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The Fraternal

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EDITORIAL.

THE WHITE PAPER.

THE proposals likely to be embodied in the forthcoming Education Bill warrant close attention. While having every sympathy with the popular demand for unity between the Denominations, we feel the desire for such unity must not be subordinated to the need for clear statement of our just demands. Baptists in particular, and Nonconformists in general, have still some principles worth upholding. That Mr. Butler's proposals fall far short of what we have a right to expect, at least in the estimation of some Baptists, is evident from the following extract taken from a private letter received from a correspondent:—"After having studied the Government's White Paper on Education I am inclined to think it represents a notable victory for the R.C.'s and the Anglicans, and marks the lowest point we have yet reached in the influence of Non-conformity on English public life. It is depressing to think of Anglican schools being bolstered up for another 25 years. Of course, the White Paper has some fine things in it, and the Dual system will be swallowed with the rest. I am appalled at the concessions to the C. of E. and the R.C.'s. I understand the Federal Council are moving, and also the Congregationalists, but I have not heard about the Baptists. Is anything being done?"

At the time of writing we are unable to answer our correspondent's question, but we feel sure our Education Committee will take an early opportunity of giving the Denomination a definite lead in this important matter.

THE FRATERNAL.

THIS issue of the magazine goes forth again in small type. We have received many messages from readers: all but four vote for the continuance of the present form while the war emergency lasts. Undoubtedly it loses in appearance and is read only with difficulty. This we greatly regret, but unless there is any general request to the contrary we propose continuing the smaller type. Looking ahead to happier days we cherish

great hopes for *The Fraternal*. There should be no difficulty in producing a magazine of considerable service to our members: a letter to hand from the Secretary of the New Zealand B.U. opens out the possibility of providing for the Baptist constituency within the Commonwealth, as well as that of the Homeland.

Thanks are due to W. R. Watkin, of Llanelly, who has spent a considerable portion of his holiday in supervising the present Bangor number. We are grateful also to those who have responded to his appeal.

Arthur Dakin has kindly consented to produce a Bristol number for January: we hope that Cardiff and Glasgow will make themselves responsible for the two succeeding issues.

BANGOR BAPTIST COLLEGE.

THE Baptists of Wales believe in an educated Ministry. They have made great sacrifices for it in the past. Their generosity is continued to the present day in their spontaneous support to their two Colleges. Some of the Denomination's Founders in the seventeenth century were university men. When the universities were closed to Nonconformists they started and supported Academies for training their men. Early in the eighteenth century an Academy was started at Trosnant, Pontypool, where several men were trained, some of whom went to Bristol Academy for further training. In time Trosnant ceased to be. Our men proceeded directly to Bristol. Our churches in Wales became uneasy over this, inasmuch as very few of the young men returned to the Principality, preferring rather to serve the Churches in England. To counter this tendency, however, an Academy was started at Abergavenny in 1807, which moved to Pontypool in 1837; and in 1893 to Cardiff. A second College was founded at Haverfordwest in 1843, which was moved to Aberystwyth in 1894, and later dissolved, dividing its students and what property it had between the two other Colleges.

The North Wales churches had been complaining for years that their men, who were sent for training to Pontypool and Haverfordwest, never returned, because of the attraction of South Wales pulpits for them. They began to clamour for a College of their own, thinking thereby that they would gain much for their churches. They realised this, and more, for they have conferred a blessing on the whole Denomination; and not on North Wales alone. The College was started in 1862, at Llangollen; and moved to Bangor in 1892.

It has been blessed from the commencement by a succession of able and devoted teachers. In Dr. John Prichard, its first Principal, it had a sane and an all-round man to guide it in its initial stages. He was assisted and succeeded by that well-known theologian Dr. Hugh Jones. Then Dr. Gethin Davies was called in as a colleague and successor to Dr. Jones. Dr. Davies was a popular preacher, and a flaming evangelist. He did great things, not only for the College, but also for the small Churches of North Wales. He secured substantial sums for the endowment of the Institution from Mr. Richard Cory and others. He and Dr. Hugh Jones died all too young. The Rev. Silas Morris, M.A., succeeded Dr. Gethin Davies, both as the Classical Tutor and Principal. Mr. Morris was a fine New Testament scholar. His services were invaluable when the College was moved to Bangor and the curriculum was gradually revolutionized by the demands of the University of Wales. In this connection he secured the co-operation of the Congregational College in forming a United Staff to prepare for the Welsh B.D., and other theological studies. At his death in 1923, the Rev. J. T. Evans, M.A., B.D., who is now retiring, was called to the Principalship. He had been connected with the College

since his student days, on the retirement from the Hebrew Chair of Dr. T. Witton Davies, who confined himself entirely to the Professorship of Semitics at the University College. Mr. Evans was appointed to the Chair of Hebrew and Old Testament Literature. He has done well for the College. He is well known as a preacher throughout the length and breadth of the Principality. He has also gained recognition as a sound scholar. He was one of the Editors of the Biblical Dictionary published by the University of Wales. He has written a book on "The Religion of the Old Testament" and a commentary on *Amos*. He has contributed largely to the Denominational and other religious Presses. Now the Rev. J. Williams-Hughes, M.A., B.D., who has filled the New Testament Greek Chair for some years, is called to the Principalship. The College will be in safe hands. Mr. Williams-Hughes is one of the most popular preachers in Wales. He is quite at home in both languages; and he is called to all the big events by other Denominations as well. May he be spared for many years, to guide the Institution!

Besides the men who have been called to the Principalship, the College has been well served by many notable men. Dr. T. Witton Davies, the great Hebraist and well-known Old Testament scholar was on its staff for many years. Dr. J. Gwili Jenkins filled the New Testament Greek Chair with distinction for years. He was a great figure in the national life of Wales. He was a literary giant, a fine poet and a great scholar. He became Archdruid of Wales, and as a preacher he was in great demand throughout North and South Wales. The Rev. T. Ellis Jones, M.A., B.D., after fourteen years as pastor of Soar, Llwynhendy, one of the largest Churches in the country, and three years before that as pastor at Mold, has been called to the Chair of Biblical Literature and Doctrine. He enters upon his work with great credentials of service as a preacher and a writer. Dr. Jenkins, Principal J. T. Evans, Principal J. Williams Hughes and Mr. E. Ellis Jones were all old alumni of the College. Two other old students rendered valuable services on the staff of the College, Dr. H. Cernyw Williams for short periods, and Dr. Owen Davies, of Carnarvon, for many years as Lecturer in Homletics and Pastoral Theology. All the other Principals and Tutors were trained at other Institutes.

Bangor has turned out a large number of leading preachers; chief among them were the Revs. E. T. Jones, of Llanelly, and Charles Davies, of Cardiff, who were considered Princes of the Welsh Pulpit in their day. It may be said that most of its alumni have remained in Wales, to serve the Welsh Churches mostly. A larger proportion of its students has clung to the Welsh Language than of any other College in Wales. It may be that being located in the heart of the Welsh countryside has something to do with this, whereas Cardiff and Haverfordwest are the centres of large English-speaking areas. The fact also that its first students, Dr. Owen Davies, Dr. Waldo James, Dr. W. P. Williams, Dr. J. R. Jones, Dr. H. Cernyw Williams, and others made a name for themselves in the Welsh Pulpit created a tradition among later generations of students that no sphere offered larger opportunities for real preaching than among the Welsh Churches. There have been some students in the College, however, who showed an early preference for the English Pulpit. Perhaps the chief among them was the late Dr. Tom Phillips, of Bloomsbury, who reached an unsurpassed position as a preacher, over the border.

