

# The Fraternal.

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## TENNYSON'S TEACHING ON SIN AND SORROW.

**T**HE Poet who joins the ranks of the Immortals is always one of the Prophets of his age, and there is no great prophet, who in the utterance of his measure does not become a Poet, for when the depths of the soul are moved, music is there. There is no finer illustration of all this than in the book of the Prophet Isaiah. In the old days the Poets were not merely men of literature, but were roused into speech more by the intensity of their spiritual convictions, than by any ambition to write verses; they sang their songs not to minister to the sensations of a reading public, but because they must; they never condescended to ask the public what they wanted, but gave out their Divine message fearlessly, which at times was a call to arms for men to battle for the right, at other times, it was the shout of a great victory, again, a cry for Divine cleansing, or the broken hearted cry of one who mourns and refuses to be comforted.

Once realise there is a Prophet in a Poet and the fact of his inspiration will be no problem to us. Many seem to imagine that God's inspiration comes only to men who write certain books of a certain religious character, but while granting a fuller inspiration to the Apostles and Evangelists say, because of the unique spiritual mission they had to fulfil, one is almost bound to recognise that God has by the inspiration of great poets and masters of music, taught the world some of the great lessons of the

Kingdom, even though in an altered Key and in a different tone. If the fire of genius points to God, then it has borrowed its flame from the great central fire, and since no one can question where the fire of Tennyson's genius points and no one can deny that he was a great preacher of all that makes for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, it would not surely be out of place in any Christian pulpit to deal with one of his distinctive messages, I say one, for there can be no doubt that his outstanding message is that of "Immortality on a Christian basis."

To come, however, to the work of Tennyson expecting to find the Doctrinal statements of those great truths which are at the foundation of the Christian faith, we shall meet with disappointment, then that mode of procedure would have been fatal to him as a poet. The truths themselves were the elements of the soil out of which his poetry grew, but if there be no dogmatic statement of these truths which are at the foundation of the Christian faith, we realise that—He is on the Lord's side who calls Christ—"the life indeed," who owns His power to raise the dead, and looks to Him as the Word of God who breathed human breath, and wrought out "the Faith" with human deeds. It matters not where we open his pages we never feel far away from the Great Master. His spirit breathes through every page. The heights of Calvary shine out resplendent and we see shining and sparkling there, "the fountain open for sin and uncleanness."

There is not the time here to deal with the relation of Tennyson to the religious thought and spirit of his age, but one has only to consider the difference between the religious atmosphere of his early years and closing days to see the development and change there must have been in the faith of the man himself. This man had to fight his doubts and thus he gathered strength and guided by his strong moral and spiritual instincts, he passed through that mechanical and materialistic period, when Science and Faith appeared to many in deadly conflict and came into the region where faith means joy and rest.

Tennyson cannot be justly charged with being a dreamer and nothing more, seeking to get away from the hum drum of life, for mere selfish pleasure; his eyes were never away from the stress and the strain, and with his

spiritual insight he knew as the ancient prophets knew that evil is potential wreck and that sin and sorrow are earthly twins.

It was a very broad conception of sin which Tennyson had. It was not merely in a form of revolting vice, but oftentimes in refined and intellectual selfishness, sometimes even in a religious enthusiasm, which forsook the world and sought only the salvation of the individual soul. But wherever met with and in whatever form, it always meant sorrow.

There are three poems which deal with the different phases of sin mentioned, and these I will take in order.

"*The Vision of sin*" comes first. It takes the form of an allegory and deals with the sins of the flesh, and the subject is dealt with in a way that reveals a master hand at poetic craftsmanship and one whose knowledge of human nature is most thorough, and who has understood the nature and havoc of sin as only the pure understand it or the wrecked sufferers themselves. Some may criticise the poem and say it is ideal and not true to life as we know it. The poem may embody some tendency in human life, showing to us that men drain every cup of pleasure until sensibility wears out, health wears out. With the passion and earnestness of a great Prophet, the Poet cries to men that "God is not mocked," that everything bringeth forth after its own order. In the poem we have a series of pictures of sensual pleasure—base passion—acute suffering borne by one who has become a cynic, and then brooding over all there is a terrible Nemesis.

Look first at the opening picture.

"I had a vision when the night was late :

A youth came riding through a palace gate,  
 He rode a horse with wings, that would have flown,  
 But that his heavy rider kept him down.  
 And from the palace came a child of sin,  
 And took him by the curls and led him in ;  
 Where sat a company with heated eyes,  
 Expecting when a fountain would arise ;  
 A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—  
 As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
 Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes—  
 Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid shapes,  
 By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine, and piles of grapes."

