

# The Fraternal

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## EDITORIAL

## SWANWICK, 1964, AND AFTER

ALTHOUGH NO OFFICIAL communiqué was issued by the denominational Conference held at Swanwick in May, the opportunity for group discussion on matters vital to denominational life was of the greatest value. Out of the many issues raised – some might say too many – we would draw attention to four which are of extreme relevance to all ministers.

The first is Christian Education. *The Fraternal* has carried many articles on this theme, but at Swanwick two things became clear. Every minister and every church, large or small, needs to know where they are going in this matter and, although methods will vary from place to place, we need to rid ourselves of a haphazard approach to the subject. Further, the pressure for a co-ordinating of the Baptist Union departments dealing with education is obviously becoming very great indeed. Probably these two aspects belong together. But if at national level we drag our feet there is no reason why any of us in the local church should do so. As ministers we have a responsibility to our people to teach them the Faith and its application in the world today.

Secondly, we need to consider carefully Association life today. Later this year a report on the Associations is anticipated from a special Commission, and no doubt the findings and recommendations will be discussed in our pages. But already at Swanwick the need for making sure that all ministers and churches are aware of the purpose of Associations, and indeed of the very reasons for associating together at all, became quite obvious. Evidence suggests that far too often, the Association is not taken seriously by either minister or church. That this is not always the fault of the minister and church may well be true, but, as we were reminded at Swanwick, Association life is impoverished unless there is the participation of every minister and every church.

Thirdly, Dr Ruden reminded the Conference with clarity and a certain amount of pathos how the Baptists of the mainland of Europe are faring. Sometimes the English Channel seems wider to them than the Atlantic Ocean when the American Baptists show greater concern for them than we do. Whilst there may often be good reason for this, the fact remains that we are part of Europe. It is certain that we should be made more aware of our Baptist brethren in Europe and that we should not view them as poor relations but as part of the fellowship bound together by the blest tie of Christian love. At fraternal meetings, Association meetings, retreats and the like we should seek to obtain a speaker knowledgeable on European Baptist life – perhaps on occasions even inviting one of the brethren over. Expense is not always as insuperable a barrier as we tend to believe.

Finally we were reminded of Christian outreach in the work of evangelism. Of course Christian Education and Association life are related to evangelism, but we were advised to make sure that each minister and church thinks through the basic questions as to what it is we have to communicate, to whom we have to communicate it and by what method we are most likely to succeed in this task. Certainly the Holy Spirit works with us, but He does ask of us an intelligent appraisal of the message, the field and the means. It could be that we have failed to take sufficient care on these points.

## THE CHRISTIAN SUNDAY

### II. IN ENGLISH PROTESTANT HISTORY

THE SUNDAY QUESTION has been a troubled concern ever since the Reformation. What does the Lord require of His people? How can they be helped to render it? What ought to be done to discipline the unspiritual and bind the unruly?

The reformers inherited a Sunday in which attendance at Mass was virtually compulsory, and the church courts exacted penance or fine for work on Sundays and holy days. Otherwise it was a day of recreation. Too much could not be expected of people ill-taught in their faith.

Henry VIII's *The King's Book* declared that temporal rest on the Sabbath was ceremonial, not binding on Christians, whereas spiritual rest was moral and incumbent on all. Sunday was to be spent in attending worship, in visiting the sick, and in giving instruction in virtue to the family. Necessary work was allowed; indeed, work was better than 'to lose their time in leaping and dancing, and other idle wantonness'. The reformers agreed, though not unanimously.

Whatever the theory, the practice remained much the same. Church attendance declined, but was made compulsory in the Act of Uniformity of 1552.

Elizabeth liked the people to have their sports. She held Council meetings on Sundays, and attended plays and jousts. She would check abuses, but would not approve a bill for better Sunday observance, though many wanted it.

A preacher at St Paul's Cross cried: 'Will not a filthy play, with the blast of a trumpet, sooner call thither a thousand, than an hour's tolling of a bell bring to the sermon a hundred?' The people would have their fun whatever local authorities might do to stop them.

Nicholas Bound's *The True Doctrine of the Sabbath* gave divine authority to those who demanded that Sunday should be virtually a Jewish Sabbath, contrary to the early reformers, including Luther and Calvin. Some deemed it the recovery of neglected truth, others thought it expedient though not Scriptural, whilst yet others denounced it as a return to Judaism. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chief Justice tried to suppress the book, but it provoked extensive controversy. Those who agreed with it were suspected of being adversaries of the State Church.

Observance had not greatly changed when James I issued his Declaration of Sports in 1618. It issued from a petition to him the previous year against Lancashire magistrates who forbade Sunday sports. The Declaration followed tradition over against the rising conscience, and allowed those who had attended church but not others, to enjoy any lawful recreation. Such sports as bull and bear baiting were unlawful in any case.

In 1625, an Act of Charles I's Parliament differed little from the Declaration, but forbade roaming from parish to parish for sports. Two years later, for the first time an Act prohibited some Sunday work, in this instance that of waggoners and of butchers, who disturbed the Sunday peace.

Wakes and church-ales on Sundays often occasioned disorders. At Somerset Assizes the Lord Chief Justice at the magistrates' request ordered that revels, church-ales and the like should be utterly suppressed. Archbishop Laud asked the Bishop of Bath and Wells whether the order was justifiable. The bishop consulted seventy-two clergy, who all replied that they had never seen or heard of disorders! Next year the order was revoked under Laud's pressure. When twenty-five magistrates then petitioned the king, he re-issued his father's Declaration of Sports.

The Long Parliament from the commencement was concerned about Sunday. When the civil war began an ordinance forbade the public crying of goods for sale, all travelling and carrying of burdens, wrestling, ringing of bells for pleasure masques, wakes and the like. Legislation against 'idle sitting openly at gates or doors or elsewhere' or 'walking in churchyards' was avoided by only two votes. The Quarter Sessions showed that strict enforcement was necessary for Puritan Sunday observance, even in the Commonwealth.

'Yet even at the Restoration, when the very name of Puritanism was a hissing and a reproach . . . the Puritan idea of Sunday, as a day strictly set aside for rest and religious meditation, continued to hold the allegiance of the English people' (G. M. Trevelyan). Work, buying and selling, and travel were forbidden in the Act of 1677, and public recreation was confined to one's parish.

Observance became slacker as the years passed, as Samuel Pepys showed, but Sunday was a day of rest and many worshipped. In 1685, James II directed the two archbishops to take steps 'for the better observing of the Lord's Day, too much neglected of late'. The clergy were to persuade people to worship, and the authorities were to apply the law. The Toleration Act of 1689 still required church attendance, but it made the law more difficult to apply.

William and Mary were zealous in this matter. Mary tried confiscating puddings on the way from the bakers. William called on magistrates, ministers, and judges, to stop the profanation, and asked citizens to inform against their neighbours. This stimulated the formation of Societies for the Reformation of Manners, which effected local improvements, often by informing.

Queen Anne went further than the 1677 Act in prohibiting dice, cards, and other games in private houses. The upper classes commonly failed to keep the Sunday in spirit. *The English Lady's Catechism* (1703) showed the fashionable lady spending Sundays in chit-chat, going to church to display new clothes and to laugh at 'scurvy creatures' who went there for worship.

Among the poorer people, charity schools for children sprang up in which among other things they learned the catechism and became familiar with church services. Near the end of the century, Sunday schools did even more effective work for those who had no time on working days for school.

The religious condition of poor people varied from place to place. Viscount Percival in 1733 came to Sandy Lane. Some colliers were asked whether they went to church. 'No', they replied. 'Then I believe you know nothing of the Commandments.' They all answered they knew a family living in their parts, but not personally!

Matters certainly worsened in the early years of George I. The annual sermons to the London Societies for the Reformation of Manners referred to more drunkenness, immorality, and violence on Sundays than on any other day. People went into the country for pleasure, leaving meagre congregations in the churches.

The tide turned with John Wesley and his mission. Epworth was a favourable example. Wesley wrote: 'The society here is not large; but God hath wrought upon the whole place. Sabbath-breaking and drunkenness are no more seen in these streets; cursing and swearing are rarely heard.' The Methodists expelled members for working or for buying and selling on Sundays, and later would not permit them to take part in military exercises on that day. They thus strengthened the hands of the Nonconformists and the Low Churchmen, who had always been strict about Sunday.

In 1781 the Bishop of London secured an Act which aimed at two kinds of Sunday entertainment recently opened in London. One was the Promenade at Carlisle House, which tended to draw the dissolute together. The other was the use of rooms for public discussion, often sceptical, of religious subjects. By the Act any place which on Sundays charged admission for public entertainment or debate was deemed a disorderly house.

The French Revolution is credited with shaking the upper classes into greater respect for Sunday, making them roll up in their carriages for worship. Some think this was no more than a flash in the pan. Certainly from the end of the Napoleonic Wars concern for Sunday became more manifest. Sunday newspapers came under fire again. The paying of labourers late on Saturdays was attacked as causing heavy drinking and Sunday opening of shops. The Methodist Conference in 1824 required its members to pay their servants on Fridays or early on Saturdays. In 1830 an Act closed public houses within specified times on Sundays. In 1831 the Lord's Day Observance Society came into being.

As the sentiment grew, various tradesmen asked Parliament to legislate against their Sunday work. A select committee was appointed, and had no sooner reported than petitions deluged in for legislation on the same lines. From 1830 to 1838 the Sunday issue agitated Parliament and the whole nation. Despite seven bills which were introduced, no new laws were enacted because agreement could not be reached on details, but there was a general desire for an improvement. Gradually it was felt that legislation was not the best means of dealing with this subject.

In the meantime great good was done by books and pamphlets, by public and private debates in churches and societies, by the passing of resolutions and sending petitions. People were made to think about the issues, and to question their own practice. The revivals of the previous century and the work of Sunday Schools were quickening the religious consciousness of the nation. The Victorian Sunday was created.