The College has repaid its debt to other Colleges for some of its Tutors by giving Cardiff Dr. Tom Phillips, and Professor John Griffiths. It has also given Professor M. B. Owen to Carmarthen Presbyterian College, which is a sort of Undenominational Theological Institution serving all the Denominations. Bangor has not been to the fore in

Missionary work. There are signs now, however, that it is turning a new leaf, for the new representative of the Society in Wales is one of its students. It has not contributed spectacularly to the public life of Wales, though many of its alumni have played their part well in local and educational matters. It has served the Denomination in Wales well. It has supplied the Baptist Union of Wales with many Presidents. Five of its men have been chairmen during the last seven years, and the present efficient Secretary of the Union, the Rev. R. T. Evans, B.A., is also an old student.

Not only has it turned out a noble succession of preachers, but from its inception it has also supplied the Denomination with many literary men. Three of its first students did a great deal to enrich the churches with noble and useful literature. The names of Dr. Owen Davies, Dr. Cernyw Williams and Dr. W. P. Williams will be long remembered in our midst. This tradition has been handed down to the present generation. Every Editor of *Seren Gomer*, our Baptist Magazine, from its resurrection in 1909 has been an old student of Bangor. Two of the recent editors of *Seren Cymru*, our Denominational weekly, have also been given by this College, and the able first editor of *Seren yr Ysgol Sul*, our Juvenile monthly, the late Rev. B. Humphreys, hailed also from our midst; and our modern scientific Historian, the late Rev. T. Markland, M.A., was an old student of the College. It can be safely said that the prevailing marks of our Llangollen-Bangor training are preaching and literary gifts. May it long retain those distinctive marks!

The College has entered upon a new stage in recent years. The University College has formed a full theological Faculty. Our tutors, along with the Congregational College tutors, and others, constitute the teaching staff. It is a pleasure for Baptists to remember that there are two distinguished Baptists, in addition to our tutors, members of the Faculty, namely, Principal D. Emrys Evans, M.A., B.Litt., and Dr. H. H. Rowley. This arrangement will give our men a new and a finer opportunity of equipping themselves with latest results of scholarship, for the tasks of the Ministry; and under the leadership of the new Principal and the new Professor, who are well-known preachers and writers, the College can expect to retain the old traits while acquiring new ones.

W. R. WATKIN.

FORGIVENESS THROUGH THE CROSS.

WHY the Cross? That is a question which has faced the theologians of every age, and to which many and diverse answers have been given ranging from the purely subjective theories of atonement to the most crude forms of the substitutionary theories. We must needs seek a reason for the faith that is in us, and we are compelled to ask anew, could not God forgive the sins of men without the cross and suffering of Christ?

Broadly speaking the theories of atonement can be divided into two classes, the subjective theories which maintain that the Cross has to do only with man, and the objective theories which hold that the Cross has its influence also upon God. To the former type of doctrine God's forgiveness is entirely dependent upon His graciousness apart from anything that happened in the life and death of Jesus. God is eternal love, and it has always been His pleasure to forgive the sins of men. The Cross did not in any way influence God to forgive. Its purpose was not to make God a better and kinder God but rather to make man a better man. The essential power of the Cross is its power to generate in man a spirit of repentance which is the one condition of forgiveness. The obstacles to reconciliation all lie in the life of man. It is our hardness of heart that pre-

vents God's forgiveness from reaching us. The Cross of Jesus, wherein was revealed a love that went to the uttermost for our sakes, has power to melt our hardened hearts, and thus to make us the eligible recipients of forgiveness. But it does not influence God in any way, for it has always been God's pleasure to reconcile sinners to Himself. There is a great value in this emphasis upon the subjective efforts of the Cross. Too often have theologians conceived of God as being a hard unmerciful being, who must be bribed ere He will grant His petitioners the forgiveness that they seek. Men have been too apt to clothe their ideas of atonement in terms borrowed from the courts of law, until Calvary became far too much like a struggle between two Gods, the one intent upon securing His "pound of flesh," whilst the other was sacrificing His all that the trespasser should be freed from his just doom. Nowhere does the New Testament justify anyone for holding such ideas of the atonement. God is one, and He is love. It is "God that is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself without imputing to them their trespasses." It was not apart from God, and surely not in opposition to the purposes of God that our reconciliation with God was effected by Jesus. It is God's own eternal love that is the moving cause of all that was enacted through that Cross. As the stream flows from the spring, so the work of atonement flows from the eternal love of our Father in heaven. It is "His own love" that God commends, "in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Neither can we overstress the truth that no historical event can in any wise benefit us except it become part and parcel of our own experience. The work of salvation is not a work done and completed beyond the confines of our experience, and apart from our self-identification with the purposes which Christ achieved upon the Cross. Our repentance and faith are vital conditions if we are to experience forgiveness through the Cross. We are indebted to the subjective theories of atonement for the emphasis which they have given to these truths.

Nevertheless, it is quite another question whether we can rest satisfied with a merely subjective theory. Both the witness of Scripture and the witness of the Christian consciousness down the ages have testified to the fact that the Cross is far more than the subjective theories of atonement would allow. It is in that Cross that Divine forgiveness becomes available for us sinners. It is through that Cross that God forgives. There is in it an objective element, and apart from it God cannot reconcile sinners to Himself.

(1) The Cross was necessary so that God might reveal His love towards us. It is there God "commends," "proves," His love. A true conception of the atonement is bound up with belief in the Deity of our Lord. It is when men deny Christ's oneness with God that the objective theories of atonement become immoral. Jesus is too often conceived as a third person who stands between God and the sinner, receiving at the hands of God the punishment which the sinner deserved. Against such an idea our very conscience revolts. No one would justify an earthly father who visited upon his innocent child the punishment due to his guilty one. No one would commend an earthly judge who, instead of convicting the law-breaker, sent into prison the most righteous citizen in the land. And what would be immoral in the human realm we feel must also be immoral in the Divine realm. But all this comes of separating between Christ and God. What if Christ be God? What if it be, not a third person, but the Judge himself who takes upon himself the punishment of the guilty? That is the teaching of the New Testament. It is God's own love that is revealed in the Cross. The Cross is the price that God pays for the forgiveness of our sins. In the words of the Fourth

Gospel, Jesus and His Father are one, and they are no more one anywhere than in the sufferings of the Cross whereby the sinner is reconciled to God. The atonement is not something demanded by God, but something given by God. "God hath indeed looked into himself for the lamb of burnt offering." The sufferings of Christ are the sufferings of God. It is thus He has revealed His love. Mere words are too weak to express love. Love must ever reveal itself in service and in sacrifice. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

(2) The Cross was necessary to reveal the heinousness of sin, and the reaction of a holy God to the sin of man. It is when sin raises the Cross for the Christ of God that we see sin for what it really is. And it is when we see the Christ of God bearing His Cross that there is revealed to us God's reaction to sin. Merely to announce forgiveness in so many words would be tantamount to condoning sin, or at least to minimizing sin, and making it appear as a very unimportant matter. But when we see Jesus "protesting unto blood" against sin, then we see what sin really means when it is seen through the eyes of God. Whenever the holy love of God and the heinous sin of man meet, there is the Cross.

