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EDITORIAL

GOD WHO CREATES

L. G. CHAMPION, B.A., B.D., D.Th., President of Bristol Baptist College.

THE WORLD IN WHICH WE WORK

J. O. BARRETT, M.A., General Superintendent, N.E. Area.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPIRIT

W. E. HOUGH, M.A., B.D., Tutor, Rawdon College.

LEIGH PARK

J. D. LAMBERT.

AN OBSTACLE TO EVANGELISM

J. R. C. PERKIN, B.A., D.Phil., Minister, Altrincham, Cheshire.

THE PSALMS AND HYMNS TRUST

R. L. CHILD, M.A., B.D., B.Litt. Lately Principal, Regent's Park College, Oxford.

OF INTEREST TO YOU

THE WIDER CIRCLE

BOOK REVIEWS

EDITORIAL

THERE is no doubt about it. As has been said before the pattern of ministerial life today and the shape of the working week are not what they were when older men began. Especially is this the case with those doing pioneer work. This came out clearly in discussions at the Oxford Conference for second year probationer ministers. The new generation of College Principals are aware of this. Though the studies essential to a minister's equipment remain unchanged and occupy most of the time, ways are being found to help students in coping with the new pattern of life and the new problems they will find. Men speak appreciatively of benefit received from College visits of ministers and experts in different social services, especially of the value during student days of being associated for a time with an experienced working minister in the work of his church.

Even so, when a student is in his first church, and still more so in the case of men beginning their ministry without that equipment which College can give, after six or twelve months there is often a sense of frustration and even of disillusionment. The going is hard, the problems are complex, the response is disappointing, his own keenness is reciprocated perhaps by very few, demands are made which he scarcely knows how to meet and maybe he feels the denomination does little to help him. Well, denominational leaders are aware of this and have invited our Fellowship to co-operate in finding some way of meeting it. For the last two years, in place of the general school for ministers previously organised in Oxford, there has been held a Conference for probationers instead. The second of these has just run its course and has confirmed the impression made last year that such a Conference meets a real need and might well become an integral part of a probationer's training. Apart from the mental stimulus of the discussions and the spiritual quickening of the devotional sessions, the Conference could have two outstanding values. It could, if made permanent, give each successive batch of men an opportunity to meet the leaders of the Baptist Union and the Baptist Missionary Society and to know in formal Conference and in informal personal contacts, what manner of men these are who handle our affairs and the "whys and the wherefores" of things done; thus helping to establish confidence, co-operation and solidarity. And it would also strengthen the bonds between ministers themselves. Men come into the ministry through different doors and this Conference would be a kind of lobby where they meet and get acquainted, before attending the Assembly to receive their diplomas from the President and enter the ranks of the accredited ministers.

Last year the Secretary of the Baptist Ministers' Fellowship wrote to the fraternalists asking their views about the future of the Summer Schools. Some suggested that a School for older men should alternate

with one for probationers. This was considered by the Fellowship Committee who decided to recommend such a School for 1959 and one for the probationers in 1960. The Baptist Union General Purposes Committee were not drawn to the idea, being persuaded of the value of the school for probationers. They await a report of this year's School before making a final decision. They are likely to be confirmed in their view.

We know that many men value the week in Oxford as a refresher course, but now most Areas have their own Conferences, often run largely on the Oxford lines with men of the same calibre giving addresses. And there are probably few ministers for whom such a Conference is not available. Hitherto generous help has come from denominational funds. But if the Baptist Union should decide that in the interests of the denomination the best use of such grants in future is in support of probationer Conferences as part of the general probationary scheme, can we demur? On the contrary, as a Fellowship of Baptist Ministers, should we not rejoice that the Union was recognising the value of fellowship and the bringing of new recruits into it as an essential part of ministerial training, and give the new venture our blessing?

The Fellowship Officers and the Editorial Board will be glad to hear readers' views on the question and they promise that such views will be duly represented in official circles.

A PRAYER OF ST. ANSELM

O blessed Lord and Saviour, who hast commanded us to love one another, grant us grace that having received Thine undeserved bounty, we may love every man in Thee and for Thee. We implore Thy clemency for all, but especially the friends whom Thy love has given to us. As Thou dost love them, so make them to love Thee with all their heart and mind and soul, that those things only which are pleasing to Thee they may will and speak and do. Measure not to them Thy goodness by the dullness of our devotion; but as Thy kindness surpasseth all human affection so let Thy hearing transcend our prayer. Do Thou to them what is expedient for them according to Thy will. Amen.

GOD WHO CREATES

THE Christian doctrine of creation is an expression, primarily, of the relationship between God and the world, between God and all forms of life in the world.

Its primary concern is not the point of time at which the world and life within it had its beginning. Whether the universe came into being during the six days of the Biblical account or during the long ages posited by modern scientific thinking is not of primary importance. Whether the coming into being of the universe was the immediate result of divine decree—"God said: Let there be light and there was light"—or the slow outworking of evolutionary processes is not fundamental. It may well be that these pairs of contrasts are not in fact contrasts at all but different modes of expressing the same truths. In any case they are truths on the periphery of the doctrine of creation. Why should we bother to cycle around the perimeter of an airport when we can take a 'plane and soar into the heights and distances; for that is what the airport is for!

The doctrine of creation is as complex as the organisation of an airport! But it exists primarily to express the relationship of eternity and time, of the unseen and spiritual with the visible and material, of God and ourselves. It is to these heights that we must soar and these distances we must seek to travel.

God is creator: all else is created. That is at once a relationship. God possesses life in Himself: all else derives its life from Him. This is a truth formulated in the Fourth Gospel as it seeks to express the abiding mystery of the Presence of Christ. On the one hand the daring assertion is made that "as the Father has life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (v. 26), thus stating that the unique prerogative of God is shared by Christ; yet on the other hand it is immediately said "I can of mine own self do nothing . . . I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (v. 30); thus indicating that in his subordination to and dependence upon God Christ shares the life of mankind.

All life is derivative and dependent. It is never life in itself and for itself. Existence means life in relation. This relation is a fact of existence. It does not depend upon recognition or understanding. It is true of the lowest forms of life as of the finest human intellect, it is as significant for the atheist about whom T. S. Eliot rightly says "Those who deny Thee could not deny if Thou didst not exist; and their denial is never complete, for if it were so, they would not exist" as for the longing soul of the sincerest believer whose intimate desire for God cries out in John Donne's words

"Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me."

Life in all its forms is dependent upon God, i.e. always in relationship with God.

