

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](https://paypal.me/robbradshaw)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Fraternal / Baptist Ministers Journal* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bmj-06.php

**THE BAPTIST TIMES
IS YOUR PAPER**

It gives news of your denomination at home and abroad.

It gives news of your church.

It publishes articles of concern to you, your deacons and your church members.

Its profits help the Home Work Fund.

Please encourage *your* people to read it.

For full particulars of church agencies write to:

**THE PUBLICATIONS MANAGER
6 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON WC1**

**BAPTIST
MEN'S
MOVEMENT**

SEEKING—

To lead men to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and to see their whole life as obedience to him.

To encourage and train men to take an active part by service, prayer and giving to the work of the Church and community at home and overseas.

To cultivate fellowship among all christian men, and to promote understanding and reconciliation among men of all nations.

**93 Gloucester Place,
London W1H 4AA**

The Fraternal

April, 1971

No. 160

EDITORIAL	4
THE PRESENT TASK OF THEOLOGY: II	5
Dr. Helmut Thielicke, Professor of Systematic Theology, University of Hamburg.	
LEADERSHIP FOR THE CHURCH'S EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY	14
Rev. R. R. Rodney Collins, Minister Elect, West Croydon Tabernacle, London.	
STUDENT UNREST	28
Rev. W. J. A. Turner, B.A. Minister, Leavesden Road, Watford.	
CHANGES OVER FORTY YEARS	32
Rev. W. E. Booth Taylor, Retired Minister, Downham Market, Norfolk.	
WHY BOTHER ABOUT CITIZENSHIP?	40
Rev. Donald D. Black, M.A., B.D. Christian Citizenship Department, Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.	
OF INTEREST TO YOU	44
B.M.F. ACCOUNTS	48

EDITORIAL

The recently announced appointments of two college principals and the head of a new Department of Ministry should stir our interest. We are concerned for brother-ministers taking up such responsible posts and we are unsure whether our reaction should be pride in them or sympathy for them. After all the future of any theological college is uncertain enough and even in better days to be an ecclesiastical bureaucrat could be a nasty fate!! Above all we have hopes for and in the men involved and through them for the colleges and the union.

College loyalties and rivalry between colleges are luxuries we can no longer afford. We are faced with the demanding and exciting task of re-casting theological education so that the church is trained for mission. The outcome of the debate on "Ministry Tomorrow" is unknown but that report raises issues that will be with us for a generation. There are grounds for suspicion that we are not selecting, training and deploying our ministers in the best way either for them or for effective ministry. Furthermore there are many who would say that a scholar-ministry as an elite in the church has hindered the training and use of the whole people of God.

Whatever is to happen the colleges are crucial for its failure or success. The South Wales and Northern colleges had new Principals last year; Bristol and Regent's are to have them next. It is a marvellous opportunity to think anew and most important *to think together*. It is not for this journal to detail what should or might happen but as one voice of ministers in this country we do plead that the colleges will see in the new Department of Ministry an agency for common thought and action. We look for a joint strategy that will give to each college a distinctive role in training the church and the knowledge that it is sharing with and not competing with the others.

Of course it depends what kind of Department it is to be! We see it as a resource body both from the colleges and for the whole ministry. Our fear is that it will become obsessed with administrative matters and not be free to sustain this more important task. But to all the people involved we send greetings and prayers.

J.F.M.

THE PRESENT TASK OF THEOLOGY: II

The first vision of the Death-of-God in modern times is to be found in Jean Paul's *Siebenkäs*: "The Sermon of the Dead Christ from the World-Building, Saying that there is no God." Here, however, it is a kind of preliminary exercise of the idea, a kind of "heuristic" experiment, which is directed by the question: what would happen and what would it mean if the Death-of-God had to be declared? The "heuristic" meaning of this approach corresponds exactly to the one St. Paul displays when he raises the subject: what would happen and what would it mean if Christ were *not* resurrected? (I Cor. 15:14ff.) Then we would be found as false witnesses of God, our faith would be in vain. We would be the most miserable of all men. A chain-reaction of apocalyptically horrible consequences would be released.

Jean Paul makes an analogous reflective experiment: He has the vision of the godless desert, which the world must become if God as the sun no longer shines above it and no longer produces life and warmth. It then relapses into chaos. Atheism and the Death-of-God are then studied in the light of this cosmological significance. The temporal is, so-to-speak, the criterion for the importance, the significance, and finally, also, for the reality of the eternal.

The discussion about atheism—and this is the interesting point—thus does not move in a truly "religious" sphere; neither the Trinity nor the reconciliation of the sinner with God, neither judgment nor mercy, are the themes treated. Instead must we say that only the temporal—the climate of life, the intensity of fellow-feeling, the stability and the duration of the orders of life—are "interesting" in the true sense and raise the question of God from obscurity to relevance.

Here also the refutation of atheism stems from the same roots as the approach which has included atheism itself on the agenda: *it is the question of the specific weight of the problem of God for a consolidated secular consciousness*. This secular consciousness, which made the transcendent reality of God appear questionable, is the very area where this element of questionability has to be refuted. Not the religious sphere itself, but the realities of this earth will provide the field of battle on which the question of God will be decided. Only the finite can be the criterion for the infinite.

For this reason, if for no other, we should take care not to understand Jean Paul's dream as the reactionary conjuring of the vanishing one, nor to regard the "angelus" heard by the one who wakes from the horrible dream of godlessness as the cheap idyllisation of a very unidyllic problem. In the thought of God—even in a dream—being subordinated to temporal control, Jean Paul stands on the threshold of modern times.

The "religious" components appear only in three places in the vision—and, even there, not of their own accord. We find the religious components first in the visionary *frame*. Christ himself appears to proclaim the Death-of-God in the dream of the person who dozed off in the cemetery: "Now a high and

noble form in infinite pain alighted from on high upon the altar, and all the deceased cried: 'Christ! Is there no God?' He answered, 'There is none' ". Since He, as God's Son, can no longer stem from a non-existent eternity, He is now only "the highest mortal". The idea that He was the representative of the abdicated, absent God (as the dialectics of contemporary Death-of-God theologians attempt to make plausible today) does not appear here.

The *absence* of God, (the fact that He is not discoverable in the width of the Cosmos which Christ spanned in futile search) is . . . taken to mean his *non—existence*. Jean Paul is closer to Nietzsche than the theological God-is-dead dialectic.

A further "religious" factor appears in the children's vision who—"terrible as it is for the heart—. . . had awakened in the cemetery." They entered the temple "and fell down in front of the 'high and noble form' by the altar and said 'Jesus! Have we no Father?' And He answered with streaming tears, 'We are all orphans, I and you; we are without a father' ". There is no paternal world-basis any more. Life is without warmth and protection; it has been cast out into the void.

A third "religious" factor, finally, lies in the absurd gesture of *prayer*, which is no longer valid; the praying hands drop away: a corpse just buried woke up, "raised its hands and folded them to pray: but the arms lengthened and separated, and the hands fell away folded." As the godless world collapses upon itself, so the connection of the praying hands with the body is torn apart. There is nothing "whole" any more which is organically held together. As in Picasso's pictures, the organs separate and fall away from their allotted order: a displaced eye appears anywhere as well as a stray knee. And as the judgment commences with the house of God (I Peter 4:17) so the great perversion, the disorganised condition of every order, is first noticeable in the annihilation of the Holy: the gesture of prayer collapses. Here there is no thought that prayer can be salvaged by a re-interpretation, as for instance by its becoming a "reflection on the world" (van Buren). This strained attempt to find a "salvation through secularisation" could possibly be symbolized (if it should be furnished with a symbolic designation) by Jean Paul's separating hands.

The main emphasis of this vision, however, is not based in this "religious" dimension, which only provides the spring-board for that which is thematically decisive: the disorder of the de-sacralized world, which is robbed of its foundation and centre through the Death-of-God, so that it is chaotically scattered and takes on that sinister, weird aspect which Dostoevski has his Ivan Karamazov acknowledge: "If God is dead, then everything is possible." Reality collapses into the unpredictable, the un-manageable, and becomes the basis for our fear. Where everything becomes "possible", everything also must be "feared". There is no doubt that this observation, (that the universe is without a soul, that it is empty and that it is basically nothing, and that it cannot remain limited to the Platonic realm of mere metaphysical observation)—this observation determines our being, our being in elementary form.

As a result, this void of the universe is seen in its apocalyptic terror. Christ professes: "I walked through the worlds, I ascended to the suns and flew with the galaxies through the deserts of the heavens but there is no God. I descended to there where the Being casts its shadow, and looked into the abyss and cried, 'Father, where are you?' But I heard only the eternal storm which no one controls." The emptied world is the puppet of Tyche and Moira, the limitless, frightening "possibility". "Rigid, mute void! Cold eternal necessity. Mad impulse! Do you know this among yourselves? When will you destroy the dwelling and me?" calls the "highest finite". Yes: when will you destroy the dwelling—the dwelling of your existence, the world surrounding you, and thus the temporal as well?

This is the crucial question for which we are waiting. There is no thought that the Death-of-God declaration is all, that only an over-world was toppled here, while in the temporal situation everything went on as previously—only less constrained perhaps because the induced misdirection of the religious has disappeared, and the temporal can "live-it-up" appropriately and work out its own essence. No: the world building just does not arise in its emancipated glory as a technopolis under its own mature direction (as in Harvey Cox). On the contrary, the proclamation of the Death-of-God is accompanied by assaults on the world building: "When do you destroy it?" Where does this assault come from, though, this undermining of Being which occasions the Death-of-God?

It is demonstrated in the anthropological and cosmological consequences: namely, contact with the world and my fellow man breaks down because the system of reference is eliminated. Once the God of Descartes is non-existent (and this illustration suggests itself) then no road any longer leads from me to the outer world, and that which identifies itself as "outer world" becomes an illusionary mask and an unreal deceit. A paralysing docetic unreality covers everything and the loneliness of an endless ice-region, comparable to what David Caspar Friedrich expresses in his pictures, pushes the one who denies the existence of God into a fearful isolation: ". . . the entire spiritual universe explodes through the hand of atheism and is dispersed in innumerable quicksilver drops of self, which sparkle, flow, waver, gather and disperse without unity or permanence. No one in all the universe is so very much alone as the one who denies God—for he sorrows with an orphaned heart which has lost the greater Father, by the side of the vast corpse of nature, which no World Spirit animates or holds together, and would grow in its grave; and he sorrows so long until he himself crumbles because of the corpse . . . how lonesome everyone is in the great funeral-vault of the universe! Only I am with me—O Father! O Father! Where is Thy infinite breast, that I might rest upon it?"

Here the *solipsism* is anticipated which is expounded in the most grotesque terms by a younger contemporary of Jean Paul, Max Stirner (Kaspar Schmidt) in his strange book, "The One and His Property". Here the ice desert changes from a dream picture to a speculative postulate to an "exact" diagnosis of waking consciousness.