(3) It is in the Cross that forgiveness becomes available. It is true that God remains unchanged. He hath loved us with "an everlasting love." In a very deep sense "the Lamb has been slain from the foundation of the world! And yet, somehow, the Cross has changed the relationship between God and man. For the Cross is a creative power, it creates a new fellowship. It is there that the forgiveness of God is, as it were extended to us. It is one thing for us men to forgive in our hearts the people who have offended us, it is quite another thing publicly to announce our forgiveness. It is that public announcement that costs. It is then that we have to bear our cross. But even so, it is then only that we can re-create the fellowship that has been broken. God has never been other than a loving and a forgiving God. But on that Cross He has announced Himself as such. There He has put His hand in our hand and sealed His forgiveness. There He has effected the at-one-ment, and created a new relationship between sinners and Himself, so that henceforth we can testify with an early saint, "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." T. ELLIS JONES.

THE VALIDITY OF OUR MINISTRY AS BAPTISTS.

IN the main we are, and have been, congregationalists in theory and in practice as regards church government: and every church, by virtue of its being self-governed and having no court of appeal in matters involving difference of opinion except the New Testament, claims the right to raise preachers and teachers of the Word from among its own members and to set apart suitable men as ministers, to administer the ordinances and attend to the pastoral duties of the ministry.

When in the past a church served a wide parish, it had branches far apart, and to secure for the mother-church and its daughter-churches regular Communion services more than one minister was set apart or ordained for the work of the ministry by such a church. The practice of ordaining a man for the purpose of administering the ordinances without being in pastoral charge of a church, still prevails in certain districts.

This may be a survival of Presbyterian influence on our church life, though a very modified form of Presbyterianism. Recognition of the ministers of sister-churches was a matter of courtesy at first, but each church reserved the right to refuse acknowledging the minister of a sister-

church, if either his doctrines or deportment was not in harmony with New Testament teaching.

The practice of laying on of hands when setting one apart for the ministry was important in the opinion of some churches, but even they never held that that ceremony implied transmission of grace to the person being ordained which he could not otherwise be the recipient of.

We Baptists have been pretty consistent in our emphasis on the spiritual nature of religion and that the Spirit endows a man with the gifts and the grace necessary to be a minister of religion, and calls him to the work. We, therefore, only recognize, in our ordination service, the call to, and the qualifications of the man for the Christian ministry. We do not endow him with authority to exercise his ministry. We have no clerical and lay distinctions. The minister is a layman, but a layman set apart for the ministry. His ordination confers no new power on him: imparts no grace to him. We hold that this view is truer to the spiritual nature of Christianity than the sacerdotal view, and that it is the prophetic view as expounded by Jeremiah with unerring insight and by the Apostle Paul without ambiguity. But are we mistaken?

Listening lately to a Bishop inducting a new minister to a parish and emphasizing the grace which could only be imparted by men consecrated in the apostolic succession, I was seriously led to reflect upon this belief.

The view represented by the bishop holds that the grace sufficient for an effective preacher is not adequate for the administration of the sacraments, and that the grace imparted in the consecration of a priest endows him with a power to perform the greatest of miracles, namely to change ordinary water into means of regenerating a sinner and the bread and wine into a real incarnate Christ—for such seems to be the meaning of consubstantiation or real presence in the language of high churchmen.

Now one must admit that the view put forward by the bishop is very old in the Church, really older than the Church, according to Kirsopp Lake, but not inherited from Israel's religion. One cannot ignore the fact that the terms priest, altar, sacrifice, appear in sub-apostolic writings of the Christian Church and that Paul in 1 Cor. 10, 20-21 and John in Ch. 6 of the Gospel use language very similar to what sacerdotalists have used and do use all along. Further, scholars of strong judgment and endowed with keen critical powers, when dealing with the history of the Church, find that the consistent testimony of the Church from the end of the first century to the Council of Trent four centuries ago, supports the sacerdotal view of the Christian ministry. One has an uncomfortable feeling that they may be right. Again it has been hurled to our faces as Baptists that we have no regard for the testimony of tradition and history, that we jump the centuries and go back to the apostolic age, ignoring the interpretation given to the teaching and practice of the Apostles by their immediate successors. There is some truth in this charge. One of our earliest predecessors would have no exponent of the Christian religion but Luke and Paul, (and his father was a contemporary with the author of the Gospel of John), and yet, even he had sacerdotal views with regard to the sacraments.

The sacerdotalists find support for their views in the New Testament itself. Cardinal Newman in his books sincerely believed that Roman Catholic doctrines of church and sacraments is a logical development of the Apostolic teaching as embodied in the New Testament, with the result that the sacraments are ineffective as channels of grace unless administered by a Catholic priest. This standpoint seems to be reflected in the Letters of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, c. 90-100 A.D., when he asserts

that the bishop alone gives validity to what is done in and by the Church, so that neither baptism nor eucharist had any value unless administered by the bishop or a duly appointed deputy, that is, a presbyter ordained by him.

The passages in the New Testament relied on in support of this view are those in which Peter is given the authority of the keys to open and shut the door to the Kingdom of God, to feed and shepherd the sheep and lambs where Jesus bestows the Holy Spirit on the Apostles by breathing, and Paul by imposition of hands and the like, and the inference drawn is that the Spirit can reach the lay soul only via the hands of those who have been raised to the unbroken succession of the Apostles, by episcopal ordination.

The Church of Rome claims that she alone possesses the true succession, so that "nulla Salus extra ecclesiam" has no meaning outside the Church of Rome. If her claim were true, we Baptists would have no hope in the world. But high churchmen claim to share in the apostolic succession, and a dignitary of the National Church in a sermon preached in a village church some years ago, when the writer of these words was supplying a Baptist pulpit in the same village, compared his church to a reservoir, the ministry to the pipe which conveys the water to the people and ordination in the apostolic succession to the sluice which controls the water from the reservoir. As to what power is transmitted by such an ordination the belief of a newly ordained, but imperfectly educated, curate, in our neighbourhood, is an illustration, for he asserted that if he blessed milk adulterated with water, no analyst could detect the adulteration.

One is entitled to be sceptical as to whether the New Testament supports any such extravagant claims.

However, it is a fact that apostolic succession in the sense of an unbroken series of ministers in churches founded in apostolic times from their foundation to the middle of the second century, is emphasised by Hegesippus, Irenaeus and Tertullian as a guarantee of the transmission of the true teaching of the Apostles. Tertullian, in any case, would scarcely limit the operation of the spirit to the mediation of the Catholic priesthood.

We can heartily accept the unbroken tradition of the early church through succession of ministers from the earliest age as to the Rule of Faith, but the Church formed her Canon of the New Testament before the end of the second century as the authoritative writings which contained the Apostolic Rule of Faith, and with that the succession finished its work. Thus we Baptists are not far wrong in making the New Testament our final court of appeal, and in its light we should not be unduly worried as to our right to ascend a pulpit.

The claim to apostolic succession is at bottom a pretext in order to muzzle liberty of judgment in spiritual matters, and it should be weighed in the light not of what the credulous past thought about it, but of spiritual experience and common sense. However, this claim centres chiefly on the sacraments, for they become channels of grace only in the hands of priests in the succession, if the view be correct. As Baptists we hold the view advocated by Zwingli of the ordinances: we seldom clothe them with the importance Calvin attached to them. We do not even make ordination vital for the administrator, for holding as we do Luther's view of universal priesthood of believers, an ordinary church member is qualified to baptize and preside at the Lord's Table with us. That they seldom do is due to our preferences, not our principles.

We are not at implacable variance with the Church of history,

after all, on this question, for in its riper wisdom as the result of bitter disputes, the Church decided that the act of baptism mattered, and not the administrator. The Church of Rome does not re-baptize a convert from the Baptists, as we know for a fact, because it holds this view. It, of course, takes for granted that the right formula has been used when baptizing. The succession, therefore, even for a Roman Catholic, is not a *sine qua non* for baptism. The same reason ought to apply to the eucharist; but consistency would undermine the pretensions of priestcraft, consequently the bread and wine are in a category by themselves. Why? Perhaps this quotation may help to answer—"The matter common to Christianity and the Mysteries (pagan) is of the essence of religion and must at all costs be retained, if Christianity is to be a religion at all and not a mere code of morality." (A. Chandler: Cult p. 135).

