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EDITORIAL

IN many branches of the Christian Church there are new stirrings of thought. The inexhaustible treasures of the Bible are being explored anew, Christian worship is taking on new and richer meanings, the part to be played by lay people in the life and witness of the church is being seen in a fresh light. These stirrings are surely the fruit of the Holy Spirit's contemporary work among the People of God.

Baptists are not exempt from this new ferment in Christian thinking, and we should rejoice that it is so. There are outward pressures upon us from the ecumenical movement, compelling us to expound our understanding of the Christian faith, and in particular our doctrine of the church and of baptism. Moreover, there is pressure within our borders, especially from our younger ministers, with their keen interest in our forms of worship and in the implications of our fellowship in Christ for our life as a denomination. The far-reaching Statement issued by the Denominational Conference at Swanwick provides ample evidence of the healthy thinking going on among us on a variety of important questions.

One of the subjects which is naturally of great interest to ministers is the doctrine of the ministry. The present shortage of ministers and the loss of an appreciable number in recent years to other forms of Christian service underlines the need for fresh thinking on this matter. What is the teaching of the New Testament, what did our Baptist forefathers think and do about the ministry, what are the contemporary functions of the minister, and what changes (if any) are called for in our present arrangements for a separated ministry? These are questions of the first importance and they need to be looked at afresh.

At the request of the Baptist Union three of our brethren, L. G. Champion, Principal of Bristol Baptist College, J. O. Barrett, General Superintendent of the North-Eastern Area, and W. M. S. West, formerly of Regent's Park College, Oxford, and now minister of Dagnall Street Church, St. Albans, have produced what is mainly a Biblical and theological study, *The Doctrine of the Ministry* (Carey Kingsgate Press, 3s.). But they have also delved into past Baptist thinking on the ministry, have considered our present situation and then gone on to suggest questions which they believe call for an answer. The booklet is intended for consideration by ministers and churches. We hope it will be widely studied in Associations and fraternal meetings and introduced to deacons' meetings and church meetings, as the B.U. Council have asked, and especially that thought will be given to the questions raised in the third section. Much may depend upon the answers we give, or fail to give, in the years immediately ahead.

OUR MINISTRY AND THE MINISTRY OF ST. PAUL
A STUDY IN 2 CORINTHIANS

1. THE POWER AND THE METHOD

THIS is a good letter for the minister to read carefully on each anniversary of his ordination, for it gives a moving and searching revelation of St. Paul's own ministry. It tells us much that is not elsewhere recorded of what one may term the externals of his service. To read xi, 23-28, "in labours more abundant . . .", is to realise how fragmentary is the information given about him in the book of Acts. But more important is the fact that this epistle gives us a deeper insight than any other of his letters into the spirit which inspired all his work.

It is well to remember that Paul is not writing to ministers as a distinct body of workers but to the church. The ministry of reconciliation is entrusted to every member of the Body of Christ. But what is applicable to all believers is even more forcibly applicable to those whose primary task is to preach the Gospel.

It is true that the calling of an apostle far exceeds the ministries we are exercising both in scope (xi, 28), "the care of all the churches", and in authority (x, 8, 13; xiii, 10. cp. vii, 15; xiii, 2). Yet we have the care of at least one Christian community and are trusted with the preaching of the Gospel and the building up of the church. Even his call to be an apostle, impressive and dramatic though it was, follows lines familiar to many. It did not come to him as the unmediated word of God to his soul, but through the mediation of a Christian disciple (Acts xxii, 12-15). His response and acceptance of the call may have been immediate, but several years elapsed before the call was confirmed by the church at Antioch and his feet set upon the apostolic way. Members of College Councils and Candidate Boards often have heard a similar experience recounted.

In some respects the background of our ministry today is more akin to Paul's time than the situation our fathers knew. They ministered in a day when there was a general tacit acceptance of basic Christian beliefs. Today we serve a generation, for the most part not only without religious convictions but taking it for granted that scientific knowledge has made Christian belief untenable and irrelevant. Our work in this country has a more strongly missionary character than for many years. Like Paul we minister to the ignorant, the indifferent and the hostile.

In this work the apostle was pre-eminently successful, both in winning converts and building them into virile Christian communities. We, who in so many cases are working hard with little result, finding it difficult to reach effectively the "outsider", or to lead the believing community into a richer spiritual life, may be inclined to attribute the fruitfulness of Paul's work to his exceptional gifts of mind and spirit, and to the circumstances of his time, ministering as he did to a world weary and disillusioned in its worship of the ancient gods.

Of course these factors are important and contributed to the effectiveness of his work. But they are not the reasons Paul would give.

In this letter he reveals the convictions, methods and spirit which inspired his ministry, and in examining them we can find guidance, heartening and sometimes rebuke for our own work. In particular, there are two aspects of his ministry which force themselves on our attention in almost every chapter.

In the first place, he scorns the idea that the achievements of those years were due to his own gifts and efforts. A few years before, when he and Barnabas returned to Antioch from the first missionary journey, they did not recount to the church what *they* had done, but "all that *God* had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts xiv, 27). In this letter also it is plain that he regards the creation of the church at Corinth as all of God. There was an essential humility in Paul. It is true that as an apostle he has an authority to uphold and he asserts it trenchantly and with vigour, but it is not that he himself may be exalted, but because God has entrusted him with the apostleship that the church may be built up (x, 8). When he asserts the validity of his apostleship he adds, "though I be nothing", and immediately after claiming that the changed lives of the Corinthians are a proof of his apostleship ("Ye are our epistle"), he corrects himself with the words "Ye are the epistle of Christ ministered by us".

His reliance was always on the grace of God, not on human wisdom. "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us." "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament." He did not convert men. Only God could do this. "He that establisheth you with us in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God."

