

THE FRATERNAL.

The Editor will be glad to have the offer of short papers on matters of interest to men in the ministry, and also brief communications in the form of correspondence. The latter must be really brief and to the point. Short reports from county and other fraternal will be especially welcome.

Vol. III., No. 6.

JUNE, 1909.

Mr. Medley.

EXTRACTS FROM A MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

(BY ONE WHO KNEW HIM.)

. . . In some sort was not the word *simplicity* the keynote of his life? "If thine eye be simple"—he had learnt that saying of the Master, had translated it into habit, and had obtained the promise, "thy whole body shall be full of light." He had in a rare measure the "heart that watches and receives." It followed that simple things spoke deep truths to him, and through him to us: he showed us that the best in life lies close to our hand, that the eternal runs like a thread of gold through all the common things of time.

To give two examples of what was habitual. He is speaking of St. Matthew's Gospel, the Gospel of the words of Jesus, in the characteristic quality of its revelation of the Personality which lies behind the four—revelation by speech. Listen to his illustration. "There has been a plant in my garden all the winter; I knew not what it was; it had been mute, a mere expressionless stem. One day this last April I looked and lo, a leaf on the bare stalk; a dainty palm outstretched. The plant had expressed itself, had spoken, and I knew the language, and understand its nature now."

Again: there is a commonplace bit of road between "The Nook" and the College. How he loved it! With what voices of God did it become vocal as he paced it slowly to and from his work here! In one of his "Angus Lectures" he is expounding what to him

was the central idea of the Christian religion, fellowship of spirit with spirit. "It can be shown, I think," he writes, "that it is in fellowship that life, through all its vast hierarchy of being, from lowest to highest, has its significance." And then, seeming to say to himself, "How shall we liken this great truth?" he turns for his parable to that familiar stretch of road. "Let some wanton hand"—and one who heard remembers well the startling thrill of indignation thrown into that word "wanton," and the spoken aside, "How it makes one's blood boil to think of it!"—"Let some wanton hand tear that clump of sweet violets from its nestling-place in the hedgerow, and fling it out into the way. In a few hours you pick it up and say it is dead. What did it die of? The answer is plain and most significant. It died because that fellowship was ruptured which is at once the equivalent and interpretation of Life. It lived by communion: it dies when the communion is broken . . . Fellowship is Life."

It was this cultivated gift of spiritual insight, by which he saw into the heart of things, that gave to his teaching so much of its charm and power. His mind was possessed by the conviction, the certainty, that no material with which the student has to deal is alien from the highest; that from each single point on the vast circumference of knowledge there runs the line to the one centre, which is God. It is the centre which gives its meaning and its unity to the whole. How he loved to trace those lines! Give him the most unpromising material—Greek Grammar, Formal Logic, in the early days of his teaching, I believe, even Mathematics (though in this last particular he used in after days laughingly to confess that he had fallen from grace), it did not matter what it was—in his hands it became, not by what he brought to it but by what he found in it, a revelation of the unseen and eternal.

Facts were nothing to him till they had been interpreted into *truth*, and *truth* translated into its imperative, *duty*, and truth and duty carried up to their source, and seen as twin revelations of the *glory of*

God. He recreated for us the most familiar words and clothed them with undreamed-of splendour—truth, duty, life, light, fellowship, love. And so it is come to pass that the ministry which remains faithful to the impulses quickened by Mr. Medley is for ever delivered from the deadening tyranny of the commonplace and customary, and has learnt to find in what is simplest a veritable apocalypse of God.

Closely allied to this simplicity of nature was his *joyousness*, not effusive, but quietly pervading all his days. His own sorrows and his wonderful sympathy with the sorrows of others left him still the happiest of men. No one ever enjoyed life more. He had that delicate sense of humour which is the sign of a mind master of itself and at peace with the world; the darker problems of life have ceased to fret or jar, though they have not ceased to be. A store of fun lay close beneath the surface, always ready to bubble up, even in delightful nonsense. His laughter was so natural and so pure that, as talk went on, he would lead you, with no sense of incongruity, from moments of unrestrained merriment to immediate communion on the "deep things of God."

