

The Fraternal.

VOL. XXI.—No. 1.

MARCH, 1930.

Literary and other contributions for "The Fraternal" should be addressed to the Secretary, Rev. A. J. Payne, 25, The Grove, Earlsfield, Wandsworth, London, S.W. 18.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT.

Dear Brethren in the Service of Christ,

As President of the Fraternal Union I greet you all, and I wish for you fidelity, joy, and spiritual prosperity in the work you have been commissioned to do for your Master.

We have all been moved by the statistics, which, however we may read them, show us clearly that all is not well with us. I will not attempt here to explore "the force of the figures." It is easy to be unduly pessimistic as it is to belittle these signs of a lack of abundant life. We must begin with judgment on *ourselves*. That is our first concern, and our first cry must be "Lord, revive Thy work in *us*." We need more religion, that is, more personal fellowship with God in prayer, a fuller understanding of the teaching of the New Testament, a greater loyalty to the central truths of faith, the truth about our Lord's person and work, as Teacher, Redeemer and King, and a corresponding love of the people of our charge. The longer I live the more convinced I am that revival must begin with *us*. A deeper inward life, a fuller manifestation in our characters and ministries of the power of Christ, a sincere, insistent witness to the Gospel, a wholehearted devotion to our people in all their joys, sorrows and needs—these will be the sure herald of greater days in the Church, To know God in Jesus Christ, to apply the religion of

Jesus in all its manysidedness to the minds and hearts of men, and to live in the lives of our people and their friends, teachers, pastors—*this is our business.*

It is the one task of our lives and to that, whether the years be many or few let us give ourselves anew.

Your affectionate brother,

WM. ERNEST BLOMFIELD.



SECRETARY'S NOTES.

We have been revising the roll of our Members as it is important that we should have a live membership and not merely a nominal one. After this issue of the 'Fraternal' we do not propose to send the magazine to any whose subscription has not been paid up with some regularity, Will members therefore please forward their subscription 2/6 to Rev. W. H. Pratt, Nocton Rise, Stratford Road, Watford, as soon as possible. We cannot afford to send it otherwise and the good work we might do is hampered as a consequence.

We are seeking also through our President, Rev. W. E. Blomfield, B.A., to raise the sum of £50 to replenish the boxes of Books for circulation amongst groups of five ministers and if any one of our members can help us to secure contributions for this purpose we shall be very grateful. We wish to keep the Boxes full of Books which are fresh and up-to-date.

Will members please note that our Annual Meetings will be held at Richmond Baptist Church, Liverpool, during the B.U. Assembly on Thursday afternoon, May 8th, from 2.30 to 5 p.m., when Dr. Blomfield will give us an address on "Some Time-honoured Secrets of Victorious Church Life."

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Rev. William Joynes, of Frinton-on-Sea.

THE MINISTER IN HIS HOME.

The *title* and *subject* of this address are intentionally common-place. As ministers, we are creatures of the common-place, though we are not always ready to acknowledge it.

I begin with an assumption. That is, that a minister has a home, not merely a lodging. Not like the author of the song "Home Sweet Home," who had no home at the time he wrote the song. Sweet home was either a memory or a prospect.

I. THE MINISTER'S HOME.

Home.—Someone has said home should be built four square and rest upon four pillars—Confidence, Purity, Forbearance, Love. "Our to-days and yesterdays are the blocks with which we build."

In home building there must be an active partnership between husband and wife. It should not be left to the wife whether there is a family or not. You need the masculine and feminine gender in the grammar of home making as well as in the grammar of speech making. If there is one home more than another that needs to be constantly happy it is a minister's home. Some are; some are not. I recall two who confided in me about their unhappiness. The cause of one was the husband, the cause of the other was the wife. Debt and incompatibility of temperament were the causes of the unhappiness. In both cases the churches were injured and Christ was wounded in the House of His friends.

II. THE MINISTER IN HIS HOME.

These are the requisites required.

Diligence.—St. Paul's advice is as much for the minister as the merchant, "Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." No minister can retain his people and increase his congregation unless he does.

As Dr. Maclaren quaintly and succinctly puts it, "A

minister must keep putting through the bung hole if he is to keep drawing at the spigot." And as C. H. Spurgeon said to the students of my day, respecting his own habits, "I graze in every field, but always try to give forth my own milk." No minister can retain and maintain his freshness unless he is diligent in his study, diligent in the culture of his own soul, diligent in looking after the health of his own body.

