

The Fraternal.

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APRIL, 1927.

Literary and other contributions for "The Fraternal" should be addressed to the Secretary, Rev. A. J. Payne, 25, The Grove, Earlsfield, Wandsworth, London, S.W. 18.

SECRETARY'S NOTES.

THE Annual Meetings will be held in the Kingsgate Chapel, on Thursday afternoon, April 28th, as follows: Business Meeting and Elections at 2.30 p.m. United Meeting with British and American Fraternal, presided over by Rev. J. E. Martin, of Erith, who will give his retiring address as President; there will also be an address by a representative of the British and American Fraternal; an hour of united social fellowship in the Library of the Church House.

The same friends will be nominated for election to the Council owing to the fact that there was no meeting at Leeds because of the General Strike. We shall also need to elect a Vice-President for the same reason.

May I call the attention of the members to the fact that there has been a great falling off in the Membership Subscriptions mainly owing to the Leeds fiasco. However all subscriptions are now due and we hope Brethren will pay up any arrears, especially as we have issued the "Fraternal" regularly in spite of depleted Funds.

As acting Editor of the "Fraternal" I would urge the various local Fraternals to keep me supplied with any news of interest to the Brethren and also any paper read before them which would be helpful to our larger circle.

THE CHURCHES AND THE COLLEGES.

DEAR BRETHREN,

IN a weak moment I said "yes" to my friend Hardy's suggestion that I should speak to you on the need for fostering in our Churches a sense of responsibility for the supply and education of the ministry. Alas! I have hardly anything new to tell you that I have not expressed in my address from the Chair of the Union about four years ago.

I have never been to a Baptist Board meeting before and I am not sure what the Board is, whether it includes laymen as well as ministers. I assume that ministers are in the majority, and if laymen are not here I must reach them through the ministers, so I shall address myself to the latter. By the way the Baptist Handbook does not say what the Baptist Board is. Forgive the ignorance of a poor Northerner who has only recently come to London.

The outstanding facts of the present situation are these. (1) We have a serious shortage of ministers. There are 1,062 more Churches than ministers and though some of these Churches are very small and ought not in many cases to have a minister to themselves, the need of *more men* for the ministry is obvious.

(2). The Colleges are not supplying enough men. A few years ago one of the numerous and badly informed complaints was that we had too many colleges, and that the colleges were flooding the denomination with too many ministers. Nothing could be further from the facts. The recent Ministerial Recognition Sub-Committee made investigation, and reported that for the last six years an average of 48 ministers had been removed by death alone, that in that period the average output of all the colleges had been 32, of these 32 a goodly number go to Mission Fields. We are not making good our losses.

(3). The Colleges are full. Last year, 1926, 160 applied for entrance, only 40 could be received. For 120 there was no room. Some at least must have been worthy of admission. You must therefore increase the number of

the colleges or enlarge their accommodation. It is possible, but it cannot be done easily or rapidly, though I believe the problem will have to be faced before long.

(4). Meanwhile there are 460 non-accredited men in actual charge of Churches and I do not believe the number is likely to be reduced appreciably *at present*. Nor have I much doubt that of the 120 men for whom the colleges had no room, some have already become pastors and more will follow. These will have had no college education.

(5). Again I cannot resist the conclusion that for grouped Churches, you will in most cases have to secure non-collegiate men. I wish it were otherwise, but it is no good burking facts, the facts must be dispassionately judged, and men in colleges must not be rashly condemned. A student of mine was willing to take a group. There were two Churches united, both weak, one very much weaker than the other, this student said to me "By the bequest of some generous donor interested in the much smaller Church union became possible. But the condition is that the minister shall give two Sunday evenings a month to the weaker cause. I see no chance of getting much increase there, whereas provided the minister were on the spot all his Sunday evenings he might build up something durable in the other place. Absence from the more hopeful part of the field half my Sunday evenings means failure. If I can secure one church where I can concentrate I prefer it because I can do more for the Kingdom of God." Well, the one church came along soon after, and he accepted a call though his stipend is less than the two churches would have given him. He felt he could make a better investment for his service that way. Can you blame him? I do not. I think the majority of men who have had four to seven years in one of our colleges would do the same. What would *you* have done, and from no unworthy motive?