This truth has a special application to man inasmuch as man is the one being in the created order who is able to recognise this relationship and make a conscious response to it. Man is thus a being in a particular relation with God. This might almost be regarded as a definition of the Christian doctrine of man! No account of man in terms of his own being, e.g. a self-conscious or rational animal, or in terms of his activity, e.g. a tool-using creature or a political being, or in terms of his destiny, e.g. "master of my fate" or "superman" can be called Christian, nor in fact are such accounts very helpful in elucidating the problems of human behaviour. The Christian account of man always sees him in his relationship with God. After surveying a number of views about human nature which are commonly held H. H. Farmer in "God and Man" p. 67, writes: "... none of these views does justice to the fact that man is primarily and distinctively a person in a world of personal relationships; and, in particular, none comes even within sight of the fact that absolutely basic and central in the personal world is the infinite and eternal personal reality, the source of all being whom we call God". Consequently Farmer asserts that "the Christian view of the essential secret of human nature, of the distinctive humanity of the human is that he is a person standing all the time in personal relationship to God. It is that relationship which constitutes him—MAN".

If we accept this assertion that the Christian doctrine of creation is primarily an expression of the relationship of God with all men and all men with God, we have to ask: what is involved in the relationship? What does it tell us about man and his life in the world? Martin Buber has given us useful categories of thought in his simple phrases about the realm of relationships: I and thou; I and it. But we still have to ask questions about the "I" in the nexus of relationships.

What we have first to say on the basis of the doctrine is that all men are equal and this equality is before God. Nothing is more obvious than the fact that people are not equal in capacity or in function. But "God is no respecter of persons"; that is man's equality. Yet "in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him"; that is the responsibility of this equality. Any attempt to assert and maintain equality without recognition that it is equality in relationship with God ends in the denial of equality. The Communist doctrine may proclaim a classless society in which all are equal but in fact the opponents of Communism have to be eliminated to achieve this equality; and even in the Soviet Union the tendency appears to be towards distinctions rather than equality. It is not enough to say, as the American Constitution does, that all men are created free and equal: we have also to emphasise that the equality derives from and exists in man's relationship with God.

On this basis two further important statements can be made and these will bring us closer to the life of man in society.

1. We can say that man in his relationship with God is free and responsible. His freedom is a responsible freedom; his responsibility is freely accepted.

Both these words denote relationships. Brunner has said that "responsibility is a relation", but that is equally true of freedom. As soon as you add the preposition normally associated with these words you realise that they indicate relationships more than attitudes or rights; for we speak about freedom "from" and responsibility "to". "God creates" means then, in regard to man, that man is free and responsible before God.

Man is free in the sense that he is able to exercise sovereignty over all material things, just as God is free in the sense that He exercises sovereignty over all men. The relationship of man to his material environment is guided and controlled by God's relationship to man. Man is free to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Genesis i, 28); but this dominion is divine decree, i.e. it is dependent upon God.

Consequently Christian thought is able to give a positive evaluation of man's control of his material environment. Scientific investigation of the nature of the universe, of its resources and of life in it, technical inventions enabling man to use the results of his discoveries are a proper exercise of his freedom. There is nothing in the Christian faith which should cause us to condemn machines whether fastened to the factory floor or moving in orbit around the earth. Quite the contrary! Our doctrine of creation calls for the exercise of the freedom in which man will increasingly exert his mastery over his environment and suggests that all this is within the purpose of God who creates. Such a positive evaluation is of great help in regard to the activities in which so many people today are engaged in our industrial society, for these activities are seen to be linked in a positive way with the supreme purpose of life and to be integrated with the profession of religious faith. What a man does in church and what he does in the factory are both activities related to the purpose of the one God for him and for human society; both belong to his relationship to the God who creates.

But of course this freedom is responsible freedom. It is freedom exercised within the sovereignty of God. Assert freedom as an inherent and inalienable right of man, and history shows that the assertion will lead either to a licence which becomes self-indulgence or to a competitive warfare in which the cleverest and most ruthless survive. Augustine's well-known dictum "Love God and do what you will" is not a support for that conception of freedom; it is an enunciation of the Christian conception of responsible freedom, for the man who loves God is free in his decisions and actions but will in fact decide and do what is in line with the divine purpose. The struggles of the 17th Century Nonconformists for freedom of thought, worship and speech were valuable for just this reason. The Nonconformists

fought for freedom to obey God. They held the responsible view of life.

We all know how desperate is the need for an emphatic proclamation of this truth. It is the special obligation of the Christian. For the Christian is able to link freedom and responsibility together within the context of a doctrine of creation, i.e. within the context of what is man's true life. Just because he is able to do this the Christian can supply a powerful motive for responsible living. When man is truly conscious that he stands all his days in relationship with God the Creator, he is restrained from abuse or exploitation of his material resources; that experience provides an incentive to responsible activity.

One of the most useful concepts which has emerged from the ecumenical thinking within the World Council of Churches is the concept of the responsible society. This is not an attempt to provide a party programme for another form of human society; it is "not an alternative social or political system, but a criterion by which we judge all existing social orders and at the same time a standard to guide us in the specific choices we have to make". A full acceptance of the doctrine of creation leads to this concept of the responsible society which is a form of man's true life.

Thus the Christian faith asserts that man is free and responsible, and both assertions are of the utmost importance. The emphasis on freedom enables the Christian to make a positive, appreciative approach to much of the activity and achievement of modern man. The emphasis on responsibility is both a standard by which much in our society may be judged and a challenge to be proclaimed more emphatically. For man's true life is in responsible freedom.

2. The second important statement to which our emphasis upon man's relationship to God brings us is this: man in his relationship with God is both individual and corporate. He is himself in all the particularity of his being, yet he finds himself only in fellowship with other men.

It is just this particularity of the individual that is stressed in the Bible and it is stressed on the basis of the doctrine of God the Creator. God knows the outcast Hagar and her son Ishmael as He knows Abraham the "friend of God" and his son Isaac. Christ is as aware of the woman who touched his garment as of Peter boldly saying "Thou art the Christ!"

The equality of men in their relationship to God involves this particularity, this recognition of the individual. For the equality is not that of a consignment of mass produced goods; it is the equality of members of a college. Each man is himself yet all are members of the college, and the college fulfils its function most fully when each member lives his particular life most completely.

Here we meet one of the gravest problems of modern life, for so much of our society is designed to remove the particularity of the

individual. Frequently this is harmless. We may grow tired of seeing the same kind of buildings everywhere, of shopping in the same multiple store in every town, of eating the same packaged foods, but this has its conveniences and does little harm. But the process goes further than that! Lose a sense of the value of particularity and the individual has no value. He may then be manipulated or eliminated. The slight chill of fear which has been felt recently in a few places in our country, as unemployment figures have shown a small increase, derive in part from the dreadful experiences of the older generation who at one time felt that they were without value to the community. They were simply the unemployed! One of the chief sins of our age may well be in the slackening of the sense of the particularity of the individual, in the growth of doctrines which give value to impersonal units, e.g. a race theory, an economic plan, the profits of the business above the value of the individual.