I have heard it said more than once by an ex-president of the Baptist Union "That the two besetting sins of some ministers are mental laziness and indiscretion."

Devotion.—Prayer in the home is as vital as breathing, if our lives are to be healthy and our influence helpful. The family altar should be as sacred as the Communion Table and much more frequently used. Make time to pray. I know all the difficulties where children go to school and young people go to business at different times. But where there is a will, a way will be made.

I can speak with experience as I have had six in our home and four now grown up and members and workers in the Christian Church. They tell me there is nothing that binds them so firmly by gold chains about the feet of God as the memory of family prayer in their parents' home.

The records of Matthew Arnold, Dr. J. G. Paton and even the Cottar's Saturday Night show us that memories of the family altar often hold fast when the old home has crumbled and the old home voices are silent. Brethren! keep the home fires burning on the family altar.

Discretion.—Are we as discreet in our homes as we might be, where there are either children or servants or both? Many years ago the Rev. Wm. Brock read a paper to the ministers of the L.B.A. on the subject of "The Minister's Home." One lesson, I well remember, was the need of discretion in the home. That husband and wife should not, over the meal table, discuss *people of the church* nor talk about any *Church trouble* before the children. It creates prejudice, distrust and suspicion in the minds of young people.

I know a church whose minister had this miserable habit. Trouble arose in the choir. The minister's daughter hadn't wisdom enough to be silent outside the

home. The result was, gossip spread, the church was split and minister resigned. The wise man advises us "to keep sound wisdom and discretion, they shall be life unto our souls."

Discipline.—This is necessary in a minister's home, as much, if not more, than in any home. So many of our people think a minister's home should be an "ideal home."

In an ideal home there will be parental discipline. The parents will train the children, *not* the children train the parents. The way a minister's sons and daughters walk and talk outside may either help or hinder a minister's work. I sent a family of four, parents and two daughters, to a certain Baptist Church in Kent where they were gladly welcomed, attended regularly, and gave generously of service and money, so the minister wrote me. After a few months I received a letter from the minister saying these friends had slowed down. Could I see them or write them. I did and found the reason was the minister's two daughters openly flouted their father's Church and flirted about the streets on a Sunday whilst the father was preaching. My sympathy went out to the minister, I found out from him, the reason was discipline in the home began too late to be effective.

Then it is not only homes where there are children, but where a maid is kept. The way the maid is treated may either help or hinder a minister's influence. I know that all servants and maids are not angelic, some have fallen! A Wesleyan minister once came to me in his distress over this business. They only kept one, but his wife had had 10 servants in 12 months. Those ten servants were loud speakers that broadcasted in the neighbourhood where the minister lived and worked. They, with bad motives, half ruined that minister and especially his wife's influence in that neighbourhood.

III. THE MINISTER'S DUTY IN HIS HOME.

To live in his home.—"To live more nearly as we pray." Too much is left to the wife in some homes. "Some ministers," says a well-known Professor, "suffer from too much foot and mouth disease. They talk too

much in the wrong place, and run about too much." You may remember Dr. Robertson Nicholl said of a certain popular preacher, that when he got to heaven the first thing he would ask for would be a Bible and the second thing would be a Bradshaw!

Is it this habit that explains why so many ministers' sons and daughters are outside the churches? Within an area of two miles there were five ministers' sons who rarely attended any church. I knew their fathers, and as Secretary of the Northern District of the L.B.A. I got in touch with them at various times and their fathers. It was not a question of attending a Baptist church, they attended no church. I have sometimes wondered if it were possible to take a census of Baptist ministers' children. How many would be found outside our Baptist Churches.

The Great War and aftermath explain the reason why so many ministers' sons and daughters have no use for their fathers' churches. But why haven't they use for our churches? Doesn't that imply condemnation of us? What have we taught them? I must leave you to answer that.

To live for our home. Robertson, of Brighton, says his father's home was the noblest place on earth wherein to cultivate the noblest sensibilities. Home life is the test of our religious life. It is here that real character displays itself. It is the place where real character is measured.

Are we living and walking advertisements of our calling? It is not enough to wear a clerical collar, or Spurgeon "bow" or Fairbairn "knot." In our homes we are to be a Gospel, then an Epistle, and finally a Revelation. of spiritual goodness. Every day is a judgment day for a minister. We have to either walk or stand before the judgment seat of our people. They do not always judge righteous judgment.

