

# The Fraternal

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## EDITORIAL

THE opening session of the Annual Assembly is usually cheerful, business-like and sometimes a trifle dull. This year it burst into life with a vengeance when the matter of the hydrogen bomb was suddenly dropped on it. A carefully worded resolution on which practically everybody was agreed had been drafted. Dr. Dunning, the newly elected Vice-President, had spoken to it powerfully and we were preparing to vote, when it happened. The resolution had closed with an appeal for "the agreed cessation of all tests of such weapons". Whereupon an amendment was moved calling on the government "to abandon the forthcoming tests as a major contribution to the creation of an atmosphere in which agreement on the complete abolition of such tests may be reached". In other words the issue was: do we advocate waiting till we can persuade U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. to stop making and testing these fearful weapons, or are we for urging our government to "go it alone" and call off the impending tests, whatever the others do? At once the Assembly was ablaze and proved to be almost equally divided in the voting, with many unable to make up their minds. There is a grave issue here which we ought to think out on the basis of Christian principle, and to be able to talk out together without getting hot under the collar.

A powerful and persistent supporter of the amendment in the Assembly was Alan Hughes, minister of our Grimsby Church. Here are some of the points he makes:—

The latest hydrogen bomb is 200 times stronger than the Hiroshima one. And the cobalt bomb many times stronger even than that. If these weapons are ever used it will be fratricide on an unthinkable scale. But in a world where atomic bombs are made, it is urged, we dare not be without them. We must make them. And it is no good making them if they are not tested, lest potential enemies persuade themselves we have not really got them, or got such potent ones. Therefore we must test them. We must assure ourselves and everyone else that the bombs we have got really work.

But even testing means exposing mankind to appalling risks. Professor Coulson, the distinguished Oxford scientist, has said: "We have learned a lot about radio-strontium recently and of the manner in which it accumulates in the bones of a man, and then destroys him through anaemia; and of the way in which it may be absorbed into the soil, be built up into the growing plant, eaten by cattle and thus transferred to man." And worse, Dr. Schweitzer

declares that "in Nagasaki during years following 1945 an exceptionally high occurrence of still births and of deformed children were observed". The effect on the health and sanity of the unborn is a risk it is appalling to contemplate. Scientific opinion differs widely and furiously about it. Yet suppose Coulson and Schweitzer prove right!

But the government say tests must proceed for two reasons. First, because the Soviet Union would be left with a fully-tested bomb, and if ours were untested we should have to rely on the U.S.A. for our defence. And secondly, because without the bomb we could not give up conscription. In other words because we dare not pull out of the game of power politics. But dare we go on playing it? "It is like playing conkers with contact-mines." Power politics is a fratricidal game in a hydrogen age. The only hope is a new political atmosphere. We could help to create it, could become moral leaders of a United Europe.

Dr. Dunning and those who felt with him, however, did not believe that to stop making and testing nuclear weapons unilaterally was the most likely way to achieve the end we all have in view. He pointed out that the Disarmament conference at present sitting is beginning at last to make real progress, and that to apply the pressure of public opinion to that conference table and the governments represented there was the best objective "in this crusade for dear life". We should urge as a first step that "no further experimental explosions of nuclear power should take place . . . by mutual agreement while final objectives are being considered".

There are a number of our brethren who feel very strongly that Hitler would never have broken loose as he did if the nations of the West had built up sufficient armed strength to deter him. And that it is even so to-day with the rulers of Soviet Russia. We are relatively secure from war while we are strong and retain the power of swift and devastating retaliation. But forgo the possession of the most potent weapons, and the outbreak of the holocaust the world dreads is the more and not the less likely. If the perils of the new nuclear weapons are what scientists like Coulson and Schweitzer say they are, the confirmation of it cannot be long delayed. Public opinion the world over is waking up. Let it be focused and canalised on to the Council of Nations, that the truth may be the more speedily seen and accepted, namely that it is in the interest of no nation on the face of the earth to explode another nuclear bomb, or to continue piling them up. To have called a halt here, would be real progress, and a first step toward control and progressive reduction of armaments, and incidentally towards international sanity. So sums the counter argument. Well, here's a theme for Fraternalists. And what better place than a Fraternal for Christian ministers to get down to it and talk it out!

## THE USE OF THE BIBLE

## III. STUDY GROUPS AND HOUSE CHURCHES

THERE is evidence throughout Europe of a breakdown of fellowship in the life of the Churches. It is as though the Church had lost the experience of the *koinonia* which was given to it on the day of Pentecost. There is obvious danger in trying to restore that gift of the Holy Spirit by artificial means, because it is liable to create an *ersatz koinonia*. However, the situation is so desperate that a number of artifices have been devised to create something like fellowship within the Church. Generally, these, whether good or bad, take the form of breaking down the larger membership of a local Church into small groups. Thus, throughout Europe, a new movement has grown up in the past generation. It is the formation of the House Church.

There is obvious advantage in gathering together 10 to 20 people in order that they might get to know each other. The large parishes and congregations often leave members isolated, whereas House meetings make this almost impossible. Behind this formation of small groups is not only the search for renewed fellowship, but also the belief that when Christ said "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst", He meant that there was something which can be done with half a dozen people which cannot be done with a whole congregation. Ernie Southcott, vicar of Halton, Leeds, puts this briefly when he says "Something of the Church and something of Christ is especially discovered in the small group".

The origin of these small groups, however, is not always to be found in any theological search, but rather in the practical problems of everyday life in a large area. The House Church became fairly popular during the Second World War, when people were reluctant to gather in large numbers. During that time, many Churches, especially in London, formed small groups in homes to minister to one or two streets of people. It was then possible to go to a religious Service without being more than a short distance away from home.

Since the war, industrial areas, particularly in Scotland and under the leadership of the Iona Community, have discovered the value of small discussion groups. If people who have been long estranged from Church and whose way of thinking is so different from the normal presentation of a sermon, are to come into the life of the Church then first, they must be able to sit down and discuss with other Church members their real problems of daily life. Thus in Scotland, many such House groups have sprung up. Whatever the reason for forming these groups, whether the need for friendly relations, or to discuss problems of everyday life, or the search for what Christ can do with two or three, the House Church soon becomes a centre for Bible study. It is at this point that the House Church

movement has become blended with the Bible study group and has grown considerably in Europe since the Second World War.

Groups are as varied as the traditions which produce them, but certain national patterns may be determined. In Germany, for example, Bible study is all too often the expounding of a passage by the leader, about which certain questions may be asked by the members of the group. In Britain there is more discussion, and a thorough search of the passage to find out what it really says to those present in their everyday life. Perhaps description can best sum up some of the main points in this recent development. The leader is often the minister or at least a layman who is acquainted with Greek. He will choose a passage, probably the continuous study of a book of the Bible. He will begin with a short exposition of what in fact the Greek says and the drawing out of relevant points arising from the study of the passage. In Britain different members of the group bring different translations of the Bible with them. The discussion begins with comparing the translations and when the full meaning of the passage is known, it becomes evident what it is saying to individual members, and they will share their experience. Before the end of the evening a good half of the group will have made some contribution. This meeting for Bible study creates fellowship in the right way. It is not because the group is small, but because it is engaged upon finding out what God is saying to them through the Bible.

Not all House Churches are predominantly Bible Study groups. In Halton, for example, where Ernie Southcott has pioneered the work of the House Church, it is possible to discuss other books as the principal theme for the evening. He tells that on one evening they discussed the War on Want booklet, "Time to wake up", with a member of the City Council present. His House Churches seem to be concerned mostly with finding out the relation between the Church's teaching and the society with which it must inevitably be involved. It has led to the facing of questions that have prevented the development of *koinonia*. For example, many of his House Churches have been led to the problem of the division between Communion and Baptism. As he says, "We discovered that Baptism of the many and Communion for the few makes nonsense both of the Bible and of the Prayerbook". His groups have also discovered something of the need for bringing the various divided denominations together. They have discovered the unity which we have in Christ. For example "we owe our home meetings in part to the Methodists, our parish meetings in part to the Congregationalists, our offertory procession in part to the Eastern Orthodox, we owe concern about Baptism in part to the Baptists, and our concern about Communion in part to the Roman Catholics, and our concern about prayer in part to the Quakers; during the week we learned what a lot we had to learn about ourselves and each other and, under the Holy Spirit, that it all takes time and faith and penitence and humility.

At the end of the week there seemed so much for which to thank God after ten years praying and working for local ecumenism. Here at Halton we are discovering Amsterdam, Lund, Travancore and Evanston writ small.

“The Christian community is called upon to listen in our time, as it may not have listened for generations, to ‘what the Spirit saith to the Churches’.

“How can the Spirit speak if Christians do not meet? How can the divided Church evangelise unless there is a local ecumenical community? If we are to do together everything except that which conscience forbids, must we not meet together to discover in each other’s presence what conscience forbids and what conscience bids?”\*

There is a particularly interesting movement for the formation of House Churches in Holland. Notably in Amsterdam, but also in other cities, a number of House Churches have sprung up in the Gereformeerden Church, which is the conservative Calvinist Church in Holland. The groups are not all of the same kind, and there is not yet an organised development, but a working party set up by the Church has been gathering together information and has produced a book called “According to the strength of every member” for the guidance of these groups. It is written by three men who have been most concerned with the movement in Amsterdam: Prof. J. H. Bavinck and two parish ministers—Ds. M. De Goede and Ds. G. Lugtigheid.

Professor Bavinck’s article on “We seek community” begins with a fairly common problem, recently accentuated in Holland because of the more rapid movement of population. Here are some selections from his chapter presenting the problem.

“Many young men have left the countryside and gone to take up work in the towns. They live there a strange kind of life, among people whom they do not know, and they are often very lonely. . . . One of the great problems of our modern Church life is how to begin and broaden our fellowship.

“On Sundays we meet together in fellowship, we sing together, we pray together, we listen to the same Word of God, we sit together around the Lord’s Table—all that is wonderful, but it is not enough. It does not stay the hunger of a lonely soul. In a large Church with hundreds of people, it’s so easy to feel all alone. Then after the service, as the crowds go out, the lonely young person finds no door open to him, and no home to share.”

The Rev. G. Lugtigheid writes on the Bible study group as a House Church. He points out that there are two quite different kinds of Bible study groups, both have their place: one is the pietistic group of Christian people who already know each other quite well, but who meet for the intensive study of the Bible and for prayer.

\* “The House Church” (pp. 11-13, by Canon E. W. Southcott (British Council of Churches, price 1s.)

