

The Fraternal.

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EDITORIAL NOTE.

FOR the consideration of the brethren in some of the leisure of August days, we have to offer in this issue, two papers which were read with great acceptance at an East Midland Assembly, together with a consideration of one of the most important practical themes, viz: the resources of men in their retirement. These and the first part of a thought provoking paper on Physical Science, will provide light reading for light evenings. Answers to the questions concerning Interdenominational action, are coming in, and will be printed as far as possible together, in a subsequent number.

In our next issue we hope to be able to offer some competent notes on recent publications of reasonable price, in various departments of religious knowledge.

THE MINISTER'S DEVOTIONAL LIFE.

IN one sense the minister's devotional life is like that of every other disciple. For prayer is every man's means of coming into contact with the divine realities, of developing his spiritual sensitiveness and vitality. Yet always with this difference, that a minister's prayer life is essentially vicarious. Others are helped if it is strong; others lose if his outlook becomes secularised.

As to methods and habits of prayer, it is enough to say that they should be often reviewed. We are apt to fall into a certain dull content with ways that are habitual, especially when the habits have a hue of sanctity over them. We are always balanced on a knife-edge, between the comfort and quiet satisfaction which habit gives, and that unreality which haunts it like a shadow.

With regard to the use of aids to devotion, it is well to make a distinction between those books which discuss prayer in general and tell us how we ought to pray, and the great classic prayers and books of self-revelation which show us other men at prayer. I do not believe in much reading of books on prayer. It is possible to lose the zest for prayer in the keenness to find out how it works; to come to feel that the study of the subject of prayer is prayer.

Books of the other type—the great prayers of the Church and of great Christians—are a valuable revelation to us of the range of Christian experience, and a study of them will help to lift us out of our narrow limits. A similar benefit can be gained from books of spiritual self-revelation. They are full of reminders of the struggles through which the Church has passed, and through which men have passed, in the strength of Christ; they show us the wide range of character and piety which owes its inspiration to Him. Yet they are not substitutes for our personal prayer. All these belong to the Holy Place; the Holy of Holies we must enter alone.

In a minister's prayer, a great place must be given to intercession for our people and for the unshepherded men and women about us. General Gordon used to say that it made a great difference, when he met a man for the first time, if he had prayed for him. It often makes a difference *after* the first time, and sometimes it is more necessary. One of the best notes in Bishop Ridding's *Litany of Remembrance* is its recognition of our need of pardon for our inadequacy in handling men. Moreover, it will always be easier to get people to pray with us in the sanctuary if we regularly pray for them in the oratory. There are two or three pages near the end of Dale's *Lectures on Preaching* which every minister ought to read again and again. They show most excellently the more excellent way.

We ought to take to God also the very details of our work. We should admit no limit to our right to ask help and guidance on every matter of life and duty. Some of us have allowed our ignorance of the limits of natural law, or our belief that we knew the limits which the divine freedom had set upon itself, to set bounds to our communion with God. I for one have had to learn to refuse to allow my philosophy to circumscribe my prayer. I do not know how God gets within these apparently closed circles of cause and effect, any more than I know how my own thought

gets to work among the mechanical controls of my circulation, so that one word calls up a flush of anger and another depresses the pulse. But we have been cowed by materialism long enough. I do not contend that prayer, the prayer of faith, is always destined to get what it wants; such a course of treatment would teach us faith in our prayer rather than faith in our God. But I do contend that we ought to take counsel about all things with God. As James Smetham puts it, if we are believers, we are perfectly understood. Christ "takes the old woman's view of things by the wash-tub, and has a great interest in soap-powder . . . But He never plays the lawyer or the philosopher or the artist to the old women. He is above that littleness." Such a faith is the only one on which can be based that kind of prayer which leads us into ever-deepening understanding of Him who perfectly understands. If God's gracious dealing with us is restricted and excluded from any aspect of life, we should never know where next it might fail, says Dr. Oman. "The test of a true faith is the extent to which its religion is secular, the extent to which its special religious experiences are tested by the experiences of every day." This is a line of exploration in which we ought to venture more.

A great function of our prayer is to render us "perfect and fully assured in all the will of God." There are many pressing problems on which we must seek His guidance. We are in the ministry to secure the doing of God's Will on earth as it is in heaven; and it is not an easy thing to find that Will. Let me give what I hope will prove a non-contentious illustration to show what I mean. The mind of the day has been greatly influenced by Christian Science, faith-healing, the teaching of the Guild of Health and other similar movements. We are surrounded by currents of thought and feeling which predispose men to the idea that the Church is at fault because it is not able as a regular thing to exercise the gift of spiritual healing. It is a characteristic of the age that it dreads and shrinks from pain. We ourselves are the children of our age, and are affected by its mood and outlook. But this is not a matter to be settled by sentiment or even by sympathy. Is pain so allied with sin that it ought not to be, or does it in the wisdom of God serve such a purpose that we are disabled from saying it is contrary to His will? In so large a question, I distrust the easy solutions of the enthusiast and the special-pleader. I require a world-view as

