

The Fraternal.

VOL. XIII.—No. 1.

JANUARY, 1921.

LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS for the FRATERNAL should be addressed to the Editor, Rev. F. C. SPURR, Regent's Park Chapel, N.W., and all other communications to the Secretary, Rev. E. D. deRUSSETT, M.A., 17 Roxborough Park, Harrow.

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS.

THE result of the United Effort in which we have doubtless all participated is most gratifying. A considerable portion of the surplus will be utilised in providing bonuses which will help to tide many brethren over the difficult period between now and next March, when the first payments are made on the higher scale, but it is earnestly to be hoped that our aged brethren who are on the Annuity Fund will also be benefitted.

Our revised Constitution, as published in this number, is the result of very careful consideration and conference and not a little correspondence, and we hope it will result in a large increase in our membership.

We trust all our members will see to it that their local "Fraternals" are federated, and in case there is not one in connection with their Association, that they will take steps to have one formed and duly affiliated.

The special article in this issue for discussion in the various Fraternal is the anonymous one on "Ourselves and the Lay Preachers," and it is hoped that this important subject will not only provoke a free expression of opinion in these gatherings, but also further articles suitable for insertion in these columns.

There is a widespread misconception which should be dissipated at once. Many brethren are under the impression that the Editor is simply snowed under with literary contributions to this magazine. This is by no means the case; in fact, scarcely one article is supplied except as the result of a personal request from the Editor. Surely many of our brethren have subjects in their minds which would be very acceptable and beneficial to us all.

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It is gratifying to know that in spite of the very brief time between the issuing of our last number containing the Order of Service for Re-dedication Day and that date, yet over five thousand re-prints were sold. The service was much appreciated wherever it was used.

Do all our members realize that they may claim an allowance for the cost of books and telephone when assessed for the Income Tax? At present rates this means that the actual cost of books will be only two-thirds of the purchase price. But perhaps the most important is that one-sixth of the value of the rent is allowed where one room of the house is used as a study.

We are all very sorry to hear of the illness of both Dr. G. P. Gould and Dr. J. H. Shakespeare. They seem indispensable at the present time, and we earnestly hope and pray that they may soon be restored to their most important and much-loved work.

Will brethren who have used the Circulating Library please look amongst their own books and see if any of our missing volumes are there, for about half-a-dozen boxes are held up for want of just one book each which has not been returned. Also Box 16 has completely vanished! The Rev. W. H. Pratt, of 235 Selhurst Road, S.E.25, is our new librarian and will be glad to receive these books as soon as possible.

Please remember that all Subscriptions are due on the 1st of January. I regret to say that a large percentage of our members have neglected to send in last year's half-crown!

E. D. DE RUSSETT.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF ST. PAUL.

By DAVID SMITH, D.D.

(Hodder and Stoughton, 21s. net).

DR. DAVID SMITH has long been the valued helper of the student of the life of our Lord, through his book "The Days of His Flesh," and now he has given us a fine sequel to it in his volume on the Apostle Paul. Such a work was needed, for since the days of Conybeare and Howson a generation has passed, and much new material bearing on Pauline times and conditions has come to

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hand. Sir W. Ramsay's investigations in Asia Minor have thrown a flood of light on the Acts of the Apostles, and the finding of ancient papyri in the rubbish-heap of Oxyrhynchus has led to Deissmann's discoveries as to the language of the New Testament. The result is that many puzzling phrases used in the Epistles are seen to have been current idioms of the time, full of point and meaning.

To the assimilation of the new material as well as to the renewed survey of the old, Dr. Smith has given long and patient labour, and has produced a book which will, one feels sure, mark an epoch in Pauline study. It is a treasure-house upon the subject. Fresh, balanced, full, ripe in scholarship and of broad outlook, it is also marked by a deep sympathy with the spirit of the Apostle, whom it sets forth vividly alike in his rich humanity and in his tender devotion to Christ.

