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Chowns: Christians and Citizens.

THE denomination has just lost a man who served us well, but whose service was not limited to our boundaries. The Tract Society, the Bible Society, the Free Church Council, the Federal Council, attest his wide interest in all Christian work. The Liberal Association and the Total Abstinence Association show that he was awake to public claims. It was a family heritage, and it is worth while gathering up some of the ancestral traits.

Two hundred and seventy years ago, a number of General Baptists from churches in several counties, met on New Year's Day at Northampton. The crowning mercy of the battle of Worcester, completing the work of Naseby, had removed all immediate danger from Royalists or from Scots. There was leisure to attend to internal development. And while the Baptists had doubtless come together chiefly to attend to denominational business, for Associations were very active in those days, yet they could not separate without thought on public affairs. So they drew up a letter to Oliver Cromwell, in very frank terms; the gist of it was that it was time to curb his ambition, and to devote himself to the humbler task of redressing grievances. It is most refreshing to read their plain speech, and to see that there was none of the almost slavish adulation to be found too often to-day in Free Church references to Cromwell. These Baptists were well aware of the warts upon his character.

Among the churches which sent this letter were those which we call to-day Friar Lane, Mountsorrel, Arnesby, Foxton, Ravens-thorpe. Every such church had members in a dozen villages, and we may be sure that Moulton was represented at Northamp-ton. And thus John Chown, the weaver, newly come there from Spratton, was learning that to be a good Christian includes being a good citizen, watching public affairs, and warning public men.

With the Restoration humble villagers could do little but live and endure. Even to-day it means something to run counter to the local custom and decline the services of the clergyman; but it meant much more then. The parish registers at Moulton record plenty of Chowns being married and buried, and even being born, but they add such notes as "unbaptized and excommunicated." John Chown owned a Bible, and when the vicar pressed him to conform, he took a firm stand and replied that he found nothing about infant baptism in the Bible. A family bred under such auspices was bound to be sturdy. When the Toleration

Act made it possible to hold meetings, another Chown certified his house for public worship, and conducted service for his fellow Baptists. John Painter and William Painter and the other ministers of the scattered church round Moulton must have rejoiced in such staunch adherents.

There came a time, however, when no General Baptist could be found any longer to shepherd the little flock. It dropped to pieces, some members joining the church at College Lane, a few miles away. In 1784 a Particular Baptist church was formed at Moulton by College Lane, and four Chowns were among the first members. A young minister was told off from Olney, and tried to eke out a living by cobbling shoes and by teaching school; but his heart was not in those occupations, and his success in either was very problematical, so he moved away to Harvey Lane. The village school fell vacant, and a Churchman would, of course, have the preference. William Chown broke the record of his family, and conformed. He had not lost the piety of his ancestors, and he published a tract, "A Warning to Sabbath-Breakers." The joys of authorship prompted him to issue a grammar; and for an Anglican, forty subscribers were forthcoming to help him put out some poems. Such an exception enables us to realize what strength of character was needed to resist the constant attraction to the Established Church.

Two younger brothers did hold to the faith of their fathers. Now Thomas Wood of Moulton had joined College Lane, and had there met William Lawrence, elder of the church. He lived at Kingsthorpe, which village was strong in Baptists, and had sent a pastor to Folkestone. While they were on the roll of College Lane, they wanted a resident minister, and they offered John Chown ten shillings a week to come amongst them. But even an increase to twenty-seven shillings did not enable him to cover expenses, and he went a year later to Stogumber. They recalled him in 1814, and he built up the local work till a church was formed in nine years, independent of College Lane. In 1827 he went to take charge of another daughter church, at Harpole; this pastorate he resigned at Lady Day, 1837.

Another of the family was sent to John Sutcliff at Olney for training, and in 1811 C. Chown began a short pastorate at Burford. John, of Kingsthorpe, had a son John, who adopted the staple trade of the neighbourhood, and earned his living as a shoemaker. But like Nehemiah Cox, of Cranfield, he was anxious to be minister as well. On the edge of the county was a little cause at Byfield, once linked with Chipping Warden, Horley, and Banbury, as one church. It shows the tenacity of the family when we know that he agreed to shepherd this little flock. Every Sunday morning he tramped twelve miles to Daventry, where he might pause to greet some distant cousins,

then another six to Byfield for the day's services. Monday was spent in visiting the scattered flock, and in the return journey; and next day he sat down again at his bench. Some men are content with giving a tithe of their money: he gave two-sevenths of his time.

With such parentage, what is to be expected? One son, Henry, devoted himself to the home church, which he served as deacon; and his son in civil life is to be found on the bench and in the council chamber of the city of which Kingsthorpe is now practically a part. Another son of John is yet to be found, with the joy of seeing his own son secretary of that same church at Kingsthorpe.

The church is proud of the family. When the chapel was enlarged, the corner-stone commemorated another of its children, descended through Thomas, in another line, Joseph Parbery Chown. There was some thought of his taking up the profession adorned by Lorimer in America, by Sheridan Knowles in England; but Milne of Prince's Street induced him to consecrate his elocutionary gifts to the direct service of God. Across at Ravenshorpe, where the Baptist church had joined in that admonitory letter to Cromwell, the first Particular Baptist minister was ending a quarter of a century's work, and retiring. Young Joseph was invited on trial, and though the trial was long, the church was at last satisfied. It is often harder to please a hamlet than a city. Another eighteen months convinced the pastor that he was not properly equipped; a fine voice is something, but a message is more. He consulted John Turland Brown, the new minister at College Lane, and made application to Horton College at Bradford, then under James Acworth, with whom was associated Francis Clowes. They welcomed the opportunity of a man above the average—in ability as well as years.

He learned much from these three men. Brown was a founder of the Liberation Society, and took an active part in all politics. Acworth was the leader of Yorkshire Baptists, and played his part beyond the county; even on his retirement he turned to influence the borough to which he removed. Clowes was a thinker and a writer, with gifts devoted soon to journalism. With such examples, Joseph Parbery Chown learned much and fast. When the pastorate of the second church in Bradford became vacant, his course was shortened at its urgent request, and he entered on a great career for over a quarter of a century. The denomination profited richly, with a new church at Hallfield, a new building for Sion; but the town profited more. In those days there was no compulsory education; he saw the need of developing Sunday schools, and did his part in starting Bradford on that career which keeps her in the front rank of education. Lectures were popular, and Mann of Shipley had done

much; but Chown did more, and soon the great St. George's Hall would be filled every time he was announced. Temperance was not then recognized as much more than the fad of a few; but he threw himself into the battle, not on mere utilitarian or financial or social grounds, but as a Christian. It is no wonder that when Bloomsbury needed a new leader, he was called to transfer his energies southward. But London is too big for a man to exercise the sway in it that he can in a town that has a pride in itself. And thenceforth his influence was more concentrated within the denomination, which honoured itself by calling him to the presidency nearly forty years ago.

His only sister remained in Northampton, and there she, too, devoted herself to temperance work. She was a founder of the Women's Total Abstinence Union, and throughout an abnormally long life gave thought and energy to this and kindred work.

Of later generations we will not speak here. But such a record may show the value of our ancestors, the power of example and training, the gain to a city when men who render to God what is God's, render also to Caesar what is Caesar's. Every generation, from 1648, has seen at least one member in the ministry; the present can show members in several branches of national service.

The Message of Amos and its Bearing on Modern Problems.

IT is sometimes said that we need to-day to get away from the Old Testament, and concentrate on the Gospels. If this means that we must avoid the error of thinking that all parts of our Bibles represent religious ideals of the same validity and of equal authority, then nothing could be more self-evident. But if it means that we can disregard the spiritual history of Israel, and forget that when the full revelation of God came in bodily form, He came as a Jew, then few things could be more dangerous. There were certain features of Judaism which Jesus adopted so thoroughly as to say little or nothing about them. Such were its ethics and its monotheism, and as we are in danger of forgetting that in His day the Jew was the only person in the world to whom there was only one God—for the monotheism of the philosophers was hardly religion—and that no one else ever thought of connecting the ideas of God and righteousness as He did. And it may well be that amongst those whose

teaching Jesus tacitly adopted for Himself, we may find worked out problems analogous to those of our own day. From some points of view the Prophets are strikingly modern, and few more so than Amos. His message is worth studying.

To appreciate the first of the prophets whose words have come down to us in our Bibles, it is necessary to look some centuries further back to the time when Israel first entered the Promised Land, and when she was still struggling to make good her foothold. She had had her own religion in the desert. Of its details we are in a large measure ignorant, but there seems to be a real consensus on the part of the prophets that it was without sacrifice and practically without ritual. There can be little doubt that it was of a type more or less familiar to us from other peoples on a similar level of civilization. That civilization was essentially pastoral and nomadic. The wealth of the people consisted largely, if not entirely, in flocks and herds, and the ordinary occupation of Israel must have been that of the wandering tribes who have no settled home and who move about wide spaces of country in order to find suitable pasturage for their animals. In so far as there was any organization, it was that of the tribe or clan, sometimes associated with others like it, and sometimes living alone, "with its hand against every man, and every man's hand against it." Each tribe had its own God, and the characteristic feature of the work of Moses was that it was he who had introduced the tribes to their God and unified them under a single faith. The name of their God, self-revealed through Moses, was Yahweh (camouflaged in the English Bible under the name "the LORD"—in small capitals), and He claimed their whole and absolute devotion. They were the people of Yahweh, and Yahweh was the God of Israel. But this did not preclude a belief in the existence of other gods, and there are indications in the Old Testament which show that long after the settlement in Canaan they were prepared to recognize the reality of the gods of the nations round them, and to accept their claims on other nations. But for Israel there was only one God. However real others might be, it was Yahweh alone with whom they as a people stood in immediate contact.

The conquest of Canaan proved to be a supreme test of their religious loyalty. They entered into a civilization on a higher plane than their own. They found men living in cities of brick and stone instead of tents, making homes which remained unmoved for generations, instead of wandering over "no man's land," cultivating corn and vines and olives instead of merely tending sheep. They came into the midst of a people well advanced in the arts and crafts; their terror of "chariots of iron" is significant of their outlook. Gradually they exterminated these people or absorbed them; little by little they learnt their methods and their

arts. Adopting these things, it would not have been surprising if they had adopted their religion and their gods as well. How real the danger of their doing so actually was can be gleaned from the words of the prophets. Yahweh had served them well enough in the desert. He had led them through strange paths and found for them water and herbage, the two primary needs of a pastoral people. He had fought their battles, and was renowned as a warrior God. But, with their limited experience and views they may well be forgiven if they asked themselves from time to time whether He could grow corn. That this question was asked—and answered in the negative—is clear from passages like Hosea ii. 9, which show that even at the very end of the northern monarchy, men failed to realize the true source of those aids that the farmer needs to secure success. Also there was a certain amount of fear lest the gods of the dispossessed nations should turn vengeful. This was well illustrated in the case of Yahweh Himself, when the "mixed peoples" planted by the Assyrians were plagued by lions, and had to send for Yahweh-priests from Assyria to teach them the right method of worshipping Him. It is true that in the main they learnt their lesson, in bitter suffering. But even then they were far from understanding its implications, and thought of Yahweh as the Canaanites had thought of their gods. Worship was continued at the "high places," those immemorial sanctuaries attached to each town and village, where men had averted the hostility and secured the favour of their local gods. Nor does it seem that the ritual was greatly changed. The ancient forms of Canaanite sacrifice were still observed, though offered to Yahweh. The common meal was still held in honour of the God, though He bore a new name, and in it He and His people were still believed to share. His altar was still the refuge for the runaway and the criminal. Men still brought to His priests their difficulties and disputes for settlement by divine sentence, though that sentence was now passed, not by a local, but by a national God. And it would seem that the more terrible and the grosser elements in Canaanite religion were maintained, and the Israelites would commit at the shrines, in all the odour of sanctity, acts for which they would have been stoned to death had they been guilty of them in secular life.

Such conditions are far from being unique. In many parts of Asia, where people are nominally Buddhists, the old degraded heathenism persists, thinly overlaid with Buddhist terminology. And in parts of Europe—till the Reformation perhaps the whole of Europe—the ancient religions remained almost unchanged, save by the substitution of the names of Christian saints for pagan gods. But in Israel there seems to have been one saving feature. Culture and civilization were very unequally

spread over the country, and in the wilder parts, on the borders of the desert, in the sparse vegetation and scanty water supply which made for the continuance of pastoral habits, the genuine Israelite faith and the primitive character of Yahweh maintained their hold. It is a striking fact that the two earliest champions of righteousness, Elijah and Amos, were both men of the desert border.