A further chain reaction in the conduct of man in relation to his world and to himself is precipitated through the Death-of-God: the "eternal midnight" in which time stands still because there is no Lord of Time, and I am robbed of my Creator. In place of dependence, which implies the concept of the Creator, there is no *maturity* or *possibility* of maturity (as in contemporary dogmas of secularisation), but only the usurper who has to ascend the throne of the overthrown God. In a visionary way the consequence is drawn from the message which the history of the tower of Babylon announces: The head of him whose upper limits have been removed shoots up titanicly into the spaces out of which God has been dispersed. The evacuated heaven is filled—or is to be filled—by him who has emptied it or regarded it to be empty. Not only physics but also the realm of the Holy knows the law of *horror vacui*. Wherever the Creator is banned, man exalts himself as self-creator. Upon whom else should the dignity due the Creator descend if not upon the "One" who is "alone with himself" only, and whose own voice addresses him as the mocking echo of his cry to a no longer existing "You". "Oh, if every 'I' is its own father and Creator, why can it not be its own destroying angel as well?"

In fact: the self-creator over whom no God any longer rules is not released to "freedom" but to the curse of unlimited self-disposition. What then is still thinkable, which is capable of setting limits for a self-creator, and which could call to him: Up to here and no further, "here shall your proud waves be subdued?" (Job 38:11). Where can there still be an irresistible force in the face of which he would have to stand still? Would it not have to be equipped with credentials, with a cosmic message, for which there is now no authorised sender?

Death qualifies as that primeval, irresistible force, which can mock me and my self-power. Death appears as the absolutely indisposable. Can it remain that for the self-creator? Does he not have to become his own "destroying angel?" Obviously, he who creates himself should also be able to dispose of himself as well.

Jean Paul initiated a direction of thinking which was fully expounded by Friedrich Nietzsche: The "Madman", the self-creator, has to control death as well. In being a murderer of God he has to be a murderer of self as well. The creator of self has to "dispose of" himself as well. Death as the grasp of finiteness for me is only a "stupid physiological fact; which has to be reversed into a moral necessity". This happens if one does not permit one's own death, and thus defeat by it, but "accomplishes" death oneself. In Zarathustra, suicide is actually called "accomplishing death" which is placed in opposition to merely naturally-sustained death. In natural death man is defeated, while in suicide he is victorious. Consequently, one has to "stop eating at the height of enjoyment", when thus the heights and limits of the desirable and worthwhile life have been attained; "a holy negator, if there is no more time for affirmation: thus one understands oneself in death and life." To suffer death as an inevitability instead of controlling it by strength of personal effort, would mean sub-

mission to misery and subhumanity. For "there is no greater banality known to man than death". To suffer it passively, instead of "abolishing" it upon one's own responsibility, means a submission which is contrary to the dignity of the self-creator after the Death-of-God. For in natural death the body is the "frail, often sick and stupid prison guard, the 'lord' who determines the point where his dignified prisoner is to die. Natural death is nature's suicide which means the destruction of the rational essence by the irrational".

Jean Paul does *not* take this new step which Nietzsche now dares: the step, namely, which makes a *virtue* out of *necessity*, (the death of God becomes a productive absurdity) and which appears to intensify life instead of destroying it or driving it to suicide. In Jean Paul there is only the sensing of the *fate* of self-elimination, the forced function, namely, of having to be "one's own destroying angel". In Nietzsche, that which is announced here in terror, becomes the victory of the rational over the irrational. In Camus, finally, life has at last come to terms with itself and, in the midst of the absurd, arrives at its highest intensity.

Who is right? He who stands at the door of initial awareness and—while still in possession of faith!—is confronted by the vision of what it could mean if Being were to lose its centre—or, he who, resigned, has contrived consoling formulas, particularly the catch-all caption "maturity" and the "liberated secular"?

The dream ends with a nightmare of extreme fear and runs through the entire range of fears: while the fear initially appears as a kind of cosmic agoraphobia, (that is, the Phobes of empty space and the fatherless infinity) it appears finally as *angustiae*, (claustrophobia)—as an "existence in a bottleneck," the most extreme constriction. This transpires in that the mythical image of the Midgard snake is taken up: I saw "the lifted up coils of the giant snake of eternity which had coiled itself around the universe—and the rings fell down and encircled the universe twofold—then Nature a thousandfold—and they squeezed the worlds together—and crushed the infinite temple into a cemetery chapel—and everything became close, dark, and fearful—and an immeasurably extended bell-clapper was to strike the last hour of Time and shatter the world-building—when I awoke."

Anxiety, one can say, is a "temporal" emotion. But its object cannot be temporally localized. For anxiety does not refer to one object among others which is to be "feared". This differentiates anxiety (Angst) from fear (Furcht). The latter fears a particular "something". Since the feared object is clearly profiled, I am not delivered or subjected to it defencelessly, but I can react to it and take counter-measures against it. To this extent fear puts me into a condition which does not deliver me to an absolute state of abandonment, but rather corresponds to that blend which Schleiermacher describes as "divided feeling of dependence" and "divided feeling of freedom". But anxiety, on the other hand, is non-objective and is part of my being-in-the-world per sé. Just as surely as I am abandoned to this being-in-the-world, and my "self-disposition" thus can have no

bearing on the condition itself (but only to my conduct *within* it), so surely is anxiety related to the feeling of "absolute dependence". But it is a distinct variation of this feeling: in the awareness that this form of dependence cannot refer to an objective counterpart of the innerworld, (for I am never delivered defenceless to this objective counterpart, but can mobilize my own resources against it) Schleiermacher calls the point of reference for "absolute" dependence "God". However, since God comes to him, (in the Christian view) namely, in the form of Christ, this consciousness of "absolute dependence" is not a kind of metaphysical terror, but the description of a pious refuge. Since the point of reference for absolute dependence is at the same time the object of my trust, this abandonment is no longer marked by the Phobos of fatalism, but by "peace".

It is just this refuge, however, that is unattainable for the *atheistic* dreamer. He can no longer attribute absolute dependence to the "infinite Bosom" of the father on which he might rest; rather, it now describes only abandonment to "stolid, mute nothing", to "cold, eternal necessity" and "blind chance". And so, instead of that which protectively surrounds me (Ps. 139:5) there is the entanglement of the Midgard snake. Whether I am afraid or gay, whether I approach death or celebrate a wedding, whether the winter numbs me or spring elevates me into euphoria—all these variable conditions of being-in-the-world are in equal measure surrounded by a stifling, uncanny gloom. On the horizon of even the most beautiful world-celebrations lurk phantoms.

On the horizon! With that, we are saying that this is a matter of a *transcendent* fear. The temporal which has separated itself from God is not at all "resting in itself", closed towards the outside and also independent. For it includes the question of meaning which cannot be answered by stating worldly purposes, but which demands to know the origin and aim of the whole, of the system itself—a system which includes all purposes, and within which each purpose has only its particular rank. Whoever saw this question (in the waking consciousness just behind him) as answered with "the 'Father' of the Universe", can now pose it only with the horrified uneasiness of the forsaken. For, although the former answer has been silenced with the Death-of-God, the question itself has *not* become silent. It has a *character indelebilis*. Thus, horror clings to it; and it has not yet led to the point where man has accepted it, extracted its positive traits, and transformed its anguish into the virtue of productive re-interpretation.

And again one would like to ask: Who is right here and should know truth to be on his side: The one who can perceive within the first horror, or he who has psychically integrated and sublimated the horror?

What is here dreamed about horror is this: The Death-of-God thrusts man into that place of no refuge, which can manifest itself either as a boundless space or as a restricting confinement. Solipsistic loneliness and boundless self-disposition spread, terror rules. One thinks of Pascal's analysis of the god-denier, which leads to similar "existential consequences", and which expresses the emptiness not only in

anxiety but especially in boredom, in *taedium vitae*. The reason why this condition is thought to be without remedy is that the question about what transcends me and my world, or causes us to end in senselessness and nothing, cannot be escaped. For this reason, the melancholy of the one who is tempted by nothingness has been classically characterized by the monk's illness of *acedia*. For it is based on the fact, (as Kierkegaard demonstrated in his critical and historical study of melancholy) that the eternal is no longer wanted unequivocally but that it announces itself in the presence and remains the object of my questions, wanted or not. The "Purity of the Heart" to "will one thing" is gone. In its place, there appears a "multiplicity of desires", a hysteria of the Spirit, which Kierkegaard can make clear in the person of Nero.

Nero's split between "might and lust, horribleness and sadness" already caused the Baroque century to regard him as the "paradigm of melancholy", while for Pascal he was the representative of loneliness and boredom, and thus misery in the midst of royal splendour. This split is caused in that he does not permit the question of that which is essential, which occupies his spirit, to be brought to the fore, and yet does not permit it to be completely silenced. "The Spirit cannot break through in him and yet agitates for this break-through, for it desires a higher form of Being. Should it break through (to this higher form of Being), however, then a moment has to come when the splendour of the throne and the royal might pales and appears inconsequential. To face this, Nero lacked the necessary courage." And so he satiated his sensual desires, exhausted all worldly possibilities, knew every craftiness known to man, and yet found no peace through it although he was filled with it. Why was he granted no peace? Because the burning questions of reason, purpose and meaning would not be still—and yet he failed to answer them. Thus melancholy, (as the quotation from Guardini about Hölderlin stated) is the unrest of man because of the proximity of an eternity which is no longer willed and attained—but which *should* be willed and attained. It is the result of indifference towards a question which should precipitate engagement. It is the "sin of the intellect."

Certain "modern" theologians, like van Buren, seem to regard this complex of experience as non-existent if they regard secular man as having lost the sense for the transcendent "after the Death-of-God"—obviously, only because the transcendent does not emerge as object of a reflective question. It seems there is never any reflection upon the possible explanation for this lost sense, and the possibility that there may be other symptoms (such as melancholy or boredom) which express the influence of the transcendent. Moreover, this symptomatic phenomenon (appearing frequently in the history of ideas) should certainly give rise to the consideration of whether the elimination of the transcendence-question from the reflective consciousness is not possibly due to a "Neronic" repression—what St. Paul termed "suppression in wickedness" (Rom. 1:18). And could it not also be that we simply should not believe the so-called modern consciousness when it asserts that all

references to transcendence are irrelevant—just as little as we can believe a creative urge and activity, if it presents itself as a triumphant life victory when in truth it could be an act of escape and repression?

It is peculiar to what extent we are inclined to use the concept of "repression", as well as other psycho-analytical categories, for the interpretation of conditions of consciousness and manners of conduct, while no one seems to have had the idea of investigating the notions of self-contained finitude and the irrelevance of reference to the transcendent in the light of the processes of repression which these notions imply. This may be so because melancholy, boredom and other symptoms of completely "temporal" life are no longer interpreted existentially—on the basis of the insoluble question of origin and aim—but merely expounded psychologically or psychoanalytically. Psychology and Psychoanalysis, in their usual structures, however, are themselves forms of reflection of an existence which lives from repression. It is in this context that psychoanalysis itself has, in a profound sense, been called a "sickness".