Arthur Bryant wrote: 'There was no make-believe in the genuine piety of the English middle-class home'. It burst into full intensity on the Sunday. The day was different in its activities as in its restrictions. As well as church services, Bible reading and hymn singing were part of the day, and attention was paid to great literature. The middle class had the franchise, and loyally defended the Sunday, though some losses were inflicted.

The working people had less pleasure in the Victorian Sunday, cooped up in tenements and cottages upon the one day they were free for recreation, and ill prepared for worship or for great literature. The industrial revolution had moved masses of them out of the churches' reach, and it was physically impossible for them all to get into the churches. By the time something was done about it their Sunday behaviour had been stubbornly established. For generations some families had no vital contact with the churches. Had not Methodism been strong in many industrial areas and other Nonconformists done their part, Sunday work might well have been established. As it was, the popularity of Sunday excursions and other entertainments as they came could not be a matter of surprise.

The centuries confront us with original sin. Men, having rebelled against God, have little inclination to worship Him. Even the harshest legislation has failed to compel men to use the Sunday in a Christian manner. When the spirit is weak, chastising the flesh does not effect much. Ultimately Sunday observance depends upon the evangelical zeal of committed Christians. They must delight in the Risen Lord and work with Him for the conversion of the people. The challenge of Sunday always comes back to us.

J. C. ASKEW.

### OUR VILLAGE CHURCHES

THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION appointed by the Baptist Union Council to consider the organisation of the Denomination will be awaited with great interest. It is to be hoped that its terms of reference

are not limited but that it has *carte blanche* to examine the total condition of our denominational life and work. No doubt some advantage could accrue from a reorganisation of its machinery, but however radical it might be, something more than this is needed to meet the present situation with its so drastic change in social patterns. This article is concerned with just one aspect of our problem, the future of the village church and the church in the lesser towns. After almost a lifetime in industrial regions, a few years in the country has brought home to the writer the urgency of this problem.

Tribute must be paid to the devoted love and service which help to keep alive these smaller groups, but so often there is a sense of isolation when, rightly or wrongly, the people feel that they are out of the main stream and that there is little thought for them. Obviously this is not entirely true. Area Superintendents with whom one has had contact have been concerned about these causes, but they are vastly overloaded with responsibility for so many churches that they are limited in what they can do. Further, diligent District Secretaries can do a good deal to dispel this impression through their District Councils: probably in most districts planning includes the locating of their assembly in villages, though often lack of accommodation is a problem. Even then a visit to any church may occur only once in even five or ten years, especially if a District has only an annual assembly. Sometimes, of course, the village church itself creates or adds to the difficulty. It can be as independent as any numerically-strong cause, and one has known instances where an attempt to advise has been resented as an infringement of freedom and independence. But generally speaking the village church will surely welcome the interest and help of its sister churches in the immediate neighbourhood. There is often a desperate need of strong leadership and inspiration.

It would be ungracious not to recognise that this is being given in not a few places, sometimes under considerable difficulties. For example, in one Cathedral city in the south, a strong community has several village churches under its wing. The minister is active in guiding and helping, and the churches have close contacts with the 'Mother', having frequent rallies of their members in her house. A strong and well organised Lay Preachers' Federation serves the churches by its ministry. One knows of similar relationships in other parts of the country, where conditions are specially suitable with a vigorous central church or group of churches and satisfactory means of transport. But all too often these conditions are absent and the problem becomes more acute with time.

In our gratitude for large contributions from larger churches, we are apt to forget the generous and loyal response of these little communities to the demands of the Denomination and its witness at home and abroad. The response of some of our village churches to the Home Work Fund is sometimes quite astonishing. While, of

course, it is wrong to assess giving in terms of advantage accruing, nevertheless when one realises that so many of these churches experience little or nothing of the main benefit which the HWF offers, the support of a regular ministry, at least it emphasises what a store of loyalty and devotion there is in such tiny fellowships, something without which the Denomination would be the poorer. Apart from material gifts, let us not forget the contribution that villages can make in terms of personnel. How many village churches, and how many ministers in charge of churches in small towns have to face the loss of promising young folk who have been brought to Christ under their ministries and then have left to work in larger towns or cities and, when rightly led, help to strengthen already strong communities. Unhappily there is too little movement in the opposite direction for obvious reasons. And where occasionally there is such movement the small community is not always the beneficiary. How many ministers, one wonders, have known of Baptists moving from contacts with a 'strong' church in the town to residence in the country who are unwilling to accept responsibility in a small and struggling church and tacitly renounce their Baptist links for an easier time in a larger congregation — and this not always through retirement or old age. If only it were possible to write the story of what the Denomination owes to the village churches!

In these days we are laying great stress upon the matter of Stewardship, not least the stewardship of time and talents. How much time and talent we could release for the service and encouragement of our village fellowships! Of course many practical difficulties can be raised, but surely the situation offers wide opportunities for the exercise of Christian service of many kinds. Leaving aside ways of more important and sustained help, what an encouragement it would be to a tiny congregation to find itself strengthened occasionally by a group which had for once torn itself away from an already strong congregation to express its care for brethren engaged in a hard struggle. In face of the problem this many seem a mere trifle, but who can measure the value of even so small an expression of a wider concern.

There are churches, one knows, where there are more members than can be set to a practical service: some ministers would be hard put to it to find such channels if everyone were to offer. It is true that we realise the importance of Christian service in the wider community outside the church which can be an excellent exercise of Christian gifts. But here, in the service of the village churches, is surely a fine field for talents which are at present being buried and lying undeveloped.

Again, if we may roughly translate the concept of stewardship from individual to community terms, how often does it occur to a church enjoying a regular ministry to release its minister occasionally for a day or for a service, as a gift to express its fellowship and care



for the weaker? And, incidentally, to experience and appreciate what it rarely knows – the ministry of a lay preacher? Sometimes, no doubt, but all too rarely one fears.

With this problem is closely associated the organisation of the lay preachers. In recent years much has been done by the relevant Department of the Union in encouraging better organisation and in offering opportunities for lay preachers to qualify themselves better for this service. But while in some districts Lay Preachers' Federations are fairly well organised, in others there is little or no co-ordination. Headquarters can do much by way of initiation and encouragement, but ultimately responsibility in this, as in other matters, must devolve upon the various Associations and, more specifically, upon Districts.

For the fuller equipment of lay preachers the Baptist Union has shown some concern by its establishment of the Baptist Diploma; the scope of this is limited, since it is beyond the aspirations of many. This might well be supplemented by special classes especially for younger preachers, which could be shared by ministers of a District.

The supply of lay preachers is a serious gap in our denominational work. Some places have enough and perhaps more than enough for their needs. Others rely to a considerable extent on members of other denominations. While such interchange may be in principle no bad thing, so long as separate denominations do exist we should be concerned to supply leaders for our own work. While the Baptist Union has laid down its standards for the recognition of lay pastors and lay preachers, these can only be operative by the goodwill of the churches; in many instances sheer necessity leads to the ignoring of them and to the acceptance of leadership in worship which is inadequately equipped. That God can use inadequately equipped ministries for His purpose is undeniable but that is no ground for complacency in this matter.

If we do value our witness in the village it is surely time for a fresh consideration of the responsibility of the Denomination, particularly through a greater effectiveness of the District. Probably one answer to our question would be the cessation of rival witness in one village by two and sometimes three different denominations. Unfortunately the obvious step has to wait for the more ponderous movements of whole denominations, and often it is the victim of undue sentiment. But what can be contrived in newly-built areas ought to be possible in villages. While this may be a distant consummation, in the meantime here is our own problem and our own responsibility. As with so many other matters, the first requisite must surely be a greater readiness on the part of both larger and smaller churches to surrender some of their cherished 'rights' in the interests of the wider fellowship and to show that responsibility for one another does not end with a gift to the Home Work Fund, however generous.

W. S. DAVIES.

## AN ANTIDOTE TO ROME

WHAT FOLLOWS is a real letter. It was sent to a friend, an able and serious-minded young man, who wrote to tell me that he was thinking of becoming a Roman Catholic. He had been influenced by friends who had plied him with publications of the Catholic Truth Society. In an earlier letter I discussed transubstantiation, the attitude of the Roman Church to the Bible and to other Churches, and other matters. The line of this second letter was determined by his reply. We have since been able to meet for a long conversation. His name is not John and I have deleted some personal passages. I am publishing the letter in the hope that it may be helpful to others who find themselves in a similar situation.

'MY DEAR JOHN,

'Thank you for your letter. It is a good letter and your points are well stated. You have taken a lot of trouble over it and I am grateful to you for writing so fully. You have obviously been reading RC books because you reproduce the familiar RC arguments which I have often read. I don't complain of that. But I wish I was equally sure that you had read "the other side" before making up your mind on so important a matter. Arguing with your friends is not the same thing as knowing what real students of these subjects have to say. Would you read a serious book on the Protestant side if I lent it to you?

'I am glad of the new spirit of friendship between RC and Protestant now growing up and the growth of better understanding on both sides. I have had a little share in promoting this. Nevertheless, and in spite of all your arguments, I feel very strongly that on some important matters the RC Church is seriously and dangerously wrong, and I should be very sorry if you decide to join it.

'Let us look first at "infallibility". You recognise that the fact that you or anybody else might like to find an infallible authority is no proof that there is one. Personally I can see no reason to suppose that God ever intended the Church to be infallible, and I have seen no evidence that any Church is in fact infallible.

'On what ground can one say that here God has departed from His usual ways and made a miraculous provision to guard us from errors in doctrine or morals, whereas in everything else He makes us for our good learn from our efforts and mistakes. To guard us infallibly against sin and suffering, intellectual or moral error, would be to deny us that personal responsibility that makes us men. Jesus again and again urged the importance of personal decision and responsibility, e.g. Luke xii, 57. I could quote many passages from Paul to the same effect, e.g. 1 Thessalonians v, 21; Romans xiv, 5; 2 Corinthians iv, 2. Granting infallibility to men, even to the Church, is not God's way. And the fact the Jesus has promised to be with His Church and that the Holy Spirit will guide us into the truth if we obey Him, does not alter this.