He compares these with the work of Prisca and Aquila in the New Testament. Then there is the other kind, deliberately organised by the minister, and it is this which he recommends. It is a group with a definite function either in an area or with a particular number of Church members, the kind of fellowship which a small group rather than a large Church can provide. Both writers recommend strongly that the House Church should be fundamentally a Bible study group, and the appendix contains five sketches of Bible study showing how the leader could deal with ordinary people and help them to come to the heart of the message of the passage they are studying.

The selected subjects given for study are: "Our life must be changed"; "Building up the Church"; "The Young Church"; and so on. The commentaries which follow, simple and practical, are within the context of a conservative attitude to the Bible and if there is a weakness in not reconciling sufficiently the social problems of our day, they do press the point of relating the Bible to the decisions of everyday life.

Holland has been rich in this kind of experiment, especially since the end of the war, and it is more deeply grounded in Bible study than in Britain, largely because of the personnel of the pioneers. In 1953, for example, a nationwide campaign was launched, called "The Great Trek", to encourage the reading of the Bible. One result of this effective campaign was the emergence of a number of mixed Bible groups. They are inter-denominational and drawn from various levels of society and attract members from the two great branches of the Reformed Church as well as the Baptists. He has succeeded also in making his groups mixed in age so that the younger members of the Church are able to enter into natural conversation with the older members. A striking effect of these Bible study groups in creating fellowship not only within a local Church but between the various denominations was shown when the Baptist Church at Utrecht was destroyed by fire. The loss of the Church immediately gave rise to a concern by the other Churches and there was a collection in all Churches of Utrecht to restore the Baptist Church. An action which would have been difficult to imagine some years ago, but which came naturally from the studying of the Bible together.

Bible study groups in their various forms largely depend upon the ability of the leader. Much may be done in the way of providing material for members, and efforts can be made to see that the leader does not dominate the group, but unless there is a good leader no Bible study group stands a chance of being really effective. It is good to record that there are Bible study groups with no effective leader, where people simply meet to read the Bible and let it speak to them but, by and large, the quality of leadership has determined the usefulness of such groups.

The House Church remains an experiment. It is probably where the Church began, for a long time in Rome there was no Church, no

central meeting place, only the gathering of Christians in various homes in different parts of the city. Paul's list of greetings in the Epistle to the Romans, which is in effect an address list to which the letter is to be sent, gives a picture of the early Church before it had been formalised into established congregations. It may be that the House Church is doing more than trying to recover fellowship but is in effect going back to the beginning and discovering in simple meeting together around the Word of God what God will say to His people.

E. H. ROBERTSON.

### THE PROPHET JEREMIAH AND THE MODERN MINISTER

“FOR Jeremiah is not merely a character in ancient history, but a living voice with a message of striking pertinency for today.” So writes the American scholar, Elmer Leslie, in his recent commentary “Jeremiah”. Not least has the life and work of Jeremiah a message for the modern minister, though separated from him by the distance of the centuries.

We may begin with the fact that Jeremiah exercised his ministry in a time of international ferment and change—in this respect a time like our own. Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, the Medes, in turn dominated the stage of contemporary history. National rivalries and tension were never far away. It is noteworthy that Jeremiah matched the times in which he lived by a majestic doctrine of God. Of him as of Moses it was true that “he endured as seeing Him who is invisible”. Though he was a pioneer in discerning the place of the individual in the thought of God, Jeremiah's conception of God was never bounded by limited horizons, confining God's concern and action to the individual. To Jeremiah God was the Creator (xxxii, 35-37) and the One who is ever at work in the world, His workshop (xviii, 1-5). We need to be on our guard, in these days of fresh concern about the evangelistic work of the Church, lest we limit our doctrine of God within narrow and individualist confines, and fail to remember that God is at work also in the large movements of contemporary history, in the rise and fall of nations. God is still at work in the world, His workshop, exercising His judgments among the nations, and working out His sovereign will.

Nevertheless it is with Jeremiah's pioneer thinking about God and the individual this article is concerned. It has been memorably expounded by John Skinner in his noble book “Prophecy and Religion” which is still the outstanding book on Jeremiah. It is in what the prophet has to say on God and the individual that he still speaks with “striking pertinency” to the modern minister.

Old Testament prophets who preceded Jeremiah had recognised the frailty and corruption of the human heart, but Jeremiah was led by self-scrutiny, based on prayer, to discern that *his own heart* was, left to itself, incurably sick (xvii, 9). It may seem trite to say that



entrance upon the work of the ministry brings no exemption from temptation—gross and otherwise—but it is something which ministers need to remember. We also “wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers . . .” Especially do we need to remember this in a time in which moral standards have so steeply declined—a decline that has not left our Churches unscathed. Ministers also may get caught up in the blurred moral and spiritual vision of our time. The late Dr. Dinsdale Young, the famous Methodist preacher, considered jealousy, for example, to be the dominating temptation of the ministry. It is certainly one of the minister’s temptations.

The fact is, however, that in modern conditions the minister is subject to tensions and temptations at many points, over and above those we ordinarily take into account. In some places the sheer hardness of the work, the difficulty in securing response from the outsider, and, alas, sometimes the frustrations of a minister’s work within the Church, may expose him to such weariness in well-doing as threatens his continuance in the work. In Britain the economic pressure is all too severe upon most of our ministers—or rather on their wives. Many men must be tempted to seek some easier sphere. Again, the man who in middle life, while still possessing bodily vigour, and enriched by years of valuable experience, finds that the demand for younger ministers closes some doors to him, may wonder whether God has forgotten him. And always there is with us the steadily increasing pressure on time and strength which modern life exercises. Most of us are constantly threatened by “the barrenness of a too busy life”. The present writer recalls a conversation with a fellow minister who spoke of his consciousness of the tensions that were pressing upon his brethren as he met them in the ministers’ fraternal. This is where Jeremiah and the modern minister are sometimes very near to one another. For most of his ministry Jeremiah had to contend with fightings without and fears within. He was by nature a man of exquisite sensitiveness, a poet, and he felt all the more acutely the struggles, the buffetings, the rejections of his lot.

The minister needs someone to whom at times to unburden himself. The Report of the Committee on Baptist Polity (1942) called attention to this aspect of the work of a General Superintendent. “. . . There is need of someone who will act as pastor *pastorum*, to whom the minister feels he can turn for advice about the best use of his time and strength and the relative places of prayer, study and ministry.” The present writer knows he is speaking for all his brethren in the Superintendency when he says that they view this side of their work as very important, and always welcome the privilege and opportunity it brings.

In any case the minister needs to practise the habit of bringing “everything to God in prayer”. It was in that habit that Jeremiah found his salvation from self-pity amid the manifold difficulties

and disappointments of his work. To him prayer was conversation with God, and he learned to talk to God about everything—his perplexities, his moods, his struggles, his temptations, his disappointments. W. A. Elmslie, in his perceptive chapter on Jeremiah in his fine book "How came our Faith" speaks of a time in Jeremiah's ministry in which under the pressure of his many difficulties "his character weakened, for he began to make his personal grievances a central issue. If at that stage he had merely talked to himself about himself, that would have put an end to greatness and perhaps to sanity. But in his perplexity and misery Jeremiah turned to God, willing still to judge his feelings by Absolute Goodness, and striving still to find enlightenment from an understanding greater than his own". (p. 318.)

Moreover, in one such hour, Jeremiah, while praying for help against his relentless enemies, and for vindication of the cause which he had made his own, realised that God was calling him to a renewed dedication of his own life to the prophetic office. "And if thou bring forth what is precious, unmixed with what is base, then thou shalt be as My mouth" (xv, 19 ff.). The prophet's exacting experiences had taken their toll of his strength and had weakened his sense of vocation. Skinner thus sums up the lesson Jeremiah learned: ". . . the condition of victory over the world is victory over himself . . . He sees that he must separate between the noble and the base in his own mind . . . He gains a glimpse of the truth that the pure in heart alone can see God." There is something here for the modern minister who finds himself indulging in self-pity and resentment at the hardness of his work.

Alongside Jeremiah's discernment of the frailty and sin of the human heart is his understanding that man is at bottom a religious creature, made for God and needing Him if he is ever to achieve his true life (viii, 7). The minister needs to remember this, not only in his work, but for himself. As he does so he will find, as Jeremiah did, a deep joy in the realisation that, unworthy as he is, God vouchsafes to give to him His companionship, and a share in so great a work as that of the Christian ministry.

JOHN O. BARRETT.

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#### CHILDREN AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION— THE CUSTOMERS' POINT OF VIEW

**W**HAT a wonderful job is being done in the Sunday Schools of our and other lands! No one can really assess the true value of the dedicated service given so generously, so regularly, by so many. And yet! And yet! It is clear from reports of surveys in the field of religious education, both in Church and in Day School, that the situation is not satisfactory. Our Sunday Schools are not holding many children with whom they make contact. We all know that from our own observation, and the reports confirm the facts.

These reports, however, cannot be complete, in so far as they cannot say much about the point of view of the children themselves. When, therefore, the opportunity was offered to write about the reaction of "teenagers to religious teaching in day and Sunday School", it seemed that the most useful thing to do would be to ask them just what they thought about it all, and especially to try to discover what it is that puts them off Sunday School.

The enquiry was made in day school, during free discussion in R.I. periods. Each discussion was marked by frankness and sincerity. There was no attempt either at "shooting a line" or at "pulling wool over the eyes of Holy Joe" (by which nickname a specialist teacher in R.I. is likely to be known). If the reports seem to stress over much the criticisms levelled at Sunday Schools, it must be remembered that our concern was with those who felt so strongly critical that they left. Presumably, our methods are not unsuccessful with those we hold, or they have other influences which help them to stay.

In a secondary modern class of 11-12 year-olds, 11 boys and girls still go to Sunday School, 21 used to, 5 never did. The majority prefer the R.I. lessons in day school (in spite of their being compulsory, a fact which I stressed when I put the question!). Sunday School teachers, I was told, are too "high-brow". They do not explain things. The children have to listen, whereas they want to speak. They want to know more about the Church and the Bible. These things the teacher has no time to explain.

In a grammar stream class in the same age-group, 14 children are members of Sunday Schools, 10 used to go, 1 never did. 6 prefer going to Church than to Sunday School. Most agreed that they learnt more in R.I. lessons. "In Sunday School you just have to take it or leave it." Everyone agreed that they prefer to be made to behave themselves, and some referred to or suggested inter-class or inter-house competitions as means of maintaining good order. There was, however, criticism of being "ordered about even during prayers". Individual comments from this form included: "You don't learn anything in Sunday School." "It would be better if the Sunday School hall was more like a Church." "If I had enough money, I would buy a new set of hymnbooks in place of the torn ones we use now."