Instead, then, of a complete "syncretism" such as is found to-day in Tibet or Brittany, there seem to have been two forms of Israelite religion existing side by side, the one simpler, more primitive, but immeasurably purer, the other more highly developed, more highly civilized, but at the same time spiritually weak and morally degraded almost beyond belief.

Yet it may not be wholly true to say that the morality of Tekoa was "higher" than that of Samaria. The ethics of a simple people may be purer just because they have never been exposed to the temptations involved in the development of a more complicated social order. But from certain points of view there can be no doubt that the simpler life is the purer. Amos had never in his life been exposed to the dangers accompanying a fair amount of leisure, a luxurious standard of comfort, and the possibility of great wealth. One may then fairly assume that the community in which he was brought up was free from the darker features of the religious life of northern Israel. We have to picture to ourselves the startling contrast presented to his eyes when first he came into contact with Samaritan luxury. He brought with him a freedom of spirit and an independence of outlook which saved him from the numbing influence of familiarity. It is not easy for men brought up in a community to stand out from it and form a fair judgment upon it, even when they are conscious that things are wrong. They are apt to be blinded by association, and oppressed by the knowledge that they cannot escape from personal complicity. This helps us to appreciate the full greatness of Hosea and Jeremiah, both grander personalities than even Amos. For of him this is emphatically not true. He had been accustomed all his life to the wide spaces of the South, to the rolling hills on whose broad slopes travellers are so rare that the presence of two together can be no accident but must have been prearranged. To him the sky had been a dome of expansive grandeur in whose blue depths he had watched the flight of the vulture to where some dying creature, it might be miles away, had caught its glance, and it had grown in one rapid swoop from a circling speck to the largest of winged things. He had heard and understood the hollow roar of the lion as he leaped upon his prey in the thickets of the marshy bottoms. He had met the bear, the most dreaded of all four-footed beasts, and had seen the snakes coiled in the

holes of crumbling walls. The things that are most familiar to him are the things of the out-door world, and from his various experience of nature he comes to the complicated and artificial life of the great city with an amazing clarity of vision which pierces far below the surface and penetrates the most attractive disguise. It was, perhaps, only such a man as this who could see the rotting civilization of Samaria as it really was, and could give to her habits and customs the right and proper names.

For there could be no doubt as to the rottenness of that society into whose midst Amos found himself at Bethel. Years of cruel border warfare had tended to depress and impoverish the tillers of the soil. The comparative freedom which had been enjoyed since the decline of Damascus brought little relief to the "lower" classes. There had flowed into the great cities a wealth which was no longer the product of the exertions of the citizens themselves, applied directly to the natural resources of their own land. It would seem that almost all the markets of the known world were now open to Israel, and from her central position, holding the bridge that leads from Asia to Africa, she could levy a formal or informal toll on all the merchandise that passed from one continent to the other. It is clear that there grew up at the same time the perilous habit of making money for its own sake. Farming is always liable to need financial loans, though it is likely that there had always been some restriction on the extent to which the owner of money might profit by his neighbour's misfortunes. But such limits, if they ever existed, were no longer observed. The small farmer who failed to redeem his mortgage lost his land. A step further, and he became the serf, the absolute property of the wealthy capitalist. Land-grabbing of this kind was one of the crimes most fiercely denounced by Amos and Isaiah, and the former has bitter complaints of the people who rack-rented their tenants. As not infrequently happens in the East, the rich had the legal machinery at their disposal. It would seem that a mortgage could not be foreclosed without an appeal to a court of some kind. No form of social wrong is more common in eastern lands than the corruption of justice. The venality of the judge is one of the most prominent features of Amos' protest. Even the smallest bribe—a pair of shoes would do—was enough to secure the condemnation and the enslavement of a poor man. It is possible that men sometimes even went so far as to make a claim of this kind when there was no loan at all, and the verdict had not the slightest justification either in fact or in law.

Hand in hand with the oppression of the poor went the shallow luxury of the rich. Greedy, selfish, and shameless women, tasteless domestic ostentation, Jingoism, and national conceit—

these were the most striking elements in the ordinary life of the townfolk as Amos saw them. Further, the demands of religion exercised no restraining influence. On the contrary, the claims of worship were not seldom invoked to shelter some unusually iniquitous conduct. The common law of Israel provided that if a man's outer garment, the simple robe that serves the oriental peasant as a cloak, a cushion, a mattress, and a coverlet, were taken as security against a debt, it must be restored to the owner at night, lest he suffer too greatly from the cold. But there was an exception to the law, and if the creditor could make the excuse that he needed the article for some sacred ceremony such as "incubation," he felt no obligation to return it. Violence and oppression were held to be justified if they were the means whereby wine could be secured for the sacramental meals at the shrines. Fornication—and that in some of its most loathsome forms—was practised in connection with the worship of Yahweh Himself. If anybody was morally guilty in the matter, it was not the man who did the act, but the God who was supposed to demand it. Even where the cultus was not stained with the grosser forms of iniquity, it was an external thing, a matter at best of elaborate ritual, the rigid observance of outward forms and feasts, with no spiritual or even mental consecration to correspond. Of the conception of religion as a personal and spiritual relationship with a morally holy God, Amos found no trace in the sanctuaries of his day.

It seemed, indeed, as if nothing could arouse the conscience of Israel. Disasters that befell other people were attributed to the whimsical patriotism of the national God. No honest critic could secure a hearing. Blow after blow had fallen upon Israel herself, yet she utterly failed to connect her misfortunes with Yahweh's passion for righteousness. Famine, drought, blight, epidemic disease, earthquake, eclipse—if these things were recognized as the work of Yahweh, they were regarded only as a demand for more strenuous religiosity. If attention were called to the facts, and to their ethical implications, the bold speaker was promptly charged with treasonable aims. An honest prophet was outside the experience of the men of Jeroboam II. For nearly a century, when the inspired man had interfered with public matters, his motives had been political. The revolution which had placed on the throne that very dynasty to which Jeroboam himself belonged had been engineered by the "prophetic" party, and probably Amos himself was only protected by the superstition which held his ecstasy sacrosanct. The spiritual starvation with which the southern prophet threatened the people had already been their lot for three generations past. The faculty for God had been suppressed to the point of atrophy.

Amos saw and understood all this. But if one would see his

full greatness, it will be necessary to see him not only in contrast with those whom he condemned, but equally in contrast with others who stood as he did for the purer and simpler outlook of more primitive Israel. For in his instinct for a better life and in his sense of iniquity, Amos did not stand alone. The syncretism which had given religious sanction to the worst sins of Israel, had naturally affected most those who were concerned with the operations of agriculture, and lived in the more fertile lands. In the wilder hills where Israel had first established herself, in the great desert spaces which nurtured the hardier type to which Amos himself belonged, there were still those who clung to the earlier and more truly Mosaic form of religion. This double tradition of Israelite faith is not always obvious, but there are indications of its existence. It was not an accident that Elijah himself, the forerunner of the great ethical prophets, came also out of the wild. And even in the heart of the land there were tribes and groups who stood for the purer cult of nomadic times. Such were the Rechabites and the Nazirites, who, in spite of temptation and possibly persecution, still clung to their testimony.

The Nazirite and the Rechabite, however, had one cure for the sickness of Israel, Amos had another. To them the evil was civilization, and was only to be cured by the most drastic social surgery. Both refused to touch the vine or its products. It does not appear that they had any protest to utter against drunkenness—one hears no word against palm-wine. But the vine was the most obvious article of cultivation, and that which most fully implied a community settled on the land. Razors were not usual in the desert, so the Nazirite let his hair grow. Pastoral tribes lived in tents, not in solidly built houses, so the Rechabite eschewed brick and stone. To him all this elaboration and complication of life was something strange, foreign to the genius of Israel, and therefore to be avoided by all true worshippers of Yahweh. The difficulties could only be met by abolishing the whole scheme of life as practised in Samaria, and reverting to the habits of the desert even in a rich and fertile land. The newer manners had proved a source of temptation: righteousness could only be attained by the disappearance of that temptation.

Such a position was only natural to an honest, enthusiastic, but short-sighted man. It is inevitable that fresh conditions of life should bring with them fresh possibilities of evil. It is almost equally inevitable that men who stand for righteousness should see in the new conditions the *fons et origo mali*, the spring of all the rottenness and corruption of their time. It is impossible not to sympathize with such a feeling. It is all very well to stigmatize it as narrow-minded, but it does make for character, and it does help to keep alive the sense for goodness.

No doubt it may develop into casuistry and superficial hypocrisy—perhaps worse dangers than the more blatant forms of wrong—but it does testify to the existence of a moral ideal. Yet its methods are conservative and even retrograde. It ignores the truth that wherever there is real life there is also growth. There is an evolutionary element in social as well as in physical life, and in the long run the one is no more to be checked than the other. Humanity moves forwards and not backwards. A social order may come to a catastrophic end, but it cannot retrace its steps. It is at best only a piece of machinery, and it is entirely dependent for its efficiency on the motive force which lies behind it. If that be right, the machinery suitable to it will in time be produced by natural means. Though men do not commonly realize it, each new stage of society is an experiment, an adventure, and safety can only be secured, not by returning to the paths already forsaken, but by adapting a developing spiritual life to the needs and conditions of the new discovery. Such a state of affairs as that which confronted Amos is the result of a growth in the externals of social and political life with which the soul of the community has failed to keep pace. As Hosea put it a generation later, "Ephraim was a cake not turned"—cooked on one side and raw on the other. The true cure was not to attempt a reversion to a more elementary society—as the Nazirite and the Rechabite strove to do—but to apply to the new order the spiritual and moral principles which had made for the highest success in the old.

It is in the appreciation of this truth that the real greatness of Amos lies. He did not denounce the system as a system; he said that it must be worked on principles which Israel had already received from Yahweh in the desert. The supreme failure was not that Israel had learnt to plough and Samaria to trade, but that neither had seen that Yahweh was concerned in both activities. In the desert the highest religious and ethical conduct might consist in offering the first-born, in sacrificing the Passover, in bringing tithes, in not seething a kid in its mother's milk, in observing the elementary laws of property, and in maintaining the obligations of blood-relationship. These things were not wrong in themselves, but, unless supplemented by something more, they were quite inadequate to the conditions of Palestine. They were expressions of principles, natural and suitable enough to the nomadic life; these same principles must be crystallised out of that life, and redissolved in conduct which would make it possible to apply them to the market and the farm.

First and foremost amongst those principles is the truth of the universality of Yahweh. This is not necessarily monotheism, though it must in time develop into monotheism. But men are slow to realize the implications and logical results of their own

views, and it may well be that many years must pass before Israel could attain to the more finished theological and philosophical doctrine of a single God. But Amos certainly did proclaim the truth that Yahweh is supreme. He mentions other gods, but always with a certain contempt. Real or not, they were inferior, and Israel should have nothing to do with them. On the other hand, Yahweh had made the whole world. He had set the heavenly bodies in their orbits, and still controlled their movements. The expanse of earth and the dome of heaven were alike the products of His activity. All human history, too, was the outcome of His will. He was interested in Israel, it is true, but He was equally concerned with other nations. Even the great racial migrations were undertaken at His behest, though those most concerned in them might be ignorant of the fact. Still more did He appear as the vindicator of universal moral laws. He would punish the neighbouring tribes, not merely as the patriot-God, for wrongs done to Israel, but for crimes which violated the natural laws of humanity, whoever the victims might be. His special relationship to His own people meant, not privileges to do wrong, but responsibility to do right. It was Israel who must adapt herself to this conception of a universal moral law, not Yahweh who must consider first the material advantage of Israel. If she failed here—and this is the real essence of the teaching of Amos—she lost her only *raison d'être*, and, so far from protecting her, Yahweh would Himself ordain her ruin. Every nation, every sphere of life was subject to these supreme laws, and the real function of Israel amongst the civilized peoples of the world was to work them out in common life. Sacrifice, as compared with this, was insignificant, and without it a mockery. Religion consists of getting into touch with God, and it is impossible to get into touch with a God who is supreme righteousness without at least making righteousness an essential element in the religious ideal.