The pagan Mysteries did claim to possess miraculous power to regenerate the soul and confer immortality by a process similar to what the "succession" stands for; but if the choice were between the Mystery view and the Quaker view of true religion we should lean to the latter as the safer one, but as Baptists we remain at the mean between two extremes.

We are accused of denying the capacity of material things to convey a spiritual message by refusing the claims of advocates of apostolic succession: for by consecrating the elements they make them vehicles of spiritual sustenance and sanctifying influence, they say. The way we get hold of the deeper meaning of nature is not that represented by priestcraft. The absence of such a system from our thoughts in studying nature assists our discovery of her spiritual message, rather than vice versa.

If our claim as Baptists to have the right to be ministers of the gospel by virtue of a spiritual call be not in harmony with the prevailing belief of the Church of the centuries, we worry not, for we can go to the source of the Church's authority for our enlightenment, and even though Peter and Paul be not altogether for us, we can go back to the Master and defy all, and continue our mission in the world. M. B. OWEN.

WHY DO THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER?"

NO question was asked more persistently by the pious in Israel than this which has been adopted as the title of this article. The following are some of the replies given by those who endeavoured to solve the problem.

To the vast majority, of course, afflictions of all kinds were nothing other than the sign of God's displeasure. This was the generally accepted orthodox view. Suffering was penal, retributive, and due to the judgment of God. The Deuteronomic teaching of rewards and punishment too fully supported this view. He who obeys the law shall enjoy all the good things of life; but he who disobeys, must be prepared to face all its worries and disappointments. And as the proclamation of a general principle, the law was of course valid. We cannot live on this earth doing just what we like. The apostle Paul knew exactly what he was talking about, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6. 7). We cannot violate the laws of even physical creation without being called to pay the penalty. "If you eat salt herrings, even the grace of God cannot prevent you from being thirsty." Much less can we violate the social and moral laws. None can be selfish, greedy, and vicious without injuring others and destroying himself. And yet in course of time, this Deuteronomic teaching was felt to be, not only inadequate, but also even misleading.

One reason for this was that it interpreted goodness in strictly material terms, and when this material prosperity did not fall to the lot of the pious, they were inclined to doubt both the justice of God and the genuineness of His religion. Moreover, people failed to grasp the possibility of innocent suffering. To them, every form of suffering was penal; and when a righteous person was sorely afflicted, they could come to no other conclusion than that he had sinned most outrageously against God. In course of time too, the teaching of the Deuteronomic law was perverted even further than this. The extent of the suffering was made to correspond exactly with the enormity of the sin; and the extent of the happiness was made to correspond exactly with that measure of virtue which had produced it. A big sufferer presupposed a big sinner, and the very prosperous man was taken to be specially favoured by God Himself. A strict, precise, mathematical equation was thus thought to exist between conduct and condition. If Job had only suffered from an acute attack of toothache, the friends would not have bothered about him. But his afflictions had actually been showered upon him, a clear proof to them that he must have violently abused the will of God. The author of Chronicles, because he could not tolerate the idea that good king Josiah should have come to such a bitter end, had to make Josiah himself responsible for the tragedy (2 Chron. 35, 21); and in order to make the facts square with his perverted theory, he must needs confer the dignity of sainthood upon the evil king Manasseh who, in spite of his reactionary measures, had been permitted to occupy the throne of Judah for fifty-five years (2 Chron. 33, 13). But notwithstanding these abuses of the Deuteronomic law, the penal view of suffering was always in the ascendant, and it was applied to both the righteous and the unrighteous. Interpreted in a national sense, it gave little trouble. Even the prophets could ascribe the national calamities of both Israel and Judah to the sins of the nation; but during and after the exile, when Jeremiah and Ezekiel had taught personal religion and individual responsibility, this view caused the most painful searching of heart to the righteous, and called forth from them all kinds of agonising complaints and protests.

Some of the pious in Old Testament times sought to solve the difficulty by claiming that there *was* no actual problem. Rather than explain the fact of suffering, they endeavoured to explain it away. According to them, the suffering of the godly was not real. It might appear for a time, but it soon passed away. There was nothing really substantial about it. It is true that the ungodly were successful, and just as true that the godly did not succeed. But this state of things will soon be changed. The difference between them is merely accidental. "Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Ps. 30,5). The best exposition of this view is undoubtedly found in Psalm 37.

But all true believers were not able to comfort themselves by these considerations. Had they not known some people who were passing rich in godliness dying of starvation? And on the other hand, had they not known others who had never ceased mocking and ridiculing the Almighty, getting all the good things they desired? There was nothing gained by explaining away the suffering. The class of people we have now in mind insisted upon believing that God had some specific purpose in the suffering of His children. They would not deny that He was still the source of the suffering. Possibly too, they would be quite prepared to admit that the sufferers deserved a great deal of it; but notwithstanding this, they were yet fully convinced that it was the love of God rather than the vengeance of God that was at the back of it all. The Lord was desirous of proving His children, and making them better children as the result of the process. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted" (Ps. 119,

71). Such was the experience of one of them. He felt better for the buffeting. To all who believe, and persist in believing, suffering can be the means of spiritual advancement. It is the sufferers of the ages who have been their most generous benefactors. They succeeded in attaining to a wealth of spiritual knowledge quite unknown to more fortunate folk. The Old Testament in a number of places has called our attention, not only to the fact that suffering can be penal, but that it can also be educative and disciplinary.

Neither was *this* explanation satisfactory to all the Old Testament saints. Even Job was not completely satisfied. They could not divest themselves from the popular conception to which we have already referred. It was always the penal aspect that appealed to them. For this reason, they surmised that they were suffering, not because they themselves had sinned, but because others had sinned before them. They assumed that they were reaping what others had sown. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." To such an extent were the prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, absorbed in the new doctrine of individual responsibility that they took upon themselves to criticise this popular proverb, but it was true in spite of this. And had not God Himself declared that He would "visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation" (Ex. 20, 5). Mr. C. S. Lewis in his book "The Problem of Pain" has expressed his opinion that four-fifths of the suffering of our world is due to the infamous doings of wicked men and women, and his calculation cannot be very wide of the mark.

There were others again who had reached such an altitude of spiritual experience that they were able to defy the problem of suffering. They made no attempt to minimise it, and they were not, like Qoheleth, defeated by it, but such was their faith in God that they rose above it. The success of the ungodly, their wealth, and their luxuries! What do they matter? The tribulations of the godly, their afflictions and their misfortunes! Why should we croak over them either? It is worth while cherishing godliness even for its own sake, not in order that punishment may be averted, or that a substantial reward may be gained. All that really matters is that we should be thoroughly convinced that God is ours, and that we are God's. "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want": Come what may, prosperity or adversity, success or failure, joy or jail—godliness brings its own reward. The author of the 73rd Psalm was evidently pre-eminent in this company.

Lack of space forbids us from referring to those explanations of the problem of suffering in late Post-exilic periods, but two remarks may be made. With the development of the conception of Satan, the evil was ascribed to him. The devil became responsible for many of the wrongs of human life. In other circles, the wrongs were put down, not to him, but those supernatural powers to whom it was assumed the interests of the heathen nations had been committed. It is in the light of this late view that we can best understand Psalms 58 and 82.