To me the reading of this book has brought Paul nearer, and made him a more real and vital personality. The in-weaving of facts gained from the classics, the monuments, and the literature of early Christianity, makes the scenes described luminous and concrete, and amid these Paul moves almost with the clearness of a contemporary. We live with him in the Tarsus of his boyhood, accompany him to his college in Jerusalem, feel the stress of his anti-Christian zeal and the keenness of his compunctions, until the hour when Christ claims him, and then we follow step by step the unfolding of the great and adventurous career in which he obeyed the Heavenly Vision. It is all intensely graphic and life-like, often truly pathetic, and sometimes grandly inspiring.

One of the most valuable features of the book is the insertion of the epistles at the appropriate stages of the Apostle's story. Of these Dr. Smith gives a new translation, each paragraph being led up to by a paraphrase which is in itself an exposition. But, second to nothing for freshness and suggestions are the notes, in which the author, by happy quotations and allusions, flashes light upon innumerable passages. Some examples will illustrate the quality of the book.

"For, I fancy, God has exhibited us, the Apostles, at the last as condemned criminals" (1 Cor. iv. 9). A metaphor from

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the circus. The sated appetite of the spectators was stimulated at the close by a piquant entertainment: condemned criminals were introduced to fight unarmed with wild beasts (cf. xv. 32)—the final event of the performance.

[Quotations from Chrysostom and Tertullian.]

“**Deliver such a man to Satan**” (1 Cor. v. 5). . . . The sentence signifies merely exclusion from the fellowship of the Church (Ambrosiaster). . . . The sinful flesh . . . is to be destroyed through repentance, that the man himself, soul and body, may be saved. “Deliver to Satan” is the converse of “Baptise into Christ.” As one “baptized into Christ” is “in Christ,” so one “delivered to Satan” is “in the Evil One.” The sentence was that the offender, who claimed to be “in Christ,” should be relegated to his true position, “in Satan,” in order that he might realise the misery and shame of it. . . . Apparently the Apostle here employs the Greek formula of execration, which runs thus on one of the Magical Papyri in the British Museum: “Spirit of the Dead, I deliver to thee X, in order that . . .” This formula would be familiar to the Corinthians.

“**The Lord's freedman**” (1 Cor. vii. 22). Based upon a merciful Greek usage. When a slave was hardly treated, he might take refuge in a temple, particularly the Temple of Theseus or the Temple of the Erinyes at Athens, and claim the privilege of being sold to the deity. He had previously brought thither his purchase-price, the hoarding of his poor **peculium**, and when this was handed over to his master in the presence of witnesses he forthwith passed into the god's possession, and thenceforth he was unassailably, and irrevocably free. . . . He had been “bought for freedom.”

The usage is exemplified by an inscription recently discovered at Delphi. It is dated the first year of 2nd Century B.C. “The Pythian Apollo bought from Sosibius of Amphissa for freedom a woman slave named Nicaea, by race a Roman, at a price of 3½ minae of silver. . . . The price received. . . . And the purchase (i.e., herself) Nicta entrusted to Apollo for freedom.”

“**If someone see you . . . at table in an idol-temple**” . . . (1 Cor. viii. 10). “It was the fashion for a devout heathen, by way of thanksgiving for good fortune, to hold a feast in the

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temple of his deity and invite his acquaintances to share it. . . . Specimens of such invitations have been unearthed at Oxyrhynchus. 'Chaeremon invites you to dine at the table of the Lord Sarapis in the Temple of Sarapis to-morrow, the 15th, at 3 o'clock.'

"(They display the Law's work written on their hearts, their conscience bearing witness with it and their reasonings debating in condemnation or defence) on the Day when God judges the secrets of men" (Rom. ii. 16). "Observe the graphic metaphor: a law-court with legal code, witness, prosecutor, advocate, judge. The Unwritten Law is the statute, Conscience the witness, their reasonings prosecutor and advocate, God the Judge."

"The bounteousness in grace" (Rom. v. 15). "Dorea, in the Paypri the Emperor's largesse to his soldiers: in New Testament God's regal munificence, the bounteousness of His grace."