Paul is very far from claiming any trust in his personal abilities. On the contrary, he is aware that in some respects he is unfitted for his calling. He accepts the description of his opponents in Corinth that he lacked an imposing presence and had no gift of eloquent speech. God has given to him, as to all believers, a wonderful gift, "the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" but he recognises that "we have this gift in earthen vessels", thus making plain "that the excellency of the power is of God and not of us". So also in xii, 7-10, where he writes of the thorn in his flesh. Whatever that may have been, he felt it to be a hindrance in his work and prayed repeatedly for its removal. But his desire was not granted "lest he should be exalted above measure", feeling pride in his great achievements as if they had been accomplished by himself. In his weakness he discovers the sufficiency of God's grace. God's strength is made perfect in his weakness. So thrilled is he by the experience of God working through his infirmities that he no longer seeks to get rid of them, but rather he will glory in them. It was in his weakness that the power of Christ rested upon him. "For when I am weak,

then am I strong." He illustrates this experience in some detail in iv, 7-11. Thus we who realise our inadequacies can take heart. God uses the weak things of this world. If on the other hand we have become too reliant on our own powers, we may be humbled in the apostle's humility and driven anew to the feet of God. We are no more, and no less, than fellow-workers with God. Our labours meet with success only because they are made alive and effective by the Spirit of God. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

The second main aspect of his ministry concerns the content of the message which he proclaimed and which God blessed. It may be summed up in the words "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ".

"We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord." He is called to the ministry of reconciliation and he will show forth the great things that the Lord hath done to make the reconciliation possible. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." Many of those who comment on these words point out that God's loving-kindness to men is unchanging and it is only the attitude of men which needs alteration, but this is only partly true. In Christ God reveals His love in a new, unprecedented way, committing Himself to human existence and there bearing in His own Person the consequences of human sin (cp. Philippians ii, 5-11). "He made Him to be sin Who knew no sin." In His resurrection He revealed sin broken and powerless, and in His risen life a new life becomes possible for men. The unchanging love of God has been revealed in saving power in His mighty acts in Christ; and his will has been revealed to men not in a fresh code of laws, but in a Person. To be a Christian is not simply to do one's best, to be kindly, tolerant, decent; but to be united to a living Person and to live in His life. It is by preaching this Gospel that Paul reaches the conscience.

Here is an emphasis which we ministers must always take to heart. It has been my lot to listen to many sermons in recent years, and many of them have made me aware how often my own preaching had moved away from the heart of our message. I have heard much of the sins of our time, of the failure and of the task of the church. My sins have been berated often. I have been urged to do better and to be better. How I have longed at times not only for a plain, straightforward setting forth of salvation in Christ, but to see all my sins and needs set against the background of the wonder and mystery and hope of God's grace in Christ. Here, and only here, arise the springs of redeeming life. Even when Paul is only appealing for a collection for a sister church, he does not base his appeal on the urgent need or on their generous impulses but on the self-giving of Christ in His incarnation and death. "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich," and he ends his appeal with "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift". To the simplest Christian duty he brings the deepest Christian truths.

There is, of course, in this letter much more that is relevant to our ministry, yet here is enough to set us thinking once again of the saving, life-giving elements in the Christian life and ministry. The apostle's task is our task—"to preach Jesus Christ the Lord", and only "in Christ" are the resources which can make our ministry effective.

FRANK BUFFARD.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM

SO far as the theology of baptism is concerned, we Baptists are at last beginning to move out of "the theological slum" in which for so long we have been content to dwell. But if these new Biblical insights into the meaning of baptism are not to be confined to a few books or to the ministry, they must be embodied in our administration of baptism. For it is not what is written in books, but what is enshrined in the cultus, that becomes the treasured possession of the people. It is not even sufficient to give verbal teaching about the meaning of baptism, although this also needs to be done. For the truth is imparted not only through what the people hear, but even more through that which is habitually seen and done in church. Our theology must therefore be embodied in our practice.

Speaking of our churches as a whole, it can hardly be denied that at present many of our baptismal services give a distorted picture of the meaning of baptism. The stress is usually laid upon that which is being done by the candidates. This itself is often oversimplified and represented only as an act of witness. And our chief concern, it appears, is with the influence and effect of this act of witness upon the unbelievers who are present. Indeed, one sometimes has the impression that the baptism of the candidates is merely instrumental—an act to be used for the conversion of others. It is, of course, a fact that baptism, like the Lord's Supper, and all true Christian worship, is witness. But although it may be a hard saying, there is very little, if any, direct teaching in the New Testament about baptism as witness—unless we start off with the assumption that confession and witness are synonymous terms. Certainly baptism is not there represented as only, or as mainly, an act of witness. Without in the least belittling the value of baptism as witness, there are other aspects of the sacrament upon which stress should be laid, other truths which should be declared in the actual administration of the rite. Three such emphases will now be mentioned, with special reference to the content of the baptismal service.

In baptism God acts, through Christ in the Spirit. The words used in the service and the whole administration of the sacrament, should evoke in all those who are present this awareness of the Divine presence and activity. The Lord who has already been active through the Gospel and the Church in bringing the candidates

to repentance and faith, is acting here and now through His appointed means of grace. Baptism not only symbolises, it effects that which it symbolises; although it always symbolises more than it effects. For all that the Lord has done before baptism, is doing in baptism, and will do after baptism, is symbolised and sealed in the rite. God acts in baptism to unite the believer with Christ in His Body the Church, to grant the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. This action of God in baptism can be emphasised during the service in various ways—through the Scriptures selected and read, and the teaching and preaching of the Word. It is also helpful to read or recite a concise introduction to the rite itself, which lays stress on the Divine action and promises, as well as upon the human response required. The hymns should not all be expressive of the faith, loyalty, and dedication of the candidates; let there be at least one hymn on the Atonement, one on the Resurrection, one on the Holy Spirit. Fortunately—for the first time—some of the baptismal hymns of the new Baptist Hymn Book have this sacramental emphasis:

Strengthened with the sevenfold blessing
Of the Spirit here outpoured,
Thou must dare to live confessing
Christ thy Lord.