But the writer who offered the loftiest solution to the problem of the suffering of the righteous was that great religious genius of the exile. He went further than all the rest. He was inspired by God to observe that every pious man was called upon to suffer vicariously, and that every innocent suffering, inspired by love, had redemptive power. The path of voluntary suffering in the interest of others was nothing other than the way of God to attain to the highest and best, the way of God to save sinners and redeem the world. The last of the Servant Passages (Is. 52, 13—53, 15) is of course the *locus classicus*. We remember that

this truth obtained its fullest and most perfect realisation in our Lord and Saviour. "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet. 2, 22). And yet, though Himself innocent, such was His love of men and His devotion to the Father, that He suffered more than all else, and became the source of salvation to all sinners.

Suffering inspired by love is always redemptive, and it is only this kind of suffering that can break the spell of sin and banish its evil consequences. Devotion and love, service and surrender, sacrifice and the cross! This is the way of the Kingdom, and in this lies its challenge to us who are its subjects. We remember the story about Telemachus, the monk, how he wilfully threw himself into the arena, a voluntary victim to the devouring lions. It is said that this self-sacrifice proved to be the end of the gladiatorial shows of the Coliseum in Rome. One deed of voluntary self-sacrifice succeeded in breaking the spell of one of the most cruel customs of the ancient world! And this action on the part of Telemachus is a prophecy of what can be done by others when the vision of the Lord Jesus has mastered their lives. "I rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake which is the church." (Col. 1, 24).

We are called upon these days to stress this fundamental truth of the Christian religion—that the path of the cross is the way of the life abundant. It is only as we consecrate ourselves to the highest that we can defeat the lowest. Sin can be overcome only by voluntary and self-sacrificing love and once we overcome sin, we shall annul the pain and the suffering which have been caused by it. If we cannot solve the problem of pain, we know how to reduce it, and we should be grateful to God for this knowledge.

J. T. EVANS.

OUR PECULIAR DIFFICULTIES: THEIR PERFECT SOLUTION.

AS Servants of our Lord and Saviour, we are called to face the world as we find it. An atmosphere of "modernism" is evident in all quarters with a strangely confused complexity, but we must face it as it is, and face it squarely. No admirable imaginary bygone will relieve us of our practical difficulties, and no compromise with the so-called "modern" world will solve them. Our high calling compels us to deliver our Lord's Message of Life and to minister to the needs of our own generation in and through His Love. Therefore, whatever aspect of our work we consider, it must be viewed in the light of His commission to us as His messengers. Our personal conviction that we are His messengers is our first and foremost qualification. This indeed is the source and solution of our difficulties.

"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith, Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20, 21, 22). In John 14, 12, He says, "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father." This high privilege and sacred responsibility of the Disciples is subordinate to their individual life-consecration to Him. As our Lord Himself devoted His life to work out the will of His Father and therefore went about doing good and taught the people with authority—"even so send I you."

Although the world to-day is in many ways different from the world of our Lord's day, in spirit everything is the same. His life continues in His disciples; His call and commission to His disciples continue in every generation; the need of human nature and His sufficiency remain

unaltered. Even His first disciples were sent to a world different from the world He lived in. He sent them, after His resurrection, to an entirely new world; they were sent beyond the borders of Palestine and were no longer to confine their message to the Jews. They were sent to face the gentile world, with its complex social life, its intellectual cults, and pagan religions and wild habits. They launched out into the deeps of the new paganism. But they went under His command, compelled by His indwelling Spirit, and inspired by their devoted love for Him. They were convinced of His sufficiency to meet the world's need and that His desire was to save all men from their miserable estate into His Kingdom of Love.

The disciples applied this message to the need of the people as they saw them, in the cities and the villages. They proclaimed: The Lord Jesus as the Saviour of the world—the world as it was, with its races and religions, its rot, riots and ruins, its folly and its fun, its philosophy and its failure, its sorrow and its sin, its diversity and its devilry. A tremendous adventure to the Lord and also to His disciples. But it succeeded. It succeeded because they were entirely dependent on their love and faithfulness to Him. They were watchful of their devotion to Him and careful to introduce Him to the people they met. All their problems centred in their relationship to their Lord. It is an interesting study to follow them and to watch them applying this Gospel of Love to the problems that faced them. Let us take the work of the Apostle Paul as an example. Here is a quotation from "Paul and the Intellectuals" by Dr. A. T. Robertson. Preface, page vii:

"Paul faced his world full-breasted and with no dodges or evasions. He was a man of transcendent intellectual powers and of fine scholastic training, a man of schools! But he was no mere copyist of Jewish rabbi or of Greek philosopher. He did not hesitate to turn to his own use the language of the men whom he faced in conflict, if by so doing he could convey his meaning with more clearness and power. But Paul did not follow the Judaizers to ceremonialism or the Gnostics into philosophical stupidities. He had his faith and philosophy grounded in an unshakable experience with the Risen Christ. On this supreme fact he based his theology and his philosophy. He knew Jesus Christ. No new theory could upset him. So he brushed to one side the bondage of the Judaizers with terrific blows, as seen in the Corinthian Epistles, Galatians, and Romans. When Gnosticism lifted its head in the Lycus valley, Paul smote it, though a prisoner in Rome. He could not endure to see the glory of Jesus Christ obscured by the mist and fog of Gnosticism. The Epistle to the Colossians is the body blow against the early stages of this heresy that has never wholly disappeared. It appears to-day in various cults with high-sounding names that drink of the fountain of the Gnostic Philosophy. The Epistle to the Colossians is a short one, but tremendous in its depth and height, its scope and grasp. Gnosticism is met also in Ephesians and in the Pastoral Epistles as in other New Testament writings, but to Colossians we must go to see Paul on fire on the subject."

The Epistle to Philemon is an example of Paul's insight and mastery in dealing with the social problem in the case of Onesimus the runaway slave.

As His servants are we also qualified for our task at the present time, and our success is dependent upon our personal consecration to Him. Is our world different? This makes no difference, except, perhaps, in the method of application (even if there is that difference). Dr. Alexander Maclaren addressed the students of the Bala Theological College

in 1892. The following quotations are taken from the address: "...I would point to you, that element of ministerial power without which all other are vain. It is to be and know that I am a messenger of Christ..... The efficiency of the minister is in direct proportion to the prominence of Jesus Christ in him. The story of His Love and Life, and His Death and Glory, is the only power that will evolve and secure the results that we aim at." "But we must cultivate, if we are to do anything for the Master, the consciousness that He speaks to us. We are all apt to drop into the fault of taking our words, our thoughts, and our leading ideas, and the like from our fellows, instead of going to the fountain head....." "I do not know that there is anything more pathetic, more beautiful, or more heroic than the outline sketched of John the Baptist, in his sublime readiness and willing self-abnegation and gladness to be lost in the light of the Messiah whom he loved. Brethren, you and I have to do the same if we are to be of any use. A harp string when it is struck into music vibrates into invisibility. It is only when the string is unseen that the sweet notes will be heard."

We have our special duties to our own day, but our Lord will see that we are not without the necessary equipment. The many obstructions in our paths make our work difficult; but this fact should drive us nearer to our Master. The catalogue of difficulties facing us to-day would break the heart of anyone but a Christian. The apathy and antagonism, the practical atheism coupled with professional Christian faith, the social problems, moral and others, the inimical influence of vested interests in their organized snares for the young, besides the urgent calls of national service of all kinds. Our work has to be done in this atmosphere. We feed from it in our pulpit, in our Sunday School work, with the young people, in our visitation, and our services on public committees.

"Who is sufficient for these things?" "Our sufficiency is of God." "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Paul).

