. The schism of the Church already described resulted in division at the Lord's table. One form of ecumenical co-operation is the effort to establish inter-communion across denominational boundaries. Within the Baptist churches, too, there has been for some time now one group practising "open" communion. Both "closed" and "open" communion involve difficulties, which will now be demonstrated by a description of three possible Baptist standpoints. It is characteristic of them all that they want to master the problem of infant baptism, re-baptism, the Lord's Supper, ecumenicity and proselytism. They make the many meanings of Baptist thought clear both on the practical and theoretical level, and they illustrate the necessity of thinking out the Baptist message and programme of action anew against the background of the ecclesiastical situation of today.

IV. BAPTIST FAITH AND ECUMENICITY. THREE POSITIONS

1. "No" to Infant Baptism as a Christian Baptism. Closed Communion.

According to one school of Baptist thought infant baptism is not a Christian baptism but a "church ceremony" or whatever one may like to call it. Likewise it is a common Baptist view that baptism should be regarded as essential for the existence of the Christian Church. Consequently a denomination baptizing infants cannot be a Christian church in a real sense. There is lacking one of its essential characteristics. If the Lord's Supper is a fellowship meal of those believing and baptized, it is impossible for Baptists to enter into communion with such "churches" and their "unbaptized" members. They are not "churches" but "communion societies," to use a term from the Swedish revival movement of the nineteenth century. If, according to Baptist principle, we stick to the words of the Great Commission—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations"—the consequence must be that the other "churches" are regarded as *objects of mission*. The latter say that they are Christian churches without following the clear words of the New Testament regarding believers' baptism. Consequently they must be challenged to begin to baptize and thus *become real churches*. The baptism of people already "sprinkled" as children is not a re-baptism but their first baptism. Under these conditions all ecumenical co-operation on an equal level is impossible for Baptists. They can either choose the way of Rome and place themselves outside all church ecumenicity and exhort all other churches "Come back to the Church, the Mother." (Christian co-operation on the individual and personal level remains, of course, possible in the same way as it is for Roman Catholics who are interested in it and have the permission of the Pope.) Or the Orthodox Church can serve as a pattern, which takes the same position *within* the ecumenical movement. "Not until you accept our confessional basis (the decisions of the ecumenical councils) and Orthodox tradition do you represent the true Church of Christ." Instead of co-operation, *proselytism* must be the Baptist call and task in relation to the other churches. This means that if the latter cannot be won in their entirety for Baptist faith and practise, which is unlikely, Baptists ought to endeavour to win as many as possible of their individual members for their view of baptism and the Church. In many cases this consistent and exclusive attitude has contributed to giving the Baptist movement inner strength and outer success.

2. "No" to Infant Baptism. Open Communion

Many Baptists hesitate before this logical coherent consequence of their own conception of Baptism and the Church. The adherents of believers' baptism are no longer exposed to persecution from the side of the official churches baptizing infants, as was the case, for instance, in sixteenth century Germany and nineteenth century Scandinavia. Instead, most Baptist churches live in fellowship and co-operation with paedobaptist churches, and there is no desire to deprive these churches of their true, believing members. As a denomination the Swedish Baptist Union, for example, takes an active part in ecumenical work on a national level (e.g. in the Free Church Federal Council and the Swedish Ecumenical Council) and elsewhere some ten Baptist Unions are members of the World Council of Churches. This co-operation in ecumenical work on local and denominational levels reveals how theory and practise fall apart within the Baptist movement. In theory, Baptists recognize only believers' baptism as Christian baptism and consequently only their own church as the true Church of Christ on earth. But, in fact, most Baptists of today do not interpret their own spiritual position like this. They acknowledge other Christian churches existing side by side with those practising believers' baptism, and they act according to this conviction. Thereby the first standpoint has been dismissed as out of touch with realities, not realizable and fundamentally foreign to the spirit of the New Testament. Other ways must be found which make both Baptist participation in ecumenical co-operation possible and grant liberty to realize and proclaim the Baptist ideal of baptism and the Church.

The New Testament knows only *one* baptism and *one* Church, the undivided body of Christ. But we are living in a Church situation, which is quite different from the one of the New Testament. The one Church has been divided into the many churches and denominations which all think that they practise Christian baptism and that they are true Christian churches. The New Testament authors cannot give any immediate direction in a situation which was unknown and foreign to them, even though tendencies to splits began to appear even at that early stage. We are therefore forced by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to find a way through for the Baptist movement of today, and this attempt must also manifest itself in an attempt to formulate and motivate the result theologically.

The second alternative implies that according to established Baptist usage every baptism of infants is denied the character of a Christian baptism but at the same time ecumenical co-operation is acknowledged and open communion is practised. This means in its turn that baptism is not regarded as a pre-requisite for the Lord's

Supper; every believer in Christ can sit down at the Lord's table irrespective of his being baptized or not. Thereby a distinction is made between the church which consists of those who believe and are baptized and the congregation celebrating the holy supper, which is made up of the believers in Christ. This distinction can scarcely be made from the New Testament. When therefore one branch of the English Baptist movement in the seventeenth century with John Bunyan as its best-known representative practised "open membership" as well, this was a quite consistent attitude. This "open" Baptist line implies that on one side believers' baptism is kept as the only thinkable Christian baptism, and on the other side, unbaptized believers in Christ are granted holy communion, and in certain cases even church membership. The dualism between the "strict" attitude and the "open" one has asserted itself throughout the whole of Baptist history. The strict Baptist line has been predominant but the tendency towards open communion is increasing. Open communion is now practised in the whole Danish Baptist Union. Open membership, however, has up to now been practised only in England on a large scale. What powers and motives have driven this increasing "open-ness" within the Baptist movement, and how should this development be judged and theologically understood?

Representatives of traditional "closed" Baptist practise undoubtedly regard the present development as treachery against the Baptist cause in that "open" Baptists are yielding to the pressure of surrounding, paedobaptist churches. But this development can also be interpreted in a positive way. By personal experience more and more Baptists have recognized their fellow-Christians in spite of the fact that the latter have not received believers' baptism. The desire to manifest fellowship with these brethren in faith at the Lord's table did not emanate from sentimental sympathy but is rooted in the centre of the New Testament: the fellowship already existing in the Word and in prayer strives to manifest itself in the breaking of bread as well (*Acts* ii. 42). In the same way an increasing readiness can be observed among Baptists to recognize other denominations who preach the gospel and celebrate the holy supper as partakers of the communion of saints and thereby as Christian churches and members in the body of Christ. But as they do not have baptism, in spite of the fact that they believe that they have it in the form of infant baptism, the Baptist recognition cannot be an absolute one. With reference to the Toronto statement made by the World Council of Churches in 1950, it can be expressed like this: a church composed of unbaptized but believing members cannot be looked upon as a church "in the true and full sense of the word," but yet as a church with reservation. Certain English Baptists

declare that the reason why the greatest part of Christianity has lost baptism is disobedience to divine revelation. This disobedience cannot be defended but it can be understood with reference to the fact that as early as in the time of the ancient Church the original meaning of baptism was obscured by outside influences. The introduction of infant baptism is the definite proof of the fact that both the understanding of the meaning of baptism and baptism itself, were lost. But in his long-suffering God has forbearance with human disobedience and he blesses churches too, which do not have baptism. If God "recognizes" such churches, it is a matter of course that also a church which thinks that it has preserved New Testament baptism does the same.

By this it has also been suggested that a Christian church is conceivable without baptism but not without faith. Faith alone can "bear" the Church; baptism alone cannot. Faith is more essential for the Church than baptism. Thus the present divided Church situation which was unknown to the New Testament has necessitated a reduced description of the Christian Church: "the fellowship of those believing and baptized" has become only "the fellowship of believers." Thereby a remarkable thing has occurred, in that Baptists, who in the course of history have endured martyrdom fearlessly for the sake of believers' baptism, have yet not seldom depreciated the importance of baptism to such a degree that they sometimes almost lost the understanding of their responsibility and the New Testament meaning of baptism. Baptism has often been regarded only as an act of confession and of obedience. This change of accent has especially been favoured in the Anglo-American climate with its strong spiritualistic element which is shown most consistently in the Quaker movement.