A year higher up the school, in a class of average secondary modern boys and girls, 9 go to Sunday School, 16 used to. A number go to Church instead of Sunday School. "The lessons consist of the same stories over and over again." The younger children spoil the service. The school should be divided into groups according to ages. The hall does not aid worship. More help is gained from the R.I. lessons in which "we are all the same age and doing the same work". There is more reference to the historic basis and background of the Bible stories, and more progress through the Bible. The written notes and tests help us to memorise the facts, and "you don't get little books with silly little texts to stick in".

Moving up into the third year, we come to a class of boys who represent the best type of secondary modern scholar, able to take a modified technical course in our school. One remarked that: "The efforts made by Sunday School teachers to hold the older children are embarrassing." I would much like to have followed up this comment! Another asked that lessons should be given in simpler language, to separate classes, and that more use should be made of modern translations of the Bible. The teacher should be "Someone who knows what he is talking about". Too many teachers read up the lesson before and even while they are giving it.

Our fifth group was a class of boys and girls, aged 14-15, in the second year of their commercial course; almost all think Sunday School could be improved. The teacher ought to explain the Bible more fully. The R.I. lesson is better because it is better explained, and there is discussion. "We can give our opinions and hear the teacher's."

Lastly, there is a class of boys, approaching school-leaving at 15. All but 2 have now left Sunday School, and there are 36 in the class. 11 had done so by the age of 11. They found Sunday School boring and uninteresting, with the "same old things". "They should make every Sunday different from the last." Films are more interesting than someone always talking. While the Sunday School concentrates on Bible stories, the R.I. lesson goes further afield; there is more variety; it is more up to date; there is more discussion. Sunday School worship is not "attractive". "You go in, have a few hymns and a prayer, sit down and read the Bible, do drawings, have a few more hymns and go home." "The Sunday School seems too eager to get you converted." "Our Sunday School was so desperate about getting new members that they offered prizes for anyone who brought someone who stayed for a few weeks."

To sum up. In the case of children, and probably of adults, the customer is not always right. It would be wrong to attach exaggerated importance to what has been reported. Few of the Sunday Schools described are Baptist, but we would not be wise to draw too much comfort from that. What was said in the opening sentences of this article is still true. And yet! We probably have here some clues to the problems we are facing in our Sunday School work. These are the things that some children think about the Schools they know. Are we sure that these things do not apply to ours? In many of their comments the children seem to confirm our own judgments. On the other hand, it will surprise many to find them supporting so strongly the standards and the methods which are more characteristic of day school. They prefer good order and control. It means security and makes learning possible. Moreover, they go to Sunday School expecting to learn. They expect to find a sense of purpose and of progress in all that is done. They want to be taught according to their age, and that means just what it says. The lesson must not be too simple, and yet simple enough to be understood. They look for a sense

of co-operation and partnership between themselves and the teacher. They want to be able to offer their opinions and hear the teacher's. They do not expect to be presented with a lesson which is labelled "Take it or leave it". Far too many do as they are told—and leave it, and the school. They lose, and so does the Church, and to that extent, Christ is thwarted, because He wants them in His Church.

H. GORDON RENSHAW.

### UNITY IN DIVERSITY

NO one can doubt that there is a deep longing for unity. As a general rule, conflict is hateful, both in oneself and between friends. Among the nations it creates an atmosphere like a damp mist on a swamp. It makes the heart sick. The press, the radio and television become oppressive when the threat of war is in the air. The same thing is true when a strike is imminent. We feel better when we are getting along better.

This applies when it comes to the fellowship of the Church. Nothing can be more heartbreaking than schism in the body of Christ, whether it be in a local congregation or in the wider fellowship and there can be no doubt that it is God's plan that His Church should be unified in Christ.

### UNITY IN THE EARLY CHURCH

In the account of Pentecost we read that the disciples were gathered together "with one accord in one place". Then the Holy Spirit came and fused them into one. They became what the New Testament calls the "fellowship"—the "koinonia". It was a new thing, as different from an ordinary gathering of people as a glowing fire is different from a heap of coals. Such was the Church at the beginning, and the flame spread from one loving heart to another, throughout the world of that day.

Then the unity began to be lost. You see it happening in First Corinthians. Some said, "We are of Paul", and others said, "We are of Apollos". Still others, "We are of Cephas". It came through taking one aspect of the truth for the whole truth or one particular form of worship for the only true channel of devotion. Paul warned the Church about the danger. "Is Christ divided?" he asked. His answer was that while there are many members they all belong to the one Body and draw their life from Christ, who alone is Head. The worst kind of heresy, someone has said, is that which claims that the eye or the hand is the whole body and excommunicates all the rest. The other parts are also of the Body of Christ and all derive their common life from Him.

### UNITY BUT NOT UNIFORMITY

But the living unity of the Church cannot be achieved by what has been called "ecclesiastical carpentry". It will not come by

trimming doctrine to a shape on which all can agree. There is no form of worship in which all can find expression for their devotion, whatever their tradition or temperament. The real unity of the Church is a creation of the Spirit. It comes when we are all ready, as John Wesley put it, to have our hearts "strangely warmed by the love of Christ", whatever our particular form of worship or organisation. This unity can be achieved even in diversity, and it can be realised without the necessity of compromising one's convictions.

What does this unity mean? How can it be created? What form should it take? Some years ago, addressing the General Assembly of the World Presbyterian Alliance, of which he was President, Dr. John A. McKay, speaking about their relation to the ecumenical movement, said "Above all, let us say this to ourselves and to the whole world: We are not, and we should never become, an ecclesiastical power bloc. It is not ours," he said, "to make our Alliance an end in itself, to imply in any way that we are it. No, we belong to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. So also do our fellow Christians who are Lutherans, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and others. No ecclesiastical power politics must ever be engaged in by us. Christ must use our Alliance as He uses us, our Church and the Church universal, as His servant, His instrument, and organ of His redemptive will."

The supreme purpose of our Baptist World Alliance and our Baptist Federation of Canada must not be to promote the Baptist position as an end in itself but to make of it the servant of God's redemptive purpose through the wider agency of His universal Church.

#### A PARADOX

Now, in this connection, we face a paradox. What Dr. McKay said of Presbyterians we could say of Baptists. This is how he put it, "There are Presbyterians today who are both *more* Presbyterian and *less* Presbyterian than ever before. They are more Presbyterian because they believe that in their heritage there are treasures of thought and life which are important for the Church universal. They are less Presbyterian than ever before because they recognise that what God has said and done through the medium of other Christian communions is also needed to enrich the Church universal."

Isn't the same thing becoming increasingly true in our own communion? We are both more Baptist and less Baptist than ever before. That is to say, for one thing, we believe more than ever in our distinctive denominational principles. We cannot convince ourselves that the New Testament teaches other than the baptism of believers by immersion. Nor can we accept anything but the principle of a regenerate church membership. Still less can we believe that preaching the Gospel, baptising believers and commemorating the Lord's Supper are only efficacious when performed by a priest in the apostolic succession. We do not say that members of other communions, Protestant or Roman Catholic, are outside the

Kingdom. No, they are fellow Christians. It is simply that this is the truth as we see it, and here we stand. We can do no other. So far as these principles are concerned we are more Baptist than ever before. We believe that in our particular heritage there are treasures of thought and life as well as certain distinctive principles which are important for the Church universal and it is our duty, under God, to give them emphasis, providing, of course, we speak the truth, as it has been given us to see it, in love.

But, we are less Baptist than before because we recognise more than used to be the case that what God has said and done through the medium of other Christian communions is needed to enrich the Church universal. There is a growing awareness among us that if we pursue denominational pre-eminence and make our great worldwide fellowship an end in itself we betray our Lord. But if we desire, and succeed in our desire, to make denominational emphasis an enrichment of the common evangelical heritage we will, by so doing, be true to the one Head of the Church and be a worthy organ of His redemptive will.

#### AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

Along such lines it would seem is God's plan, at this time, for the unity of His Church. Something like this is what our Lord must have meant when He prayed "that they all may be one", and when we are given the grace to recognise this basic unity underlying the rich diversity we are helping to answer His prayer. This spirit was beautifully illustrated in the remarkable innovation at the enthronement of a Bishop of Winchester a few years ago. At one point in the impressive ceremony, quoting from the service paper that was printed for the occasion, the following passage occurred:—

"Then shall the Chairman and representatives of the Free Church Council of Winchester be conducted to the Bishop and shall greet him, saying: 'My Lord Bishop, in the name of our brethren, we salute you in the Lord. Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father be multiplied.'

"And the Bishop shall answer: 'Brethren in Christ, we thank you for your greeting. May we have fellowship one with another through our common faith and service; and may the God of peace be with you all.'"

Not necessarily one fold; but definitely one flock. Not necessarily one Church organisation, but certainly one Lord and all who love Him one in Him.

C. HOWARD BENTALL.

#### THE PASTORAL CARE OF BAPTIST UNDERGRADUATES

THE numbers of young people from Baptist Churches coming up to the Universities each October have increased considerably in recent years, and in nearly twenty University centres there is now a Baptist students' society, with its officially appointed chaplain. Their primary purpose is to foster fellowship among

Baptists, nurture them in the Christian faith, and so strengthen their links with the denomination that, at the end of their University career, they will go out into our churches where eventually they will serve in various forms of lay leadership.

That this purpose is often not achieved, however, is known only too well to those who are in closest touch with students. It is a fact which should cause us no little concern that a noticeable proportion of students who enter the University from Baptist Churches go down at the end of three years with their Baptist connections lost or seriously weakened. This is no doubt more true of the situation in Oxford and Cambridge than in Universities where there is a large proportion of non-residential students who continue to live at home and my reflections in this article are based upon my own experience both as an undergraduate and latterly as chaplain at Oxford. But much of what is said about the problem at Oxford and its solution will no doubt apply to some degree elsewhere.