"They stumbled over the stone of stumbling" (Rom. iv. 32). A continuation of the metaphor of the race in v. 16. c.f. The description of a disaster at the Pythian games through a chariot striking the turning-post.

"I am paid in full" (Phil. iv. 18). In common Greek *apecho*, "I have received it," was the technical acknowledgment of payment. *Apoche*, "a receipt."

"I, Paul, write it with my own hand: I will repay it" (Philemon 19). Here Paul takes the pen from his amanuensis Timothy and playfully writes and signs a debtor's bond, his "note of hand," just as he had given the Philippian's "a receipt of payment." . . . The formula had to be written with the party's own hand, or, if he could not write, a proxy wrote it for him with the note "I wrote it for him."

"And we would not have you miss the truth" (1 Thess. iv. 13). *Agnoein*, not simply "to be ignorant," but "to be ignorant where one might and should have known." It was used, e.g., in the common Greek of making a wrong return in an assessment schedule.

"Prove everything, retain the genuine" (1 Thess. v. 21). Like bankers who tested coins to ascertain whether they were genuine or counterfeit.

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"God does not accept any man's person" (Gal. ii. 6). A phrase signifying "take at face-value."

"In Christ" (Gal. ii. 17). Observe the Pauline nexus of Christian experience.

- (1) Christ for us—Substitution.
- (2) We in Christ—Justification.
- (3) Christ in us—Sanctification.
- (4) We for Christ—Consecration.

But these fragments give little idea of the rich teaching of this book in its consecutive unfolding. They are only nuggets from a mine.

In the Appendix Dr. Smith gives a useful table of Pauline chronology, also a chapter—which certainly has piquancy for Baptist readers—on Baptism. In the latter it is at any rate good for us to see the strongest case that can be made out against our views.

The one regrettable fact about this book is its price. In these days of expensive living it is difficult for most Baptist ministers to spend a guinea on a single volume. But this volume is of such value that it ought to be on every minister's shelves. Congregations and Bible Classes would do well to present it to their pastors; they would be repaid in the enriched ministry which a patient study of Paul's life and message, under the guidance of the Apostle's latest expositor, would be sure to bring.

JOHN W. EWING.

OUR REVISED CONSTITUTION.

(ADOPTED, 1906. REVISED, 1920).

I.—Name: The Baptist Ministers' Fraternal Union.

II.—Constituency:

1.—All whose names are included in the Baptist Union Ministers' List or Probationers' List shall be eligible for membership.

2.—Any minister of a Baptist Church who is recommended in writing to the Secretary, by the Secretary of the

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Association in which his Church is situated, and by the Superintendent of the Sustentation Area.

3.—All male missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society shall be deemed Honorary Members.

III.—Object:

1.—To foster the spiritual and intellectual life of our members and so increase their efficiency as ministers of the Gospel.

2.—To form a Fellowship for mutual help in the common interests of the ministry.

IV.—Methods:

1.—By affiliating Association and Local Fraternal throughout the country.

2.—By encouraging the formation of Baptist Fraternal or Baptist Sections of Fraternal.

3.—By linking up isolated men by personal membership.

4.—By stimulating mutual prayerfulness by means of the Prayer Union.

5.—By providing study in the pastorate.

6.—By arranging conferences.

7.—By cultivating close co-operation with the Pastoral Session of the Baptist Union.

8.—By the circulation of our magazine, "The Fraternal," as a channel of intercourse between the Fraternal.

9.—By maintaining a Circulating Library for the use of the members.

V.—Membership:

Membership shall consist of the acceptance of the Constitution of the Baptist Minister's Fraternal Union and subscription to its Funds.

RULES.

I.—Officers: The officers shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, a Secretary or Secretaries, and a Librarian.

II.—Council: The Council shall consist of the Officers, together with the Superintendents of Sustentation Areas, one representative of each of the Association Fraternal and ten

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members elected at the Annual Meeting, held during the Annual Assembly of the Baptist Union.

III.—Subscriptions: Each member shall pay a subscription of not less than 2s. 6d. annually, to be due on the 1st of January of each year.