Here also a process, which has been transpiring for a long time, merely matures. It is not *only* a matter of "modern" conditions of consciousness. Even the Renaissance, in its understanding of acedia, slipped into mere psychological deliberations without recognising the split of the soul. How could this be possible, if the repression of transcendence pushes that polarity out of sight which is indispensable, not only for the interpretation but for the mere perception of that schism!

In Petrarch acedia is a mere psychic, irrational listlessness and weariness, and not a sin—as it was understood by the monastic "athletes of sorrow". Also, the coming-to-grips with this condition, its transformation from a state of misery to a virtue, is already perceptible here. This means a certain "enjoyment" of melancholy. It is assessed positively. Melancholy and reverie are regarded as spiritual attitudes which characterize the highly gifted, and are part of the price which creative men "must pay to strive beyond restrictions and standards into the sphere of God." Thus "Philautes" becomes melancholy.

All attempts to "ennoble" melancholy and make it "heroic", however, and all attempts to make it a component of creative brilliance, can hardly fail to take this into consideration: here the task is undertaken to transform theology into anthropology, and to burden (and by no means *only* to liberate) man with the usurpation of a role which was to be played by God—by God who was evacuated from the beyond, and who is now absent. This indicates the enduring presence of the question of transcendence.

Hence once again the question arises, whether one can believe in the pure temporality of the man who proclaims his secularity—a realm in which he pretends to be holding out and which he claims to have won. Is the Phobos of this discovery not more honest in Jean Paul? Does he not show this discovery in its original form and *prior* to all manipulations which then repress, sublimate and re-form it? It is because this first

HMF IS MISSION

The co-operation of every minister is sought in presenting the challenge of the Home Mission Fund.

This is vital if we are to maintain the evangelistic thrust of our Baptist Denomination.

1971 Target £177,000

The Home Mission Fund
4 Southampton Row
London, WC1B 4AB

statement of the Death-of-God merely touches upon "theological" themes and, instead, expresses the terror of the exposed temporality which has become chaotic and manifests the misery of a godless desert. Jean Paul shows that temporality is never *only* temporality; that one can never fail to take one's horizon into consideration, and that this implies the question of transcendence.

But after all: Jean Paul only *dreamed* this state of affairs. Here we have to do with a manoeuvre in a terrain of Being for which the Death-of-God is merely "postulated". It is a matter of an experiment of the "as-if" in heuristic intent. The meaning of God is studied from the opposite extreme of atheism. That which, in Jean Paul, is still dreamed as an "as-if" soon transforms itself from a manoeuvre into the "real thing" and becomes the subject of our waking consciousness.

HELMUT THIELICKE

LEADERSHIP FOR THE CHURCH'S EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

The Sunday School Movement was founded in England by Robert Raikes, a newspaper proprietor, who in 1789 started a school in Gloucester. The kind of school it was, in times when children worked twelve hours a day in factories and mines, is suggested by an entry in the old Minute Book of a Sunday school still in existence today after one hundred and fifty years, which included an account for two dozen inkstands, two dozen canes, one hundred quill pens, spelling book, and "bread, cheese, beer, etc., for singers"!

The lead given by Raikes was strengthened first by the Sunday School Society founded by William Fox in 1785, and later, when Sunday schools had been established throughout the Kingdom and had already taken root in America, by the interdenominational Sunday School Union formed in 1803. After a century of developing but ungraded children's work, George Hamilton Archibald, the Canadian pioneer of teacher training in the Sunday school, succeeded in introducing various reforms and making religious teaching methods more educational in character.

Archibald's concern for our present theme is shown by the simple words he repeated again and again over a period of thirty years: "There is no boy problem; there is no girl problem; there never has been! There is no teacher problem; there never has been! The problem of the church is the problem of *leadership*. Solve that problem and you have solved all."

I. SOME PRINCIPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT LEADERSHIP

Any Baptist consideration of leadership for the church's educational ministry must be firmly based on the New Testament. In the training of the Twelve we see the importance which Jesus placed upon producing leaders. Prof. T. W. Manson suggests that their discipleship was not matriculation in a Rabbinical school, but apprenticeship to the work of the Kingdom. In either case the brief ministry of our Lord involved the work of training as much as of healing and preaching. His apprentices belonged "to what we might call the lower middle class—a tax collector, a revolutionary, four fishermen and the rest we know not what" (A. M. Hunter): not altogether the stuff of which outstanding leaders are made, but for leadership Jesus taught and trained them, not only by what He said to them but by what He did and what He was. "He made the Father real not by argument or much speaking but because it was obvious that the Father was the supreme reality of His own life". In stooping to cleanse the tired feet of his disciples (John 13), Jesus laid down the pattern of the service he expected from the leaders he trained. S. Pearce Carey suggests that the bathing and wiping of each man's feet, with constant changing of the water, could scarcely have taken less than five minutes a man—a full hour for the twelve, an hour's silence that could be felt, an eloquent part of the Master's own unique educational ministry.

"Some of you will be given a position of leadership in Christian work," writes an experienced medical missionary. "When you are, you must learn that it will give you opportunity to serve, not to rule. The symbols of Christian leadership are not crowns and thrones, but a towel and a basin."

Three of our Lord's titles describe His ministry in terms of leadership. The first is a self interpretation: the other two are used by Peter and the writer to Hebrews.

1. *The Good Shepherd* (John 10: 14). Here Jesus uses a picture woven into the thought and language of the Jewish people. In the Old Testament God is pictured as Shepherd to his people (e.g. Ps. 23:1, 77:20, 79:13, 80:1, 95:7; Isaiah 40:11). The Messiah is to come as Shepherd-King (Ezek 34:23 and 37: 24) and the leaders of the nation are to be shepherds in their care for the people (Jer. 23:1-4; Ezek. 34:1-10). Jesus takes over the picture and applies it to himself. The significance of the Eastern shepherd with his rod, staff and sling is that he goes ahead of his sheep (John 10:4) calling, leading, feeding and protecting them. His leadership of the flock depends upon a personal, caring relationship in which each sheep recognises the shepherd's voice and gestures, and is known by name and idiosyncrasies, a relationship which extends over eight or ten years and might terminate in the shepherd's self sacrifice.

So in the New Testament the leaders of Christ's people are likened to shepherds. The Christian leader must shepherd the flock of God not as a matter of constraint, not for pay or prestige, but as an example to the flock (1 Pet. 5:2, 3). Paul

urges the leaders of Ephesus faithfully to carry out their duty to all the flock (Acts 20:28). Jesus had already commissioned Peter to feed His lambs and His sheep (John 21:15-19). The Church has its pastors (Eph. 4:11) and "pastor" of course is Latin for "shepherd."

2. *The Forerunner* (prodromos). This title is given only once to Jesus (Heb. 6:20) in the vivid and dramatic passage regarding the annual entrance of the Jewish high priest into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. The word was really a military one used of an advance guard or reconnaissance corps. It also had a naval use applied to the swiftest triremes sent out ahead of the fleet, or to the pilot boat in the great harbour of Alexandria sent out to guide ships entering the difficult channel. Jesus as leader goes first to make it safe for others to follow, opening the way to God, by his self sacrifice.

3. *The Pioneer* (archegos). This word occurs four times and is translated in various ways. The RSV uses author, leader and (twice) pioneer. Other renderings include prince, guide, source and captain. Occurring frequently in the Septuagint and in secular Greek, the word refers to the pre-eminence of natural princely leadership, or to the source and origin of something great and lasting (such as the founder of a city, a family or a philosophy), or to someone who originates or initiates something to which others can follow. Jesus is the great pioneer who blazes a trail for others to follow—the pioneer of faith (Heb. 12:2), of salvation (Heb. 2:10), of life (Acts 3:15). Although no attempt is made to apply the last two titles of Jesus to His followers, the leadership exercised in His Church must clearly be based on the example of His own ministry and continuing work as forerunner and pioneer. He calls His disciples to follow and in following to lead others. As His witnesses they are to reveal, by their own quality of leadership, something of the nature and power of His.

In every part of the church today lay leadership is emerging. Twelve years ago the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church stated, "There is a growing recognition that too sharp a distinction has been made between clergy and laity." Last year John Stott, in his book *One People*, suggested three pragmatic reasons for the greater participation of laymen in the life and work of the church: the increasing birth rate coupled with a decreasing ordination rate; fear of losing frustrated people; and the spirit of the age. Then he argued convincingly on Biblical grounds the case for regarding clergy and laity as one people, each with their own functions but with equal opportunity for exercising gifts of leadership. Baptists should have no difficulty in accepting such a thesis, but our principles are not always practised in the local church where the pastor, or even a prominent member, has too often been regarded as sole leader, to the exclusion of other naturally or spiritually gifted people. Sometimes the Baptist layman has been scarcely

distinguishable from his Anglican brother about whom Sir John Lawrence asks "What does the layman really want? He wants a building which looks like a church, a clergyman dressed in the way he approves, services of a kind he has been used to and *to be left alone.*" The church members described in the New Testament, sharing the one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:1-3) and exhibiting various gifts (vs. 4-11) did not want to be left alone, nor were they expected to opt out of opportunities for leadership when these were presented: "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them," is Paul's challenge (Rom. 12:6).

II. QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

The Church's leaders in every field, and certainly in Christian education, must be recruited from the ranks of ordinary but carefully trained church members. What qualifications are required? What should we look for in those expected to exercise leadership? In submitting the following ten suggestions, I am taking for granted both a vital experience of conversion and commitment, and a godly life that can be "considered" and "imitated" (Heb. 13:7).

1. A humble dependence on God whose Holy Spirit guides into all the truth (John 16:13). A young married couple leading an international Bible study group in a London church confessed, "If we try to do it in our own strength we get flustered and frustrated. We have learned to trust the Lord to help us."

2. A readiness to stir up (2 Tim. 1:6) and not neglect (1 Tim. 4:14) one's gifts.

3. An appreciation of the place of comprehensive Christian education in the Church's life, in accordance with the great commission, "Make disciples . . . teaching them . . ." (the present participle implying a continuous process, not only preparing believers for baptism but continuing afterwards with a view to practical Christian living).

4. Teachability, especially in regard to modern educational techniques and methods. "Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser . . ." (Prov. 9:9). "You then who teach others, will you not teach yourself?" (Rom. 2:21).

5. Faithfulness, rather than exceptional ability. "Faithful men . . . will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

6. A love of people and a real concern for them, rather than a passion for talking to them!

7. A respect for others which enables one to accept criticism and profit by it. (Rom. 12:3).

8. Sensitivity in personal relationships. The good and efficient work of a dedicated leader can be vitiated if his relations with others lack a sensitive awareness of their feelings, needs and desires.

9. The ability to deal with personality problems especially those arising out of the voluntary nature of Christian service.

10. An optimistic spirit inspired by Christian hope which will not easily be depressed by difficulties, disappointments and discouragements.