In this poem we have a wonderful illustration of the working of spiritual death in a human soul. Such a process is usually complex, and always invisible and known only by its results. Though the sin is through the sense it soon touches, intellect, conscience and feeling. The soul is a unity and is not divisible. The horse with wings is the soul within man, and is suggestive of high spiritual possibility; the spirit winged with imagination and aspiration, that looks and struggles Godwards, but this horse is overweighted by the youth who has already been overmastered by the flesh. It is to a palace gate the youth draws near, his pleasures to begin with are not coarse, but refined, they however soon begin to slip and develop into coarser forms.

The second picture is that of one outside listening to all the revelry within; he only listens however for a curtain is flung over it all. While the Poet stands listening, he thinks of the Eternal outcome of all this, the bitter sorrow the spiritual death.

In the third picture the poet looks away from the solemn landscape round about that palace of pleasure.

“towards a Mountain tract,  
That girt the region with high cliff and lawn;  
I saw that every morning, far withdrawn,  
Beyond the darkness and cataract,  
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.”

and seeing all this the poet yearns to go into the palace of sinful pleasure and warn the man ere it is too late, and save him from his mad folly. While feeling and thinking thus, the old vision comes to him again; ah but the figure is changed, his sin has found him out. It is a very different picture he now beholds.

“I saw within my head  
A gray and gaptoothed man as lean as death,  
Who slowly rode across a withered heath,  
And lighted at a ruined inn.”

What a contrast; in place of the young man—a gray and gaptoothed man. In place of the one in the bloom of health, there is one as lean as death. Instead of a noble horse with wings—he rides a worn out hack and instead of arriving at a palace gate, he comes to a ruined inn.

Where could we find a more impressive sermon on the terrible ways of sin, or that the way of transgression is hard. The young life of soaring genius is shrivelled into an old age of sodden cynicism. "The withered heath and ruined inn are symbols of wasted empty being, where no flowers grow and the winds wail a requiem."

The next picture however is worse. When he has come to the inn his talk with the ostler and barmaid and waiter reveals the man. Cold blooded cynicism and contempt of virtue, he tries to make into self defence. He assails the Church and Religion and liberty. All men are hypocrites, life is a delusion and death is King.

"Wrinkled ostler grin and thin!  
Here is custom come your way;  
Take my beast and lead him in,  
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay."

What a descent, we read that the Prodigal would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, thinking the food that would satisfy a beast would satisfy a man. This man has got to the same stage. Think of his degraded conception of the spiritual. "Take my beast," the highest part of his being, through which communion with God is possible, which Christ died to redeem. In this fourth section of the poem you have a whole series of pictures, all of which tell a sad story of the loss of faith in God, in human friendship and love, in social and private virtue. Faith is a trunk from which many branches spread and when that dies, all the branches are soon withered. He has now lost all shame, his pleasures become coarser and coarser, all has gone down in the great charnel house of ruined appetites. He begins to mock at holy things, sneers at friendship and virtues and all those things so precious in life. Mocks at and denounces all the social aspirations of men. Having lost all these things, he makes himself an equal with the common tipplers.

"Sit thee down and have no shame.  
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee;  
What care I for any name?  
What for order or degree?"

Fill the cup, and fill the cup :  
 All the windy ways of men,  
 Are but dust that rises up,  
 And is lightly laid again."

"The main contention of the allegory is" says Stopford Brooke "that subtilised sensuality is finally driven in order to capture fresh pleasure, into fiercer and baser forms till all the pleasure dies."

Apart from the immortal parable of our Saviour there is not in our language any finer and truer picture of the descent of sin, and its terrible cruelty, than in this poem of Alfred Tennyson. The poet however being a man of Christian faith and knowing of one who came to seek and to save, does not pass a final condemnation, does not leave the man to utter loss. There is a fifth section in the poem. The mystic mountain range of section II. rises again. Below: men were discussing this man's crime and shame and sorrow.

"At last I heard a voice upon the slope,  
 Cry to the summit, "Is there any hope?"  
 To which an answer pealed from that high land,  
 But in a tongue no man could understand;  
 And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn,  
 God made Himself an awful rose of dawn."

The answer that comes is very vague and uncertain. Man may not determine another one's destiny. God alone knows the hidden things of the soul, and whether nobler life can be fashioned out of the wreck and ruin. Tyndal once asked Tennyson what that last line meant, "the awful rose of dawn" puzzled the scientist. Tennyson however shrank from expounding it, only remarking—"What I say will be considered nonsense by some, but you will not so consider it." No, the idea is this; the battered human wrecks which have sown to the flesh and reaped corruption, can only be left with God, whose love and mercy keep open the door of Eternal Hope.

MORTON GLEDHILL.

*(to be continued)*

## THE CHURCH AND ITS YOUNG PEOPLE.

*A Paper read at the Spurgeon's College Conference.*

**F**OR many years we have had continual reminders of the alarming leakage between the School and the Church, and it must be confessed that in spite of efforts made in certain directions the situation has very little improved.