'In fact the whole conception of infallibility seems to me to rest on a logical fallacy and to present an insoluble dilemma. A man who accepts the infallibility of the Roman Church is really saying that his own judgment is infallible! He is pitting his judgment that the Church is infallible against the judgment of all those who say it is not. He must admit that his own judgment is *not* infallible and so may be misleading him. I do not believe in either an infallible Church or an infallible Bible. So long as a man remains a human personality he cannot divest himself of responsibility. And he ought not to want to.

'There is not a word in the New Testament about infallibility, and I cannot see why it is more important for the Church that God should protect the Popes from mistakes in doctrine than from moral evil, and He certainly did not protect them all against gross sin. Nor do I understand how on this theory you can find more than one Pope condemning a predecessor for heresy. Of course, not even RCs claim that everything a Pope says is infallible, and there has been much debate in that Church as to which utterances are infallible.

'To me, the declaration that it is as much part of the Christian Faith to believe in the Immaculate Conception and Bodily Assumption of the Virgin Mary and the infallibility of the Pope, as it is to believe in the Trinity and the Incarnation, is sufficient proof that the Pope is *not* infallible. You know, I am sure, that these Roman doctrines were denied and opposed by many great Roman Catholic teachers, including Aquinas, Bernard and Bonaventura.

'I find it rather odd that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was not proclaimed by the Roman Church until 1854, the infallibility of the Pope only in 1870, and the Bodily Assumption not until 1950. If these are really fundamental parts of the Christian Faith one would have expected that an infallible Church would have discovered the fact long before that!

'The claims of the Roman Catholic Church stand or fall with its *claims about Peter*. No one denies that he was one of the outstanding apostles and in many respects the leader of the band. But RC claims go far beyond that. For example, far more than is reasonable is read into Matthew xvi, 17-19, a passage which has given rise to endless debate among scholars, both RC and Protestant. The incident was the turning point in Christ's ministry. For the first time He was recognised for who He was and He declared that on the rock of Peter's faith in Him He would build His Church. So far we can all agree. But what follows?

'I understand that Pope Pius IV laid it down that all RC bishops must promise never to interpret the Bible "except according to the unanimous consent of the holy fathers", i.e. the early Church theologians. But they are certainly far from unanimous about this text, which is so fundamental from the Roman Church point of view.

'Hilary, Gregory Nyssen, Chrysostom and Cyril of Alexandria say the rock was Peter's confession of faith. Some, for example the

great Augustine, say the rock is Christ Himself; while Origen declares that the Church is not built on Peter alone but on all who have the same faith. A Roman Catholic scholar, Jean de Launoy, says that seventeen Fathers declare the rock to be Peter; forty-four agree with Origen that it means faith like Peter's; sixteen agree with Augustine that the rock is Christ Himself; eight say it meant all the apostles. Very perplexing, isn't it, for the poor bishops!

'For myself, I think Christ did mean that Peter was the rock, as the first to confess a Christian faith in Him. The Church is to be built on the rock of the faith which Peter showed. But it is a far cry from that to maintain that Christ thereby made Peter the ruler of the Church. I am impressed by the fact that both Paul and Peter emphasise that Christ Himself is the only foundation of His Church, as if some people had misunderstood this saying and they wanted to put them right. See, for example, 1 Corinthians iii, 11: "Other foundation can no man lay than . . . Jesus Christ". In 1 Corinthians x, 4, Paul calls Jesus the rock. In Ephesians ii, 20, he says the Church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone". And see 1 Peter ii, 4-6.

'Peter was obviously one of the foremost leaders of the early Church and takes the lead several times in the Gospels and Acts. But it is a shared leadership, not a supreme position. He is subject to criticism, e.g. Galatians ii, 11, and Acts xi, 3. In the very important Jerusalem apostolic council described in Acts xv it is James, not Peter, who presides and announces the decision. In Galatians ii, 11, Paul tells how on an important issue he "withstood Peter to his face" and he asserts his equality with Peter (Galatians ii, 8; 2 Corinthians xi, 5; xii, 11). Paul could certainly not have done this if he had known about Peter's primacy or infallibility. Again in 1 Corinthians xii, 27-28, and Ephesians iv, 11, Paul describes the kinds of ministry God has provided for His Church. He could not possibly have omitted from the list the supreme position of Peter if Christ had so appointed him.

'The Book of the Acts gives Paul the chief place of leadership and could not have been written as it is if Luke had known of the primacy of Peter. Neither Luke nor Mark even mention the rock story of Matthew xvi. This does not mean it did not happen, but I think it must mean that they did not consider it very important, certainly not so important as the RCs make it out to be.

'No support for the Roman claims can be drawn from Matthew xvi, 19, because the promise is made in practically the same words to *all* the disciples in Matthew xviii, 18. And it seems to me significant that the rock story is followed almost immediately by Christ's stern rebuke to Peter (Matthew xvi, 21-22). It would be hard to fit that into any theory of primacy or infallibility. In John xxi, 15-19, Jesus gives Peter the opportunity to wipe out his three-fold denial by three times asserting his loyalty and restores him to his apostleship, as a shepherd of His flock. But there is no word of his being *chief*

shepherd. *All* ministers have the task of tending the sheep. Look, for example, at Acts xx, 28, and 1 Peter v, 1-4.

'Now what about Peter's "successors"? Even if we admitted the exaggerated RC claims for Peter himself, against (as I have shown) all the New Testament evidence, it would not follow that he could pass on his position to anyone else. A foundation stone is there to be built on. You cannot have a succession of foundation stones! Peter had the honour of being the first to confess Christ as Lord and Saviour. He was the first to open the door of the Church to non-Jews.

He obviously could not have a successor in doing these things. The slow growth in acquiring a leading position for the bishops of Rome, for long challenged by other churches, was in fact due as much to political as to religious reasons. It was mainly due to the fact that Rome was the capital city of the empire. The New Testament and the early Church know nothing about any special authority having been given by Christ to the bishops of Rome. It is in fact historically doubtful if Peter was ever a bishop of Rome himself. But it would take too long to argue that here.

'So I just cannot see any ground for the assertion in your letter that "Peter's authority over the Church is continued in the Popes because they hold Peter's position as Bishop of Rome and leader of His Church". I do not think any of these statements is true!

'I am glad you went to see what RC worship is like. I can understand your being impressed by its reverence and I agree that this is sometimes missing in Protestant churches. But much depends on the particular church and priest. I am sure you would have got quite a different impression if you had gone with me to some RC churches I have been in. The "atmosphere" and spirit of worship varies both in RC and Protestant churches.

'There are many fine RCs and there is much in the RC Church which I admire. And I agree there is much to criticise in Protestant churches too. No Church is perfect. But my trouble is that some of the fundamental principles of the RC Church seem to me to be clearly false and unfounded. I cannot for a moment accept their exclusive claims and their attempt to shut other Christians out of the Church. And I have many other difficulties beyond what is said above, as I hinted in my last letter. I could easily write a book about all this, expanding and giving evidence for what I have said above. But this letter is nearly a book already and I have probably exhausted your patience.'

HUGH MARTIN.

### THE BAPTIST TIMES

WE CAN COUNT OURSELVES fortunate as a denomination that we have our own Baptist newspaper. It is no secret that ever since the *Christian World* went under Congregationalists have felt a sense of deprivation because as a denomination they now have no weekly journal. It is difficult to imagine the situation for Baptists if they had no paper. During the printing dispute of 1956, when for several

weeks the *Baptist Times* could not be produced, the Baptist Union found it necessary to produce its own newsletter to keep in touch with the ministers and the churches.

The *Baptist Times* is the chief means of communication between the Union and the churches, and an important means of communication for the BMS. About half the circulation of the paper goes out to Baptists through newsagents; the rest goes in some 700 parcels direct to churches which have agents appointed for the distribution of the paper. In addition there are readers in all parts of the Commonwealth, in the USA, the USSR, and most countries of Europe as well as in Africa and Asia. Regularly news and comment from the paper are reproduced by the European Baptist Press Service, and frequently by other news services.

But to hold its own in the field of journalism the paper must have a wider interest and outlook than news and affairs of domestic interest to Baptists. It must serve the denomination but in doing so must take account of what is happening in all branches of the Christian Church, in national and international affairs. Nor must it become merely a Baptist 'mouth organ'. To maintain its integrity it is, I believe, necessary for the paper to have a certain measure of editorial independence, even, if need be, to the point of comment and criticism of the Union itself; and it must try to give a fair opportunity for the expression of differing points of view both in its correspondence columns and in its articles, and in the selection of contributors.

If this puts the Editor in an exposed position, that is something which has to be accepted. In the expression of views in the leading articles (on page five) the responsibility must fall upon the Editor and his staff and those who may be asked to write the editorials. It would be quite impossible to have a committee doing this or to have everything vetted by an editorial board. No doubt the officers of the Union and even the Directors of the paper must sometimes disagree with views expressed – and no doubt the views may at times be mistaken – but it is better that way than that people should be able to say that Baptists, who boast of freedom and criticise those countries where the Press is not free, refuse freedom to their own denominational journal.

The first and main task of the *Baptist Times*, as of any newspaper, is to give news. The days are gone when people will read a journal that is mostly made up of lengthy articles. They want news, and more news, presented in an attractive and arresting way, with as many pictures as possible. To do the job properly we ought to have a reporting staff. As it is we have to arrange for people to send reports of events – if we have been notified of them in advance – or we have to rely on publicity-minded people in the churches and Associations to send in their own reports. We are able to get reports of events beyond our own circles and our own denomination through the Ecumenical Press Service of the World Council of Churches (which issues a weekly press bulletin), through the European Baptist Press Service

and other agencies. Every week there has to be a combing of other religious papers and of the secular Press (daily and Sunday) and viewing of television programmes or listening to radio programmes to keep informed of relevant news.