. . . To this transparent simplicity of soul was due perhaps, in large measure, the wonderful power he possessed of access into other lives. One might reverently use of him St. Paul's word describing his relation to his Lord: "I was apprehended by Christ Jesus." Mr. Medley apprehended men, laid hold of them, found entrance into their lives, and held his place with a gracious insistence one has hardly seen equalled. We students of his know it best. He was baffled by no diversities, imperfections, angularities of student nature; nothing could keep him out of our lives but lack of earnestness and sincerity. "I cannot trust him" was his one sad sentence of exclusion.

In this *fellowship* was his chiefest delight: he found it wherever he went. In the most unlikely natures he would discover some point of contact, and with sympathetic touch would elicit the best, and use

it for fuller communion. He had homes all over England. One has often listened with amazement as he has talked of one and another of his "boys," their homes and wives and children, the joys and difficulties of their ministries, all with that intimate knowledge and affection which most of us must be content to limit to the chosen few. He would *make* you talk about yourself, would ask about your life in all the range of its interests as if he *must* know all you could tell him, and so he brought to countless needs, often unconfessed until his sympathy compelled, the help of a warm and understanding heart.

This was the more striking because he himself lived apart from many of the activities of thought and practical affairs in which some of us are eagerly engaged. A characteristic sentence from a letter written during sojourn in a West-country village will be well understood by those who knew him: "It is a curious little world of its own: the rage for meetings affects us even here, and now that the village boasts a Jubilee Hall, there is new scope for its satisfaction. *I cannot say that I go to them.*" No, he did not go to meetings if he could help it, and from many of the feverish interests of life, denominational, social, political, he was a recluse. He knew himself, and had the courage to choose and keep to his own path, under the good guiding of God, and to our great gain. But in eager knowledge of others' ways, in sympathy and help, he was never a recluse. . . .

S. W. G.

THE PROPHET-MARTYR.*

For any date between 1900 B.C. and 1900 A.D.

Here's a Prophet! let us *stone* him;
Or his words will seal our doom.

100 years after.

Here's a Holy Martyr! own him;
With *these stones* adorn his tomb!

V.D.M.

* Cf. Matthew xxiii. 29-31, and any religious history, ancient or modern, *in loc.*

Counsels to Clement.

Dear Clement,

As I had seen you for an hour a fortnight ago, I was not surprised at the contents of your letter of yesterday, and I write now in haste to beg you not to send a single letter that you can withhold to any single soul, for the next month. Write as many as you like, and post them in some capacious box in your own house. Read them in twelve months time, and you will look in the looking-glass and say "Raca," without being in any danger of the judgment.

I have read with very great carefulness your story of the doings of your Men's Meeting, and followed your forcible and withering statement of your case against their committee. You have entirely won my sympathy—for your committee.—I should rather say for their widows, for by this time they have probably hanged themselves; your last communication to them left them no other option save one perhaps; but as you are still able to write letters, apparently they have not exercised it.

But I saw you a fortnight ago, and am not surprised. As a matter of fact, you did not conduct that business with your committee, it was your body, not your mind and heart, which entered on such a grim sort of game. Your body, which you had been obviously neglecting when I saw you, having had enough of such shabby neglect, felt like the poor actor with the one-line part, who angry with his subordinate position, added lines of his own and spoiled the play. So when I read your forcible statement that you are "not going to stand it," I know that voice. Some would call it autocratic. To be both accurate and polite I should rather call it hepatic.

When I saw you at the time I have named, you were ill-rested and ill-fed. Ill-rested because of badly planned work; ill-fed, not because of poverty, but for lack of a fair understanding with your own body,

and a reasonable theory of diet. As you were a few weeks back, I would not have hired you to navigate a barge down Thames, even if you had a Cunard captain's reputation. That which St. Francis called "Brother Body" has not had brotherly treatment from you, and it was he who, in revenge (for he is not a Christian) floored your committee and danced on their prostrate forms—metaphorically, of course.

So much for the diagnosis. Now for the cure. Patience is in this case a virtue, but not resignation—either your's or the committee's. Have an understanding with Brother Body first of all; it must be in the nature of a compromise, for Brother Body is a power to be reckoned with. Give him his due measure of rest, or if he is a sluggish animal, as he often is, make him do his fair share of activity. Do not concede too much to him, but never think that you can ignore him. A wise medical man would probably be of more use to you just now, than a whole library of divinity. No rash or heroic methods are necessary, but patient, watchful training is as essential to you as it is to a jockey, and the race which you may lose for lack of it, is infinitely more important than his. Self-respect and peace of mind are among its prizes.