The Scriptures remind us that all our children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of our children. "We can have no greater joy than to hear that our children walk in truth." In that great day of the Lord when we must give an account of our stewardship, may

we have that unspeakable joy, "Here am I Lord and the children which Thou hast given me."

"Happy the home when God is there
And love fills every breast,
Where one their wish, and one their prayer,
And one their Heavenly Rest."



THE MODERN MINISTER AND BIBLE STUDY.

I am to speak to you about the study of the Bible. I could wish, in some ways, that my task had been easier, because the subject is now so well worn and familiar that it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to say anything about it that has not been said hundreds of times before.

I. And yet there is no subject after all that is more important than this. For the Bible is the final text-book in the things of God, and we can never afford to do without its help. There is, we would all agree, no literature in the world that deals so adequately with the deepest things, and whatever else we feel we are bound to read, we must take care that we never neglect the Bible. For if it is necessary to "keep abreast of the times," it is more necessary to keep abreast of what Carlyle called "The Eternities." But the trouble is that in the enormous pressure of modern life, with all the thousands of things that are thrust upon our notice, it is the more immediate things, as we call them, that we feel bound to consider first—the daily paper for instance—and the things that really matter most we are apt to forget altogether.

We are constantly saying things like that to our people, because they need to have them said. And yet, perhaps there is no place in life where the proverb more directly applies, "Physician, heal thyself."

We are, all of us I hope, aware of the problem. (a) We have to read a great many things to keep ourselves abreast of our people. Travel, biography, science, the serious men of letters like Galsworthy and Masefield, and popular authors like Edgar Wallace and W. J. Locke—we feel we

must have some acquaintance with all of them so that our people, especially our younger people, may see that we know something of the modern situation. Nothing is perhaps more directly useful to a minister than a wide acquaintance with general literature. But that takes up time.

(b) Then, in addition to this general literature, there is the reading that belongs more directly to our own department, theology, philosophy, church history, sermons. Sometimes we look down a publisher's catalogue, and we sigh with envy and despair. If only we had the requisite time and money what a tremendous lot we could do! But as it is we can only pause to dip our bucket into the stream, and taste, and hasten on; for we dare not linger longer.

(c) Now add to all this "that which cometh upon us daily," the care of the churches to which we minister, the letters we have to write, the committees we must attend, our pastoral visitations, and all the things which go to make up our work, and who is there among us that does not lament the awful swiftness of time and the lack of leisure from which we suffer?

We live in a busy world, and it is hard amid the rush to keep our footing and stand still for a moment or two. We are always on the move, forced on perhaps by the pressure around us, and it is nearly always the Bible that has to pay the price.

You know how it is with our people. Even the best of them find they have little time for prayer and Bible-reading, the rush of life is so great. And we often have to pull ourselves up with a jerk because the thing we reprove in them we find, alas, in ourselves. We can spend our days quite honestly at our work and discover that, apart from the portion we read at family worship or the verse we are studying for our next Sunday's sermon, we hardly ever open our Bible at all. Perhaps the greatest weakness in our churches to-day is the lack of the devotional spirit. There is plenty of bustle and movement, but there is little time for prayer and the cultivation of the deep things of God, and when we condemn the churches, we must, I think, include ourselves.

We need to remind ourselves again and again that the secret of any power we can wield in our ministry must lie

in serious and devout Bible-study, and so, whatever else we do with our mornings we must see, I think, that we give the Bible a daily and generous place in our time-table, for nothing can ever possibly take its place.

(a) We should find it productive and even prolific of sermons, and if we studied our Bibles we should never have to live in that dry and weary land where some unfortunate preachers seem to pass so much of their time, living from hand to mouth and wondering how on earth men like Dr. Clifford or Dr. Maclaren managed to carry on for fifty or sixty years in one pastorate. The Bible is the most fruitful soil in the world to anyone that will dig in it and as we work in its fields of thought from week to week the difficulty will not be how to get something to say, but how to say in our limited time all that the Bible gives us to say.