I would plead for people to send us more news (with advance notice), written immediately and not a week or two later; and briefly, without superfluities, and giving the main news in the first paragraphs – not tucked away at the end. Ministers are sometimes too diffident, I think, lest they may seem to be boasting about their own work. But the result, too often, is that good news stories go begging.

It is always worth remembering that space is given to a story according to its news value and not according to its sentimental value.

Besides giving news the paper has a teaching ministry to perform. That is why we have articles on current theological, religious, moral and social questions, on worship and on world movement. We include also Bible studies and a devotional article every week, and book reviews. We believe that an informed church membership is a membership that cares more and prays more. Our aim is to increase the knowledge and competence of the local church and its members. Our job on the paper is to work alongside the ministers in helping to grow a healthy and informed Christian community.

The teaching ministry must, I believe, include the business of helping people to think as Christians about what is going on in the world around them, including political events. Christian citizenship demands that we should not keep silent about matters like nuclear weapons, race and colour, education, poverty, or policies which seem to work out unjustly. This is not a matter of taking the side of one party or another, but of trying to see what is the Christian judgment on situations and to encourage others to think things through.

Part of the function of a newspaper is to give opportunity for free exchange of opinions through its correspondence columns. While I think that these columns in the *Baptist Times* are livelier than they were, I confess that I often find them disappointing. We have more than once had good subjects started but the letters have soon dried up. I have known sometimes when I have allowed a letter to be published which expressed, perhaps, a peculiar point of view, that there are men up and down the country who could have used the opportunity to write a useful answer, disabusing people of misconceptions and providing a timely bit of education. But either they were too busy – or even too lazy – or they meant to write and didn't. The result too often is that we are left with an indifferent lot of letters, many of them not worth publishing; or letters which instead of trying to make a new point, merely repeat what others have already said.

Does anyone take notice of the *Baptist Times*? We have plenty of evidence that people do. Quite apart from the frequent quotations

from it in Baptist circles, even in sermons sometimes, it is noted by the secular Press. Earlier this year, twice within three weeks, the paper was quoted on radio and television and one story was followed up by BBC television. Foreign Embassies and Governments, to our knowledge, take particular note of what appears in the *Baptist Times* concerning Baptist communities in countries where they are a minority.

Of course we could, and would, like to do much better. But we can only do what our resources and the size of our staff permits. We would like to see an even bigger paper – though compared with its size a year ago we now have the equivalent of twenty-three pages as compared with sixteen pages then. The solution lies in increasing the circulation. The bigger the circulation the more you get from advertising and the more you can spend on improving the paper. Even so the *Baptist Times* pays its way and every year makes a worthy contribution to the funds of the Union. It is the ministers who can do most to increase the circulation by commending the paper to their people and helping them to know that the *Baptist Times* is *their* paper.

*Extracts from an address to the Baptist Board by the Editor, the Rev W. W. Bottoms*

### THE UNCONSCIOUS MISSIONARY FAITH OF THE WEST

WE ARE ACCUSTOMED today to describe this world in which we live as a 'changing world'. This description is indisputable for within the last one hundred and sixty years a scientific and technological revolution has taken place. The steam engine has replaced the horse; the self-propelled ship has replaced the sailing vessel; and the motor car and the aeroplane have given man a mobility he has never known before. Millions each year travel by air and heavy satellites soar spacewards at over 25,000 mph. By circling the globe with voice and flight, by splitting the atom and probing outer space, scientific progress has made the world one. No longer is it possible to ignore in Europe at 1 o'clock this afternoon what happened in Asia or Africa at 9 o'clock this morning. We now live in a world community which has rapidly shrunk to the size of a neighbourhood – and a very small one at that!

Politically there have been revolutions in one country after another. The 'winds of change' have swept and blown through our world, sometimes as gentle breezes slowly sifting the autumnal leaves of old ideas and customs away; sometimes tearing through a land with gale force leaving in their wake torn bodies and broken homes. The so-called 'backward nations' have come to the fore and are making their voice and presence felt. When the nations first gathered in 1945 to found the United Nations Organisation there were forty-seven nations in attendance. Today the membership of UNO



is nearly three times that figure and about fifty countries in Asia and Africa have attained the status of independent nationhood since the second world war. The world now speaks not only of a Western and Eastern 'bloc', but also of an Afro-Asian 'bloc'.

If it be true that the world has become a neighbourhood, then it is also true that our neighbours in Africa and Asia – in fact, in all the newly emergent and independent countries – can now look over the fence at us and at one another. As far as the West is concerned these countries now have a clearer knowledge and understanding of our Western way of life, of our thoughts, of our ideals – and of our weaknesses. What they see of the image which we project has had, so I believe, far reaching consequences, not only for those of the East, but also for those of us who live in the West, and Christians in particular.

During the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston in 1954, one of the speakers, a young American woman of negro descent, Mrs Rene Karefa-Smart, described secular materialism as being 'the unconscious missionary faith of the West'. If few disputed her statement then, even fewer would dare to do so ten years later. As many enquiring eyes turn their gaze on the West they see her as being full of people whose annual incomes are as much as twenty times greater than theirs. They see a people who have enough to eat, enough clothes to keep them warm, enough money for a good standard of housing and medical attention. They see a people who in addition to the bare necessities have refrigerators, washing machines and televisions, and still have yet more money for theatre tickets, holidays, ornaments, carpets, fads and fashions, and much else besides. They see, in short, a people spending far more on drink and tobacco than on education; more on slimming aids than on famine relief; more on armaments to destroy peoples than on economic aid to build them up. In other words, they see her not as the stronghold of Christian values but as the agent of an altogether different attitude that denies meaning to anything beyond this world, and finds value only in that which can be seen and touched.

It is no small wonder, therefore, that one of the significant outcomes of newly acquired (and rightly granted) independence is a desire to emulate the West and acquire in a single generation the standards of living which she has taken four centuries to achieve. That such standards should be achieved is indisputable. The tragedy is, however, that if the example of the West is followed, then these countries are in grave danger of repeating the West's mistake of failing to see that scientific progress and technological advance are gifts of God to be used for the benefit of all mankind rather than to be exploited for selfish and national interests.

Unhappily this 'unconscious missionary faith' is not confined only to those outside the Church of Christ. All too commonly it has become, perhaps unknowingly, the faith of many Christians today.

Like their non-Christian neighbours, they too have been insidiously influenced by the materialistic outlook that is so typical of our modern affluent society. This has many serious consequences, one of which surely is the appalling dearth today of candidates for the ministry of the church at home and overseas. Christian parents have been known to set value on material rewards and prospects more than on vocation and service when speaking of their children's future life work. Their estimate of the minister, the missionary and the social worker has been that of the world. Area Superintendents, Ministerial Recognition Committees and Missionary Candidate Secretaries can all tell stories of open opposition by Christian parents and friends to the sense of call that their young people have felt. Sometimes the opposition is not so obvious – albeit more dangerous – and comes in the subtle form of pointing out that ministerial or missionary service is ill-paid, insecure, lacking in social prestige and rather a waste of 'the sacrifices that we have made for you'. It is not surprising, therefore, that churches in our country are lacking much needed and desired pastoral oversight. Or that Field Secretaries have to inform national Church Councils that the doctors and nurses, the teachers and ministers that they so desperately need are not available.

Consequently the Church in its mission to the whole world is not as effective as it ought to be, or as it could be. It lacks leadership and resources. It even lacks the complete support and total commitment of many of those who claim to be its members. For a vast majority of our members the Christian world mission and anything associated with it seems remote and of no direct personal importance. The 'unconscious missionary faith', the concern of daily living fills our thoughts. Few, if directly challenged, would declare themselves hostile to the Christian mission, in fact they would be deeply offended if you were to suggest that they were. Very many, however, are quite indifferent to it and look upon it rather as an embarrassment. But even amongst those who have some measure of concern for the proclamation of the Gospel there are those who act as though it had been given to them for their own close-knit community. In consequence, many never see beyond their own church doorstep to the neighbourhood in which they live, and certainly not to the world of which they are a part and into which Christ commissioned them to go. Yet the Church is in mission in the world and to the world; to belong to the Church means to be part of that mission.

Ministers in particular are in a unique position to bring alive for the members of their church and congregation the fact that the Church lives its life in mission and that its mission is to the *whole* world, whether that be at home or overseas; the difference between the two is not so much a spiritual one as a geographical one. The outcome of this must assuredly lead to a renewal, under God, of the Church's vitality and missionary fervour. The Church will be driven to meet together for prayer, discussion and Bible

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To the Members of the Baptist Ministers' Fraternal

Dear Friends,

'He jests at scars that never felt a wound'

—*Romeo and Juliet*

The impetus of this Shakespearian year has been gathering force. As I write, Olivier is playing the Moor in *Othello* at the National Theatre and in July, during the City of London Festival, *Twelfth Night* is being presented in the ancient Middle Temple Hall.

As I visit diaconates all over the Country I have been struck by the diametrically opposed attitudes of deacons to Church fires. When I have spoken of destructive fire damage and of the need for full insurance to some deacons who have never experienced or seen a Church fire I have heard, if not a jest, at least a bland statement such as 'It couldn't happen here'.

Deacons, however, who have experienced serious burn-outs are only too glad to insure to the hilt.

Total fire destruction does happen, *we* know it happens and in case it ever happens to your Church premises ask your deacons *now* if they have fully revised the fire policy sums insured *recently*. Even if the revision was last year or the year before, remember money values continue to fall and upwards adjustment is a yearly necessity.

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Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN,

*General Manager*

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study. It will pray for forgiveness, for consecration, for zeal and an enlarged understanding of the mission God has set before it. It will pray for individual persons in various parts of the world who in a special way are engaged in Christian mission. It will pray for insight as to what its calling to mission means in its own neighbourhood and nation. It will pray for its pastor and will also expect of him help in understanding the work and witness of the whole Church at home and in all the world. It will hold before God the local and larger work of churches of other denominations. It will pray and urge that every individual member should see that there is a missionary frontier in his or her home, at the office, the shop and the workbench, or in the club, society or group of which he is a member. The revitalised Church would encourage its youth to see the urgency of the Christian world mission and would make sure that the immense needs of our world today and the boundless possibilities of service are clearly taught and emphasised. In other words, it would seek to reverse the 'unconscious missionary faith' of the West and would have as its aim that every one of its members in his or her life should respond fully to God's will and bear effective testimony to the Apostolic nature of the Church.