Nowhere does the contrast between Amos and his contemporaries appear more strongly than in his conception of the Day of Yahweh. Israel was looking for some final and supernatural revelation of her God in power, when He should overthrow her enemies and give her all that her heart could desire. To Amos also the Day was to be a revelation. But it was a revelation of Yahweh as God of Righteousness, not necessarily as God of Israel. And in so far as Israel failed to reach the standard of righteousness, it was to be a day of calamity for her. She would find herself hurried from one danger into another, till the final stroke fell upon her from which there was no recovery. Thus would Yahweh be vindicated, once and for all, by the destruction of the very people whom He had chosen to be His instruments in making Him known to the world. Samaria's one hope was to

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give the moral character of Yahweh its place in her social and religious life. That chance she would not take, and though the fatal blow was withheld for a generation, it fell in the end as surely as the autumn followed the summer and the summer the spring.

Few ages have needed the warning and substance of the message of Amos more than our own. In the course of the last century we have passed from the agricultural stage of society into the industrial one. No thoughtful man to-day can regard the position of society with equanimity. On every hand we are being asked whether the Church really has a message for the times, and the answer is too often in the negative. As a matter of fact, there is no message for the times except that which the Church has to give—or ought to have. There are those who would say that the whole system is wrong, so utterly wrong that there is nothing for it but to crush it to powder and to mix therefrom a clay with which a new order can be built up. But it is never the system that is wrong in the last resort. It may be very far from being right, but at worst it is a symptom and not the disease itself. We have the cure in our own hands—the one thing the Church has had to offer the world since she first came into being, “God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” As with Amos, so with us, the principles are eternal; what is needed is a new application of them. As ever, we have but one thing to proclaim, “Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.” But it may well be that we need a fresh insight into this truth, a more ample social and moral interpretation of it. A statement of the implications of the Cross which could work without disaster in a simpler social stage may be calamitous in a more complex economic order unless expounded afresh to meet the new conditions. To-day’s political, economic, and industrial chaos may be the last struggle of a perishing civilization to maintain its existence, or it may be the birth-throes of a nobler age. In large measure the decision as between these alternatives lies with the Church. Nothing can save the world but Christ, and the question which Amos brings before us is whether we, who claim his name, can bring His healing and saving power to bear upon our sick and dying age. If we can, the flowers of life will once more bloom to fruit; if we cannot, the end is sure, and the tree of human society must break out again below the broken, withered branch into new, God-given life.

THEODORE H. ROBINSON.

The Wallis House, 1792.

Substance of an Address at Kettering, October 2, 1922.

THE Baptist Missionary Society can say now, with Jacob, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years." But she will by no means go on to lament that they have been few and evil; she may say, with the honest pride of Isaiah, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs from the Lord of hosts." If we cast our eyes back over the years preceding the birth of the Society, we may discern five lines along which Divine preparation was being made in Northamptonshire, so that Kettering should see the actual origin:— The General Baptist tradition of evangelizing; A group of men from other counties; The conversion of men from other communions; An Association that blended these elements; A family that offered its home for a birth-place.

I. THE GENERAL BAPTIST TRADITION OF EVANGELIZING. The first Baptists in those parts were General Baptists, who held that the grace of God was really meant for all men in general, not only for particular people. Thirty of their Churches published in 1651 a statement of their faith and practice, which has in it the seed of the seven resolutions at Kettering. For they declared "that God requireth or commandeth service of men, answerable to those gifts of grace which he of his good pleasure hath bestowed upon them: that it is the gracious pleasure of God, that Jesus Christ, his life, death and resurrection, should be made known unto men, and by men, as arguments, or motives, to allure or provoke them to live holy, and righteous in this present world."

Slight changes of name and of doctrine have too long obscured the fact that the principle of missions was asserted in 1651 by some of the very churches whose sons reasserted it in 1792, known to-day as Oakham, Morcott, Wymeswold, Mountsorrel, Whitwick, Friar Lane, Earl Shilton, Sutton in the Elms, Arnsby, Long Buckby, West Haddon. Those men practised what they asserted. We have the minutes of a meeting at Peterborough, when, after sending so far afield that they planted churches at Canterbury and Eythorn, they planned a long evangelistic tour in the midlands. And so there were soon to be found groups of these Baptists every few miles round Leicester,

meeting in farm-houses and cottages, edified by one another, and shepherded by a "Messenger" or General Superintendent living at Ravensthorpe. Orthodox and fervent as they always were, they yet had two weaknesses: they were slow to build meeting-houses, they were reluctant to train ministers. And so, one by one, their churches adopted the sterner creed of Calvin, disseminated from Northampton and Kettering, and passed over to a new fellowship which did value education, and into which they carried their steady custom of evangelizing. The process may be illustrated by the churches at Moulton and Long Buckby, with the allied families of Stanger and Staughton.

Moulton contained General Baptists from 1648 at least, and they swarmed in the hamlet west and north. Among them settled a Harringworth farmer, William Stanger, married to a daughter of John Staughton, at Blisworth: their fathers had both been in prison for their faith. He was soon chosen to superintend all the local work, and presently induced the Assembly of the whole denomination to meet regularly at Stony Stratford till 1732. Their son, Thomas, was called to be a preacher, and we hear of services at Ravenstone, East Haddon, Long Buckby, Walgrave, Scaldwell, Brickworth, Spratton, Isham and Harringworth. At Moulton itself he promoted a meeting-house in 1750, and while still supporting himself by his farm, was chosen pastor. When he died in 1768, no successor could be found, his co-pastor could no longer manage the out-stations at Long Buckby and Ravensthorpe, and the local Association disintegrated. His son John had been sent to a difficult post in Sevenoaks, and could not desert it, and an attempt he made to get kindred spirits to labour at Moulton proved abortive. The widow did her best to keep the place open, but on her death some radical change became necessary. Now John had made friends with Calvinists, and found that dead as London was, a better spirit had arisen in Olney and Kettering. So in 1785 he agreed to hand over the meeting-house, and he soon had the pleasure of joining with Ryland, Sutcliff, and Fuller in laying hands on William Carey as the first Particular Baptist pastor of the church at Moulton, which at once joined the Particular Baptist Association.

Glance down the other line. John Staughton of Blisworth had a son, Zacharias, who became elder of the General Baptist Church in Leicester that had signed the confession of 1651; he was reported to the Bishop in 1709 as teaching in Friar Lane. His son William married Ann Sutton in 1742, and settled at Long Buckby, where he became one of the first trustees of a meeting-house. His death in 1780 proved a turning-point for this church also, for his son, Sutton Staughton, had left the village for Coventry, the rest of the family had gone also, and

ther was no one left to continue the work under General Baptist auspices. The influence of the elder Ryland and the elder Hall told here also; though the church did not join the Association, Rippon reckoned it as Particular in 1792, and it is well known that Sutton Staughton's brilliant son, William, was one of the original subscribers to the Particular Baptist Missionary Society, showing thus the persistence of the General Baptist custom of evangelizing. That custom, be it marked, had been shown on wider fields than England. In 1714 two Messengers had been sent to Virginia, in 1739 to Carolina, and again in 1758 and in 1772. It was General Baptists who first sent evangelists overseas, when Whitefield lay in his cradle, and Wesley was at Charterhouse.

Yet these churches and these families illustrate not merely the value of the evangelistic tradition, but also the weakness of a mere evangelism divorced from education. Our Lord's charge to the apostles included not only the proclamation of the gospel to all men, but also the impartation to them of a training in all His ways. Because the General Baptists forgot this, their work always tended to limp. They won disciples, but did not teach them, and therefore they often lost them. Young Staughton consecrated his gifts to preaching, but unlike young Stanger, he went to college, and thereby trained his gifts so that while Stanger lived out a faithful but obscure life in a village, Staughton became a revered and trusted leader throughout the United States. We have here a warning against the shallow evangelism, at home and abroad, which has nothing but "the simple gospel," and does not follow that up with hard thought, systematic doctrine, organised action.

II. A GROUP OF MEN FROM OTHER COUNTIES.

A district led by men who were born and bred there may easily cease to advance. Not every tree is self-fertilizing, and the best results are when the bees visit flower after flower. God had guided hither eight or ten men, bringing the traditions of other parts.

Joshua Burton had brought to Foxton something learned from Abraham Booth at Sutton-in-Ashfield. From the delightful village of Bourton-on-the-water, on the eastern slope of the Cotswolds, had come first the Rylands to organize the Baptist forces of the country, and more lately Alexander Payne, transplanting the experience of Stow-on-the-wold and Bewdley to enrich Walgrave. The coming of John Goodrich from Preston shows that Stony Stratford had before 1790 passed over to the Particulars. And Lancashire had sent also John Law, from Rossendale, who after serving Waingate, Shifnal, Welshpool, had administered the tonic of Calvinism to Weston-by-Weedon.

Barnoldswick, in Yorkshire, had contributed Abraham Greenwood that Oakham might fructify with pollen gathered in three counties. His fellow-student, John Sutcliff, who had tramped from Hebden Bridge to improve himself at Bristol, was settled for his life work at Olney. And at Nottingham, again of General Baptist origin, was to be found Richard Hopper, who had founded a church at Bishop Burton in the East Riding.

Take one case for an example. Robert Hall was born in Northumberland, where he obtained sound doctrinal training in a Presbyterian Church. When he was about twenty, he foregathered with some students for the ministry, and hearing that his brother Christopher was entangled with a family of Baptists in the next county, he and his friends went to dispute with the Baptist minister. In two nights' debate they were silenced, and Robert set himself to study the question. Naturally he became convinced that believers ought to be baptized, and like an honest lad he went to the minister to confess his faith. He was soon taken into the church at Hamsterley, and called out to the ministry. Now a Lutterworth man had been in the army that marched north in 1745, and had met Christopher Hall ministering at Great Broughton in Cumberland. This led to an invitation going from Arnesby first to Christopher, then to Robert. The latter came south and settled in June, 1753, to exercise a leadership like that of Moses for nearly forty years, and to catch a Pisgah view of the land to which he had brought them.

For the leadership fell entirely to new-comers. Just as those who had dwelt all their life in the pleasant land of Egypt needed to be braced up by one who had been trained in Midian, so it was the Rylands, Sutcliff, Hall, who summoned the Midlands to new undertakings. And the case of Hall brings us to notice the third factor at work here, that there were men trained in other schools of thought, able to contribute fresh ideas and energy.

III. THE CONVERSION OF MEN FROM OTHER COMMUNIONS. A still more illustrious example is that of Andrew Fuller. A Pedobaptist church at Isleham had been guided by the eccentric David Culey, and after his death there arose out of it a separate church, meeting three miles away in a barn at Soham. The Fullers had lived in both places, and had heard great variety of doctrine before they settled down to the hyper-Calvinist preaching of John Eve, the first Baptist pastor. A scandal among the members led to the minister departing, and to Andrew questioning the scheme that seemed to defend bad conduct. In the end he was called to the pastorate, and was ordained by Hall, through whom the church joined the Northamptonshire Association. And finding what he felt to be "False Calvinism" rampant in the district, spread abroad from Rothwell, by 1780,

he wrote a pamphlet on the true. He thought over it, prayed over it, and after five years he published it with the title, "The Gospel worthy of all acceptance; or, the obligations of men fully to credit and cordially to approve whatever God makes known. Wherein is considered, the nature of faith in Christ, and the duty of those where the gospel comes, in that matter." And so there emerged a great theologian, and were it not for his experience in other circles, with other doctrines, which urged him to think, it is improbable that any such exposition of Calvinism would have preserved the churches from putrifying.

One of the deacons at Soham who signed his letter of dismission to Kettering, John West, succeeded him as pastor, and then came on to shepherd the flock at Carlton. Reynold Hogg brought other strains of thought. He was a Londoner trained in Yorkshire, where he had served three Pedobaptist churches. Thence he went to Oulton, came to Oundle, spent a year or two at Stourport, and returned to the county at the urgent request of the Baptists in Thrapston, to whom he ministered from 1790 to 1808.

