
A table of contents for *The Fraternal / Baptist Ministers* Journal can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bmj-06.php

The Fraternal

OCTOBER, 1954 No. 94

EDITORIAL

INTRODUCTION
V. E. W. HAYWARD, M.A. General Foreign Secretary, Baptist Missionary Society.

HISTORY AND REDEMPTION
W. M. S. WEST, B.A., D.Theol. Tutor and Bursar, Regent's Park College.

ESCHATOLOGY AND MISSIONS
A. STUART ARNOLD, B.A., B.D. Minister,Park Road, Rushden, Northants.

THE SPIRIT AND THE MINISTRY
W. S. DAVIES, B.A., B.D., S.T.M. Minister, Hope, Hebden Bridge, Yorks.

CHRISTIAN VOCATION AND MISSIONARY VOCATION
GWENYTH HUBBLE, B.A., B.D. Principal, Carey Hall, Birmingham.

MISSION AND UNITY: ITS BIBLICAL BASIS
GEORGE FARR, M.A., B.D. Tutor, Manchester College.

MISSION AND UNITY: A STUDY IN CHURCH HISTORY
D. MERVYN HIMBURY, B.A., B.D., B.Litt. Tutor, Cardiff College.

BIBLE STUDY
FRANK BUFFARD, B.A., B.D. Baptist Minister (Retired).

OF INTEREST TO YOU

WIDER CIRCLE

BOOK REVIEWS

EDITORIAL

WALKING AND NOT FAINTING

SO we face another year of work. The holidays, such as the weather allowed, have come and gone. Autumn, winter and spring stretch before us with their months of work without a break: preaching (at least twice a week), visiting, committees, meetings and the care of our people's troubles as well as any we have of our own. Those who have just left college and are beginning in the ministry, or those who have recently changed pastorates, have all the thrill and discovery of new work to give them stimulus. But what of those who are entering their fifth, or their eighth, or tenth or fifteenth year? And what of those who have been hoping for a change of pastorate that seems so long in coming that they grow weary? How can they do?

There are many ways in which we can gain freshness and new inspiration for continuing our work in the same place and circumstances. Our deepest inspiration comes from the recollection of our call; that God called us to the place where we are and will sustain us in it. Many have found that re-reading some of the familiar books on preaching and the work of the ministry has suggested fresh things to them about their work and the way they might do it. New ventures in the prayer life and the use of lesser used books of devotion can have a tonic effect on the spirit. It is they who wait upon the Lord who renew their strength, who can mount up . . . run . . . and, at length, walk and not faint.

We can be saved from a sense of drudgery and from falling into the ruts of habit and repetition by setting ourselves something new each year. Alexander Whyte planned a fresh series of study every year, and in his biography there are many rewarding suggestions. True, he lived in more leisurely times and circumstances. Yet why should not a minister set himself a refresher course of study and take his deacons and members into his confidence about it? If he does, and asks their co-operation in helping to relieve him of some of the routine work, he may well be surprised at their readiness to help him. The burden of preparation, for instance, might be relieved by arranging for the deacons, or each organisation in turn, to take the mid-week service for three months.

Fresh courses of sermons on books of the Bible, or great themes can also stimulate both minister and congregation.

Again, a church visitation plan might bring new interest to the pastoral work both for minister and people. By making a list of members who need to be visited and by a careful choice of deacons and members to help, the minister might arrange for every member,

especially those on the fringe of church life, to be visited once during the winter by someone other than himself.

The main thing is that we refuse to let ourselves get into ruts, or grow dull, unimaginative and uninspired. Imaginative pondering over our work, especially when we are recently back from the holiday and can look with more detached views, will yield many suggestions that may turn what seemed in prospect to be a listless, pedestrian, ordinary year into one bright with new and fruitful ventures.

To all our ministers and missionaries, in Britain, Europe, the Commonwealth and Dominions, and the U.S.A. we wish much joy and blessing as they take up their work afresh. Let none think he is forgotten or labours alone. And as we each like to be remembered, let us remember one another every Lord's Day morning in prayerful tryst. It is good to know that as we ascend the pulpit to declare the Word of the Lord, we go up in the strength of the Lord and on the shoulders of prayer. It is good to remember also that we never know what God is going to do in any service. Not that we are always aware at the time what He is doing. As with prepared hearts and minds we lead our people to the throne of grace, we can confidently " expect great things from God and attempt great things for God."

THE JANUARY MAGAZINE

In response to a suggestion made by our members in South Africa—numbering about 50—that they should be responsible for an issue of the magazine, we have pleasure in stating that the next number will consist mainly of articles, theological and otherwise, dealing with Baptist life and work in that country. J. L. Green, of Johannesburg, is kindly making the arrangements.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS

As the New Year will already be growing old when our January issue reaches friends far distant, we take this opportunity on behalf of our ministers in Great Britain, to send warmest greetings and prayerful good wishes. We realise that very many in the Commonwealth and elsewhere, labour in isolated places, and to them especially we extend a brotherly hand-clasp. Whom oceans part our B.M.F. unites and wherever our ministers are, in churches large or small, we are one in our great work for Jesus Christ. Blessings on you all.