IV.—Affiliation Fees: (a) A Local Fraternal shall be federated if the majority of the members are eligible to become members of our Union and if a subscription of not less than 2s. 6d. be paid for each such eligible member, these latter to become thereby actual members, except in the case of those who definitely wish to be exempt.

(b) Any Associated Fraternal may be federated to the Union by the payment of an Annual Subscription of 2s. 6d., and shall have the right to elect a representative on the Council.

(c) The Baptist Students' Fraternal Union or any such society shall have the right to become affiliated and to appoint from amongst its membership two students of each of the Colleges as delegates to meetings of the Fraternal Union, the subscription being one shilling for each delegate.

DR. MULLINS' BOOKS.

“The Axioms of Religion.” (8s. net.)

“Freedom and Authority in Religion.” (10s. net.)

“The Christian Religion in its Doctrinal Expression.” (20s. net.)

“Why is Christianity True?” (10s. net.)

By President E. T. MULLINS, D.D., LL.D.

The presence in England of President Mullins offers an excellent opportunity of calling attention to one or two of the great books he has written. By some mischance many of the most excellent books published by our Baptist brethren in America are not generally known in this country. This is greatly to our loss. A few of them find their way to this side, chiefly falling into the hands of men who keep in close touch with American Baptist life. But such massive books as those named above deserve as proportionately wide a circulation in Britain as they

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have obtained in the United States. "**The Axioms of religion**" was marked down in American Book Catalogues for two consecutive years as heading the list of the best sellers in religious literature. And we are not surprised. It is a magnificent apologia for the Baptist position. Men who are not sure whether Baptists have a future or not should read these living pages. "God has given to the Baptists of the world a great and sublime task in the promulgation of principles on the preservation of which the spiritual and political hopes of the world depend." The book shows convincingly the truth of this claim. A careful study of its contents would help to create a new Baptist conscience in Britain.

"**Freedom and Authority in Religion**" is, in the reviewer's judgment, one of the very best books ever written upon the subject. It surveys the various theories of Authority, shews the weakness and strength of each and offers a final synthesis of the whole, which seems to us to be complete. The present writer has read the book through twice. He ventures to say to his brethren that they will find in it material for a good many fresh sermons as well as a statement of Authority which will commend itself to them as perhaps the most comprehensive that has yet been put forward.

The volume on "**Christian Doctrine**" is the largest and greatest of the four. It was reviewed at length by Mr. Phillips in the "Baptist Times" some months ago. His enthusiastic commendation of it is entirely justified. Upon the question of "Last Things," Dr. Mullins would not carry all of us with him. We are growing accustomed to thinking about that solemn subject less statically and more spiritually than formerly. But the major part of this truly great work treats Christian Theology as a living thing. It takes note of modern thought and of the historical method of approach.

We are happy to introduce to some of our brethren the writings of one of the acutest minds in America. We should like to see Dr. Mullins' books enjoy a large circulation amongst us, especially as our own Publication Department has them in stock.

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OURSELVES AND THE LAY PREACHER.

FOR some time past the great claims of the United Fund have been absorbing a large portion of our thought and energy, it is therefore not to be wondered at that many less urgent considerations have had scant notice, one of these being the recent development of the Sustentation Scheme and its effect upon the Lay Preacher. One direct result of raising the minimum to be subscribed towards the minister's salary before a church can claim assistance from the Fund, will be that in many cases two churches will have to consent to share the services of one minister and the Circuit System will be considerably extended.

Personally, I feel we should do well to use all our influence to induce churches to adopt this plan as widely as possible, for it is only by so doing that many of our present difficulties will be solved.

Many brethren who are much exercised at the lamentably inadequate salaries of some of our country ministers, and who are willing to sacrifice a good deal to alter this condition of affairs, are at the same time feeling that any attempt to equalise remuneration must be accompanied with an equalisation of labour—and this can only be accomplished by the grouping of churches.

The first problem which will present itself will be how to adequately sustain the Sunday services, and this will inevitably call for the ministry of a large number of lay preachers, and it is quite a question whether as a denomination we shall be able to meet this demand.