the basis of my prayer. I have read a book which made great play with the iniquity of calling death by lightning "an act of God." But is life so simple as the writer supposes? Is even the love of God so obviously simple? Lightning, like the rain, descends on evil and good alike; may not these conditions within which our life is set refuse to be explained away as contrary to His will? I am not hostile to such enquiry and study as is being made round about us; but we have to point out that quick thinking cannot make any real contribution to the problem. When we speak the will of God, we must get back to first principles. There is always a temptation to be over-riden by current views, and to take up striking theories of the day; but we have to expound the eternities. The false prophet in the Old Testament was less a conscious deceiver than the easy echo of current religious impressionism; the true prophet sought the authentic word of the Lord, and the final proof of his inspiration lay in the message itself. The truth he proclaimed took its necessary place in the divine system of thought and life. So we, whether our problems be theological, social, industrial, have to reach our conclusions upon them, not as part of our intellectual interest, our sociology, our politics, but as part of our ministry for Christ. It is not a light thing to speak for God; it is possible only through humility and openness of mind. It means renunciations, and the uprooting of prejudices, and a willingness to work hard both in study and prayer. I remember somewhat indistinctly an illustration of Dr. Horton's: there is on the west coast of Ireland a shrine to which many make pilgrimage. At the foot of the cliff is a chapel where most of the pilgrims make their prayer. But at the top of the cliff there is a small shrine, reached by a narrow and difficult way, that perilously overhangs the surf and the rocks. But it is held to be more sacred, and some few make their way there to pray. And the name of the stairway that leads to the place of wider horizons and open sky is the Stones of Pain.

We have not even yet reached the last demand of our devotional life. We are to exercise our ministry "as though God were entreating by us." Nothing less can be our ideal; but how to make it actual? May I venture to be theological in trying out of my own experience to answer that question; as one may answer it out of gleams of light that hold out a promise of a perfect day yet to be?

Our ministry rests less on knowing the will of God for us than on a discovery of the work of God in us. Whittier's words,

"By all that He requires of me,
I know what God Himself must be,"

strike the modern note; but Paul uses a word almost violent in its suggestion: "The love of Christ *constraineth* us." Somehow, it has become almost a commonplace among us that we do our work less by what we say than by what we are. That saying, for all its truth, needs safeguarding. It must not make us careless of what we say. And are we really sure that it is our personality that counts? The nature of our Christian personality is determined by our relation to something beyond ourselves. Hocking gets nearer the truth in his fine saying, "We work less by what we are than by what we worship." Our sense of the Divine Majesty is really far more formative than all else.

This truth needs emphasis, because to-day, even the Church member has largely abandoned theology for theosophy; and not a few ministers also. By theosophy, I mean any idealist creed arrived at through intuition, independently of any historic revelation. Theology is the unfolding of the historic revelation of the self-communicating God. That revelation is given, not in propositions, but in life. We enter into it only as we receive Him and submit to His renewing action on us. The content of that revelation will always be wider than any individual experience of it. It needs the collective and continuous experience of the Church of the redeemed; and as individuals we grow into its fulness, we do not make it fragment by fragment for ourselves.

There has been great emphasis lately on experience as the source of religious certainty. But experience does not guarantee more than a theosophy. It may rise in our "unconscious." The great question is not our certainty, but the trustworthiness of One whom we are certain. It is not our experience we have to preach, but our God, of whom we are made certain in our experience. We are first and last witnesses to something that is given, and is ours only because it is given, and has its source beyond us. "Ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God," says Paul in a significant second-thought. The men who can preach the divine revelation are those who can pass beyond the thought of God which they gleaned or formed or found in the thought of the day, because they have met Him in the inmost re-making of themselves. We must be able to tell

that of God which vindicates for Him a life and purpose of His own, independent of all that men may think of Him and imagine about Him and His demands on man.

It is in such worship that our power to work is made. The experience may be only personal and temperamental; but that of which we become conscious in the experience is real and creative, a God whose majesty is beyond our thought, as His mercy is beyond our experience of it. Such worship re-makes us in the worshipping.

You know what I mean, and you know how the thought breaks through language and escapes. But the results of the worship are not lost; and I venture the suggestion that it is these results by which we really achieve all that we do achieve: all that shall come as gold from the furnace. "We work not by what we are, but by what we worship." Fitzgerald tells in a little poem how the moths sent messengers to investigate the nature of their deity, the Flame. One and another went, and circled round the fire and came back with various surmises and suggestions. But a third, filled with a true desire,

Plunging at once into the sacred fire,
 Folded his wings within, till he became
 One colour and one substance with the flame.
 He only knew the flame who in it burned,
 And only he could tell who ne'er to tell returned.

There is more than a suggestion for us there of what our worship should be.

J. A. STUART, B.A.



THE GOSPEL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCE.