The worst thing that a denominational society can become is a "religious huddle". If in any way it seeks to withdraw its members from the full life of the University or from the wider fellowship of the whole Church, it is doing a great disservice. It must be recognised that if a young Christian in the University is going to make any spiritual impact upon his fellow-students, he must live as a full-blooded human being, sharing in their interests and taking a full part in the general life of the college, not merely in his work, common-room activities and sport, but in the religious life as well. Now the religious life of the college community (at Oxford and Cambridge particularly) naturally centres around the college chapel, which of course is Anglican; and the Baptist undergraduate who rightly seeks to play his full part, cannot, and must not, withhold his interest and support from this important centre of college life. Here, perhaps for the first time, he will be introduced to the beautiful liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer; here he will take his turn in reading the lessons; he may sing in the college choir; he will be welcome in the college chaplain's group for Bible Study and discussion; and in all these ways he will be actively participating in the religious life of the community, in which no one is concerned very much whether he is a Baptist or an Anglican: first and foremost he is a *Christian* member of his college, bearing witness to that faith within the full life of the college (albeit within what is traditionally an Anglican framework).

Very soon other influences draw him beyond the confines of his own denomination. The Student Christian Movement and Inter-Varsity Fellowship provide a desirable opportunity of meeting students of other churches and traditions and of enlarging his understanding of the life of the Church as a whole. These two organisations present a sharp contrast in their method and emphasis. The S.C.M. while striving for unity in the Church, yet seeks to persuade people to faithful membership of their own particular church; the I.V.F. on the other hand in its desire to preserve



conservative evangelical witness, more often than not, tends to create a new and somewhat exclusive community which naturally weakens a student's denominational loyalties.

In his religious life, therefore, both through his own college chapel, and through such wider influences, an undergraduate is faced with many intellectual and spiritual challenges which, while contributing greatly to that general development which is one of the priceless privileges of University life, may nevertheless so easily lead him out of the denomination in which he has been cradled. That this is no mere academic problem is proved by the fact that one third of the Anglican confirmation candidates at Oxford come from other denominations.

It must be recognised that the period at a University gives an opportunity to students to re-assess their religious beliefs. And where, after careful and honest facing of the issues, a student decides to join another denomination we all respect his decision, nor, surely, need we feel unduly alarmed. But the plain truth is that there are quite a number who are drawn to other denominations because in their first term at the University they never came into touch with the Baptist Church or the Baptist Society; and there are others who drift away from the church because so many secular interests clamour for and win their attention in the vital first few weeks. Moreover, since the student's time is divided more or less equally between college and home, a term at college being followed by a vacation at home, and so on throughout his three years at the University, it is easy in these circumstances for his links with his home church to grow weaker, while his connection with the Baptist Church in his University town is in the nature of things somewhat superficial, unless his roots have already gone deep down into Baptist soil.

In the light of all this, there are, I would suggest, three ways in which those of us who have the pastoral care of students, whether as ministers of their home churches or as University chaplains, can co-operate. Firstly, every minister can notify the chaplain of any member of his congregation who is coming up to the University. This is such a simple thing to ask, and such an obvious thing to do that it is appalling how few do it. But the differences that such notification can make are striking. In the past two years sixty-eight Baptist "freshers" have come up to Oxford (excluding Regent's Park men), but we were notified in advance of only twenty-four. The remainder we have had to "discover" as best we could, but often not until it was too late. The result is that over these two years, over one third of those who were not notified have no contact with Baptist life in the University, while of the twenty-four whose names were previously sent up, only five have been "lost" to us. Whatever these figures may or may not prove, they surely indicate the serious obligation laid on all to advise the chaplains of new students coming to their district. A list of all chaplains and societies is published each September in the *Baptist Times*.

Secondly, since the pastoral care of students is shared between ministers of home churches and chaplains there is room for much more co-operation between them. It would help the chaplain, for instance, to know a good deal more about the background of a young person than he is usually told in such introductions as are made; and correspondence between a student's own minister and the chaplain over a case, say, that is causing some anxiety, may enable both to be of greater help to the student concerned.

Thirdly, the best safeguard against losing our young people during their years at the University, is to see that they are informed Baptists before they come up. I do not think we need to be apologetic about this. There is an amazing ignorance among Baptist undergraduates about their own Church and its doctrine and history; and one wonders whether sufficient instruction in these things is given to young people in our churches. What is certain, at any rate, is that the undergraduate whose denominational loyalty is firmly established before he comes up to the University will be able to share in the religious life of his college without yielding to it; Anglican influence will be able to broaden his sympathies through S.C.M. and still remain faithful to his own church, and will be able to bring the evangelical fervour fostered by I.V.F. to the service of his denominational society, where it may well be needed.

ERIC P. SHARPE.

### MY FIRST PASTORATE

**A** FIRST pastorate is said to be crucial, for a man's whole outlook on the ministry is largely determined by his experiences in those first few years. With deep thanksgiving to God I can say my first pastorate has been happy and fruitful, and I count it the highest privilege to be allowed to serve in the ministry of His Church.

When I began my ministry I had obviously some idea of what was expected of me, and how to go about it. I did, however, decide from the very first that I would let experience and the situation teach me.

In an interregnum of any length the sheep do tend to wander, and my first job was to gather the flock and make it one. Much of my first year was spent getting to know my own people in their homes, their background and their problems. And whatever else a minister must be (and he has to be a man of many parts), he must be a pastor. This is the title of our office which I personally value most of all. We have to love men and women, and how well they will respond to one who really cares for them. We must be preachers and teachers, and other things, but if we are pastors also it will add something to the effectiveness of our preaching and teaching. This is the great difference between the peripatetic and settled minister.

The problem of the divided Church soon pressed heavy upon me. In this part of Leeds we have a number of Churches close to each

other, but with the exception of a united Good Friday service there was nothing by way of co-operation. It seemed intolerable that we should ignore each other and Christian pass Christian in the street without any recognition. During these last few years great strides forward have been made. We have had united services for worship in Church buildings, and out of doors, united discussion groups and united campaigns of house-to-house visitation. Whatever one may think about the possibilities of a united Church, or whatever may be our reservations, I firmly believe the Holy Spirit is trying to lead us in this direction and I for one am prepared to walk. Many people in this area have come to see for the first time the real need for a united Church, and are praying and working toward that end.

At my ordination Dr. L. H. Marshall said he bequeathed to me a gadfly. "Whenever you think things are going well and are inclined to take it easy, I hope that the unchurched masses will act as a gadfly, making you dissatisfied and stinging you into action." It was not long before I realised how great this problem really is. So in 1952 I began to visit the houses situated immediately around the Church. I visited about 2,000 and it took me seven months of hard labour. Then I got some of my people to follow up in pairs, and we have visited other areas in the same way. I would not for one moment decry the efforts of our people in this form of evangelism, for even if there are no results the Church is immeasurably stronger for their efforts and experiences. In my opinion, however, far more valuable than this is the visitation done by the minister. Folk really do think the Church cares if the minister calls, and by so doing he is continually making new contacts, some of which pay rich dividends. We must find time for this even if we neglect other activities, and so seek to be a pastor to the lost. Our congregations really did begin to grow when the minister began to visit.

Such has been the strategy of my first pastorate. Building up the local Church, working for a united Church, and evangelism outside the Church.

Problems are many and very soon one runs up against them. Space forbids a discussion of all, but I would mention the problem of priorities. A minister must be, and is expected to be, a man of God. Yet how easy it is to let one's youthful enthusiasm lead one into doing this and that, and going here, there and everywhere, and so leaving no time for the devotional life. We fall into the error of thinking that "doing" can take the place of "praying". It cannot, and we must discipline ourselves to see that we who preach to others really do take time to be with God. This is not only a problem for the minister, but for the Church as a whole. Many Churches in the north have plenty of social life, but no depth of spiritual life; a full house on Saturday, but half empty on Sunday. This was and is not, however, the problem at Harehills, for we are mainly a Sunday Church. We do have our youth activities in the week, but the grown-ups hardly meet at all. We have not been able to establish a strong

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THE BAPTIST INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED  
4, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1

*To the Members of the Baptist Ministers' Fellowship*

Dear Friends,

In these early months of my period of service as General Manager of the Denomination's own Insurance Company, I am very glad to have the opportunity of greeting you on this advertisement page and of giving to you a word of re-assurance (no pun is intended!).

This may seem an unusual introduction, but I have deliberately used the word "reassurance" because I know that a fresh executive appointment sometimes prompts the thought that there may follow a change of emphasis in the direction of affairs. Many of you, however, know that I joined this Company as Assistant Secretary in January, 1946, and was appointed Secretary in 1952. For over eleven years, therefore, I have been privileged to serve the Denomination as an assistant to Mr. Seymour J. Price.

In 1953 at the time of the Coronation Mr. Price wrote in the July issue of the *Fraternal* "of the dedication to service of our young Queen" and then added

"In the Baptist Insurance Company we feel that we are dedicated to the service of Baptists generally, but particularly to our Churches and Ministers."

In 1957 I would like you all to know that it is in the spirit and letter of that dedication that we shall continue to do all in our power to serve you. You can help us—naturally it is gratifying to hear from you when some action of ours, probably a claim settlement, has pleased you or your Churches, but we particularly want to hear from you when you have any insurance problem, however small it may be. If your problem is insurance then it is ours, too!

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN,  
*General Manager.*

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mid-week meeting for prayer and Bible study (though one has been kept going all the time) and no prayer meeting exists for the Church as a whole (though the young people have one). How do you get people to see that Bible reading and united prayer are not just for odd folk, but an essential for the life of the Church? I have discovered no answer. As I see it, the great hope of the Church here is the young people—in more senses than one!

Of rewards there are many but nothing can compare with the joy of seeing people come to Christ, and watching them grow in the Christian life. This is joy not only in heaven, but on earth. How wonderful it is to see young Christians becoming enthused with the vision of the world-Church and its universal mission! It has also been my privilege to help two young men suffering from mental disorders to find their way to Christ, and so to re-instatement in normal living. What privileges and what rewards are given to the pastor!

The ministry has its humour, too. Once when I was calling at a house, I asked about children for Sunday School. The woman replied that her child was too young. Thinking that the child might well be old enough, I said: "How old is he?" "He's not been born yet", came the reply! I heard one day that one of two old ladies who live alone near the Church had died. Thinking I might be able to help the one who was left, I called. On being admitted imagine my dismay on finding both sisters alive and well. In my confusion I hardly knew how to begin. It turned out that there were three sisters, and the third, who had in fact died, was a recluse. To crown it all, the two seemed to think I was touting for the funeral.

With thanksgiving to God for the past and all His mercies, I look forward with great eagerness to my second pastorate.

H. T. THORN.

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### TEN YEARS IN AMERICA

TEN years ago we arrived in America. The sun was shining brightly as the *Queen Elizabeth* sailed up the Hudson River on that lovely April morning. We experienced the thrill of coming into this young and vigorously progressive country, but there was some doubt in my mind concerning the transition from the settled pastorate in the Old Country to the itinerant ministry in the New.