“God creates” means the worth of the individual. It means an ordering of society and of the organisation within the society in such a way that people can be themselves, can live their lives, can flourish as individuals.

Yet this emphasis upon particularity must be set within the context of man's corporate life. Martin Buber is right in pointing out that the relationships in which man is involved cannot be separated from one another. The medieval hermit endeavoured to isolate the relationships of the vertical dimension from those of the horizontal, and found himself often involved in phantasies, illusions and hallucinations. Political reformers have at times operated only in the horizontal dimension and have lost motive and grown cynical about human nature. It seems clear then that man's true life is found only as he lives in both dimensions. The question: “Am I my brother's keeper?” was bound to arise soon after the account of creation! John puts it forcibly: “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.” All relationship with God involves relationship with man.

This is what is meant fundamentally by the responsible society! It is the recognition that we belong to all the children of the Father and the more truly we pray “Our Father”, the more we are committed to the life of our brethren. This awareness of being involved in the life of others is not the same as some modern forms of social organisation which are the result of prudential motives or the outcome of sheer propaganda. Both the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. spend great sums of money outside their own countries and supply backward peoples with much equipment, and we may be glad that thus some answers are being given to economic problems, but we suspect that the motive is not a sense of involvement with backward peoples and care for them. The Christian task it seems to me is that of proclaiming ceaselessly that we do-all belong together and are responsible for one another, and of keeping alive the true motive for

corporate activities and organisations. And that motive derives from an acceptance of one's personal relationship with God the Creator.

L. G. CHAMPION.

This article and one to be printed in our next issue, "God who redeems", were prepared as lectures for people in industry in Luton under the General title "The Christian in an industrial society—a theological approach". They were so much appreciated that Dr. Champion has been asked to repeat them.

THE WORLD IN WHICH WE WORK

THERE are three qualifications for effective ministerial work. The minister must know God at first hand, otherwise his essential superficiality will soon be discerned. Secondly, he must know what the message is which God has given him to make known, or he will be mostly hitting the air. Thirdly, he must understand the times in which he is living, otherwise he will seem to many to be out of touch with real life. The present article seeks to indicate some aspects of the life of our time of which the minister ought to be aware, and to mark what seem to the writer to be some things that are significant in the contemporary scene.

We are living in a time of immense scientific achievement. The Sputnik is the first instalment of man's conquest of outer space. One result of the further public discussion in press and over the radio of this theme and of fresh achievements in this field will be the enlargement of the horizons of ordinary people's thinking. There will be constant reminders of the larger universe in which our world is set. Christian preaching must have an adequate background for such times as these. J. B. Phillips has given a striking title to one of his books, *Your God is Too Small*. We must not reduce God to the level of One whose interests are exhausted by His relationships with individual men and women. In this matter the prophets of the Old Testament have much to teach us. They had a magnificent doctrine of God. To them He was the One "that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in . . . the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth". Moreover, they thought of Him as at work in world affairs, raising up and casting down nations and working out His judgments in the earth. (Amos vi, 14, Jeremiah xviii, 7.) The insight of the prophets into the meaning of current happenings seems no longer available to us. Christian men are divided, as they were at the time of the Suez crisis, in their understanding of world events. Nevertheless, present day preachers ought to have an adequate doctrine of God as the basis of their preaching, in short a Biblical doctrine of God, with its far ranging view that He is at work not only in the lives of individuals but also in the large-scale events of human affairs.

We live in the atomic age. At the moment its grimmer possibilities are in the forefront of men's minds. But there is a wider setting in which the atomic age must be viewed. We live not only in the presence of fearful perils but also of immense creative possibilities. Before many years have passed fresh water may be distilled from the sea and pumped inland from the Australian coast and so transform the vast desert areas of that country into arable land. No less exciting possibilities are opened out by the invention of the English machine, Zeta. "The research now being carried out to harness thermonuclear power will, however, outdo the good fairy. When this work is successful it may well be that the flow of water in the Thames on a single summer's day will be enough to supply Britain with energy for nearly two years." The distinguished scientist, C. A. Coulson, writing as a Christian, speaks of these as "revolutionary times . . . the most exciting times in which any of us could wish to be alive" and affirms that "if this is a revolutionary world Christians, with their profounder view of human destiny, should be leading it". We may go on to ask in what direction should Christian leadership be exerted in these days of atomic development? It is surely significant that at the same time in which these new possibilities of developing the material resources available to man are being uncovered there should be a growing awareness of the fact that two-thirds of the human race live cheek by jowl with poverty and hunger. We are told that the individual annual income in Britain is about £270 and that in India and Pakistan it is about £25. Why has God seen fit to open up to man at this particular time in the history of mankind the new creative possibilities of the atomic age? Surely this is in part in order that the Western nations may use the opportunity to minister through this new wealth to their needy brethren. "The failure to be compassionate" writes Canon Roger Lloyd, "perhaps the deepest sin of the modern world, spreads thick ice over all living." We are accustomed to interpret the parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew xxv, 31-46) as applying to the individual in relation to the individual. Maybe God speaks to us today through this parable in a rather different way. In the modern Social Welfare State the poor and needy are in large measure cared for by the State, but we live in a time in which in the world at large they are numbered by millions. This is clearly a situation which calls for concerted action, and ministers have an important part to play in stirring the consciences of their fellow-believers concerning their responsibility towards their poorer brethren—brethren for whom Christ died.

The majority of the readers of *The Fraternal* live and work in England. What are the factors in the English scene which call for attention and study? We are constantly being reminded that the English people are no longer a church-going people. It is important, however, not to exaggerate the situation. U.S. ministers visiting this country have expressed their astonishment, after having heard about the decline in English church-going, to find themselves facing good

congregations in English Baptist churches. Still, there can be no denying the fact that only a small proportion of English people are regular church-goers. Has the decline in church-going affected moral standards in English life? Christian people have no doubt that religion and morals are closely bound together. "Where there is no vision the people cast off restraint." Observers of the contemporary scene tell us that about half the total population over twenty-one do football pools, that about eight hundred million pounds is spent on drink every year, and that sexual promiscuity is commonplace, though they differ on the last point. One keen student of English working-class life in the North tells us that he notes an increasing lack of conviction about anything, increasing conformity to the crowd, and a movement towards scepticism and cynicism. When Christian people read these judgments they are firmly convinced that one powerful factor in this moral decline is the loss of Christian faith.