IT is a far cry from Modern Science to the Gospel. It is not only that there is no exchange between the coinage of one and the other. The salient fact is, that from the scientific point of view, the people of the New Testament were completely out of touch with the actualities of the case. Their cosmogony was the Palestinian-Jewish one. The earth—a disc of no great dimensions, central to the universe, surrounded, and sustained from beneath by the chaotic watery abyss. Above—an inverted

bowl called the firmament, whose arch supported the heavens and provided a path for sun and moon and stars. Sheol or Hades was placed beneath the earth and served as a kind of waiting-room for departed spirits. The crudeness of the cosmogony need not disguise the fact that the Jews interpreted the physical world from the religious standpoint, and anticipated the conception of a unity underlying phenomena confirmed by modern science. But if the deduction was sound, the phenomena themselves were wildly misconceived. Of science worthy of the name there was none. The times were not ripe and if they had been it was not the Hebrew *metier*. It is a question whether the Gospel could have appeared amongst a scientific people. Science is pre-occupied with the phenomenal, tests and measures, facts perceptible by sense; searches out chains of sequence in physical happenings. It is quite an impersonal and unemotional pursuit: and even where it does not numb, it cannot possibly be favourable to the subjectivity characteristic of religious experience. Moreover, the necessarily sceptical method of science makes agnosticism a virtue. To abstain from formulation when the data are insufficient; to resist the temptation to find exits from ignorance; to be patient in the presence of unsolved problems, with a tight grip on the tendency to transcendental explanation—makes for a calculating temper inimical to the life of feeling. Man is a limited creature, and while nothing in scientific method is inherently unfriendly to religious belief, first because the habitual pre-occupation reacts on the organism, it may be that one can discern a Providence in the unscientific nature of the age in which the gospel had its rise.

It would be idle to close one's eyes to the handicap under which the gospel labours in gaining acceptance in a scientific age. Providential as we believe it to be that it emerged on the arena of history just when it did—in the fulness of time, we cannot disguise to ourselves the suspicion the modern mind entertains of any interpretation of reality originated amongst a people more ignorant of the world-order than a present-day kindergarten. The difficulty of accepting their testimony in regard to the spiritual order is enormously enhanced by their ignorance of the natural order. Obviously and immeasurably inferior to us in the region of verifiable truth, why should we yield them superiority in the region of that kind of truth most intractable to verification?

The argument can be met. It is the mood behind the

argument that constitutes the difficulty. We are the heirs of the ages—and their superiors. Science has engendered in the modern world an attitude in relation to a pre-scientific age comparable to that of the public school-boy towards his grandfather when the older man's aspirates get out of control. Conscious superiority in minutiae is a bar to the admission of inferiority in the magnalities. It is shallow but it is human nature. But as in the case of the school-boy, so in the case of mankind, there is hope. Time does tell. Science in the modern sense is a new thing, a recent acquisition. There has not been time for its lately conned lessons to be harmonised with the whole of mankind's manifold experience. The lessons have been so amazing, so exciting even. They have gone to the head. At such a stage of adolescent culture, ancestors are prone to be seen in the light of dodderers. It is a phase, and though, while it lasts, it creates obstacles in the way of the apprehension of reality which Vith Form education cannot touch, we may confidently cherish the hope that, as Bacon put it, "if the first entrance into philosophy doth dispose the opinion to atheism, wading deep into it will bring about men's minds to religion." The further science advances, the more patently do the incomprehensibles baulk her. In the last resort, may not science prove to be a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ, when it is faced with its incompetency even so much as to envisage the invisibles and spirituals amidst which He moved with confident assurance?

It might even be suggested that we are in the act of witnessing the passing of the phase referred to. A marked change has passed over the spirit of the scientific worker. Swash buckler methods relative to religious opinion, like those of Huxley, are no longer to the taste of men of science. The jest at the expense of the editor of a certain scientific journal: "He seems to forget that he is only the editor and not the author of Nature," decreases in relevancy to the scientific temper of our time. Scientists no longer cherish the illusion that science gives them the open sesame to ultimate reality, and they show a due appreciation of the fact that the Victorian Scientists only burned their fingers when they touched metaphysic. That is not to say that a scientist cannot be a philosopher—the ideal combination indeed—but that the task of describing phenomenal existence and the task of interpreting reality are things apart. As he grows older the school-boy discovers that his elderly relative

knows more than he thought. Otherwise, in the words of a present-day leader of science: "to try to find out what is scientifically true in Nature may be the beginning of waiting patiently upon the Lord."

Be it confessed, however, that in the meantime the substitution of a scientific, for an empirical, *Weltanschauung* has somewhat unsettled the tenacity of the Gospel in the modern mind. The cosmogony of the Gospels reminds us that the world as then conceived was as easily oriented to the thinking of the people of the New Testament as a doll's house is to the immature mind of childhood. "When we look at the star which lies ten billions of miles nearer to us than any known star, we see it as it was four years ago. If the sun were represented in a model by a grain of sand one hundredth of an inch in diameter, and the earth by a quite invisible speck one inch away, the nearest star would be represented on this scale by another grain of sand more than four miles away." In the processes of evolution half a million years may be spent in fashioning a feather, and longer in giving the horse his hoof. Quantitative descriptions are the least important, but whether by virtue of illusion or not they powerfully affect the mind. An adolescent nephew remarked to me: "My father's classy sermon is on the 8th Psalm—astronomy Arcturus, space and all that. It gives me the blues every time I hear it!" The human mind tends to be paralysed by duration and appalled by distance. Are they only spectres and is Berkleyism the truth?

Science has opened our eyes to the unfathomed universe, and revealed the fact that the manageable home of the earlier cosmogonies is less in scale with the world we live in than a British Empire Exhibition with the Empire itself. If not 'mid pleasures, science has set us peregrinating 'mid palaces with a homesickness, which may be only the reverse side of a registration of the cosmic outlook of our ancestors. At all events it has shrivelled us up to tiny mites wandering in vasty halls. The world is no longer homely. Science has made it difficult to sing the songs of the Lord in a strange land.