When we recognise the very bright record of these young people who, coming straight from the School to the Church, have turned out to be our best workers, our missionaries and ministers, we are led to ask more eagerly than ever; Why need this leakage go on?—Why can we not retain, if not all, a very much larger proportion of our Sunday School scholars. Why do we lose them?

In the first place—one is led to ask—is the Sunday School as efficient an instrument as it might be? Much magnificent service and devoted labour has been given by earnest consecrated teachers, and studied and painstaking labours by many Sunday School Superintendents—but does not the very brilliance of the service rendered by those whose names flash into our minds prove that the majority are “just ordinary”—and the tragedy of the situation is that *the Church leaves it at that*, with regrets. An examination of the circumstances of the leakage shows that we lose scholars mainly through *lack of oversight*, through lack of *constructional teaching*, through failure to grip *them during the difficult period*, and through failure to get *their decision at the most impressionable time*.

The only figures available to me refer to our Baptist Church in Scotland, and they shew 20,828 Sunday School scholars on the roll, 1,309 of whom are over 15 years of age. The total number of scholars members of the Church is 395, and the average rate of applicants from the Sunday Schools for Church membership is 180 per annum.

The great proportion therefore never reach years of adolescence as scholars.

Whilst individual Churches can show better results than that, still those figures represent largely the situation prevailing throughout our Churches, and we confess sadly it is far from satisfactory, and it is our incumbent duty to

see that it is improved. Methods and syllabuses have been improved to make the School attractive, but there must be more than that to hold them, and to lead them right into Church Fellowship. A very great deal, of course, depends upon the teacher; on the intimate contact, interest and affection established. The teacher who does not know the scholars will certainly fail to keep them, but if the Church realised that these children were committed to us as the lambs of the flock, we should not be content to leave everything to the individual teacher.

Are we then afraid of interfering with the worker? It is a delicate point—but none the less it is a fact—that in many places the Sunday School is a close preserve—where the Ministers and Deacons have no voice in its oversight—probably in many cases they have no desire to have. We are not concerned as to the details of management—but *must* be concerned about the efficiency of the teacher, and the content and value of the teaching. At present there is only a very simple and trifling examination on details of Scriptural incidents.

The *Church* is responsible for the nature of the Syllabus and the efficiency of the staff, and it may be a more urgent item for Deacons' meetings and Church meetings than the usual agenda.

Our Evangelical position may make it difficult for us to adopt a form of probationary Church membership or any system that definitely links the child with the Church before a conscious personal committal to Christ; but this may be possible at a far earlier age that we are ready to admit—and after all—what is difficult is not necessarily impossible—and the Church as a Church must take a very definite interest in the care of the child—and this, through its executive bodies—the Deacons' meetings and Church meetings.

The Church, however, to whom the Sunday School scholars really belong, is called to be more than a School. The whole personality of the individual must be considered and even boys and girls must be interested in something more than the Sunday afternoon class. Young life is of necessity full of activity and restlessness, the years of adolescence are years of development, and religion must be related to the natural needs of growing life. Sunday

School and Bible Class work, therefore, however efficient, will not be enough. Until we can relate religion to life in all its aspects even—in the early years and find a place in the Church programme for young people during the week—we shall continue to have the majority of our Sunday School scholars slipping out of our hands.

*Week-day activities*, I firmly believe, is the secret of holding and winning those very young people whom now we lose.

May I speak out of my own personal experience? In one Church we were alarmed to realise that we had no young people in our School over 15 years of age—in fact 13 was the age when they seemed to leave. We opened the Church Hall on two nights of the week and invited them to come in to a free and easy gathering. Within a year we had two strong bible classes on Sunday afternoons—and twenty of those same young people joined the Church. That work is still going on—many of them actively engaged on evangelistic work—two of them Deacons and one a student of the ministry.

In another Church my experience has been that out of 80 scholars joining the Church, 50 of them came in through some form of week-day activity, the very ones who were the most unlikely. The others might have come in any case through the influence of parents and teachers. On the other hand, many Churches have found that they lost some of their young people because in the absence of any such movement in their own church—they had joined a Boys' Brigade or a Scout Troop in some other Church where every member of these organisation was required to be a member of the Bible Class or Wesley Guild.

I hold no brief for any of these organisations. To introduce any one of them and leave it uncontrolled is to court disaster, but with wise leadership and sympathetic control, most of them may be instruments for good.