How is the present situation to be tackled by the churches? It is an encouraging fact that though some churches are still dreaming of the minister who, by his magnetic personality and remarkable preaching powers, will fill the empty pews there is a growing awareness that God is calling His people to a more thorough-going acceptance of the responsibility of the whole church to make disciples. Visitation Evangelism and the like are on the increase. This is excellent, but if we are really to get to grips with our task we must also look more closely at the world in which we work. While it is true to say that sin is our great enemy we are also called to try to understand the forces which are at work and which provide part of the explanation of the present situation. It is not enough, for example, to say that the working man doesn't come to church because sin keeps him away. That is a superficial diagnosis. There is need for a thorough-going study of the reasons for the present state of things, for research of the kind that E. R. Wickham has done to discover the causes of the gulf between the churches and industrial man in the city of Sheffield. His most startling finding, based on a mass of evidence, is that in Sheffield the churches have never had the working man!

Again, what are the sources of the materialistic outlook and spirit of our time? They have been skilfully traced by Henri de Lubac in his book *The Drama of Atheistic Humanism*, in which he expounds the philosophy of such thinkers as Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Comte and Karl Marx. We may sometimes think that there is not much connection between the common man and the philosopher thinking his solitary thoughts and spinning his theories, but de Lubac shows that what these men thought and taught in the nineteenth century has become the outlook of multitudes of twentieth century men and women.

The England of today is a mission field, and just as the intelligent missionary studies the background and religion of the people he seeks to win for Christ so must the leaders of the church's work today—including the ordinary minister—try to understand the reasons for

the unwillingness of multitudes to turn to the church. We ought to pray for the revival of religion which only God can give, but we ought also to stretch our minds in the endeavour to understand the times in which God has called us to serve Him.

It might seem from what has been written thus far that there are few gleams of light on the horizon. There is, however, evidence of a revolt against futility, purposeless, and a materialistic philosophy of life, and a reaching out after stability and a spiritual interpretation of life. It can be seen in the work of two contemporary writers.

The first is Colin Wilson, the twenty-four year old author of *The Outsider*, which quickly ran into several editions, and *Religion and the Rebel*. *The Outsider* is a study of the sickness of twentieth-century man. By "the outsider" is meant the man who discerns the unstable foundations of contemporary life and seeks firmer ground. It is significant that within a month of the publication of this book the author received over a thousand letters from people who also claimed to be "outsiders". Colin Wilson seeks a spiritual foundation for life. "Materialism and all its incarnations, Marxism, logical positivism, rationalism, are all deadly." "Man is not complete without a religion." But what religion? On this question Wilson has nothing satisfying to say. He is still groping. Ministers who are unacquainted with Wilson's work would be well advised to begin with his second book *Religion and the Rebel* because of the extraordinary biographical chapters with which it begins. As they read on they will realise that many of Wilson's religious and theological judgments are naïve, and that he has little hopes that the churches will be able to minister effectively to modern man. But his is a significant voice.

The second writer is a very different person, Arnold Toynbee, the distinguished historian, author of the monumental ten volume *The Study of History*. It is a striking fact that when Toynbee began this work he looked upon religion as escapism, man's attempt to find some comfort in the face of difficult circumstances, mystery and death. But as the years passed he came to a different standpoint, and now affirms that only sainthood is worth striving for. He sees Western civilisation as on trial and believes that it can be saved only by a return to a religious attitude to life. It is, he argues, the creative minority who determine the fate of a civilisation. As this minority wrestles in solitude with the problems of man it lays hold of new insight and fresh vitality, which it then communicates to the wider society in saving power. A civilisation fails when its creative minority fails.

What does Toynbee mean by a religious attitude to life? His reply is disappointing to us who believe that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved". He sees the hope of salvation in a common effort by all the higher religions of mankind. Nevertheless, his strong appeal for a spiritual interpretation of life is an antidote to contemporary materialism.

The world in which we work is intensely alive, a world in which the peoples of Asia and Africa are stirring from the sleep of centuries,

a world of revolutionary discovery and of "technological grandeur". We work in a world in which the dispossessed and hungry multitudes cry out to their Western brethren to succour them and give them an opportunity of real life, and in which through the thick crust of materialism there emerge the groping hands of those who seek for themselves and their fellow men a more satisfying understanding and experience of life. These surely are great days in which to be ministers of Him who was and is the Bread of Life.

JOHN BARRETT.

BOOK LIST

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| "Some Problems of the Atomic Age" | C. A. Coulson, Epworth Press. |
| "Automation" | L. L. Goodman, Pelican. |
| "A Plain Man's Guide to Zeta" | <i>Manchester Guardian</i> . |
| "An Open Letter to British Baptists" | Carey Kingsgate Press. |
| "The Uses of Literacy" | Richard Hoggart, Chatto and Windus. |
| "English Life and Leisure" | Rowntree and Lavers, Longmans. |
| "The Drama of Atheistic Humanism" | Henri de Lubac, Sheed and Ward. |
| "The Outsider" | Colin Wilson, Gollancz. |
| "Religion and the Rebel" | Colin Wilson, Gollancz. |
| "Church and People in an Industrial City" | E. R. Wickham, Lutterworth Press. |
| "Christianity Among the Religions of the World" | Arnold Toynbee, Oxford University Press. |

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPIRIT

WHEN we speak of adventure we usually have in mind certain practical activities that strike the imagination by reason of their enterprise, daring and attendant risks. Such activities cover the whole field of human interest from sports and athletics to notable ventures in business, social reform and religion. But may we not also speak of adventure in the realm of the spirit? The thinker, it may be claimed, no less than the practical man, commits himself to hazardous enterprise when he forsakes the familiar highways of thought and ventures out into the unknown. Both are lured by the call of the unrealised, wanting to go beyond established frontiers and make new discoveries and set up new landmarks. The thinker may well be possessed of greater courage in refusing to take refuge in conventional concepts; he may imperil his peace of mind as he seeks to do his own thinking and lays himself open to doubt and uncertainty; he may encounter derision and almost certainly misunderstanding; and he may even prove a great danger to

the world, when he releases ideas that lesser men seek to put into action. Beware the thinker! Nietzsche and Marx may have seemed insignificant enough in their own time because they did no more than wield the pen, but has anyone done more to alter the shape of modern history?

Yet it would be surely mistaken to set the man of action and the thinker over against one another, to applaud the one and denigrate the other. We need both thinkers and doers, and the outstanding representatives of both types are both adventurers who blaze trails for others. It may sometimes happen that one and the same person combines in himself both the contemplative and the active qualities, and this is no doubt the sort of person we should all strive to be. But as a rule it is the man of action who wins approval; the thinker has to be defended. We cannot deny that the contemplative Mary had the Master's commendation, yet we are quick to say a good word for the active Martha. There is doubtless much to be said for the world's doers, yet doing would be much more profitable if there were more thinking.