Looking back over the decade there is the definite consciousness of it being robed with divine mercy and goodness. Of course there is much we have missed, such as the work in connection with the Northern Association and the Baptist Union. Then my thirteen years' pastorate in Gateshead have always been regarded as the formative and profitable years of my life. Yet God has been good in that we have made many friends on this side of the Atlantic, and He has been pleased, from the very beginning, to open up a fruitful ministry of evangelism and Bible teaching throughout this vast continent.

This ministry was exercised at first with the Pocket Testament League, which is doing a fine work in distributing the Word of God in many parts of the world. Then Billy Graham invited me to renew an association commenced in 1946 when he first visited Britain. It was a privilege to organise the first city-wide campaign which he and Cliff Barrows ever conducted. It was a privilege also to begin, at Billy's request, the negotiations for the London Campaign, and later to be a member of his team at those meetings in Harringay.

As Spiritual Counsellor of the Billy Graham Association my chief task is to deal with the letters which reach our office in Minneapolis every day. A daily average of 5,000 are received, the majority of which can be answered without any personal dictation. The problems these letters reveal are amazing. People want to know Billy's mind on every conceivable subject, from fried onions to atomic energy and flying saucers.

Many letters are from seekers after salvation, or from those who have found Christ through his ministry. A large percentage deal with marriage problems, as can well be imagined when one out of every four marriages in America is destined to end in divorce. There are many who think that Billy Graham is a theologian, judging by the difficult Scriptural questions we have to answer. Then there are critics who do not agree with Billy's theology or policy, and those who have some particular theme to develop or some bright scheme to initiate. One man wrote taking exception to a brief reference made to the blessing of God resting upon America in one or two particulars. The critic said it could never be because the digging of the Panama Canal violated the word of Scripture, "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder"! Another man wrote: "Dear Mr. Graham: My wife and I will doubtless go to heaven. We have been married, and peacefully, for many years. We are nearly 60 and mind our own affairs, never cause anyone any trouble. My problem—I just can't imagine spending an eternity with my wife. One hundred thousand years or so, yes. But eternity—well, I just don't see how I can stand it. Isn't there some way I could avoid going to heaven and at the same time not go to hell?" So you see our work is relieved of all monotony!

There have also been increasing and enriching opportunities for the preaching of God's Word. These last two years, over 65,000 miles have been travelled by car over America, and other journeys by train and plane, to fulfil appointments in Churches and Bible conferences.

During the last six months I have visited Christian colleges and universities in 33 of the 48 states of the Union to speak to students concerning the New York Crusade. As a result, thousands of prayer partners were recruited and one learned to admire the many young men and women who have yielded to the supremacy of Christ's love, and who are therefore seeking to get the most out of their college

and university education. The story is told of a Chinese student writing back to his family describing American universities as "A vast athletic association where some studies are maintained for the benefit of the feeble bodied". Not so in the places one visited these few months back.

One great joy in the itinerant ministry is that of renewing fellowship with brethren from the Old Country: Alan Redpath in Chicago, Eric Rust in Louisville, and Don Ackland in Nashville. Also to meet brethren visiting America to fulfil preaching appointments, such as Townley Lord, Sidlow Baxter and Stephen Olford. Another opportunity valued is that of keeping in regular touch with some dear men in England.

This article is written in New York where help is being given in the final preparations for the campaign beginning on 15th May in the Madison Square Garden, accommodating approximately 20,000 people. We believe that God is going to do wondrous things in these meetings; we hope they may continue for even three or four months.

Certainly there is need of a genuine spiritual awakening in America, particularly in New York City, often described as "the most wicked city in the world". It will need to be the work of God if any impact is to be made upon the forces of evil so strongly entrenched. Billy himself has said: "We feel that our particular type of crusade could at best only make a dent in New York City. Time after time as we stood in the midst of this metropolis we felt our inadequacy to accomplish this challenge. Protestantism in New York is in the extreme minority. Ministers have been discouraged and frustrated, many almost to a sense of desperation."

Yet, for some time back, we have been on a Church Membership campaign. People have been exhorted to "join the Church". It has succeeded remarkably, for Americans are great on joining things. About two out of every three persons have their names on the roll of some Church. The disturbing thing in contrast is that while Church membership is at an all-time high numerically, the prestige of the Church is at an all-time low. It would appear as if all there is to it, is to be a good citizen, subscribe generously to the Community Fund, and practice tolerance towards other faiths. Don't let your life get snarled from inhibitions, be a good fellow and that sort of thing.

Roman Catholics have been warned against listening to Billy Graham and expressly forbidden to listen to him on radio or television, or to read his books and sermons. After stating that he preaches "Heresy", Rev. John Kelly said: "So well constructed are his sermons, so interwoven is true and false doctrine, so forceful and persuasive is his delivery, that even a fairly well instructed Catholic may be deceived". Then followed this significant admission that, based upon what happened in other cities, Catholics in their thousands would attend the meetings in New York. He went on to say: "The Protestant evangelist is certainly a man of prayer, humble, dedicated, devout . . . . Certainly Catholic projects for evangelising

the unchurched would be much more effective if they were administered with even half the efficiency of the Graham team." Mr. Kelly concluded his article by saying: "Most of all, we should all pray for Billy Graham".

This statement is the more remarkable in view of the strong and continuous criticism Billy Graham gets from two sections of Protestantism, the extreme liberals, and the extreme fundamentalists. The former attack Billy because of the message he preaches. The tragedy of American liberalism is the indefiniteness of its message and the ineffectiveness of its programme. The latter attack him because of the sponsorship of his campaigns. The tragedy of American fundamentalism is its divisiveness and its disruptive effect.

One main reason why over 1,500 ministers in the Metropolitan area of New York out of 3,000 are co-operating in the campaign is because Billy recognises that some of the issues which once separated fundamentalists from modernists in America do not exist today. There is an ever-growing recognition that we have only one message to proclaim—the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we may not have too much time left to proclaim it. More people are realising the implications of being catapulted into an atomic age and that civilisation can come to an end at any time. Nevertheless the instructed man of God is not piteously wringing his hands lamenting, "Look what the world has come to", but rather is clapping his hands proclaiming, "Look Who is coming to the world".

Another reason why so many ministers are co-operating in this New York Crusade is the sincerity and singleness of purpose of the evangelist. As one wrote: "I don't agree with his theology, but I do believe he may have something to teach me in this crusade". The one consuming passion of Billy Graham is the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. He refuses by the severest logic and the sincerest philosophy to admit to a second place this primary, pre-eminent act of proclaiming the evangel of present and personal salvation. Furthermore, he makes it clear in his preaching that this salvation has an ethical bearing, and that the follower of Christ must make his witness in the world powerful and practical, and thus it is a great privilege to be associated with such a man in his ministry. Billy Graham thinks so much of Britain and is always ready to thank God for what his visits to the Old Country have done for him. We rejoice in knowing that there are so many prayer groups in Britain who are especially remembering the New York Crusade before the throne of heavenly grace.

RALPH W. MITCHELL.

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#### OF INTEREST TO YOU

*Changes of Pastorate.* A. Bury, Hemel Hempstead; L. Coates, Rothley; H. Doornkamp, Weymouth; N. Fairburn, Penarth; A. T. Fleetwood, Hornchurch; M. Francis, Shrewsbury (Claremont); G. W. Haden, London (Ferme Park); R. Hirst, Gosport; R. Hunt,



Croyde; J. H. John, Builth Wells; M. D. McKendrick, Laindon, Essex; L. A. Lane, Wellington, Som.; R. S. Luland, Bedford (Russell Park); E. W. Mills, Llandudno; E. Moorhouse, Pudsey; J. H. Nelson, Crewe; W. Nelson, Church, Lancs.; J. E. Nicholas, Abergavenny; R. Petty, Seer Green, Bucks; P. C. Rusbridge, Basildon, Essex; G. W. Sterry, Hampstead; J. S. Swain, Parkstone; A. C. Dovey, Pitlochry.

From the Colleges we report the following: Bristol: G. A. Catherall, Alnwick; E. L. Giles, Minchinhampton; J. T. Perry, London (Bonneville); P. Withers, Benwell, Cambs. Cardiff: B. Evans, Merthyr Vale; T. Thomas, New Tredegar. Manchester: T. A. Roberts, Nantwich. Regent's Park: N. B. Hall, Bletchley. Spurgeon's: R. W. Archer, Bournemouth (West Howe). London Bible College: D. McBain, London (Devonshire Square).

The following have entered the teaching profession: H. J. Andrews and S. Wakelin. J. Mudd joins the Staff of Dr. Barnardo's; W. J. Boyd enters the ministry of the Church of England and P. R. Goodchild that of the Presbyterian Church.

All these B.M.F. members take with them the best wishes of their brethren.

*Personal.* We were glad to have W. D. Reynolds at our Annual Meeting after his long illness, but regret that Mrs. Reynolds is still in hospital. We note, too, that R. W. Hobling is again able to serve our churches. Dr. J. W. Bottoms has been in hospital, paying the penalty of long years of hard work in India. F. H. Kingsbury and Rowland West have both met with severe accidents: we wish them a full recovery, as also Mrs. John Dow. T. F. Valentine has completed his five-year term as Y.P. Secretary, B.M.S., a work discharged with ability and devotion. Principal Edward Roberts, after 21 years as Tutor and Principal of Cardiff, enters upon a well-earned retirement. Many will remember him gratefully and trust that he will long be spared for further and wider ministry.

*Promotions.* We salute those of our Fellowship who have received that Call to Higher Service, which none can say "Nay". H. S. Curr, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.(Edinburgh), B.Litt.(Oxford), after seven years in Scottish pastorates, and seven as Professor at McMaster, was Principal of All Nations Bible College, 1925-1939. For another six years he was in the pastorate. The B.M.F. will miss his letters and gifts. His brother, Tom Curr, is a Scottish B.U. ex-President.

John Brown, educated at Dunoon, was for forty-four years in pastorates one of which, Aston-on-Clun, he held at the time of his death. A good and faithful minister of Jesus Christ.

Another name honoured in Scotland is that of R. J. Smithson, Ph.D.(Glasgow), B.Th.(McMaster). He held three pastorates in Scotland and one in Canada. An outstanding leader; for twenty-five years he ably edited the Scottish Baptist Magazine: his passing is a loss indeed.