Of course there are *dangers* in this sort of work. But surely nothing shews our lack of faith and holy boldness so much as this fear of any new thing because it is "dangerous." As a matter of fact it is the only phase of life that appeals to young people; "live dangerously" is a distinctly Christian Doctrine. (It is a dangerous thing to live—easier far to die). Having started some such week-day

activity you will soon have to say what amusements or forms of recreation are allowed and what discouraged—for I firmly hold that the admission of *anything* on the ground that it is under the eye, or in the precincts of the Church—is a foolish and self-destructive policy. It will require the careful and sympathetic interest of some of the leading people of the Church. We cannot delegate these things to an official and then expect best results. If you start such things and leave them entirely to the young people themselves, you sow seeds of trouble. If you police it—you kill it—but if as father and big brother you meet their objections or wishes in frank talks, you may win them.

This side of life must not be ignored. The Canadian and American Churches have a four-fold programme for young life based on Luke 2, v. 52. He “grew in wisdom and stature and favour with God and man”—the intellectual, physical, devotional and social life.

In our Young People’s Fellowship of Scotland we seek to unite all week-day activities in a Common Declaration of Purpose dealing with Devotion—Service—Study—Recreation, and under this last head it reads:—“To affirm that all our recreation shall be a means of greater fitness for the service of the Lord.”

We all can, and surely must allow any form of physical development on those lines.

It is, however, the work of the Church, and must not be left to a self-governing School and a variety of organisations more or less in touch.

One of the important findings of the last Sunday School Convention held in Glasgow 1924 was—

“The Church dare not shift responsibility of ultra-Church organisations at work in the field of adolescence no matter how efficient they may be. The Church must ever be the chief and controlling agency in all forms of religious education for Youth. The two-fold outstanding need is 1. an effective correlation of all programmes of instruction and expression—and 2. an efficient trained leadership.”

But there arises another and greater question—when we keep them at adolescence in this way or in any other—we have another and equally urgent duty, viz: to give

them very definite teaching—that we may lead them to intelligent discipleship and effective service.

Education is after all—in general—our main concern with the Young.

Great developments in this line have taken place in America—to which the Churches have been forced by the secularisation of all public elementary education. The onus of responsibility for a full religious education is now put upon and realised by the Churches to whom it rightly belongs and who alone can worthily undertake it.

We, however, still largely “take it for granted” that our children are somehow getting a full religious education somewhere—but the ignorance in elementary knowledge of Bible facts and vital truths of most people to-day is a sad reflection on the teaching of Sunday Schools to which the majority at one time belonged. Dr. McAphee, of Chicago, told a story at the World’s Sunday School Convention of the ignorance concerning the bare bones of the Bible on the part of candidates for the Theological Seminary. It was explained by one youth that he was *the victim of misplaced confidences*:—at the primary school they took it for granted he was told these things at home. The School took it for granted he had learnt them in the Primary Department. The Bible Class took it for granted he must have learnt these elementary facts at the School, and so on all the way he had been the victim of misplaced confidences.

I have come across sad cases of ignorance concerning the elementary principles of Christianity in some who had passed right through our schools—ignorance which was a stumbling block to their acceptance of Christ for they misunderstood what Christianity was. Very few of our scholars—if any—ever leave our schools with a definite rejection of Christ, but many go out in gross ignorance of Him and of the great facts of Christianity. A book like “The Army and Religion” shows that this is a fair statement of the general situation—and the verdict is there expressed that Sunday School teaching is *grievously ineffective*—a hard saying made even harder by the Copeck Com. on Education which said it showed *scandalous neglect* on the part of the Church.

Education alone will never produce either converts or consecrated Christian workers—but we gravely err in

neglecting it, and should get a great many more converts by developing it. As Christian Ministers we must not content ourselves with publishing salvation—unless by that we rightly understand—“the fulness of the life more abundant”—which is a long process needing a great deal of preparatory and after-care teaching. The problem is—how to fit in anything more to our already overloaded programme. But we shall have to ask whether a Minister is necessarily called to preach two sermons every Sunday to more or less the same people for the most part steady and convinced—even to prejudice—and whether he would not more adequately fulfil his vocation by devoting the most of his time to teaching the young and training others to teach. We plead—plead—plead to the *few* who come to our services—when we might be set free to teach and prepare the *many* in the senior school who never come to these services. I yield to none in my devotion to a full evangelical position: that at whatever age—the work of the Spirit—regeneration, conversion, must take place—but even here—we may say: “How shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard?” A zeal not according to knowledge is futile and perilous.

These are days, moreover, of widely disseminated information—Newspapers, cheap reprints, and street corner orators spread all sorts of doctrines not only evil, but many that delude by their apparent goodness.

Socialists cry out that the Church should champion Housing of the People, the condemnation of Capitalism and every form of social amelioration. Whilst their opponents are equally voluble in condemning all social reform usurping the Divine prerogative. There is a cry in some quarters that the Church should adopt Spiritual healing of the body—and there are innumeral advocates of Psycho Analysis as an integral part of a minister's work.