Secondly, baptism is an act of God by which we are admitted to His Church, "the blessed company of all Christ's faithful people". Baptism therefore should be administered in such a way as to make patent to all that it is the rite of initiation into the Body of Christ. "For indeed we were all brought into one body by baptism, in the one Spirit." Many of our people unfortunately still think of conversion, baptism, and churchmanship as three separate things. First you are converted, and then you are baptised, and then you "join the Church". But "a Christian is a person who has met God in Christ and is trusting Him as Saviour and serving Him as King in the fellowship of His Church". Conversion is not complete until a man is "in the fellowship". Baptism which consummates conversion is initiation into the Church. Now the best way of making this clear is to administer the sacrament of initiation, as in the primitive Church, as one indivisible whole. That is to say, baptism, the laying-on-of-hands, and first communion, should all take place in one and the same service. The laying-on-of-hands because the right-hand-of-fellowship is not an appropriate symbol of initiation. The latter is an act of recognition extended to one who is already a full member of the Church of Christ. It is therefore rightly extended to all those who are being transferred from the membership of other churches. "Because you are already a member of the Christian Church, we welcome you into the membership of this local Church". But in the service of initiation the candidate is not being welcomed as already a full member of the Church—he is in process of becoming one. He should therefore kneel as an act of submission to Christ the Head of His Body, the Church. Pastor,

Elder, Deacon, or other appointed representatives of the Church, lay hands upon the candidate with prayer. This is an act of acceptance, an act of blessing, an act of commissioning, an act of ordination to the priesthood of all believers. For the candidate has been baptised into the priestly body, and is commissioned to bring others to the Lord in intercession and to take the Lord to others in service and witness. Having been thus fully initiated, he receives his first communion as a full member of the Church.

Now there are some ministers who readily assent to this in principle, but contend that it is quite impossible to administer the whole rite of initiation in one service, because of the practical difficulties. "Our Communion Table is over the baptistery, and we have to move it out of the way in order to open the baptistery". Others object, not so much on grounds of space as of time. "That sort of thing was alright in the primitive Church, when they stayed up all night at the paschal vigil—it would take far too long as a Sunday service today." Perhaps I may answer the latter objection from my own experience by saying that a baptismal-eucharist usually takes about one and a quarter hours. In chapels where the former difficulty (someone is sure to raise it!) cannot really be overcome, the baptisms may take place in the morning, followed by the laying-on-of-hands and communion in the evening. What is important is that the rite of initiation should be seen as one whole. No person should ever be baptised without becoming a member of a local Church—not necessarily the one in which the baptism takes place.

Thirdly, baptism is a confessional rite. In the Divine-human encounter of baptism, confession is the human response to the Divine activity. The whole congregation of believers as well as the candidates should be actively involved in that confession. "Rise and be baptised, and wash away your sins, calling on His name." The confession is made primarily to the Lord, is our response of faith and love to Him. The confession of the candidates should be made in the context of a confessing congregation. Such a congregational confession may be made in one of three ways. Some of our great hymns—the *Te Deum*, or "In the Name of Jesus"—are fine confessions of faith, all the better because set to music. Alternatively, the actual words of Scripture may be selected and arranged in a pattern of confession, and made available to the congregation for corporate recital. It should also be remembered that the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, in their original form, were baptismal confessions. Such patterns of faith were handed over to the candidates at baptism—or rather the candidates were handed over to them! "Thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed." (Romans vi, 17.) The Apostles' Creed, especially if it has been memorised, can be effectively used as a congregational confession of faith, just before the Minister calls upon the candidates to make personal confession.

To those who are being baptised, baptism is both a confession of faith and an oath of allegiance—both alike made to the Lord “in the presence of many witnesses”. The verbal response of each candidate should therefore be first confession and then promise. The confession may take the trinitarian form:

Do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, and in the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier? . . . *I do.*

or it may take a more simple form:

Do you make profession of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? . . . *I do.*

The vow of allegiance may take the form:

Do you promise, in dependence on divine grace, to follow Christ and to serve Him for ever in the fellowship of His Church? *I do.*

The Holy Spirit, the Church, the Faith—these three emphases should be made at baptism within the full pattern of Christian worship. It may therefore be helpful here to give an outline of the whole service. Its four main elements will be the ministry of the word, the baptisms, the laying-on-of-hands, and the communion. Between the second and the third parts, it is necessary to allow sufficient time for the candidates to change their clothing. The service may be outlined as follows:

Call to Worship—Hymn of Praise—Prayers of Adoration, Confession and Supplication—the Epistle—the Gospel—the Sermon—Confessional or Baptismal Hymn—Words of Institution of Baptism—Apostles’ Creed—Confessions and Promises of Candidates—Prayer for Candidates—the Baptisms—a Hymn—the Intercessions—the Notices—the Offertory (during which the candidates return, bringing the Bread and the Wine)—the Laying-on-of-Hands—Communion Hymn—Invitation and Prayer of Approach—the Thanksgiving—the Breaking of Bread—the Distribution and Communion—Post-Communion Prayer or Lord’s Prayer—Hymn—Benediction.