It is true that we have nominally four thousand laymen able to occupy the pulpit, or an average of about two per church, but it is common knowledge that only a comparatively small number of these are acceptable preachers in our churches, and we are already very dependent upon other denominations for sustaining the lay ministry for our own mission halls and preaching stations.

Is it not time that both the lay preacher and the Church had a more exalted conception of the nature and qualifications of

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this office and made strenuous efforts to produce an adequate supply of well-trained and truly gifted men for this service?

If this is to be accomplished we who are in the "separated ministry," as our fathers called it, must give ourselves earnestly and unreservedly to the work of training the local preacher and rendering him every assistance within our power, and I venture to suggest that our energies might well be applied in the following directions:—

Preachers' Classes.—These might be conducted regularly during the winter in various centres, and although prominent preachers of all denominations might be asked to give lectures from time to time on special subjects, yet the class itself should be the care of one minister for at least the whole of one season.

Study Circles.—These could be formed in separate churches or groups of churches and should be led by either a minister or a well trained lay man.

Reference Libraries.—Well-equipped libraries might be formed and housed in district centres, and men should be instructed in the use of them.

Circulating Libraries.—These could be run on the "group system," similar to our own.

Fraternals.—A system of grouping men in Fraternal would encourage an esprit-de-corps, besides forming a nucleus for classes and library groups.

Magazine.—A monthly magazine devoted to the interests of the lay worker with valuable helps and suggestions, would largely assist in training men and also in sustaining their ministry.

Summer Schools would be much appreciated by the most earnest men and would develop the sense of comradeship amongst them, besides encouraging and directing them in their training and studies.

Special Courses might be even arranged in connection with our Theological Colleges, which would be of great benefit to men who could manage to spare a few weeks or even months to thus equip themselves for their all-important ministry.

Correspondence Courses.—The needs of some can only be met by correspondence, and I am sure many men whose assistance

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would be much valued, would willingly give their services to laymen, but this service would need to be definitely organised.

Directed Reading would be valued by a number of lay preachers, especially if it were accompanied by an invitation to a well-filled and well-selected library.

Perhaps the most valuable service which could be rendered, especially by our older men, would be the attachment of one or more young men to themselves as comrades, who would not only come to their studies, but also go with them to their services and meetings and so learn by a true "discipleship"; the one talking without reserve of his experiences and his ideals and placing all that he knows and believes at the disposal of the other, and above all, being willing to share with him even his devotional life and thought.

When by diligence and devotion "the gift that is within" has been developed and utilised and also been manifestly sealed by the Spirit of God, then a service of ordination or recognition would give to the man himself and to the church a higher conception of his "high calling" and might be held even in connection with the Association meetings.

Only those who have been thus recognised should have their names registered as "lay preachers," and from their ranks alone should the candidates be recruited for our home and foreign ministry; and I have no doubt that if from our well-educated and talented young people we could gather a considerable body of enthusiastic and spiritual men who would submit themselves to this discipline and training for the sake of Jesus Christ and His Gospel, all prejudice against lay preaching would be banished from our churches and a large ministry would be opened to them. Incidentally, the whole status of our ministry would be raised, for such service on our part would re-act upon ourselves most beneficially and increase our efficiency and effectiveness.

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Things I Have Tried.

(SECOND SERIES).

By REVS. R. A. BURROWS, B.A., B.D., and

C. STANFORD RUDGE, B.A.

4.—A YOUNG PEOPLE'S UNION.

IN a ministry of three years, nearly one-half of which was spent before the Armistice, it was extremely difficult to try any experiments in Church work. All the time, however, I had in the "suggestion box" a fully worked out scheme for a Young People's Union. The idea was taken from a similar organisation which had a successful career under my friend, Rev. W. S. Davies, B.A., B.D., at Union Chapel, Manchester.