From quite other sources we have champions of various forms of Millennialism and a rigorous demand for a stereotyped creed. These many and varied ideas throw a large proportion of our young people into bewilderment. Other churches have a creed or a catechism and teach it, and their people are undisturbed, but our young people and many older ones—find it difficult to rebut the arguments of Millennial Dawnists, Christian Scientists, Socialists, Spiritualists and why not.

We have no formulated creed or catechism; but we have a very clear Essential Belief. The terms of it may be too vague or too stereotyped. Then we must simplify them by intelligible phrasing and practical illustration.

In 1922 the Congregationalists issued a report of a Commission on Christian Education which is well worth our close study.

The culminating principle of their finding was: That the Christian Churches have a Direct and Practical Concern in the Full Education of the Child, the Youth, and the Adult—and they recommended:

“That the Churches must themselves undertake the task of a continuous education of their own constituents in the subjects relevant to religious life.”

The Copec Com. on Education said: “Half the prevailing alienation of all types and classes of people from the Church is traceable to sheer ignorance of what the truth of Christianity really is and means.”

The natural impulse seems to be that when we recognise that alienation we immediately set about some form of activity to induce these people back to the Churches. If, however, our forces and powers are too limited to divide between two courses—it might be wiser for us to prevent those we have straying—rather than to leave them with the doors open whilst we rush out after those that have strayed. Important as both are—there is a prior claim on us that we must discharge first. The plastic material still with us in the Sunday School gives the golden opportunity.

Dr. Poole, at the World's Sunday School Convention, said that Educational Evangelism among the Youth of the World is the commanding strategy of the hour. And the World's Sunday School Association statistics show one-sixth of the entire population of England and Wales as enrolled in the Sunday School, a statement in virtual agreement with Carey Bonner's figures that four-fifths of the available young people and children of England and Wales are connected with our Sunday School. Why should we let these four-fifths of the next generation grow up to be the drunkards, wasters, and the flippantly indifferent for whom evangelistic missions must be organised, but who for the most part never think of coming anywhere near such meetings.

We have the Young People now—and from sheer ignorance many of them never join the Church.

Jesus called us to preach and to teach—to make disciples and to teach them—not the mysteries of the hidden future—into which Bible study too often lapses—but the wonders of the Eternal and the pressing claims and duties of the present—Essential Belief, Fundamental Truth—Christian Ethics?

Scotland probably has more organisation than England for this Educational policy—in the Ministers Bible Classes—though in many instances this becomes merely a popular lecturette. In England we often have the catechumen class—generally of too short duration and too limited in its scope. We must devise ways of definite teaching in Eternal Truth—and, with our older young people, a deepening in the understanding of those things for which we stand.

I need not describe to you what these are—but I may suggest that too often we have been content with snippetty lessons drawn out of minor Biblical incidents or clever outlines on familiar Scriptural phrases. R. H. Coats' book on "The Christian Life" though probably too full for our young people to read privately, provides an ideal manual for this instruction. I know of nothing that equals it in its complete, concise and sane teaching on all the essential things.

Moses and Ezra had training schools. Paul having himself profited by two years close application to what the new faith meant for him, urges Timothy to do the same and to train others. To-day we want no inadequate Social Gospel, Institutionalism has proved a failure, but more than ever we must face up to the relationship of the Gospel to the questions of the hour—Social, Intellectual Scientific:—the best of our young people are concerned about these things, and no form of obscurantism will win or hold them. We have nothing to fear or lose—for there is room and power in the Everlasting Gospel to meet and express relationship to every age—to all life and every changing phase of it. We have to show that the Spiritual is not aloof from and indifferent to the affairs of this life—but that it must permeate and dominate it all through.

In avoiding this work we may be honouring tradition and thus becoming guilty of making the Word of God of

none effect through our tradition—we may win some—but we lose 80 per cent—an awful fact that *compels* us to new methods. The things that the 80 per cent are worried about, or at least obsessed with, viz:—the common objections and loose talk against Christianity and the otherworldliness of religion are the things we have to deal with. The little homilies on Bible incidents—and the deciphering of Apocalyptic mysteries may please a few—but they seem so utterly unrelated to the pulsating life within and around us, about which Christ seemed to feel so deeply—and about which young men and women to-day are gravely concerned. We have to show them the glory and beauty and sufficiency of Christ, and clear the air of those things that hide Him from their view.

To sum up then—If we are to keep for Christ and the Church more of these *four-fifths* of the children and young people of our land *to-day in our schools*—and to prevent the leakage of 80 per cent of them as hitherto—we must—first, see there is a close link between the Church and the child from the beginning—largely through the personality of the teacher, but with more of the oversight of the Church.