In conclusion, two practical advantages of such a pattern for baptism may be mentioned. The actual act of baptism takes place relatively early in the service. If some of the candidates, as often happens, are nervous, it is better to baptise in the earlier part of the service, rather than to keep them waiting an hour or more in a state of nervous tension. The other point is even more important. On the old and now familiar pattern, the service ends abruptly—for the candidate—with the act of baptism. He is not indeed left “high and dry”—but he is left, with nothing devotedional to follow. Should there not be a solemn but joyful act of worship after, as well as before the baptism? How much more wonderful is the baptism itself when it leads on to the act of blessing and commissioning, and to the first communion!

S. F. WINWARD.

THE DOINGS OF HYMNBOOK EDITORS

(continued)

AN interesting discussion of what words a modern congregation will stand is provided by the now famous hymn, "Who would true valour see". Dearmer claims the credit for "daring" to put this into the *English Hymnal* in 1906¹, but he declares that to have included hobgoblin would have been to "invite disaster". "No one", he says, "would have been more distressed than Bunyan himself to have people singing about hobgoblins in church" and he would never have sanctioned the unaltered form as a hymn. (I wonder!) So Dearmer produced a gentle drawing-room version of Bunyan's rugged verse, cutting out the wind and the weather, the giants and goblins and lions. He agreed with Bottom, "To bring in a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing". But Baptist and Congregational books, for the last thirty years anyway, have happily swallowed Bunyan whole: even *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, though it carefully alters hob-goblin to goblin.

There is a pleasant story of an eighteenth century editor who was suspicious of the worldly associations of "Thy gardens and thy gallant walks" in "Jerusalem the golden"; he revised them and so delivered himself of the surprising assertion about the heavenly Jerusalem that

Thy gardens and thy pleasant fruits
Continually are green!²

Editors have certainly made some bad mistakes, but none the less some of the best of our hymns owe everything to their alterations. The truth is that some great hymn writers were very poor judges of their own work. Many hymns were written hastily for an immediate occasion without thought of wider use. It was a common practice of Doddridge, among many others, to compose a hymn to be sung after his sermon. It is not strange that hymns so written should need revision and polishing. Some wrote far too many and mislaid their waste-paper basket.

A transformation was wrought in "O God of Bethel" and "How bright these glorious spirits shine" by the Scottish paraphrase committee, who did a very good job with several. The much-loved version of the twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord's my shepherd", is a curiously composite work. It is usually attributed to Francis Rous, the Englishman who wrote so many of the so-called "Scottish" Psalms. Actually it contains only seven lines by him, and two by an earlier writer called Whittingham. It was revised by the Westminster Assembly to approximately its present shape, which was finally given it by a Church of Scotland committee for the Psalter of 1650.

¹*Songs of Praise Discussed*, p. 271. He apparently did not know that it had already been included in E. Paxton Hood's *Our Hymn Book*, Brighton, 1862.

²*Songs of Praise Discussed*, p. 51.

Another well-loved hymn which owes all its power to a hymn book editor is "All hail the power of Jesus' name". There was a first version by Edward Perronet, who is usually given the credit for the hymn. In fact it was completely rewritten and improved out of all recognition by Dr. John Rippon, the Baptist editor of *A Selection of Hymns*, one of the leading Free Churchmen of the early nineteenth century.

It is very necessary for editors to watch out for the danger of unreality and insincerity. Hymns which could no doubt be honestly sung in past generations or in some gatherings are dangerous nowadays. I confess I shudder when I hear a miscellaneous crowd shouting "Abide with me". I am astonished by watching congregations singing about "The rushes by the water We gather every day", when most of them have probably never gathered rushes at all, and certainly none of them gather them every day. If I am told that they don't mean it and that they are not really attending to what they are saying, does that make it any better? A popular hymn for boys, "Lord, we thank Thee for the pleasure", makes them declare that they are "yearning for their home above". Which is certainly untrue, and if true would be unChristian! A well-known Glasgow minister of the last generation, Dr. A. C. Welch, in announcing the hymn, "Take my life", to his comfortable suburban congregation, is reported to have said, "We shall omit verse 4, 'Take my silver and my gold, Not a mite would I withhold'. It is a bit too strenuous for Claremont."

Let us by all means have hymns of aspiration to what is beyond our present reach, hymns that are ahead of us and call us onward. But let us avoid like the plague hymns that make false assertions or claim attainments in the spiritual life which must be untrue of most of the congregation. Many hymns are too intimate for use except on special occasions. It is best most of the time to keep to hymns of objective Christian fact, couched in terms that are suited to the average Christian, and not to concern ourselves too much with the secrets of individual psychology.

One thing no editor is entitled to do is to alter an author so as to make him say what he does not believe, as Montgomery charged people with doing to his hymns. I remember a visit I paid more than forty years ago to a Universalist Church. The minister, Dr. Walsh, was an estimable man, but eviscerated hymns with all specific Christian references removed led up to a sermon in which the preacher enumerated all sorts of things which we must not on any account believe. Unitarian books also have on occasion been guilty of a similar maltreatment of orthodox hymns. George Walker in 1788 issued *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for public Worship, unmixed with the disputed doctrines of any sect*. In the preface, after talking about the difficulties of orthodox beliefs as found in previous books, he says, "It is the principal object of this collection to remove the offence which their doctrinal zeal

has occasioned . . . the alterations bearing no small proportion to the whole work and in many of the psalms and hymns the retaining the name of the original author must be considered as a mere acknowledgment of the source from which the composition was derived".¹

In other words Watts, Doddridge, Wesley, Newton, Cowper, and others were made to say over their own names something quite different from what they had really written. Not unnaturally such a procedure roused protests in Unitarian circles themselves and led to the publication of a collection of hymns exclusively by Unitarians: *A Collection of Hymns compiled by John R. Beard*, 1937, which was explicitly declared to be "a protest against hymn tinkering".²

Some Unitarians claimed the right to adapt Watts on the ground that if he had been still alive he would have done so himself, having shown Unitarian sympathies. This is more than doubtful. But in any case they did the same to all orthodox writers where there was no such imaginary justification. The great Dr. Martineau took a different line. In the preface to his *Hymns for Christian Church and Home* he said that in removing all Trinitarian references from the hymns of Watts he was only doing what Watts himself did in "making David talk like a Christian" in his own versions of the Psalms! But it is hardly a fair parallel.