A fifth case was even more remarkable. William Carey was son of the parish clerk and schoolmaster at Paulerspury. When apprenticed to a shoemaker at Hackleton he had a dissenter as fellow learner, and by him was led to join in establishing a Congregational church in the village. Then there fell into his hands "Help to Zion's Travellers," by Hall of Arnesby; as a result he made a second change, being baptized by the younger Ryland in 1778. Three years later the Association set him to preach regularly at Earl's Barton. Yet it was 1785 before he applied to join a Baptist Church, and Olney pondered over the request before granting it.

Now men who have enough independence of thought to examine the systems in which they have been bred, and enough force of character to adopt a better, have usually enough to make their new friends terribly uncomfortable by their energy. Just as in the last century lethargic Baptists in London were rudely shaken by Baptist Noel and Spurgeon, so the impetus that brought these five men from other denominations and other counties could not be absorbed and deadened; it proved strong enough to carry on the neighbouring churches to new positions.

IV. THE ASSOCIATION THAT BLENDED THESE ELEMENTS. "The Annual Association of the Particular Baptist Ministers and Churches in the Adjacent Counties formed on the Principles of Christianity" was founded at Kettering on 17 October, 1764. When the new society met next Whit-week, it was attended by twelve ministers from the shires of Cambridge, Bedford, Leicester, and Northampton. Obscure as were most of

them, there were a few who were not content with vague phrases about "the principles of Christianity." They were led by the grace of God to see that these principles were active, and they took up the very work which had been so long maintained by the expiring General Baptist Association. Within fifteen years they had an Association Fund to promote village preaching, to foster new cases, to send ministers on visits to feeble churches: its first treasurer was Beeby Wallis, and under his care arose the churches at Burton-on-Trent, Derby, Braybrooke. Its vision ranged across the Atlantic: while our kinsmen across the sea were bringing to a successful issue the struggle for freedom, this Association was reading and reprinting the works of Jonathan Edwards. Thus in 1780 his life of David Brainerd was recommended to the Association, and those who read it would see that the "nature of true religion" was to hold aloft the light of truth. And within ten years a call was sent out to rejoice in the great increase of Baptists in Virginia, where we recall the first church had been organized by missionaries from the General Baptists.

But the Association made one striking innovation in the Circular Letter. The plan in vogue elsewhere, hallowed by a century's usage, was that every church sent a letter to the association, and its representative read it aloud. To this extent some rural associations still keep up the old custom, and it is pleasant to hear a lady deacon or a lay-preacher giving an account of the year's work in some village, so that every church at first hand knows the doings of its sisters. But in former days there was nothing doing, and the churches had to pad their letters with lamentations as to the woeful state of Zion; the public reading of a dozen letters of this type must have reduced any meeting to a state of depression. In this mood it told off one of its members to retire and draft a reply, into which he naturally concentrated the essence of gloom. After revision, this was dictated, and every church had a copy taken down by its own representative and signed by the moderator. When this was read at the next church meeting it must have yet further lowered the spirits of its hearers.

Now the people who planned the Northants Association had a better vision. They had learned to take the initiative, and not merely answer the moves made by others. They decided that the Association should send an original message to the churches, and by no means echo their wails. They told off a man, a year in advance, to prepare that message against their meeting; and they told him what they wanted to hear about. The result was the production of a thoughtful essay, which even in 1766 they saw was worth printing and circulating widely. A course of sound theology was thus built up and imparted. Quite early in the series we find Robert Hall of Arnesby on "The Nature of

the Glorious Gospel of the Grace of God"; John Collett Ryland on the "Assistance of God to True Christians"; Martin on Election; Woodman on Original Sin; Gill of St. Albans on Free Justification. When in 1785, the year Carey joined the church at Olney, the younger Ryland presided over the meetings at Oakham, the circular letter was by Fuller, "An Enquiry into the Causes of Declension in Religion, with the Means of Revival." Note the practical aim; it was trite to lament declension, what was needed was to diagnose the cause, and to prescribe the remedy.

Yet not all the Associated churches were effectively leavened. There were more than a score of them in 1792, and though it had been agreed at Nottingham that definite action was to be taken in the autumn, they were not all represented at Kettering. And there was a second sifting, for the Association as such did nothing. It was a meeting of individuals, not of church representatives, that gathered in the Beeby Wallis house. This had two advantages; on the one hand it took it out of the power of the luke-warm to chill the enthusiasm of the others; on the other hand it opened the door to sympathizers from beyond the Association. And so we find persons, not delegates of the churches, who drew up the resolutions and framed the Society. They did not make the first subscription. Thomas Potts had found £10 to publish Carey's pamphlet, and Carey had issued it with the notice that all profits would go to the projected mission. But these men ably supported those who moved and seconded.

Examine the churches which heard the call to act, and consider their response. There were at least fourteen which belonged to the Association, but failed to signalize themselves that day. Some were far away, in Derby, Lincs., and Notts. Arnesby had just lost its pastor, but it showed how it had drunk of his spirit by calling one of the first subscribers. Nottingham, by some mischance, sent no one into the back parlour, but the first printed list of subscriptions shows it the most liberal on the Association, the second shows it best in the kingdom; verily the sermon had done its work, and the church had attempted great things for God. Yet when every excuse has been imagined, the melancholy fact remains that by the close of the century there were still nine churches which showed themselves completely without interest in the movement which had been before their Association so long. Of these nine, seven have since found the grace of repentance, and last year subscribed between them £342 7s. 6d. Two others remain, evincing only the grace of consistency, and subscribing nothing: the one has 21 members; the other 11. Two mottoes may be offered them for choice: "I will come unto thee, and remove thy candlestick out of its place;

unless thou repent"; "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto Me."

Turn to the happier group—the churches that did heed. Well have they maintained the start they took: Clipston, Kettering, Northampton, Olney, Wellingborough, have representatives on the field to-day, four of them having been on the first printed subscription list. Great towns such as Birmingham, Northampton, Kettering, have never lacked those who tell their glories; let us rather take for an example a country town, more typical of Baptists then. Oakham had a church of General Baptist ancestry, reconstructed in 1770, which joined the Association three years later; its membership varied from sixty to ninety, and it was plucky enough to entertain the churches thrice in fifteen years. At this time it was led by Abraham Greenwood, disciple and son-in-law of Alverey Jackson, the champion in Yorkshire of those views as to the duty of faith, which Fuller had advocated in these parts. Greenwood had been the first pastor at Rochdale, from Dudley, had founded a new church at Coseley, and was now in the seventh year of his pastorate at Oakham. That he was one of the original thirteen subscribers is well known; but many a man regards money as a substitute for personal service. What did he do in his church?

His deacon at Oakham was a saddler, named Gray, who had a motherless lad of sixteen, with no interest in religion. Three years later Greenwood was baptizing a new disciple, and the witness thus borne was brought home to the heart of the young man. William Gray was himself baptized, and when his pastor went on to Barrow and Killingholme, he was encouraged to be an occasional preacher. When he was formally called out to the ministry, he at once showed the influence of his pastor. Greenwood had had the best education available, first from an Independent, then in Fawcett's academy; Gray reversed the order, and went first to Bristol, then to Edinburgh University. Greenwood had gained experience in three counties; Gray served an apprenticeship under Abraham Booth in London, imbibed a love for hard work under Steadman at Plymouth, preaching 229 sermons in one year, then removed to the Oxfordshire village of Chipping Norton. Here he supported himself by a boarding school, and gave his time richly to denominational work. He served well the local church, and soon became secretary of the Oxford Association, then founded a county home mission, thus transplanting the traditions of Northamptonshire. But, above all, he carried the missionary tradition everywhere.

As soon as he settled in London, the long list of Greenwood subscriptions from Yorkshire may be balanced by "Mr. William Gray, White Chapel, one guinea." In the year he went to Plymouth there were two contributors there; two years later

there were sixty-three, besides many who gave less than the recorded 10s. 6d. When he came to Oxfordshire, the whole county gave seven and a half guineas; in his first year Chipping Norton alone gave twenty. Even better than his canvassing was his teaching, and soon he was training men for service. Thus there were two ministers, Mursell and Philippo, who sealed their friendship by naming their sons James Philippo Mursell and James Mursell Philippo. Both came to Gray for training. The latter went in 1823 to Jamaica for an honoured career of fifty-six years, which began with the emancipation of the slaves, their settlement, their education; the former followed his teacher to the Midlands. For Gray won recognition in two ways: when the B.M.S. Committee was widened, and met in London, he was asked to join, and served it for twenty years. When Blundell, son of one of the first subscribers, resigned from College Lane, that church called Gray, and most fitly invited Heighton of Roade, another founder, to take a leading part at the settlement. He soon gave a flavour to his ministry by having one of his pupils, James Flood, designated to Jamaica at Northampton. Then came another, James Philippo Mursell, to keep up at Leicester the splendid succession of Carey, Ryland, Hall the younger. And one of Mursell's latest acts of friendship was to come and designate Capern, of Long Buckby, for work in the Bahamas.

Sum up the apostolic succession, in the old and true sense of that phrase, revealed in these men. From Fawcett's church at Hebden Bridge sprang Greenwood. From Greenwood's church at Oakham came Gray. From Gray's church at Chipping Norton went Philippo. Gray's son at Stepney trained J. H. Anderson, who laboured in India for thirty-six years, and William Bentley, whose eldest son pioneered on the Congo. Such is but one line illustrating what Paul enjoined on Timothy: "The things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

V. A FAMILY THAT OFFERED ITS HOME. Within the nursery of the B.M.S., the Northamptonshire Association, we narrow our gaze to the cradle, the home of the Wallis family.

The thirteen men who were in earnest had no vestry at their disposal, the public business of the day was ended. But a home was thrown open to them, as it had often been opened to the Lord's servants engaged on His work.

A genial hearth, a hospitable board,
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat mansion.

Consider the record of its owners. William Wallis had once

been an elder of the Calvinistic Independent Church in Kettering. In 1689 there was no Calvinistic Baptist Church in the whole county, though a member of Arnesby lived in this town. In the course of a dispute originating at the church of Rothwell, Wallis avowed himself Baptist; so great may be the faithful influence of one obscure member. Wallis and half a dozen friends received an honourable dismission, and founded a tiny Baptist church, remaining on good terms with Rothwell and their former church, and all the high Calvinists. In 1713 Thomas Wallis succeeded his father as pastor. Within three years he baptized John Gill, son of his deacon, who presently helped him in his ministry; then John Brine, who also was called out. The church was strengthened by uniting with a second secession from the Independents, soon after the death of Thomas Wallis, but his son William did not succeed him. Probably he was a high Calvinist; and as the united church adopted open communion, perhaps he felt out of sympathy. Six years after his death, his son Beeby was baptized by John Brown, the pastor, and became deacon in 1768. Next year he sold, very cheap, a house, land for burial, and a warehouse, which was soon converted into a meeting-house and equipped with the old pews and fittings. Such a tower of strength did Beeby Wallis become, that he was chosen treasurer of the Association fund, and learned to support work on a wider scale than in a town. When a vacancy occurred in the pastorate, he was called upon to act for a time, and the time stretched out to five years. He was steadily trying to persuade the church at Soham to yield up Andrew Fuller; one call was refused, another given, but only after a year's probation did Beeby Wallis sit again under a regular pastor. For ten years they laboured together, and when Beeby Wallis died, a few weeks too soon to hear Carey at Nottingham, his pastor paid him a rich tribute, as wise in counsel, active in execution, sincere, decided, humble, and godly. His widow Martha kept up the family reputation, and by the modest hospitality of that day, has immortalized his name. His successor in the diaconate, Joseph Timms, showed himself imbued with his spirit, for he came into the back parlour and pledged a guinea.

We owe much to this family! To its founder we owe the greatest Particular Baptist church in the county, a mother of churches, a mother of ministers. In the next generation we owe two men who served two of the important London churches. In the third we owe a home for this church, which still worships on the site of a warehouse used by the silent William Wallis. In the fourth generation, which especially interests us to-day, we owe a county home mission, and a pastor extricated from a fenland church, afforded an opportunity to teach and to write till the whole denomination was leavened. Such was the family that had

woven this cradle for the B.M.S. As the infant has grown, it has never forgotten its nursery, the Association, or its cradle, this house.