"Here is a Master worth the serving, and a life-work worthy of our best!" "We, thank God, have a cause to live for, and a dream to inspire us, and a power to bring us through, if only we will work for it, follow it, use it. There are a thousand things that we should touch upon.....but first of all, and over all, and most of all, really to preach must we not have a thrilling feeling of the greatness of our office, and the glory of the Master, and the splendour of our task?" ("In Christ's stead": A. J. Gossip, p. 62). GWILYM OWEN.

SOME EMINENT WELSH BAPTIST MISSIONARIES.

FROM a number of distinguished Welsh Baptist missionaries, Timothy Richard, W. R. James, and Thomas Lewis are chosen as representative. These men are the sons of Welsh Wales and have a common heritage and environment. They belong to about the same period: Richard was born in 1845, W. R. James in 1848, and Thomas Lewis in 1859. Strangely enough, the father of each one of them was a blacksmith. They came of simple country stock and were spiritually nurtured in the tradition of the Welsh pulpit and Sunday School. There is nothing in the history of their age which would account for their missionary zeal, and there is no evidence that the Religious Revival of 1859, to which in a spiritual sense Timothy Richard and W. R. James owed so much, resulted in any general missionary awakening. To these country lads, however, came the vision splendid. One of them from the Carmarthenshire village of Ffaldybrenin went to China; another, from the Cardiganshire village of Pontrhydyfendigaid, to India; and the third from a village outside Whitland, to Africa.

God has His diverse ways of calling men. It was a missionary address given by Mrs. Grattan Guinness during his college days at Haverfordwest which prompted TIMOTHY RICHARD to decide for China. For a man of Richard's imperial mind China, with its teeming millions, its ancient religions, and complex civilisation is the inevitable field. He interpreted his mission in China in broad terms. For him the Kingdom of God included the whole range of human activities. He was not satisfied with the saving of individual souls, but was out to refashion Chinese civilisation on Christian principles. The end in view determined his method of approach. Early on, the words of Matthew X. 11 became crucial in his thinking. His aim was to seek out those who are "worthy" and to capture the intelligentsia for Christ. "I am after the leaders," he once said. He believed that China could with advantage adopt what was best in Western civilisation. This conviction came to him during the famine in the Northern Provinces in the years 1876-77-78. Richard's great work in relieving distress at that time will always be remembered. The primitive condition of the roads and the complete absence of railroads, however, hampered the task of food distribution. The truth is that China was then still asleep. The superstition of its ancient religions hindered all progress and its educational system was wholly irrelevant to life. Richard saw that the country's deepest need was for an educational system which would be scientific and general in character as well as religious. He used all legitimate means for awakening the leaders to this need. He exerted every effort to persuade them to develop China's enormous natural resources, to build roads and railways, to establish modern industries, and to open schools and colleges for the purpose of scientific and general culture. To this end he made extensive use of the Press, and for 28 years, by means of the publications of the Christian Literature Society, he hastened the awakening of China. He had many obstacles with which to contend—the anti-foreign spirit of the people, the conservatism of the ancient religions, and persecution at the hands of fellow-workers who were not big enough to capture his vision. Only a man of Richard's spiritual and intellectual dimensions could have succeeded against such opposition. The secret of his strength, apart, of course, from his exceptional mental powers and organising genius—lay in his sympathetic and magnanimous mind.

He did his best to understand the great religions of the country and to appreciate their rich contribution to spiritual culture. To quote the words of Professor Soothill*—“He was one of the pioneers in China of the love of goodness wherever it be found, of truth as truth, from the lips of whomsoever it came, and of the effectual grace of God whether ‘covenanted’ or ‘uncovenanted.’” In short, he was a Christian gentleman, and gentlemanliness makes a special appeal to the people of China. By his disinterested service he gained the confidence of the Chinese as no other man did in his day.

After more than a century of missionary work the number of professing Christians in China is still very small; but that is not the whole story. The influence of Christ in China to-day must be measured by the mighty change He has effected in the religious, social, political, and educational life of the country. “At the present moment,” said K. S. Latourette in Madras (1938),† “mass modification” (that is the general influence of

*“*Timothy Richard of China.*” By William E. Soothill. London: Seeley, Service and Co., 1924.

†“*Distinctive Features of the Protestant Missionary Methods of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.*” By K. S. Latourette, in “*Evangelism.*” Vol. III, from Tambaram, Madras Series, 1938. London: Oxford University Press, 1939.

Christianity on civilization) "is the most striking and widespread fruit of nineteenth century missions." These words are specially true of China, and for this fact we are indebted in large measure to the vision and courage of Timothy Richard.

W. R. JAMES is of an altogether different cast. From Pontypool college days he dared to follow a path of his own. The externals of life and the social conventions mattered little to him, and his many eccentricities are still well remembered. Of the reality of his Christian experience and enthusiasm, however, there could be no doubt, for he spent himself in the service of India for 33 years.

Although a first-class linguist, W. R. James did very little translation work. Neither can it be said that he shone as an organiser. His chief title to fame is as an evangelist. He was a born preacher and gained a considerable pulpit reputation during his home ministry. Many even to-day can recall the command he exercised over vast congregations. It is as a preacher that he will be remembered in India too. A. H. Baynes tells us that he was the most effective preacher in the native languages then on the staff of the B.M.S. in India. The chief task of a missionary, according to W. R. James, is that of evangelising. We can understand his method and the sense of urgency which informed his mission only against his theological background. He believed that the time was short, the end of all things at hand, and the return of the triumphant Christ imminent. There was a period when he would look out of his bedroom window first thing every morning expecting to see the coming of the Master. Like Timothy Richard, he also paid special attention to the directions which Jesus gave his disciples on sending them forth, and he marked particularly the spirit of urgency which animated them: "Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." We do not accept the letter of this theology, but we do need to recapture its spirit. The vital thing indeed which is lost to our modern world is the sense of the urgency of the missionary task. Up to comparatively recently men believed in the idea of inevitable progress; but two wars have blown to bits this superficial philosophy. The note of urgency, moreover, is strongly stressed in the New Testament and is a dominant motive in the early Church. In the words of Canon Streeter, the early Christians "found themselves as it were standing at the bedside of a dying world. Thus for a whole generation the cloud of lesser interests was rolled away and ultimate values and eternal issues stood out before them stark and clear as never before or since in the history of our race." With the end of all things at hand, as he believed, W. R. James carried not with the affairs of this present world. He did not concern himself, like Timothy Richard with the condition of civilisation, but concentrated rather on what he regarded as essential—namely, winning souls for Christ.

There is surely need of the same note of urgency to-day as we see the sorry pass to which mankind is come. We cannot afford to be complacent, so we must work while it is yet day. That is the message of W. R. James for our time.

To listen to THOMAS LEWIS relate the story of the romantic beginnings of mission work in Congo was indeed a thrilling experience. With what zest he described the first baptism and the first communion, service at San Salvador!