Then we must manifest a warm interest in their everyday life by organised and controlled week-day activities in which the Church is openly and sympathetically interested and concerned.

And finally—We must provide a constant, clear courageous, and thorough educational programme of instruction in Righteousness and the things of the Kingdom of God—that everyone be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Remembering and realising all through that our aim is intelligent discipleship of those who by the Spirit of God have been renewed in the inner life—born of the Spirit and personally apprehended by Christ Jesus—for our commission is to make disciples—baptise them and teach them to observe all things He has commanded, bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—that they may be workmen needing not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth—and able to teach others also.

WILIAM H. SHIPLEY, Glasgow.

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## THE FUNDAMENTALIST CONTROVERSY IN AMERICA.

SINCE the war there has arisen in American Protestant thought, a sharp controversy concerning what is called Fundamentalism. The daily newspapers have devoted many columns of space to theological discussion, public debates have attracted much attention and these differences have assumed political importance because of the pressure exerted upon state legislatures to pass laws forbidding the teaching of evolution. The Ku Klux Klan is believed by some to promote the religious ideas advocated by the Fundamentalists.

There are differences among the Fundamentalists, but in general they stand for a strongly conservative position, including the verbal inspiration of Scripture, the Virgin Birth, the substitutionary atonement and the bodily resurrection. All hold to "a personal, visible return" of Jesus and many of them are premillenarians. These doctrines are held not only by what Roosevelt called "the lunatic fringe" but also by many noble Christians. To them these doctrines appear as the faith once for all delivered to the saints. In general, they regard Christianity as a static deposit of doctrine.

The movement is propagated through Bible Institutes, notably the Moody Institute in Chicago and the school at Los Angeles. Their academic standards are low and they send out many graduates who prefer the "short cut" training to the more rigorous education of the standard colleges and theological seminaries. So-called "prophetic conferences" are used to spread these ideas. It is said \$300,000 has been spent in distributing a series of 10 volumes, called Fundamentals."

The enterprise has spread to China where the "Bible Union" attempts to separate the so-called orthodox missionaries and native Christians from the modernists.

William Jennings Bryan, a prominent figure in American political life, has urged that it be made a statutory offence to teach anything contrary to the Genesis account of man's origin, in the schools and colleges of Florida. A bill of this nature failed by only one vote to pass the Kentucky legislature. Bryan has called the President of the University of Wisconsin—a lifelong and

loyal Congregationalist—an atheist because his institution does nothing to counteract the modern view of the Bible.

In general, the Fundamentalists strongly oppose colleges, modern science, liberal Christians, the social gospel and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ. Extremists attack Prohibition, Peace Conferences and other efforts to make this world better.

While this movement affects various denominations, it is particularly strong among Baptists. One association in Michigan has withdrawn its 14 Baptist churches from the denomination and calls itself an Orthodox Baptist Association. Many of the Fundamentalists desire a creed but at every Northern Baptist Convention when this proposal has come to a vote, it has been decisively beaten. There has been much controversy as to the acceptance of gifts with credal conditions. There have been bitter attacks on the denominational educational institutions. The New World Movement was seriously handicapped by the attitude of extreme Fundamentalists who opposed contributing to our colleges and to the Foreign Mission Society. The Society has been under fire for some time and at Milwaukee in 1924 a committee was appointed to investigate the doctrinal soundness of its policies.

One of the leading Fundamentalists is reported to have said: "We can never consent to stop short of seeing the denominational machinery in control of the great Conservative constituency which makes up at least three fourths of the denomination. We must therefore eliminate from our Boards and offices of responsibility all those men who have put in jeopardy the spiritual life and purpose of the denomination and who wink at the subversion of our schools to the propaganda of a modernistic program."

The controversy has not been acute among the Southern Baptist where there are but few liberals. The general temper is strongly conservative and opposed to "entangling alliances" with other denominations.

The liberals or modernists range from pretty conservative men to a few very radical thinkers. This group includes many of the denominational leaders and educators besides a large number of the younger educated ministers and laymen. Their first fundamental is loyalty to the spirit and purpose of Jesus. They regard Christianity as

a living, growing, changing, thing. It is a life, rather than a doctrine. They reject the doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible as a bondage to the letter which restrains the life giving spirit. They accept the results of modern historical and critical study of Scripture, which they regard as the record of a progressive divine revelation. They believe that the Fundamentalist view of the Bible would ultimately alienate educated people from the church.

The liberals accept modern science and see in evolution God's method. They believe in freedom and in this emphasis, count themselves truly loyal to the Baptist tradition. Most of them believe in the application of the teaching of Jesus to industrial, social, political, racial and international relations. They heartily co-operate with other Christian communions and look forward to a larger measure of unity.