In spite of the weak understanding of the meaning of baptism it is, however, characteristic of this type of Baptists that they refuse to practise any other form of baptism than believers' baptism. In Baptist churches practising open membership, only believers are baptized, and these churches thus consist of both baptized and unbaptized members. The latter, however, are often baptized in course of time. Yet it could be asked what baptism means to a believer who already enjoys membership in the church. Baptism has then lost its New Testament connection with regeneration, and no other course is open to us but to interpret baptism exclusively as an act of confession and confirmation.

The Baptists largely adhering to the conception now described do not regard infant baptism as a Christian baptism, and therefore, according to their understanding it is not a matter of rebaptism when a person is baptized who has already received infant baptism. They do not wish to practise any form of proselytism. Open mem-

bership and the (limited) acknowledgement of other churches as Christian Churches include the respect for the Church membership and Christian faith of their members. If any of them by believers' baptism join the Baptist fellowship this can, as a matter of principle, be regarded as a result of the indwelling power of the Baptist witness. Nobody must be forced to accept baptism. That would mean violating the fundamental Baptist principle of everybody's inalienable right to respect for his conviction and to a free position in religious matters.

3. "Yes" and "No" to Infant Baptism. Ecumenical Intercommunion

Against the second Baptist alternative now described, certain objections can be raised. Is it consistent with Baptist respect for individual conviction of faith to declare every person baptized as an infant unbaptized, even though he himself confesses himself baptized and thanks God for his infant baptism? Further, the reduced Church conception which was a consequence of the second alternative can scarcely be derived from the New Testament. In the introductory chapters it was shown that a New Testament Church is inconceivable without baptism. If we abandon baptism as a necessary sign of a Christian Church, every group of believers in Christ can claim to be a Christian Church. Perhaps somebody will raise the objection that a Christian fellowship celebrating the Lord's Supper is a Church. But how can the Lord's Supper be necessary for the existence of a Christian Church any more than baptism?

It is thus a serious matter both to declare every infant baptism to be a "no baptism" and to speak of Christian Churches without baptism. Is the standpoint thus expressed the only Baptist alternative, if we are not prepared to accept the closed Baptist conception? What follows is an attempt to set out a "third position" which overcomes the difficulties inherent in the second alternative. It has as its background a religious environment where baptism and a sacramental interpretation of Christianity play a more important part than they traditionally have done in the main countries of the Baptist movement, England and America. In a Lutheran country, for instance, the Baptist churches are forced to proclaim their message and motivate their existence from other points of view, and thus other sides of New Testament baptismal theology have the chance to appear to advantage apart from those which Baptists have borne in mind up to now. Like the second alternative, the third position means an affirmation of intercommunion across church boundaries and recognizes other churches as Christian churches and it is inspired similarly by the conviction that the

Baptist message of baptism and the Church is still an urgent and undeniable responsibility.

The Mode and Time of Baptism.—In the New Testament baptism is described as a burial and resurrection together with Christ into a new life, and this event has its counterpart in the external form of baptism. Only baptism by immersion is the mode of baptism which actually expresses the deepest contents of baptism in the same way as the bread, which is broken and the common cup speak a language, which wafers and individual cups are not able to speak. In the Orthodox Church baptism by immersion (in the form of infant baptism) has been preserved, while on the other hand the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century and the first generation of Baptists in England usually baptized by sprinkling. If a Baptist denies baptism by sprinkling as a Christian baptism this will mean that thereby he will declare that his spiritual forefathers were unbaptized. The mode of baptism cannot be decisive on the validity of baptism even though baptism by sprinkling is a corrupt baptism compared to baptism by immersion. On the other side the procedure of immersion is not enough to warrant the New Testament character of baptism. The time of administration of baptism is also of great importance. The right time for receiving baptism is when man has been hit by the words of the law and brought to a knowledge of sin and a confession of sin and accepts the message of the gospel about remission of sin and about faith. Then regeneration in baptism through faith can take place. This sometimes happens at a very early age, and in such cases it is meaningless to speak of "adult" baptism, an expression that is unsuitable and misleading from every point of view and therefore should be avoided. But at the same time a warning should be given against too early Baptist baptisms as well, for they often prove to be premature.

Is Infant Baptism a Christian Baptism? The first condition requisite for a person to be regarded as baptized is that the baptismal formula ("in the name of the triune God/or of Christ") has been pronounced over him and that water has been used. With this event Christ has associated the promise of His presence unto the end of time. This is the *objective* side of baptism, which is an instrument for God's dealing with man. But if baptism should be a true Christian baptism, there must be a *subjective* side as well. Just as a promise must be believed in to become effectual and full of blessing *to me*, baptism must be received in faith. In baptism the objective, God's dealing, and the subjective man's reception coalesce into an indissoluble unit, by which man is made a member of the Church, the body of Christ. As distinguished from the proclaimed word baptism is a non-recurrent event, which must be experienced in faith. The more baptism and faith are separated

in time and experience, the more baptism loses its New Testament meaning; it becomes "an unclear baptism" (Karl Barth). This is true of the believers who long postpone their baptism, and it is increasingly true of infant baptism and of the baptism of older people who had no faith at the time of their baptism. But is the objective side of baptism wholly lost in this "unclear" baptism? Is infant baptism a non-baptism? To this question no unambiguous and definite answer can be given. How far does God's forbearance with human misuse of divine ordinances reach? Does God use infant baptism as a means of building His Church in the world in spite of the fact that, according to Baptist conviction, it means a corruption of what baptism originally was meant to be? In the last resort the question of the "validity" or "nullity" of baptism must be left unanswered—for we know in part. But from an empirical point of view something can be said of the value of infant baptism.

Two Kinds of Infant Baptism. One type of infant baptism is administered in the presence of believing parents and godparents, who promise solemnly to bring up the baptized child in Christian faith and remind it of its baptism. This promise is fulfilled, and the baptized child is brought up to receive its baptism in faith. The objective contents of baptism are continually actualized for the baptized person until he himself can believe in his baptism and on confession of his faith in Christ can be received in "full membership" with the Church or until the baptized person after due instruction "is confirmed" in his Christian faith and thus is allowed to receive Holy Communion and enjoy full fellowship in the Church. Infant baptism acts here quite obviously as a church-building factor. People baptized as children believe that God dealt with them in baptism. Within the life-sphere of their church they have grown to faith and spiritual maturity, and they are now partaking in its service and its Holy Communion. In this case both the objective element and the subjective one are to be found, even though according to Baptist doctrine it is not the case of a New Testament baptism. Is it yet possible for Baptists to acknowledge such an "unclear" baptism as a Christian baptism in any sense? If a man who has received infant baptism believes that he is baptized and says before God and his Word that he knows this for certain, who am I to deny this? Would that not mean intervening in the ministry of God and presuming to judge another person's conscience? From a human point of view such a man could be regarded and treated as baptized, while the question of final veracity is left open. On the same grounds a church which practises infant baptism in faith and under responsibility could be given a limited acknowledgement as a Christian Church. It would thus be possible for Baptists to celebrate Holy Communion with such a church and its members on the

basis of faith *and* baptism, and it would not be necessary to give up the Baptist principle of baptism as a pre-requisite for Holy Communion. The conditions necessary for ecumenical co-operation with paedo-baptist churches would thus be created, although in a different way from the second alternative above, according to which only the church which baptizes infants but not its baptism is the object of a conditional acknowledgement.

But there is a different type of infant baptism as well, to which a "no" must be said quite frankly from the Baptist side. The Church conception must be rejected that emanates from an indiscriminate infant baptism quite independent of the fact whether the person being baptized receives faith and accepts grace or not. The consequences are obviously absurd when, as in the case of the Northern European countries, up to 95 per cent. of the population are baptized at a tender age and consequently should be regarded as Church members and members of the body of Christ. From this conception it could be argued that all non-Lutheran activity among these 95 per cent. of the population would be proselytism. Here is a caricature of the New Testament conception and practise of baptism and the Church. It is, from a Baptist point of view, important that a baptismal practise should be rejected, which means that a holy act is degraded to a half superstitious popular custom or a name-giving ceremony devoid of religious significance without any consequences for either the godparents or the child itself.