Comprehensively stated, the Revelation of God in the Face of Jesus Christ, from the point of view of man's relation to the universe, shows him in the light of son and heir. The universe is home. It is home by virtue of the Father's presence and

governance. What the Father is, is fontal of all that makes the universe comfortable to the human spirit. All things are yours for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The tendency from the beginning has been for Feeling to personify and for Thought to dispersonify. Nascent Greek Science was soon in conflict with the creations of Greek mythology. Sentence of death was already pronounced upon Pan when Thales and Pythagoras arose—even though its execution was delayed for centuries. The missionary to animistic tribes in Africa by virtue of science dispersonifies Nature of the brood of good or evil spirits with which it is a-thrill to the native. Science elbows out the elves and the gnomes and only tolerates their psychological counterpart in the person of McConachie. But the salient fact is this universal impetus in humanity, untutored by science, to personify. From the beginning man has felt the urge to find ultimate explanations in personality. The instinct continually misinterpreted itself, but the misinterpretation did not invalidate the instinct. "Folklore and mythology find endless traces of supposed incarnations which are quite as unspiritual and even immoral as they are unscientific: and conflict not only with all canons of rational criticism, but even with the ordinary dictates of plain common sense. Yet these fictions only emphasise the persistence of the instinct which continued to invent them, because it continued to demand them." So if the Gospel makes the ultimate reality personal, if the universe is represented as the Father's House, if His concern for His creatures is revealed as being intimate and tender, and if in token of this the Supreme Person of History is given to validate such affirmations, may it not appear that science has reached the limit of its dispersonifying task, that indeed that task was necessary to throw into bold relief the truth of the ultimate Personal Reality, that the dispersion of the half-gods was necessary to the Advent of God, and that in virtue of that revelation, in spite of the well-nigh illimitable enlargement of the physical universe, man is at home!

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(To be concluded).

RECENT PSYCHOLOGY IN ITS RELATION TO PASTORAL VISITATION.

THAT this is a subject of timely interest and of urgent practical importance to ourselves as ministers we are all likely to agree. None of us would deny that it is our duty to keep in touch as well as we can with the march of thought in all departments of inquiry which hold a prominent place in the general attention and which are at all likely to affect the general well-being. And psychology is pre-eminently such a department, dealing as it does with the experience and behaviour of living beings. Like other sciences psychology has a theoretical side—its aim is primarily to investigate experience with a view to gaining a more thorough understanding of it. But it has also a practical aim. It seeks knowledge not merely for the sake of knowledge but for the sake of its practical applications. It hopes that a better understanding of experience will lead to an increased power of guiding and controlling behaviour. The intimate relation of this study, then, to the work of pastoral visitation must be obvious. For I take it that our aim in pastoral visitation is exactly this—to gain a better understanding of the experience of our people with a view to improving their behaviour. Psychology, then, may be expected to afford us valuable help in pastoral visitation. And perhaps it is not impossible that in the course of pastoral visitation we can gather experience that should be of interest to the psychologist.

What chiefly distinguishes recent psychology from earlier developments of the science is the attention it devotes to those parts or factors of experience which, while present and active in experience, are not present to the consciousness of the experiencing subject. Whereas earlier psychology was content to survey the surface of experience, the field or stream of consciousness, recent psychology attempts to get beneath the surface to the hidden motives of behaviour and to explore "the abysmal deeps of personality."

In those deeps it discovers certain innate dispositions or tendencies, known as instincts, which it declares to be the main-springs of the mental life and the driving forces of conduct. These instincts come into operation at the bidding of the appropriate stimuli in the shape of ideas or mental images. They each have their "definite and specific emotional tone" and they each result in or tend towards a characteristic type of behaviour.

Different catalogues or tabulations of the instincts are given by different authorities; but it is generally agreed that there are three primary instincts or groups of instincts, viz.: the self-preservation instinct, the sex or reproductive instinct and the social or herd instinct. All our actions, it is claimed, are prompted by one or more of these basal instincts. All our behaviour has the—usually unconscious—aim of satisfying one or more of them. The determining causes of our beliefs and behaviour lie far more in the region of instinct, of unconscious desire and impulse, than in that of conscious reasoning and reflection.

Now the instincts, however we enumerate them, are not in themselves ultimates—any more than are the chemical elements. Just as physical science has analysed the elements into atoms and disclosed the fact that the different elements are different combinations of similar atoms (the atoms themselves being groupings of electrons) so we may regard the instincts as different applications or organisations of something more fundamental still, viz.: the life-force or psycho-physical energy which is at the disposal of each individual. They may all be regarded as varying expressions of the one fundamental urge to live. Essentially, there can be no doubt, the instincts serve biological ends. They tend to the increase or continuance of life in the individual, the species, or the race. They are the surgings of the life-force along channels which experience has proved to have biological value.

But the instincts are by their very nature blind, unconscious. They are liable to conflict with or neutralise one another. In the interests of the very ends which they are constituted to serve they call for harmonisation, regulation by a controlling and directing intelligence for a consciously chosen purpose. That they admit of being so controlled and directed follows from the already-mentioned fact that they come into action at the bidding of suggestion, in response to the appropriate stimuli. Let certain stimuli be present and the individual responds in a certain instinctive way—with the aim, *i.e.*, of satisfying either the impulse to self-preservation, or the sex-impulse, or the impulse to keep in association with the herd to which he belongs and in conformity with its standards and traditions.