(b) I believe to that this habit of daily and systematic Bible study would make our sermons fresher than they sometimes are. It is hardly conceivable that a man can live seven days a week with Jesus and the prophets and the psalmists and apostles, without feeling the glow and beauty and power of religion. So often we drink from water that is at best second-hand and sometimes very much second-hand. It comes to us mediated through writers and preachers who have no doubt drunk of it freshly themselves, but in the process of passing it on to us they have robbed it of much of its original sweetness and vitality; it is like the water we drink in a ship at sea, and the value of constant Bible study is, that it takes you direct to the fountain itself, and the oftener you taste it the more you feel that there is nothing else like it. The Bible is bound to affect our sermons, and I have faith enough in its divine inspiration to say that it is bound to affect them for good.

(c) But a third point, and perhaps the most important, is this, that the habit of constant Bible study will nourish our souls, and for our work as ministers of Christ there is nothing we need so much in the world. For preaching, with all that accompanies it, is the expression of our own inner spirit, and it can only be true and devout and helpful when the spirit that creates it is in abiding touch with God. "My sword shall be bathed in heaven," says a text that has fascinated me a lot though I have not yet preached

from it, and I am quite sure of this that many of us would do a great deal more with our swords if we "bathed" them oftener "in heaven."

It was never my lot to hear any of the pulpit giants of the last generation, but I can never forget my first impressions of Dr. Jowett and my own distinguished predecessor, Dr. Brown. It was not so much what they said as the atmosphere they created. It ran through all they did, their sermons, their prayers, their lessons from scripture, even the choice and announcement of the hymns they had. I felt then, and closer acquaintance has confirmed the impression, that these men from their habit of constant Bible study had so acquired the way of looking at things that, consciously or unconsciously, it affected everything they did. They lived systematically with God, and that, I believe, was the secret of their influence. They created the Bible atmosphere in their services, and that is perhaps the thing that we need most to-day.

More and more, the churches are crying out for the spirit of religion, and an arid intellectualism can never take its place. Long ago Paul spoke of the possibility of having the tongues of men and of angels without the spirit of love, and in the same way we all know quite well that it is possible to handle religious things without any true appreciation of the spirit that lies behind them. Every day, I think, we ought to read our Bibles with a view to knowing the mind and heart of God for ourselves, because apart from that, our ministry must be largely in vain.

I would, therefore, say that the first requisite of Bible study is a Bible we read for ourselves daily, and methodically, and systematically. Nothing can ever become a substitute for that, and nothing should ever be allowed to push it out of its place. If we have Hebrew and Greek so much the better, but if our Hebrew and Greek are like Mephibosheth, somewhat lame in both their feet, so that we find our progress hindered and hampered by the constant need to consult a dictionary, I should say that we should reserve our Hebrew and Greek for the detailed study that lies behind our Sunday sermons and make fuller use of the English Bible instead, of course, that it is up-to-date in its translations; say the R.V. with marginal notes or the Variorum Edition with notes and textual

emendations at the foot. I was glad to see that Mr. Aubrey stressed the need for a further study of the English Bible in our Colleges. But we need it in our ministry every day of our lives, and though it seems like stating a truism, I yet would say to myself and to you that never a day in our lives should go past without our Bible honestly open before us and our minds resolutely bent to see what it has to tell us.

II. But Bible study, if we do it honestly, begins to take us beyond the Bible itself, and I should like now to say something about that. For the Bible, however we view it, and whatever our theory of its inspiration, is a literature; not so much a book as a series of books, written by a great many different people and written over a period of hundreds of years in conditions differing very widely from those in which we now live. There are sections of the Bible that are quite plainly timeless. No one, for instance, needs to do any special study to see the beauty of the twenty-third Psalm or the fourteenth of John. A simple old saint with the A.V. open before him can get as much out of passages like these as any scholar, and if he is devout and the scholar is not, he will get, I believe, a great deal more. But, while that is perfectly true of some parts of the Bible, there are other parts that no one, I think, can get the best results out of it without help of some sort from somewhere. For instance the Levitical books or the prophets, there is much in these that we do not know by our own experience, and unless we get guidance somewhere the customs, the thoughts, the aims, that the Bible in these places deals with must remain to us more or less misunderstood. The Bible introduces us again and again to ways that are not our own, and if we as ministers are to study the Bible at all, we must study it in the light of all the conditions from which its message emerged.