PETER AMIES.

#### INCORPORATE IN CHRIST\*

L. J. MOON'S INTERESTING ARTICLE on 'Partnership' (*Fraternal*, April, 1964) raises some important questions. Brief comment is offered here on some aspects of those questions.

'This world is not only a place of soul-making but also of society-making' Moon rightly says; also that in the New Testament 'men had both to believe and to belong'. Statements like these are representative of a trend of thought in the denomination which is deeply concerned with the need for a better appreciation of the nature of the Church among Baptists. However, there are some among us who are chary - unnecessarily, I feel sure - of allowing themselves to follow this line of thought with anything like zeal, for it conjures up threatening images of 'authoritarianism', 'uniformity', 'clericalism' and the like. The situation is viewed as Evangelicalism v. Institutionalism.

But our words can become barriers, keeping asunder what God intended to be inseparables. The Gospel of reconciliation in Christ makes it impossible to think seriously of individual Christians or local churches or denominations as independent units. The New Testament figure of the Church as the Body of Christ, if taken seriously, must mean that there is only one Church in the world, and that that Church should be in some sense an organic whole.

Membership in the Body of Christ implies partnership in the service of Christ. If there is only one Body of Christ, the partnership cannot be confined to the local church, or even to the denomination: it must operate among all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And if it must operate on such a wide scale, it must

\*Ephesians i, 13 (NEB)

seek forms to express itself; forms which, though they may vary, must not be antagonistic or contrary to one another. Partnership in service demands organically compatible forms.

We Baptists, like all other Christian groups, have our forms – institutions, if you like. They are an embodiment of Christian realities and we value them highly. But we need to look at them constantly with the critical eye of love; or, to put it another way, we need to bare them to the judgment of the Head of the Body. Our forms are neither final nor infallible. New Testament authority we may claim (as does every other denomination), but the Spirit is ever unfolding fresh truth from the New Testament. Have we the courage to question our forms in humility and faith and take the consequences? Living as we do in an era of unprecedented change, shall we be left alone clutching our ossifications, or shall we venture out into the turbulent stream of ecumenical dialogue – admittedly uncertain and even dangerous – in the faith that we shall be cleansed and reclothed with lovelier forms?

Moon says: 'We Baptists rightly claim that our distinctive contribution to the Universal Church is our teaching on Believers' Baptism'. Believers' Baptism is one of the forms which embody our grasp of the truth of incorporation into Christ, and we all say Amen to a statement like Moon's. But even while we say Amen, we have other thoughts: we are loyal to our denominational position, but we do not regard the Baptismal debate as closed. Without starry-eyed absorption in the possible wonders of a united church, we must go on testing our conception of Baptism and enquiring whether it is really and ultimately irreconcilable with that of paedobaptist Christians. Is there yet more light and truth to break forth from God's Word? Are our present categories of thought and speech the one possible means of carrying on a dialogue with paedobaptists, who may be using, unrecognised by us, quite different categories? One Lord, one faith, ONE BAPTISM. Did the author of Ephesians see it differently from both Baptists and paedobaptists?

'Another contribution of us Baptists to the Church Universal is that of the church meeting and all that is implied in it', writes Moon. As in the case of Baptism, we agree, but find that it is not enough to agree. Our statements about the church meeting are of the most general kind: 'Rightly understood our conception of the Church and the church meeting emphasises the fact of the responsible partnership of the local body of believers in the worship, witness and work of their church'; also, 'at the church meeting . . . the members seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit that they may fulfil more adequately their pastoral, priestly and prophetic ministry together'. These are L. J. Moon's words, and in fairness to him we recognise that the nature of his article did not permit further exposition (as with his other points). Even the Baptist Union's Declaration of Principle, which obviously has the church meeting in mind, does not take us very far when it says: ' . . . each church has liberty, under the

guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer (Christ's) Laws' (Clause 1). A great deal of theological work needs to be done on the subject of the church meeting.

What *is* our conception of the church meeting? What do we mean by partnership in it? There is a widespread looseness of definition that is reminiscent of the attitude of some Anglicans to episcopacy: it is a fact to be accepted in some way irrespective of interpretation.

Let us linger over this a little longer. One of the truly great values of the church meeting is its provision for a free exchange of thought and opinion; if there is an acceptant atmosphere, which may be encouraged by the chairman, the door is opened to a greater spiritual maturity and usefulness for both individuals and the community. But when the church meeting process reaches the point where a decision has to be made, have we any assurance that such a decision (whether on a point of Christian doctrine, or on the relative virtues of different heating systems) will best be made and be according to the mind of the Spirit by an unfettered democratic vote? Is the theocratic community bound to take the form of an absolute democracy? Is there an acceptable modification of democracy or other alternative form which would both preserve the freedom of the individual Christian and serve the purposes of the community by its recognition of special gifts, knowledge and callings? In actual practice there are probably very few ministers who tolerate absolute democracy, even when they are subjected to pressures that demand it. But why do they resist it? Because they have a lust for power? Sinners Baptist ministers may be, and are, like all other men; but a lust for power is not their dominating characteristic. The reason is more likely to be that they are seeking to live and work by a doctrine of the church which points in the right direction, but which is not as yet developed sufficiently to influence the form of the church meeting.

At the risk of making this article one-sided, let me make a few more brief remarks on the church meeting. It is pertinent to ask what constitutes a church meeting. In our chapel trusts and constitutions the convening and regulating of church meetings is catered for. These arrangements of a legal nature are correct in principle, in spite of the dangers of hiding behind them or, oppositely, ignoring them or manipulating them so cleverly as to render them meaningless. But as theological statements of what constitutes a church meeting they have little authority. If the local church is composed of all the Christians in each place, a church meeting in one sense is something we are still waiting to see. Denominationalism makes the constituting of a church meeting a virtual impossibility. Some may demur at this conclusion because of the conditional clause which led to it; the reality of a church meeting may not depend on the wholeness of the local church in a formal sense. This may have to be conceded. But if it is, there is still a problem in the other direction. If a section of the local church (the section which

meets in the Baptist chapel) can properly have a church meeting, can a section of that section (the group meeting or the church-in-the-house) also properly have a church meeting? Can the group meeting in the Anglican church or the Methodist chapel claim to be a church meeting? Perhaps the quantitative approach is to be either corrected or complemented by the fact of meeting in Christ's name.

If my understanding of L. J. Moon's article is right, he discusses Believers' Baptism and the church meeting as two forms which are basic to the whole idea of responsible partnership. It is from those twin starting points he finds it possible to go on and speak about the possibility of partnership in greater measure in worship, team ministries, salaries and evangelism, the last of these in co-operation with other denominations. All are matters of genuine concern to those who believe in the organically social nature of the church. To see them dealt with in the *Fraternal* is encouraging, and to see them embodied in the practice of our churches would be positively inspiring. Nevertheless, it seems to me that advance to a richer partnership is obstructed by theological misunderstanding. We have been taught, of course, by C. H. Dodd and others, to recognise the non-theological factors in our Church situation, but a close and humble scrutiny of the theology behind our forms is the most pressing need of the present time.

It is not condemnation of Believers' Baptism to say that, while it incorporates individuals into the partnership of the Body of Christ, it is also a divisive factor among Christians. Within the limits of our own denomination there are sharply divergent views of Baptism, and between Baptists and other denominations the difference of understanding is so great as to make genuinely close co-operation hardly possible. This does not mean that we must thoughtlessly deny our history or foolishly relinquish the insights granted us; it means rather that under the tutelage of the one Lord we must seek greater light on the one Baptism.

More basic to the question of partnership than the church meeting is the Communion of the Lord's Supper. The church meeting as a form of partnership follows from our sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the real twin starting points for any discussion of fuller partnership in the church; they are in fact the inseparable twin starting points. We might ask whether we are breaking the wholeness of the Gospel forms by inviting the unbaptised to the Lord's Table, or whether by receiving paedobaptists at the Table we imply recognition of their Baptism. Someone has said that Eucharistic *experience* unites Christians everywhere, but that Eucharistic *interpretation* divides them. The actual church situation makes it unsatisfactory to rest in a paradox of this kind, and the idea of the church as the Body of Christ makes it impossible so to rest. Till all Christians understand the Lord's Supper in such a way that they do not exclude one another from sharing it in any particular church - till then, to speak about it uniting them in

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experience must mean very little. And it is all too possible that we Baptists, though unaware of it, are contributing to the lack of fullness in the Universal Church's Eucharistic experience by our holding of some unexamined assumptions.

Richer developments in partnership within our denomination and in wider circles are likely to become possible, not as we achieve a colourless uniformity in doctrine and institutions, but as we strive to attain that openness of mind which is characteristic of much of our tradition and without which we become dissociated from the exciting privilege of following Christ along new paths. But new as the paths may be in terms of worship, ministry, evangelism and countless other forms, the starting points remain the same – Baptism and Holy Communion. These, dynamically related to the Word of God, are the focus of the corporate life of the New Society.

W. H. KENNEDY.

### THREE EXPERIMENTS IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A NUMBER OF ARTICLES have appeared recently in *The Fraternal* on the subject of Christian education. This further one is offered with the hope that some of the practical details in it may be of help to others, and in particular that the Baptist Union Certificate and Diploma in Religious Knowledge may be seen to be of value in furthering the Christian education of our members within the whole fellowship of the local church, instead of as an 'extra' for certain keen individuals.