It is perhaps inevitable that we should often sing the words of an author in a different sense from his. Johnson's "City of God", for example, is a claim that the true Church of God is composed of all good men of all religions, and of none, with no questions asked about doctrine. It goes further than most of those who sing it would go. Similarly, "Faith of our fathers", by Faber, originally said

Faith of our fathers! Mary's prayers
Shall win our country back to thee.

For the "faith of our fathers" meant Roman Catholicism to Faber and the theme of his hymn was the winning of England to allegiance to the Church of Rome. So also "Lord of our life", by Philip Pusey, which Routley calls the battle hymn of the Oxford Movement, refers in its original intention to the plight of the Church of England, confronted within by heretics and evangelicals and without by nonconformists. Yet it is sung today by those same evangelicals and nonconformists.

Translators are a separate problem. Certainly many of them have produced so-called translations which the original authors would not recognise. The Roman Catholics accused Neale of doctoring the old Latin hymns, which he said was necessary if they were to be used in the Church of England. Many of his "translations" from the Greek are really original hymns inspired by

¹See Benson *The English Hymn*, p. 136.

²Benson, p. 141.

something he read in the old Greek documents, as he himself admitted about some of them. He attributed "Christian, dost thou see them" to St. Andrew of Crete, but no other scholar has been able to find the original. When he first published "O happy band of pilgrims" he attributed it to Joseph of the Studium. But in a later edition of *Hymns of the Eastern Church* he said it contained so little from the Greek that it could not really be called a translation: so, too, with "Art thou weary".

Most of the "translations" of Robert Bridges are independent poems on a theme suggested by the work of another. For example, S. H. Moore says of "Ah holy Jesus" that it is "a fine hymn but not Heermann's", though he finds occasional indications of "a desire to translate". Perhaps if we say "based on" or "suggested by", we get over the difficulty. But I have enough to answer for in trying to explain the ways of hymn book editors, and ought to leave it to the translators to explain the ethics of their own profession.

HUGH MARTIN.

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of the Hymn Society, editor Dr. Erik Routley*

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE

WRITING in a recent issue of the "Family Doctor", a general practitioner, Dr. Ann Mullins, pointed out that one mother in four conceives her first child before she is married and that one bride in five is pregnant on her wedding day. She continues, "ultimately the answer lies in happy stable homes where children grow up in an atmosphere of responsible freedom". It is this conviction that inspires the work of the Marriage Guidance Council.

In 1938 a group of men and women headed by Dr. Herbert Gray, became concerned about the rising divorce rate. They formed the Marriage Guidance Council with the aim of doing what they could to check the rising tide of marriage breakdown. Before much was accomplished, war broke out and the work was disrupted. In 1942 the Council was re-formed with Dr. David Mace as its General Secretary, and in 1943 the first Marriage Guidance centre was opened in London.

The movement spread rapidly and in 1947 nearly 100 Marriage Guidance Councils in various towns joined together to form the National Marriage Guidance Council. During 1959 over 12,000 couples were helped in marriage difficulties.

Marriage Guidance Counsellors are carefully selected and rigorously trained. A person wishing to undertake this work must first apply to his local Marriage Guidance Council who will interview him and, if they feel he is suitable, recommend him for selection by the National Marriage Guidance Council. He is required to complete a lengthy application form and name two referees, who are also required to give a considerable amount of information

about him. He is then invited to attend a selection conference lasting two days in which, with fourteen other candidates, he meets five selectors. The week-end consists of interviews, group discussion, intelligence tests and general observation. Fifty-five per cent of those who attend the selection conferences are selected for training. The qualifications required are "the ability to inspire confidence in others: a liberal and tolerant outlook: a genuine interest in people: clear insight and the capacity for reasoned analysis of problems".

After selection, candidates are required to attend four residential training courses each of three day's duration. These deal with the techniques of counselling, development of personality, marriage and family in society, the anatomy and physiology of sex, marriage and the law, psychiatry and counselling, and ethical and spiritual considerations. The counsellor is then on probation for a year, at the end of which time his work is assessed by a Field Secretary.

The actual work of counselling involves one or more interviews with the husband and/or wife. Couples in need of help contact the local Appointment Secretary (an appointment can never be made by a third party), who in turn puts them in touch with a counsellor. Sometimes the problem has a simple solution, more often it is deep-rooted and involves a number of interviews in which the counsellor tries to help his clients see the root cause of their trouble. When action is called for on the part of the client the counsellor rarely gives advice, but attempts to show all the factors involved in the choice that must be made, including those that they have probably missed. This "non-directive counselling" is perhaps one of the greatest differences between counselling and pastoral work. The Rev. Charles Davey preaching at the opening service of the N.M.G.C. Annual Conference this year is reported as saying, "The Marriage Guidance Council has always rejected the negative approach, and has taken the view that it is not our business to tell our clients that what they are doing is wrong: that we will not condemn them: nor sit in judgement: nor tell them what they *should* do. We may consider with them what alternative actions they may take and what the consequences of those actions may be, but we will not say what they *are* to do; we leave that to their own judgement. In that way only can they be responsible human beings, and able to achieve maturity; and only then will their choice of action be effective." Often the counsellor's role is one of a sympathetic listener who is never shocked and never condemns.

Sometimes problems are even more complicated and counsellors are trained to know their own limitations. They have behind them a panel of expert consultants in the legal, psychiatric and medical fields to whom they can refer clients direct or from whom they can get advice.