Let us look at several examples of this. Take for example geography. In the Bible, especially in the O.T., we are dealing with a land that has stamped itself deeply on the soul of its people. Wherever we read we have the land as our constant background, and we can never really pretend to know the book unless we know something of its geography. For instance, a fact like Israel's sense of dependence on God, gains enormously when we know that the physical conditions of Palestine made the people

depend for their harvests almost entirely on the bounty of heaven in the form of dew or rain. In the same way, the austerity of Amos is understood when we know something of those bare, bleak uplands in Judah from which he came. Again and again the land illuminates the book, and without the geography we should often miss the significance of the message.

I was much struck by seeing this again in Dr. Fosdick's recent book "A Pilgrimage in Palestine." As one would expect, it is always interesting and informative. But the thing that struck me most was that his study of the geography has apparently given him an increased respect for the history, and his recent pilgrimage has, I imagine, somewhat modified his previous liberal views of the historical value of the O.T. No one who has ever read Sir George Adam Smith's "Historical Geography of the Holy Land" will ever feel that the geography of the Bible can be safely ignored. Without the geography it can never in some respects, be rightly understood.

Then next, take history. Here again we find ourselves driven to go beyond the Bible for the sake of understanding its message. All kinds of peoples are mentioned from obscure nations like the Perizites, and Hivites, and Jebusites, to famous empires like Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia, and I doubt if anyone can appreciate the historical books of the O.T., and more especially the prophets, without knowing something of the political and social conditions from which they came.

Take, for instance, Isaiah and Jeremiah. We all know how great they are. But until we have looked at them with, say, George Adam Smith at our elbow, I question if we can really appreciate their value at all. We have to know something of their statesmanship and the policies they advocated before we ever see their message clearly, and we need a little history before we can fully appreciate their attitudes.

The same thing is true of the Bible wherever you touch it. I would not for a moment say that the man who never reads anything but the Bible can never understand it. But I would certainly say he can never understand it fully, and much of its significance must be completely lost to him. Many of the so-called prophetic interpretations of Scripture

would never have come into existence if their authors had understood their Bibles a little more fully, and for all misunderstandings of scripture a knowledge of history is, I believe, the best corrective. Every book and every chapter should be studied in the light of its own environment and the result will be, I think, that the Bible will become a thousand times more fascinating and a thousand times more lucid.

But geography and history are not the only studies the Bible compels us to make. There is Comparative Religion as well. I dipped, the other day, into Sir James Frazer's "Folk Lore in the Old Testament," and extremely interesting and helpful I found it. One does not suspend one's judgment in reading a book like that, and one does not need to accept all its conclusions. I found myself, for example, strongly dissenting to a sentence like this in the preface, "It should henceforth be possible to view the history of Israel in a truer, if less romantic, light, as that of a people, not miraculously differentiated from all other races by divine revelation, but evolved like them by a slow process of natural selection from an embryonic condition of ignorance and savagery" (p viii). Why should it be necessary to think that because Israel grew up from an "embryonic condition" that in some respects meant "ignorance and savagery" it was therefore "not miraculously differentiated from all other races by divine revelation"? The distinction between natural and miraculous is unscientific and the conclusion of Sir James Frazer is not by any means inevitable. But, with qualifications of that sort, I found this book extremely helpful, and many of the points he made did much to illuminate Scripture. Take that whole mass of intricate detail associated with Jewish law and sacrifice. I believe it becomes much clearer and much more intelligible in the light of Comparative Religion and without the light that Comparative Religion gives I confess I should often find it exceedingly dull and unprofitable.

There are other lines of study that I might have dealt with. But these, perhaps, are quite sufficient to show that as we read the Bible we want to read it with all the information we can get out of the Bible before us, and, speaking for myself, I should say that the best of all companions to the Bible is that much abused, but wonderful

book, Peake's Commentary. It says a tremendous lot in a little space and it gives us all the background we need for the most of the reading we want to do. I do not say that all its conclusions are gospel. Many of them I myself quite frankly accept; others I quite as frankly reject. But I should say that no one who spends an hour a day with his Bible and Peake at his elbow will ever rise from his desk without feeling that he knows and loves his Bible a great deal better than he did before.