In the spring of 1962 it became apparent during the course of a residential young people's weekend that not enough was being done for the nurture of those who had been baptised. It was decided to follow the course for the Baptist Union Certificate. About twenty young church members purchased copies of J. S. Stewart's *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ*, and agreed to use the daily readings in that throughout the summer. I promised to preach evening sermons on the themes of that book during the same period, and the Youth Fellowship planned their Sunday evening programme to tie in most weeks with the same subjects. At the same time two fortnightly study groups met, each for a course of seven lectures, one on 'Preaching and Worship', the other on 'Christian Education in the Local Church'. The Rev C. S. Reid of Moss Side led the first, attended by about six; I took the second, which had an average attendance of fifteen. In the autumn about ten bought copies of *Prophets and Rulers* and used a daily reading guide which I prepared on this, and five of these attended a class each Sunday afternoon for discussion on the passages. Four actually entered for the exam and two passed. The failures were in the one paper, 'Life of Christ', which they had been left to study for themselves. The important thing, however, was not the exam, but the fact that twenty young church members had studied at least part of the course.

In the summer of 1963 five older church members expressed interest in the Baptist Union Diploma. In the autumn of that year

two fortnightly house meetings were held, one on 'Mark', the other on 'The History of the English Bible'. Each series was attended by a number of members who had no intention of taking the exam. At the beginning of 1964 the three churches of Chorlton, Fallowfield and Moss Side organised a series of four house meetings on different evenings of the week in different areas of South Manchester on the subject of 'Baptist Principles'. These contained a cross-section of members of the three churches of different ages, and three of them were led by the ministers. In the alternate weeks to these a smaller group worked through the books of the New Testament to cover the remaining subject in the Diploma course. Four members are actually taking Part 1 of the exam.

Earlier this year concern was expressed at a church meeting about the small proportion of members attending, and in the discussion the point was made that the smaller house meetings were fulfilling some of the functions of the church meeting. As a result of that discussion a further course has been worked out for the three months April to June entitled 'Christianity in a great city - Corinth and Manchester'. This study of Paul's letters to the church at Corinth is being undertaken at three levels. Many of our members follow the IBRA daily readings, and these two epistles are covered in this same period. A further study guide has however been prepared to supplement the IBRA notes as they have omitted some of the more difficult passages! I have agreed to devote Sunday evening services to this subject, and some of them will include or be followed by questions or group discussion on such subjects as 'Christian marriage' and 'Christian social behaviour'. In addition three fortnightly house meetings are being held, led by deacons to discuss the application of Paul's words to us in Manchester in the twentieth century. Any practical suggestions that emerge from these which are relevant to the worship, work or witness of Union Chapel will be raised at the church meeting, and deacons and church meetings have been purposely arranged in the alternate weeks to these house meetings so that no member is expected to be out at the same kind of meeting more than one night a week.

One further comment is perhaps relevant on this whole subject - the role of the minister. There is no doubt that his background knowledge is considered by many to be essential for such groups, and some maintain that he should wherever possible lead them. I certainly have found such groups to be the most stimulating and in many ways the most worthwhile part of my ministry, however small they have been. On the other hand there is little doubt that sometimes the presence of the minister does tend to restrict discussion, and there is always the danger that he will talk too much! There is an increasing number in many of our churches of those who have had experience whilst students of leading Bible study and discussion groups, and some of these surely are as qualified as the minister for this ministry.

J. F. V. NICHOLSON.

## OF INTEREST TO YOU

*Calls have been accepted as follows:* S. A. Armitage, Bletchley; Wallace Swift, Hanley and Fenton; M. J. Walker, Dublin Street, Edinburgh; John Hance, Spalding; G. Hughes, Paulton and Welton; A. J. Petty, Old Colwyn; Leslie Stillwell, Coalville; S. R. McDonald, Stapleford, Nottingham; D. Eric Watson, Dennistoun, Glasgow; Frank Wiltshire, Stratford-on-Avon; G. E. Bowden, St Budeaux, Plymouth; David Bugden, Silver Road, Norwich; Ralph Drake, King Street, Wigan; Geoffrey Ellis, Chesterfield; D. H. Weller, Wycliffe, Reading; A. A. Kippax, Colchester Road, Ipswich; R. C. Rowsell, Haddenham, Bucks; Maxwell Berry, Bushey; P. D. Chevill, Northolt; A. W. Jordan, Kilmington; C. J. Sutherland, Darlington; A. T. Fleetwood, Bideford; V. S. Crane, Latchford, Warrington; P. M. Goodall, Marston Green; R. E. Ayres, Norman-ton; D. R. Oliver, Cirencester; B. E. Gilbert, Earls Hall, Westcliff; W. C. Fulbrook, St Austell; D. Snelling, Bonneville, Clapham Park; Trevor Stout, Stourport; A. J. Symonds, Ryde, Isle of Wight. Students have settled as follows: from *Bristol*: M. A. Churchill, Laindon and Kingswood; T. B. Evans, Swathling, Southampton; Roger Newman, assist. Tyndale, Bristol; John Quinn, Cotton End, Bedford; John White, King's Lynn and District Fellowship; *Cardiff*: J. E. Stephens, Marlborough and Salcombe; *Rawdon*: Eric Laing, assist. Mutley, Plymouth; R. S. Smart, Carlisle; B. Petterson, Urmston; *Regent's Park*: J. C. Henson, Pontypridd; J. A. Edwards, Stotfold; Rodger Aldersley, Westbury, Wilts; *Spurgeon's*: Derek Punchard, Bermondsey; G. A. Thomson, Tilgate, Crawley; D. J. Hollidge, assist. Metropolitan Tabernacle; D. M. Turner, Lydgate and Roomfield, Todmorden; R. G. Watkins, Mitcham, B. F. Davies, Bracknell. May God's blessing rest upon their ministries, as also upon that of C. H. L. Gayle and his wife who have come from the West Indies for a year of service among the Baptist churches of Birmingham and especially among their own compatriots there. This new venture owes much to the drive of Bernard Mason, chairman of the committee set up to plan the visit. There are some 40,000 Jamaicans in the city and the coming of these friends will greatly facilitate the ministry of the Baptist churches to them.

*Our best wishes* go to those who are moving to other fields of service: to E. H. Robertson who has been appointed to the responsible office of Director of the World Association for Christian Broadcasting; J. E. T. Hough who is to follow Cleal as director of our Christian Citizenship Department; A. W. Argyle who is to be reader in languages with the Oxford University Press; R. A. B. Thompson who is going to help Pastor Viseux with his evangelistic work in Central France; A. J. Stuart Thomson who is going to help in the work of the BMS for a three-year period in Trinidad, and Hugh Wrigley who is joining the strict Baptists. We also congratulate Howard Williams on his election to the Vice-Presidency of the Baptist Union and the most highly successful renovation of Bloomsbury

chapel, and R. G. Williams who is now a principal Chaplain in the R.N., and S. C. Crowe on the silver jubilee of his church at Cowley, Oxford, his twenty-two year pastorate there, and the stone-laying of what looks like being a fine new chapel, and H. W. Cox on the opening of his new church at Brierley Hill, a good modern building.

*Our sympathy goes out* to brethren who have been under the weather lately: to Harry Weston who has had a long spell in hospital; Gordon Wylie whose illness now necessitates hospital care; J. N. Schofield who has had a long and trying time in and out of hospital also; Alan Furnell who has made a good recovery from a serious operation; T. G. R. Tyrrell and A. G. Hamlin who have both had operations, and J. H. Jones of Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne, who has been in hospital. We also send best wishes to three brethren who are retiring, G. H. C. Angus and W. E. Hough who finish after eleven and twelve years' service respectively at Rawdon, to H. B. Roberts after forty-one years in the ministry, the last twenty-one of them at Shirley, Solihull, but most of all we congratulate Alec Charlton who has had sixty years in our ministry and is still going strong in full-time pastoral charge at Haworth. During all this time he has had only three pastorates and all have been in the West Riding of Yorkshire. And, finally, we congratulate President Lyndon Johnson on having a great-grandfather who was a pioneer Baptist minister in the USA.

*We remember with gratitude* brethren who have passed from mortal sight: Gilbert Laws, 88, who was president of the BU thirty years ago, the doyen of us all, who after brief ministries in Gosport, Boscombe and Reading, had notable ministries at Avenue, Southend and West Croydon concluding with a great ministry of seventeen years at St Mary's, Norwich, since when he was happy for many years in the service of the village churches around; W. Thorington Cork, a keen and active man, who had pastorates in East Anglia and a war-time chaplaincy before settling in Folkestone in succession to J. C. Carlile, and who served for some time as Secretary of the Kent and Sussex Association; H. S. Rudge who had long pastorates in Hendon and Gorleston with shorter ones in Bermondsey, Bath and Tenterden, a humble man and an untiring pastor; Tudor Jones, a gifted musician and active youth worker who came into the ministry from teaching and had pastorates in Pontllanfraith and Downend, Bristol; and E. W. Mills, in great demand for conventions and missions, whose chief pastorates in a long ministry were at City Road, Bristol, Torquay and West Norwood, with an interlude of two years working for the Slavic Missionary Society. We also record with sorrow the passing of the widows of two esteemed brethren, Oliver Edwards and Alan Burgoyne, and extend our deep sympathy to R. A. Burrows on the passing of his wife. One other, bearing an honoured name has been called home, J. A. Spurgeon, son of Dr James Spurgeon and nephew of the famous C. H. He was secretary of the United Temperance Council and later editor of its

**EVANGELISM**  
is  
THE MAJOR CONCERN  
of your  
**BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY**  
but  
THERE CAN BE NO EVANGELISM  
WITHOUT MEN TO PROCLAIM  
THE GOSPEL  
AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT  
THEM IN THEIR TASK

*Matt. xxviii, 19-20*

*Inquiries to:*

Rev. A. S. Clement, Home Secretary  
Baptist Missionary Society  
93 Gloucester Place, London W1

*Gazette*, a trustee of Spurgeon's Homes and a director of Arundel House which is a memorial to his father. His son is planning officer for Coventry and a deacon of Queen's Road. We extend our sympathy to Mrs Spurgeon who was his right hand in all his service.