Now the intelligent individual is in the happy position of being able to some extent to choose his stimuli, or to select among the various stimuli presented to him. He cannot help having

instincts, but he can control them instead of being controlled by them. He can determine upon what objects his vital energy shall be expended. He can harness his instincts and harmonise them in the service of deliberately-chosen purposes. He can be always enlarging his conception of what constitutes life. And as he comes to realise that life is "more than breath and the quick round of blood," more than the satisfaction of the sex-impulse or than companionship or partnership with a chosen human comrade, more than co-operation with his fellows in the interest of their joint welfare—that it is something more spiritual and more practical still, fellowship with the whole creation in the service of the infinitely glorious will of the living God and of His ever-increasing purpose—as he progressively realises this, so the energy which surges through the channels of his instincts can be directed into higher and higher channels. This process is called the sublimation of the instincts: and I believe it might equally well be spoken of as the development or vocation of higher instincts.

The whole process of experience presents itself to me as a seeking of fuller life. Often the search goes astray through perversion or misdirection. But even through the failures and disappointments, the God Who is Life, and Who creates us for Life, does not withdraw from us that original endowment of unresting energy which impels us onward in the unremitting search. We begin by seeking a small self-life, the mere satisfaction of immediate physical needs. We end—or rather we do not end, for the process is unending—but we come after long development to find that true life, full life, is only to be found in Him, by giving free play to our God-instinct, and letting the small self be taken up and fulfilled along with its fellows in the infinite self.

Of set purpose I refrain from attempting to summarise the more elaborate complications of recent psychological theory—repressions, complexes and all the rest of it. I doubt whether I should be able to compress any useful statement of them into part of a twenty minutes paper. Suffice it for our present purpose to confine our attention to the feature of leading importance in recent psychology. And that, as I said before, is the stress which it lays on the subconscious motives of action, or instincts and their control by suggestion and the possibilities of their sublimation.

What, then, of the relation of all this to pastoral visitation? Is it not our work as pastors to do what we can to further in the

members of our flocks that movement towards fuller and more unified life which is the desire of their own spirits and which is the ultimate object both of all science (including psychology) and of all religion? In our visitation, as in our preaching, we want to be always directing their instincts Godward. Our problem is, as Lord Haldane put it the other day, "to teach the finite individual that he is more than he knows himself to be, and that he is called upon to rise above the limits of his finalities.

Has recent psychology any guidance to afford us with reference to how we can best accomplish this work? I think it has, even although the help it can give may be chiefly to confirm us in the practice of methods to which we had been led intuitively or by other considerations and as the outcome of our own experience. Psychology teaches us that the subconscious counts for more than we had thought, and that unless the subconscious is reached, unless the instincts are influenced, nothing of deep or abiding value is effected. In our pastoral visitation, then, as well as in our pulpit work, our aim must be to reach the subconscious. And in order to do this we must take each individual with whom we have to deal as we find him, and with a firm conviction that he can be helped towards a fuller and better life we must seek to bring to bear the appropriate stimuli, the appropriate suggestions. We must approach the individual along the line of his or her interests and deepest feelings and endeavour to capture those interests and feelings for God and His Kingdom. That is one general principle.

Another, I think, is this. We must bear in mind that subconscious calls to subconscious, deep calls to deep. And if we are to reach what is deepest in those whom we visit it must be through the influence of what is deepest in ourselves. Recent psychology would seem to reinforce the conclusion which most of us had probably reached independently of it that the first essential for successful pastoral visitation is to "keep our own hearts diligently" in touch with the central serenities of the universe, to see to it that our own subconsciousness is steeped in the love of God.

We all know the difficulties of pastoral visitation—how futile, trivial and ineffective much of it seems to be; how far from easy it is to find the right and worth while word to say that shall make our visit more than the merest social call. I think psychology here chimes in with the teaching of the old Book that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If

our own faith and hope are in God, and if His love overflows in our hearts through His Spirit which is given to us, we shall not fail to find the fit word. And in any case our visit will not fail of its main object, viz., the quickening of the faith and hope and love of those whom we visit. We may not be conscious of having effected our purpose. But it is not so much the words we say or do not say as the self we take about with us—the spirit in which we do our work—that really matters. If our part has been mainly that of silent listener to the confidences of some overburdened and garrulous soul we may be thankful for the privilege of having at least acted as a safety valve for him or her.

To do pastoral work successfully we must cultivate the pastoral instinct, the pastoral personality. And what does that mean? It means that we are concerned for the true welfare of each member of the flock and for the rights of the Owner of the flock. It means “an undivided heart,” wholly devoted to the Master whose we are and whose cause we seek to serve, and it means “a heart at leisure from itself, to soothe and sympathize” with those whom we seek to befriend. We cannot lead our people to fuller life, bring them into more complete reconciliation with God, into fuller harmony with His Will, unless we are living that more full, reconciled and harmonized life ourselves. Through and through, from our subconsciousness upwards, we must be good ourselves and bent on seeking others’ good if we are to do any real good at this or any other work to which we set our hands. Any unreality, any pretence, any profession of piety or a sympathy which we do not feel, is fatal to real effectiveness, it may seem to succeed; but that such seeming is hollow I am profoundly convinced.