A veteran missionary, George Hughes, recently received the Home Call. Accepted by the Society in 1890, he fulfilled his life work

in India, retiring in 1923. For two periods he was minister of Circular Road, Calcutta. Educated at Haverfordwest, he was one of the many notable men Wales has sent out into the Mission Field.

Russell Tomlin (Dunoon), commenced his ministry in 1911, and was still in charge at the time of his death. He indeed fought the good fight and won an abundant entry into the Heavenly Kingdom. His son, Ivor, is our minister at Fishponds, Bristol.

Gordon Thomas was pastor for a short period at Woodberry Down, London, but his chief labour was in the wider field of evangelism in which he was greatly used, both at home and overseas. Stricken with painful illness he maintained a calm, triumphant faith, impressive to all who met him. His was a lovely character and his early death, at 46, is deeply deplored.

G. S. Southgate was for some years in the Civil Service and then filled successful pastorates at Walton-on-the-Naze and Thorpe-le-Soken, in both he retained the loyal love of his people, and was made a blessing to many.

F. C. White, after training at Regent's Park, commenced his ministry in 1910. Greatly gifted as pastor and preacher he became a foremost leader in Christian Endeavour and in public life. In 1945, he was appointed Secretary of the Liberation Society, and only the day before his sudden death he presented the Report at its Annual Meeting. Here again our Fellowship and the Denomination is bereaved of a trusted and gifted minister.

Dear ones thus bereaved have our warm sympathy and our prayers that they may be comforted by the promises in the Gospel and the presence of the God with Whom their loved ones live for ever more.

The Baptist Insurance Company has appointed as Secretary Mr. J. L. Colvin who, for many years, has been assistant. The future of the Company need not be doubted in his capable hands.

Harcourt Samuel now, for the second time, Mayor of Ramsgate, has paid an official visit to Spurgeon's Home at Birchington. The civic procession much impressed the children, as did his informing address on municipal affairs and personal Christian life.

Heath Waugh, of New Barnet, was rightly encouraged when, after an address at a Brigade Parade Service, thirty-four young people came to the front of the church in token of their surrender to Jesus Christ. Our hearts give thanks with the minister at this signal evidence of God's blessing.

*Baptist Students' Federation.* We gladly comply with the request of the Secretary and insert the following intimation: The President of the Baptist Students' Federation is anxious to contact all Baptist young people entering a University, Training College, or Nursing Course. He would be grateful if names could be sent to him. Geoffrey Reynolds, 402, Copnor Road, Portsmouth, Hants. We urge our ministers to co-operate with the Federation in this so important work.

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*Cardiff College.* The South Wales Baptist College celebrates its Ter-Jubilee this year. Founded at Abergavenny 1807, it removed to Pontypool in 1836. In order to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the University, the College removed to Cardiff in 1893. The chief credit for this important change goes to Principal Edwards, who was once depicted as marching along the road towards Cardiff carrying the College on his shoulder! The truth in the cartoon lies in the fact that for long years Dr. Edwards was the College, and his name will ever be associated with it. Thomas Phillips, T. W. Chance and Edward Roberts, followed in the Presidential Chair. Our warm good wishes go to the College for successful Ter-Jubilee celebrations, in anticipation of which an attractive programme of meetings for the coming autumn has been arranged. We trust, also, that the target of £30,000 for the new residential building will be reached and passed. The first Principal was J. M. Davies.

#### BAPTIST UNION

*The Assembly.* The *Baptist Times* has fully reported the Assembly and it found adequate notice in the religious and secular Press. All that need here be said, is that in attendance and spirit it was of a high quality. According to the B.T. Editor, "the Chapel Mouse" also attended, but if so, it could not be heard! Much the same has to be recorded of the two eminent speakers at the concluding Session—a disappointment partly recompensed by the full summary of their excellent addresses which later appeared in print.

*J. H. Shakespeare.* Memories among the elders were refreshed, and younger minds stimulated, by the address of Gilbert Laws on the great man who was the architect of the denomination that now is. All present must have felt indebted at this Commemoration Service to the ceaseless and successive labours in which J.H.S. literally wore himself out. Dr. Laws spoke for us all when, in a concluding sentence quoting Fullerton's remark about Spurgeon, he said of Shakespeare: "we stand at the salute". It was fitting that Mr. W. H. Ball should conduct the opening devotional exercises, in view of his long association with the former Secretary and the denomination, this he did with impressive dignity.

*Our Annual Meeting.* More than 700 attended on 2nd May, and were rewarded by a stimulating address from Principal Huxtable of New College. His subject was "Preaching—To-day". For forty minutes he held the close attention of his audience, in an utterance which, as one of the speakers observed, showed that the Principal could not only talk about preaching, but could also deliver the goods. The offering amounted to £38. The Officers were re-elected and the Secretary, J. H. G. Adam, is to be congratulated on so arranging the programme that the meeting finished in good time for men to attend their College Reunions.

*Women Ministers.* The first woman to occupy the Chair of the Congregational Union has just concluded a successful year of

Office. In the Presbyterian Assembly the first woman to be admitted to the ministry was given an important place on this year's Assembly programme. In the current B.U. Handbook, at long last, women ministers are given their correct designation. It is noticeable, however, that ecclesiastical apartheid continues, in that their names are placed upon a separate page with the Probationers, although there is ample room for them on the previous page, following the list of men. The B.U. does move and, in years to come, the names of its Women Ministers may be included in the rightful place.

## THE WIDER CIRCLE

### NEW ZEALAND

*Union in Ceylon.* The *N.Z. Baptist* has some pertinent paragraphs on the above subject from which we quote: "Greater concessions have been made to Baptist thinking and practice in the Ceylon Scheme than in any other scheme for Church Union. Two Baptisms are recognised, sponsored, or infant baptism, and baptism of believers. The Church in Ceylon will make up its own mind. But, with all the good-will in the world many Baptists in N.Z. will find it impossible to accept the idea of two baptisms . . . Infant Baptism cannot be regarded as an alternative to the Baptism of Believers . . . Infant baptism is a man-made ordinance that obscures the essential call of the Gospel for personal commitment. Scripture speaks not of two baptisms but of one . . . We think we rightly interpret the spirit of N.Z. Baptists when we say—on this issue our souls are thrilled to the Word of God. So help us, God. We can do no other."

*A Visitor from N.Z.* We have been happy to meet Hugh Nees who, with his brother, is combining business and pleasure in a brief visit to Britain. Hugh has been a welcome ambassador in several of our pulpits and his interpretation of Baptist life in N.Z. has greatly interested his hearers.

*A Visitor to N.Z.* The Superintendent Chaplain of the British Sailors' Society, the Rev. R. W. Phillips, is making a three year stay in N.Z. He will visit the various Ports in which there are branches of the B.S.S. work. His H.Q. will be the King George V Institute, Lyttleton, N.Z. He is greatly looking forward to meeting many friends of the Society in the churches and to the renewal of fellowships formed during his visit in 1953. A minister well beloved by us all—he carries our warm greetings and prayerful commendation.

*George Hughes.* This veteran Baptist missionary, whose death is referred to elsewhere, spent four of his many years in India, under the auspices of the N.Z. Baptist Mission, labouring in East Bengal 1895-99.

### AUSTRALIA

*Victoria.* Dr. Lindsay Grigg, son of the revered ex-Principal Grigg, is now fulfilling an appointment at the Brompton Hospital, London. We trust that, together with his family, he may have

opportunity of seeing something of this country and that he will return with pleasant memories of contacts with Baptist friends. Our brother, G. P. Rees, not forgotten by our older friends, has been much in our thoughts in his recent sore bereavement.

The *Victorian Baptist Witness* has had an able Editor in G. H. Blackburn, who has made it a powerful journal in the State. He now hands over his Office to E. T. Laxton and devotes his whole time to Denominational work. The Editorial Chair here, shakes hands with the Editorial Chair in Victoria.

*New South Wales.* Arthur Cundall writes telling of his happy settlement in his church near Sydney and also refers to the good work done by Victor Willis, whose contribution to the Summer School was very helpful. Greetings to both these not-forgotten comrades.

*Queensland.* R. M. Niebling sends an informative letter concerning his church at Dalby, a town of 7,000, the centre of a prosperous farming district. The cause was founded by the Home Mission, but is now independent, and Niebling is its first minister. He names linseed, barley and wheat as the local products. We pray that he may be a reaper as well as a sower in fruitful spiritual soil.

#### CANADA

*Recruits.* W. Niven Aitken and W. J. McLean, who have recently left Scottish churches for pastorates in Canada, will prove valuable recruits to the Canadian ministry. Alexander McCrae, also a newcomer to Canada, is having encouraging experiences in his church at Kenora, Ontario. His church membership classes have been attended by Roman Catholics as well as Protestants and from these classes, and the ordinary services of the church, he is able to record many decisions for Christ.

*Personal.* Many will remember R. J. Smithson, a one-time student of McMaster, where he graduated B.Th., and who filled a Toronto pastorate 1914-19. They will share the universal sense of loss in his passing.

Professor Levy, of Acadia, has been spending a part of his vacation in England and many friends have enjoyed renewal of fellowship with him.

*Thank You.* C. H. Bentall, minister of Walmer Road Baptist Church, Toronto, and President of the Baptist Federation of Canada, kindly permits us to re-publish the article under his name. We are grateful to him for a list of Ontario ministers to whom we mail this copy of the *Fraternal* magazine and to whom we give a cordial invitation to join our Fellowship.

#### U.S.A.

*Berkeley Divinity School, California.* Dean Ralph Knudsen, in sending a liberal subscription, refers to the retirement of Dr. Sanford Fleming from the Presidency and writes: "He has been a great leader and has rendered outstanding service to the Baptist faith". We share the farewell greetings and add our thanks for his

support of our B.M.F. Our good wishes to his successor, Dr. Ralph M. Johnson, formerly Director of the Council on Missionary Co-operation, American Baptist Convention.

Professor R. B. Hannen has been home on his Sabbatic leave and churches as well as personal friends have been glad to renew old acquaintance. We hope Berkeley will forgive us if we own that, on hearing his accent over the telephone, we are glad to note that he is still a Scot.

*Dr. Drexler.* We acknowledge a kindly letter in which occurs the sentence: "If I can introduce new members I will gladly do so." We hope our veteran friend and Mrs. Drexler are still in good health and will be spared to each other to continue their valued service.

*A Remove.* Arthur B. Crabtree moves a stage further from us to become Professor of Theology in the Eastern Baptist Seminary, Philadelphia. His very many well-wishers in England accompany him and Mrs. Crabtree in loving thoughts. We charge him to take early greetings to Dr. Norman Paullin of the same Seminary—his fellow member, and ours.