Some have predicted a split in the denomination with resultant deplorable hard feeling, confusion and litigation, but the likelihood of this seems remote. The liberals are being strengthened by the influence of Dr. Fosdick and others who hold educated men to the church and "the middle of the roaders" tend to follow progressive guidance.

KENNETH C MACARTHUR, M.A.

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#### BAPTIST MINISTERS' FRATERNAL UNION.

Very successful meetings were held in the Church House on Thursday, April 30, At the business meeting, in Kingsgate Chapel, a statement of the work of the year was made by the secretary (the Rev. A. J. Payne), which showed that the membership is steadily increasing and the financial position quite satisfactory. The library has been brought up to date, new books having been purchased and old books withdrawn from circulation. It is confidently hoped that four numbers of "The Fraternal" will be issued for 1925 to the five hundred or more actual members. The following elections were made, viz.:—President, the Rev. F. Goldsmith French; vice-president, the Rev. J. E. Martin; treasurer, the Rev. E. W. Gibbons, F.R.G.S.;

librarian, the Rev. W. H. Pratt; secretary of the Prayer Union, the Rev. J. E. Martin; secretary and acting editor of "The Fraternal," the Rev. A. J. Payne; whilst the following were elected as the Council for 1925-6, viz.:— the Revs. M. E. Aubrey, M.A., W. Broadbent, J. H. Brooksbank, A. J. Burgoyne, B.A., B.D., J. E. Compton, Dr. Dakin, B.D., E. Corns Davies, J. R. Edwards, P. W. Evans, B.A., B.D., B. Grey Griffith. B.D., C. M. Hardy, B.A., E. E. Hayward, M.A., S. W. Hughes, D. J. John, W. Joynes, G. C. Leader, B.D., Lewis Ambrose, A.T.S., D. Lindsay, F. Townley Lord, B.A., D.D., W. S. Lord, J. E. Martin, W. H. Matthews, B.A.; B.D., Jas. Mursell, A.T.S., B. Oriol, B.A., B.Sc., T. Powell, B.A., F. A. Rees A. M. Ritchie, M.A., Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke, M.A., J. R. M. Stephens, A. W. H. Streuli, H. H. Sutton, B.A., and Dr. H. J. Wicks, B.A.

At 3 p.m. a united meeting with the B. and A. Fraternal Union was held, when Dr. Wicks welcomed his successor, the Rev. F. Goldsmith French, to the chair. After prayer by Dr. Rushbrooke, M.A. the retiring President of B.M.F.U. gave an address on "Authority in Religion: Where is it?" It is not found, he said, in the infallibility of the Pope. Jesus would have been the last to have infallibility centre in His Church. Certainty in religion only comes to us through Christ's manifestation of God's holy love. The ultimate source of authority is God in Christ. Religion certainty is ours only as Christ conquers us more completely. A hearty welcome was given to Dr. E. C. Dargan, of the Southern Baptist Convention of America, who emphasized the links which bound England and America, whilst Dr. A. T. Robertson was warmly greeted when he spoke on "Our Bond of Union as Baptist Ministers." Dr. Rushbrooke expressed our thanks to the speakers, and introduced Dr. Lewis and Pastor Farelly, of Lens, who spoke of the approaching opening of his new Baptist Church at Vimy Ridge. A most profitable meeting closed with the Doxology and Benediction, after which 154 ministers adjourned to the library for a social hour. The meetings were greatly enjoyed, and the experiment of a joint meeting of the two Unions was felt to have justified itself. It gave Dr. Ewing M.A., an opportunity of making known the objects of the British and American Fraternal Union, and also the

secretary of the B.M.F.U., an opportunity of emphasizing the fact that every Baptist minister can join the B.M.F.U. by payment of 2s. 6d. subscriptions at the beginning of each new year. One result of the meetings will be the closer linking up of local Baptist Fraternals with the B.M.F.U., and so strengthening its effectiveness. The British and American Fraternal Union, which shared the cost of the social hour, will also, through its secretary, the Rev. S. G. Morris, contribute notes to "The Fraternal" from time to time, and so keep its aims before our Baptist ministry.

ARTHUR J. PAYNE

Hon. Sec. B.M.F.U.



#### RECEPTION AT THE CHURCH HOUSE TO OVERSEAS VISITORS.

**T**HE graphic pen of C. W. Vick has so well described in the "Baptist Times" the happy gathering in the Church House on Friday, May 8th, that I need do no more than place on record that such an event took place.

About 100 brethren, chiefly London Pastors, assembled and we had a truly uplifting time, both in fellowship at the Reception and in the speeches that followed.

Dr. Robertson was in fine form, and this time Dr. A. T. Fowler, our President, was with us and added a few graceful words. Visitors from Brazil, Australia and America, were amongst the other speakers, and the presence of several ladies added to the grace of the occasion. Mr. W. F. Chappell of Southlands, Kettering, our Treasurer, received several half-crowns from members, new and old, and I doubt not but that others also will send to him as the result of reading these notes.