III. DISCOVERING POTENTIAL WORKERS

In churches with a comparatively small membership and a large Sunday school, every available person will have to be recruited for the church's educational task. In such circumstances it is all the more important for the church to set a standard of training which will be required of potential leaders and kept before them during their years of service, even if some will never make first class teachers. Any other approach will cause leadership to be weak and ineffective and the opportunity of building up an efficient educational and evangelistic programme will be lost. In other churches a greater care in selection can be exercised and a higher standard of training attained.

Even in the smallest church the calling of Christian workers into the educational ministry is the responsibility of the local church as a whole. There must be nothing haphazard about recruitment. If the Sunday school is to be regarded as the Church in its teaching ministry, then the Church must accept responsibility for discovering, persuading and training its leaders. A recognised system must be developed in which the Church is seen to be concerned about education and is known to be issuing the call to serve and to be offering training. A campaign over a period of many months may be necessary in some churches to condition members to such a method.

The invitation to teach will not be given, of course, without prayerful consideration by a special committee of the needs of various departments and the suitability of prospective workers. Even the most unlikely can sometimes be encouraged to respond when the invitation is extended on this basis, and has the authority of church meeting.

At what age should young people be asked to join the teaching staff? The answer will obviously vary a great deal according to national conditions and local circumstances. Where there is a strong teen-age department on Sundays, under sympathetic leadership, a section of that can be organised to train prospective teachers. Otherwise a special group may be needed during the week. In either case, training must begin and suitability be tested before the young person is encouraged to teach. The worst kind of reason for asking a teen-ager to "take a class" is to prevent him from falling away from the church. On the other hand the keen young Christian will expect to be offered an opportunity of service—but maybe not necessarily in the Sunday school!

These principles may more easily be put into operation if, in traditional situations, an entirely new start can be made by the introduction of some form of all-age Christian education. This will give the opportunity to prepare the church thoroughly over at least two years for the introduction of new methods of teaching, enlisting and training. The first year would be preparatory and explanatory, with enquiries from and visits to existing all-age schools. The second year would be for planning in the local situation. A subcommittee could then be set up for the purpose of reviewing the staffing needs and starting entirely from scratch in the calling, appointing and training of suitable leaders.

NOTES and NEWS: This issue I should like to bring eight *new* books to your notice. Some will be of personal interest and others you may be able to mention to church-workers, young fellows, parents and children . . . there's quite a varied selection!

THE BUSY MAN'S OLD TESTAMENT—In his new book *Dr. Leslie Weatherhead* envisages a reader tackling the O.T. from Genesis to Malachi. In a clear and concise style he suggests the passages to read so that, within reason, nothing of devotional value or present day application will be missed. Comments include background material, devotional notes and brief summaries of *omitted* passages. A date chart showing the link of the various books to the main events of Hebrew history is included. Price: 70p

SEX IN A YOUNG MAN'S LIFE—This is a book which treats sex, not as something to be seen in isolation, but as affecting the whole personality. As Medical Officer at Sedbergh School, *Dr. E. K. Morris*, talked on this subject to several generations of boys in their middle and late teens. The substance of the advice and information he gave them is presented here. No attempt is made to force the author's Christian convictions, on the reader, but rather to persuade with carefully constructed arguments. "*Sex in a Young Man's Life* is like a breath of fresh air in the emotive atmosphere which so often surrounds the subject today". Price: 55p

LABOUR OF LOVE by *Dr. J. Kenneth Meir* "The Sunday School Movement has played an important part in the life of Great Britain and this story should be known by all those engaged in work amongst the younger generation . . ." Price: 20p

STORIES FOR ALL SEASONS—This *new* book contains 44 stories—11 in each seasonal section; 16 are suitable for use with 3 and 4 year olds 20 with 5s and 6s, and 20 with 7 to 10 year olds. The stories are intended for use by church-workers looking for material over and above that supplied in lesson guides; leaders of mid-week activities; ministers talking to girls and boys; teachers in day schools or by parents to read to children at home. Price: 75p

MYSTERY TRAIL—A new series of four books for 9-14 year olds and upwards—

ROVING IN LONDON — *P. Morton-George* **DAYS OUT IN DORSET** — *Margaret Putnam* **SORTIES IN THE SCOTTISH LOWLANDS** — *Isobel Lockie* **GOING PLACES IN COUNTY DURHAM** — *Margaret Clark*

. . . each book describes visits to various places where the initiative was Christian. The books are intended to be enjoyable in their own right but included in appendices are suggestions for projects, cross-words etc. Youngsters will easily be able to take the 'pocket size' book along if they decide to go and see for themselves . . . or persuade a grown-up to take them!

. . . '*Roving in London*' describes three children, ages about 14, 11 and 10, going on two outings, one by themselves and the other with a grown-up. They visit Barts Hospital; Elizabeth Fry Memorial; Eros; an International House; Royal National Institute for the Blind etc. The other 3 books follow a similar pattern. Illustrated with line drawings. Price: 35p each

Have you seen our new quarterly journal—'**N.C.E.C. LINK**'? If you would like to receive a personal copy each issue—gratis(!)—please let me know. N.C.E.C publications may be obtained through a local bookseller or direct from 'Robert Denholm House'. Mail orders should include 10% for post/packing. More news in July—Keith M. Crane
Sales Promotion



National Christian Education Council,
(formerly National Sunday School Union),
Robert Denholm House,
Nutfield, Redhill, Surrey.

IV. THE PASTOR'S ROLE

Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery once defined the art of leadership as "the determination to impose your will on others." That is a definition hardly likely to appeal to readers of this journal! Yet a pastor's vision for his church's educational ministry cannot be realised without determination. The pastor is to be a leader towards a goal, determined by God's grace to get there *with his followers*. Strong leadership means better teaching and training and leads to a more mature and more effective church membership.

Such leadership in the educational field will not diminish the pastor's primary task as an evangelist, always preaching for decisions, working for conversions and training his people in outreach. There is no stimulus for teaching and training like that of seeing lives being changed and "young" Christians being taught in the faith.

It is the minister himself who will have to emphasise the importance and value of adult education, showing that all need to continue learning, whatever their age or experience. Education is not optional: we are in fact being educated all the time (either well or badly) by life's experiences and relationships. But a structured system of some kind is necessary if the teaching is to be both in line with modern methods and worthy of the Master who is contemporary with each generation. "If the Biblical Word is to be an authority in our churches . . . there must be theological instruction in the church . . . instruction in the ethic of the Bible and its relevance to our own current problems. Only thus can the intelligent layman come to realise the authority of the Bible over his own mind and life . . . If this seems to mean adult classes and catechetical instruction of young people in the churches, the inference is correct—it means exactly that . . . Unless we teach them in the church, the laity will become progressively more and more ignorant of the beliefs and doctrines as well as of the ethical standards of Christianity." (Prof. Langdon Gilkey)

Ten years ago a Protestant minister, Thomas Roy Pendell, decided to test the congregation one Sunday morning by giving them a simple quiz. "The results were staggering." He learned that "nearly one-fourth of the adult members of that Sunday's congregation could not identify Calvary as the place of Jesus' death . . . Twelve per cent could be said to have a good, and five per cent an excellent, knowledge of the Bible. But eighty-three per cent were essentially ignorant or at best only sketchily acquainted with it." Such an experiment might be salutary in some of our own churches! Certainly it is every pastor's responsibility in these days to initiate, integrate or improve some form of comprehensive Christian education within the church's programme.

In his book *The Incendiary Fellowship*, R. Elton Trueblood, the American Quaker, raises the whole question of the purpose and function of the ordained ministry in the modern world. He describes it as an "equipping ministry," a phrase based on Eph. 4:11-12 (where the NEB version follows the suggestion of Armitage Robinson and others): "And these were his gifts: some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists,

some pastors and teachers, to equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ.' It is used also by Thomas Mullen in *The Renewal of the Ministry* and Robert Raines (*New Life in the Church*), who writes, "The chief task of the clergyman is to equip his people for their ministry. All his work is to this end. The functions of preacher, prophet, pastor, priest, evangelist, counsellor and administrator find their proper place in the equipping ministry. The purpose of this ministry is that the people shall be trained and outfitted for their work in the church and in the world . . . A layman said to me recently, "Your job is like that of a foreman in a plant. A foreman has a two-fold responsibility. First he must teach and train his men to do their work. Second he is responsible for their production. He must watch over them, guiding them and encouraging them to produce. So you as a clergyman have to train us for our ministry, and then help us to fulfil our mission to produce. We are called to "go and bear fruit"; you are called to see that we do it." Mullen further suggests the description "a counsellor of counsellors" for the modern minister. True blood settles to the word "coach": "Everyone knows that in the development of a football or baseball team the quality of the coaching staff makes a crucial difference . . . The glory of the coach is that of being the discoverer, the developer and the trainer of the powers of other men."

If this basic idea is accepted, then the pastor becomes the key figure in the church's educational programme. He will see it in all its aspects as leading to the teaching, training and equipping of Christian witnesses. He will seek to train the superintendent to the point where he can then train his own staff. Where leadership is delegated to others, as it obviously must and should be, the "coach" will be constantly available. "The true art of delegation is not to hand over work to somebody else and then forget about it, but to commit work to a deputy who knows that he is responsible to you and can at times report back and seek advice." (John Stott).

At the World Institute on Christian Education at Nairobi in July 1967 (with 370 Christian educators from 75 countries) a serious complaint was voiced concerning "the failure of pastors to assume responsibility for Christian education, their lack of knowledge about the goals and scope of Christian education and their lack of understanding of what good educational process is." In some countries it should be possible to include more work in these areas in the minister's training. In others the curriculum is already overworked but refresher courses could be arranged most beneficially from time to time. In Britain only twenty years ago men were leaving theological colleges without any preparation for leading educational work: nowadays the situation is being remedied to some extent, both by the inclusion of short courses for students and the provision of refresher courses for ministers. Even, however, in the latest report of the Baptist Union, "Ministry Tomorrow," no specific reference is made to the importance of training in Christian education, though it is stated that theological education should be viewed as continuous and be planned on a

continuing basis. In his report on the World Institute, C. Ellis Nelson writes: "The minister in many Western countries has lost his authority as the only well-educated man in the community. Today he can gain authority only by his ability to work with other professionals in the community to solve common human problems, and he needs special training to be this kind of leader."

A little more should be said about the place of the church member alongside whom the pastor is exercising his equipping ministry. Certainly he is to be trained to serve within the church's educational programme—as leader, teacher, secretary or worker of some other kind. But his chief role as a Christian witness will be fulfilled outside the church fellowship, where he will penetrate more deeply into secular society than the most conscientious minister, however involved. Sir Kenneth Grubb uses a word we have already noted in connection with our Lord's ministry when he says, "The layman's job is to be a pioneer . . . The layman, by the mere fact of living in the world, at his job, in his suburb, on travels for his firm, in his union, at his club, is in a pioneer role . . . As a pioneer in the world the layman can do much to interpret to the clergyman what it is all about."

It is vital to clarify this relation of pastor to people, the pastor "serving, or as one might even say 'servicing' the laity." (Stott) Where can this be better done than within the context of a comprehensive system of Christian education?