Christian counsellors are urgently needed, and we might well suggest this as a field of Christian service to those who we feel might be suitable. Ministers themselves would find, as I did, the intensive

training a great help in their own pastoral work. I felt very often, when dealing with broken marriages, that I was "rushing in where angels fear to tread", and my Church gladly released me for training. Ministers receiving such training must expect in return to devote time to Marriage Guidance work with their local Council.

When one gets involved in this work, it is not long before one discovers that so many break-ups could have been avoided if couples had been adequately prepared for marriage both during engagement and earlier as children and teen-agers. So the Educational work of the Marriage Guidance Council came into being.

Local Councils run discussion groups for engaged couples. In these three or four couples meet in the home of carefully trained leaders and together they discuss budgeting, running a home, furnishing, decorating, the physical side of marriage and so on. The group meets at weekly intervals for four weeks. This is intended to supplement the preparation a minister gives to couples he marries.

We all have our own methods of doing this. In addition to encouraging couples to attend the group discussion, it is my practice to see them on two or three further occasions. In the first, we talk about how they fared in the groups and clear up any points that may not have been clear, especially on the physical side of marriage. In the second, we talk together about "spiritual and ethical considerations". We discuss the difference that being a Christian makes to a home, and this is an excellent evangelistic opportunity for those who are not Christians. In the third we study the marriage service in some detail.

But marriage preparation begins long before engagement. The foundations for a successful marriage are so often laid in early childhood and in the 'teens. A child brought up in a good home is much more likely to make a successful marriage than a child brought up in a divided home. So often one or both of the partners in a broken marriage come themselves from broken homes. They have never known a united home and so they have no foundation on which to build their own. One of the tragedies of a broken home is that it is so often the seed-bed out of which another broken home grows.

However, being brought up in a good home is not the only preparation needed. Children must, from the earliest age, be taught what are generally described as "the facts of life". This is best done in the home by the parents, and if we as ministers can help parents through Young Wives' Groups and similar organisations to do this, we shall be contributing to the happiness and stability of future homes. Sex education begins when children ask questions and they are answered frankly by their parents. It is essential for their future happiness that children should not be brought up in an atmosphere in which these matters cannot be discussed. Difficulties often arise in marriage because parents failed to talk to their children about these things. The tragedy is that it is so often the Christian home in which this happens.

There comes a time, however, when parents are not the best people to deal with problems of sex. The teen-ager, for example, who is worried about heavy petting is not likely to consult his parents about it because he already knows their views. Parents are not the best people to discuss this with their children, for they are emotionally involved in the problem.

At this point group discussion under wise leadership plays an important part. Schools and Local Education Authority clubs are becoming more and more concerned about this problem. It is obvious to all who are working among young people that barriers are breaking down. Pre-marital intercourse not only amongst the engaged but amongst teen-agers is on the increase.

There is an ever-present danger that sex-education might be given by folk who approach the whole question from an entirely different standpoint from those of us within the Christian Church. There is a growing feeling amongst some teachers and leaders that pre-marital sex experiments are permissible and even desirable. There is a tendency to approach sex-education from the purely biological standpoint. Every youth worker ought to include in his syllabus some opportunity for discussion on the whole question of personal relationships *from a Christian point of view*.

Ideally the best person to do this is the Youth Leader or the Minister who knows his own young people, but not all of us feel able to do this. I would like to see opportunities made for those who are interested in this to be trained in the best method of approach, and a list compiled at Headquarters of those with experience who would be prepared to go to Baptist youth groups and lead discussion.

In our local Technical College another member of staff and myself are leading a series of discussion groups along these lines. The groups consist of fifteen youngsters whose average age is 16. In the first week we discuss personal relationships generally—brother/sister, parent/child, student/teacher, employer/employee. We go on to talk together about boy/girl relationships covering such questions as, How old should boys and girls be before they start dating? Should the boy always expect a goodnight kiss when he takes a girl out? Should we indulge in heavy petting? If not, why not? What is the best age to get married? What about religious differences? Is pre-marital intercourse wrong?—and so on. During the second week we separate the boys and girls and talk about the anatomy of sex and the emotional side of boy/girl relationships. In the third week we answer written questions that they have submitted.

Some may feel that we are getting sex out of proportion; that the pendulum has swung from Victorian reticence to an openness and frankness that encourages unchastity. The fact remains that our youngsters are being continually bombarded by sex. Advertisements play on the sex instincts, the films that they see and the books

that they read encourage the idea that to experiment is the accepted thing. If there is more interest in the subject of sex now than there has ever been, it is because advertisers and publishers, film directors and newspaper editors are exploiting what they know to be a very powerful force within the human personality.

The Christian can either ignore these things, or he can attempt to lift sex from the level of mere animal passion and try to instil into the minds of the youngsters that it is a God-given gift, that when it finds fulfilment in the act of intercourse we are co-operating with God in his creative purposes, that, far from being a casual and unimportant thing, it is the deepest expression of our willingness to give not merely our body but mind and spirit as well. I wish sometimes that I could take the sceptics and those who advocate experimental relationships into the consulting room, so that they could hear again and again the cry "I never knew—nobody told me".

D. G. GARDENER.

Books for further reading:

"Telling the Teen-ager"	Rose Hacker	Andre Deutch	8s. 6d.
"He and She"	Kenneth Barnes	Finlayson	10s. 6d.
"It's time You Knew"	Gladys Denny Shultz	Finlayson	10s. 6d.
"Whom God Hath Joined"	David Mace	Epworth Press	2s. 6d.
"Learning to Love"	Alan Ingleby	Robert Hale	10s. 6d.