The majority of infant baptisms are, regrettably, of this type rather than the other described above. They are performed without accompanying education in the Christian faith, and they consequently become empty and meaningless. In 1 *Corinthians* xi: 27-29, Paul describes an unworthy celebration of the Lord's Supper, the outcome of which is that man "eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." Analogically we could speak of "baptism to damnation". When it is the case of the misuse of baptism in that infant baptism where the rite is transferred from the sphere of faith and is secularized, there can be no question of the damnation of the young children who are baptized but of the church which thus deprives a divine ordinance of its sublimity and meaning.

Such a baptist 'yes' and 'no' to infant baptism means a double attitude towards paedo-baptist churches. On the one hand, to say 'yes' means a conditional acknowledgement of them and their baptism to the extent that, in the first type of infant baptism described, baptism stands at the beginning of a process of engrafting the individual into the fellowship of the Church. Under such circumstances ecumenical co-operation and intercommunion become possible. Baptism and church membership are mutually respected and proselytism is out of the question. On the other

hand, a Baptist 'no' to infant baptism does not mean that paedobaptist churches are denied their character as Christian churches, nor that their infant baptism is wholly denied as baptism. But it means that a reformation is thought necessary by which baptism is restored to its right place in the life of the Church and the individual. This reformation takes the form of baptism of people who come to faith outside a church fellowship where they were once baptized as children. Here it is not a matter of proselytism but of mission among people who are strangers to the Christian faith and tradition in spite of the fact that they are both baptized and confirmed. But how should we act if a man, baptized as an infant, who grew up as a believer, wishes to become a member of a Baptist church? Should he, at his own request, be re-baptized, or should he be granted membership without further baptism? If he is baptized again the new baptism neither gets its place at the beginning of the new life nor does it indicate entry to the Christian Church, for he already shares both. If, on the other hand, he is granted church membership without a new baptism the Baptist witness is weakened and the Baptist call to the reformation of the Church is undermined. If we, therefore, in spite of all, recommend re-baptism in such a case, this is not done lightly, for we recognize that this action will be regarded as a denial of an infant baptism which led on to faith.

This painful doubleness will characterize the Baptist churches as long as infant baptism is being practised within Christendom. The only radical solution of the problem of re-baptism, intercommunion and proselytism is that the practise of infant baptism comes to an end. Until this happens, an "open" Baptist Church is forced to remain in the double attitude in which it is now, whether it corresponds to the second alternative described above or to the third. The doubleness means on one hand that we recognize as the Church of Christ all those who believe in Christ and have the fellowship of life with him (as unbaptized or as baptized with an "unclear" baptism) and that in every way we try to manifest the fellowship of the saints in service and work. On the other hand that Baptist Churches regard it as the task given to them by God to try to realize the New Testament order of baptism and the Church in the midst of a complicated Church situation. According to their view faith and baptism belong indissolubly together both in the life of the Church and the individual. All those who by faith live in Christ are already one body in him. This spiritual reality strives by its inherent nature to take an outer visible form, and until this has happened it is incomplete. In this procedure baptism has an indispensable task to fulfil, and Baptists regard it as their calling, in preaching and practice, to present the Church, the body of

Christ, as a visible reality in the life of mankind between Christ's resurrection and return.

Finally, a word should also be said about the meaning of the third stand-point for the inner life of Baptist Churches as for faith, baptism and re-baptism. According to the thought presented above which regards baptism as functioning "to damnation" if it is not administered according to the New Testament, the act of baptism can never be without effects. It serves either to the edifying of the Church of Christ if it is rightly administered, or to its destruction and secularization, if it is misused. Both these possibilities are open to Baptists as well. If it becomes evident that a man has demanded and received the Baptist baptism without faith and with false motives, the necessity of re-baptism must be seriously considered if he comes to true repentance and faith. But it is still more important to stress the meaning of baptism for those who received it in faith and with an open mind. If such a man gets into doubts as to his relationship to God, the task of baptism is to serve as a help and a support of faith: in baptism God acted with me and if I am faithless, He faithfully holds to his Word, the Word pronounced over me in baptism. If the disquieting question arises, "Did I have the right faith at the moment of baptism," it is extremely important for a correct education to be given about faith so that the latter is not conceived as a human achievement necessary as a pre-requisite for God's acting. First and foremost the doubter should be directed towards God and His many promises in the Bible which are connected with baptism. Thus the fact that I was baptized in Christ's name can be a permanent source of new power and blessing, and baptism becomes a true "means of grace". On this view there can be no question of rebaptizing a backslider when he comes to faith again. If he once received baptism in faith it can never be repeated. If he goes away, it will be a permanent judgement and reminder of what he lost. If he returns, he is reinstated to membership of the Family of God which he once gained by faith and baptism.

Baptism is a holy and deeply significant ordinance which was entrusted to the Church to be administered with great earnestness and joy. A Baptist church too, must be careful not to change baptism through misuse and bring judgement on itself. Such judgement is the 'negative' effect of baptism. But its positive and essential effect and meaning is to be a way of the gracious God to man and man's way to God and His Church; a way which he has to walk with faith in Christ and obedience to His Word.

TORSTEN BERGSTEN

(translated by Nils Sundholm)

In the Study

HUMAN insight into the Christian message is inevitably partial and distorted. Churches and their theologians seize upon one doctrine and make it central to and regulative for a confessional position. A perspective, once adopted, opens one horizon but conceals another. So it is that one group stands upon the Resurrection and personal communion with a living Lord, while another stands upon the Atonement and appropriation of a redemption won; and if the Catholic is preoccupied with the reproduction of the gospel in the church, the Protestant stresses the finality of the work of the incarnate Son. Similarly, East and West divide in the relative importance they attach to the problems of sin and guilt, of corruption and death; and if the West looks primarily to Calvary and Pentecost, the East harks back to Bethlehem, to christology and incarnation. Can we, in our day, advance beyond this fragmentation of the gospel? Can we take up again the endless task of seeing things clear and seeing them whole? Can we reintegrate incarnation and atonement? Even a measure of success would involve a closer approach not only to truth but also to ecumenical understanding.

It is along this fruitful path that the Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary would lead us.¹ He finds the link between incarnation and atonement to lie, both logically and historically, in the life and ministry of the incarnate Lord. Certainly the early church, by collecting, preserving, and making central the four gospel records, posed for all time the problem of the significance of the Jesus of history within the pattern of orthodoxy. There is laid upon us the necessary duty of thinking together christology and soteriology, of imparting life and dynamism to the Chalcedonian categories by explicating and interpreting their assertions in terms of the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth.

Professor Hendry offers us illuminating studies of the humanity of Christ in Eastern and Western theology, and grapples profoundly with the new questions raised by the post-Reformation age. His twofold concern is with the idea of the consubstantiality of Christ

¹*The Gospel of the Incarnation.* By G. S. Hendry, S.C.M. Press, Ltd. 15/-, 1959.

with mankind and with the basis of the vicarious principle involved in the atonement; and the two are really one. An examination of relevant gospel material leads on to a consideration of theories of the atonement and of the contemporaneity of Christ with men through church and sacraments. The whole is a notable contribution to theological understanding.

The conclusion to which we are led is that "the reality of forgiveness is found in the personal relations that the incarnate Christ established with men at the human level." If this sounds complacent and disappointing a reading of the book will soon correct such an impression. The demolition of the conventional conflict between the justice and the love of God would alone have made it worth the writing. It is of tremendous importance that our orthodox formulations should be painted in the colours of the gospel records. God ever is as we see Him in Jesus.

Only at one point does the writer fail us. He never quite comes to terms with the Cross. He sees quite clearly that his incarnationist exposition raises large questions about the necessity and importance of the death of the Lord; and these he attempts to answer. But he seems unable to advance beyond an understanding of the death in terms of "end and fulfilment", as the climax of the suffering which forgiving grace inevitably undergoes. Is this enough? Is there not demanded some clearer recognition of the implications of the biblical correlation between death and sin?