V. IMPROVED EDUCATIONAL METHODS

In many countries the whole of education, like the rest of society, is in a state of flux. Says Dr. Kenneth Hyde, "We can safely say for certain that there is no settling down period ahead in the lifetime of any of us in the field of education." The rate of change is bound to accelerate and will inevitably affect us in the churches. Baptists ought to be prepared for change and ready to adopt such methods as may be best suited in each decade for the teaching and training of members and adherents.

"When we turn to the problem of how people learn ideas and information," writes C. Ellis Nelson, "the key factor does not appear to be methodology at all but personality. Some people learn most effectively in a permissive, accepting environment, others do better under the stimulation of discipline with measurable achievement, while others work best when they can participate at their own rate in matters that interest them . . . We tend to assume everybody learns effectively one way and design our educational programmes with only one type of educational experience in mind." That is probably more true of our churches than we care to admit! If our methods are to be improved they must allow for fluidity of structure within a basic system. The system is necessary to improve haphazard teaching common in many places where, for example, the doctrine of believer's baptism is only referred to at baptismal services, Christian marriage only taught in preparing engaged couples and the meaning of death and what lies beyond only explained to the bereaved.

What are some of the improved methods being used today?

1. *Family Church.* In England where for well over a century Sunday schools were held mainly in the afternoon, the majority of Baptist churches (and many others) now have some form of Family Church in the morning, the children and teen-agers meeting for worship in the church with parents or "adopted parents" before going to their own departments. This gives the pastor a direct contact with the Sunday school and tends in some cases to turn the older congregation into an "adult department." It has definite advantages over the afternoon school, sometimes completely divorced from the church, but the time is too short (both for children and adults), the pastor is usually unable to see the various departments at work, and the superintendent has no direct relationship to the adult session.

It is in the context of Family Church in one form or another that experiments are being tried in Team Teaching and other modern methods of utilising to the full the gifts and skills of both professional teachers and other enthusiastic but less experienced people. Again, fluidity in any section of the work must be the keynote.

2. *All-Age Bible School.* This of course has been outstandingly successful in the United States and has spread to many other parts of the world. In the United Kingdom it has only been tried (in modified forms) during the past eight or ten years and is still spreading very slowly. In Scotland All-Age Christian Education was officially adopted by the Baptist Union in 1962 and at present about one-fifth of the churches have changed over to it. In England probably not more than twenty-five churches have it, half that number being in London.

This method is a real attempt to combine teaching, fellowship and evangelism within one church-centred framework.

Its benefits can be listed as follows:

- (1) It gathers the whole family in group study; the Scriptures can be taught systematically, questions answered and the Word of God applied to the whole of life.
- (2) It makes possible the fullest expression of the church's teaching ministry by catering for all age groups, with an extension department for the "shut-ins."
- (3) It follows the New Testament pattern of teaching: Jesus chose and taught His disciples as a group before sending them out as witnesses.
- (4) It fosters fellowship and pastoral care by dividing a congregation into smaller units.
- (5) It gives an opportunity for personal and group testimony to the continuing power of Christ.
- (6) It creates an atmosphere in which relevant worship follows naturally and provides the pastor with a well-taught congregation.

(7) It bridges the gap between childhood and teens, and the example set by older people in Sunday school is invaluable.

(8) It unifies the whole programme of the church's work and makes Sunday school what it really is—the church teaching.

(9) It provides opportunities for evangelism and follow-up by encouraging uncommitted people into the groups, together with those who have been converted through the church's outreach.

(10) It offers a way of presenting teaching on Christian citizenship which cannot always be dealt with frankly and fully from the pulpit.

3. *Housegroups.* During the last decade in England this method has spread most widely among adults in churches of various denominations. It has been found possible to gather and interest a greater number of people in home Bible study than in the more formal atmosphere on church premises. Both Christians and enquirers who have never attended a mid-week meeting have joined housegroups and taken part freely in discussion.

This is a method which can of course run concurrently with some other form of Christian education and may give a welcome opportunity for group leadership to those otherwise engaged on Sundays. The pastor's absence probably allows a greater opportunity of free discussion, although he may well be needed to prepare notes, train the leaders and deal with any problems raised during the series.

Two main types of housegroups exist: those fostering Bible study among believers and those in which Christians seek to witness to their non-Christian neighbours. The purpose of a group will naturally dictate the form it will take; a clear understanding on the part of those invited is essential.

4. *Using the Weeknight Service.* The traditional mid-week meeting presents problems in most churches, but new life has come to some through its use in united preparation for one or both of the Sunday services. The guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit can be claimed as much for the planning of a group of dedicated people as for the preparation of the minister in the study—so runs the reasoning behind this method. One advantage is the immediate availability of those whom the pastor may wish to be associated with him in the conduct of the worship on the Sunday.

Along with this kind of experiment goes a re-appraisal of the value and purpose of the traditional Sunday service. Should we have two almost identical services, morning and evening? What about the sermon? "Should we scrap sermons?" asks Gavin Reid, who writes as an Anglican. "The ultimate answer may be 'yes', but realism demands that we make haste slowly . . . The sermon has become so much an institution that we are not probing into its effectiveness half as much as we should. There is little evidence of formal preaching in the New Testa-

THE BAPTIST INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

4 Southampton Row, London, WC1B 4AB

To the Members of the Baptist Ministers' Fraternal

Dear Friends,

"They were the decaying skeletons of departed mails . . . ; he thought of the number of people to whom one of these vehicles had borne night after night, for many years and through all weathers the anxiously expected intelligence . . ."

The Story of the Bagman's Uncle
Pickwick Papers—Dickens.

As I write the postal dispute continues and to some extent we have all learned to live without the postal service.

The automatic telephone has proved a boon and it has been possible for us to continue to receive instructions for new or increased business and in particular to deal with claims expeditiously.

In fire claims in Scotland and in the Midlands we have had a representative at the fire damaged premises the same day as the telephone call to us.

Indeed, I wish that more of our friends would take or make the opportunity of taking over the insurances of their churches (or for that matter their own personal insurances) with us.

It is surprising how often churches have deacons who come to London for one reason or another. On many occasions we have had letters handed in by men/women who have said "I come to London from Edinburgh or Liverpool or Exeter or Bristol or ? once a month!"

We welcome visitors. We welcome the occasion to discuss insurance problems – we welcome too the opportunity of visiting you or your people if a visit would prove helpful.

Lord Bacon in his essay "Of Negotiating" said "It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter." Try us – we shall be glad to talk.

Of course in the ultimate, the post is important but letters could deal with conclusions rather than a mass of detail. Some of the trees and undergrowth can in a chat be cleared away so that the pattern of the wood may be the more clearly discerned.

Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN

General Manager.

ment . . . Indeed, it might help us if we drew a distinction between *preaching*, which the New Testament talks about as a continuing activity in society at large, and *sermonising* which we have made into a special activity in the church premises." Some of our churches have already made considerable changes in the form of one of the Sunday services, but we are not generally making enough use of the Lord's Day for Christian education of a specialised kind—the training of our people to go *out* and "preach."

5. *A Training School.* John Stott, rector of the famous central London Church of All Souls, Langham Place, has held a training school every year since 1950. The training programme, which has to be undertaken before lay people are eligible to engage in "parochial *marturia*" (witness) is in three stages—the annual training school itself (consisting of a course of twelve weekly lectures), the written examination and personal interview, and finally the commissioning service. The rector admits that perhaps more time should be given to discussion on the one hand and to practical training on the other, and that the opportunity to qualify without a written examination might be sensible in certain cases. But on the whole the scheme has stood the test of time and gives trained people a genuine commission to serve and witness in the name of the Lord and His Church.

Experiments are being made in local teaching and training on an ecumenical basis. In areas where one church does not have a sufficiently large or enterprising staff, much more effective work may be done in united sessions. At West Bridgford, Nottingham, an ecumenical training evening is held regularly lasting three hours. This is an extension of the work of such interdenominational bodies as the (former) National Sunday School Union (now the National Christian Education Council) and is possible where churches of different denominations use the same syllabus.

VI. DENOMINATIONAL LEADERSHIP

In a comparatively small Union such as our own many factors militate against structured denominational leadership in Christian education. Already the National Christian Education Council is well established and although sometimes weak at local level it is otherwise lively and stimulating. The British Lessons Council has recently produced a quite revolutionary syllabus with parallel themes for all age groups, *Experience and Faith*, which is being used by a considerable number of our churches. The Scripture Union provides excellent evangelical teaching manuals which are favoured by most of the remaining Baptist churches; although the themes are not parallel there are materials now for all age groups.

In such circumstances, denominational leadership has to be largely confined to providing stimulus, emphasising principles and encouraging specifically Baptist teaching. More should be attempted, however, in the field of adult education, and in bringing together into an effective structure all who are con-

cerned with Christian education, by whatever name they may at present be called.

Probably the most effective way of stimulating the churches is yet largely untried. I refer to the work of the associations. For example, in our country only two or three out of twenty-six associations have a Christian education committee, although in some cases the youth committee acts for education. In London (the largest association, with 277 churches) the Christian Education Committee was formed partly as a result of the Baptist World Alliance Commission's workshop in Miami five years ago. Its most useful work has been in arranging conferences in different areas for the encouraging and training of leaders in adult education of various kinds.

If for us, as for our Baptist forefathers, the Bible is "the only sufficient, certain and infallible rule of all saving Knowledge, Faith and Obedience . . . the rule of Faith and Life" (1677 Confession), church leadership in Bible-based Christian education is one of our most pressing needs today. Leadership is required which will both relate the message of the Scriptures to life and through the Scriptures bring men face to face with the living Christ. In a modern setting we need to hear again the victorious song of Deborah and Barak,

"That the leaders took the lead in Israel,
that the people offered themselves willingly,
Bless the Lord!"

Judges 5:2 (RSV)

R. R. RODNEY COLLINS

BOOKS FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE

- J. R. Kidd
How Adults Learn (Association Press 1959)
- H. L. Miller
Teaching and Learning in Adult Education (Macmillan 1964)
- William Barclay
Jesus as They Saw Him (S.C.M. Press, London 1962)
- J. R. W. Stott
One People (Falcon Books, London 1969)
- T. J. Mullen
The Renewal of the Ministry (Abingdon Press 1963)
- E. H. Robertson
Take and Read - A Guide to Group Bible Study (S.C.M. Press, London 1962)
- Cotterill & Hews
Know How to Lead Bible Study and Discussion Groups (Scripture Union 1968)
- J. N. Barnette
A Church Using Its Sunday School (Convention Press 1957)
- Gavin Reid
The Gaggling of God (Hodder & Stoughton 1969)

Report on the Evangelical Alliance's Commission on
Evangelism

"On the Other Side" (Scripture Union 1968)

BOOKLETS

C. Ellis Nelson

"Issues Facing Christian Educators" (World Council of
Christian Education 1967)

Rodney Matthews

"Christian Education in the Seventies" (Baptist Union, London
1969)

A Christian Education Syllabus With Parallel Themes
for All Age Groups

"Experience and Faith" (British Lessons Council 1968)

STUDENT UNREST

This is an account of one session of the Central Area Ministers' Conference held at High Leigh Conference Centre near Hoddesdon in February 1969. It had been requested that the programme should include discussion of some current issue outside the usual areas of theology and Baptist Church life. At the time the programme committee were making plans there occurred the massive anti-Vietnam demonstration in London on October 27th, 1968. Very much in the news also were the troubles at the London School of Economics when among other things the authorities erected iron gates within the college buildings which resulted in demonstrations by the student body. It was therefore decided that Student Unrest should be the subject of the session.