You will think it callously unfriendly if I do not tell you what I think of your committee. Would it relieve your feelings if I called them benighted blunderers, or some such term, dear to the furs of a restive liver. I will do so; they are most foolish men, but even so they need your ministry. If they were all wise and saintly you might safely return to business to-morrow.

One other word! Over the desk of one of England's most famous Head-masters, used to hang the following strange "text,"

"LEAST SAID, SOONEST MENDED!"

"NEVER WRITE!"

these are counsels of perfection of course, especially the latter; but there is a world of truth even in that.

I would add a third motto for you, Clement; never mistake a touchy liver for a virtuous indignation.

If you must explode at someone during the next month, let it be at me. It will add spice to my morning letters, and I haven't a vote in your church meeting.

Yours fraternally,

BENEDICT.

Some Jottings.

About the Scheme This has been the main thought in the minds of ministers since the meetings. North and South, East and West, the same question is asked, "What do you think of it?" "Of what?" "Of the Scheme, of course!"

For once there is a unanimity of subject which reveals after all by its prevalence, the universality of interest which a common need has awakened.

We have not talked much about it in the "Fraternal." Here, we can be frank and fearless, and here we are not liable to be misunderstood when we speak plainly.

* * * *

For myself, I support it strongly, and I do that both from the standpoint of the minister, and of the church. In the case of the church, the supreme consideration in all our work, my conviction is that there will be such a spiritual uplift as will bring great joy to all of us.

The essential part of the Scheme is, of course, the clause that provides for the testing of the feeling of the church after a period "not exceeding seven years." In this clause, probably the minister has to make a sacrifice. I have much sympathy with those who are conscious that it will create a feeling of unrest that may not be wholesome. But to many a church, to write frankly, brothers, such a provision will be a great boon. Many a church is looking for

an opportunity to end, as kindly as possible, a relationship that has become burdensome, and may become painful. Alas, in some cases our churches do not wait as long as they ought, and resort, as a consequence to the only methods left to them, methods that are brutal in operation.

* * * *

I know a church, the officers of which recently forced a resolution to the notice of its minister—a gentleman of high standing and great power in the ministry—that in their opinion no success could attend his ministry among them. A devout man had but one course open to him. He resigned. But now there is no Scheme, and what is the result in so far as he is concerned? He has to begin that painful, humiliating search for another church; to go the dreary round of the vacancies in so far as they will give him opportunity, and with but little hope, for he is “over forty.”

Now if the scheme were in operation, the vote of the church would be taken at the conclusion of a period. The real feeling of the church and not merely of the officers, would be gauged. If the church desired him to change, then he could accept the finding, conscious that the voice of God spake through His people. The church would be free too, for the finding of the fitting man to succeed him, aided by an authorised and efficient means of introduction to the men available.

* * * *

What would the effect be on the minister? Instead of having to eat his heart out in the agony of uncertainty, trying to get supplies to make a bare living—the hateful thought of money obtruding itself to colour his decisions when a choice of places comes, he would be able calmly to face the future, knowing that in the operation of the Scheme, introductions to churches in the Voluntary Union were bound to come, and provision was certain—at least, for a time.

Brothers, I vote for the Scheme.

T.

From under Vine and Fig Tree.

When the Editor asked me to write a short paper or two for "The Fraternal," I asked myself how a man, sitting at his ease under his own vine and fig tree, both trees fruitful last year and showing fair promise this year, could say anything at all likely to be helpful to brethren toiling hard in fields of discouragement. Memory might help the man, if he could recall to mind arduous early days when body and brain were weary, even to sickness, from day to day and month to month; when his best words and work seemed thrown away and hidden from sight, like buried seed slow to appear; and yet growing even then though he knew it not.