Fifty years after Beeby Wallis had been laid to rest, men gathered from the East Indies and the West to his home, and met there Reynold Hogg, first treasurer, sole survivor of the guests of Martha Wallis on 2 October. In 1792 this place saw the birth of the third Foreign Missionary Society of England, the fourth of all Protestant Christendom: by 1842 the Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, on both sides of the Atlantic, had organized, and there were six great continental societies. In 1792 the promises in the back parlour were twelve and a half guineas; in 1842 the cash gifts on the lawn were £1,300. Nor had the family spirit died out: Martha had left a large bequest to the society, W. T. Beeby presided over the great meeting in 1842 at Calcutta four days before he joined the family on high, and five Wallises at home sent liberal gifts to the Jubilee Fund. See what God had wrought in the half century! In Baptist dayschools there were ten thousand children of India, Africa, and the Caribbean; there were 35,000 adults in Baptist churches; 44 versions of scripture were called into existence. In 1792 a back parlour in Kettering held all who cared about the matter; in 1842 4,000 Jamaicans sat down to the Lord's Supper in a vast booth at a new Kettering; and in the same year those islanders established their own Union, needing no more missionaries.

It would be delightful to tell of the gatherings in 1892, with its reminiscent touches, as when Mrs. S. Wallis, single-handed, subscribed the historic twelve and a half guineas, and in a younger generation R. E. Wallis collected 5s. But these need no recalling to many—they are within living memory. Rather look back again to the birthday in 1792. The people who met at Kettering were all Particular Baptists, though many of them hailed from churches which had once been General. There is yet a third important group of Baptists in these parts, originating at Barton-in-the-Beans. What was their part or lot in this matter.

Eleven years earlier, Stanger of Moulton had asked the Leicestershire Conference to receive him into their New Connexion; and they decided that the proposal be "taken into consideration"! They failed to see their opportunity, and Moulton was lost to them. We sometimes have the chance of learning from our mistakes, and doing better next time. In 1792 a letter came to that same Conference from Moses Liele of Jamaica, asking for help. They considered the appeal at Diseworth in December, when they may conceivably have heard what had been decided at Kettering in October. They reprinted the letter, and circulated it with a recommendation, so that many churches

actually subscribed. The New Connexion did expend money on foreign mission work in the West Indies before the Particular Baptists had started Thomas and Carey to the East Indies. But now see how we reap what we have sown. At the end of 1794 the committee of the B.M.S. published the first of the Periodical Accounts. Also they told Pearce that he could do better service among the home churches than by the side of Carey. So he was advertised to preach for the mission at Loughborough in April. A week earlier the New Connexion men met at Friar Lane, which ancient church had thrown in its lot with them. Benjamin Pollard had already been writing about the Indian Mission, and he was now appointed to meet Pearce at Loughborough and enquire whether subscriptions from their churches would be accepted, whether they might be allowed to send one minister of their own. But even Samuel Pearce could not rise to this; the enquiries were shelved, as Stanger's had been by them, and no answer was ever returned. On Christmas day he preached at Harvey Lane; it is to be feared that visitors and contributions from Friar Lane were not welcomed, even on the day of goodwill among men.

Similar overtures were repulsed more than once; but when, in 1821, the New Connexion ordained its first missionary, William Ward the Particular Baptist came and spoke at that very Loughborough where Pearce had evaded the overtures. Bampton and Peggs sailed with him, and sought counsel at Serampore; when they went to Orissa, it was on the advice of the older missionaries. Men at home, immeshed by inherited prejudices and misunderstandings, may be silent in face of offers of help, though they be seraphic Pearces; men face to face with the realities of heathendom learn more of the spirit of Christ. It was the missionary enthusiasm that brought these two bodies nearer. When the Jubilee of 1842 came, the best account of the mission and of the celebrations was issued by Winks of Leicester, the New Connexion minister and publisher. Soon afterwards the autobiography of Amos Sutton, who had sent to Carey a revision of his Oriya gospels to be printed at Serampore, was issued with a preface by William Hopkins Pearce, who thus nobly atoned for his father's silence. Before the centenary, all feeling of aloofness was gone. It was one of the joys of 1892 that the two missions were actually united. It was no longer a portent that Baynes and Kerry should visit the New Connexion Conference at Pooree; even at home, Friar Lane and Harvey Lane no longer scowled at one another like Judah and Ephraim: the two sticks were joined, Beauty was added to Bands.

Since then another generation has arisen, which calls itself merely Baptist, and has so well learned the lesson of unity that it hardly knows what was meant by the phrases General Baptists, Particular Baptists, New Connexion. It is in the active service of

Christ that divisions seem wicked, and disappear, that men unbuild the old to rebuild on a vaster scale.

John G. Paton tells how, on a South Sea island where timber was scarce, a house was needed for the worship of God, and it needed to be both wide and long. The coral walls arose, and three white principals spanned them. But one bay needed providing for, and the resources of the island seemed exhausted. In the morning the puzzled architect was aroused by tramping and singing: a procession was bearing aloft a smoke-begrimed beam, the chief dancing along in front, a very David. He had uncovered his own house and brought its mighty timber to be hallowed by completing the roof of God's house.

The roof at Kettering was hallowed by sheltering a god-fearing family, and gathering many sacred memories. There has now been a rebuilding, and Wallis House will in future shelter many families that come home for rest. They will dwell in a fitting atmosphere, may gain inspiration from the past, may add year by year to its rich associations. At Olney Cowper had sung:

Behold, at Thy commanding word

We stretch the curtain and the cord;

and had given Carey the idea of his great sermon. That couplet might well be blazoned over a doorway in the re-modelled house, and another from the same hymn will assuredly express the prayers of all who enter:

Dear Shepherd of Thy chosen few,

Thy former mercies here renew.

W. T. WHITLEY.

The Future of our Ministry.

THE Baptist denomination deserves good ministers. It has not always shown a high sense of responsibility either for their equipment or their maintenance in freedom from material cares. During these last years it has made its confession in a handsome way. In return our congregations have a right to expect from its ministry a greater efficiency. If this is not reached, the Sustentation Fund may prove a curse and not a blessing. It may add another to the list of churches in which the ministry becomes a vested interest and a traffic in spiritual things. The danger should be avoided by the pressure of an opinion that demands the highest standard of moral and intellectual power.

Efficiency depends on many other factors than the devotion and gratitude of individual men. At this moment the ministry is a serious problem for the church. We need a large supply of candidates. Our congregational system, which leaves every church unfettered in the choice of its minister, would quickly sift out the inefficient. But the number of those who offer themselves is so small that some colleges seem scarcely to justify their being. Our most desirable young men will rarely even consider the ministry as a vocation. Our congregations frequently invite men to the sacred charge for scarcely any other reason than that they are the best available. This should not be.

We must face the question as to how toll is to be taken of our best Christian manhood for the service of the churches in the ministry. The present reluctance to hear and answer the call shadows the future. Part of the reason is in the loss of the church's grip on the men of our country. The field for our reaping is smaller. Whether the number of men who offer is smaller in proportion to the number in attendance at our places of worship than it used to be, say twenty years ago, who can say?

Other causes are to be found in the intellectual and social unsettlement of the past generation, culminating with the experiences of the war. Men's religious ideas are chaotic, and it is not surprising that there is hesitation to take up the burden of a Christian teacher. The churches have frequently failed to give clear light on modern problems, and we are reaping the harvest of obscurantism in vagueness and uncertainty that debar men from the exercise of any prophetic office.

The arm-chair religion of many professing Christians and churches, with its comfortable quietism, has alienated the sympathies of vigorous men, who see many wrongs around them, challenging, strident, while the city of God is apparently unconcerned, though foes are at the gates and some have even invaded its streets. Men of a more robust faith are turned aside from our ministry by the dread that the fires that burn in them may be quenched, or rendered ineffective, by the indifference of those among whom their work might lie. Only a quickening of the whole life of the church with an ardour of zeal that shall compel men within to interpret the Spirit of Christ to the world in every relation of life, and so win men from without, can ever remove this fear.

The stipends paid to ministers, sometimes placing them on the poverty line, have also been a deterrent. A man prepared himself for personal sacrifice is often unwilling to ask a wife to accept, and possibly to thrust upon children, the handicaps he can foresee. But probably it does not happen

frequently that men of the soul we want are held back by this.

More powerful are causes which lie in the personnel of the ministry, and in the nature of the burden it is called upon to sustain.

Young university men, questioned on the subject, have told the writer that they think their lives will "count for more" in other walks of life. Pressed to explain, they guarded themselves from any charge of snobbery, but declared that our ministers as a rule had no standing among men. Their opinions are not seriously regarded and their influence is small compared with that of men in other professions. To be known as a minister amounts to a disability. The reason for this they found in the fact that on the whole the ministry had not kept pace in education with the scholastic profession, the law, or medicine, where standards are being continually raised and higher demands are being made. It is not enough in these days that a minister should win regard for his character and a life of service. This regard was neither withheld nor the fact disputed, but the minister must also be a man capable of meeting others on equal intellectual terms, if he is to constrain their assent and guide their thought and action in submission to God's will in Christ.

The ministry is only to be rehabilitated, in this respect, by education. In remote places it may still be true occasionally that the minister is the only man in the church with a shelf of good books, but it is rarely so. Knowledge has advanced, and is diffused, to a degree that a century ago, and much less, would have been thought incredible. We may doubt whether the Baptist ministers of to-day have advanced in education to an extent that their forerunners a hundred years back would have thought incredible. When we think of some of those who manned our ministry in the early years of the nineteenth century, it is sometimes difficult to see that we have reached beyond them either in intellectual grasp or in education. But we must not judge by the exceptional names that have come down to us, and the average of education is much higher. It is a fair conclusion though, that we have not gone forward nearly as far as we should, and the criticism that we have not progressed at the same rate as other professions is just. It is true of most denominations.

To regain a lost place and prestige is slow work. We must provide facilities for education, encourage our men, and try to lay the call to the ministry before the most gifted among the youth in our churches. Persistence and patience in this work will in time cause this service to be regarded as, without question, the supreme vocation. It will be de-

sired by more and more of those who, with the Vision Splendid in front of them, would follow the gleam, and, if there be need, "burn out for God." They are not wanting in our churches and universities, but we are getting few of them. They will serve Christ in this calling or that. To the ministry they give no thought.

But perhaps there is no fact that keeps men to-day outside the ministry like the work of the minister. Its many-sidedness need not be dwelt upon. Up to a point it is the joy and glory of a minister's life, but the demands have become in a sense too exacting. The spirit of sacrifice remains among our young people. It is not the poor material remuneration that drives them off. Nor is it always the sense of the call it makes on character. Ministers are always conscious that in their congregations there are often honoured servants of Christ at whose feet they should be ready to sit at all times if character were the only requisite. Our young men realize that as clearly as we do. Again, unpleasant duties fall to the lot of any conscientious minister and recognition is frequently scanty. Yet, even this is not the trouble. It is the range of the minister's task that is becoming a matter of perplexity for our ministers themselves, and a stumbling block for many who might be candidates. It is truly rather appalling for men taught in the modern school where specialization is the order of the day. A medical man speaking to the writer recently forecasted a day in which practitioners would work as partners in medical firms, including several members, each partner taking his own department of medical knowledge. It is felt to be impossible for any one man to compass the range of modern science in that profession. The all-round man is rarely an expert in any branch, and the age demands experts and has the right to them.

The dangers of over-specialization are clear. Yet we may go too far in the other direction, and have a ministry of men who because they are Jacks-of-all-trades are masters of none. Is it not time that we recognized a differentiation of functions as desirable and, indeed, almost necessary.