He commenced his missionary career at a critical period in Africa's affairs (he sailed for Africa in February, 1883), when the European countries were engaged in a mad scramble for the wealth of the Continent. The story of the white man's rapacity makes sad reading, and part of a missionary's task, according to Albert Schweitzer, is to pay back some of

the debt to the black man for what he has suffered at the hands of the white man. Thomas Lewis discharged a portion of that obligation by his life of service and sacrifice in Congo. He was undoubtedly born for Africa. Nature and grace had furnished him with everything needful for this special field and its peculiar social problems. He was a man of fine physique, well able to stand the unhealthy climate; possessed in fair measure the courage of the pioneer, and was blessed with the priceless gift of humour, common sense, and unflinching patience. Thomas Lewis is outstanding on account of his versatility; he touched life at many points, and placed his all upon the altar of service. He undertook perilous and arduous pioneering journeys in Zomboland, among a warlike people, as a result of which the new station at Kibokolo was opened. Special mention must be made of his skilful pair of hands. The pride and delight of honest craftsmanship had been instilled into him as a lad at home by his blacksmith father. Giovanni Papini tells us that the four most sacred crafts of the ancient world were those of the ploughman, the mason, the smith, and the carpenter. Thomas Lewis became master of these four crafts and taught them to hundreds of Congo natives. He was architect of the new chapel at San Salvador and superintended the work of building; he helped also in the erecting of the Training College at Kimpese, and of a number of other missionary buildings. His considerable mental and spiritual gifts were also consecrated to the work. He evangelised and taught in the Cameroons, San Salvador, and Kibokolo. Native education found in him an ardent advocate, and when a college was opened at Kimpese for the training of teacher-evangelists he was appointed the first Principal. The fact that there are to-day over 2,000 teacher-evangelists in our Congo Church is due in no small degree to his emphasis on an enlightened evangelism. He had, too, a large share in revising the translation of the Congo Bible, and acted as chairman of the translation committee in London. Thomas Lewis was a man of outstanding literary ability as well. If a noble experience of life and power to express it are the essentials of true literature, as George Bernard Shaw would have us believe, then his biography* is a piece of first-class writing. Nor must we forget the broad vision and practical wisdom which mark him out as a Christian statesman of high order. He believed that the salvation of Africa lay ultimately in its own hands, and that it was through the native evangelist that the dark continent would be won for Christ; he claimed for the native African Church the right to organise its life along the lines of its own genius. Africa was to express its Christian experience in a church organisation, a theology, and even in an architecture which would be in accord with its own temperament. The substance of his missionary philosophy may be conveyed best in his own words: "The end in view is to make the Congo Church self-supporting, so that one day she will be able to do without the white man altogether."

Upon his return from Africa Thomas Lewis was appointed Welsh Representative of the B.M.S., and for more than 14 years he journeyed up and down the country rousing the churches to a new interest in and enthusiasm for the cause of Christ in far-off lands.

These then are some of our heroic missionary figures. Natives of a small country, they thought in world terms; sons of the village chapel, they played a noble part in the moulding of the Universal Church. Much remains to be done, and it is through men like Timothy Richard, W. R. James, and Thomas Lewis that the unfinished task will be completed.

W. T. LLOYD-WILLIAMS.

* "These Seventy Years." An Autobiography. By Thomas Lewis. London: Carey Press.

DOCTRINE IN THE NEW DAY.

REVIEWING a ministry of forty years is a heart-searching business. That is my experience, and the conclusions at which I have arrived are varied and illuminating. There is one that towers above all others, and it is of that I wish now to write. It is the vital need of a return to the considered and consecutive teaching of Christian Doctrine, if our ministry is to be effective in the new day that is dawning. The latter half of the nineteenth century was an era of growing spiritual power, and widening public influence in our Free Church life. It is no mere coincidence that this era was accompanied by the expository preaching of Dr. McLaren, the evangelical preaching of C. H. Spurgeon, and the preaching of solid doctrine by Dr. Dale. Neither is it just an accident that the decline of our Free Churches in this century is shadowed by the fact that a new type of preaching has come to the fore, a preaching that is topical, that uses a Text as a peg for clever, literary disquisitions, a preaching that is concerned with what Phillips Brooks calls "the bric-a-brac of theology."

The results are seen in two features of religious life and thought in this country. (a) An amazing general ignorance of Bible teaching regarding Christian truth, and the Christian life. Chaplains in this war, as in the last, are agreed on this. (b) The springing up of strong cults and freak beliefs. It is a revealing fact, that these mostly come to us from America, where topical preaching has had a long innings, and expository preaching is all too rare. People are interested in the big questions of life, and if they are not given this teaching in our Churches, then they are at the mercy of any enterprising editor, and the latest religious fad.

The new day that is facing the Church is full of glorious possibilities, but I am persuaded that if the Church is to seize her opportunities and fill a worthy place in the new order, she must return to the great truths that gave her birth, and rest her witness on the fundamentals of our Faith. As I desire success for my brethren, I would counsel them to centre their preaching in the great doctrines that are given us in the Scriptures. If this is to be done, we must work to a scheme, and plan our preaching. The observance of the "Christian Year" will ensure that we and our people do consider the central facts of our faith at least once a year. Dr. Dale used to review his preaching yearly, to preserve balance and perspective, and he realised how easy it is to neglect certain vital truths altogether, unless we keep a check on our choice of subjects. A plan in our preaching is a minister's "life-preserver"; it saves us from our moods and preferences, and congregations restored to a full-orbed ministry. As Dr. Jefferson writes, "A Church likes to feel itself in the grip of a man who knows where he is going." The next step is to pass on our message, in terms that the people can readily understand. Doctrine is discredited when it uses stilted and technical terms, for these make it all unreal and remote to the modern mind. Phrases that mean much to us, are meaningless to many and they need to be placed in a new setting, and expressed in the language of to-day. We should leave all technicalities in our study and remember that the purpose of our scaffolding is to present our edifice of living truth to our people. "The vine should hide the trellis-work." To wish to be thought scholarly is a temptation to be resisted, for that ever leads to mystification rather than edification. Richard Baxter tells us that he preached once a year over the heads of his congregation to keep them humble and to show what he could do every Sunday if he chose! My advice is, do not try that on, even once a year. It is true to-day, as in Paul's day, that one word understood

is worth more than many that only bewilder the hearer. We are not in the ministry to impress with our own cleverness, but to impart divine truth that will save men, and then build them up in that saving faith. It has been truly remarked that "Christianity would have perished early if the apostles had been 'pleasing preachers' and 'bright men'."

Let me name three notes that should be heard in all preaching of vital, Bible truth.

I. EXPERIMENTAL.

As we study these central truths, and desire to present them effectively in our preaching, we should seek to feel them in our own hearts and apply them to our own lives. Any truth we declare will be vital to others only if it is vital in our own experience. The truth must grip us before it can grip others. It will be well with our ministry if it can win this tribute:

"He never dealt

In the false coinage of a truth unfelt."

II. REASONABLE.

There is a world of difference between Doctrine and Dogma. Dogmas are embalmed opinion, but Doctrine is a living and ever-present truth. We will do well to heed Sir E. Gosse's advice, "Let sleeping dogmas lie." True doctrine will seek to bring out scripture truth, and interpret it in the light of present-day knowledge and needs. Doctrine will sometimes declare truths that go beyond the range of human reason, but it will never teach what is condemned as false by any God-given powers we possess. We must appeal to the conscience and the heart and carry conviction to the intellect. It is not enough to claim that our teaching is true because it is in the Bible, we must show that it is in the Bible because it is true. In these days especially, we must demonstrate the inherent truth of Bible Doctrine, as it works itself out in actual life, and is confirmed by man's deepest experience. Coleridge's argument for revealed truth is still the most cogent I know, "It finds us."

III. PRACTICAL.

Much of the modern distrust of Doctrine as such, has been prompted by the idea that it is remote, other-worldly, a Church method of dodging the practical issues of life. We have heard of the wealthy man who was upset by his minister's preaching, and who said to him, "You stick to doctrine, young man, that hurts nobody." What a libel on Bible Doctrine! As if Isaiah and Paul hurt nobody! True doctrine unerringly leads to the roots of all noble living, and neglect of it leads to chaos and disaster; as witness the world to-day. "It is not a closer walk with God that is needed, but a closer walk with man." This century has tried out that precept; it has dismissed Enoch's companion, and sought to walk the dusty road with man alone; and it has ended with Hitler for a companion. The order of Bible Doctrine is the order of Jesus; we will truly love man only as we first love God.