I have purposely refrained from discussing the question of what is vaguely known as inspiration. Theories on that point have, I think, rather obscured the issue. After all, the main thing is that we read the Bible itself, read it daily and conscientiously, and if we do not find its inspiration there for ourselves I doubt very much if any theory will give us the Book as God meant us to have it. The Bible is a perfect mine of knowledge and one can spend years and years on its study and find it increasingly interesting and helpful. But the vital thing is the resolve to put it first in our study. Let everything else group itself round it. Put the Bible in the central place and your ministry will be enormously enriched.

H. COOK.



F. B. MEYER AND THE PRAYER UNION.

When our last issue went to press, the beloved founder and President of our Prayer Union had only just passed to the higher service and it was impossible to say very much concerning the great loss which had befallen us. Writing now, some months afterward, that sense of loss still remains and we somehow feel that the Church has suffered a permanent impoverishment in his departure. As there was only one Alexander Maclaren, and one C. H. Spurgeon, so we may safely say there will only be one F. B. Meyer.

We do not propose here to attempt a biographical sketch. This has been amply supplied by Dr. Fullerton's delightful and interesting book.

Here we simply wish to speak of his connection with our Prayer Union.

There can be no doubt that the Prayer Union was an outgrowth of that deepened spiritual experience which came to him in the train, of the visit of the "Cambridge Seven" to Leicester in 1883. Speaking of this he said, "Before that time my Christian life had been spasmodic and fitful, now flaming up with enthusiasm, and then pacing wearily over leagues of grey ashes and cold cinders. I saw that these young men had something which I had not, but which was within them a constant source of rest, and strength, and joy. Never shall I forget a scene at 7 a.m. in the grey November morning as daylight was flickering into the bedroom. The talk that then was held was one of the formative influences of my life."

He was conscious that he then "got something" and he became deeply anxious to share that "something" with his brethren in the ministry. It was this experience which led to his letter to "The Baptist" inviting his ministerial brethren to unite in prayer on the morning of each Lord's Day and to seek for themselves, and for others, an anointing of the Holy Spirit which should fit them for the work of the day. The response which this proposal elicited showed that many brethren felt that there was a "something" which they did not possess, but for which they longed. In November, 1887 the first meeting was held at Melbourne Hall, Leicester. It was attended by about 60 brethren, and in the memories of some who still survive, it will ever stand out as did that November morning when Mr. Meyer held converse with Stanley Smith and C. T. Studd. It was the beginning of an era of opportunity and usefulness unknown before.

Soon after, Mr. Meyer removed to Regent's Park, and with his coming to London the Prayer Union grew in numbers and influence. It became our custom to hold a meeting during the Annual Session of the Baptist Union in the Spring, and a Quiet Day especially for London brethren in the early weeks of October. These meetings were held at Regent's Park during Mr. Meyer's ministry there and afterward at Christ Church. The President was always the Chairman and also our host, generously arranging meals for those who attended. In these meetings he had

the help of many evangelical leaders of all branches of the Church, and one remembers such helpers as J. B. Figgis, of Brighton; Chas. New, of Hastings, besides those of our own ranks, W. R. Skerry, J. R. Wood, G. Turner, J. C. Foster and some others who are still amongst us.

The "Wives Prayer Union" was formed at a meeting convened at Regent's Park Chapel in October, 1890. One of our beloved President's last messages was given to a meeting of our Sisters early in 1928. District Conferences in connection with the Prayer Union were arranged in all parts of the country, brethren being always willing to help in convening such meetings, that they might secure the presence of the President, whose messages never failed to leave behind a gracious and uplifting influence.

It will thus be seen that our beloved friend was associated with every movement in the history of the Prayer Union down to the time of his translation.

How far his influence has reached, and what fruit his teaching and example have borne we cannot say, but we are sure that there are not a few who can say that they owe him a debt which they cannot fully estimate. For many of us he stands out as the ideal of a Christian minister. He lived that he might "apprehend that for which he had been apprehended of Christ Jesus." For him Christian life and service were full of wonderful and unexplored possibilities. Into these he was ever pressing forward himself and seeking to lead others. We thank God for this wonderful gift to His Church, and pray that men of like spirit and consecration may be given for the days to come—never surely were they more needed than now!



PRAYER UNION NOTES.