*Many were sorry* to bid farewell to the brethren from USA who have been over in Britain for three weeks and, at the time of writing, have just returned home. They have had a fruitful ministry resulting in conversions, and they have also shared with many of our brethren their experiences in the matters of Christian education and stewardship. Among other churches the team visited Spurgeon's Tabernacle and Bloomsbury; they also visited Spurgeon's and Regent's Park Colleges. They wound up with an excellent conference at the Church House attended by about a hundred lay leaders. The more widespread are contacts like this the better.

*We judge there has been some interest* aroused by the article on 'Churches and Schools' in our last issue. Among other letters we have received, one spoke of the making of a new Agreed Syllabus in Portsmouth. The writer called attention to the grant made to the British Council of Churches from the Gulbenkian Foundation for two years' research in religious education, and indicated that a chairman and secretary of the Research Committee have been appointed. He said he felt that in Portsmouth they were well adapted to co-operate. He is a member of both the groups responsible locally for the Primary and Secondary parts of the syllabus, and was anticipating 'some exciting developments over the next five years'.

*Our treasurer*, to whom we are so deeply indebted for much arduous work behind the scenes on behalf of the BMF has dropped a hint that the finances of the BMF would be considerably eased if all the members who wrote him on Fellowship business would enclose a stamped addressed envelope for reply. On some days in January his post has brought as many as twenty letters with subs or enquiries needing a reply. An SAE would keep down costs and save the treasurer's time.

*The sidesman in the kirk* looked suspiciously at the old lady who entered carrying an ear-trumpet. After a while he went up to her and whispered sternly: 'Mind! Ane toot, an' ye're oot!'

## THE WIDER CIRCLE

### AUSTRALIA

*Victoria.* The annual Retreat was attended by forty-five of our men. E. S. Aspinall gave three studies in St John's Gospel; Prof J. H. Watson took two sessions on 'The practice of the presence of God'; W. G. Crofts drew on long experience in the ABMS speaking on 'The practice of Missions', whilst Principal M. D. Himbury spoke on 'The theology of Missions'. S. M. J. Holly, happily much better after serious illness, conducted Communion. There was also a session on 'Using the New Baptist Hymn Book'. We quote the details as an interesting basis of comparison with custom elsewhere

in our world-wide constituency. There have been some interesting appointments lately. E. S. Aspinall is serving as chaplain on behalf of the Council of Christian Education in Schools at Essendon Technical School. R. Lloyd George now works for the Victorian Temperance Alliance. L. A. Kent is with the Northern Territory Association at Darwin, and in his spare time is helping to strengthen the Baptist Fellowship in that distant outpost. We are glad to hear from Ern Laxton that his health has improved and thank him for his letter. Cyril Nunn's English friends will be glad to know that his wife is better. We sympathise with Poupard in the death of his aged mother in England and thank him for the cheque he sent for an excellent list of subscriptions, with more yet to be collected. We welcome several new members into the BMF. Changes of pastorate we have noted are : E. C. Burden, Wonthaggi; J. W. Graham, Traralgon; R. A. Haley, Albert Park, Port Melbourne; A. E. Smith, Ormond. Our best wishes to these brethren.

*New South Wales.* The resignation of Principal E. Roberts-Thomson from the NSW Theological College has been heard of with distress by his many friends in Britain. At this distance it is difficult to comment in truth and love on what looks like a big-hearted self-sacrificing gesture. We hope and pray that his fine gifts may yet be used in a significant place in the denomination, and that the College may not suffer from what has happened. The passing of L. M. Thompson is much lamented. Pastor of a church in the inner ring of Sydney, he exercised a great personal ministry. He leaves a wife and two children to whom we extend our deep sympathy. We have learned of the following changes of pastorate: B. G. Moore from London in Perth, has settled at Punchbowl; R. C. Briggs at Croydon; K. F. Evans at Clunton Park. The veteran Sydney McDonald has gone to Stapleford, Notts, England. He was entertained to lunch by the BMF when over in England two years ago. He will be given a cordial welcome when he arrives here again. We recall that he was for many years in charge of the Sydney City Mission, and that on retirement he received the MBE. We also learn that D. S. Moore and B. Beaver are with the ABMS in New Guinea. K. R. Manley, now taking a post-graduate degree at Bristol, intends to proceed to Oxford for a further two years. We wish them all well.

*South Australia.* G. McAdam and A. F. Roberts are welcome additions to the ministry of this State at North Adelaide and Hillcrest respectively. D. J. Merriman was welcomed at the BU Assembly in London during a brief visit home. We are grateful to H. Law-Davis for his latest letter and remittance.

*Elsewhere.* C. G. Buesnel has moved to East Cannington and M. H. Dennis to Mt. Hawthorn, both in W. Australia. Keith Smith to Longford, Perth, Tasmania. A sudden mass movement of Gass Christians out of E. Pakistan into Assam has much affected the field of the ABMS. Officials have visited the affected areas and relief organisations have sought to counter the hardship of the refugees.

## NEW ZEALAND

We have little news from here, but we have learned of the following moves: A. D. Dallaston to Roslyn; T. R. Gibbs to Papakura; D. C. Hopkins to Wainoni and New Brighton; J. S. Thompson to Blenheim. W. R. Morgan has left Mosgiel but will be settling elsewhere soon. R. F. Reid has left Carterton. Student settlements are: B. Jenkins, Hawera; R. Lockwood, Morrinsville; B. Stewart, Rotorua. Details of others are awaited.

## SOUTH AFRICA

The monthly magazine is publishing a series of informative articles as background for a discussion at the 1964 Assembly about a possible unified budget for BU - SABMS, Home Missions and the Theological College. Those who saw the pictures and heard the tape commentary sent by R. H. Philpott (Bulawayo) to the Commonwealth Society Annual Meeting in London are better able to sympathise with our Rhodesian brethren in the uncertainties before them. We shall pray for you. Sidney Hall was specially pleased to discover that Cyril Yesson, who recently joined the BMF from Salisbury, was well-known to Baptists in Derby, England, thirty years ago.

## CANADA

News from across the Atlantic is scarce. We should welcome more. But Dr Dixon Burns continues his invaluable work of collecting from members, old and new, in the Ontario and Quebec Convention. We should like to commend David Kyles of the Sterling Tract Depot in Scotland as he goes to Winnipeg.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Spiritual Counsels and Letters.* Baron von Hügel. Darton, Longman and Todd, Ltd. 22s 6d.

This book contains an account of Baron von Hügel as a spiritual director with a selection of letters written in that capacity and some extracts from his books of spiritual counsel. For those who have read his books there is not much that is new; but for those who, realising the immense impact he made on many of the religious thinkers and leaders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, desire to know something more of the man and his teaching, it is just the book. There is massiveness and depth and penetration in his writing, beyond that of any of his contemporaries. His passion for precision and the right shade of meaning makes his style involved and sometimes difficult to follow. But when one grasps what he is driving at, it is usually worth the pains taken. He acted as spiritual counsellor to Evelyn Underhill and was consulted on matters concerning the spiritual life by people as varied as Bishop Edward Talbot, Dr Martineau, and Dean Inge. The book is well printed, but a 'Now' seems to have become 'How' on page 92.

F. C. BRYAN.



*Towards a Theological Understanding of History.* Eric C. Rust. Oxford University Press. 42s.

How is God working His purpose out in the story of mankind? It is a question to which the Christian preacher must be able to give some kind of answer. He knows too well that many there be who say that history is without rhyme or reason. Yet he must affirm that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is Lord of History. Provided he is ready to do some solid study he will be grateful for the guidance Professor Rust offers in this volume. A glance at the bibliography will show what a labyrinth of material he is to be conducted through. Nearly twenty years ago, when Professor Rust was at Huddersfield and Rawdon College, he gave us *The Christian Understanding of History*. Now at Louisville he takes the discussion further.

Obviously if the Christian is to make any attempt to fathom the ways of God in the history of the human race he must work from that narrow thread of history in which he believes God and His ways have been revealed as nowhere else. Salvation History is the clue to all history. This is the theme of Part Two of the present work, nearly two-thirds of the book being given to it. Such sections as those of the Triumph of the Cross and the Sacrifice of Calvary are theological writing of the highest order, revealing a sure touch when it comes to relating Wrath to Love. Even though it falls outside history we could have wished that the Final Consummation had been treated at greater length.

As they work through Part One many ministers will be grateful to Dr Rust. Here he examines various interpretations of history. Some like Marx's and Toynbee's they may feel they know something about, but other like Comte's, Spengler's and certainly Vico's are likely to be less familiar. In each case the exposition is extremely useful and the critical estimate from the Christian standpoint very valuable. The contrast of the earlier with the latter Toynbee is illuminating. The preacher must surely feel that Challenge and Response are most useful categories when trying to confront civilisation with the Word.

K. C. DYKES.

*Introducing Old Testament Theology.* J. N. Schofield. SCM. 9s 6d.

J. N. Schofield has attempted a difficult but necessary task in introducing to his readers a most important aspect of Old Testament study. A brief note at the end of this book directs attention to a number of recent theologies of the Old Testament which have appeared in English. The book is not intended to be a substitute for these nor a summary statement of their contents. It is too distinctive a contribution for that. Its success will be assured if it stimulates to further reading and study. Whatever criticism may be offered must be within this context. Perhaps what we are saying is, 'We are grateful for this, but we wish there could have been more'.

The aim of the book is 'to take the Old Testament in its present

## WEST HAM CENTRAL MISSION

409 BARKING ROAD, PLAISTOW  
LONDON, E.13

My dear Brother Minister,

One of my continuing headaches is the need to enlist the practical support of the men and women in our Churches for the work of the Mission. I wrote a letter to all the men in our Ministry last year asking for a list of half-a-dozen people from each Minister giving the names of suitable people whom I might approach with our Annual Appeal.

I am most grateful to the men who were kind enough to send me such a list and I am glad to report that as a result I have been able to add several hundred subscribers to the Mission list. I received replies from about 15% of our Ministry and I am told that I have done well!