But we must see that the full order of Bible Doctrine is carried through, and that its practical issues are made clear. The Bible ever follows that method. All the Epistles have two sections; in the first is laid the foundation of divine truth, and then follows the ethic that flows inevitably from it. The fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians closes to the sound of the resurrection trumpet, and the next chapter opens to the clinking of a coin on the collection plate. Paul was not conscious of any incongruity; to him the most humdrum Christian duty lay next door to some overwhelming truth. "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man." It is not too much to claim, that Bible

Doctrine, and faithfully applied, carries within it the solution of all our problems, religious, social, international.

Dr. Dale predicted that the next Revival would be Ethical, stressing the note of conduct and a true regard for the rights of others. We all know what that great soul was out for. But it is a deepening conviction with me, that if the world is to be blessed with an adequate Revival, it can come only through a revival of Biblical Doctrine, with a rich, full ethic issuing from it. Then the ethic will not only have a divine sanction, but will offer a power whereby alone any worthy ethic can be made to work. Dr. Chalmers confessed that his social gospel proved a failure without the dynamic of spiritual religion. Professor Joad is forced to believe that humanity unaided is doomed. This former Agnostic is now declaring with the fervour of a Salvation Army Captain that only the grace of God can save the situation. We have the full gospel that Prof. Joad does not yet accept—the truth that God's grace in Christ and His Cross is sufficient for all man's need. Let us preach this doctrine in all its completeness and fullness and a true and abiding success will crown our ministry, and renew the life and power of Christ's Church on earth.

E. CORNS DAVIES.

BAPTIST POLITY REPORT.

The Criticism from Leicester.

THE Leicester Fraternal contribution has filled me with forebodings. I am a convinced Baptist, holding firmly to the Baptist doctrines of the Church, Ministry, and Sacraments, and I glory in the faith that we are part, and no ignoble part, of the One Holy Apostolic Church. Neither am I happy about the present condition of our churches or indifferent to the problems of our ministry. I am satisfied with neither. But it seems to me that this Leicester communication shows a rebellion not only against conditions but against the fundamental principles of the Baptists, and, if it represents a wide current of opinion among our ministers, then I do not know what future there is for our Baptist faith and order.

We stand or fall by our doctrine of the Church. From the very beginning, like our Congregational brethren, we have claimed spiritual autonomy for the "gathered church." We are the highest of "High Churchmen," and have known no other authority in ecclesiastical matters than the community of believers gathered together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It may be that, as Bishop Creighton said, the doctrine is too "high" and idealistic. It is undoubtedly true that many of our churches, like other institutions, fall very far short of their profession. This is a cause for grief, repentance and amendment. But our doctrine of the Church and its rights, which are the "crown rights of the Redeemer," is clear and unmistakable. I believe it is a true doctrine. If I thought it was "too good to be true" or, at least, practicable, I should cease to be a Baptist. I can see nothing but dissolution for the Denomination if it is repudiated.

Now this communication repudiates it in set terms. In a surge of rhetoric it denies that the local church is "enabled and responsible for self-government." It contemptuously rejects the notion that the local church has the right to "call" a man to its ministry. The "call" is apparently a mystic and individual persuasion on the part of the man himself, with which the gathered church has nothing to do but humbly to accept. Nor has the gathered church any right to express its dissatisfaction with a man who claims an ordination in which it has no voice. He has security of tenure by a diviner authority. Bishop Gore criticised our "orders" on the very ground that while episcopal orders were from "above," ours were from the people "below" (of course he did not

understand that, by our doctrine, God is believed to guide the people). How it would have pleased him to find Baptist ministers agreeing with him!

I do not know how to treat the further argument that our ministers, being "prophets," have the heaven-given right to denounce the sins of their people, without criticism. These men want the palm without the dust, the prophet's authority without the prophet's danger. They want to be safe whatever happens. Of course, it is true that it may be risky to deliver the word of God. But whoever heard of "prophets" asking to be assured that it would cost them nothing? This is to make the pulpit a "Coward's castle" indeed. And men who claim this privilege make the very idea of the "prophet" ludicrous. I can see the spectre of clericalism, and Milton's "new presbyter is old priest writ large," justified again.

There are two things that strike me about the Leicester article. The absolute loss of faith in the Baptist people; and the clamant cry for "security" at the cost of everything we revere as Baptists. And it is this cry for "security" that is the over-riding motive of everything in this communication. I find the same two things in most of the men who "go over" to the Anglicans, and I am in touch with some of them.

What I feel about the whole matter is, not that there are no problems of the ministry to be solved, but that the true method of approach is to revitalise our Church life and get back to our doctrine of the Church. This is a formidable task but it is a pressing one. This attempt to deal with the difficulties of the pastorate by enunciating a doctrine of the ministry which, however consonant with Anglican theory, is utterly antagonistic to the historic Baptist witness, is foredoomed to disaster both for the ministry and the churches.

B. G. COLLINS.

BOOK NOTES.

Concerning Believers' Baptism

Contributed by F. C. Bryan, R. L. Child, Arthur Dakin, G. Heaton Davies, J. B. Middlebrook, R. Guy Ramsay, A. C. Underwood, Edited by F. C. Bryan. The Kingsgate Press, 3/-.

The book more than fulfils the hope expressed in the preface—"That it may make some small contribution, both to our thinking on the significance of baptism in the face of modern trends in Church life, and also to a worthy observance of it in the Churches of our Denomination." Particularly helpful is the closing chapter, by the editor, on "Preparation, Administration and Visitation." The book is interesting, timely and convincing. We warmly commend it to everybody.

The Ministry of the Lay Preacher.

By G. C. Leader. The Kingsgate Press, 1/6.

This little book of 21 chapters meets a real need. It contains words of wisdom and of inspiration. Let our Lay preachers secure a copy for themselves, and one for their minister. The reading of it will be good for us all, and for those whom we serve.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Choosing a Career. By T. G. Dunning. The Kingsgate Press, 4d.

Follow the Gleam. By W. G. Branch. The Carey Press, 3/6.

A Surprise Packet. By Isabel B. Craig. The Carey Press, 1/6.

The Children's Corner. By J. R. Edwards. The Carey Press, 1/6.

Cathedral Windows. By S. H. Price. Independent Press, Ltd., 2/-.

SCOTTISH NOTES

The Scottish ministry is the poorer by the passing on 15th August, at Rothesay of T. S. Metrustry. Born in Ballymena, Northern Ireland, he held four pastorates in Ireland, and at Cupar, Shettleston, Rothesay, and Helensburgh. He was a most acceptable preacher and retired about 10 years ago.

Cyril Squires, Queen's Park, Glasgow, has been appointed a Chaplain, as from 6th August.

D. B. Isaac, of Wick, has accepted the charge of Bridgeton, Glasgow, and Laurence Scollay, formerly of Lerwick, goes to St. Andrew's.

The Scottish Baptist College have arranged to ask from time to time a minister of maturity and experience to give a sequence of lectures on pastoral theology, open to the public. The first series, entitled "The Preacher in a Changing World," was delivered on each Thursday in September by the Rev. Alexander Clark, of Dunfermline, under the heads, "A Changing World, The Unchanging God, The Message, Methods, The Church in a Changing World." Appreciative audiences gathered to hear Mr. Clark, and his brother ministers were glad of counsel so pertinent to the modern situation.

J. D. J.