Perhaps we all begin with some capacity for launching out into the depths of the spirit. The intelligent child starts off with that sense of wonder which has been proclaimed to be the original impulse of the philosophic temper and which leads to the asking of those ultimate questions that have been the preoccupation of the profoundest minds. But all too soon the metaphysical questions recede into the background, although they are apt to emerge from time to time as life confronts us with its mysteries, unless we have lost the capacity for surprise and wonderment altogether.

It has always been the aim of liberal education to stimulate in the young the questing spirit. Youth is the time for adventure, and its native questing must be stimulated. Yet it is a grave responsibility to expose the growing soul to the risks of spiritual adventure. Anything may happen. The result may be the discovery that there are no satisfying answers to ultimate questions save in faith in Divine revelation. But the encounter with philosophy may well prove the solvent of faith, with the result that the enquirer ends up a sceptic or agnostic or upholder of some more or less nebulous world-view. It may be contended that it were better not to expose the budding mind to such dangerous weather. No doubt there will always be strong minds that refuse protection and rejoice in all that comes, but why disturb the simpler and less resilient minds by exposing them to a storm they probably cannot ride? Yet what adequate protection can there be for the human spirit from the hazards of the spiritual environment any more from those of the physical? How can we prevent questions arising in the minds of enquiring souls? And surely it is the mark of a robust faith to believe that we are thrust into the world to run all risks, if perchance by patience we can win our souls. It is man's right and duty to explore in every realm, at once the privilege and the burden

of his freedom. This means adventurousness, and every notable achievement of the human spirit has been due to its bold exercise.

Here emerges a fundamental issue for religion—the relation between faith and reason, revelation and philosophy. Are they irreconcilable opposites, or are they capable of being happily married? It would seem natural to say that both the philosophic impulse and the impulse to believe derive from the Spirit of God, hence it is right to assert that “what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder”. But this is an issue on which Christian thought through the ages has been divided. It has been pointed out again and again that if one root of philosophy is wonder, another is scepticism. It cannot produce certain results; its deliverances are but speculations, the fruit of interminable argument that never reaches a final goal. It can raise questions much more easily than it can answer them, and such answers as it offers are never more than tentative. What help can there be here for struggling men and women who must somehow or other find their way through this strange and perplexing mortal life? Surely, if man is to be saved, it must be only by God’s word and act. Man’s real problem is his existential situation, and for this there can be no remedy save in good news from above.

Yet asking questions and searching for answers cannot be the work of the devil, tempting men to doubt and despair. This is part of what it means to be a man; if he has a philosophic impulse, it is because God endowed him with it. We may ask, indeed, whether apart from this endowment man could ever have become truly religious. Could the Supernatural ever have become real to him unless the manifestation from without corresponded to the need within? It is not enough to say that man’s real need has been for a personal relationship with Ultimate Reality, for no personal relationship can be satisfying in the deepest sense that does not satisfy the whole personality, and this must involve a rational satisfaction. This does not mean knowing all mysteries, but it cannot mean less than grasping something and being grasped by something that gives sense and meaning to life. Here we meet a new aspect of the adventurousness of the spirit, which goes beyond the asking of questions to the acceptance of answers as a venture of faith. But this does not mean that the rational impulse is put to sleep, for, although it does not deny that what it believes goes beyond reason, it at the same time affirms that it is not contrary to reason.

Here is the basic root of that fruitful alliance between philosophy and theology which has usually marked Christian thinking. Philosophy is the champion of the rational impulse, and theology does well to respect it and avail itself of its help. Theology that seeks to ignore philosophy tends to become dogmatic and authoritarian and sooner or later provokes a reaction, for the enquiring spirit refuses to be kept in bondage for long. It is a poor religion that shrinks from exposing itself to the fresh breezes of critical comment,

for one often learns more from critics than from sympathisers. Another aspect of the adventure of the spirit is the faith that all truth is of God and that all knowledge will ultimately be seen to form a grand unity in Him. There is no irrationality here, for all pursuit of knowledge proceeds on the assumption of the ultimate rationality of all things. And those who base their lives on the religious hypothesis do not fail to find verification as they go along; they may see through a glass darkly, but they do see.

But philosophy is a weapon of defence as well as of attack. Its aim is to pursue truth disinterestedly and to follow the argument wherever it may lead. As religion is too central in human life and history to be ignored, it cannot be excluded from the grand debate. It will have acute defenders as well as attackers, and the unceasing controversy is bound to produce valuable apologetic. Current trends are not favourable to religion, but it is well to remember that the greatest philosophers have been led to give a spiritual interpretation to the universe. And the new generation of philosophical theologians, it is interesting to note, are making the modern linguistic method serve the interests of religious apologetic. But in any case, no theology that is worth the name can articulate itself without reference to philosophy. When religious ideas are sent forth into the world they can find no language save that which culture provides. It is significant that most modern theologies have found a framework in the current Existentialism.

Yet when all is said, philosophy cannot have the last word. The philosophic impulse can lead to the asking of ultimate questions, it can clarify the issues and set them within the framework of human knowledge and culture, and it can assist theology to systematise its affirmations and set them forth in proper relation to the rest of knowledge. But it has no gospel to offer: saving truth must come from above. Men are redeemed not by human wisdom but by that Wisdom of God that became incarnate in Jesus Christ. It is the Spirit of God that stirs in men the adventure of the spirit, but the adventure does not find its goal until the human spirit has yielded itself in whole-hearted committal to the God Who has manifested Himself in His mighty saving acts in Jesus Christ.

The work of the Kingdom calls for men of liberal spirit and outlook who will not be afraid to face the hazards of spiritual adventure. There is no easy way to faith nor can it be easily held when once it has been won. But no one will go unrewarded who believes that God is the God of all truth and that He has sent forth His Spirit of truth to guide us. And just because he has won the victory of faith with honesty and courage he will be rewarded also by being the means of bringing others to share his vision and adventure.

W. E. HOUGH.

LEIGH PARK

LEIGH PARK, Havant, is a vast sprawling dormitory for Portsmouth, with a population of some 30,000, estimated eventually to reach double that number. The Baptist Church is set in the midst, having been born in a farmhouse over a mile away. The present premises were erected with the help of a War Damage Grant, "ported" from Lake Road, Portsmouth, and the Church moved into them a year or so ago. In that time the evening congregation has grown from nine to about seventy.

Problems abound. The Church does not hesitate to experiment in trying to solve them. As in all such situations, for example, there is the problem presented by parents who want their children Christened or dedicated. The minister explains the belief and practice of the Church, pointing out that any such ceremony is meaningless unless the parents recognise the claims of the Church upon them. He asks them if they are prepared to attend for a month before the child is dedicated and as often as possible after. Only three couples so far have refused. And of those that have accepted these conditions, only one has defaulted. There have been eight dedications, five of these from families right outside the Church at first, now worshipping regularly with it.