Here let me venture one or two remarks of a cautionary character. This requirement of reality is not to be taken as of necessity involving anything of the nature of a stiff formality. It points rather to the fact that any doing and saying things just because they are expected of us as ministers is what we should expressly avoid. The last thing we should endeavour to do is to make our visits formal and official, imagining it to be imperative that conversation should be conducted in a vein of pious shop, and that no visit is complete without the reading of Scripture or engaging in prayer. As often as not such methods are likely to defeat their own object. No hard and fast rule can be laid down

with regard to details of that kind. Having prepared our own spirits by devotion and sympathy—having told ourselves that the interview from which we have been inclined to shrink is not going to be as formidable as we feared, that the folk we are going to visit really need the help that we can bring them, and that they are not really so petty, so wrongheaded, so faithless, so self-absorbed, as they perhaps appear, we must aim to get on a footing of genuine human intimacy with them, sense their needs, and look for the guidance of God's Spirit in the interview as to whether we keep to ordinary topics or open up a deeper vein.

It is just possible that some of us might do well to take to heart the following words of wholesome warning which I cull from an essay "On Vulgar Optimists" in *The Challenge* for April 27th.

"A good deal of the current prejudice against clergymen" says the writer "has nothing at all to do with their religion, their opinions in general, their peculiar functions: it is simply the result of a distaste for the manner they affect in ordinary society. Many of them have a suspicion that their ministrations are not wanted, and as they are compelled to meet all kinds of people who may possibly be hostile, and are anxious to carry it off bravely and to prove that they are good fellows and men of the world, they finally adopt a manner that irritates every sensible person they meet. Their firmly determined cheerfulness and hectic good fellowship are appalling. They drench the world in rose water. Never will they permit the faintest shadow to cross their faces: they will not be serious for a single moment, but will break into loud, though distinctly nervous, guffaws at every turn. They appear to exist in a universe designed by the editor of *Punch*, and by their kettledrum counsels of good cheer drive even children to a bleak but less depressing agnosticism."

Another warning to which I feel constrained to give utterance is this: that just as a man cannot be doing his best work in a pastorate if all the time he is wondering how soon the general superintendent will be successful in finding him a change of sphere, so in paying visits we cannot effect much of real value if all the time we are in a house we are wondering how quickly we can contrive to bring the visit to a close and speed off to our next engagement. A full diary is by no means necessarily synonymous with a full life. And it must be obvious that visits which are

scamped, hurried and rushed, are not particularly conducive to that which should be the aim and object of all our ministry, viz. : the promotion of fulness of life among our people.

Once again, while reality is incompatible with mere formality and professionalism it need not be taken as putting any necessary embargo upon the employment of a reasonable amount of guile or—shall I say?—Christian diplomacy. A touch of shrewd humour will often go a very long way to secure the very result we desire to achieve, and convey a lasting lesson. When old women regale us with their tale of woe how are we to comfort them? The method adopted by one young minister in Scotland whom I knew was to pat such people on the back and remark “Cheer up! You’ll soon be dead.” Only the other day one of my flock mentioned to me that she many a time recollected a little rallying remark made to her by my wife two or three years ago—a remark which my wife herself had forgotten probably almost as soon as she had uttered it. It was in reply to a disparaging criticism passed upon a visiting preacher. “He *will* be sorry you don’t approve of him!” was my wife’s observation. And that dry comment had stuck and achieved its object, doing much to cure the critic permanently of her excessive readiness to find fault. On another occasion, visiting a bereaved family who were showing a disposition to take their bereavement rather bitterly and resentfully, my wife instead of saying anything reproachful commended the mourners for their bravery. The commendation was not, of course, insincere; but it was a skilful strategical move which I, for one, should probably not have thought of taking. And again it succeeded. “Mrs. Roberts we’re *not*. We’re cowards!” was the response. And at once the hard soil was broken up, the springs of right feeling were reached and were ready to be guided in the desirable direction. The mourners were made aware in an instant both of their depths and of their heights—the depths in which they were grovelling and the heights which they had it in them to reach. Psychology lays bare the depths. Religion reveals the heights. And the aim of pastoral work is to persuade the deeps to respond to the call of the heights.

It rather looks—does it not?—as if the conclusion of the whole matter were that we might do worse than let our wives not only provide us with subjects for sermons but also do a good deal of our pastoral visitation for us.

E. J. ROBERTS, B.A., B.D.

SUPERANNUATION IN REVIEW.

THIS is written ad clerum and it is hoped will be discussed at fraternal gatherings this autumn and winter. It was evident at the Pastoral Session both by question and address that the matter of Superannuation is occupying the minds of many. The appeal of our aged brother who was not speaking for himself evoked responses in many hearts.

The other Denominations are also considering the question. The three great Methodist bodies have reviewed the whole situation as it appears to them, especially in view of the possibility of Union. The United Methodist Church are engaged at present in raising a further sum of £80,000 for this purpose, of which already £66,000 has been secured. The Congregationalists intend voting £150,000 from their new Fund towards augmenting the Superannuation grants.