Few great theological problems are exclusively modern. Indeed, the title of Professor Hendry's work might serve as an apt description of the central thought of the famous second century bishop of Lyons. The theological stature of Irenaeus has never gone unrecognized; and he stands sufficiently close in time and expression to the New Testament to speak to us in accents that our age finds particularly meaningful. So it is that we turn to this translation of a standard study in the biblical theology of this great figure with a sympathetic expectation.² The scope of the examination is comprehensive; the treatment is judicious; the conclusions are clear. Three balanced sections guide us in expert fashion from the Creation to the Last Judgment. The first of these deals with the Creation and the Fall, with man's pilgrimage from life to death. The third speaks of the Church and the Consummation, of the movement of man from death to life. Between them is the inevitable confrontation with the Incarnation, with Christ incarnate, crucified and risen. The whole constitutes an unveiling of a theological interpretation of man which provides a satisfying key to the whole thought of Irenaeus.

² *Man and the Incarnation*. By Gustaf Wingren, Oliver & Boyd, 21/-, 1959.

Wingren finds there to be two distinctive characteristics in the theology of Irenaeus, best summed up by the keywords "growth" and "conflict". On the one hand, our humanity is the ground of a ceaseless conflict between God and the Devil. On the other hand, that humanity is continually in process of change, growth, and development. And the two are basically independent, however real may be the actual and inevitable interconnection. Further, it is in the context of these central concepts that the familiar notions of *Image*, *similitude*, and *recapitulatio* are rightly understood. Man is created in Christ, in the image of God. But he is created as "child"; he must grow towards full humanity. By the Fall his humanity, perfect in its measure, is injured and impaired; henceforth he is less than truly human. It is by incarnation that the Son engages irrevocably in the conflict, wins the victory, recapitulates man's history, and so reverses the movement from life to death. So the decisive battle is won, though the warfare in man continues. Henceforth, in Christ, the growth towards fullness is possible, till the Son surrenders his kingdom, and God is all in all.

This is an attractive presentation of the thought of an attractive theologian. It reconciles divergent emphases, bringing pattern and order out of what sometimes appears to be confusion. Perhaps it imposes too much coherence. For the Irenaeus that emerges bears a startling resemblance to a modern biblical theologian with an ecumenical background and a leaning towards Aulén. It may be that this is the truth of the matter. But it would make us pause, read critically, and ponder long. In any event, Wingren gives us a profusion of material. It is only to be regretted that since this is a translation of a work published in 1947 it can make no reference to the contribution of Lawson or the more recent studies of Lundström.

Wingren informs us, somewhat surprisingly, that the idea of the world as having been created in the Son "has disappeared in modern theology". Certainly this verdict is not reinforced by a reading of Barth's exposition of the Work of Creation. This is the theme of the latest part-volume of his *Church Dogmatics* to be translated.³ It amply and richly associates Christ and creation. It is an exasperating mixture of insight and perversity.

I suppose that the really tremendous things Barth has so far provided are his treatment of election in Vol. 2 Part 2, his development of anthropology in Vol 3 Part 2, and his exposition of atonement in Vol. 4 Part 1. It is not to such heights as these that the present study attains. But it does offer us a profound and illuminating discussion of the correlation of covenant and creation. The ex-

³ *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. 3, Part I. By K. Barth, T. & T. Clark, 45/-, 1958.

ternal basis of the covenant is creation: the internal basis of creation is the covenant. That is to say that creation is no isolated act of God. It is the presupposition of the realization of the divine purpose of love to man which the covenant enshrines, the way and means to that covenant. And it is the nature of that covenant that determines the nature of the creation. For the covenant is not only creation's goal; it is also creation's meaning.

These two facets of the all-important truth are worked out in detail by way of a prolonged exposition of the two "sagas" of creation that Genesis records. Probably Barth could have done no other than concentrate on these familiar chapters, and certainly much of his interpretation is penetrating. The essential conjunction of creation and redemption is never lost sight of; the determinative position and importance of Jesus Christ is never forgotten: the essence of man as male and female is strikingly proclaimed. For all this, and much more, we must be grateful. It is the detailed exegesis, especially of Genesis I, that makes us pause and question. Many times it borders on the arbitrary, and occasionally on the fantastic. It raises again the whole question of Barth's attitude to Scripture and his hermeneutical principles. We are left with the uncomfortable feeling that this volume, short as it is in comparison with most of its associates, might with profit have been made even more brief.

But to move from the Dogmatic to the Barthian studies in eighteenth and nineteenth century European philosophers and theologians⁴ is a surprising experience. Stylistically speaking, we discover a new world. In vain do we brace ourselves against the familiar cascade of words and the endless flow of repetitive sentences; there is no shock to sustain. For here the current is strictly controlled, the pace is even, and the impact is unhurried, if decisive. Partly this is due to a difference in methodology, partly to magnificent work from the translators. But behind it all is Barth himself, presenting new and prepossessing facets of his personality to the English-speaking world, and proving himself to be in the end less skilful with the bludgeon than with the scalpel.

By way of prologue, we are offered a chapter on eighteenth century man which sets the stage for the appearance of the great actors with whom the book is mainly concerned. The age is seen as one of "absolutism", in the general sense of a system of life based on the certitude of the omnipotence of human powers. There was a restless striving for the reduction of everything to absolute form, in art and architecture, literature and education. The humanism of the era found its embodiment in Leibnitz. In his teaching about the self-sufficient monad, reflecting the divine in

⁴ *From Rousseau to Ritschl*. By K. Barth, S.C.M. Press, Ltd., 42/-, 1959.

harmony with its world and its fellows, we discern the accurate portrait of the man of the eighteenth century.

The essays on Rousseau and Lessing, on Feuerbach, Strauss, and Ritschl, have all their interest and value; but it is the central section of the work that gives it its importance and definitive significance. The publishers have given us only selections from the great *Die Protestantische Theologie Im 19. Jahrhundert*, and choice must inevitably have proved difficult. But certainly no translation could have afforded to omit the brilliant studies of Kant and Herder, Schleiermacher and Hegel. The student will be foolish to pass this by on the plea that he has H. R. Mackintosh's familiar volume on his shelves.

Adequate summary is impossible at any point. But the interpretation of Hegel demands at least special mention, both for its intrinsic importance and for the corrective it provides to an unbalanced Kierkegaardian polemic. Here is a philosophy of utter confidence in mind and thinking man, assured of the equivalence of thinking and the thing thought, of the ultimate identity of self and mind and (in some sense) God. Thus an essential insight of Romanticism is confirmed, whilst yet being placed under criticism by the affirmation of the sovereignty of pure thought. The result is Titanism, a philosophy of unqualified, self-confidence, where everything stands under the rubric of movement, process, act, event.

For the "heart-beat" of the Hegelian system is the "endless circling" of the dialectical method. Reality is reality only as "conceived" by reason. And the absolute concept—reason, mind, God—must interminably posit itself in the triple movement of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Within the hospitable borders of so tremendous a structure everything could and should be included. It meant the end of the conflict between reason and revelation; for the object of philosophy was eternal truth, and the law of truth was contradiction. No longer was the de-historicizing of Christianity demanded; for truth was understood as event, and reason itself was understood historically. When modern man rejected Hegel, he turned his back upon the ultimate human possibility of unifying the Christian and the man.

This is discerning exposition, the fruit of a rare sensitivity and sympathetic understanding. It is as amply displayed in the study of Schleiermacher that follows. Here is the great theological figure of the nineteenth century, beside which Ritschl is a pygmy and his theology an episode. Barth is entirely right in referring us back to Herder and the Romantic emphasis upon experience, feeling, and history for our understanding of Schleiermacher, his problems and his programme. Indeed, it is this constant attention to cross-

reference and interrelationship that gives the book its visible unity and not a little of its value.