It is said that hundreds of our brethren are toiling in this fashion to-day, and suffering greatly. Who would not whisper a word of hope to such a brother and his good wife? To will is present; but how to perform? I have no word to say, here and now, to men who see all things prosper around them. I write for the discouraged. For men who long for a change of pastorate and see but little hope of it. *What comfort is there for these men, and what can they do?*

While help tarries is it nothing to know that ten thousand hearts sympathise with the sufferers; and that a thousand busy brains are searching for methods to lessen friction and increase power, so that more ministers and churches may be mutually suited to each other, and work together with more hope and harmony? There are multitudes of busy, happy churches in our land. Can we do, or leave undone, as a denomination, anything that will tend to increase their number and lessen discomfort and unrest? Who would not thank God with a glad heart if such a way were found? It would bring joy to many a manse, and fruitfulness to many a barren church. Is it possible to frame a scheme acceptable, and plainly serviceable, to the great majority of our Baptist churches and ministers throughout the three kingdoms? Will the scheme now before our associations and churches for discussion unite and otherwise serve us, or can it be made to do so? Every advocate and every critic may help us, by clear thought and courteous

speech, to see what will and what will not do, and bring us to unity in theory and practice. If proposed changes are shown to subvert sound principles and to divide the brotherhood, they will be abandoned; but if it be possible to amend our methods of training, appointing and supporting our ministers, not to amend them is folly and sin. The best possible scheme will leave much to desire, and may create new difficulties, but that is no reason for despair. Our quest is for the best; and the men who long for another field of service and are hardest pressed may take this comfort, that questions discussed for a generation, as many of us can remember, are now deliberately and formally brought up for discussion by the whole denomination. Whatever the fate of this scheme, Mr. Shakespeare's diligence, persistence, open-mindedness, constructive skill and lucid exposition, make us all his debtors. Even if successful the scheme may ripen slowly. The seed is sown; but the best tree takes time to show fruit; and good fruit may ripen slowly. I know a boy who buried a cherry stone in the garden one evening, and rose early the next morning expecting to see a tall tree with ripe cherries on it. Needless to say the boy was very young. We, as husbandmen, know the need of long patience for good fruit in both the realms of nature and grace.

But while the vision carries men called of God to the ministry are glad, in their sorest straits, to know that the Father deals with them as with sons, and has neither forgotten nor forsaken them; and they may surely find comfort also in this brotherly solicitude of the whole denomination for them, and in this prayerful searching after "the mind of Christ." For "to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."

Meanwhile is there nothing that even a discouraged man might do to make things better? What if we became better men? By better I mean here fitter for our work. To become better workmen is worth while, and would tell on our work at once. How shall we begin?

SAMUEL VINCENT.

A propensity to hope and joy is real riches; one to fear and sorrow, real poverty.

Correspondence.

Dear Mr. Editor,

Mr. Ambrose says :—"The primary significance of eternal life is quality, not quantity ; it is an immortality of blessedness, not merely extension of being."

As far as I know, I do not think any who hold what are called "Life in Christ" views, argue that eternal life means mere extension of being, they believe that the life which God gives to redeemed men, through our Lord Jesus Christ, will be both holy and happy, it will be "Life indeed," as embracing the full development of faculties, perfect physical and moral health, perfect environment, congenial and delightful duties, perfect loving relationship, the absence of all pain, temptation, sorrow, disease. and death ; but nevertheless life, in the sense of existence, remains as the condition and basis of all ; holiness and happiness are attributes or qualities of life, but they are not life itself—Life is the canvas which they beautify and adorn.

Grimm gives the primary meaning of *Zoe* as : "Life, *i.e.*, the state of one who is possessed of vitality or is animate," and it is no doubt used as meaning animate existence in the New Testament.

Trench says : "The true antithesis of *Zoe* is *Thanatos*—*Zoe* is life intensive, *Bios* is life *extensive*, the period or duration of life ; so soon as a moral sentiment is introduced, and life is contemplated as the opportunity for living nobly or otherwise, the antithesis is not between *Thanatos* and *Zoe*, but *Thanatos* and *Bios*.

And though in the end of his article on *Zoe* and *Bios*, he admits that Christ's gift of *Zoe* assumes the profoundest moral significance, and becomes the expression for the very highest blessedness, so that of that whereof you predicate absolute *Zoe*. you predicate of the same absolute holiness ; it is for the reason given—that sin and death are always associated in the mind of God, and holiness with life.

Eternal life, in the sense of endless animate existence, is that which is offered to men in the Gospel ; but it is, of course, admitted that this gift carries with it in the mind of

God the highest happiness, blessedness, and holiness of the redeemed. There is no other *life* but this in the mind of God ; but does it not follow that there can be no eternal life of any kind for evil and impenitent men.