(6). Hence I maintain that one of our most urgent pressing problems is to do something to help the non-collegiate men in pastorates, of whom we now have close upon 500, and are not likely to see the number appreciably decreased at present. The Sub-Committee already referred

to say that there are probably 150 young men, who ought to be facing the standard required by the Baptist Union. Under the reasonable constraints of Sustentation and Superannuation they are likely to face it. And we ought to help them. I hear it is proposed to utilise Wolsey Hall or the University Correspondence College for this purpose. I wish we could do it ourselves. I am not sure that many of the men whose educational equipment is small, and who have not learned how to study, will be able to keep pace with the machine-like demands made regularly by these well established and efficient institutions. There are retired ministers like myself, and college trained pastors fresh from contact with class studies—B.A., and B.D., turned out with such dreary monotony (so some one said the other day, though I was not aware of it), who could give more personal individual oversight, and would have closer interest in their students (brother ministers of Christ). If such service could be rendered for nothing, but out of pocket expenses, much would be done to deepen the sense of brotherhood and to break down that suspicion of a lofty superiority on the part of collegiates which I believe to be ill founded, but which is none the less entertained.

Anyway, I affirm strongly that the immediate need is to do something for the non-collegiate ministers. They need it and we can supply it.

Let no one dream for a moment that I think anything of this sort can be any substitute for a college life. *Never*, and we must not in any way give ground for thinking that the best we can do under present circumstances is an equivalent for that beautiful seed time of the soul within college and university walls. Let us never lose sight of the high ideal of an educated, cultured ministry. I shall not live to see the day, but I hope the younger brethren will, when the man who enters the Baptist ministry without a general educational equipment and a sound training in a theological college will be the rare exception.

Now as to the college men. I think you are getting as much out of the college as the material produced by the churches warrants you in expecting. There is a good deal of talk about the denomination possessing and

running the colleges. I used to think there was a good deal in it. I no longer think so. Of this I am certain you would have very great difficulty in persuading College Committees to such a step and the results would not be worth your efforts. The Baptist Union has enough on its hands, and it is pledged to take on more in the shape of superannuation. It is quite erroneous to say that the Union is not represented on College Committees. The Treasurer, Secretary and President, our Chairman of to-day, our honorary solicitor, and a goodly number of most representative ministers and laymen are on College Committees. The General Superintendents of N.E. and N.W. areas, the Yorkshire Association Secretary, the Chairman of the Annuity Fund and many other strong union men are on the Committee of Rawdon. Bristol is in like case. Further I dislike the assumption that the heads of the Colleges ceased to be Union men when they become Principals. I was a union representative long before I had any part in directing the affairs of a college. I took up my work at Rawdon, not to serve a little sectional concern of my own but to serve the whole denomination. If there is any rational plan by which the co-operation of College and Union can be made closer and more effective you will find no lack of response from the College. If you want to do something of real value, set yourselves *to improve the quality of men coming to college*. If you ask *how*, I reply that our greatest need is in the direction of securing a measure of secondary education for all students *before* they enter a Theological College. A large proportion of men who now come in have had nothing beyond an elementary education much of which has to be regained before they can enter on any theological course with profit. If we Baptists had a school of our own to which all non-matriculated probationers accepted by college committees were sent for two years we should gain great advantages. (1) We should test probationers and weed out those *proved* unfit. (2) Competent men passed on to the individual colleges would have been brought into fellowship from the beginning. This would prevent the isolation of the colleges and bind the men into a closer union, (3) The college professors would be relieved of the work of secondary school teachers and set free for their distinctive

task. At present two-fifths of our time is spent in getting men to the point at which the college education becomes productive. However you solve this problem, by my way or a better, the real contribution you could make lies in some such direction. With a few exceptions the men who left Rawdon in my time, to become at once valuable assets to the denominational life, had all received this secondary education prior to entrance. Hence from the day they entered it was the case of full steam ahead. I have been asked again and again "Why cannot you send more men of the type of Mr. A.?" The answer is "Send us more who had reached Mr. A's educational standard when he came knocking at our door."