Nevertheless, it is not the learning this work displays that provides it with its ultimate significance, but the spirit in which it is written and the approach to truth that marks its author. On each thinker studied two verdicts may be registered, one provisional, the other final. Because we know Karl Barth, we know what the latter verdict must be. But it is never intruded, and never arrived at prematurely. All that is noble is set before us; all that is attractive and sober is presented; all that can be defended is defended. Only then are we invited not to hear an epitaph but to pronounce one. Perhaps this is Barth's own greatness: that in true humanity and humility he lays before us the immense range of man's achievement before placing the whole under the judgment and mercy of God.

It is partly due to the widespread influence of Karl Barth that the contemporary scene is marked by an interest in dogmatics and in its writing; but, as always, a renewed concern has brought with it fresh problems. For scholarship within the Christian Church in this modern age is characterized by two disastrous tendencies. The one is the confusion between the historical and the theological; the other, the cleavage between scriptural exegesis and dogmatics. These constantly combine to bedevil discussion. It is with the problems bound up with them that the Professor of Theology at Tübingen University finds himself involved in his recent exploration of the approach to dogmatics.⁵ His discussion moves from a relevant examination of the views of such thinkers as Bultmann, Barth, and Schlier to a sustained enquiry into preaching, teaching, inspiration, the canon, apostolic tradition, and the unity of Scripture. It will be apparent that the concern is with prolegomena and methodology rather than the writing of dogmatic theology. Certainly the reader will gain much in understanding if he places alongside this study J. M. Robinson's *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus*. It is regrettable that the publishers have not seen their way clear to providing us with a translation of the whole of Professor Diem's work. What we are here offered is the second instalment of a two-volume opus.

Nevertheless, here is prodigality of riches. The modern situation is faithfully portrayed. On the one hand stands the exegete plying his trade without even a sideways glance at the dogmatician; on the other is the theologian doing despite to historical criticism through his fettering of biblical exegesis by the application of rigid dogmatic criteria. It is true that a thinker such as Barth will define dogmatics as the testing of the Church's doctrine and proclamation by reference to the original Word of God enshrined in

⁵ *Dogmatics*. By Hermann Diem, Oliver & Boyd, 30/-, 1959.

Scripture. But Barth too quickly assumes the unity of the Scriptural canon and too easily restricts the liberty of historical enquiry. By what criterion are the theological assertions of Scripture to be examined as to their unity? By what measure are the values of individual texts to be appraised? What is the norm for dogmatics? These are the searching questions that demand an answer.

Perhaps advance must come by way of enquiry into the meaning of the historical Jesus for the preaching and doctrine of the Church; for the historical locus and the starting point of all Christian theology is the self-proclamation of Jesus in the Gospels. If the Gospels enshrine a tradition of preaching, then the essential task of criticism is not to penetrate behind the texts to some presumed historical facts but to enquire into the formation of the text wherein is mirrored the history of the proclamation. Here and here alone shall we reach a confrontation with the history of the revelatory process itself. This is not a matter of conventional textual criticism, but a question of the way in which and the extent to which the biblical writings attest the history of the Christ who in his preaching proclaims himself.

If all this seems vague and ambiguous, we must read Diem further and more closely. He would have us give a central place to the biblical concept of *akoē*, which is both the preaching and the hearing. Testimony is authenticated by its object; it is verifiable solely by that to which witness is borne. This does not involve any neglect of the problems of historicity. In a memorable phrase, Diem reminds us that we must never ignore "the historical contours of revelatory events". But it does mean that the disastrous confusion of historical and theological arguments must be eschewed, that—*pace* Kummel and Gullmann—"in the empirical use of the canon in preaching lies the only theological possibility of defining it against Church tradition". And it does imply that exegesis must be orientated in its approach to the biblical text by the dogmatic point of view. To the practical exemplification of this conclusion, the final pages of this notable study are devoted.

N. CLARK

Thomas Rees Davies: A Centenary

THE centenary of the death of Rev. Thomas Rees Davies on June 26 passed without a comment, almost. As far as I know the only public tribute to his memory was paid in a short address at the weekly prayer meeting at Tabernacll, Llandudno, by Mr. R. W. Jones on June 29. A synopsis of this address was published in the Welsh Baptist Weekly, *Seren Cymru* on July 17, 1959.

I first encountered the name and face of Thomas Rees Davies in my home in Carmarthenshire when I was a boy. The house was pretty well alive with Baptist celebrities, past and present. Pride of place went to centenary photographs of the local church and its ministers. Then came contemporary prophets in the Principality at large, well over a hundred of them at their shining best. In another room there was a framed Missionary Calendar with the title in Welsh: "Hold the Ropes", and Timothy Richard and Evan Morgan, China; W. R. James, India; and Thomas Lewis, Congo; among others, were symmetrically placed to form a border, literally roped in. The oldest picture gallery was of a handful of Welsh Baptist fathers, of whom I remember distinctly Christmas Evans, John Herring, William Richards (Lynn), and Thomas Rees Davies. (I understand that this particular group is less in public favour than it was, and the Secretary of the Welsh Baptist Union would welcome it as a gift for Ilston House, Swansea, if there is a single survivor after the war salvage drives.) Thomas Rees Davies stood out among the ten or dozen worthies because of the black cap on his head, and the spectacles resting above his forehead on the cap. Other details stuck, too, the bushy eyebrows, the granite face, and the double-breasted waistcoat. Many years were to pass before I was to encounter a full-length portrait of Thomas Rees Davies (in *The History of the Baptists of Llandudno District*) with a Bible at his elbow on a rather florid plush table-cloth, his hands crossed on his knee, his shapely leg in exquisite side-buttoned trousers. The black cap must have been exceptional in his life-time, for he was known among the contemporaries as "The Black Cap" (a term with a less pleasant connotation in England, I understand).

There has been no satisfactory biography, but in 1860, W. M. Evans, Carmarthen, printed (in Welsh) a 104 page work :

The Biography of the Reverend Thomas Rees Davies, Glanwydden; commenced by himself and completed (on request) by H. W. Hughes: with a statistical pre-ample including a Review of the last sixty years in connection with the Baptist Denomination in Wales; with the numerical strength of the Communion; also a selection of divine gems, a memorial ode, poetical remains, addresses, etc., etc.

A problematic quotation also adorns the title-page :

*“ Let us speak of a man as we find him,
And heed not what others may say.”*

The twelve pages of preface matter dealing with Baptist witness in Wales from 1800 to 1860 is a chronicle of Baptist successes in the war against Socinianism, Sandemanianism, Campbellism, “and many other strange isms”. Whereas in 1800 there were only 80 churches in the whole of Wales, in 1860 there were 467 (with a membership of 62,246).

The autobiography is short (only four small pages, the first three paragraphs in English, the remainder in Welsh). The English introduction is as follows :

Thos. Rees Davies was born at Penwenallt, Parish of Kilgeran, County of Pembroke, South Wales, on the 9th day of May, 1790; and baptized in the river Morgenau, at Felin Garnet Bridge, by the Rev. Benjamin Davies, of Nantyreryd, minister of Cilvowir, on the 22nd day of June, 1806, after a sermon on the occasion by the Rev. Evan Jones, of Cardigan; and the Rev. Gabriel Rees, of Rhydwylym, did preach in the chapel of Cilvowir.

And he, T.R.D., began to preach the gospel of Christ the next winter, before the end of the year 1806, at Cilvowir, etc., Went to North Wales in 1811. His ordination was held at Cilvowir, on the 9th day of March, 1814. His charge was given by his uncle Dd. Rees, of Froghole, the charge to the church by Wm. Evans, Cwmfelin; and a sermon to the congregation by Thos. Jones, Rhydwylym. Wm. Pritchard, Penypark, and John Herring, of Cardigan and Dd. Phillips, Blaenwaun, did preach the evening before.

And I am now in North Wales, at Salem, Llansantffraid, Glanconway, Roe, Glanwydden, Llandudno, Bettws, Dawn, and Eglwysfach, since 1812, 19 months before my ordination. Thanks be to God.