S.G.M.

## BRITISH-AMERICAN BAPTIST FRATERNAL ANNUAL MEETING.

THE decision to combine with the Fraternal Union for our annual meeting proved a very wise one, the result being mutually beneficial to the two sister organisations. Does this point the way to the advantage of further co-operation in the future? In any case, as the Secretary is good enough to offer me space in the "Fraternal," I hope that some notice of our own work may appear from time to time.

Kingsway Chapel was crowded when, after Dr. Wicks' inspiring address, Dr. Ewing rose to report progress in the work of the British-American Fraternal and to introduce the visitors from Overseas. Chief among these was Dr. A. T. Robertson, whose presence, with that of Dr. Dargan, as Messengers from the Southern Convention, was one evidence of the activity of the "B.A.F."

Dr. Robertson gave us one of his delightful New Testament talks, illuminated by many a shrewd remark and humorous illustration. Dr. Dargan, both at the Assembly and at our own meeting, succeeded in making his audience feel that there was something in the Southern point of view in the Civil War, and then roused his hearers to a high pitch of enthusiasm by his eloquent assertions regarding the intentions of thousands of the best people in America to take their fair share in the settlement of European problems.

Dr. Rushbrooke told of his recent visit to the United States and also of his work in Europe, and we then adjourned to discuss over the tea cups the possibilities of drawing our Baptist folk throughout the world into a vital union of fellowship, and incidentally the closer working of the two Fraternal Unions in this Country.

I shall be glad to hear from any Minister who is willing to correspond with a brother Minister in America or in our Dominions.

SYDNEY G. MORRIS.

## PRAYER UNION NOTES.

WE very heartily welcome the following new members to the fellowship of our Prayer Union :—

R. A. E. Anderton, Southampton	W. F. Knight, Nuneaton
James E. Bottoms, Southend	S. M. Loveridge, Devizes
Samuel Brown, Ilford	John McBeath, Leytonstone
E. J. Burrows, Wedmore	Archd. Mc. Fadyen, Leicester
S. Pearce Carey, B.M.S.	J. Bryan Marshall, Camberwell
Percy A. Clements, Margate	W. D. Morris, Kidderminster
J. E. Collier, Chipstow	G. Wilfred Nash, Pole Moor.
Jno. Edmonds, Portsmouth	Huddersfield
Harri Edwards, Raglan	T. G. Pollard, Ealing
W. S. Evans, Neyland, Pems	B. Reeve, Bermondsey
Chas. Feakin, Cullingworth	S. J. Somers, Paulton, Bristol
A. D. Garrow, Brighton	Tinsley Such, Leicester
E. Barnardo Green, Sidcup	J. Cameron Taylor, Hackney
N. W. Gubbins, Welwyn	W. H. Tebbitt, Teddington
R. Douglas Hamilton, Melsham	E. Ungoed Thomas, Carmarthen
A. B. Hall, St. Neots	F. W. Walter, Walthamstow
Griffith J. Harris, Southsea	A. E. Wheeley, Oadby
A. E. Hastings, Chelsea	John Wooding, Middleton Cheney
R. W. Hobling, Oxford	G. S. Woodeson, Chard
D. H. Feakin, Luton	D. W. Young, Golcar
W. T. Kershaw, Bideford	

We heartily invite all members of the Fraternal Union to unite with the Prayer Union. If they will send a Post Card to J. E. Martin, The Manse, Erith, Kent, intimating their desire he will gladly forward a card of Membership. Should any of the old members of the Prayer Union wish to have a new card of Membership we shall be *glad to forward* them one, on hearing from them. Several have written to enquire what additional subscription is required for Prayer Union Membership. We should like it to be clearly understood that the subscription to the Fraternal Union includes membership in the Prayer Union if brethren wish for it.

We hope we may be able to publish a full list of our Prayer Union membership at the close of the year.

Dr. F. B. Meyer, the founder and for so many years the President of our Prayer Union, is now on a visit to Canada and the United States. We are sure our brethren will follow his movements with prayerful interest.

J. E. MARTIN.

**LIBRARY NOTES.**

Many new books have been added to our Library and most of them are now in circulation.

Librarians will greatly help the smooth working of our Library system by collecting and despatching the books of their Group as promptly as possible.

Several Boxes are at present available and applications from any Group of five members of the B.M.F.U. will be promptly dealt with.

A number of Library books have been withdrawn from circulation, and book buyers are invited to apply for list of bargains.

There are still one complete Box and two odd volumes missing which should have been returned in December last!

All communication should be addressed to the Hon. Librarian, W. H. Pratt, 235, Selhurst Road, South Norwood, S.E. 25.