Now let me turn to the ministers present and point out some ways in which you can assist us. (1). Lay on the hearts of your people from the pulpit, in the Church Meeting, in the home, in contact with young men the claims of the ministry and the blessedness of a life given up to the service of winning men to Christ and building up a Church of strong Christian men and women who can minister to the world's needs. You must have a conviction of your own on this subject before you can propagate it in others. You must believe with all your soul that the ministry is worth while, the best which you or anyone else can give. There is nothing more disconcerting than to observe what a large proportion of our ministers do nothing in this sphere. Few who enter our colleges come to us impelled by the example, influence, and counsel of our ministers. On the other hand let me add that some ministers, and often such as would be designated great *pastors*, with magnetic power over the lives of their young men, rather than brilliant or eloquent or learned preachers, have sent *one man a year from their Churches*. For the first twelve years I was at Rawdon, we were never without one or more men from a particular Church. Ministers sons have come to us in fair measure, but mostly from humble homes. Ministers of large Churches, able to give their sons a good education have made no appreciable contribution. Bishop Westcott's greatest glory was that he had five sons devoted to the Church. When will the leaders in our Church get something of his holy fire?

(2). I shall incur criticism, as I have done before, when I say that we want more of the sons of our best people. I do not mean the sons of our relatively rich folk—though we ought to have a proportion of them. I mean the sons of our most educated, most devout, most active and zealous Church members. Dr. Dale once said that the strength of Congregationalism had been in its appeal to the middle class. He was right. Forty years ago our ministry was recruited from this class more often than it is to-day. Now our recruits come in the main from the working class and even here we do not secure as many of the best as we ought to have. I am not depreciating the fact that some of our great leaders exercising a powerful ministry have sprung from that class. Joseph Parker said from the Chair of the Congregational Union, "I am a working man and the son of a working man, and I am not ashamed of the venerable title." I agree. Thank God for such, but I crave for a larger representation from the sons of our best people. If you look over the names of members of the Council of the Baptist Union and the Committee of the B.M.S., see how many have a son in the ministry! The ministry should not be recruited exclusively from one class.

(3) After all the great need at the present time is that ministers should foster a strong religious life amongst our people in the home and in the Church. When religion is at a low ebb we suffer at all points and the draw to the ministry is feeble. When the temperature of the Church is raised advance will be seen in this direction as in all others. Some few years back an Anglican Clergyman, asked me if I thought our Free Churches had declined in power in recent years. I told him there could not be a doubt of it. "Could I give him the reason?" I said, "Yes they have declined, because religion has declined." He rather demurred as though I had suggested that whilst we were dependent on religion for our power his own Church might flourish without it. My reply was "*You are not as dependent on religion as we are, you flourish better with it of course, but you can do better than we can when religion declines. You have many assets we do not possess. The King, the Court and*

Society are with you, you have great historic buildings, you have wealth, you have a stately beautiful liturgy, you have the sense to utilise the powerful auxiliaries of music and art. Roughly speaking we have not these—if with us religion is at a low ebb we have NOTHING and we go down.” Historically that is true, an age of declension in religious life has always been disastrous to the Free Churches, and the Anglican Church can weather such a time better than we. And the converse is true. An age of religious revival in the home and in the larger life of our land has always meant a new era of power for the Free Churches, The Revival has touched them *first* and later it has come to the Established Church.

We need revival of religion—we ministers must begin with ourselves, work in our homes, realise our first duty is to the people whom God has given into our charge, and we must concentrate our energy there. Cultivate a stay-at-home ministry. Our prayers must be for this, our preaching must be directed to this, all our energies must be concentrated on this. When God comes in power amongst us, our problems, and not least this problem of the ministry, its supply and training, will be in a fair way to solution.

W. E. BLOMFIELD, B.A., D.D.



VISION AND PERSONALITY.