At this point he breaks abruptly into Welsh, and relates how he had a little early schooling at Llechryd, Capel Newydd and Cardigan (under Reverend Evan Jones, “He was a very good scholar, and he had a big school; I shall be indebted to him for ever for the education I received from him”). The Academy at Abergavenny had been opened about this time, but his parents “for some reasons they had” stood in his way to go there. He educated himself, however, and took good care to listen to the religious leaders of the period (he refers, for example, to “old Jones, Llangan”, and Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala). He preached his

first sermon before the end of 1806, and at the age of sixty-seven, "after trying to preach for fifty-one years", he recalls how poor a performance it was, "so that I had decided to give up once and for all". After a fortnight of "worry, shame, and prayer" he ventured the second time, and after that there was no turning back. The custom at that time was to win your spurs "in small meetings" at home, take Sunday services "under the authority of the church" in the branches, and then go out to neighbouring churches with an elder minister. T.R.D. went out with David Evans, Cilvowir "as a *footman* for over a year" in his home district, and later with David Davies, Rehoboth, on tours away from home. ("He was a good old Christian: we were sometimes on our journey for a whole week.") In 1811 he and Simon Jones, both barely twenty-one, ventured to North Wales. T.R.D. preached his first Association sermon at Amlwch, Anglesey.

This was the first Association where I tried to say anything; but scores of times afterwards . . . Brother Christmas Evans liked us very much, and pressed upon us to stay in the North. . . . Simon Jones stayed that year in Lleyn, Caernarvonshire. . . . I went with Rev. Thos. Davies, Cefnbychan on to Denbighshire. The Sabbath I was in Roe, Fforddlas, and Glanwydden. The brethren there besought me eagerly to come and settle among them, though they were only a few. In the Roe at the time there was nobody but Sian Peters, and only one member in Tudno Island.

He promised to come in a year's time, and in 1812 he came back, making Glan Conway his base of operations. At that time Roe (Ro-Wen, now closed) and Ffordd-las were the only two chapels between Anglesey and Llanrwst. There was not a single one in the whole of Welsh Flintshire (in 1959 it is a county without a single minister in charge of a church). T.R.D. preached in farm houses and in the homes of ordinary people, "doors open in every district, so that for a few years it was almost the exception to sleep two consecutive nights in the same bed". There were only thirty-five members in twelve parishes, but soon there were chapels in Llandudno, Glanwydden, Eglwysfach, Codau, Llangernyw and Llanddulas, and a little later in Llanddoged, Llansannan, Llanefydd, and Bontnewydd: "Much perspiration did I lose in all these places, before there was a chapel in any of them, when I was young and in my prime".

It was on March 9th, 1814, that he was ordained, in Cilfowir: "I had to go there from the North, to the 'Mother Church' to receive the 'ordination', in order to satisfy them, so that they would have the right, they said, 'to call him back whenever he would be needed'."

The last paragraph of his autobiographical sketch is particularly gripping:

After this I began to baptize in almost every river, lake and stream from Conway to Llansannan, and from Llanrwst to Bontnewydd, from the sea of Llandudno to the mountain of Berwyn, consecrating all their waters. I baptized in these years, 1814-15-16 and -17, some who became useful as deacons and ministers in the churches, such as John Prichard, now of Llangollen, and John Griffiths, Llandudno, two very good men—I baptized both in the same month, and John Morris, Cwmifor, at Glyn Ceiriog, long afterwards, and many who became preachers, as it were.

For the record, a few significant details may be added. On June 4th, 1814, he married Miss Ann Foulks, the daughter of Mr. Robert Foulks, Peniarth Fawr, a well-to-do land owner, at Llangwstenin parish church. In 1818 there was an unfortunate clash between him and some of the members at Glandwydden over a trust deed, and for eight years he preached among the Wesleyans.

In 1826 he was reinstated by his old denomination, and ministered at Glyn Ceiriog (1827-29), Stanhope Road, Liverpool (1829-35), and Cilgeran (1835-43), before returning to Glandwydden, to spend the remainder of his days as a travelling evangelist.

Thomas Rees Davies deserves to be remembered as a very active propagator of the Baptist faith in the first half of the last century, especially in North Wales. He not only taught the principles, moreover, but gave practical proof of his convictions by lending money (even if it was his wife's) to struggling communities facing the task of building chapels against great odds. A contemporary, Daniel Jones, Tongwynlais, writes of him a few months after his death "Who did more for weak churches than Thomas Rees Davies, by lending them money on their chapels, when others were not ready to do so? It is well known that it was raggedly enough that he got a little interest on his money—count the chapels from Bagillt to Conway".

It is interesting that his slightly cynical biographer, H. W. Hughes, defends his good name against a charge of niggardliness :

All who knew Thomas Rees Davies knew he was under the heavy oppression of excessive frugality, but he had good schooling in that art in the north; . . . and the churches that complained that he was too learned on this head can thank themselves for teaching him.

Daniel Jones also defends him :

Some would set Thomas Rees Davies out as one too attached to the things of this world . . . considering his station as a servant of Jesus. I think that had been suspected because he excelled most of us in his attention to small matters. . . . In his own home, and at his table, he was most kind and cheerful . . . he was very much against waste . . . and it would be a mercy to God's church, and to the world, if many in these days followed his example in frugality in eating, drinking and dress.

It is as a preacher, however, that he is still best remembered. For better or for worse he was one of the fore-runners of a host of itinerant preachers whose Association and "Union" and "big meeting" sermons have been woven into our Baptist pattern of public witness for the past century and a half. He is reputed to have preached 13,145 times (a remarkably "exact" total recorded even in the article by Rev. L. E. Valentine in the Cymmrodorion *National Biography*). The late Dr. H. Cernyw Williams in his biography of Dr. Hugh Jones, Llangollen, says that he was privileged to hear Thomas Rees Davies scores of times, and that he possessed extraordinary preaching gifts, using even his stammer to advantage. In Dr. Owen Thomas' classic biography of Rev. John Jones, Talysarn, there is a remarkable tribute to Thomas Rees Davies as a powerful and vivid preacher. "The presence, the voice, the manner, and the sermon" left a lasting impression upon the mind of the hearer, who was only ten years of age at the time, and after fifty-one years he could remember the gist of the sermon, the 'heads' and the peroration. "All must agree," he says, "that here was an extraordinary example of popular eloquence . . . There is no doubt that some of the chief elements of the powerful and effective preacher, and that to a considerable extent, met in Thomas Rees Davies."

H. R. Hughes gives a selection of 'gems' from his sermons. Here are a few examples :

I do not know what most astounds us, men's shamelessness in treating the Son of God, or his patience in bearing with them.

Water is sure to keep its level. Since the water of life springs from God's throne, anything that threatens it must rise as high as the throne before it can challenge it.

Let us learn to die like ones who are to live eternally; and to live as ones who die daily.

It would pay us to remember the example of John the Baptist in preaching—preaching his Master, not himself; he who comes after me is more than I.

Augustine desired three things—to see Rome in its glory, Paul in his pulpit, and Christ in the flesh. I would desire three things before I die—the destruction of AntiChrist, the kingly rule of Christ, and the binding of Satan.

The things of the world want to cling to us, and we to them.

It is impossible for us to cleave to Christ, and to desert His people. Ignorance is the devil's own college.

Some churches and their ministers are like wanton women with their husbands—they would rather see anybody else come home.

Generally, they who come to God's house on the Sabbath day only, finish by not coming on the Sabbath either.

If the meeting is hard, share the blame.

The last three weeks of Thomas Rees Davies' long and energetic preaching ministry was spent in Monmouthshire and Glamorgan-shire. The end came dramatically. On June 22nd, 1859, he preached his last sermon at the Association at Caersalem Newydd, Swansea, on the text *Hebrews* ii 3: "How can we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" He died the next morning at the house of the minister of Bethesda, Swansea, where, twenty-one years previously his great predecessor and hero, Christmas Evans had passed away. A most significant list of coincidences and likenesses in the careers of the two great preachers mentioned in Hughes' biography bears quotation at the centenary of the death of Thomas Rees Davies:

Two men (one twenty years after the other) born in the same part of the country, both taking up the same principles; called to the same work, both giants in stature, and much alike in gifts; both settling in North Wales; both returning to the South and spending the same number of years there; both returning to North Wales to finish their ministry; both dying on a journey in the South; both dying in the same town; after being ill in the same house; dying almost at the same age, and buried in the same grave.