Then there is the problem of awakening the interest of the non-churchgoer. The Church believes in offering people jobs, and especially asking the help of men in work among boys and in things that need doing by hand. And this willingness to use what must be called "unconsecrated" labour has proved a blessing. There are those who have begun to find they can worship God by the use of their hands, who are going on to worship Him in their hearts and to serve the Church by the labours of their love.

Then there is the problem of suiting the times of services on Sunday to the habits of the people. The Church has experimented. The Morning Service is at 10.45 as is not unusual. But the Evening Service is from 7 to 8. This has proved, after a year's trial, to be popular. It means that families can go out for the day, or during the day, and be home in time to end the day with worship. A significant factor in Church worship is the large number that stay to Communion. One can reckon on seventy-five per cent of the congregation remaining to take part. It is not an addendum, but an integral part of the evening service once a month, and apart from fencing the table with St. Paul's solemn words of warning, the Communion is "very open". There are cases in which God has used it to bring about conversions.

But perhaps the greatest experiment of the Church has been in its youth work. It was realised that the conventional Sunday School was not doing much to attract and hold the teen-ager, so the senior boys' class was taken out. They were treated as young adults and formed into a Club with week-night activities particularly

appealing to a boy. The membership is now 104, of whom 45 are seniors, 37 being over the age of 14. It is a condition that they come to their own service every Sunday morning. For the last six months the average attendance has been 70, and there have been a number of conversions of whom most are standing well. The work, however, is suffering seriously from a lack of major items of recreational equipment.

A similar experiment was started later with the girls and though this has not succeeded as with the boys, it is beginning to grow. Girls present problems and difficulties not found with boys. They prefer to mix with the other sex at an earlier age and some provision is made for this. After the evening service they have a "record" session to which they bring their own records. This has brought quite a number to the service and there have again been conversions. It is interesting to note that some of these teen-agers are asking for more serious discussion about the faith and the Church is seeking to provide it.

But beyond these problems in the life and working of the Church itself is the problem of the type of ministry required in an area of this kind. With the unsettled rawness of the new area many problems that would not have appeared in a more stable society have cropped up. Within the first three months of the new ministry there were three suicides in which the minister was called to be deeply involved. Constantly the Church is appealed to for help in housing problems, including evictions. Rents are high, and with a time of unemployment arrears soon accumulate. Matrimonial problems too become more acute when the restraints of a settled and knowing society are removed. Yet arising out of these problems many have been drawn to the Church by its ministry of understanding compassion.

The solicitude of the Church for the neighbourhood has also been seen in the formation of a group for the betterment of social conditions. It took the lead with other churches on the estate in bringing together ministers, doctors, headmasters, councillors, social workers and all interested in welfare work. And this group has already achievements to its credit. Through it the churches have been able to influence the life of the community for good in many ways and have found doors opening that would otherwise have been closed. Valuable contacts have been made with schools and factories, with the local Council and the political parties. The link with the schools especially is valuable, in a growing co-operation between the minister and teacher over the many problem children and problem homes, and in giving the children from pagan homes a truer idea of the place and function of the church in the community.

These contacts with the common life around have had some striking results. People know that there are folk in the Church who really care and to whom they can turn in any trouble. One illustration must suffice. We'll call the individual concerned "Bill". He turned

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To the Members of the Baptist Ministers Fraternal.

Dear Friends,

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This week a Baptist in his mid-thirties expressed grateful surprise on learning of our work. "Grateful" pleased me but "surprise" disappointed.

May I briefly state here what I said to him:—

- (i) The "Baptist" provides an insurance service specialising in the needs of Churches.
- (ii) Claim settlements are generous and sympathetic.
- (iii) Profits are retained within the Denomination and are not used to swell dividends or to increase the value of shareholdings.
- (iv) Denominational funds have benefited by nearly £90,000 from our work since 1905. In 1958 alone the Home Work Fund has benefited by £3,500 and the Baptist Union of Scotland by £260.
- (v) The premiums charged are moderate and in line with those charged by the great majority of Insurance Companies.

It is significant that hundreds of business men, throughout this Country, many of whom are employees of Insurance Companies or Underwriters, nevertheless advise diaconates to insure with the "Baptist".

Incidentally where Church policies are with a deacon's own Insurance Company or that of a friend of the Church conflict of interests may arise. When a claim is made, particularly for a substantial loss, an employee's first duty is to his employer and he cannot therefore advise the Church. No such position could possibly obtain with the Denomination's own Insurance Company.

"For the good of" whom do we work—for the whole Denomination.

Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN,

General Manager.

up at the church one night while the Boys' Club was in full swing, drunk and in tears. He was shown to the minister's vestry. His first remarks on seeing him were "You are too young to help me". This he kept on saying. Eventually he agreed to unburden his heart and the story came to light. He had been a drunkard for fourteen years. At that very moment he had broken into the wage packet again and spent the money for the rent and the housekeeping. The wife was at her wit's end as to what to do. The minister and Bill talked till one o'clock in the morning and then he saw him home. There he met the distraught wife and quietly he prayed with them both. Bill then promised that whenever he felt the drink urge come on he would 'phone the minister who would come and drag him, physically if needs be, out of the pub. He also agreed to hand his wage packet over to the minister as he left the factory gates on a Friday, so that he had no money to tempt him. The minister was to take the wage packet to the wife intact. For just over six weeks this was done. Fortunately Bill never had to be dragged from a pub. The Church prayed for him, and he was given a responsible job among the boys. At the end of that time he came to the minister's house to say that he was going next night to a party where whisky would be in evidence. It was agreed he should go and face it; and he was promised that both minister and Church would support him with prayer while he was there. This promise was kept. And Bill returned home sober for the first time in fourteen years. For six months now he has worshipped in the Church with increasing regularity. He is devoted to the work of the Boys' Club and only ill health, aggravated by past drinking, prevents him from doing more than he does. He is not yet won for the Lord in the accepted evangelical use of the term. But his wife said recently "Bill is a completely changed man since he met the Church. He is reading his Bible and praying". The Church has now helped them to a new house in which to start a new life together.

One further word about the future. The Church has set itself to evangelise this new estate both by word and deed. It is realised how easy it is for even a keen church to lose its zeal. A mission has been planned for September and by the time these words are in print will be over. It is being conducted by the South London Witness team plus members of Spurgeon's College. The Church is praying and believing that God can do mighty things during this fortnight. But the work of evangelism must go on when the mission is over. There are already a number under instruction for baptism. And it is true to say of the Church, becoming independent after only eighteen months, that the spirit that pervades her is the spirit of the risen Lord and that the Cross is the sign in which she triumphs.