Yours sincerely,

The Manse,

Gunnersbury, W.

H. B. MURRAY.

A Romance of the Country Pastorate.

An Anniversary Service was arranged for mid-week in North Wales. I arrived with my companion on Wednesday afternoon with the mail-car of the district. I enquired of a little girl on the road, "Where does the Baptist Minister reside here?" The little dear climbed the hedge to point to us a lonely little farm house in the middle of the fields. I should add that the land surrounding it was let at a good rent as "accommodation land" for some village "meat purveyor." We walked slowly towards the humble dwelling meditating as we went how these noble men "hold the fort" in out-of-the-way rural districts, without any library within reach, scarcely knowing the meaning of the word "Fraternal," only weekly newspapers reach the place, the whirl of the great world of modern commerce is, to them, in the dim distance, and without the inspiration and the comfort of meeting brethren in the ministry but seldom. We arrived at the door, the devoted pastor met us with a cordial welcome, and the good wife was profuse in her apologies at the humble character of their dwelling and its surroundings. However we were all of us at ease on that point in ten minutes.

A cup of tea, and new-laid egg, and home made Welsh bread satisfied us in the clean little apartment. We found out that the devoted companion of this man of God had a small annuity of about 15s a month, and that the house rent, with plenty of liberty for fowl-farming, was £4 a year and that kind providence had denied them any children to care for out of such small and meagre wage, which we found to amount to about £2 1cs. a month, sometimes to £3. The district was very thinly populated, and many of the

younger generation leaving annually for the industrial centres. One church (small one) with two chapels about two to three miles apart. One of them years ago was in a delapidated condition with a door that allowed the entrance of a barn fowl to lay an egg there under one of the seats, and when a popular preacher in Wales approached, came out from under the door cackling triumphantly, intimating that the chapel visitor had left a fresh nest-egg behind in the Lord's House, and when they had some fun over it with the old lady that lived in the house attached to the little chapel, she said "yes, that egg shall be sold and the penny gained from it shall be returned to the Lord's work." And the smile became metamorphosed into a tear.

As we were there early in the day we tried to get to know of any books—new books—he had read lately. No, he deftly managed the talk to other grooves. He could not afford it. We noticed his clothes they were thread-bare. We asked for the current magazines and denominational papers—sometimes he had a bundle from the town pastor 20 miles away. We noticed the wife's clothes were all very good in material, but old-fashioned and well-worn. He said that he wanted to go to the village, two miles away, before the service and we both of us insisted on accompanying him, but he was not willing. However we prevailed. Reaching the village he made many efforts to send us *sight-seeing*, but we were gathering facts and declined to move from his side. At last he went to a shop, bought *two good candles* and a little lamp-oil which he carefully wrapped and carried in his clerical frock-coat pocket. Then I understood the pathos of it, and I looked for my handkerchief for my eyes were moist and my heart and head in a whirl—looking at the country pastor preparing for the first service of the Anniversary. What can he do—with energy and inspiration—when he is dragged down by such surroundings and has but scant enough to keep body and soul together without any idea of comfort and competence. No new books, no magazines, no visit to the Baptist Union—he may reach the Association Meeting on foot often. The wife in early days had been a trusted servant in high families; such a change for her—the larder of the squirearchy to the simple cupboard of the rural pastor. He a college-trained man

with very respectable family connections and a spotless character, and of a shy and diffident demeanour, working quietly in this remote corner of the vineyard. Is the Scheme needed? Yes. This passage from real life I offer as a contribution to the consideration of the Scheme referred to by "Quartus" in the May issue. D.T.C.R.

Whether they hail from Rawdon or not, many members of our fraternity will be glad to have the further appreciation of William Medley, which this number contains. It is late in appearing, unfortunately; but there have been among us in the past, a few men at least, concerning whom it would do us good to hear again from time to time. The months which have elapsed since Mr. Medley's death have not robbed his life of its value even to those who only knew him by name.

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Our brotherhood has again lost one of its members, Ernest Edward Tippet, of Totnes, by cycle accident, and a young career has been cut short, as it seems, prematurely. Our sympathies go out to those who will miss him and mourn for him. The accident has its practical warning for all the brethren who cycle in their work. Defective brake-power again!