There were other reasons why this subject was considered important. Half the population of the world is under 25. When we say that our mission is to the whole world, that must therefore mean that 50% of that mission is to Youth. It is very important therefore for us to try to understand their ways of thinking, their outlook, culture, aims and ideals. If Christianity is to be successful in its mission in the foreseeable future it must attempt to present its message and its structures in ways that will capture the idealism and faith of the young. This does not suggest any dilution of the Gospel or 'gimmickry' but rather an honest confrontation with the best of our young people and a recognition that God has not deposited the whole and final truth with the middle aged, but may Himself be speaking through the younger generation. So a 'confrontation' was arranged and we were successful in obtaining the then Vice-President of the London School of Economics Student Union as our speaker.

The first surprise to some was his appearance. No long hair, no way-out style of dress. His name was Jim Jones. He was studying at the LSE with a view to becoming a Child Care Officer. He was a member of the Methodist Church, a Lay Preacher, and deeply committed in the Methodist Society of

JOIN A REVOLUTION WITH THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The B.M.S. is a revolutionary movement.

It was formed as a revolt against 18th century hyper-Calvinism.

It was party to the revolt against social evil and injustice in India.

It shared in the revolt against slavery in the West Indies.

It still revolts when faced with the rule of disease and the restrictions of ignorance.

It will remain a revolutionary movement until every power other than the power of God in Jesus Christ has been defeated.

Will you share in a revolutionary movement that is sure of success?

Write to:

**Rev. A. S. Clement,
Baptist Missionary Society,
93 Gloucester Place,
London, W1H 4AA**

London University. Clearly a person with this background who was also very involved in Student Union work was well qualified to speak to us.

His address began by discussing the concept of 'alienation'. He said that today, Marx is read not as an economist or a revolutionary, but as the philosopher who first laid bare the estrangement of man from an oppressive society. His writings on 'alienation' were almost unrecognised until the late 1930's but, following the interest in such a concept with the rediscovery of the writings of Kierkegaard and Kafka and the sense of despair they both epitomized, it is now recognised as a far more sophisticated critique on contemporary society than the stilted earlier Marxist analogies of class.

He described alienation as it is derived from Marx, as a socio-psychological concept, speaking of that condition where the individual experiences a sense of distance or divorce from his community. It is the experience of estrangement. Sociologists such as Max Weber have taken up this theme and developed it further. Weber sees alienation as a consequence of large scale bureaucratization and high social mobility. The individual feels that he counts for nothing when set within vast impersonal organizations while the loss of the familiar landmarks in an ever changing community rob him of a sense of security and belonging.

Having described this background, Mr Jones then went on to show how this was reflected in the experience of the student. 3,500 students were crammed and cramped into inadequate accommodation at the LSE. The library was unable to meet their needs. Yet they were having to undertake a demanding academic course that would largely determine their prospects. In the first year lectures there could be as many as 500 students present. The lecturer walked in, delivered his lecture, and walked out again, so that the student could not make contact with him. Some never saw their tutors. The effect on the student was to depersonalize him. He felt himself lost in a vast impersonal world in which no-one knew whether he was there or not, perhaps even worse no-one cared. He had no influence at all, let alone control, over what went on and what was done. Could there be any wonder, asked Mr Jones, that they felt themselves lost and adrift?

When the student tried to do anything about his position, when he attempted to find a footing in the institution of which he wanted to feel a part, his true position was only made that much clearer. Jim Jones told of his experience in Student Union negotiations of being passed from one official body to another, each passing the buck, none prepared to accept responsibility, and nobody prepared to do anything to improve conditions for the students. He said that the student "is helpless in the face of it, powerless to effect any changes in it, always threatened to be swallowed by it".

For those who take it upon themselves to articulate these deep seated grievances, the analysis usually does not stop there. The critique is usually widened into one which condemns the general nature of large scale modern industrial society characterised by its pervasive acquisitiveness, where all

relationships are in terms of money relations and where the worker is as much alienated in his large factory as the student in the University. But again, this is only a more extreme version of what many young people feel in a vaguer sense without the ideological framework to see it in. The prevailing characteristic of our society is that of acquisitiveness, more money, more goods, regardless of the cost in human terms. The whole social system is disguised behind a mask of hypocrisy and self-deceit. How can anyone, asked Mr Jones, talk of 'democracy' and 'freedom', when the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer, when share dividends are increasing and so are the homeless and slum dwellers?

What young people are looking for, he went on to say, and working for, wisely or unwisely is a kind of society where each person can be himself, where he is not a prisoner of a system over which he has no control, but where he is free to live in an environment which he has helped to mould and in which he has a stake. The evil of alienation is not so much the sense of frustration it brings to a person, but the fact that it prevents him from being a full human being, it denies him a true human existence, for how can an individual be a full person when he is but a cypher, when he has no control over the situation in which he is placed?

What is the place of the Church in this? Surely what is here being said by Mr Jones would meet with approval from many Christians. Loss of humanity based on lack of love; loss of human dignity reflecting a disregard for God's creative plan; acquisitiveness and selfish materialistic ends; are not these all themes which have been constantly repeated by preachers? Yet here is the irony, that the Church is seen as part of and a supporter of the status quo.

Mr Jones did us all a great deal of good by helping us to see what lies behind the attitudes of many young people. All too often our views are strongly influenced by the mass media which so often present the most rowdy aspects of young people's behaviour. We see the clothes and hair styles so obviously in rebellion against the normal and we experience distaste and rejection. In the same way young people are subject to ill-informed generalizations about what other generations think. What we all need to do is to put our prejudice aside and meet one another, listen to one another, and attempt to discover what it really is that we each care about. For the Central Area Ministers at High Leigh it meant hearing a young person closely in touch with student attitudes say, "As I look at the criticisms levelled at society and the aspirations and solutions put forward and then look again at Christianity, I come to the conclusion that Christianity, *authentic* Christianity, is the greatest revolutionary doctrine this world has ever known".

The role of the Church is to be the agent of humanity (or the love of God as seen in Jesus Christ). He saw the Church as the spearhead of a Christian revolution but emphasized the need for a change in structure if the revolutionary potential is to be utilized. We are grateful to Mr Jones for giving us a

thoughtful and interesting address and being prepared to expose himself to the questions and comments afterwards.

I believe we may learn much from this. It reminds us that the local Church is a place where people are people, where concern for the individual is greater than structures or traditions or theological differences. One experience I had illustrates so much of what Mr Jones said. A young Lecturer from the local College of Technology was pouring out his troubles; the impersonal atmosphere at the college, his own tangled personal life and broken marriage. He kept saying, "Why do you listen to me? As an atheist I don't even attend your church!" Eventually I replied, "Because I am the servant of One who spent much of his time talking to individuals". His eyes were wet with tears. He said, "I wish our Principal understood that".

W. J. A. TURNER

CHANGES OVER FORTY YEARS

Looking back one is struck by the extent of the changes within the Churches, the ministry and the Denomination. When the writer entered college (1926) the old rigid Independency was giving way to a measure of Interdependency. There was some opposition, but gradually the "system" of Area Superintendency became established, and with it a greater official control over the ministry. The changes for the most part have proved to be beneficial; not least for the ministers. Even to-day, a change of pastorate, with the help of the Area Superintendents, is not always easy; there are delays and frustrations. But forty and more years ago, for some men, it was virtually impossible. Not all long ministries, often eulogised, were of choice. Men just could not move.

An even greater change has been brought about by the awakened conscience within the Denomination with regard to the material well-being of the ministers. Stipends to-day, with few exceptions, are lower than they should be, but compared with a generation or more ago, they are greatly improved. Where hardship and injustice still remain, action is now demanded. It was not always so. The writer recalls the days when many men received less than £3 per week in cash.

Yet the concern of many was not first for the minister, but for his wife. She cared for and loyally stood by her man; scraped, schemed and often denied herself to feed, clothe and educate the children; somehow managed to keep manse finances solvent, and took her place in the life of the Church. To refer to her as an Unpaid Curate was an insult. She did a work among the people and exercised an influence for good within the Church, far beyond anything a curate could do. In those days there were not the opportunities as now for a minister and, or, his wife, or both, to supplement their income.

The Baptist Denomination owes more than it can ever know to these brave women of generations past. Whatever may be done in the future let us never forget those who in by-gone days, often at risk to themselves, sought to rouse the conscience of the Denomination on these economic issues.

BATTLES OF LONG AGO

To enter college forty or more years ago was, for many students, a disturbing experience. In those days the introduction to modern critical Biblical scholarship created sharp moral, spiritual and intellectual conflict. It proved too much for a few, but, once accepted, most men found their faith strengthened and the temptation to departmentalise their thinking or to succumb to intellectual dishonesty, removed. As the late Principal Townsend put it: "What is true cannot be false to Him who is TRUTH." If, over a period, one felt uncertain, and preaching became more difficult, the passing years brought deeper convictions to be proclaimed with a growing certainty. Out of the experience of intellectual enlightenment and a deepening loyalty to the Lord, valued spiritual insights were gained. "He who doeth the will . . ." Before Law-giver, Prophet, Priest and Psalmist He is THE LIGHT by which all else must be judged.

There was not, of course, and never can be escape from intellectual problems, but he best loves God with his MIND, who, with patient humility, seeks to probe and to know. Many of us came to realise that it was no small privilege to have been presented with the findings of high and sanctified Christian scholarship. Alas! not all thought in those terms. To some, lay and clerical, even the name of the saintly A. S. Peake—and he a Primitive Methodist—was anathema. However, it's an ill wind . . . The manager of one large bookshop, annoyed with a subordinate for ordering a supply of the famous Commentary, gave orders that they were to be reduced to half price and got rid of as soon as possible. To many an impoverished student this was joyful news indeed. I still have my now well worn and somewhat battered souvenir.

Over the years great names have appeared in the realm of Theology: Barth, Niebuhr, Brunner, Tillich and others, but it has been left to their successors to re-discover that God is dead. The idea is not new. Many, with Job of old, have clamoured to know where they might find Him, and wished to argue their cause before Him. Men felt the same when Faber wrote: "He hides Himself so wondrously as though there were no God . . ." And Faber died in 1863. But we now find ourselves in an even more remarkable situation. "The plain fact is that theology is in such sad straits because so many theologians do not believe in God." (W. R. Matthews, *Memories and Meanings*, p. 147) To the uninitiated this sounds odd. A Logos—discourse, about a Theos who (which?) does not exist. Atheology, I suppose. How do students cope with this?