Some of our churches are large. The pressure of modern business life on the men of the church, and the claims of countless philanthropic agencies outside, mean that increasingly functions, which of right belong to the whole church, have devolved upon the minister, and he is not seldom crushed beneath the burden of them. In our denomination the minister is commonly expected to preach three sermons each week that will satisfy the exacting standards of an educated and often critical audience. Think of the time John Bright took to make a set speech, and how rarely he did it, com-

pared with the speeches and sermons a successful preacher is called upon to deliver. If he is to keep the level up, he has enough in that alone for any man to do. But this is far less than half his work. He must visit all the sick and bereaved and any in trouble, and newcomers. He must be available for consultation and advice at all hours. Committees and meetings are innumerable. Reading must be fitted into his time-table. He has to know his workers and be in close touch with every part of the church's activities. He must keep an eye on the young folk who are growing up around him, and watch for the moment when the right word is to be spoken. In addition to all this, he is expected to take some place in the social and religious life of the town and county, and there are the wider claims of his association and denominational body. He rarely has an evening at home with his family, and the work that imposes the greatest nervous strain comes at the end of the day, when he is already almost exhausted, and other workers are finding recreation and rest. The faithful minister often finds the burden well-nigh intolerable. He has the constant feeling of inadequacy and of being in arrears. There is no opportunity for that quiet hour in which the great things come to a man's soul. He heartily hates the system with the consequent sense of ineffectiveness and futility. He has to withdraw from much of the work to which he believes himself called that other things, that wait to be done in the church, may not be left undone. Again and again he must desert the ministry of the word to serve tables. It makes for unhappiness, disappointment and failure. His own discouragement reacts on his work, and an impression is produced on the minds of others that the ministry is not the triumphant and exhilarating service of Christ that it should be. How many men have broken under the strain. "It is not reason."

The conscientious minister must in common honesty set the situation before the man who, thinking of such work, seeks advice. He will speak of its privileges and compensations, but he may not hide its demands, and the disclosure has been enough many times to turn men's thoughts another way.

May there not at least be a more frequent recognition of the distinction between the pastoral and the preaching offices? It is of course notorious that co-pastorates are rarely an unqualified success. Perhaps that is inevitable in such churches as ours. But need the same difficulties arise when one man is pastor, attending to the organizing of the church, keeping contact with the people, presiding at meetings and committees, representing the church outside, while the other is the preacher, responsible solely for the ministry of the

word. The distinction goes back to the apostolic age. We know of men who believe the Divine Voice has sent them forth to proclaim the everlasting gospel. When they gave themselves to God for the ministry of the church it was for this. The other multifarious activities in which they should be involved never came within their vision. They are preachers. Their business ability is a stock theme of amusement with their officers, and their awkwardness in ordinary social intercourse is the amazement of men who marvel at their command in the pulpit. On the other hand, we could name men with the pastoral heart, diligent and capable in business, with a gift for religious organization, and a "way wid 'em" that Father O'Flynn himself might envy in getting at close quarters with all sorts of men and women and with the young, yet their powers are never given play because, not having any special aptitude for preaching, the larger churches will not invite them. They eat out their hearts in little villages, who should be exercising a pastoral ministry in the thick of some big town. Let these facts be recognized and the moral read.

When a large congregation is without a minister the people say, "We must have a good pastor, and we must have a good preacher, if we are to meet the need around us." Of course! Then why not have one of each? It would mean greater efficiency all round, and a stronger and more contented church. It would also mean a higher standard of giving, and for a time some financial strain, but the men who supported such an arrangement liberally would certainly reap their reward in the joy of seeing its success. To avoid all heartburning, functions should be plainly divided and responsibilities assigned from the first. The pastor need not be condemned to silence. He might preach in the absence of the preacher, and being loved for his own work, he would be welcomed by his people who would not be attracted by a regular preaching ministry from him. The preacher in the absence of the pastor could add for the time the pastoral office to that of the evangelist, and the real preacher will always love men enough not to be a recluse. It is the multiple responsibility continually borne that presses a man down and sometimes kills. At this time the man called to be a preacher has to choose between the career (unsatisfying for most of us) of an itinerant evangelist, with no opportunity for training congregations in the truth by years of patient teaching and exhortation, and that of the pastor-preacher, which prevents him doing his best at his special work. There have been a few strong-minded preachers who have resolutely confined themselves to their divinely appointed task. The church has been the richer for their resolve, but only they have known what it has cost them, not alone in

unsympathetic criticism from without, but in the strain within the soul of any man who realizes that work, that someone should be doing, is being neglected, and he is disappointing the hopes of some of his friends. All honour to such men.

Would it not frequently mean a great gain in effectiveness if congregations merged, two or three of them, and supported not one minister but two, who between them should divide the work. May we not dream of a day when at least in our big towns, the problems before our churches will be more effectively met in some such way?

Meanwhile relief might come along another line. An eminent American preacher once said to another, after they had been watching the finished work of a great actor, "The trouble with us preachers is that we end with the first rehearsal." Any real preacher knows how a sermon preached three of four times gains in power to reach and move men. The irrelevancies are weeded out. The truth shines more clear. The forcefulness of our evangelists is due not a little to the gradual developing of a theme under the sense of the need of the congregations that listen. There is a limit, of course, beyond which repetition means staleness. But how weary one grows of reading in John Wesley's *Journal* the entry that this day he preached on "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God," or some other well-preached theme. He does not seem to have had as many sermons as most Baptist ministers of a few years' standing have had to make, but what sermons they grew to be!

Why cannot we have something like a circuit system for preachers? So long as churches will have only one minister, let each man be pastor of one church, and let none other presume to exercise pastoral functions there. But let the churches be in groups of two or three or four, granted a certain community of sympathy, and let these ministers preach in turn at the various churches. Then each man would have to prepare a sermon say once a week or once a fortnight instead of two or three times a week. He would have more time for study and thought and also for his pastoral tasks. It would not work well perhaps in small towns, but in groups of villages or large towns need there be great difficulty? Imagine a city with three neighbouring ministers, Mr. Smith, Mr. Brown and Mr. Robinson, all men of fine attainments and preaching power. Why should they not pass, as a natural thing, from one pulpit to another regularly, it being understood that they were free to repeat their messages in each? There would be a dual advantage. The congregations would enjoy a fuller presentation of the Christian Gospel and in better sermons, and if ever some listener found that a sermon seemed specially addressed to his need, and was eager to

hear that word again, the opportunity would be there, though, normally, loyalty to a particular church would keep hearers from gadding about from place to place.

The ministry of the future must depend on the church of the future. Some of us dream of our churches as centres of spiritual force, of sympathy and practical help for all who attend them, and a spiritual clinic for the neighbourhood to which all who will may come. Then the pastor should be in his office as regularly as the physician in his consulting room. Like the physician he would have his rounds for the cases that could not come to him. We need a wider thought of the church's task as we take a wider view of its opportunity. There is room, and need, for a far more varied ministry than we have offered the world in recent times.

The question of the colleges, which is in closest relation to that of the ministry, may only be touched upon here, though it is big enough for a series of articles. If the functions of the ministry in the church of the future are to be increased and differentiated, a burden of extra work will be thrown on the colleges. It is more important than ever that adequate training should be given. There would be specialization in addition to a good general groundwork. The studies of the pastor and the preacher would proceed along somewhat divergent lines. To an even greater degree than at present would each student have to be regarded as a separate case. A preliminary year of probation, with a course mapped to take stock of his particular gifts, might be the means of classifying him and deciding the lines of his future studies. For some men the time and labour spent in the attempt to acquire a university degree is virtually wasted. This is not true only of some marked out for the pastoral office but even for some who are destined to be Evangelists. Men react in as markedly different ways to the discipline of academic routine and close study as they do to army discipline. For one man it means the widening of vision and the forging of new weapons. For another it means the close grind that narrows outlook and sympathy and wears down instead of whetting the edge of his speech. Intellectual application and discipline are good for all, but how many men, who look back on laborious college years devoted to university examination work, are conscious that the time might have been spent in other studies to much better purpose. The writer knows the value of a course in Semitics, and will be for ever grateful that he had the opportunity, but he knows men to whom it was sheer drudgery and brought no good.

If it were recognised in our colleges that some men were going out definitely as preachers and evangelists, would there not inevitably be an effort to give more systematic homiletic

and literary study and training in modern apologetics. In one denominational paper lately the suggestion has even been made of a professor of preaching. But homiletics has always had a place on our college curricula, yet how small a place! The men preparing for the pastoral office would have instruction in business methods, and would study the work of churches both here and in America that really reach the people. The gravamen of the complaints, so frequently heard against our colleges, is that so much of what is learned is remote from the needs of the ordinary congregation and the ordinary minister, and that, by a process of learning through much tribulation for both of them, the latter has to acquire a great deal that he always thinks he should have been taught before he accepted the charge of a church.

Great advances have been made in some of our colleges within the last generation, but still men leave some of them with little enough knowledge, not merely of our denominational story and the historical development of our principles, but of the whole of the Evangelical and Free Church progress since Reformation times. For modern preachers the modern book of Acts is scarcely less important than the ancient. At home and abroad, for those who have eyes to read, it is, when opened to them, the great vindication of our faith. Yet men have said that even after they left college it was to them a closed book.

We may be sure that the principals of our colleges, who themselves have been ministers, realize the situation, and wish they could do more to meet it. But however wistful they may be, their power is curtailed by the relative poverty of these institutions and the smallness of the staff. As it is, each professor usually has more subjects to teach than one man can do justice to. At times our teachers may have revealed some lack of imagination and practical insight, but the fault is not chiefly with them. It might be that, with amalgamation of some colleges and the pooling of endowments and other funds, larger staffs, with a better division of labour, could to the needs of our churches to-day, a better college equipment be secured. For the training of an efficient ministry, adequate seems necessary.

It is good to know of the efforts in some of our colleges to make men as well as to teach them. There has been some failure here in the past. The education given has been too much an affair of lectures and examinations, and the real meaning of a college has been missed. Staff and students should not be simply speakers and listeners. They should be fellow-workers in a corporate effort to attain to truth, readers together in the Book of Life, reading on their knees. These are the days for forming those habits of true piety which

are the foundation of every man's best work. Here a man must learn to think as well as to listen, and to school himself with others as they sit, teachers and students alike, at the feet of their Lord.

When the Master bade His disciples not to rejoice that the devils were subject to them, but rather that their names were written in heaven, He laid down for all time the principle that there is a sense in which the workman matters more than the work. We need trained men, efficient men, more and more of them, but, above all, in the future as in the past, men whose names are written in heaven, men well-known at the throne of God.

M. E. AUBREY.

Baptist Church Discipline.

PART II.

31d 1m 1695

It being the First or Lords day after the publike meeting was over, And the Church was intire, Bro : Steed presented againe to the Church the case of Bro : Claridge with his importunate desire to be dismisst from his communion with the Church. And they saw that as He sayd he did not come that day to keep up his place as in times past. Also it was presented to their consideration that it was impossible to detain him in his communion without the endangering the peace and union of the Church, because of necessity if he continued they must have the troubl of hearing Mr Wards case which had already been above a yeare in debate and consideration and had caused much trouble distraction and division amongst the ministers and members that had been employd in that affaire. Moreover the peopl that belongd to Mr. Warburton would bring in a charg against Bro : Claridge which they had already attempted to but because of the disorder that was manifest in their manning of it was rejected. But it must be expected they would again endeavour to introduce it, which would occasion much contention and might in the end make a breach amongst them. Therefore as they would avoid these great and sore inconveniences it was reckoned their best and safest way to dismiss him according to his desire, or else their present Elder could not comfortably keep up his station among them. These things were debated a long time variously by the Brn : Some as Bro : Watson and Bro : Gold with some others were for his being treated with to see if they could make up this breach. But considering the present danger

the Church was in which was like to increase and contention like to break in as a flood upon it should there be any delay in this matter it was still urged by severall of the Brethren that it was most expedient to grant him his desire and to dismiss him. And accordingly it was put to the vote, And by the majority it was carryd for his dismission. And there being a letter of recommendation in readiness produced, it was read. It was a letter of recommendation for him to the Ch: at Broomsgrove from whence he came, which was readily signed by most of the Brethren. And then the Church assembly was dismisst

A copy of the letter (of) recommendation signed at the time aforesayd To the Church of Christ assembling at Broomsgrove whereof our beloved Bro : Joh : Ekels is pastor
Dearly Beloved in our Lord

We salute you with deare Christian affection, heartily desiring that the gracious presence of our Lord Jesus may be with you whereby you may be comforted and edifyd, That being more and more established in the truth of the Gospell you may in love and peace walk together shining in the beauty of holines, adorning your holy profession by abounding in all the fruits of righteousness to the praise of his holy name