At a time when the Christian Endeavour Society was in a very unsatisfactory condition and the attendance at the weekly meetings ranged from four to eight, I felt it was necessary to launch the Young People's Union scheme. My first difficulty arose in getting really suitable people to give the scheme their support, so the following circular letter was sent to some forty or so likely people:—

"I am anxious to commence in connection with our church a Young People's Union. The idea is to develop the devotional, social, intellectual and literary side of our work. A plan for such a Union and a syllabus for a Winter's programme has been prepared, but for the successful carrying out of the work strong, enthusiastic support will have to be secured. With the object of talking over the matter and securing the necessary support to guarantee the success of the movement, would you kindly meet me in the Minister's Vestry on Friday, October 10th, at 7.30 p.m.

About twenty-five people—conspicuous for their quality—attended, and I placed before them a scheme, whereby a meeting was to be held every Friday, to partake of the nature of a devotional gathering one week, followed by an evening given over to the discussion of big public questions, the next meeting to

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be of a purely literary nature, the final meeting each month being of a social nature. The support promised was sufficient to enable me to go ahead. Meanwhile I discovered the existence of the Baptist Young People's Fellowship and at once secured the affiliation of our new society. In a city like Sheffield, no difficulty was experienced in securing excellent speakers, and in a fortnight a printed syllabus with the aims of the B.U.Y.P.F. on the back was in circulation.

The response was far greater than we had dared hope for, and the surprising feature was that the devotional meetings made a greater appeal than did the social evenings. The average attendance kept up through the winter to about forty or forty-five. The young people grew quite proficient in the art of presiding and of speaking on their feet.

It was my privilege to be able to get the Fellowship going for the second year before leaving Sheffield, and to see how firmly-rooted the institution had become. From the modest beginning, it had branched out in many directions and many new organisations had grown up—a rambling club, photographic section, fishing club, a Sunday evening social gathering. I hear now that the Fellowship is the heart of the Church and it has succeeded in doing what otherwise could never have been done, viz., providing something to bind the young people of the Church together.

R. A. BURROWS.



5.—THE "LEAGUE OF COMRADES."

IMMEDIATELY upon settlement in my present pastorate I saw that adolescence had been neglected. There was nothing for the young women save a decadent Christian Endeavour Society, and nothing for the young men to look forward to on their return from the war. No Scouts or Guides troops existed in the Church, and no Young Worshipers' League. And there were no clubs. The young people were not being taught a Christianity applicable to the age, nor had spheres for the training of their powers been provided.

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After a swift renaissance and decline of the Christian Endeavour Society, I resolved to scrap it and start afresh. The weakness throughout the Church was incompetent leadership. I reconstituted the diaconate and made changes in several offices, never scrupling to set aside incompetence. Men and women with "key personalities" were enlisted for service, and each was allotted a special department.

The "League of Comrades" was constituted with the dynamic ideals of Comradeship and Service. The mention of these is sufficiently explanatory. Provision was made for the development of the spiritual, mental and physical life of the young people. The keynote of the syllabus for the weekly meetings was variety. From the start the range of interests had been enormous. The League was an immediate success, and has continued its prosperity. It has mobilised a fine, striking force of young people, which can be brought to bear at any point of the Church's need, and has revolutionised the outlook of the Church. Since the inception of the League of Comrades, the Young People's Department of the Baptist Union has promoted the Fellowship scheme with which we are all familiar, on curiously similar lines. In view of this, further description of the League as such would be trite; but I will add a few comments on developments.

Following hard upon the selection and training of leaders and their inspiration for Service in Comradeship, the boys and girls of the School were organised into Scouts and Guides (which troops proved emphatically successful and soon took leading places in the district), Young Worshippers League and Clubs. The whole Church was conceived as existing for Worship and Service. The Service proceeding throughout the week was to derive meaning, force, renewal, from the Sunday Worship. Naturally, the entire Service side of the Church became in course of time organised under the League. The bi-monthly Council is composed of representatives from every Department of the Church. The education is in Service with a Christian world-outlook, and in consequence keen missionary interest has been generated.

On these lines the Church grew steadily month by month, over 130 members having been received during the last four and

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a-half years. On Sunday nights, when the Church is nearly always full, there is a large proportion of young people, many of whom were first drawn into the week-night activities by their friends. The Church has been saved and possesses a future largely because of this influx of youth.