*F. H. Wheeler.* Weymouth, the pastorate of which has just been accepted by H. Doornkamp, does not forget F. H. Wheeler, nor the interim pastor C. A. Arrington. We acknowledge receipt of a letter in which is given an unusually graphic account of the religious and social atmosphere of Simpsonville, South Carolina, where Wheeler is now pastor. An article for publication in the *Fraternal* would be welcomed. Meanwhile, blessings on the trio—Doornkamp, Arrington and Wheeler.

*Grateful.* We have received, once again, a grant of 50 Dollars per Dr. George Sadler from the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Convention. This will go far to meet the cost of supplying the *Fraternal Magazine* to many readers in Europe.

#### SOUTH AFRICA

*G. I. Thomas.* Preparations had been made for a Mission to be conducted by G. I. Thomas in many S.A. Baptist churches—alas, it was not to be. We send assurance of prayerful sympathy to Victor Thomas, minister in Pretoria, on his brother's early death.

We receive many letters from overseas, especially from those who have gone out from the homeland. One from J. E. Gartry, of Roodepoort, told of the passing of his highly gifted wife and spiritual comrade. Her marvellous work amongst thousands of our boys during the war will long be remembered. We think of him in his sore sorrow. Among the visitors welcomed at our Annual Assembly was Mr. Hellyer, Treasurer of the S.A.B.U. It was good to have him with us again.

*Colour Bar.* It is difficult for those living in Britain, accurately to assess the racial problems so acute in S.A. There is no doubt, however, as to the common mind in Britain and S.A. concerning the recent Act regarding Racial discrimination in Public Worship.

# B. M. S.

*“Go ye into all the world . . .”*

The “marching orders” of our Lord still remain to stir our consciences in relation to our duty to those in other lands who have not heard the Gospel. In obedience, the B.M.S. goes on with its work in India, Pakistan, Ceylon, the West Indies, Congo, Hong Kong, Malaya and Brazil. It relies on your support and your leadership in the churches that

*volunteers for service overseas  
interest and encouragement  
prayer unceasing  
sacrificial giving*

may continue.

**BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY**

**93 GLOUCESTER PLACE  
LONDON, W.1**



In this matter the Resolution passed at the British Assembly is at one with a similar Resolution adopted by Baptists in S.A. The Archbishop-elect of Cape Town, Dr. Joost de Blank, goes out to a difficult task. Possibly it is hoped that his Dutch origin may help him in a work of reconciliation with the Dutch Reform church in seeking the repeal of the Act. However that may be, it will soon be discovered that the Archbishop, though a Zacchaeus in stature, is a giant in moral strength who will make his convictions known and his influence felt.

#### JAMAICA

*Congratulations.* We add our congratulations to those expressed to F. Cowell Lloyd in the Annual Report of the Jamaica B.U. During his long residence in the Island he has taken a leading position in Religious and Civic affairs. He has recently attained his 90th birthday and is still going strong.

We join in the good wishes expressed in the same Report to Keith Tucker, Principal of Calabar College, on the occasion of his ministerial semi-jubilee.

#### EUROPE

*Rüschlikon.* George Beasley-Murray, Professor at Rüschlikon, is doing excellent work, not only among the students but in the churches he visits. A letter from him says: "It seems clear that there is something of worth to be done here and that Rüschlikon can play a really large part in the development of our European Baptist life." Greetings from the B.M.F. to President, Faculty and Students.

*Vienna.* From J. A. Moore, Secretary, Baptist Relief Committee for Hungary, we have received a deeply impressive account of his work and of those he supervises. It tells not only of humanitarian help so urgently needed and well done, but also of the spiritual uplift rendered to the churches, and through them to hundreds of people. We appreciate his references to the Magazine and we reciprocate his good wishes.

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#### BOOK REVIEWS

*The Baptists in Upper and Lower Canada before 1880.* Stuart Ivison and Fred Rosser. University Press, Toronto. Oxford University Press, London. 40s.

This book is well documented and will be useful to those who are interested in the history of our Baptist witness. It throbs with the story of persons and movements during the early settlements on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence, and will captivate those who have an interest in that great member of our Commonwealth. It covers the years between the 1780's, when the thirteen colonies in America won their independence, and 1820. Varying sympathies in the war-struggle, and even pacifism, affected the support that was given toward the establishment of the Churches. Those whose

interest lies in following out into the wider world the principles and practices of the Baptists of Britain will find satisfaction here. These small communities were the result of settlement and missionary activity. The churchmanship of most of them stemmed from the Confession of the Particular Baptists of Great Britain which was published in 1677, and got to Canada by way of Philadelphia, but that of the County of Oxford stemmed from the General Baptists of the Homeland. The closing chapter of the book shows that the general pattern which obtained at home still obtained when the movement had been transplanted in Canada. There was the same autonomy for the local Church, and the same desire for association.

This all means that, though this is a book about Quebec and Ontario, and the beginnings of Baptist life there, it will prove to be interesting and informative for British Baptists.

W. J. GRANT.

*Christology and Myth in the New Testament.* Geraint Vaughan Jones. George Allen & Unwin. 21s.

The title of this book, though briefer, is more illuminating than its table of contents, for it at least has the virtue of expressing clearly what the book is about. It seems to be inspired by a desire to accommodate the New Testament record to the scientific spirit of the twentieth century, and thus it considers the problem which faces those who cannot accept many of the New Testament statements as literally and objectively true. The author suggests that such passages are to be regarded mythologically, and, concentrating upon the Christological aspects, he proceeds to investigate their extent and character, dealing extensively with the Incarnation, and the Lordship of Christ over the creation and the powers of evil.

Various ways of viewing the mythological elements of the New Testament are considered, such as their expurgation, or their re-interpretation along allegorical, poetical, or metaphorical lines, whilst the author bears in mind continually the approach of Bultmann and the existentialist school. Finally he returns to the defence of the mythological as essential, and reaches the conclusion that truth is safer expressed in mythological terms, even though the terms may need re-interpreting, than expressed in philosophical propositions which may be equally unacceptable to succeeding generations.

It should be understood that this study is not primarily one of theological terms, nor yet the revision of an out-dated cosmology, but of the essential substance of the myth. There are many who would agree that we may change our terms at will, and indeed there is every reason for doing so, if thereby we make clearer the thought which we are trying to express. They would go so far as to agree that mythological forms may need to be re-interpreted in that they are determined by the cosmology of an unscientific age. But it is good to see the question raised as to whether the modern man's problem really is a question of the *form* in which the truth is expressed or

whether it is fundamentally an antipathy to that which the myth is endeavouring to say. The preaching of the Cross was not originally a stumbling block or foolishness because of its form, for the objectors belonged to the same age as that in whose thought-form the preaching was set. The real objection arose, as it arises today, from a reluctance to accept the significance and implications of the myth. If this is so then no amount of de-mythologising will succeed except by removing the basic truth at which men stumble.

There are points at which Mr. Jones's line of reasoning is obscure, and the supporting data doubtful. For example, readers may find it hard, in spite of the supporting footnotes, to accept the assertion that the idea of pre-existence is inconsistent with that of virgin birth (page 182), and even more the assertion on page 31, reiterated on page 115, that the book of Revelation contains no suggestion of Jesus as an historical figure. Among other things it is difficult to see how such words as "The Lamb as it had been slain" could have any meaning at all to the readers unless it pointed back to the historical event of the crucifixion.

There are one or two printing errors. Whether the inclusion of a further negative on page 6, line 24, is to be classed as such depends upon the interpretation of this typically obscure and complicated sentence.

To those readers of the *Fraternal* who have a mind to emulate the Grand Old Duke of York, this book will provide an excursion up the slopes of a formidable mountain, and the fact that it is necessary to retrace most of the steps which are taken need not detract from the value of the exercise involved. F. S. FITZSIMMONDS.

*Training in Visitation.* L. R. Misselbrook. Carey-Kingsgate Press. 2s.

As we should expect, this is a practical and helpful booklet. We hope it will be widely read by ministers and laymen, for it will encourage and guide its readers to initiate regular and persistent visitation by the local churches. We have in this booklet some of the talks given by Mr. Misselbrook to those preparing to take part in the Visitation Campaign of the Leavesden Road Church. After pointing out that New Testament evangelism is centred in the Church, and emphasising the need for the visitors themselves to be right with God and their fellows, he goes on to deal with such matters as making an approach to strangers, conversing with them, dealing with their excuses, leading them to Christ and using St. John's Gospel in doing so, and follow-up work. There is an interesting appendix with short paragraphs giving the comments of some of the Watford visitors, and indicating the thrill and stimulus they received in sharing in this work.

The using of St. John's Gospel rather than the New Testament as a whole we think unwisely limits the passages of Scripture the visitors might use and the teaching they could give. We were not

fully satisfied with the chapter on leading a person to Christ, with its belittling of the use of Scripture verses (which are so used not to win "intellectual assent", but to give authority to the word of the visitor and to make clear that the convert's faith is rooted not in any word of man's but in God's). Also, although it is true that people come to Christ for various reasons, we do need to make clear to them, more definitely than is indicated here, that there is no way into the Kingdom but through penitence, and no possibility of being right with God except through God's redeeming grace. We found the continual use of "folk" irritating. Why not "people"? For that is what they are!

L. J. MOON.

*Day is Dawning.* Christian Education Press, Philadelphia. \$3.50.

When the Nazis attempted to muzzle the evangelical churches in Germany, champions of the churches' right freely to proclaim the Gospel soon made their witness. They were, moreover, not afraid to declare that the Nazi creed could not be reconciled with the Gospel.

Among the champions was Martin Niemoller and Bishop Otto Dibelius, Bishop of Berlin. One who knows Dr. Dibelius intimately has written his story in this book. It is a story to stir the heart and serves to remind the reader that the spirit of Martin Luther lives on in the Germany of today.

J.O.B.

*The Raven.* About a year ago the British Council of Churches launched this periodical to help ministers to use the Bible more effectively in their preaching. Its circulation, which has been steadily growing, is now 3,400. It is issued six times a year, and contains biblical expositions, with suggestions for further reading. There have also been articles on the prophets, the psalms, and the parables. We commend this new venture to our readers. Annual subscriptions (4s.) should be sent to The British Council of Churches, 10, Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1.

*Mental Gain and the Cure of Souls.* H. Guntrip. Independent Press. 10s. 6d.