For Welsh Baptists, that common grave at the entrance to Bethesda, Swansea, is no ordinary shrine.

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Reviews

Die Baptisten: Lehre, Praxis, Geschichte, by J. D. Hughey. (J. G. Oncken Verlag Kassel, n.p.)

In the last few years the German Baptist Publishing House in Kassel has shown its renewed vitality and enterprise by the issue of a number of attractively produced paper-backed volumes of pocket size dealing with Baptist and Anabaptist history. The latest to appear comes from the pen of Professor J. D. Hughey of the Ruschlikon Seminary, and has been translated into German by his colleague, Dr. Claus Meister. Based on lectures given at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey in 1957, it aims at providing a brief conspectus of the teaching practise and history of the Baptists.

Dr. Hughey's carefully documented study of the ebb and flow of religious liberty in Spain (published by the Carey Kingsgate Press in 1955) has established itself as an authoritative reference book. Of his gifts as a teacher and writer there can be no question. Moreover a volume of the kind before us is badly needed not only in the German tongue. It is, however, a more difficult task to give an accurate and balanced picture of the Baptist movement as a whole, than to follow the vagaries of successive Spanish governments—an almost impossible task if one has only eleven brief chapters at one's disposal. We have probably reached the point in Baptist history where an international historical commission must be set to work by the Baptist World Alliance or where any single author must be prepared to submit his manuscript to the scrutiny of Baptists of other lands before it is published. Dr. Robert Torbet found in 1950 that his *History of the Baptists*, though confined in the main to factual material and based on very wide reading, contained a number of points which needed correction. Though it has had a deservedly wide circulation it cannot be regarded as an altogether satisfactory record.

By and large Dr. Hughey may be said to have succeeded admirably in his quite different task. In the earlier chapters of his book he describes the nature of the Church, the rite of baptism, polity and ministry, evangelism and worship, as most Baptists see and practise these things. He frankly admits that not all Baptists believe

or act in the same way, but bases himself mainly on the expositions of Baptist principles by E. Y. Mullins and W. O. Carver.

There follows a group of historical chapters, one on our seven-teen century origins, one on epochs of British Baptist development, a parallel one on American Baptists, and finally one on our world wide fellowship. The last two chapters deal with Baptists and religious liberty and Baptists and the Ecumenical Movement. Useful appendices contain statistics; the confession of Faith and Constitution adopted by German Baptists in 1847 (McGlothlin gives an English translation of the 1908 edition of this document); and the important 1944 Confession of Faith of the Union of German Evangelical Free Churches (the Union embracing Baptists and Plymouth Brethren).

The references to Russian Baptists, based on an article in *The Fraternal* by Alexander Karev, are to be welcomed, but they make all the more regrettable the absence of information about Baptists in other "Iron Curtain" countries, in the lands of the British Commonwealth, and in parts of Africa like Angola. The brief references to the Baptist Union (p. 50) and the Baptist World Alliance (p. 113) are hardly adequate even in a work of this size, and it is particularly strange to find no mention of the relief work of the Alliance. The ruling of Dr. Tinsley at the Copenhagen Congress in 1947 regarding the World Council of Churches and the B.W.A. is given an unfortunate twist (p. 139). What was said, on the basis of the constitutions of both bodies, was that no directive to the Alliance or to member unions *either* for or against would be in order. But the special consultative relationship of world confessional bodies to the W.C.C. deserves mention, for the B.W.A. has rightly taken advantage of it.

It is hardly to be expected that the ill-fated Sierra Leone venture of the B.M.S. should have a place in these pages, but it must not be claimed that Baptist Missionary history in Africa begins with Lott Carey (p. 110). An English reader also finds it strange to see no mention of William Knibb and the Baptist part in the struggle against slavery. Was Oncken ever in America, as is asserted on (p. 57) and why refer, as is done on (p. 106), to the support he received from the United States, while ignoring the close connection of Britain with the beginnings of modern Baptist witness on the continent of Europe? To describe Clifford and Spurgeon as differing as the "night from the day" (p. 86) is to supply an unfortunate and misleading metaphor, however unlike they were.

But these are minor matters, which can easily be corrected in the next printing of this interesting book, which should be useful outside as well as within the denomination.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

The Gospels, Their Origin and Their Growth, by Frederick C. Grant. (Faber & Faber, 21s.)

There have not been lacking in recent years books giving brief accounts of the origin and nature of the Gospels; but the majority have tended to be popular, having in view, we suspect, more particularly the needs of teachers of divinity in schools. Here is a more extended treatment of the subject by a master in the field. It is well written and can be used alike by lay and theological students and ministers.

The reader is made to feel from the start the impact of form criticism on the study of the Gospels, though undue claims are not advanced on its behalf, since it is acknowledged that literary criticism is as much needed as ever. But the point is stressed that the Gospels are "social products", not simply individual creations, recording traditions of the many rather than the few. They are "Church books", i.e. "written by members of the church, for reading within the church, to meet the needs of the church; they both presupposed and also made use of the traditions, the ideas, the language, and the doctrines of the church"; hence they differ from the products of literary movements and schools of philosophy. In his persistent stress on the nature of the Gospels as creations of the Church, the writer could perhaps have mentioned the complementary point that the Church is itself the product of the Gospel in the Gospels; she is servant of the Gospel as well as giver of the Gospels, a not insignificant distinction to make in these days.

Much attention is paid to the Gospel of Mark. It is agreed that in the compilation of his book the evangelist used primitive Christian handbooks of apologetics, collections of scripture proof texts, of anti-Jewish polemics, of ethical counsels to disciples: "The facts of Marcan order and arrangement speak for themselves; and some hypothesis of this nature seems to be all but inevitable". The structure and contents of Mark and the sources used are fully treated; this section is perhaps the most valuable one in the book.

A cautious attachment to the Proto-Luke theory is advanced: "The most probable view is that L represents 'the contents of Luke's notebook', and that he had already amplified his 'copy' of Q by the addition of this L material before he began combining Q and Mark to form his first volume". The apologetic motive in Acts is traced in the third Gospel also, while the "we" passages are thought to reflect a careless lapse in recounting personal recollections rather than a written diary.

Matthew is held to reflect the conditions existing between the fall of the Temple and the revolt under Bar-Cochba, most particularly the period just prior to the latter event. The attempt to demon-

strate this date by the apocalypticism of Matthew is not very successful.

Without doubt Dr. Grant has left his giddiest wine till last, in his treatment of the Four Gospel. In his concern rightly to evaluate the Hellenistic elements in this Gospel he has unduly minimised the Hebraic. The Semitic 'tone' of the Gospel is said to be debatable, and it is affirmed, "No Palestinian Jewish writer could have produced this book. For it abandons not only the form and in large measure the dominant ideas of Jesus' own teaching, but also those of contemporary Judaism". The parallels adduced from the Qumran literature are regarded as a mere drop in the bucket compared with those from Hellenistic mysticism; Jesus here wears the garb of a Hellenistic mystagogue, being delineated not on the plane of history but in a "religious mystery drama brought down to earth and forced to make terms with a tradition—not extensive or exhaustive—of the kind that underlies the earlier Gospel of Mark". It does injustice to the author's treatment of the Fourth Gospel to summarise so briefly, but it is surprising at this date that an eminent scholar can so cavalierly dismiss the Jewish elements in the Fourth Gospel (the Gospel in which the Rabbinical scholar Israel Abrahams felt most at home) and so completely deny its author's interest in history.

That perhaps, indicates the necessity of the student to exercise his critical capacity to the full when reading this work and to compare its findings with those in other similar works. The author would doubtless approve so diligent a use of it! And the student will be well rewarded.

G. R. BEASLEY-MURRAY

The Amplified New Testament, Sixth American Edition, First British Edition. (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 25s.)