As soon as the League had been stabilised, I proceeded to engineer a Federation of the Young People's Societies in the Free Churches of the district. This has proved sound. At the Quarterly Rallies the affiliated Societies can fill any one of the Churches. Inter-church lectures and debates are promoted, and the young people of the Churches are getting to know one another as never before. They are discovering that they hold the essentials in common; and the way is being paved for a United Free Church based not on ecclesiastical machinery but on an enthusiastic comradeship in the Christian cause.

G. S. RUDGE.

NON-COLLEGIATE MEN.

A FRATERNAL has special duties and splendid opportunities with the men who settle without the advantage of a college course. These latter have their little circle of friends to whom they are linked by years of fellowship, and annual gatherings. The non-coll. man has perhaps been a fine local preacher, but his daily associates have been at the linotype, the desk, the warehouse, the commercial-room; and these have no direct and strong influence on the spiritual life. When a man quits those former acquaintances, and sets himself deliberately to preach the gospel as the chief thing, he is liable to feel extremely lonely, in his inner life, if not also in his outer.

It would abundantly cheer many such men if soon after the excitement of the first few weeks, or days, he could spend a morning with some neighbouring minister. Problems may be arising for a pastor, which had never presented themselves to the visiting local; he is viewing the choir from a different angle now that he no longer sits in the singing pew; the deacons and the superintendent have taken on a new aspect, and already a stream of people have begun to sound him and see how far he

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can be exploited for their pet causes. He has not discovered how to lay out his week and his day, now that the carpets are down and the invitations out to tea are slackening. His score of standard travelling sermons have nearly all been preached, new ideas are slow to come, and hard to develop. He is about ripe for the hints that a man can give who has been through this painful stage, and been through it not so long as to have forgotten. Is it not a most fraternal thing for a neighbour to ask him over for half a day? it may include golf or a walk or anything that may set him at ease; food and tobacco need not be ignored in this connection.

Among the points that may occupy a little time will be his relation to brother ministers. The host can probably make up his mind after their chat, whether he will be sponsor at any Fraternal; in some favoured districts a man may have the chance of joining three or four, and it may be considered which will be the most congenial. The question may be discussed in what way the newcomer can best serve the cause of his Lord in the district as additional to his own cure of souls; temperance, Free Church Council, society for protection of children, Barnardo, all are clamouring for secretaries and committee-men; a new man may either be dazed and induced to fritter his energies by yielding to every request, or he may say that he had no idea of the claims of a pastorate, and finds he has no energy for anything else.

That will open the way for a chat on how to lay out time, what to study and what to drop. A non-coll. man has possibly very little idea how to work, and he may presently ask for a specimen morning's coaching to put him on right lines. Our Ministerial Recognition Committee suggests certain books of the Bible and a few other indispensable things; but it can hardly show a man what study means. He may be distracted to chop up books into J.E.D.P., and think that this is what is wanted; whereas it is the abhorrence of examiners. Or he may have had a complete set of Barnes' Notes, bound in half calf, as a parting gift, and he may think it a wise plan to read steadily through. He would be most grateful if shown what can be done just with a concordance and a reference Revised Version, spend-

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ing an hour on about six or eight verses. To go through a paper set on some book of Scripture, whether for the Cambridge Local, the London Divinity, or even the Baptist Union exams., to see what experienced students expect to be known, to discuss the best answers, all this may save a man misdirecting his energies for months or years.

Then will come the question, How to get books for study. Few non-coll. men know the generosity of the Particular Baptist Fund, the General Baptist Fund, the Religious Tract Society, to beginners. They need to know the free lending libraries, such as our own at the Church House, Dr. Williams, the Fraternal, and perhaps their own town. It may not have struck them that wonders can be done with half-a-guinea a year, at Boots, Mudie, Smith, Wyman. There may be some neighbouring town where even less will be accepted at some semi-endowed municipal institution. A talk on books to be procured and books to be avoided, will be as good as a tip from some cricket professional to a novice.