The author (formerly minister of a famous Congregational Church) is now giving his whole time to psycho-analytic therapy, for which he has been carefully trained. He has therefore exceptional qualifications for writing on his subject in a way that will help ministers.

This is certainly a helpful book. It will help the minister to tackle his pastoral work with a deeper understanding of the needs of people; it will also help him to understand his own complex personality. Dr. Guntrip has taken pains to write intelligibly on a subject which is too often made unnecessarily difficult by excessive use of technical jargon.

**THE BAPTIST HOME WORK FUND**



*Ministers are asked to pray  
that the Home Work Fund  
may achieve what it sets out  
to do*



**The General Secretary,  
The Baptist Union, 4 Southampton Row, London, W.C.1**

**FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE TO  
THE DENOMINATION**

Inaugurated in 1908, the *Baptist Women's League* has a long record of work for the churches and the community. In 1958 the Golden Jubilee will be observed not only as a thanksgiving for the past, but also as a gateway into future service. All Baptist women are called to prepare by Consecrated Living, Consecrated Serving and Consecrated Giving to share in this historic event.

Full particulars of the Jubilee Thank-offering and the celebrations in the Royal Albert Hall on 1st May, 1958, may be obtained from the Women's Department Office in the Baptist Church House.

**4 SOUTHAMPTON ROW  
LONDON, W.C.1**

The book is also encouraging. It reminds us of fundamental human needs—self-realisation in and through good relationships, love, a life with meaning and satisfaction at the heart of it—needs which can be met only through acceptance of the Gospel by the individual.

J.O.B.

*The Ten Words.* Sydney Myers. Independent Press. 12s. 6d.

The author states his aim in the prologue—to re-assert the unchanging worth of the Ten Commandments as God's Great Charter of human conduct, "an integral part of the covenant of His grace". In the following chapters he discusses in turn the essential meaning of each commandment, with reference to a wide range of personal and social questions. Most chapter headings are from the New Testament, and aptly indicate the significance of each Word (e.g. "None other Name", "In Spirit and in Truth", "Hallowed be Thy Name").

The chapter on the first commandment well illustrates the writer's method of treatment. He begins by discussing such modern idolatries as the unredeemed self, the love of money, the glamour of success, the idolatry of power, modern superstitions, and certain forms of patriotism, showing how all stand under the rebuke of this first Word. He then devotes the remainder of the chapter to a consideration of the positive fruits of obedience—"God at the centre means well-being, on the largest scale, for the greatest number of people."

One does not see this book making a wide general appeal, partly because of the rather difficult style in which it is written. Ponderous words and long sentences frequently obscure the plain meaning, and at times there is a pedantic air about the style which tends to irritate the reader. For all that, ministers especially will find much here that is stimulating and suggestive of further lines of thought. Occasionally, both exegesis and exposition appear rather strained and the writer seems to be pleading too much (as in the chapter on the fourth commandment), but on the whole he keeps fairly close to his text.

A. T. PECK.

*The New Testament Background: Selected Documents.* C. K. Barrett (S.P.C.K.). 21s.

Serious students of the New Testament will find this book a most useful tool for their work. It consists of a series of extracts from various sources in the Jewish and Hellenistic world which, in one way or another, bear upon New Testament studies. The selections are introduced and accompanied by comments by the author which add much to their value.

R.L.C.

*Sure and Steadfast.* J. R. Edwards. Carey Press. 5s.

J. R. Edwards has a flair for Children's Addresses and his latest book, *Sure and Steadfast*, containing 34 talks, should be helpful to the minister needing material for his pulpit preparation.

*Padre's Pie.* J. R. Edwards has an equal flair for rhyming, and his verses contain thoughts that may well prove as arrows to unsuspected targets. For the modest expenditure of 6d., plus postage, a copy may be had of *Padre's Pie*. Twenty poems, so-called in reminiscence of his Chaplaincy days. Postal address: Timbercombe, Bleadon Hill, Weston-super-Mare. S.G.M.

*South of the River.* J. M. Matthews. Carey-Kingsgate Press. 7s. 6d.

Good stuff, Mrs. Matthews! The author, a B.M.S. missionary, is "a member of a great missionary family". The book is interesting and ought to become known both outside and within our denomination. It is produced in a pleasing manner, with four pages of photographs and a sketch-map. The style is easy, and not at all "mishy" or "deputationish".

This is a very honest piece of reporting, and contrives to build up a reliable picture of the life of a mission-station in the Lingungu region south of the Congo river, giving at the same time a sympathetic understanding of the African. This is done by careful grouping of stories and anecdotes about people. To read it is to acquire information painlessly and to sense the inspiration and the purpose behind the missionary's life. It ought to be recommended, and must stimulate enlightened support. It cannot be dismissed as "Oh, another missionary book". This one is different.

F. N. CARPENTER.

*The Great Realities.* Samuel H. Miller. Longmans, Green and Co. 176 pp. 10s. 6d. net.

Dr. Miller is pastor of the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, near Harvard University, and also Adjunct Professor of the Philosophy of Religion at Andover-Newton Theological School. His book deals with the One Reality from a sevenfold aspect—Man, God, Prayer, Worship, Faith, Love, Peace. It will make the reader painfully aware of the paucity of his knowledge of the living God, and yet in that awareness will bring him to his burning bush—on one condition—that he makes himself "available". Dr. Miller has much to say about being available, and about the things which make us unavailable to God and therefore to one another. "The public has seeped through all the normal dykes of privacy until there is no seclusion left." "We are public-minded, shut up outside ourselves." We have lost the power of looking at things and the sense of wonder and mystery. And there's the "hypercritical attitude we carry into the church". "On the basis of being free to have our own 'say', we develop a veritable doctrine of papal individuality." Dr. Miller's delineation of one obstacle to prayer is worth pondering over—"with our democratic enthusiasm erasing from the imagination of our time that peculiar worth of any aristocracy, we have eliminated any basis for the high achievement of the saint in religion".

Much of this has been said before, though it can rarely have been said in so arresting and forceful a manner. But Dr. Miller is no mere destroyer of our illusions about ourselves. He never casts down without raising up. And lest it should be thought that he despairs of his fellow men, take this, which may not please Barthians, though it may please the newer Barth: "Most men are in love with God, and yet perhaps do not know it". "Jesus preached and acted everywhere as if men had known God, . . . and if they had moved away . . . he could remind them of what had been theirs, even help them find what they had never altogether known that they possessed."

Should not the Scripture on p. 80 be credited to Isaiah and not to "the Psalmist"?

W. E. MOORE.

*The Covenant People of God.* H. F. Wickings. Independent Press. 1957. 191 pp. 9s. 6d.

This book consists of an introduction and six chapters, and the chapters are divided into a large number of sections. These sections are each concerned with one topic, and the treatment consists of a passage of scripture with an accompanying exposition. The chapter on Moses extends as far as Jehu; the second chapter is mainly concerned with the prophets; the third on the Deuteronomic covenant is largely concerned with Jeremiah and Ezekiel; two further chapters bring us to the N.T.; and the last chapter sets forth Torah according to Jesus. The book, which is nicely produced, has a Scripture index and some maps.

The title of the book, so attractive in itself, led me to expect something different, and so the treatment inevitably caused some disappointment. The book will mainly serve the laity, for it is a simple and straight-forward account of some of the covenant passages of the Bible. Different people would naturally choose different Scripture passages for the expositions, but on any view the omission of the passages dealing with the Davidic covenant is inexplicable. The statement that the word Lord is often substituted for Jahveh is of course very misleading.

Ministers will find the book to contain a convenient collection of sign posts as they direct their young people and laity along one of the main roads through the Bible.

G. HENTON DAVIES.

*The Seven Letters. Christ's Message to His Church.* Hugh Martin. Carey Kingsgate Press. 122 pp. 7s. 6d. net.

This is a useful book to give to those who may be puzzled by "The Revelation", or put off by the abuses of it. It will be found very helpful in Bible Study groups and as a stepping stone to the larger works by Charles and Kiddle. There are two short introductory chapters giving the whole book its setting in life, and the rest is an exposition of the text, with the author's admirable translation.



Dr. Martin takes the angels of the Churches as being their spiritual leaders—"for the religious condition of a church and its pastor tend to be the same". The Nikolaitans and the Balaamites are, in the view of "John", a fifth column in the Church. "Balaam" means "devourer of the people"; "Nikolaos"—"conqueror of the people". He suggests that they had adopted a compromise in the matter of Caesar worship and invitations to pagan weddings, funerals, birthday parties, etc. He has some interesting suggestions about the white stone (2.17), including the possibility that it may have been the "tessera", a little cube used, among other purposes, as an admission ticket to all sorts of events—here, to the supper of the great King. The trouble at Thyatira may have been due particularly to the difficulty Christian tradesmen would have in deciding whether to join the trade guilds for which the city was famous. In discussing the recording of the name of the victor in the "Book of life" (3.17), Dr. Martin refers to the keeping of rolls in Roman cities and the fact that criminals might have their names erased.

These are a few samples of a very lifelike picture of these Churches in Asia Minor, a picture all the more alive for the skill with which the author shows its relevance to the Church today. There seems to be a slip on page 21, where the impression is given that Flavius Clemens was put to death by Domitian immediately on the latter's accession in 81 A.D.; it was 95 A.D. W. E. MOORE.

*The Best Story-Book in the World.* P. N. Bushill. Carey Kingsgate Press. 6s.

*All the Year round.* W. G. Branch. Carey Kingsgate Press. 7s. 6d.

Here are two fresh little books for devotional use. Bushill's is specially prepared for use by children. There is a page for each day in the year. At the top is a reference to a Bible story to be read. Then a sentence or two drawing out the significance, a sentence of prayer and a verse to memorise containing the gist of it.

Branch's is a book of stories from real life for young people, stories gathered from many walks. There is one for each week in the year and they are grouped under the successive months, each story having some link with its month. Some are out-of-the-way stories; and some all young people should know and often don't.

F.C.B.

#### ADDENDA

Further pastoral changes include W. D. Baird, Alloa; W. W. Burch, North Curry, Som.; F. J. Coward, Boscombe; D. H. Hall, Potters Bar; L. W. Jiggins, Bristol, Soundwell; W. Scott, Huddersfield, Birkby; C. Lapsley, Norwich, St. Mary's; T. F. Valentine, Teddington; D. F. Stone (Rawdon), Coseley; W. Porch, Sudbury, Suffolk.

W. N. Clarke accepts an appointment with the Sailors' Society and T. M. Gordon with Dr. Barnardo's. J. Ithel Jones has accepted Principalship of South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff.