

capital of Sihon, devouring Ar of Moab (or reading 'ad with the Sept. instead of 'ar, as far as Moab) and swallowing up (so Sept. reading *bāla'h*) the high places of Arnon."

It is hardly necessary to point out how closely the Biblical notices of the Amorites and their kingdom agree with the results of archæological discovery. Once more, where the archæological test can be applied, it is the Pentateuch that turns out to be right, not the subjective speculations of modern writers, miscalled criticism. The general sense attached to the name "Amorite" is that which it ought to bear if the Pentateuchal narrative goes back to the age to which it professes to belong, and Sihon and his kingdom have not only been proved to be historical, but the mention of them is an indication of the Mosaic date of the story in which it occurs. At a later period all remembrance of the kingdom had passed away, and in place of a king of the Amorites we should have had a king of Midian, a king of Edom, a king of Ammon, a king of Zobah, or a king of the Arabians. In the Mosaic age, however, the king of the Amorites was still a power, and only upon the supposition that the story of the conquest of Northern Moab is a contemporary record can we upon either scientific or common-sense grounds explain its presence in the Book of Numbers. Like the quotation from the Amorite poem, it presupposes, not deceptive oral legend, much less deliberate fiction, but a trustworthy historical source.



The Problem of Home Reunion.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR W. ROBINSON, D.D.

THE problem is an exceedingly difficult one; the signs of encouragement are many; the solution, when it arrives, will in all probability be unexpectedly simple—that is, in effect, what I want to say, with the addition of a few practical suggestions as to what it may be best for us to do, and not to do, in the immediate future.

To begin, then : nothing is to be gained by attempting to minimize the difficulty. It is always hard to mend a situation that has been for a long time mismanaged and misshaped. Where views have become prejudiced and antagonisms stiffened, where all sorts of interests are concerned, and where consciences are quick to resent anything that looks like indifference to the seriousness of the issues at stake, it is sheer folly to suppose that all can be set right in a moment. Moreover, the thing to be aimed at is large and high, and consequently far from easy of attainment. As Dr. Stock, at the outset of this discussion, most truly affirmed, reunion means more than intercommunion ; it means the restoration of inward and outward co-ordination and co-operation in the life and work of a single body—a reunited, and in some respects doubtless a reconstructed, Church. We know well enough the difficulties that bar the way to such a consummation within our own borders, and it needs no great exercise of imagination to realize that as many more present themselves to the minds of our separated brethren when they are considering the concessions that a return to the old home would be likely to involve for them. The more any of us have tried to devise a plan that could be generally acceptable, and the more we have tried to promote a mutual understanding, the more convinced we must have become that the task is arduous in the extreme. The path to be trodden where a great wrong is to be undone has ever to be sought with dimmed eyes and anxious hearts.

It is, and it must be, difficult work. Were it not that we have many and strong encouragements to persevere with it, we might reasonably question whether much good could come of any efforts we could make. But the encouragements are, thank God, both many and strong. Let us think of some of them. It is, happily, a commonplace to say that the great forces of the higher life to-day are tending powerfully in the direction of unity. It may well be that this has always been so, but certainly the evidence of it was never more visible than now. The signs are everywhere. On all sides and in all

departments the watchwords are alike. From the workshop and the mass meeting, in the newspapers and magazines, among politicians as much as among the advocates of the latest philosophical religious cults, the rallying cries are the same. How familiar they are, and how plain is the direction of thought to which they bear witness! Association, federation, co-operation, union, solidarity, the life of humanity—all point to the need and the longing for something more and fuller than the experiences of division and isolation that we have known in the past. “It is becoming more apparent every day that combination can accomplish almost anything, and that nothing can be accomplished without it.” So spoke a master cotton-spinner at a business meeting lately. Consciously or unconsciously, he was the mouthpiece not only of his craft, but of his age. And the great principle is pressing for an application of which he was not thinking, and possibly never dreamed. For what we are slowly coming to realize is this—that union is much more than strength; it is life. The full truth is, not merely that we can *do* more together, but that we can *be* more together. “For there the Lord promised His blessing, life”—the highest and fullest life—“life for evermore.” Men together can attain to wider apprehensions, clearer visions, nobler purposes, than they can reach alone. “With all saints” it is possible to know that which passes the understanding of the individual saint. “The glory of the Lord” waits to be revealed until “all flesh shall see it together.” Once this truth has been generally apprehended, the desire for reunions all the world and all the Church over will be mightily reinforced, and the obstacles will have to be formidable indeed that will keep men apart.

Already we are becoming aware of a new temper and a changing atmosphere. Dean Stanley used to tell how he had been startled by hearing an aged minister pray, at a meeting of the Free Church General Assembly in Scotland, that there might be poured upon the Church “the spirit of disruption”! Perhaps the good man had omitted a “the,” or possibly it was the Dean’s hearing that was at fault. Anyway, no such prayer

could be uttered at the present time. The very opposite spirit is manifestly at work. Its effects are most apparent in our mission-fields and distant dependencies, where conventionalities are less rigid, and where the absurdities of unnecessary competition are more quickly felt. In India and Australia and Canada very bold proposals are being made; and even here in the Old Country there are tokens of movement, some of them unmistakable on the surface, and many more to be detected by those who can perceive what is happening beneath it. What extraordinary changes have taken place in theological thought within the memory of us all! How completely standpoints have been altered under the influence of Biblical criticism, and historical research, and—surely we need not hesitate to admit it—as the result of a truer understanding of the meaning of Christ's Gospel both for the individual and for the community. What a difference has been felt in our preaching since we learned, thanks mainly, under God, to F. D. Maurice and D. L. Moody, that the true teaching starts, not from sin, but from Grace; that love is mightier as a motive to conversion than fear; and that the "Pilgrim's Progress" is not the only, nor indeed the most trustworthy, portraiture of a Christian's experience. With this change has followed a much more sympathetic attitude towards matters of Church order. A famous Nonconformist of the last generation admitted to a friend that he had sometimes wished that our Lord had been pleased to dispense with the need for Sacraments. In the light of our larger ideals of corporate Christianity this old difficulty of individualistic piety has been greatly relieved even where it has not yet disappeared. The late Mr. Price Hughes once remarked to me: "You may not realize it, but we"—he was speaking for his fellow-Nonconformists—"are now going through our Oxford Movement." Only a few days ago I was told of a Baptist minister who had offered himself to one of our Bishops for Confirmation, his reason being that he could no longer remain content with a position in which he had no Gospel to offer to a child.

Do we not also begin to detect a change in the way questions affecting organization and the ministry are regarded? Is it not apparent that the old independency is being quietly abandoned, as the advantages of a more central and personal authority and leadership are increasingly recognized? And is it not also the fact that within the Church of England we are feeling our way towards simpler and more constitutional ideals of Episcopal oversight and government? Dr. Stock speaks the evident truth when he says that "we cannot possibly hope for reunion except on the basis of the historic Episcopate." By no other means can we make manifest and intelligible our continuity with the past, or expect to appeal effectively to the great communions of Greek and Latin Christians who may never be forgotten when we are praying and working for unity. And there are other considerations which will be felt by many to be even more convincing than these. "On practical grounds some form of Episcopacy is likely to commend itself to every extending Church." That is Canon Henson's belief, and there is good reason to think that, in this direction at all events, his foresight may be trusted. The question as to Episcopacy will be settled when it is settled, not because all scholars have been brought to an agreement as to the primitive lists of Roman Bishops, and the right interpretation of the early consecrations at Alexandria, nor even because there is any general consensus as to the spiritual value of an unbroken succession, but because earnest and thoughtful men have come to admit that the old way is the true way of efficiency and peace. That this conclusion is nearer than it was has lately been shown by the remarkable utterances of the American Congregationalist leader, Dr. Newman Smyth.

Yes, there are encouragements, and we should be blind if we did not perceive them. From time to time hopes are greatly raised, and we are disposed to say that only the most gloomy foreboders can entertain any doubts as to what is to happen before long. Nevertheless, we shall be ill-advised if we allow our hopes to make us forget the obstacles that lie between us

and their accomplishment. The function of hope is to brace us for the conflict with difficulty. There will be many a struggle and many a failure before the eventual solution arrives. And that solution will have to be a bigger thing than most of those who desire it imagine. No settlement can be lasting which does not find ample room for the fullest and freest expression of every positive conviction on the part of all who are to be included by it. Those who return to us must return with the full assurance that they will be giving their witness and safeguarding what is dear to them more completely by doing so than by continuing to protest from outside. The platform must be spacious enough to hold us all. No nicely calculated reduction to an incontestable minimum will serve as a basis of agreement. Undenominationalism, with all its fair promises, is now passing ignominiously through the bankruptcy court. The reunion of the future will be obtained, not through compromises, but by comprehension. It will be a case of the Least Common Multiple, and not of the Greatest Common Measure. Unity is waiting until we have relearned the old lesson: "All things are yours." When we have learned it we shall look back with reverence to those who in the past held on to any section of truth, only wondering that devotion to a fragment should have prevented their seeing its relation to the whole. The goal will seem obvious when once we are face to face with it. Like all great solutions, the conclusion will astonish us by its extraordinary simplicity. That will be the surest guarantee that it is the work of the Wisdom which is from above, and no mere artifice of clever men. With full hearts and clear minds we shall gratefully acknowledge: "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!"

And now, what can I say about the steps that any of us may wisely take to accelerate the process that is working amongst us whether we will or no? There are doubtless not a few things that we can do. We can answer to the calls to prayer; we can meet in conference when the opportunity is given; we can try to understand the positions of those from

whom we have differed ; we can seek to define our own ; we can keep perpetually before us the ideal of a unity in a Body where the members are linked to one another, not so much by sameness of opinion as by the possession of a Spirit in loyalty to the common Head ; we can hold ourselves in readiness to follow whenever our responsible authorities are moved to bid us proceed. More privately, we may do much to cultivate feelings of brotherliness which will help to remove many a suspicion and to heal many a sore. Having said this, I should wish to add, with all the emphasis I can, that I am convinced that we shall assist the movement towards reunion even more at the present stage by being sensitively careful to do nothing that could hinder it than by any deliberate attempts to advance it ; and, to be quite practical, I shall venture to suggest to my fellow-Churchmen, and to others who may read this, the three things which I believe it to be most important to avoid.

In the first place, we must not *hurry* one another. Never was there a case in which more haste was likely to mean less speed. Rapid growth is not the healthiest growth. Convictions simply will not be forced. Let each of us be fully persuaded in his own mind as to the measure of the truth of which he is the representative. And let us sincerely determine to live it. Then will follow inevitably the reverence for the larger truth, and the willingness to accept it through others. How often we have seen people carried by reaction from one extreme to its opposite, with the result that in their undisciplined enthusiasm they have abandoned the old lessons without ever really apprehending the new. A little more patience and respect for the intention of Providence in its shaping of their course would have enabled them to bring all they had gained under the narrower conditions to enrich the larger fellowship upon which they had entered. We have learned little from history or from our own experience if we do not know that the best things come slowly, and that God's purposes are ill served by any impatience or violence of ours.

And if we must not hurry one another, so also we must not

humiliate one another. Words and actions must be avoided which could cause unnecessary pain. The temptation of the controversialist is to view his opponent in the least attractive light. We may not presume to think that all the mistakes have occurred on the side to which we do not belong. Those who have been most right may for that very reason have also been most wrong. The obligation to love increases in proportion to light. The greater the opportunity, the heavier the responsibility for using it. We must strive to see the best, and not the worst, in one another. We must try to do full justice to all services rendered and to gifts which are not our own. Spiritual graces must be even more eagerly welcomed than intellectual abilities. Where God's blessing has rested upon any man's work we must be forward to give thanks for it. There is no more serious obstacle to reunion than the fear that those who have received unmistakable marks of the Divine approval in their ministry may be called upon to submit to what they would regard as a humiliating renunciation of their claim to have exercised any valid ministry at all. We shall have to find a way by which all convictions shall be honoured, while no consciences are hurt. Let us be as humble ourselves as we will, but let us not think to humiliate one another.

And finally, let us not *harass* one another. Alas that this should need to be said! It is time, surely, that vexations and pin-pricks should cease. They are ruled out in the diplomacy of love. Let us consider one another in every department of action, whether it be the social, the political, or the religious. We may not pretend to a unity that does not as yet exist, but we can at least do nothing to advertise disagreements. How differently questions about education and—shall I venture to say?—disestablishment might be handled on all sides if while we were discussing them we kept uppermost in our minds the assurance that sooner or later we are all to be one! That thought might not alter our views of the particular matters in debate, but it would often greatly alter our ways of presenting them. Then, again, might we not pass a self-denying ordinance,

and resolve to avoid as far as possible the proselytizing of individuals? More and more it is becoming plain that reunion will be reached by some more satisfactory method than the transference of individuals, with all the heart-burning and friction that this process engenders. We shall have to reckon with the possibility of which Mr. Lacey spoke so impressively at the Pan-Anglican Congress, and to which Chancellor Lias refers when he writes that "we should be ready to consider a scheme of federation in which the various religious bodies should take their place as religious societies or orders within the pale of the one reunited Church." Something of the sort, I have no doubt, we shall be asked to consider, though I would fain believe that the word "federation" will seem to fall very far short as a description of what should be looked for. But if this is the direction in which we may properly turn our thoughts, it must be obvious that the end will not be most quickly reached by withdrawing from the separated bodies just those elements that are in sympathy with the desire for better and more intimate relations. We cannot, of course, forbid any man to follow the leading of the light he has received, but we can bid him be quite certain that he is not mistaking its guidance. If we are persuaded that God has some better thing for us all than our existing isolations and rivalries, we shall feel it to be a sacred duty to do nothing that could needlessly embitter the feelings of those whom we are longing to draw with us into His way of peace.



The Functions of a Missionary Committee.

BY THE REV. F. BAYLIS, M.A.

TO prepare for the taking up, on another occasion, of the question of Prayer in Relation to Missionary Finance, a preliminary problem is here discussed. Missionary finance is with us largely shaped by Missionary Committees. What are the true functions of a Missionary Committee, particularly in the matter