ONE of the many bits of advice which Mr. Ruskin gives to us is this, "The main thing to ask for is sight, there is light enough." But to make such a request is practically to pray that God will send again into our midst, men like the Prophets of old, who were their country's *Seers*, and by virtue of their clear far-reaching vision were the leaders in thought and action.

Considering Mr. Ruskin's advice in this larger sense, I think it is well worth heeding; in fact we might make it a daily prayer that God will give us the inner vision to see things aright; to be able to distinguish clearly between what is truth and what is tradition, what is essential and what is not essential, what is temporal and suited only for one of the changing phases of human history and what is Eternal and suited for all times.

Though Browning's expression :

"Make no more giants, God,
But elevate the race at once."

comes in very well toward the end of the first section of *Paracelsus*, yet when you step out of the region of poetry and think, you realize that in the past God has elevated the race by the mental and spiritual giants whom He has occasionally raised up. A few lonely men here and there have been the Mountain climbers, and from the heights have caught the dawn of the coming epochs, have noticed the first signs of the vanishing darkness, seen the first grey streaks in the east, and then with a clarion voice sent the message of hope or of warning to the slower climbers below. God uses strong personalities as the levers by which He lifts up humanity and one of the essential elements which goes to make up these moving personalities is the element of vision. Carlyle tells us "It is with man's soul as it is with nature the beginning of creation is—Light. Till the eye have vision the whole members are in bonds."

In Thomas Carlyle himself we see an illustration of the truth that vision is one of the essential elements in every great soul. But with him there was mainly the keen clear vision for the unreal, the superficial, as if his

eye was always wandering to and fro in search of masks which were hiding some hollowness, some false economy which was deceiving men, because of the brilliance of its teachers, and when once his keen eye had detected the falsity his exposures and denunciation were as if steeped in the altar fire with which his lips had been touched.

It is said of Themistocles "In this business of his life (General) he had displayed a rapidity of perception which gave to his maturest judgments the appearance of intuition." And if we look at the character of Oliver Cromwell, note how on the battlefield and especially on some of the memorable 3rds of September, how, with an eye all on fire, he took a long broad look, grasped the situation as if by instinct, and almost as speedily won the victory; and then we shall feel that what was said of Themistocles of old can with truth be applied to Cromwell. The same element has always played an important part in the life of the religious reformer. In that unique volume of lectures by Frederick Meyers, of Keswick, he says of Luther, "Luther had a good deal of *insight* whatever else. He saw beneath the surface of a good many things into their substance or their hollowness." Look wherever you will, and where you see a man who is leading his fellows onward and upward, you'll find he is the man with the seeing soul. At first this seems to isolate, but when you look closer it is that which unites him to them and to his age. He speaks as a prophet to the heart of his age, for he is in sympathy with its work and its hope. He leads and guides their minds because he knows their thoughts, and can speak in telling language what other men feel, but cannot express. To be true teachers and leaders we must have a Divine insight into the wants of those about us, we must be able to Divine their half dim visions, we must sympathise with their great longings and blind aspirations, we must be able to voice the soul's language which has long been struggling at dumb lips; if we would be heroic shepherds we must see and smite the wolf which the sheep see not, but have somehow felt its haunting presence.

In some spheres of life there are men who are successful

who seem to have none of the fine spiritual vision, yet they are possessed of a commercial cuteness. But with us as preachers of the Gospel it is one of the great essentials if we are to be anything more than the echoers of other men's thoughts. We read that Bartimæus was a blind man. Yes, but what more do we read of him ; why that he sat by the road side begging. Blind men are always beggars, waiting for the men with clear eyes to come and lead them by the hand unless some Saviour should pass that way.

But then comes the question, is this faculty of inner vision something born with all of us and impaired by neglect, or is it the possession only of a few rare souls? Surely you cannot blame a man for being without what he never had the chance of possessing? No, but if a man be altogether without that keen insight into life and character and history, that spiritual vision which sees the inner soul of things, if such a faculty never formed part of our being, we are out of our place in the Christian ministry. Oft-times I believe our eyes are dim because we have neglected that soul-culture which clarifies our vision, and enables us to read some of the deeper truths which God revealed to us in His words, and has written on the pages of human history.

Tyndall in his lecture on the scientific limit of the imagination tells us "that two thirds of the rays emitted by the sun fail to arouse in the eye the sense of vision. The rays exist, but the visual organ requisite for their translation into light does not exist." Can it be that we have neglected the training of that spiritual organ, the condition of which determines our success so much? What is truth if we have not the vision which recognises it, what are jewels to blind men, what is a Gospel to blind eyes? They are as nothing and all the worth in the world lies in the seeing soul.

Now we come to another part of our subject and that is the relation of vision and truth, and I want us to remember that seeing is one of the greatest agencies by which we acquire knowledge and become the possessors of truth. It is by such an agency that vision becomes so important and valuable.

During the past twenty years there has been quite a reformation in the methods of elementary education. Symbols, pictures, figures are far more in use than formerly and it is becoming more and more recognised that the eye is the best avenue of approach to the mind. When we come to higher education though the usual method of solving problems and making great discoveries is the stiff road of steady grind, yet many times the end has been reached by the exercise of a superior visual faculty. In the biographical sketch of that noble, clever sceptical mathematician, W. K. Clifford, written by Frederick Pollock, the writer relates that on one occasion being out for a walk with Clifford, he told him his perplexities relating to a mathematical theorem. The text book had compelled his understanding, but failed to satisfy the reason. Pollock says, "What he said I do not remember in detail but I know that as he spoke he appeared not to be working out a question, but simply telling what he *saw*." In the same sketch Mr. Pollock points out that Clifford excelled as a mathematician as much by his visual faculty as by any other faculty.

Now if there be one realm where this higher insight is more helpful than another it is the realm of Theology. Here, there is scope and work for the keenest and most logical criticism, but in addition there is the inner history which can only be read by the seeing soul. We are all prepared to acknowledge that the Old Testament is a piece of history. Now historical criticism is mainly a work for the intellectual faculties, so that to deal with the Bible simply as history, a keen, clear intellect is of supreme importance. But then we need to ask ourselves this question, is the Old Testament a history first and foremost and a history of the Jewish section of humanity, or is the history simply the instrument which God uses so as to slowly and gradually reveal His character and will to men; is it that the history of the Jews is of first moment when reading the Old Testament or God in His relation to human action? If the first thing to consider be God as He reveals His will and unfolds His purpose, then the man who goes there groping for God, whose heart is most susceptible to all Divine influences, who has got the clear

vision because he has got the pure soul, is the man to tell the meaning of the Bible to a congregation, and not the one who is simply the historical critic. We should strive after both, to read the Bible as historical students, and also to read it as "the seers" of God, and if we have no valid orders as some might say, we shall feel some Divine impulses, and these will be the more helpful in moving men's minds and hearts Godward.

There is one thing I must briefly mention here and that is the relation of vision and eloquence. It is the idea expressed in the opening verse of the 5th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, "And seeing the multitudes He went up into the mountain and when He had sat down His disciples came up to Him and He opened His mouth and taught them." Similar expressions occur several times in the Gospels, and in *those* books of Christ, God's infinite pity and love spoke with an eloquence not of earth. The speaking man must first be the seeing man.

Have you never noticed after you have seen something beautiful, say a bit of scenery or a picture or an action, how great longings have seized you, that you might let others see the same, and as you have described it you have felt possessed of a new freedom of expression. If we could only look at the multitudes as Christ looked, and see all the infinite possibilities stored up in human life, see life's hope, and disappointment, and worry, and gladness, and care, listen and hear the harmony and the discord, and then look to the Gospel of Christ and see it in its fulness, as the complement of all human needs, as the transforming power to make this earth as God would have it be, then indeed would our heart burn with living and loving messages, which would express themselves in a language to reach men's hearts. We must ever remember that the depth to which the message sinks, is just the measure of the depth from which it is drawn. It is only deep that calleth unto deep.

But it is not enough to have a clear vision of truth, or by this vision to acquire large stores of information. So far, we have been speaking mainly of means, now I want to point out what should be the end. The end of it all

should be the appropriation of the truth so that we might become the living incarnations of it. It is *that* which makes personality, and puts upon a man the stamp of individuality. I often think that when God wishes to teach men some new truth, He raises up a man who is the incarnation of it. When you analyze the character of those men whom we call great, you find that underneath their numerous writings, and their manifold actions, there is usually one truth which has become Incarnate in their lives and was ever struggling to find expression. With Geo. MacDonald it is the truth of the Fatherhood of God. With Geo. Elliot, the irony of fate. With F. W. Robertson, God's nearness to men through the human side of Christ's character. With Wordsworth, the Divine pantheism. With Charles Kingsley, the doctrine of the Divine immanence and the social Gospel. With Thomas Carlyle, the hollowness of everything that does not rest on righteousness. Then if you come to the Gospels and take away everything which Christ said about the Kingdom of God; what is its character, how it grows, Christ owns relation to it, how men enter, and what is left would be a very small heritage for the Christian Church.

It is truth incarnate which makes personality. Truth in the abstract lacks the living force to drive it home. It seems to me that God knew that His Kingdom, which is one of righteousness and truth, never could grow among men, until men saw those Eternal abstractions written out in living characters. Men never would have fully understood the love of God, if Christ had never gathered the little ones to his breast; helped the sorrow and stricken to bear their burdens and flung a protecting arm around the daughter of shame. The great doctrine of the Incarnation is grounded upon an absolute necessity of our nature, and the belief in it is not so much an act of faith, as an act which is the expression of reason. Truth in the abstract never did, never will work salvation; when it has become incarnate in a person, who has vindicated it in life then it becomes a powerful reality.

Some of the Proverbs of Solomon express truths very similar to those expressed in some of the utterances of

Christ. Whatever may have been the moral influence of those Proverbs when their truths became first crystallised, their influence upon adult life as compared with the words of Christ, is nil. Why? Solomon followed the path of pleasure and of sin, found to his sorrow that it ended in death, and then declared that it must be the path of virtue which leads to a larger life. He learnt the truth from the negative side. His teaching was the outcome of remorse rather than conviction. Christ's life was the Positive expression of the truth. When the tempter came he found nothing in Him.

Now I think most of you will be prepared to accept this statement. He who has seen the truth, appropriated it, felt its vital influence, must of necessity be growing into one of the moving personalities in human life. Emerson tells us that "the unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon."

It is this type of personality which is required in the ministry and especially in the Baptist and Congregational ministry. I go so far as to affirm that when we cannot get into our ministry this strong type of personality the speedy decay of our denomination will soon become manifest. You cannot mention any town or city where our denomination has risen to any strength, but that some of our "Baptist worthies" have lived and laboured there. There is no good strong Church in our denomination which has not had impressed upon it the stamp of some strong personality. This is not so with some of the other denominations, say the Wesleyan and Presbyterian. Their prosperity has been brought about, and now largely depends upon their members in relation to the organization which gives to the members the sense of their large relationship and responsibility, far more than upon the personal influence of their ministry. I am not here overlooking the fact that in the other denominations many of these strong personalities are to be found, or that wherever these men are they must be exerting a strong influence. But these people have other things to depend upon than the personal strength of their ministry. On this account we cannot compete with them in certain kinds of work.

If the Wesleyans want to establish a new cause, the circuit takes it up, and the churches which compose the circuit have each some of the burden to bear, therefore the burden is not a crushing one. But in what town or district could you find a number of Baptist Churches which would unite to establish and sustain for a time a new cause. No, the more likely method is that a Church has been made strong through the instrumentality of some able minister and can now afford to work a mission place and eventually draft off some of its members to form the members of the new Church, or some gentleman full of denominational loyalty settles where there is no Baptist Church, and begins to work, or there is a SPLIT, a sort of church extension which makes one wonder whether God or the devil is the unseen agent in it. When a county association takes up the work, the area of those interested has become so large, the petty jealousies which are the outgrowth of our independence are killed.

Taking into consideration our Church polity I consider that our surest method of church extension is the strengthening of the personal element in our ministry. To do this the entrance into our ministry needs making more difficult or perhaps I should first have said the entrance into our colleges, personally I trust that the time will come when all our College authorities will work in harmony with one another, so that the standards of entrance may be more uniform, and that *inside* our Colleges less time will be devoted in equipping men to hack some of the old sceptical objections to Christ and Christianity, which lost their vitality half a century ago. Some of our examinations should aim at developing more of that keen critical insight into the history of human thought and action. More of that spirit which gropes for the causes which when found make the most complex pieces of history intelligible, that spirit which asks, why did men change their opinions at that critical time, why have certain doctrines grown lifeless and why did they once appeal with such force, and when believed in give such strength to our nation at that stage in our history? What is it that keeps some doctrines ever vital. In short they should aim at the development of those elements in our characters

which will give to them the most personal force when we go out to our work.

And when we get out into the work we are soon made conscious of the dangers which beset the very elements of our nature upon which our true success so much depends. There are so many to lead to the throne of grace that there is a danger of neglecting to go on our own account. We have our time taken up so much with the little things that we forget to climb the Transfiguration Mount, and yet that is the place of vision. When the Disciples went there with the Master there appeared unto them "Elijah and Moses and they were talking with Jesus." Law and prophecy and Gospel were all seen as one. Things are seen only as fragments and chapters because we never climb the Mountains where we catch the long far-stretching visions. We live too much in the valley and see only the fragments and pass our days forgetting that life is a great whole. We perform our daily actions and never think they are the tiny portions of one great purpose. If occasionally we were to climb the spiritual heights and look, we should see the distant past living still and linking itself to the living present, and meaning would enter into the hitherto meaningless.

Then there is danger of unfaithfulness to our deepest convictions, and the uttering of those truths which may not be so well received by the people and so let popular taste influence us when it should have been God given instinct and the light from about God's throne. There is also the danger of scamping work because a sermon hastily prepared made an impression on the people, but when we looked later we saw the impression was not God's, but one we would gladly rub away, but it remains there to keep us humble. Now there is nothing clarifies vision, like faithfulness, nothing dims it like unfaithfulness. God's larger revelations are saved as rewards for the faithful ones. He lets those rule over ten cities who have ruled well over one, the reward of faithfulness is that it enlarges our capacity. To the unfaithful one it will be darkness at noonday, and the faithful one will become the true seer of God, and to him it will be light at even-tide.

THE FRATERNAL

Thou must be true thyself
 If thou the truth would'st teach,
 Thy soul must overflow if thou
 Another soul would'st reach,
 It needs the overflow of heart
 To give the lips full speech.

Think truly, and thy thoughts
 Shall the world's famine feed,
 Speak truly and each word of Thine
 Shall be a fruitful seed,
 Live truly and life shall be
 A great and noble creed.

MORTON GLEDHILL.



PRAYER UNION NOTES.

THE following have lately been enrolled as members:—

Chas. J. Pipe, Aberbargoed (near Cardiff).

John Ewing, Romford (shortly proceeding to Perth,
 Western Australia).

The Secretary will be pleased to enrol brethren who wish to join at the Annual Meeting of the Fraternal Union on Thursday, April 28th, or information and cards of membership can be had on application to J. E. MARTIN, The Manse, Erith, Kent.

A PRAYER FOR 1927.

Tune—Pentecost.

O Master teach me Thy blest way,
And help me so to walk therein,
That I may know Thee, day by day
As Guide and Helper, Friend and Kin.

O Spirit breathe Thy life in me,
—A power subduing all my heart—
That by its courage I may be
A soldier brave in every part.

O Saviour lead me by the Love
So faithful spite of all my sin,
That by its gentle might I prove,
The greatness of its life within.

O Master in this heart of mine,
So prone to follow its sweet will,
Let Thy inspiring goodness shine
And woo me from the love of ill.

Lord of the worlds of Love and Light
And Master of the pure in heart.
Lead me from ways of sin and night,
To be in Spirit as Thou art.—AMEN.

J. MILLER HAMILTON.