The Baptists must not be unmindful of the altered conditions of life nor ungrateful for all that has been done. We are an old body and up and down the land there are local funds instituted scores of years ago for the benefit of those who had finished their day's work. In 1875 the present Annuity Fund was inaugurated under the leadership of Dr. Maclaren, Chas. Williams and others. Since that time spasmodic efforts of great but temporary utility have been put forth especially by our laymen presidents. It would be difficult to over estimate the enormous relief obtained through all the years because of these generously established Funds.

It is perfectly clear however, that the time has come for survey and reconstruction. The Annuity Fund Committee have appointed a sub-committee to investigate and report and the new Commission of the Baptist Union Council will have this as one of the subjects to be discussed, and upon which a report is to be given.

Meanwhile it has been admirably suggested that we should celebrate the Jubilee of the Annuity Fund in 1925 by some new and large development. The success of any project such as that for which we are appealing will depend largely upon the mind and attitude of the ministry, especially as to the form it may take. Hence we venture to set forth the following considerations.

- A. 1.—The Superannuation Fund should be based denominationally *i.e.*, all accredited ministers and probationers should be eligible for participation.
2. An attempt should be made to federate the Local Funds. When these were first instituted the length of service in one place was much longer than it is at present. Men would spend their whole career in a very limited area. A glance at the Handbook will show how the conditions have changed. We are denominational ministers as never before. The Sustentation Fund is not so much creative of this fact as it is symptomatic. Years ago, Yorkshire handed over their Fund to the Baptist Union and it is pleasing to hear that some of the oldest and strongest societies are prepared to consider some kind of federation.
3. There should be an annual contribution from the ministers themselves according to income. It cannot be too strongly realised that here is the crux of any new and worthy development. A generous response in this direction would immediately raise the enthusiasm of our laymen. The new principle introduced is of course that income will determine the contribution. In the Methodist bodies there is a flat rate, but there is not with them that difference in income which prevails amongst us.
4. An Annual contribution from the Churches. It is reasonable to suggest that this also be according to the salary paid to the minister. At least that might be set as the ideal and eventually, as in the case of the Sustentation Fund, it would be accepted by the Churches.
5. The Annuity granted shall be according to years of service. This is the rule in the Methodist bodies. For example, the United Methodist Church grants £2 per annum for service up to 20 years, £3 per annum additional for the next ten years and £4 per annum additional for the next ten years, totalling in their case £110.
6. A new Fund raised among the Churches. On previous occasions the denomination has responded magnificently, and it is believed they will not fail in this.
7. It has to be remembered that the Sustentation Fund Executive have agreed to pay £45 per year for three years

to those reaching the age of 65 years and who are out of a pastorate.

8. What shall be the status and position of a minister who retires under the Fund at the age of 65 years? Clearly in most cases he will be free and able to preach on the Sundays and that with greater vigour now that the strain of pastoral work will have been removed. It has been suggested and the suggestion has been accepted with much favour in some quarters that men so retiring shall still be regarded as denominational men and that arrangements be made for them to preach in our Churches, by some local body, or the Superintendent of the Area. All fees for such service shall be determined by the local body and the Church requiring the services, and that they should be paid into the Fund. If this were done, then the Superannuation Grant could be considerably increased. There is an idealism about this suggestion that commends itself to very many. It operates of course in the case of Superannuaries of the Methodist Churches.

- B. How much money shall we need and how can we obtain it? Here of course we cannot speak with certainty, but we can make a comparison through similar Funds of other denominations. Here perhaps the Primitive Methodist experience will help us as well as any. We are probably as wealthy as they are, and our length of life about the same. Their figures are as follows:—

			Per annum	Average per annum
Number of <i>Annuitants</i>	189,	Amount distributed	£15,651	£83
<i>Widows</i>	258,	„ „	£ 9,056	£35
		Total	£24,707	

Our figures are:—

Total Ministers and Probationers	2174
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Assuming the proportion will be the same as in the case of the Primitive Methodists.

Supernumeraries	...	...	...	367
Widows	...	...	...	500

Not all the 367 will have retired at 65 years. If we assume a grant of £80 a year at 65 and a lower grant as the years served are less we may perhaps strike the average at £75.

Our total needs then would be :—

Supernumeraries	...	...	...	£27,525
Widows	...	...	£40 per annum,	£20,000
Total	...	...	...	£47,525

Can we raise this very large amount? What may we expect from all sources?

1. The present Annuity Fund (voluntary) should yield say £8,000. It may be urged that this figure is too high inasmuch as for the last two years it has not reached an average of £7,500, but it should be pointed out that the amount of the fund has increased during the last two years by £2,500 exclusive of voluntary contributions received and if there had been an average disbursement of the amounts stated above nearly £1,500 would still have accumulated in the last two years. It may be urged that this is largely due to legacies but even legacies ought not to exhaust themselves unless we assume that we are not creating new Baptists to take the place of old.

2. Local Funds. The result of Federation would mean a contribution of over £2000 annually. Regard must be had, of course, to the subscriptions of the present participants but that would not seriously effect the total amount.

3. Contribution of Ministers. Here again we cannot be sure of our ground except that about 1,700 Ministers will be in active service and so able to contribute. The Primitive Methodist contribution is £8 per annum per Minister equal to about 2½% of income. Can we do the same? And if we could, what would it yield? If we were dealing with the 10 areas of the Sustentation Settlement Scheme we could probably assume an average income of over £250 per annum but we fear that this must be reduced when we include the whole of the country. However, unfortunately, a large number of the more poorly paid ministers are not on the list in the handbook, and we may at least say that an average of £225 per annum will be somewhat near the mark. This at 2½% would bring us an income of £9,500.