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Our next number will be made to serve the purposes of the two holiday months and will be issued on July 20th for July and August. The Editor will be glad for once to have only one brick to make but with two lots of straw.

Secretary's Notes.

BOOK FUND.

Deposits received in May :—No. 19, 5/-; 34, 5/-; 39, 6/-; 52, 5/-; 53, 5/-; 54, 2/6. Total, £1 8s. 6d.

MEMBERSHIP

The following new Members have enrolled :—

GREENWOOD, Herbert Melchor, 73 Mayow Rd., Sydenham, S.E.
SMITH, Frank Herbert, 44 Richmond Road, Ilford, Essex.

“THE FRATERNAL.”—Only 16 names have had to be struck off the list of subscribers this month. There are still some brethren who have subscribed for “The Fraternal” for the next month or two whose Membership subscriptions remain unpaid.

YEAR BOOK.—The Secretary is making his plans for this. One alteration, which it is hoped will add to the interest and usefulness of the Year Book, will be in the form of the List of Members. In last year's this was in alphabetical order. It is proposed this year to arrange it in counties, so that members may see at a glance the personnel of the B.M.F.U. in their own counties. This will assist in the convening of conferences, etc. The Secretary would be glad to add to the counties the names and addresses of County Fraternal Secretaries, where there are any, and where they are also willing to act as conveners and “consuls” for the B.M.F.U. Where there are no such county secretaries, the Secretary would be glad to have offers of service from brethren who would be willing to act as conveners. The organisation of the B.M.F.U. in counties should lead to the wide adoption of the plan to some extent worked in the past by the Prayer Union—the holding of Devotional Gatherings in connection with Association district meetings. It will also help in the organisation of the Mutual Benefit Fund and Book Fund. The success of this proposal will largely depend upon the interest of our members. Up to the present we have been chiefly engaged in the effort to secure a larger membership and the awakening of a fraternal consciousness. Now we must all seek to make the Fraternal Union more helpful to all its members. The Secretary would be glad of suggestions from members for the improvement of the Year Book, and the increase of our usefulness generally. Hitherto suggestions have been mostly in the direction of the Baptist Union Scheme of Ministerial Settlements. No action has been taken, because it was felt that the need would be met by the scheme. Now we have the scheme before us, we may well consider how it affects our life work; and, if it be adopted, how we can help to make it a success. Perhaps something can be done in the direction of introduction of Brethren to vacant churches. The present “system,” by which the secretaries of vacant

churches are inundated with appeals for opportunities to "supply," is hardly worthy of the sacred calling of the ministry; its influence is bad on the ministers and on the churches.

One difficulty in recommendation is that we seldom hear one another preach. We are judged by the churches mainly by our preaching ability, yet this is just what we are most ignorant of in one another. The quiet man who talks very little and makes no boasts, may be a Chrysostom in the pulpit; and *vice versa*. Few men are at their best when they preach "with a view." It is when we are conscious of a message from God, and think nothing at all of our own interests or the good opinion of our hearers, that we are at our best. It is quite possible that the message a man hates to hear may ultimately become a greater influence for good than that which charms his soul. We are not always most *effective* when we are most enjoyed.

B.V.B.

Memoranda.

(i.) Baptist Ministers' Fraternal Union MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS became due on January 1st. These, together with the subscription for "The Fraternal," 2/6 in all (minimum), should be sent to the Hon. Secretary:

B. VERNON BIRD, "STRUAN," STEVENAGE,

to whom also should be addressed applications for benefits of the Benevolent Section of the BOOK FUND, or Membership in the Mutual Benefit Fund; and all general correspondence.

(ii.) Enquiries *re* Books, Orders, and Deposits for the BOOK FUND should be addressed to: The Secretary B.M.F.U. Book Fund, 4, Southampton Row, W.C.

(iii.) MUTUAL BENEFIT FUND SUBSCRIPTIONS are payable in advance, and become due on the first day of each quarter; they should be made payable to "The Treasurer of the B.M. Mutual Benefit Fund," crossed ——— & Co., and sent to the Rev. J. H. French, 86, Hampton Road, Forest Gate, E.

The first subscription should not be sent till a member has received notice of the acceptance of his application, and of the amount of his subscription.