THE MINISTER AND THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKER

AMONG the features of our present day welfare state are increases both in the number of professional social workers and in the demand for trained social workers by voluntary and statutory bodies. These factors accentuate the need for the churches to preserve as much contact as possible between Christian thinking and action and the professional social work done in community life. The Church has, of course, pioneered many forms of social endeavour and experiment; some have passed under statutory control, but others remain the concern of voluntary organisations, among which the Church must be included. The growth of the welfare state does not necessarily mean there is a lessening need for voluntary service. On the contrary, some needs, such as the welfare of the elderly, are increasing.

The respective roles of local churches and voluntary and statutory bodies in relation to social service have, then, to be kept under continual review. Often it may be best for church members and for religious organisations to work through official agencies rather than through the churches as such. At the same time, it must be remembered that local churches are doing far more community service of various kinds than can ever be estimated or recorded. The best booklet on the responsibility of local church members to serve the needs of those in trouble in their neighbourhood is Clifford Cleal's *The Church in the Community* (Ter-Jubilee Series. 6d.). This booklet

should be studied by every church member, and its implications for individual Christian responsibility pondered. One is the extent to which local churches can deflect money and personnel into the work of social service agencies and another, the terms in which Christian people are to think of their evangelistic responsibilities. As Mr. Cleal writes, "a common mistake after a worker has been persuaded to give his allegiance to Christ and has joined the Church, is to withdraw him from the ' front-line ' where he works ".

The significance of an article on this subject appearing in a ministers' magazine, is that the initiative towards fuller co-operation between ministers and professional social workers must come from ministers themselves and any social workers who happen to be members of their congregations. Experience seems to suggest that professional social workers welcome, even when they are not themselves in close contact with churches, clergy and ministers as colleagues. Social workers themselves find when they discuss their work, that different types of worker are often dealing with the same family needing help, and ministers do too.

Now that the Social Service State has grown to such large proportions, the Church must look for the gaps in the social welfare provision by both statutory and voluntary bodies, to discover what is the unique contribution the Church can make in the present situation. An outstanding example has been the work of the World Council of Churches Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service and its counterpart in this country. For example, the total amount raised during World Refugee Year was more than £9,000,000 in cash and kind. Of this a total of nearly £4,000,000 was raised by member agencies of the World Council of Churches, of which more than one third (£1,378,500) was attributable to the British Council of Churches Inter Church Aid and Refugee Service Appeal.

Loneliness is another major social problem, particularly among older people. In 1955 there were 267,000 men and 496,000 women in England and Wales over the age of 80, more than twice the number twenty years before, and 3,241,000 people are over the age of 70.

Home and family life is another important area of social concern in which the churches have a unique part to play. The British Council of Churches is planning to encourage special weeks in 1962 throughout the country, at which training for marriage and family life will be given.

A further important field of social service, in which increasing responsibility is being placed on the community, is mental health. Some mental hospitals practise group therapy, in which the hospital Chaplain is invited to play his part. And there are enormous numbers of patients in mental hospitals who never receive visitors or letters, whose pastoral care is as much the responsibility of whole Christian congregations as of specially appointed Chaplains. Mr. Cleal's booklet gives other instances of the need for the fullest co-operation on the part of ministers and their congregations with social workers.

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

To the Members of the Baptist Ministers' Fraternal.

Dear Friends,

A SELF SERVICE STORE

Two or three Saturdays ago I was shopping with my wife when we reached the one self service store in our country town. "Just wait outside for a moment", she said, "I want to pop in here for a packet of 'Whizzo'". But when, after more than a moment, she reached the cash desk and called through the open door of the store for the spare basket, I knew that on the way round she had found other items displayed which we needed.

What has this to do with insurance?

Simply, that by our displaying to diaconates the various classes of insurance they will know what we have to offer and will be able to select policies to meet the insurance needs of their churches. Our "self service" display is incorporated in a leaflet which we have entitled "Plan Your Church Insurance" and it lists the many risks for which a church may be insured. We shall issue the leaflets in the early part of 1962 to all churches insured with us. The treasurer can return the leaflet suitably marked to show the items which interest him and we can then quote premiums.

I am anxious that deacons may be aware of the modern approach to church insurance. Our aim is to help you and your churches. We hope, too, that we may expand our grants to Baptist Union funds which have already benefited by over £100,000 from our work since the inception of the Company.

Yours sincerely

C. J. L. COLVIN,
General Manager.

A particular responsibility of ministers in these days is to encourage Christians to consider social work as a profession. The Young-husband Report, published in May, 1959, was concerned with this matter of recruitment and training. Social work in the health and welfare services is, the Report claims, "an un-recognised career". "More than 40 per cent. of the officers are over 50 years of age, and an unusually high retirement rate must be anticipated during the next ten years, at a time when many of the services will be faced with the necessity of expansion to meet fresh needs." The Younghusband Committee estimates that between 5,550 and 5,700 full-time officers with a general training in social work are required to staff the health and welfare services satisfactorily. This represents an increase over the present figures of between 2,395 and 2,545 officers, and the report recommends that these numbers should be reached during the next ten years by an annual recruitment of between 240 and 255. There are also opportunities for voluntary or paid part-time social workers and assistants to professional workers. Among the duties the report considers voluntary workers may effectively fulfil are: regular visiting of lonely people, or making it possible for relatives to go out; driving someone to church, to a handicraft centre or just for pleasure; helping with shopping, changing books, writing letters and reading aloud. The good neighbour is also a voluntary worker and "at some point good neighbourliness shades into community responsibility". The report emphasises that sincerity and goodwill are not enough for competent social work. It is unfortunately obvious that untrained, though well-meaning workers, may do more harm than good. Visiting, for example, the report says, "is not the smooth and simple task it may appear to those who have never attempted it". Religious bodies which sponsor voluntary social work must continually beware lest they fail to recognise problems which may be too severe for them to handle, and bungle by uninformed and unskilled goodwill a situation which may thereby be lastingly impaired. There are an increasing number of training courses available, some lasting only for a weekend, to help those who wish to train for community service.