Forty years ago one long-raging battle was virtually over, although stubborn rearguard actions were still being fought—even as they still are, but mostly in the USA. There has not, and never can be conflict between Science and

WEST HAM CENTRAL MISSION

409 Barking Road, Plaistow, London, E13 8AL

My dear Brother Minister,

OPENINGS FOR SERVICE: I would like to draw your attention to the fact that we have openings for suitable young people who are seeking a worthwhile opportunity of personal service to gain experience in Christian Social Welfare work.

We find that there are some young people who are prepared to give us six months or a year of their time whilst they are waiting for an entry to University or Training College, or preparatory to entering a career in the Social Welfare field.

We are able to provide board and lodging and a reasonable amount of pocket money for such folk, and of course, we can guarantee to provide them with a great deal of experience in working in either Greenwoods or Orchard House or Marnham House Settlement, and if they so desire, at Lawrence Hall Plaistow, where our Colin Marchant is warden.

We acknowledge with great gratitude the fine help given to us by Peter Tongeman of the "Time for God" scheme, which has been of great benefit to us, and we shall be quite happy for you to apply either direct to Mr. Tongeman or to get in touch with me if you have any ideas of a suitable young person of either sex who might be interested in coming to us for a period of service. We want convinced Christians of course, and we ask for a testimonial from the Minister to the effect that the young man or woman concerned is a balanced personality and likely to fit in with a 'team' effort.

If you can think of such a person whom you can recommend I should be glad to hear from you.

A WORD OF GRATITUDE: We would like to acknowledge the splendid support we are receiving these days from an ever increasing number of churches, either direct from the church or through organisations in the church. For the past ten years we have had the joy of seeing the support from the churches of our Faith and Order going steadily upward and we want to put on record our appreciation of the tremendous interest and concern for our work which is shown by so many people in the churches.

We realise that we owe a very great deal to our ministers and if you are one of the people who have been putting in a good word and encouraging your people to support our work, then we do want you to know how grateful we are.

May God's blessing be on all you own work.

Yours very sincerely,

STANLEY TURL

Superintendent of the West Ham Central Mission

Religion; at least, between Science and a true Christian Faith. A scientist, however brilliant, is a man. As such he has to come to terms with his own existence: with life and death, and all that comes in between: love, hate, sin, forgiveness, hope, fear, faith, unbelief, his relationship with his fellows. But these are the issues with which the Christian Faith is basically concerned. This is what the Gospel is all about: Christ reconciling man to God, to himself and to his fellow man. A scientist or a philosopher may repudiate the Faith as Bertrand Russell and others have done, but that has little or nothing to do with science or philosophy. A chimney-sweep or any one can do the same. The conflict is all the more surprising when we recall that then as now quite a few scientists could be found who held firm to the Faith, some, indeed, loyal Churchmen. In some respects, let it be admitted, the unbelieving scientist saw more deeply into certain implications of the Faith and Christ's teaching, particularly as touching society, than did many ecclesiastical leaders.

There was a conflict, however, and still is, between a scientific view of the world and the universe, and the cosmogony of the Bible. The dogmatic and sometimes arrogant attitude of the "defenders of the Faith," in face of irrefutable scientific evidence, did both the Faith and the Churches much harm. The sad results are with us to-day. A little more regard for truth and less for tradition would have gone far to have avoided the conflict and might well have kept many who deserted us within the fold.

Two other hopes ran high in many hearts in those days: the bringing into being of a United Free Church of England, and the dis-establishment of the Church of England. Strong denominational loyalties, among other reasons, proved too much for the former, and, it was said, the refusal of the Free Churches to agree to dis-establishment unless the Anglican Church gave up its vast endowments, discouraged the latter. There were those who asked what would happen if the Monarch were no longer called upon to defend the Protestant Religion as by Law Established? Would a Roman Catholic one day occupy the throne? Recognised on both sides, of course, were other stubborn factors: theological, philosophical, metaphysical, ecclesiastical, all deeply rooted in history. Within the Established Church are those who would like to see THE THIRTY NINE ARTICLES stringently revised or even abolished, and many medieval ceremonies dispensed with. However, our own house it not exactly in order.

THE DAYS THAT WERE . . .

Dwindling congregations are not new in history. The fall-away for our age began before the turn of the century. It would have begun earlier if radio, TV, the motor-car, commercialised sport and amusement had been available then as now. Post-1945 saw further losses although not perhaps in such great numbers as after 1918. From this date began the increasing secularisation of Sunday. Words about the "Golden Shore," which for long years had been a metaphor in a well known hymn, now became actualised!

As I waited one Sunday morning on a city station for a connection to a village some few miles away, I saw within an hour eight packed excursion trains leave for different sea-side resorts. This was about 1930. I had perhaps twenty in my congregation! In fact, even at this time, Sunday in almost every large sea-side town, was little more than an extension of Saturday.

It was soon after this that the cry went up: 'The motor-car is emptying the churches'. It was an example of the common addiction to transfer personal responsibility to others, or even to inanimate objects. No car ever compelled its owner to go anywhere, to Church or away from it. The owner decides. To-day, if we willed it, the car could help to solve one of our major problems. In some areas, where large buildings with small congregations are not too scattered, the car could help to build a strong central Church, save money and conserve man-power.

Few changes are sudden and spectacular; most are slow and almost imperceptible. Thirty years ago there was concern over lack of "total" worship. The sermon was all; the rest preliminaries. This, in many of our Churches, has now been remedied. Worship is what the term implies, the sermon being an integral but not a dominating part of it. True, there are those who feel that the congregation is too passive, and the minister too active. Yet, a modified Prayer Book type of service with responses does not find favour with our people.

Again, a changed vocabulary is indicative of much. In my young days we were Non-Conformists who went to chapel—and no apologies! We met with the Church. We were a congregation, not an audience; we listened to a Sermon, not an address. My impression still is that our people were aware of the distinctions. At this time and for long afterwards, the ministry as a whole accepted that preaching and pastoral work went together, one complementing the other, the neglect of either resulting in an inadequate ministry. The great preachers were always loyal pastors. To-day, it would seem, in some quarters at least, and not in our own Denomination only, that both preaching and pastoral work are called in question.

In some respects the greatly changed social conditions have added to our difficulties. Occasionally one has to compete with a noisy TV programme. Yet, to be in the homes of one's people is often a mutual blessing. In a relaxed atmosphere, over an unwanted cup of tea, one has learned of hidden sorrows, fears and frustrations the existence of which was never suspected. We learned also of triumphs of faith. Thus, as one listened, a sermon theme was born, which tactfully used brought renewed hope and encouragement to many a worshipper. Of recent years loneliness has been labelled a "disease." The name is immaterial; the experience can be devastating. In this situation a pastor may be of far greater help than either a doctor or a social worker.

Is preaching out? Dr W. R. Matthews claims: "The standard of preaching has declined . . . partly due to a decline in the intelligence of congregations." Yet, over the last three or four decades a greater number of young people have been educated

over a longer period of their adolescence than ever before in our history. But, do we need two sermons on the same day within a few hours of each other? Could the evening service be more of a social fellowship gathering with an act of worship included, but without a sermon? A testimony could be given, or a short address telling how one relates one's faith and churchmanship to daily life. Could we have reports from those who have experimented on these lines?

Yet preaching there must be. Can we learn again from the old and proved methods of Homiletics? The "arresting" introduction, three or four well-defined "heads," the final word of appeal, challenge, encouragement. In sermon preparation another discipline is called for: the writing and re-writing that clarifies thought and teaches economy of words. "Study how to convey thoughts by inference; it will save much time and talk." It was profitable advice.

"Remember, gentlemen, mornings are sacred to study." Repetition made it unlikely that we should ever forget. Once in the ministry that was not always easy. There are many demands on one's time and many distractions. Yet the discipline proved its worth. Much study may be a weariness to the flesh, but it need not be all the time and in every case. There is pleasure and blessing to be got from study for its own sake and not just for examinations' sake. In fact, for some temperaments, examinations, at least of the advanced type, are best forgotten. One type of brain finds delight in worrying through a problem, but, try as one will, it will not retain for more than a few hours together long lists of irregular verbs, declensions and conjugations. It was at an Association Meeting that I heard the story of the good brother who told an astonished congregation that he had never read Pluto in the original! He's not alone; or Plato either for that matter. Weymouth reminds us that: "The Hebrew verb for TO GIVE, even in its simplest forms, is translated in 56 different ways in the Greek of the LXX." The mind truly boggles; at least mine does!

Nevertheless, a prescribed and disciplined course of study, apart from just reading, and the daily reading of a few verses of N.T. Greek will prove rewarding. It was helpful to read Weymouth's note on Acts 11.12: "It was more likely that (as in other instances) Peter's Greek was faulty." There's nothing like being in the true Apostolic Succession, brethren.

For the writer the study proved its value when later in his ministry his partner in the ministry needed over ten years of almost daily and nightly care through a distressing and worsening illness. One's people showed a wonderful friendship, and one learned the immeasurable value of a faith centred in a Lord who Himself had trod the Via Dolorosa. Within the colleges there must always be concern for academic attainment, but, for some, it has its dangers. Critical faculties may become stunted; the feeling of exhaustion once the degree has been awarded may be such that one has no desire henceforth for any serious sustained study. One has met such cases.

Changing circumstances will compel some drastic changes within the Denomination and the Churches. One has the conviction that the religious situation in the country will get

TO HELP MAKE A BETTER CHURCH MEMBER!

THREE COURSES OF STUDY:

forming a progressive scheme for individuals or groups.

1. **Christian Discipleship Correspondence Course.** Especially designed for young people and new church members. Six lessons in attractive folder. Supplied through Association secretaries.
2. **Baptist Union Certificate in Religious Knowledge.** Bible study; Christian living etc. A course based on elementary text books and projects. In two sections, each with three subjects.
3. **Baptist Union Diploma in Religious Knowledge.** Further training for Christian service. Bible Study; Baptist Principles; Church History; Christian Doctrine; and a choice of subjects to allow for particular interests. Thirteen subjects, divided into three parts.

Tuition by correspondence available.

Further details from, Diploma Department, Baptist Church House, 4, Southampton Row, London, WC1B 4AB.

worse before it gets better, but that is no cause for fear. Faithful men have met such a challenge before, and it can be done again. But one truth stands: the ministry for us will never be easy. One must learn to live with frustration, disappointment, plans delayed and hopes unfulfilled. During their college days men should come sharply to terms with this or life will become increasingly burdensome. Yet with prayer and patience, devotion and adaptability, a sense of humour and a genuine concern for the well-being of one's people in the light of the Lord's patience and compassion one will achieve much.

In one sense we have a great liberty; in another we are severely restricted. We cannot crack the economic or any other whip to compel that this or the other shall be done quickly to our liking. We work with voluntary labour. Our Doctrine of the Church allows us no other authority beyond that of our own character, integrity, sanctified common sense, moral suasion and spiritual leadership under the Sovereignty of the One Saving Lord. Nor should we wish for anything beyond that. We cannot change human nature. We are human from the moment we are conceived. But we can declare, with the Scriptures, history and personal experience to confirm us, that there is a power available in Christ to cleanse the heart, re-direct the mind and will, and to ennoble conversation, character and conduct: a New Creation in Christ.