Deare Brethren the occasion of these lines are to recommend our beloved and Honored Brother Claridge to your Christian care, love and communion, who having been received by us from you and having walked with us in the fellowship of the Gospell and having laboured amongst us in the ministration of the word of the grace of Christ, we have and do esteem him as one whom the Lord hath graciously chosen and called and made to beare a faithfull and bold testimony to his despised ways. He now being desirous to be dismisst from his communion with us to you, we doe hereby intreat you to receive him againe into all the priviledges of the House of God, watching over him and being tender to Him as Brother in Christ and a labourer in his vineyard. We shall add no more but commend you and our beloved Brother to God and to the word of his grace. Desiring to remaine through the grace of God

Your Brn in the faith & fellowship of ye Gospell

Robert Steed

El :

From the Church assembling neer
Newgate Street London

This 31 d 1m 1695

5d 3m (vulg may) 1695

Br Brooksby having been often and frequently admonisht & warned (by the Elder of the Church) in private for his sinfull miscarriages in railing at a very unseemly rate & manner against Mr. Lane who is a member of another Church calling him rascall

and knave with other such approbrious language, And for his threatening to ruine him; To which end he had informed against him at the Court called Doctors Commons that he might be excommunicated whereby he might be prevented from teaching school which was the way of his livelyhood; And that thereby he might have no benefit to defend himselfe in Law, There being a law-suit depending between them against each other. But Br Brooksby not hearkening to him The Elder had Bro: Lampitt and Bro: Skinner with Him to discourse with Him about it, which they did with love and faithfulness. But he manifested no repentance to them whereupon finding all these endeavours were in vaine, And his offences growing very scandalous, The matter was brought before the Church at the time above written, Where his evils were againe layd before him. But he manifested no repentance only saying to this purpose that wherein he had spoken hastily or wherein the name of God might be dishonored he was sorry, But wherein in those matters he had done anything to his owne vindication or to the preventing his adversary from having any advantage against Him therein he was not sorry, with many other words that rather shewed a hardned than a penitent frame of heart. Which being considered by the Church his evils the scandal that followed them and his persisting in them, They unanimously agreed to withdraw their communion from him, which accordingly was solemnly performed and declared. And he being present was acquainted with it

24 d 5 m 1695

The case of Br. Brooksby aforesayd was againe under the serious consideration of the Church his crimes before mentiond being highly scandalous and immoral, for which he had not only manifested no repentance but had aggravated them by his undue reflections on the Brethren that had endeavoured to reduce him to repentance and had faithfully testifyd against his miscarriages. And also had accused Bro: Carter for speaking lyes before the Church because he had endeavoured to prove that Br Brooksby had not made a just defence for himselfe in his alledging that he never saw the hopps he bought of Br Lane till after he had given bond for them which being examined by Brn appointed by the Church they could not find that Br Carter was guilty of telling a ly in what he declared concerning ye matter but it still remained dubious some of the Brn rather reckoning that Br Brooksby might not speak truth in his excuse or defence in saying he had not seen the hopps till after he gave his bond to Br Lane. But that which greived the Church most of all was that Br Brooksby brought forth a paper & read it in the Church wherein there was an attestation as under the hand of one Mr Winchester about a bargain that had been between him and Br Brooksby about

some horses which he had bought of that person aforesayd with the name of the sayd Winchester to it: when it appeared that the person before mention'd never wrote that paper nor subscribed his name to it, nor gave his consent that his name should be sett to it: whereby it appeared that he was guilty of lying and forgery before the Church. He having also by his violent pashions and bitter reflections greatly offended many of the Brn dishonoured his holy profession and thereby caused the good ways of Christ to be evill spoken off It was agreed that the sayd Br Brooksby should be putt out of the Communion of the Church and excluded from being a member thereof as an impenitent obstinate person that refused to heare the Church; which accordingly was solemnly declared on the day above mentioned

27th 3m 1696

One the day aforesayd the Church being assembled the case of Bro: Provo (?) was before the Church presented that He had been formerly a member of this Church and had been dealt with for neer twenty yeares since or more and had been ever since absent from the Church till of late He came to the Church and without giving any account of himselfe attempted to break bread. For which he being called to account He denyd that ever he was withdrawn from by the Church and could give no reason for his long absence and no sense of his miscarriage in these things. Therefore the Church reckoned it their concernment no longer to beare with such miscarriages but by an unanimous consent He was excluded and putt out of their communion as an impenitent person which was solemnly declared at the time before mention'd

1697

Bro: Simon A journey man shoemaker living neer Clare Market was charged in the Church by Bro: Jackson for inhumanely beating his wife and giving himselfe to much idlenes not minding to be diligent in his calling and imployment whereby he went into debt and did not provide for his family as otherwise he might. And though he had been often privately admonished and warned of those evils yet still he persisted. And especially in his barbarous cruel handling of his wife whereby the name of God was greatly dishonored and our holy profession reproached. He being before the Church had those scandalous enormitys layd before him. But he appeared not to have any due sense of his miscarriages. Therefore considering the heinous nature of his iniquitys and the publike scandall it brought on our holy profession he was solemnly excluded or cast out of the communion of the Church.

Oct 11: 1699

The Church being assembled together there was a complaint

made and a charge presented against Bro: Hind for his forsaking his holy profession not attending on the solempne assemblys of the Church to worship God and for being immorall and scandalous in his conversation in not paying his due debts and giving himselfe to intemperance in drink indulging himselfe to spend away his time in foolish and vaine company to the dishonour of God and of his holy profession whereby the holy ways of our God were reproached and the spiritts of his people greived. For these things He had been severall times warned and admonished by the Elder and others who in faithfulness had pleaded with Him about these miscarriages. And though he had seem'd to repent and to promise amendment, yet he still persisted in such evill practises: whereupon there being full proof of all these foul enormitys, It was judg'd it to be the duty of the Church to putt him out as a wicked person no longer to be reckoned as a member of such a holy society. But to be delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh &c which was accordingly solemnly done at the next opportunity wch was on the 18th of the same month

Oct: 18th 1699

There was also a charg presented against Bro: Leeson that his conversation had been to the dishonour of God not only in his often fayling in his employment and busines in the world whereby he did not fully comply with those he was indebted to, But especially in his being greivously immorall and scandalous in his behaviour and walking with those he was related to or had occasion to be treating with. Particularly He was charged with taking up of money that was due to his wives father and spending of it without the order or consent of his Father-in-law. Who when he called him to account about it instead of a faire submissive answer falls into a pashion rayles at him and threatens him in such kind of language that if he had knife in his hand he could stab him. Moreover that in a letter he sent to one (Mr. Corbin (?)) dated July 7: 99) who lovingly imployd his wife as a nurse in his house he rayles at him calls him fool threatens him like a rude Hector as appears in that letter that was read in the Church. Also in a letter to his wife at the same time He treats with her not in a loving but after an imperious scoffing rate and therein also useth rayling reviling threatning language against Mr. Corbin aforesayd. All which being witnessed against him and clearly proved by undeniable or unquestionable evidence, It was seriously in the whole of it considered and debated in the Church with the holy rule of our Lord directing how such heinous transgressions should be witnessed against and what ought to be done to such notorious criminals who can indulge themselves in such extravagant paths under a forme of Godlines. From such we are to turne away II Tim iii. 5 Such are to be cast

out as old Leaven I Cor v. 5, 7, 11 : And not to be reckoned any longer as a member of the Church of Christ. And accordingly he was at that time solemnly excluded or excommunicated according to the command and counsell of the Lord Jesus our Lord and Lawgiver

The same day there was a charg against Sr Hewitts daughter presented in the Church which at first was as a complaint made by her husband against her that shee had abused Him with very uncivill and barbarous language. Some Brethren had been imploiy to inquire into the matter who made their report as they heard to the Church. The whole being impartially examind it was found that shee had been very badly and inhumanely treated by her husband, That deep distressing poverty had afflicted her through his incapacity or negligence to gett a livelyhood or subsistance, whereby great provocations had been given her to speak and act unadvisedly, which sometimes shee had done by her owne confession. Therefore though (thought?) it was not the duty of Church meetg to exclude her but solemnly to Admonish and warne her to repent of what of disorder was past and to be more cautious for time to come. And in the mean time to be withdrawn from as to the full enjoymt of communion with the Church, till by a carefull meek conversation there may be seen a reall reformation : which was accordingly solemnly performed at the time

Dec : 13 1699

Bro : Wood having a long time neglected to attend the assembly of the Church on the first days or to keep up in the holy communion of it according to his profession and solemn engagement, which was aggravated in that the Church had been helpfull to Him in the time of his distress and that after he had received their benevolence He then forthwith gave himselfe up to those omissions and neglects before mentioned : He then appeared and had little to say for himselfe : only complaind of poverty and of his being assaulted with many temptations. He was then solemnly admonished for his slothfull and careless neglects warned to repent and consider his ways and was left upon tryall to see how He would walk for time to come

Dec. 20 99

Bro : Naylor having been also a long time absent from the Church was then called to Appeare and his sinful omissions layd before him. He had littl or nothing to say for himselfe but also complaind of temptations and troublesome exercises that he had mett with all ; whereupon He also was solemnly admonished and so was left for further tryall of his walking and conversation.

Dec : 27 99

On that day severall persons that hed been members of the Church

over which Bro : Barret lately deceased was overseer : They being by his death in a scattered condition did then present their desire to be admitted into the communion of this Church Which accordingly was unanimously granted to them and they were solemnly taken into our fellowship according to their desire The persons then admitted were

Daniel Hanks Sen : with his wife and son

Daniel Hanks junior & his daughter Susanna Hanks

An Handford

living in Mile End towne altogether

Lawrence Rede in Petty Coat Lane next doore to the Bull

John Massman and his wife living in Weller Street

John Hatton living in Peter feilds York Street in Bednal green Hamlett

Thomas Allwood living with Mr Shepherd in Katharine Wheel Ally White Chappell

Isaac Debar living in Hig lane

Feb 14 99/700

Bro : Wood before mentioned then appeared againe before the Church and manifested his repentance with much seeming brokennes of heart for his miscarriages that had been charged upon him : which repentance of his being seriously considered by the Church, It was judged satisfactory and so he was restored in his communion as in times past

May 10th 1699

The Church being then assembled, And the question being putt whether Sister Mary Webb alias Bernard sinned in breaking the contract of marriage made to Mr. Swaine it was agreed in the affirmative by all

2ly It was inquired whether the sin of breaking this contract with Mr Swaine ly only upon her or her parents or both. And it was concluded and agreed by the majority that sin lys on both on her and her parents that is by all except 3 Brn that declared their dissent

Dec 6 1699

Then there was read a letter sent from Sister Webb aforsaid to the Church declaring her repentance for her miscarriage in the transaction (mentiond before) between her and Mr Swaine : which repentance was accepted by the Church as that which gave the members good satisfaction, which by their consent was declared. And a letter by the Churches order was drawn up and subscribed and sent to her according to their order and agreement wherein there is testifdy their forgiving of her wherein they were offended with her or by her in that matter with a renewd testimony of their Christian love and respect to her

Review.

THE RELIGIOUS HYPOTHESIS: "A Faith that Enquires."
Gifford Lectures, 1920-21. By Prof. Sir H. JONES, F.B.A.
Macmillan, 18/-.

BENEATH that somewhat common piece of cynicism that says "Language is given us to conceal our thoughts" there lurks a little truth, for the written language of books does frequently conceal the real mind of an author from his readers. The printed page reveals his conclusions, the results of his thinking, but the mental life of which they are the fruit is unexpressed. If this be the rule then is *A Faith that Enquires* an exceptional volume. Partly, perhaps, because the form in which these Gifford Lectures were delivered is retained in print, but more because Professor Jones' philosophy was a *working* creed, a faith that was operative in his life, this final work of his creates an impression on the reader of immediate intercourse with another mind. The personality behind the pen cannot be hidden.

It would not be true to say that Professor Jones underestimated the worth of results or despised conclusions, but certainly philosophy was to him pre-eminently the *pursuit* of truth. And while there are many aspects of the professor's character that his former students will recall—the humour that flashed in his illustrations, his eagerness to state an opponent's case at its strongest before the process of demolition should begin, and, with this last, his intolerance of slipshod theories that seemed to him unworthy of a thinker,—yet it is his emphasis on the greatness of this enterprise of thinking that is one pupil's most vivid memory. When the session's work had ended he would often sum up the lessons of the course in one illustration. He compared himself to a tug whose humble task it was to lead great liners to the river's mouth, leaving them there to face the open seas. The class was only the beginning of Philosophy, and no wish was nearer to Jones' heart than that his students should continue to be adventurous in thought, never dreaming of the Great Refusal—the refusal to think. He counted them all "the partners of his ethical enquiries."