J. D. LAMBERT.

AN OBSTACLE TO EVANGELISM

MOST men in the ministry today have lived long enough to have witnessed a marked change in the attitude adopted towards Christianity by the average non-Churchgoer. 25 years ago religion was not a talking point, religious books did not sell well, and, generally speaking, Christianity was at a discount in most intellectual circles.

Nowadays things are different. Sound radio and television bring the Gospel into millions of homes; many daily papers and periodicals carry regular features; religious books sell reasonably well: in short, Christianity is "in the air", a "talking point", freely discussed as a belief and a way of life to be taken seriously. Moreover, the churches themselves seem more alive. Experiments in evangelism are going on in every part of the country and descriptions of new ventures can be found on every religious bookstall and in all the denominational papers.

Consequently, one would have expected the churches to have enjoyed some marked increases in personnel and resources. Such is not the case. The churches are not, or do not seem to be, making the most of the situation. There are obviously some obstacles in the way which must be discovered and removed. One of the biggest obstacles to evangelism in our Baptist churches today is our concept and conduct of worship. The difference between our theory and practice is so marked that we need not wonder why so many promising contacts are made, but do not develop as we should wish.

We know in theory that worship is a corporate act—yet our practice usually belies both words. Its corporate nature is expressed only in hymns and the Lord's prayer, and the action is limited to the occasional interruption of seated passivity to sing.

We know in theory that the Lord's Supper is the central and supreme act of Christian worship, we tell our congregations so; yet we still make the celebration of it a postscript to another service, usually when worshippers have been in the church at least an hour.

So one could go on, pointing out the discrepancies between the expectant hush in which the call to worship should be awaited and the drone of conversation fortunately smoothed into incomprehensibility by the organist: between the concept of prayer as the gathering up of the people's thoughts and emotions in a unified offering to God, and the lengthy and individual nature of so many petitions; between the theory that the offering is a joyous response to God's great gift in Jesus Christ (spoken of in the New Testament lesson) and the practice of thinking it the last item among the notices.

To make the situation even less encouraging, while Anglican Ordinands (who have a Prayer Book which gives them comprehensive guidance on the liturgy) receive a thorough grounding in matters concerning the conduct of worship, the Free Church theological student, who will have no Prayer Book or set pattern to help him, receives

little or no detailed instruction or example in the central function of his life's work.

While our theory and practice are so diverse on such an important issue, the wonder is not that so little progress is made, but that any worshippers find satisfaction in our services. Merely to find fault, however, can only do a limited amount of good. The positive requirements are more important and something must be said of them.

The first is a *change of attitude among ministers*. We must have the courage to effect the necessary reforms, even if they give rise to some opposition, as indeed they will. The suggestion of one complete communion service may occasion serious doubts on many diaconates, but the positive benefits from such services enrich church life beyond all expectation. True, this type of service demands a severe discipline of careful preparation from the minister if it is not to be too long, but such discipline brings its own rewards.

The most impressive and helpful experiences of worship our church has known have been the baptismal services, which include a sermon, the baptisms and the Lord's Supper and last 80 minutes. This idea was at first viewed with dismay, but has now become a regular feature of church life.

The second major reformation must take place *in our colleges*. Much more time is necessary for the study of worship and the pastoral ministry. Sermon preparation is rightly stressed and sermon class does an important task, but what of the rest of the service? Or are we to assume that if we have listened to a good sermon we have necessarily worshipped? The study of such a book as Raymond Abba's *Principles of Christian worship with Special Reference to the Free Churches* (O.U.P. 10s. 6d.) would make an excellent starting point for a seminar, providing a good background to the subject. It is a fine introduction and deserves careful reading and discussion.

Another essential requirement is the understanding of a point made by Mr. Abba, "The basis of Christian worship is not utilitarian, but theological". The various parts of the service, their order and significance, their connection and inter-relation: these are to be decided not by the minister's likes and dislikes, the tradition of the church or the preference of the people. The pattern will emerge only when we give ourselves to study this theological basis.

These things together will produce a reformation in practice which will remove at least one serious obstacle to evangelism. Perhaps some indication should be given as to the kind of pattern which will emerge. The overall pattern is one of "dialogue with God", the service consists of God's speaking to man and man's response. This dialogue is carried on, in a sense, through the minister, in three different ways. The first way is the direct reading of scripture—the call to worship and the lessons. The second is the interpretation of scripture—the sermon. They are both God's word to man. The rest of the service is largely man speaking to God, in hymns, prayers and offerings. These three aspects are most clearly understood if the

minister is able to engage in them from three different positions. The service is most fittingly conducted from the Communion Table and everything done here is done on behalf of all the people. The lessons are read from the lectern and in every reading one hears the echo of the prophetic "Thus saith the Lord". The sermon is preached from the pulpit—this is God's word, but in a less direct and more applied sense than in scripture.

The service will always begin with a *call to Worship*, preferably with the congregation standing. An introit is suitable only if the words are scriptural. This gives the "first word" in the service to God, and the Psalms are full of appropriate passages for this purpose.

The first hymn should be one of praise, focusing attention on God, not man. Thus, "At even, ere the sun was set" and "Sinful, sighing to be blest" are not appropriate, while "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven" and "Give to our God immortal praise", are. Perhaps the best example of a hymn of pure adoration is Faber's "My God how wonderful Thou art"—a hymn which goes from first to last without a single request creeping in.

The first prayer may continue the note of adoration; it will certainly include confession. Once a congregation has learned the General Confession or a similar prayer, it may be used at this point in the service. The Lord's Prayer, as a summary of all prayer, is not in place here, although most churches use it after the first prayer.

Our act of adoration and Confession made, we listen to God speaking in the Old Testament lesson. One function of this lesson is to represent the whole Old Testament and from this we derive comfort and the assurance of God's mercy. After a hymn (perhaps about scripture or of invocation of the Holy Spirit) we hear the New Testament lesson, and it is in response to the great gift of God to us that we make our gifts to Him. So the Offering follows the New Testament lesson, thus preceding the notices or being entirely separate from them.

If a hymn follows at this point it may well express our *thanksgiving* to God and then we offer our petitions. One of the distinctions least appreciated by those who lead public worship is that between public and private prayer. In the house of God we are not expressing our own prayers, we are voicing those of the congregation. Some prayers offered in public are so personal that to utter them aloud sometimes strikes one as being a spiritual standing on the street corner. The petitions should be brief, specific and acknowledged by the people with a loud "Amen". This will help to deliver us from the two great misuses of public prayer—lecturing the Almighty and "getting at" the congregation. Those who have access to Raymond Abba's book will probably find his chapter on public prayer the best of all. "The minister who knows what he is about spends many hours, not to say days, in careful preparation of the word that he is to speak on God's behalf to the people: should he be any less diligent in preparing what he is commissioned to say on the people's behalf to God?" (p. 116).