THE DAYS THAT ARE . . .

We live in a multiple age: Scientific, Technological, Space, Secular, Permissive, Intense Nationalisms, and most threatening of all, Nuclear. The Christian, however, is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. He labours faithfully on in Christian Hope—the second of the three great Christian virtues. Two things should always be in our minds: the promise of Matthew 28.20; and the inspiration of Paul's unconquerable spirit, 2 Corinthians 4.8f. (Again, Weymouth's notes are helpful on this text).

Nor are we without encouraging signs. Many of our young people to-day have a deepening sense of Churchmanship and of personal responsibility for Christian witness, and there is also a willingness to become involved in the lives of people generally, to show the relevance of Christianity to the complex problems of housing, poverty, immigration, to political, economic, national and international affairs. These young people are on the Lord's side; they deserve every encouragement. To-day, too, in almost every sizeable town there is a United Fraternal and an effective Council of Churches—thirty years ago almost unthinkable. There is now a "Fellowship of the Spirit which is deeper than a fellowship of belief." The Church, if it will be truly His Church is not finished yet. And should an unbelieving world one day destroy itself, His words still stand: "How often I would . . . but ye would not."

RETROSPECT—primarily, it evokes gratitude. For a Christian home, for a faith firmly held by parents who knew much suffering and a poverty over many years better described as near destitution. For being spared during 1914-18 when so

many of one's friends were lost. For ways "miraculously" opened up to make a college training possible, for the inspiration to think, study and use one's critical faculties. For the work of the ministry, grim at times and with disappointments that still perplex one, but with the thought ever in mind that every difficult situation should be accepted as a challenge to be met with faith and hope. For sustaining grace, some small achievements, and lasting friendships. Above all, for the inestimable privilege of having had some little share in the Service Royal, now limited in retirement, but still continuing. LAUS DEO.

W. E. BOOTH TAYLOR

WHY BOTHER ABOUT CITIZENSHIP?

Writers who begin with a lengthy discussion of their title are always rather tiresome. It seems to cast a reflection on the title itself and by implication on those who gave it, or it casts doubts on the ability of the reader. But more often it casts doubt on the ability of the writer to get on with the job. Here we have a case in point. We all know perfectly well what is meant by the four words at the head of this article. Or do we?

As I visit Baptist churches and colleges one question is put to me time and again "What is meant by Citizenship?". The question comes so often that a suggestion is coming forward that the name of the Department should be changed to 'International and Social Responsibility'. That is our concern—the Christian responsibility to the society in which we live.

Let us look at the Society to which we have a responsibility.

The illegitimacy rate which until 1960 was stable at 5 in every 100 live births, in the next seven years increased to over 8%. An Abortion Act has been passed which, though it has solved some pressing problems, has created others. Divorces have risen from 32,000 in 1962 to over 50,000 in 1967. On 1st January, 1971 the new Divorce Law with its emphasis on the breakdown of marriage came into effect. There will certainly be an initial rise in the number of divorces, but in many cases the increase will be due to a recognition that some time ago a marriage irretrievably broke down. It is estimated that 3 million contraceptive pills were sold in 1969 and advice is now available for unmarried people on contraception. Of the forty-three films advertised in the West End of London in one week, twenty-nine were what are known as 'sexploitation' films. 'Oh Calcutta', which was not well received by the theatre critics, was followed by 'Council of Love' which only had a short run and then by . . . the Customs and Excise Authorities . . .

The Customs and Excise authorities confiscate a considerable number of books and films each year, both from America and the Continent. Now, obscene gramophone records are on sale. The 1959 Obscenity laws are so difficult to operate that

prosecutions are rare. Prosecution in any case tends to give the sort of publicity to pornography that one is seeking to avoid.

The 1960 Betting and Gaming Act allowed the situation to get out of hand, so much so that the 1968 Gaming Act was passed to establish some sort of control. In 1969, £285 million was spent on all forms of gambling.

On 31st December, 1969, 1488 drug addicts were receiving drugs controlled under the 'Dangerous drugs act'. Seven hundred of these were under 21. Next to coal gas, barbiturates are the most successful form of suicide and 25 to 26 million barbiturates are legitimately dispensed each year. The 'Misuse of Drugs' bill is now at Committee stage. The Bill will discriminate between 'hard' and 'soft' drugs and considerably increase the penalties on 'pushers'. In 1969 £3,504 million were spent on alcoholic drink and tobacco, an even more appalling figure when we realise that at the same time only £150 million was given to world development.

A survey carried out recently showed that 'the Monday morning hangover' may well cost the country £250 million a year.

The second report of the Royal College of Physicians talks about death as a result of cigarette smoking as reaching epidemic proportions.

It is now a well established fact that crime pays. The net profit to thieves in 1968 was about £42 million. Shop-lifting has become a major industry at £75 million a year and when this is added to the many acts of petty thieving an estimate of £300 million is not far out. In 1968, British Railways reported 20,000 ticket frauds. The offenders ranging from titled people to tramps. One television owner in fourteen has still not bought a licence nor have one in three of car radio owners. Cheating has become a common practice and dishonesty has been allowed to pay. Indictable crimes have risen from 451,435 in 1950 to 1,289,090 last year. Our prisons are overcrowded. Prisoners sleep three to a cell, making the reclaiming of prisoners much more difficult. £100 million would be needed to put things anything like right. This year, 2,000 innocent people will be sent to British prisons untried. After waiting in a cell, probably for over three months, they will be granted a trial, then acquitted—without a penny of compensation.

Over 190 families are awaiting housing in London alone and every night throughout the country nearly 4,000 families are divided because of lack of adequate accommodation.

By distortion, exaggeration or inventing alleged facts and figures about immigrants, fear and hatred have latched on to prejudice and created an explosive problem which demands action. The government has set up a Race Relations Board and a Community Relations Committee. The British Council of Churches Community Relations Unit begins its work this year. This year has been declared International Year for Action to combat racism and racial discrimination, and churches have been asked to set aside 21st March to observe the spirit of the year.

Violence is a growing phenomenon of our time and is a world-wide problem. Visitors to the United States report an atmosphere of violence in that country (a robbery with violence takes place on average every fifteen minutes in the city of New York alone, but we, in this country, have not escaped. The number of recorded offences against persons makes the most depressing reading—7,500 in 1954 to 37,800 in 1969.

In his book *The End of the Twentieth Century* Desmond King Hele writes—"however optimistically we view the present programmes of population control, I do not see how we can avoid a world population of 6,000 million by the end of the century. God knows what will happen then". The world economists, the Paddock brothers, do not give us that long. They tell us that the situation will have deteriorated so much that in the year 1975 we shall have a world famine.

Until quite recently there used to be talk about 'the third world' or as some would prefer it 'the two-thirds world', but just as people have got used to the phrase it is out of date. We ought to talk about the four-fifths world, most of whom live in Africa, Asia or Latin America. These are the people who only have one-fifth of the available wealth of the world to share between them. We also used to talk about the under-developed countries. We were then told to change our words and talk about developing countries. Now we must revert to the original 'under-developed'. Half the human family is under-nourished and between 300 and 500 million of their children are under nourished. That is, if they do not die—and about 9,000 children die every day—they will be retarded in growth physically and mentally. 95% of the world's poor are illiterate. In a world of plenty, the majority of mankind is economically and socially deprived and therefore politically impotent. There is a call to us to rejoin the human race. A Working Group is making a study of Baptists and World Poverty and it is hoped will report to the Assembly this year.

These are some of the things which are covered by the term 'Citizenship'. No doubt readers will find this a remarkable account of Society, if for only one reason—namely the things that have been omitted. Space would fail me if I were to tell of television, medical ethical problems, man's destruction and pollution of the created world.

Readers will also say, quite rightly, that this is an un-balanced look at society. It is so easy in the Citizenship Department to gain a jaundiced view. There are some signs that society is becoming more compassionate, more concerned, but it is these problems, some of which I have mentioned, that are subsummed under the heading 'Citizenship'.

Now, why bother? Why not simply concentrate on filling up our empty pews? Why not just gather around us a group of people who make confession of faith in Jesus Christ and build up our own church structures? Why not turn our churches into the 'ark of the saved' and let the remainder sink in the turmoil of the raging seas?

First of all, of course, this is impossible. All the factors I have mentioned affect our lives and the lives of the people to whom we are sent in mission. Though there is inestimable value

in helping one individual here and there or perhaps even ten or twenty who have found that they are inadequate to face contemporary life, what about the pressures in Society which cause them to fall? If we are really concerned for the individual, we must also be concerned with the society which makes the individual what he is.

But this is not the real reason why we are bothered. The inspiration for Citizenship work is not sociological, though we share much of our work with those who have caught that vision; the inspiration is theological. Lift up your heads and what do you see? We see Jesus. We do not as yet see all things in subjection under his feet, but we do see Jesus. We see him seated at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father. We see him crowned with glory and honour. We see him to whom a name has been given which is above every name. We see the Lord of all.

This is our message. He is Lord. A Lord to whom is committed all authority and power. He's got the whole world in his hand.

But with his Lordship we are given a completely new interpretation of that word. 'On the night on which he was betrayed' our Lord must have had many things he wanted to say to his disciples. He must have spent much time thinking about what his last message to them would be. Now the whole world knows his choice. He called them to a life of service—feet washing.

There are some people who think that he was being something other than Lord in that Upper Room; as though for a time he laid aside his Lordship as he laid aside his garment. Oh no! He was saying, this is what Lordship means, 'If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet'. The Lordship of the servant Christ was to reach its final consummation within a few hours of this acted parable, when on a cross outside the walls of the city the Lord was crucified and was raised from the dead to offer reconciliation to us and to all men.

This is the action of God which precedes all human service. The Lord of Glory has placed himself wholly and unreservedly in the service of man. Because of this he calls us also to a life of service. But what does it mean to serve Jesus Christ the Lord? (Jn 12:26) says, it means to follow him, and this obviously means his way of service—of total service—which may include even the surrender of life itself and must certainly include the readiness for it. To serve Jesus (Rom. 14:18) and therefore to serve the 'living and true God' (1 Thess. 1:9) includes the service that each should render to the other (Gal. 5:13) in submission 'one to another in the fear of God' (Eph. 5:21). This is not the way the Gentiles exercised Lordship 'but it shall not be so amongst you, but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister' (Mt. 26:25). It is in this way alone that one becomes a fellow-worker in the Kingdom of God.

God asks service from man as an action which is consequent on the fact that he belongs to God and on the basis of what God does. To belong to him who took upon himself the form of a servant means to take his yoke upon oneself—that

is, to serve with him in correspondence with his action and therefore amongst men and in the service of men. This is the test as to whether it is really the service of God—whether man is responding to the divine choice and not going his own way and living for himself. This is why we are 'bothered about Citizenship' because the Servant Lord calls us to live for others just as he is the God for all men.

DONALD D. BLACK