The need for enquiry was the lesson of his class-lectures,

and the need for a spirit of research in religion is the topic of these Gifford Lectures. In the preliminary chapters certain general objectives to the spirit of enquiry are stated and discussed. It may seem to some that the arguments here lose in value because there is no direct criticism of the most recent wave of anti-intellectualist philosophy which treats the cognitive function from a purely biological point of view or opposes ethics and metaphysics as products of rationalisation and remote from the real life of impulse. But the examination of Carlyle's view of thought and the discussion of the appeal from Reason to Values sufficiently determine Professor Jones' position in the controversy. As later chapters show he believed Morality to be typical of man at his best, and not an unnatural artificial imposition, and he asserts that no action can be called moral unless it is intelligently directed.

But the first concern of the book is to meet those objections to reason that the religious man has raised. Apart altogether from general scepticism as to the efficacy of the intellectual method, there are special objections to its applications to religious problems, and the attitude of the church in the past has not been one of willingness to submit the articles of its faith to critical enquiry. Some of his readers will undoubtedly question the present appositeness of Professor Jones' statement that "Theology has its face turned towards the past"; to them it will seem an exaggeration to say that for the church "fettered-thinking" still means "devoutness." Yet there are few who do not need to be reminded of this need for free enquiry, not only for tolerance of the investigations of others but for intellectual enterprise in their own lives. It is, as Professor Jones clearly shows, a fundamental requirement for Protestantism, for Protestantism "has appealed to Caesar, and to Caesar it must go. It has affirmed the right of private judgment in religion, it must establish that right, and satisfy the intelligence."

Nevertheless there is one important argument that is a weapon in the hand of them who dispute this need. For the difference between the Sacred and the Secular, between religious and natural facts seems so definite and decisive that the methods by which the latter are studied may well seem useless for investigation of the former. While our knowledge of the finite increases through the use of enquiry it seems that Reason cannot help us to a belief in those infinite and absolute facts to whose reality the history of religion testifies. Our author's whole case depends on his demonstration that Reason is of service to the study of the infinite, and his arguments are worthy of being repeated in some detail.

In the first place the contrast between sacred and secular is not denied; rather it is admitted that its significance

will gain in intensity as mankind advances. But is this contrast is the last word one of two views must follow. Either the sacred is unknowable and we have no means of becoming acquainted with the infinite, or there is a dualism in man's cognitive nature, a fundamental division between the head and the heart. There have been pious scientists who have adopted the former alternative and confessed to a religion based on Awe before the Unknowable, but such a position is untenable. The conception of such a Deity is a masterpiece of confused thinking for we have no more right to call the Unknowable "God" than to give it any other name. But the second alternative has its own difficulties. The long-continued conflict between Science and Religion results for this belief that "the heart has its reasons which the head cannot know" and there are many who have felt that in this conflict Religion is always fighting a losing battle.

Further, there are certain positive considerations that lead us to doubt the ultimacy of this contrast between sacred and secular, and to believe that Reason can speak with authority of both realms.

In all other matters contrast always presupposes unity, and the assertion of differences implies an underlying identity. Paraphrasing Jones' argument we may say that it is only in conundrums that we ask what is the difference between objects that seem completely unrelated—and even in this case the answer to the riddle is the demonstration of some unsuspected resemblance as much as of a difference. In everyday life there is always a "universe of discourse" within which distinctions are made, and we are dealing with abstractions though they be legitimate for practical purposes—when we neglect this unity. So the sacred and the secular have their real meaning only in a wider whole; "Spirit" as opposed to "Matter" is unreal, and the true significance of "Matter" is found in "Spirit." Thus Jones declares that the merely religious and the merely secular are "poverty-stricken abstractions."

But we must guard against a misunderstanding. So long as man is content to contrast the spiritual and the natural, sharing his life between them, this deeper unity must be asserted. Yet if they are exclusive as is commonly supposed, then the underlying unity can only be one that is "beyond good and evil." Now this is far from Professor Jones' meaning, and to understand him we must realize that he denies the exclusiveness of the contrast. On the contrary, he describes the contrast as the difference between the infinite and the finite, and if the former is to retain its character it must *include* the finite within itself. Thus the opposition

is one between a point of view that comprehends the whole and one that is absorbed in contemplation of the parts in their isolation. Religion in short is a synoptic point of view,—not idle nor alive, but active as all true creeds are active, transmuting the value of particulars concentrating man's faculties and giving unity to the scattered facts of everyday life. The sacred is the true significance of the secular.

In the third place the spiritual, so regarded, is not intrinsically hostile to Reason. It is a narrow and unworthy view that looks on man's intelligence as a ready reckoner whose data must be units, fragments of life. Even in the natural sciences the quantitative method has its limitations. There indeed we have an example of different types of facts that demand different methods of knowledge,—for the hypotheses that serve the physicist are inadequate for the biologist—yet it is one reason that is used in every science. At bottom there is only one way of knowing, and that is the discovery of intelligible principles in widely differing events. The scientist goes out to meet his world in the faith that it is there to be understood. The religious man must go forth to meet it in the faith that the intelligible principle, the form that orders and systematizes events is a principle of goodness, and in this enterprise his equipment is the same reason that has enabled science to advance in the past.

There can, I think, be no denial of the importance of such a view. We have too long sought for "the spiritual" in some little hidden shrine within a man and have known the bitterness of defeat as the light of science has illumined one by one the dark corners of man's being. We have remained too long content with a mere juxtaposition of the spiritual and the natural: they have stood side by side like Sunday and week-day and the unity of life has been lost. To advance on these old views and justify the importance of religion in the whole of life we must accept the hypothesis that the spiritual is the natural rightly understood, and put the hypothesis to the test. For an hypothesis Jones acknowledges it to be. We are only learning the nature of the laws of our world, moral and natural alike, and none of them can escape the test of the crucial instance. No exception can be made in the case of the great presupposition of religion that there is "no fundamental discrepancy between the good and the real or the true," but this too must be justified in the light of secular experience.

A Faith that Enquires is an experiment in the laboratory of religion as well as an apologia for the scientific method, and indeed the greater part of the book is devoted to the trial of the hypothesis. Professor Jones enquires as to the stability of his faith in view of three facts—(1) the insistent

fact of evil, (2) the apparent contradiction between the claims of morality and those of religion, and (3) the difficulty of reconciling progress and perfection or of conceiving a perfect God as active.

I. The intelligence testifies with no uncertain voice to the reality of sin and suffering, even of the suffering of innocent for guilty. Can we still say that goodness is the foundational principle of reality?

We need look for no idle boast that this ancient problem has at last been solved. In many of its pronouncements Natural Religion has shown that it too has its dogmatisms no less confidently asserted than these of Orthodox Faith, but Professor Jones was too sincere in his recognition of the difficulties to be satisfied with a blind if easy optimism. He condemned as "facile solutions" that could satisfy no scientific spirit those theories that offer the conception of a God limited in power or goodness, or of a god "careful of the type" but "careless of the single life." "The religious history of man gives no ground for believing that he *consciously* worships a *recognized* imperfect God." No less certain is his rejection of those views that deny the reality of evil, for such theories find difficulty in maintaining the reality of the good. Goodness and evil alike are regarded as appearances, predicates applicable of temporal existences but not of the absolute. For Jones on the other hand the Absolute must itself sustain finite appearances and be "a doer and sufferer in the world's life." In his earlier works Professor Jones often emphasized the fact that the greatest tragedies of life are the result of the conflict not between good and evil but between two goods. But in this volume he strikes a deeper note. The great problem of the Book of Job, which often formed the subject of essays set for his students, is here forcibly restated, and the stark evil of evil is exposed.

But some contribution to an answer is offered. In the first place it is shown that the real problem is not occasioned by natural evil. No man was better acquainted with physical suffering than Professor Jones for his last years were deeply streaked with agonizing pain, yet his assurance is fine that natural evil may be no hindrance to moral good. The great problem is that of moral evil, for this is *final*. In the second place, however, it is pointed out that the character of all evil is *self-destructive*, it is negative at its own heart. Again the possibility of moral evil is recognized to be a condition of goodness, and it is Professor Jones' belief that the world exists to furnish mankind with an opportunity for learning goodness, while to demand a world in which wrongdoing is not possible is irrational. Finally it is suggested

that our hypothesis cannot stand unshaken in view of the tragedies of human failure unless personal immortality be assured.

The remaining two problems are far too frequently ignored to-day, at least in their practical issues, and the discussion of them in these pages is a great stimulant to thought. But it is also fruitful in results and perhaps the most valuable section of the volume. The suggested view of the relation between the sacred and the secular leads naturally to an identification of human nature at its noblest and highest with the divine. But this appears to involve the nullification of morality. Even if the identification be not recognized, at least religion insists on man's dependence on God while Morality on the other hand declares that the man himself must will the good. How are dependence and freedom to be reconciled; how is man's individuality as a moral being to be guaranteed if in religion he can say, "I can do all things *through Christ* which strengtheneth me"? The central point in Professor Jones' answer is that Personality does not mean mere isolation and that while every individual must live his life alone yet his personality grows as it becomes comprehensive. The unity between God and man is a unity of love—"that which unites wills and leaves them standing."

The practical importance of this teaching needs no elaboration, for frequent attempts are made to-day to divorce the ethical and the religious. From the side of the churches these attempts generally depend on a ready acceptance of recent psychological theories, and take the form of a protest against the degradation of religion to a mere means. It is *not*, we are told, the handmaid of morality: it is *not* concerned first of all with the improvement of mankind, it is the outcome of a wild necessity of the soul of man. Many and varied are the tunes played on these strings, but the central doctrine is the substitution of Worship for Service as the essence of Religion. As a corrective this has its value, but it leads all too easily to a depreciation of Deity, which is regarded not as the "stern daughter of the voice of God," but as the offspring of human intellectualism. The argument in *A Faith that Enquires* recalls us to a sense of the practical and to a recognition of personal responsibility.

We have noticed Professor Jones' doctrine that the Absolute is active in the world's life. Any other conception of the divine involves the isolation of the Good from the temporal process, and so a denial of the reality of that process, for by our hypothesis the Good and the Real are one. These conceptions then must be rejected. "I cannot call that which does nothing—which for ever stands aloof from

the world process in 'eternal fixity—God," says our author. "Such a God could not at least be a God of Love, for love identifies the lover and the loved. Love cannot stand aloof; love lives in the life of its object and shares its fate."

But what can be meant by the Perfection of God if He advances in the process, if He progresses in the progress of the world? If we reject the "static Absolute" must we not deny its perfection? Within the world of human activity we can follow Professor Jones' argument without difficulty. There attainment and process are one. Morality is a process, yet it were untrue to say that moral goodness is not achieved. But for God there can, it would seem, be no further aim, no real advance if He is perfect. It is precisely this which Professor Jones contests for, he says, a world progressing would be more perfect than a fixed and static ideal. For him Reality is a process and the process is the operation of the ideal. It is idle to look for the ideal outside its operation, for always a thing is what it does. So we cannot distinguish between Ideal and Reality, and must say that the whole, in process, advances to real achievements, the Perfect breaks out into new Perfection. Jones accepts the conception of a growing God.

A paragraph from Professor Hobhouse's recent work on *The Rational Good* may illustrate this. He says, "We desire objects that satisfy us, and yet it seems to be a condition that they should point beyond themselves, and thus not wholly satisfy—a paradox which is resolved if we have the grounded confidence that what is *wholly* good breeds more good and more in unending sequence." Professor Hobhouse does not, like Professor Jones, identify God with Reality, and may speak of goodness growing while God remains unchanging. But because this implies the inactivity of the Deity, Professor Jones welcomes the other alternative. It is idle to deny the difficulties within his statement, but he has suggested a line of enquiry that may be profitable.

And the argument he offers is fully in keeping with the rest of the volume, for it restates, from one more aspect the message of the earlier chapters that the Infinite is not to be sought apart from the Finite, that Static Conceptions cannot truly express the character of Reality and that the noblest philosophy of life is itself a living philosophy, a faith that enquires.

IDRIS W. PHILLIPS.