

The Annual Meeting.

PERHAPS every district in England has a Baptist romance hidden away; Leicestershire is fortunate in having at least three, brought to light, in having their scenes within easy reach of Leicester, and in having a splendid body of Baptist laymen who generously facilitated a visit of the Society, and told off Mr. Alfred Yates to make it a success. We had planned such an historical excursion round Halifax in connection with the Union meetings, but this is the first time it has ever been held. All tickets were sold on the first day of the meetings, much to the disappointment of many who delayed.

At the close of the fourth session of the Union, about ten charrs-à-banc, and as many private cars, filled rapidly, and started off for Arnesby. Here, to an assembly that crowded the building, the Rev. L. E. Bartlet, pastor, told briefly the early story of the church, known from 1672, sending to the Assembly of 1689, founder of Ramsey and Coventry, calling Robert Hall from Durham, sending out Robert Hall junior, Samuel Pearce, and two other founders of the B.M.S. Interesting extracts were read from the books of Robert Hall senior, whose *Helps to Zion's Travellers* is still valued. The meeting was closed with prayer by Dr. Clifford, our Vice-President.

Sutton-in-the-Elms was the next objective. This began as a General Baptist Church, signing the Midland Confession of 1651, but by 1707 joined the Midland Particular Association, which met that year at Worcester. Isaac Woodman came in 1749, and next year application was made to generous Londoners for help to build a meeting-house in Leicester for the members resident there. By 1756 this was completed, in Harvey Lane, and the venture was so successful that four years later the members were dismissed to become a separate church, under Christopher Hall, brother of Robert. There were many other points of interest which time did not allow to be expatiated upon, but the welcome by the Rev. J. Newton and his Church was appreciated.

The long caravan streamed across Bosworth Field, and met another contingent, which had come direct from Leicester to Barton-in-the-Beans. Despite this large accession, the Church provided all with a welcome meal. The story of the Church was told to a section only; it shows yet another type of Baptist. A footman of the great Countess of Huntingdon began preaching, and by 1745 there was a branch of the Methodist movement. Study of the Bible led the band to believers' baptism; the two

Samuel Deacons and other leaders spread the word far, and by 1770 this group formed the nucleus of the New Connexion of General Baptists, into which came, one by one, all the older evangelical General Baptists, till the network spread from Burnley to Ramsgate, from Boston to Rushall.

The Annual Meeting of the Society took place here, under the presidency of Principal H. Wheeler Robinson. The Reports by Secretary and Treasurer were submitted, as below, and adopted. Officers and Committee for 1922-3 were elected as appear on the cover. Hearty thanks were given to the Church at Barton, and to Mr. Alfred Yates, as representing the Leicester laymen. At the close of the meeting members returned to the city in time for the Mayor's Reception.

Committee's Report. We are glad to announce that the printers of the Baptist Union have at length completed the second volume of the Bibliography, cataloguing all materials, in manuscript or in print, known for Baptist history within the Empire, from 1777 to 1837. Copies have been supplied to all guinea subscribers.

It has as yet been impossible to publish the small history of the Seventh-Day Baptists which was accepted years ago. Mr. Langley's history of the Lincolnshire Baptists is nearing completion, but the question of publication has not yet been discussed. Nor has any definite step been taken as to the publication of the Baptist History which is now ready for the press; but an estimate for printing is ready for the new committee to consider.

Your committee, however, has enlarged its plans in another direction. The first series of *Transactions* closed with 1921, by which time seven volumes were completed. The new series is merged in a fresh publication—the *Baptist Quarterly*; while Dr. Whitley continues to superintend the antiquarian side of our work, Dr. Dakin has undertaken to obtain articles which will apply the lessons of history to present-day problems. In view of the enlarged quantity of printed matter and the diversified quality, it has been necessary to raise the annual subscription to ten shillings; and it will also be necessary to obtain many new subscribers. We trust also that many of the guinea subscribers will continue to contribute on that scale, even though for the present no promise can be made of additional publications.

The Society's library is frequently referred to, and proves of increasing value. Researchers often appeal for information, and they have always been helped. It would be well if more country churches, such as those we visit to-day, would investigate their relics, and see whether ancient libraries could not be turned to better account by being entrusted to the care of the Society, whether as a gift or on loan.

The finances of the Society have been superintended to the

close of the year by Dr. Thirtle, who submits the following statement, examined and found correct by Mr. Harold Knott, our auditor :—

RECEIPTS DURING 1921.

	£	s.	d.
Balance forward from 1920	11	14	0
Subscriptions for 1921	48	8	0
Vote from Winchmore Hill Church ...	8	8	0
Proceeds of Sales	4	7	6
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	£72	17	6

PAYMENTS DURING 1921.

	£	s.	d.
Balance due for Printing in 1920	14	17	6
Printing on Account for 1921	40	0	0
Stationery, Printing, and Postage, ...	2	9	2
Balance in hand	15	10	10
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	£72	17	6

LIABILITIES AGAINST £15 10 10.

	£	s.	d.
Balance of Printing for 1921	23	4	7
<i>Bibliography</i> , Vol. II., say 44 copies ...	38	10	0

The Mind for Peace.

THE Christians duty "to seek peace and pursue it" has never been seriously in question, and is certainly not likely to be after the bitter experience of the last few years. Indeed, many to-day, who would scarcely call themselves Christian, are convinced that peace is the ultimate destiny of our race, and are willing to give consideration to any plan which seems to offer it. But there comes the difficulty. Is there any plan? To some the League of Nations gives hope, and they toil for it bravely; but on the other hand there are others, equally ardent, who echo the words of Phillip Gibbs: "The spirit has gone out of it. It was born without a soul." Phillip Gibbs himself talks about "an International League of Goodwill," comprised of individuals of all nations who will work for good and give a call to humanity independently of statesmen or schemes. He pins his faith in what he calls "a union of democracy across the frontiers of hate." At the same time, even those who have faith in the present League, are equally insistent in their declaration that it depends entirely on the earnestness of the peoples,