In relation to youth work, co-operation with the local Youth Service can sometimes be fruitful. It both offers opportunities in the field of youth leadership for young people who want to make it a career and sometimes it can help a local church in meeting the needs of young people in a special locality. Baptists have not been as forthcoming as Anglicans and Methodists in availing themselves of this facility. But our new church at Bilborough, Nottingham, for example, worked out a scheme for combining the life and witness of a Baptist Church with a local authority Youth Club, under the leadership of the Baptist minister, an experiment which has justified itself and should stimulate experiments elsewhere.

Considerable guidance in all these matters could be given by professional social workers, if they are invited to discuss their

work and problems with ministers at fraternal and conferences, as well as with church organisations, and are allowed opportunities of saying how churches could help but do sometimes hinder their work. Church groups have been formed in many parts of the country as meeting places for clergy, ministers and social workers, and members of both "parties" have testified to the value of the insights into their respective responsibilities which they have thereby received. Advice about the formation of such groups may be obtained from the Secretary of the Central Churches Group at the National Council of Social Service, 26, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

JOHN HOUGH.

A NORTH LONDON EXPERIMENT

DURING last winter the North London ministers carried out an experiment which may not be very new, but was sufficiently successful to commend to other fraternal. It arose from a suggestion from Ungeod Davies, the Ter-Jubilee commissioner of the Group, that there ought to be a specific contribution from the ministers towards the Ter-jubilee effort; and that we ought to do something to bring home to our people the rich heritage that is ours as Baptists. W. R. Butler invited the ministers to lunch at Stroud Green church and Dr. Payne came to talk to us on "The Baptist Heritage". He divided our heritage into four strands: The heritage of our history; of our convictions; of our world-wide fellowship and of our opportunity. Afterwards four of the men were invited to prepare detailed studies of these four themes for subsequent fraternal so that we could clear our minds on how to present them to our people. Then a letter was sent to all the churches asking if they were willing to have visits on four occasions during the winter from ministers of the Group to study the themes with their people. The response was extremely good, and practically every church and minister agreed to come into the scheme. Ministers volunteered to be directed, as far as their diaries permitted, to any churches where they were needed, and to give a talk on one or other of the themes with discussion and questioning. In most cases the visits coincided with the church's mid-week service.

We brought our history under review. Many of our people admitted that they knew nothing at all about it, and Smyth, Helwys, Carey, McLaren and Knibb came alive for them for the first time.

We re-examined our convictions. What is it that makes us Baptists? Is it our doctrine of baptism? Or our understanding of the church as a gathered fellowship of Christ's people? Or our tradition of freedom and refusal of any particular credal formula? Or all these together? Usually passive members of the mid-week service heard themselves actually talking about what they believe.

Our world-wide fellowship was surveyed. Some of our people feel unnecessarily bashful about being members of their denomination, thinking it a minor one. They were astonished to discover

that they belonged to a fellowship half as large again as the Anglican communion, spreading from Russia to the southern States, and from Congo to Brazil.

Then we looked at our present day opportunities. Our refusal of a creed gives us the opportunity to reinterpret the gospel of Christ to each generation and to every kind of culture in accordance with its needs, whilst our insistence on the importance of believers' baptism ensures that the essential truths of the gospel always remain at the centre of our life. Our rejection of an ecclesiastical hierarchy makes easier the practise of the direct lordship of Christ in His church; and the comparative simplicity of our worship ought to make it easier to reach the religiously illiterate with the message of Christ.

Questions came plentifully at many of the sessions, and ranged widely. Isn't it more important to form links with other denominations in our own country than to link with Baptists in other countries and so make unity harder here? In what way can you still regard the Bible as infallible? How can we have real fellowship if we remain independent? Do Russian Baptists only survive at the expense of their social witness? Have we any connection with the Anabaptists?

We hope to repeat the visits this winter to consider some further Ter-Jubilee themes, namely the churches' responsibility: 1. to the neighbourhood; 2. to the nation and 3. to the world.

KENNETH WITTING.

BAPTIST MUSIC SOCIETY

THE committee of this recently formed Society is to be congratulated on arranging its first activity so soon after its formation.

Over one hundred people gathered at Camden Road Baptist Church, London, on Saturday, 14th October, for a half-day course for organists, choirmasters and choir members. After a brief introductory talk by the vice-chairman of the Society the members of the course split into two groups, one for organists and the other for choir members. The latter, under the energetic and genial leadership of Ewart Rusbridge, organist of Horfield Church, Bristol, proceeded to learn a new anthem and make themselves familiar with the pointing of canticles which will appear in the forthcoming new Baptist Hymnbook. The organists listened to a series of talks on their craft by Gerald Barnes, organist of Bloomsbury Central Church, and then gathered round the console for practical work and mutual criticism. Gerald Barnes obviously has a lot to teach us, but he must ensure that all his audience can hear him speak.

Our generous but unobtrusive hosts at Camden Road provided us with an excellent tea, after which the two halves of the course united to hear a recital by Gerald Barnes, who showed us that an organ which is on the small side and far from modern in its controls is no barrier to a high standard of execution. The day concluded

with Divine Service in which the singers used their newly rehearsed works and the presiding minister, the Rev. Neville Clark, made us vividly aware of the theological basis of what the Society is trying to do.

The attendance of people from as far afield as the West Country and the Midlands, clearly indicated the widespread concern of Baptists for high standards of music in worship. The committee plan future activities on a regional basis; the success of the first course has no doubt encouraged them to expect enthusiastic support.

G.P.L.P.