The following names are to be added to our list of members :—

J. E. Johnson, Bibury, Gloucester.

G. Marshall, Cotton End, Bedford.

D. F. Mitchell, B.A., Flinders St., Adelaide, S. Australia.

A. E. Pope, 22 Poppleton Road, Leytonstone. E. 11.

H. J. Warner, Stanley Avenue, Chesham, Bucks.

It will greatly facilitate the working of the Prayer Union if all our members would kindly remit a subscription of 2/6 to the Financial Secretary of the Prayer Union—Rev. W. H. Pratt, Nocton Rise, Stratford Road, Watford, Herts. This will enable us to send them the "Fraternal and Remembrancer" as soon as it is published. Otherwise on account of the printing and postage it will be impossible to do this.

It was the intention of Dr. Meyer to have called the London brethren to a day of prayer during last Autumn. We trust that when our Committee meets it may be found possible to arrange this. Surely, in view of our Denominational Statistics, the condition of our B.M.S. finances and other matters, if ever there was a time that called for earnest prayer it is now.

Our Baptist Ministers and Missionaries Wives Prayer Union maintains a very vigorous life. We were privileged to attend the Summer Gathering at the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Wood, at Shenfield, Essex. The whole day, which included a visit to Child Haven, was greatly enjoyed by a large company.

Will brethren wishing to join our Prayer Union kindly send their names to the Secretary, J. S. Martin, The Manse, Erith, who will furnish them with a card of membership.

It is with much regret that we have heard of the death of the Rev. J. G. Raws, who was formerly Assistant Minister to Dr. Maclaren at Union Chapel, Manchester. Mr. Raws had been living for many years near Adelaide, South Australia. He was greatly respected amongst Australian Baptists. When the first Secretary of the Prayer Union, Rev. G. Wainwright, was stricken with illness, Mr. Raws kindly acted as Secretary till the appointment of the present holder of that office. He was always keenly interested in the Prayer Union.

Rev. G. Wainwright, who has been residing in Tasmania for the past nine years, is now on a visit to England. He delivered an address at the Quarterly Meeting of the Wives Prayer Union at Bloomsbury Chapel on July 12th.

The death of our late Founder and President, Rev. F. B. Meyer, raises the question of the future of the Prayer Union. At the recent meeting of the Council a Sub-Committee was appointed to consider this question, consisting of:—Revs. Dr. E. W. Gibbons, G. C. Leader, B.D., E. Corns Davies, W. H. Pratt, A. J. Payne, and J. E. Martin (Secretary).



REALITY.

They ask reality, yes, and we
Can show them reality visibly :
And they must allow the things which we show
Are just what all men can see and know.

A real *Book*, with its printed page,
Loved, valued and honoured, from age to age ;
A Book which contains the wondrous gift
Both men and communities to uplift.

A real *people*, without a home,
Through nations and countries condemned to roam ;
Scorned and dishonoured by thoughtless minds,
But in whom Faith a witness to Scripture finds.

A real *change*, often so strangely wrought
In the worst ; beginning with inmost thought,
Then made apparent in words and acts—
Conversions, Divinely ordered facts.

And if a reality yet is asked,
To find it *within* let the soul be tasked ;
If prayer for salvation ascend on High
God's Peace shall be a reality.

WILLIAM OLNEY.

MINISTERIAL SLOVENLINESS.

Dear Editor,

I recall a bit of sound advice which I received when leaving business for College some years ago. My old employer, a sturdy Baptist, said, "Always pay strict attention to your personal appearance. You will be God's servant and pastor and leader of the church. You owe it to both to be clean and tidy in your general deportment. A slovenly pastor is an insult to his church and his Creator."

That advice has lived with me. I don't wear a clerical collar, but I do endeavour to always wear a clean one; and I try not to look as if I had slept for a week in my suit. My reason for writing is because I can see an increasing disregard on the part of a number of men, of their personal appearance. There are plenty who dress as if eager to disavow any connection with the ministerial office. Call it "anti-sacerdotalism" if you like, but they need not go to the extent of slovenliness. Our Superintendents usually set a good example; one or two of them might smarten up a bit though. They set an example to the men in their own areas, and they would be the first to criticise a man who let his church down through untidiness.

I attended the Nottingham Council Meetings and the luncheon at which the Bishop of Southwell was present. I could not conceive of the Bishop letting down his episcopal office by untidy attire, but some of our brethren looked—well, looked as you see them look! Not even smart enough to be commercial travellers.

If it is *not* possible for some to look tidy without the clerical collar, by all means resort to it, for it often hides a multitude of sins.

Yours sincerely,

DECERE.