This work is commended by Billy Graham as 'the most wonderful translation' of the New Testament, and it is said to have had remarkable sales in the United States, where it has gone through six editions before appearing in this British edition. As its title indicates it is more than a translation. The area of meaning of a word in one language is rarely quite the same as the area of meaning of any one term in another language, and every translator must recognize this, and choose the word which will most nearly convey to his readers the impression intended by the writer. Many modern translators of the Bible have done this with great skill, though all are aware of the difficulties. In this edition of the New Testament two or three different words are frequently used to render one word in the effort to bring out all the fullness of meaning of the original:

By various signs the reader is warned when a word is being rendered more than once. Moreover, comments are frequently inserted into the text, where they cannot legitimately be regarded as in any sense translations of the Greek. The result is that we have the impression of the sort of running commentary with which some preachers intersperse the reading of the Scriptures. The author of this 'translation', F. E. Siewert, has used scholarly tools in the form of the best dictionaries, and has consulted many translations of the New Testament. He indicates in the footnotes where he has taken over a rendering from Luther or Calvin or some other commentator or translator, so that a great deal of information is packed into this work. It is in many respects praiseworthy. Nevertheless, it makes a curious impression on the reader, as a few examples may make clear.

John i:9 is rendered: 'There it was; the true Light [was then] coming into the world—the genuine, perfect, steadfast Light—that illumines every person.' Here the parenthesis supplies the sort of comment that any intelligent reader could supply for himself, and the rendering lacks the grace of the Revised Standard Version, 'The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world', which really says all that this clumsy version says. Or again, *John* xv:2: 'Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit—that stops bearing—He cuts away (trims off, takes away). And He cleanses *and* repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit, to make it bear more *and* richer *and* more excellent fruit'. The additional verbiage here contributes nothing to the simply clarity of the verse. Translation and comment are interwoven in *Rom.* viii:3: 'For God has done what the Law could not do [its power] being weakened by the flesh [that is, the entire nature of man without the Holy Spirit]. Sending His own Son in the guise of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin [God] condemned sin in the flesh—subdued, overcame, deprived it of its power [over all who accept that sacrifice].' How many readers would fail to understand *Phil.* ii:4 f. without the expansions: 'Let each of you esteem *and* look upon *and* be concerned for not [merely] his own interests, but also each for the interests of others. Let this same attitude *and* purpose *and* [humble] mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus—Let Him be your example in humility'? The simple beauty of *Rev.* vii:5 gains little from the rendering: 'For this reason they are [now] before the [very] throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His (temple) sanctuary; and He Who is sitting upon the throne will protect *and* spread His tabernacle over *and* shelter them with His presence.'

Many more examples might be given, but these will suffice to indicate the method here used. Some of the additions are need-

less expansions; some are useful comments which would more appropriately be given at the foot of the page as comments. Every translation is an interpretation, and must in a sense be a commentary. Yet every translator should be careful to keep as separate as possible translation and commentary. Hence while the reviewer would not harshly dismiss Mr. Siewert's work, and appreciates his endeavour to make the meaning of the New Testament clear, he frequently feels that it achieves the effect of painting the lily.

H. H. ROWLEY

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent review)

FROM the Independent Press

N. Micklem, *You Ought to be a Christian*. 15 pp., 8d.

McEwan Lawson, *African Portraits*. 47 pp., 5s.

John Murray, *The Call and the Work Overseas*. 22 pp. 1s. 6d.

H. Harold Kent, *An Architect Preaches*. 205 pp., 10s. 6d.

Albert D. Belden, *More Tales Worth Telling*. 158 pp., 8s. 6d.

A. E. Gould, *I Couldn't Care Less*. 15 pp., 1s. 3d.

William W. Simpson, *Some Festivals Jesus Celebrated*. 20 pp., 1s. 3d.

Howard S. Stanley, *A Recipe for a Merry Christmas*. 31 pp., 1s. 6d.

Shorter Congregational Praise. 161 hymns, 3s. 6d.

W. E. Sargent, *The Psychology of Marriage and the Family Life*. 125 pp., 8s. 6d.

Truman B. Douglass, *Preaching and the New Reformation*. 137 pp. 9s. 6d.

Every Person Canvas. 24 pp. 2s.

Harold E. Berry, *On Parade*. 65 pp. 6s.

Robert Duce, *God in Great Britain*. 17 pp. 1s. 6d.

Joyce Reason, *Magnificat*. 19 pp. 1s. 6d.

Albert D. Belden, *The Sacrament of Marriage*. 7 pp. 6d.

H. Lakeman, *Any Questions, Please?* 24 pp., 9d.

C. H. Dodd, *The Leader: a vivid portrayal of the last years of the life of Jesus*. 19 pp., 9d.

A. E. Gould, *Tiresome Types*. 15 pp., 1s. 3d.

Douglas Stewart, *The Broad Way and the Narrow Way*. 16 pp., 1s. 3d.

John Huxtable, *The Promise of the Father*. 96 pp., 6s.

Leonard Woodley, *The Man who Missed the Queen*. 69 pp., 5s.

John B. Nettleship, *Come As You Are*. 99 pp., 7s.

- Bernard Lord Manning, *Why Not Abandon the Church?* 88 pp., 6s. 6d.
 K. R. Matthews, *The Church Youth Club*. 127 pp., 6s.
 R. G. Martin, *At the Sign of the Scarlet Thread*. 129 pp. 7s. 6d.
 Martin Southwood, *John Howard*. 144 pp., 9s. 6d.
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 Alice M. Pullen, *Stories Jesus Loved*. 127 pp., 6s.
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 John B. Nettleship, *Tend the Flock of God*. 98 pp., 9s.

FROM Marshall, Morgan and Scott

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 William Culbertson, *God's Provision for Holy Living*. 112 pp., 8s. 6d.
 F. J. Huegel, *John Looks At The Cross*. 126 pp., 8s. 6d.
 William J. Schnell, *Thirty Years a Watch Tower Slave*. 207 pp., 12s. 6d.
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 Archibald Hughes, *A New Heaven and a New Earth*. 233 pp., 17s. 6d.
 Arthur W. Kac, *The Rebirth of the State of Israel*. 387 pp., 20s.
 G. B. A. Gerdener, *Recent Developments in the South African Mission Field*. 286 pp., 18s. 6d.

FROM Oxford University Press

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 Norman C. Hunt, *Sir Robert Walpole, Samuel Holder and the Dissenting Deputies*. 31 pp., 4s.
 W. R. Matthews, *The Religious Philosophy of Dean Mansel*. 23 pp., 3s. 6d.
Scottish School Hymnary. 132 pp., 3s.
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 Arnold J. Toynbee, *Hellenism: the History of a Civilisation*. 255 pp., 7s. 6d.
Let Us Pray. 95 pp. 8s. 6d.

FROM Skew Miller, Capetown

- "Alkie", *An Alcoholic's Story*. 156 pp., 10s. 6d.

FROM Review and Herald, Washington

Seventh Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine. 720 pp., no price.

FROM American Sabbath Tract Society, Plainfield, N.J.
Seventh Day Baptist Year Book. 249 pp., \$1.50.

FROM George Allen & Unwin

Jeannie B. Thomson Davies, *The Heart of the Bible.* 784 pp., 15s.

Bertrand Russell, *ABC of Relativity,* 139 pp., 15s.

Edmund W. Sinnott, *Matter, Mind and Man.* 196 pp., 18s.

W. E. Hocking, *The Coming World Civilisation.* 210 pp., 16s.

Errol E. Harris, *Revelation Through Reason.* 123 pp., 15s.

T. R. Miles, *Religion and the Scientific Outlook.* 224 pp., 21s.

W. Mays, *The Philosophy of Whitehead.* 259 pp., 25s.

William F. Zuurdeeg, *An Analytical Philosophy of Religion.* 320 pp., 30s.

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Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Christian Pacifism in History.* 84 pp., 10s. 6d.

FROM Carey Kingsgate Press

J. P. Hickerton, *Caribbean Kallaloo.* 99 pp., 4s. 6d.

Hubert V. Little, *The Gospel in Shakespeare.* 43 pp., 3s. 6d.

Alan Gibson, *The Ministry of Song.* 100 pp., 6s.

FROM Convention Press, Nashville, Tennessee

Pope A. Duncan, *Our Baptist Story.* 149 pp., no price.

FROM Faber & Faber

Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Godly and the Ungodly.* 150 pp., 21s.