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Dear Minister,

This is the time of year when children's and youth work usually seems to go best. We trust that this is your experience. And we shall be glad to assist your leaders with suggestions as they plan now to avoid that slump that often comes after Christmas!

Is yours one of the many churches that are benefiting from the enthusiasm and devotion of young people who found new inspiration in one of the B.M.S., BU/BMS United, or B.U. Summer Schools this year? And there are those whom the Lord reached in your own camps and in other ways during their holidays. Thanks be to God. Next summer seems remote, but we feel a deep sense of responsibility as we look ahead and complete our plans.

There is a growing number of opportunities for young people and their leaders to share in conferences at home and abroad, as well as in “holidays with a purpose”. One of our difficulties is that of finding the right people to make the best use of them.

You can help us if you will let us know:

- (1) Of any special interest which you would personally like to follow in a conference,
- (2) Of gifted young people and leaders who might be asked to represent us,
- (3) Whether, in the light of the fact that special terms can sometimes be arranged for party leaders, you might be interested in convening a group of young people to share in one of next summer's projects.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID JACKSON,
DOROTHY TAYLOR.

The hymn before the sermon should set the scene for the preaching and the hymn afterwards may often express the point of what has been said in a different way. Then, with the people still standing, the service concludes with God's last word—the Blessing, shorn, one hopes, of all additions (“with us, with those we love, etc.).

If we desire to be instrumental in changing the lives of those who come into our churches we must constantly strive in the impossible task of making worship worthy of the God in whose name we meet. Unless we are constantly aware of the solemn obligation laid upon us in this respect our evangelism is only a kind of religious salesmanship—in which case it is not only pointless but wrong. J. R. C. PERKIN.

THE PSALMS AND HYMNS TRUST

AMONG the candidates for centenary celebrations in 1958 the Psalms and Hymns Trust deserves an honoured place, and arrangements are in hand for a suitable commemorative Hymn Festival to be held at Bloomsbury on 17th November. It may be of interest, therefore, to say something here about the Trust and its work. The earlier records of this body no longer exist, having been destroyed during the bombing of the Baptist Church House in the last war. But enough is known to establish the fact that the Trust was launched in 1858, its objects being to publish the hymn book “Psalms and Hymns”, and from the profits to assist the widows and orphans of Baptist ministers and missionaries. The purposes of the Trust have been steadily pursued through the years, and it is pleasant to be able to record that, notwithstanding all the hazards and upheavals, both national and international, which have attended its growth, the work of the Trust has resulted in increasing success and usefulness up to the present day. The financial soundness of the undertaking may be gauged from the fact that whereas, at the close of the first trading year, the sum of £105 was available for distribution, the amount voted to Baptist widows and orphans for the year 1957 was no less than £2,197. This sum brought the total amount distributed to date to £105,816, to which must be added a further sum of £32,247 paid in grants to the Baptist Union in accordance with the arrangement made in 1900, which is referred to below.

The first edition of “Psalms and Hymns” was published in 1860, and was so successful that a new edition with a Supplement was called for in 1881, and this was quickly followed by “Psalms and Hymns for School and Home”. To these books were added in 1883 and 1886 the well-known “Treasury” Tune Books. By the turn of the century it became clear that it was desirable to enlarge the scope of the original undertaking in order to enable it to relieve the Baptist Union of the responsibility of publishing various other hymn books such as “The Union Mission Hymnal”, “The Baptist Hymnal”, etc., which the Union had hitherto been carrying. The Charity Commissioners were accordingly approached, and a revised scheme was

in due course approved whereby the profits of the reconstituted Trust were in future to be applied in agreed proportions, first for the benefit of "deserving and necessitous widows and orphans of ministers and missionaries of the Baptist denomination" and then to the general purposes of the Baptist Union. At the same time the administration of the Trust was also placed on a new footing, and responsibility was henceforward shared between sixteen "Co-optative Trustees", and eight "Representative Trustees" appointed by the Baptist Union. Under these new auspices the "Baptist Church Hymnal" appeared in 1900 and a revised edition in 1933. Today, a new generation has to be catered for, and preparations are well advanced for the publication, under the editorship of the Rev. Dr. Hugh Martin, of a completely new Baptist Hymn Book, which it is hoped to publish in 1962.

The strong position now held by the Psalms and Hymns Trust must be attributed in the first instance to the welcome which its hymn books have received from the Denomination, and to the wide and continuing circulation which they have enjoyed. Without such loyal support from Baptists little could have been achieved. But this in turn is an index of the prudence and ability shown by successive generations of Trustees and their staff in preparing and publishing the various books issued by the Trust. It has also been of marked benefit to all concerned that of recent years the Carey Kingsgate Press have acted as sole distributors. The list of Baptist laymen and ministers who have directed the affairs of the Trust since 1858 is a very lengthy one indeed, and naturally includes many names unfamiliar to the present generation. But it should be recalled with gratitude that of recent years the following have acted as Chairmen of the Trust: Mr. Herbert Marnham, Dr. Charles Brown, Dr. Percy Evans and Dr. M. E. Aubrey. The present Treasurer of the Trust is Mr. Herbert Chown, whose father also served in that capacity. The office of Secretary seems to encourage longevity for the last three holders of the office, Mr. J. Templeton, Mr. H. W. Pewtress and Mr. C. H. Parsons covered between them a period of no less than 89 years. The present secretary, Rev. R. W. Thomson, was appointed this year.

The grants made by the Trust are of necessity extremely modest, covering as they do a very wide area of Baptist life in England and Wales, not to speak of India and Jamaica. They are authorised by a special group of Trustees under the chairmanship of the Rev. B. Grey Griffith, three of whom are appointed by the Baptist Union and three by the B.M.S. Last year 225 widows and one orphan received help. Many beneficiaries are far advanced in years and some have been in receipt of grants for thirty and forty years past. The details of the applications are, of course, confidential, but it is clear that even the small sums, which is all that the Trust can give, make an appreciable difference to the budget of the recipients. The letters constantly received testify to the deep gratitude felt for the continuing interest of the Denomination, and for this very practical form of

remembrance and goodwill. It is not for nothing that the needful resources for this gracious ministry are furnished by the " psalms and hymns and spiritual songs " in which Baptists express their united praise and gratitude to God.*

R. L. CHILD.

** When a minister dies the Baptist Union informs the widow of the existence of the Trust and to whom to write. Superintendents also bear the Trust in mind. The widow is asked to complete a simple application form naming two ministerial referees who furnish some necessary details as to the widow's circumstances. Application forms have to be filed by early January, and grants are made in March. Applications have to be renewed each year as the grant is not in any sense a pension.*