4. Contribution from Churches. It is not unreasonable to expect the churches will annually contribute an equal amount. At present, over £3,000 a year is collected for the similar fund of the Baptist Missionary Society obtained generally at the first Communion Service of the year.

5. As stated above (7) the Sustentation Fund contribution ought to be a considerable relief; for at least one-third of the annuitants would be between the ages of 65 to 69. This would produce a total of over £5,000.

6. There are also other funds available in the way of relief. We note that over 100 widows of Baptist Ministers obtain help from the Widows Fund, at an average of just over £11 per annum.

7. A New Central Fund. Will the time be opportune in 1925 to start another effort to raise say a sum of £150,000 to bring an income of £6,500? It is confidently believed that if the Ministers lead the way as set forth above the laity in our churches will not be slow to follow.

It may well be that we cannot proceed as a whole owing to the very varying conditions obtaining in say Scotland and Ireland and Wales and perhaps some such arrangement as was set forth in connection with the Sustentation Fund will have to be adopted again. In all the above no cognisance has been taken of the Beneficiary Fund of the Baptist Union Annuity Fund. And it is believed that while our commitments under this scheme are not under-stated, we have not over-estimated the amounts obtainable in the way of income. It would be well to obtain the mind of the ministers themselves especially with regard to the following:—

1. Whether as a body we are prepared to contribute according to our income.
2. Whether we think the churches would contribute annually a like sum.
3. Whether the local funds are prepared to be federated.
4. Whether the time is opportune for a new appeal.

A statement prepared by request.

Signed { B. GREY GRIFFITH, B.D.
B. ORIEL, B.A., B.SC.
F. GOLDSMITH FRENCH.

PRAYER UNION NOTES.

IT may interest our brethren to be reminded of the origin and history of our Prayer Union.

It was in the early part of 1887 that the Rev. F. B. Meyer, then of Leicester, wrote a brief letter to the Baptist Times, inviting ministers who were conscious of the need of greater spiritual power in their ministries, to unite in a brotherhood of prayer and to pledge themselves to seek this blessing for all the members of the Union in the early hours of each Lord's Day.

There was at once a wide response to this invitation, and a card of membership, embodying the above pledge, was prepared and sent to all who joined, the Rev. G. Wainwright, of Manchester, acting as the first Secretary.

The first Prayer Union Conference was held at Melbourne Hall, Leicester, by Mr. Meyer's invitation, on Wednesday, November 23, 1887, and proved a time rich in blessing to the 60 brethren who assembled. A clearer view of the need of a deeper personal piety, and of the necessity for a richer inducement of Spiritual power came to those who gathered and that day still lives as a humbling yet inspiring memory with many who were present. The little publication of the Prayer Union first known as the "Fly Sheet," and afterwards as the "Remembrancer" was first issued in December 1887.

The progress of the Union was remarkable and ultimately a membership of over 850 was reached including Missionaries in India, China, and the Congo, with branches in the Colonies, and the United States. Letters bearing testimony to blessing received through United Prayer, came from all parts of the world. Many a discouraged worker found fresh courage and inspiration as he realised, on each Lord's Day morning, that he was one of this great Brotherhood of Prayer.

Since the last issue of the "Fraternal" we have received several applications for membership. Many also of our old members have written to say that they still continue to unite in our Concert of Prayer on the morning of each Lord's Day.

We shall be glad to hear from others desirous of joining our Prayer Union, or from old members desiring fresh copies of our card of membership. All such communications should be addressed to the Prayer Union Secretary: J. E. Martin, The Manse, Erith, Kent.

Dear Mr. Editor,

AS there is a considerable amount of co-operation between the Churches in the district, I gladly give the details asked for in this issue of the Fraternal.

1. We have a united Fraternal. It is attended by two rectors (Sutton and Cheam), three other vicars, one or two of their curates, seven or eight Free Church ministers, and the adjutants of the Salvation Army. We meet bi-monthly, have a prayer meeting in a Church building (alternately C. of E. and Noncon.), have tea at the Vicarage or Manse, or some room in the building, and have an informal discussion afterwards.

2. We have also a Christian Council, formed under the inspiration of the Lambeth proposals which also meets bi-monthly and consists of the minister and three representatives from each Church in the neighbourhood. All the Churches are represented whose ministers attend the Fraternal and several missions are also represented. Up to the present this body has done little but discuss various problems affecting Church work and town life and generally our different points of view have been acutely revealed. However, I managed to persuade the Council to have a united meeting in aid of the Shantung Christian University, and this was done with great heartiness and consequent success.

3. We have a Temperance Council in which all the Free Churches and two or three of the Established Churches unite. We have held public meetings and opposed the extension of the hours of public-house opening.

4. United services have been held in the local Cinema after the hours of service on Sundays, and although I am not participating in this owing to overtures being made to the Roman Catholics and also to the fact that it approximates to a Sunday evening smoking concert, yet it is an exhibition of united effort.

With congratulations on the new Fraternal and best wishes,

Yours heartily,

WM. D. ROSS.