There are many other things that a local Fraternal can do. Much depends on their being done speedily, when a man is doubly grateful for a helping hand. If the secretary keeps his eye on the vacant churches and sees them filled, or if he makes friends with the General Superintendent, he can see when the iron is hot, pick his tool in the shape of a brother minister of experience, and strike.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FRATERNAL."

SIR,—During the year of his Presidency of the Baptist Union, Dr. Roberts, of Manchester, visited the English Baptist Association in the County of Monmouth. On the morning of the day he spent with us he met the ministers. A good deal of the talk at that morning session centred around social questions and the Christian method of Social Betterment. Dr. Roberts spoke of the Inter-denominational Social Science Union, and he expressed a desire that we should all become acquainted with its literature and with its work. I was particularly struck with the eagerness of those present to know how they could be kept in touch with the developments on

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our side with regard to the solution of the great problems that beset us to-day.

It occurred to me then, and the feeling has deepened since, that the time has come when our denomination should be enriched still further by a "grown-up" Social Service Union—a clearing-house for the denomination in all matters touching the social, economic and industrial welfare of the country. Why should we leave so much of the thinking on the tendencies which, for better or for worse, mould the conditions of our social life to those who are outside the fold of any church? And it is not quite fair that the burden of such thinking as is being done, from our point of view, should fall so largely upon Committees appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

We Baptists have our contribution to make, and there is room to fear that we have not quite succeeded in making it. In everything else we are in the very front; our denomination is there always in the first line of every advance. But not in this. At Swanwick year by year, in the month of June, forward-looking men and women gather for a week from every quarter of the Kingdom. They come together, Anglican, Roman and Free Churches in a common desire to discover the will of God for this generation. They are of one mind that the new heaven and new earth will not be got by shouting for it. Reverently, humbly they seek the light, being fully persuaded that only in Christian principle and in the Christian spirit is there any relief for the agony of the peoples of the world. The company of seekers at Swanwick numbered last June between two and three hundred, and of them the Baptists could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. The call to this Inter-denominational Social Science retreat comes year by year, but there are few, very few of us, who respond. If within our borders there were a virile Social Service Union, our representation at the Swanwick School would be worthier of the prestige which is ours and the influence which we exert in the life of the nation.

Now comes another call and a call to which, if we are rightly led, we shall respond with all our hearts. In 1922, or it may be in 1923, there is to be held a British Conference, and this Conference, so it is expected, will have the weight and importance of

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the Edinburgh Conference on Missions. On something the same scale and with something of the same thoroughness in organization this Conference will deal with **Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship**. It will attract widespread attention, but its power for good will depend largely upon the preparation in thought and in prayer which will be done for it and the response which the Churches will give to its message. In our denomination so much will hinge upon our attitude to this Conference. I am convinced that scores of us are ready to do our share if we are only pointed the way, and that can easily be done once we have a vigorous, well-manned Social Service Union of our own.

May I venture upon concrete proposals merely as a basis for discussion in the pages of "The Fraternal"?

- (i) That we set about the formation of a Baptist Social Service Union.
- (ii.) That, as a beginning, the Social Service Union with such membership as it can attract, be under the wing of the Baptist Ministers' Fraternal Union, but with its own Chairman, and its own Secretary.
- (iii.) That, after its formation, the S.S.U. proceed immediately to arrange for groups in various districts or in various Associations—each group to be invited to do a clearly defined piece of work.
- (iv.) That, if possible, the task allotted to a number of the S.S.U. groups have a direct bearing upon fundamental problems under consideration by the departments or Commissions preparing for the British Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship.

[In this way from the start definiteness will be given to our efforts; our interest in the Conference will be demonstrated, and the link between us maintained.]

- (v.) Finally, I hope I may be pardoned, as an outsider, for suggesting that a portion of the annual meeting of the Fraternal be allotted to the consideration of some such scheme as I have so imperfectly outlined.

Yours sincerely,

GWILYM DAVIES, M.A., Baptist Minister,
Hon. Sec. of the Welsh School of Social Service.

Llandrindod Wells,

December 21st, 1920.