I realise that there are some who for conscientious reasons do not feel able to send such a list, but I believe that there are probably a large number of Ministers who meant to send a list, but it has been put aside and forgotten in the rush of the work of the Ministry.

Can I please plead with you again to let me have such a list? The burden of raising £10,000 every year to finance the work of the Mission is a very heavy one, and if you can help me, I should be very grateful indeed.

Please remember that if you have any young people coming to London and needing hostel accommodation that our two hostels at **Marnham House Settlement** and **Baptist International House** are here to serve the young people of our denomination. We are glad to report that we are crammed to capacity at the moment, but of course there are always vacancies in the Autumn of each year.

Also, please let me remind you of the fact that we issue a **Coloured Filmstrip** and that this makes a very good afternoon or evening for Women's Meetings, Men's Meetings, Youth Clubs and similar organisations.

With warmest good wishes for God's blessing on all your own work.

Yours very sincerely,

STANLEY TURL

*Superintendent Minister*

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form and discover what is the theology of the book as we have it now'. This sentence could be misleading. The author does in fact distinguish between the various parts of the book of Isaiah, places Ecclesiastes in the Greek period and parts of Leviticus at the end of the Old Testament period. Further, the suggestion that 'the metaphors, covenant and choice, came into the religious vocabulary of Israel in the sixth century' may seem unnecessarily sceptical of what appears to be much earlier tradition.

Sometimes we are given a discussion of certain important words, eg, time, righteousness, believe, loving kindness; and there is a very good paraphrase of Psalm li, 1-3 on page 114. The examination of the Hebrew concept of righteousness (and this would apply also to New Testament usage) would do much to correct the modern (and earlier) English associations of that word. Some statements we would question. Was the Wisdom literature 'aimed at the irreligious man outside the pew'? (page 23). Is Isaiah ii, 2-4 'a peasant's longing for peace'? (page 81). On page 99 we are told that 'the idea of the fatherhood of God seems to arise firstly from the concept of the creator who formed man' but this seems to disregard Exodus iv, 22f where it is firmly linked with His redemptive activity, as in the New Testament. In the treatment of the resurrection hope it is surprising that exclusive use is made of the admittedly ambiguous Psalm passages, and none of Isaiah xxvi, 19 and above all of Daniel xii, 2.

If criticism is offered, it is because the material is of an importance to invite it. There is material here to stimulate the preacher, and the book would be especially useful in discussion groups and Bible Study classes. It takes the Old Testament seriously as 'the record of the living experience of a living people in contact with a living God'. Within its pages we meet God as 'active, self-revealing and personal'.

A. S. HERBERT.

*Luther: His Life and Work.* Gerhard Ritter. Collins. 21s.

This is a translation, by John Riches, of a work first published in Germany in 1924. Professor Gordon Rupp says: 'For its skill and compression I think it is easily the best work of its size on Luther, and in its sensitiveness and expository power worth most of the bigger studies also.' This very 'compression' makes it advisable for new students of Luther to come to this book via such a book as Roland Bainton's *Here I stand*; for much is assumed in these pages, both in the story of Luther and in the historical background. But 'come to it' he must, who desires a better understanding of Luther the man, and, more important, of the influence of Luther in the last four centuries and of his significance for the present day.

One of the marks of greatness appears to be that disciples of opposed ideologies think themselves able to find roots in the same man! Luther is no exception: Luther the German hero (Bismarck was a Lutheran Christian), Luther the Founder of Evangelical Churches. Some have even seen his achievement as 'an (unconscious) victory over the Christian concept of God'. Our author himself

**PICK OF THE MAGAZINES**

Dear Brother-Minister,

Church magazines and newsletters are a most valuable record of church life, and we are pleased to receive a number of these at the Church House each month. Tucked away in these printed or duplicated pages is some good writing, and the story very often of some notable endeavour or achievement.

If we were asked to choose the top ten from the magazines we receive we should have some difficulty, partly because they adhere to no particular format. One that always attracts by its brightly coloured cover is the magazine of Fallowfield, Manchester. And the six-page folder of the Guildford Church is a model of its kind.

Looking through the magazines and newsletters which come to us, we wonder if everyone has given attention to style and format. Colour is virtually non-existent amongst our church magazines, and yet it is possible cheaply even in a duplicated magazine. It is worth asking an up-to-date firm handling printing or photo-litho work for its advice.

The Congregational Union tell us that they receive some 200 church magazines each month at the Memorial Hall. We do not receive anything like this number – *we shall be glad to see your magazine, particularly when it tells of some new venture in your church work.* It may give us a welcome item of news.

With good wishes,

R. W. THOMSON

PS Some ministers on coming into the Reception Office at the Church House are surprised to see on display post cards which can be used for commending a church member to another church. We shall be glad to supply copies free of charge.

The Baptist Church House,  
4 Southampton Row,  
London, WC1

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confesses that the earliest editions of this book 'emphasised Luther's importance as a national hero, as the central figure of German culture, with a vigour which I to-day feel to have been exaggerated'. Lutheran frankness! The same faith landed Ritter in gaol for his part in the conspiracy against Germany's Führer.

This is a parable of the fissiparous fruit of the explosion of the little monk. And those who wish to find their way among the fragments could not do better than consult the last chapter of this masterly book. But there is no hero-worship. 'It would be very un-Lutheran if we were to fête him as . . . a protestant saint'. There's hardly a page that does not show the 'defects of his virtues'. For that reason Luther's secret stands out all the more clearly - 'his life with God and the direct relationship of all his thinking and willing' with God. Luther 'believed', 'lived by' - God.

W. E. MOORE.

*Baptism and Conversion.* John Baillie. OUP. 15s.

Dr John Baillie has left us here a good and very concise treatment of the vexed question, 'Does the Christian life begin with baptism or conversion?' In the first chapter he gives a most informative outline of the teaching of the major branches of the Church. The Roman Catholics see baptism as cleansing from all previous sin, and penance as necessary thereafter. The Lutherans stress the once-for-all nature of baptism. Calvin and the Reformed churches emphasised election, and therefore neither faith nor baptism are of ultimate significance. Baptists emphasise faith as essential for baptism. Dr Baillie tries to solve the problem from within the Reformed tradition without the idea of election. He quotes Jesus' blessing of the children. He says an infant at baptism is the kind of Christian God wants him to be at that stage; he is a Christian because he is born in the household of faith. Baptism of children of non-Christians is a gross abuse. Those baptised as believers often fall away, therefore the baptism of infants is not invalidated by its frequent repudiation. Nothing new here, nor at all profound. Most Baptist minds boggle at the profusion of *non-sequiturs* in all this. If it is a choice of 'baptism or conversion' then the Protestant must logically opt for conversion completed by baptism, and Dr Baillie's lectures do not prove the contrary.

*The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.* G. R. Beasley-Murray. Oliphants. 3s 6d.

Dr Beasley-Murray gave these four talks on the Resurrection of Christ on the radio during Lent 1963. We are now fortunate to be able to read them, giving the carefully phrased sentences and the overall arguments the attention they deserve. He deals first of all with the fact of the Resurrection. Then he writes in a moving way of the new life in Christ, that comes through conversion to faith in the risen Christ. The Resurrection and the new community of the Church, and the Resurrection and the future are the last two addresses. Knowing the wealth of scholarship lying behind them, these talks will suggest many fruitful lines of thought. ROBERT BROWN.

*Moody without Sankey.* J. C. Pollock. Hodder and Stoughton. 21s.

This biography grips you from beginning to end. It is fresh, well written, inspiring, full of adventurous Christianity.

Here is 'Crazy Moody' – the farmer's boy full of fun and practical jokes; the lad of seventeen leaving home to seek his fortune in Boston and meeting the living Christ while working in a shoe shop; the hell-fire preacher being instructed by the Lancashire lad, Harry Moorhouse, who preached 'that God *loves* sinners' and who taught Moody to study the Bible as an *entity*; the evangelist called and equipped by Christ and His Word, baptised with fire, ready to obey the King.

Here is the 'Billy Graham' of his time evangelising Britain (1872–84). Should an American evangelist be invited to British churches? What place has the evangelist in the life of the local church? How relevant is this! It will help us to come to right decisions if we study Moody's great missions in York, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, Manchester, London and Cambridge. What mighty results! The Cambridge Seven and many other missionary recruits, vast numbers of converts, the transformation of the social life of the people.

Here is the 'grandfather of the Ecumenical Movement'. Returning to America this missionary strategist did his greatest work in planning the evangelisation of the world. He made no world tours but he trained and sent out into the world tens of thousands of evangelists. In Chicago Moody established the Church and Bible Training Institute. At Northfield he built his famous schools and the inter-church conferences out of which grew the Student Christian Movement, and, Mr Pollock claims, the ecumenical movement. The achievements of this apostolic evangelist were phenomenal. The secret? A man small enough for God to use in a big way. GEORGE A. YOUNG.

*Vox Evangelica III.* Edited Ralph Martin. Epworth Press. 6s.

The latest issue of *Vox Evangelica* contains a penetrating survey of Paul's use of the Old Testament in Romans i–viii, (the Annual Public Lecture of the London Bible College for 1964) by Leslie Allen. Those who wish to follow up some of the fascinating suggestions made by Dodd, Tasker and Earle Ellis, will find much to stimulate their interest in Mr Allen's Lecture and preachers will be grateful for some illuminating ideas here also. Arthur Cundall contributes an article on 'Antecedents of the Monarchy in Ancient Israel' in which he discusses the factors which led to Israelite kingship and the reasons for their initial conservatism. H. D. McDonald writes on the changing emphasis in the Doctrine of Providence and discusses the importance of the theme in the light of the *Honest to God* furor. Students of Modern English Church History will be grateful to H. H. Rowdon for his informative article on a neglected subject – that of the early nineteenth century seceders. The editor contributes a brief article on the well-known words in Pliny that Christians 'sang alternately a hymn to Christ as to a god'. This collection of essays maintains the high standard of its predecessors.

RAYMOND BROWN.