INTRODUCTION

FOR some years now fresh study has been given in several different quarters to what may be termed the "theology of missions." As Dr. Norman Goodall has aptly written: "The missionary obligation begins with the Gospel, not with theology. Its dynamic is met with in the realms of faith and obedience, of worship and personal commitment, more than in the field of speculation, reflection and intellectual enquiry." It has, nevertheless, been felt of vital importance that missions should be viewed afresh in the light of recent movements and insights of theological thought. The extraordinarily representative gathering of the International Missionary Council at Willingen in 1952 was planned as a milestone along the path of this renewed study of missionary theology. One of the five groups at that Conference was concerned with the basic theme of a theological understanding of the Missionary Obligation of the Church. It was significant, however, that the Conference decided only to "receive," but not to "adopt," the report of this particular group; it was recognised that far more work was required before any adequate theology of missions could be re-formulated. Dr. Goodall, in his introductory paper to the full report of the Willingen Conference, published under the title "Missions under the Cross," listed four such "open" questions concerning which further ecumenical thinking is necessary before a new and generally accepted missionary theology can emerge. It is to these four questions that, in a general way, the first four papers in this issue of the *Fraternal* are addressed.

The fifth and sixth papers are directed towards two aspects of that consideration of "Mission and Unity" which has become one of the leading themes for ecumenical study since the meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches at Rolle, in 1951. This on-going study has already proved of revolutionary importance. It is now becoming generally recognised that the very term "ecumenical" must relate to the missionary task of the Church as well as to the unity of the churches. The deeper the realisation of the total missionary obligation of the Church, the greater and more dynamic is the ensuing search for Christian unity, a fact which is reflected in the pressure now being brought to bear upon the Older Churches by the Younger Churches. On the other hand, Unity is far more than an expedient of Mission. For the Mission itself is to gather into the One Body of Christ all the scattered children of God throughout the world, thereby demonstrating the reconciling power of the Cross.

These papers are offered, not as final conclusions, but as contributions by Baptists to lines of thought along which it is hoped that many readers of this Journal will themselves be prepared to explore.

V.E.W.H.

HISTORY AND REDEMPTION

IN his introduction to the report of the Willingen Missionary Conference held in 1952 Dr. Norman Goodall puts certain questions which, although not new, demand urgent re-thinking and re-emphasis in the missionary context of to-day. One of these questions is the relation between History and Redemption, between God's activity in Creation and His grace in Redemption. That this is no abstract problem was brought home to me recently as I sat in the kitchen of a cottage in an Oxfordshire village. This same question, although in different words, was put to me by an intelligent man seeking God in Christ. " What do you Christians say about the course of History? " Well, what do we say? All that can be done in the brief compass of this article is to make some statements on this subject in an attempt to stimulate further thought.

The source of our thinking on this problem must be the Bible, and although the Bible does not use the expression it nevertheless contains unmistakably the conception of world history—in the sense of a history of humanity. In fact, as Brunner points out, apart from Judaism and Christianity " there is no conception of the history of humanity in any other religion or any philosophy of the Ancient World." The Bible begins with the creation of the world and of man. The man Adam is created in a special relationship to God " in His own image." We should remember that Adam and his immediate descendants were not Hebrews, and before the Bible begins the story of Abraham and his seed it deals with the origin and early history of all the races of mankind. The historical horizon of the Bible is that of the whole of mankind. Adam is the representative of mankind. One of the earliest actions of Adam is his disobedience of God's command, and his Fall. This is a point in the history of mankind, but it is not the beginning of mankind's history—that goes back beyond the Fall. Man from this point on is in need of salvation and from the biblical point of view the history of mankind becomes the salvation history of mankind. It is interesting to recall the way in which the Reformers, the Zurich theologians Zwingli and Bullinger for example, emphasise that the moment man fell, God promised salvation in the bruising of the serpent's head by the seed of the woman. Salvation history began and the rest of the Bible contains the account of the working out of this divine plan of salvation for mankind. But it must be noted that this divine plan is revealed within the framework of world history. And it must be further remembered that this plan, although complete in the divine purpose from the beginning, was revealed gradually to mankind on the stage of history. In it we see the revelation of the living God of history, and some theologians would call it " revelation history."

There is no need to detail here all the stages of the working out of this plan. There is the call to Abraham and the promise to

him, the taking of a nation yet to be born and the separating of that nation apart. As God deals with this nation He may be seen making Himself known as the God of history in the historical experiences through which He leads the Jews, in the Exodus, in the Promised Land and so on, using other nations in His plan. As the Old Testament story progresses it is possible for us, looking back, to trace the method of God as He works out His plan. Abraham becomes the nation, the nation becomes the remnant and the remnant decreases until it becomes the One. It is clear why Jesus had to be born of the Jewish race and why, as it seems, He was born of the small faithful remnant within that nation.

With the coming of Christ God's plan for the salvation of mankind reaches its decisive and critical stage. To write such a sentence in such a publication as this may appear impertinent, but do we always recognise just how decisive and critical in the context of the history of mankind the brief ministry of Christ really was, and more especially the three days containing the events of Calvary and after? On that hill one Friday afternoon and in a nearby garden early on the following Sunday morning decisive battles in God's plan were fought and won. The turning point in the history of mankind was reached.

From this central point in history the first Christians looked back and, standing fearlessly before the Jewish authorities, traced the hand of God in the history of the Jewish nation pointing to Christ. They did the same in the wider context of the history of mankind. Their conception of history was Christ-centred. Before the foundation of the world Christ was foreordained (1 Peter i, 20). He was the mediator of creation (St. John i, 1; Hebrews i, 2, 10, etc.), and as we have seen, the election of the Jewish nation reaches its fulfilment in the work of Christ.

From this central point in history the first Christians also looked forward. The decisive phase in God's plan had come and gone—the end was inevitable, the setting up of the Kingdom of God was only a matter of time. It is natural that Jesus Himself should have recognised this and it is interesting to note that in the Synoptic account of His life and teaching it is possible to see what may be called a tension between the present and the future. The future is already fulfilled in Him—yet it is still to come. He has seen Satan fall like lightning from heaven—yet the final victory over Satan will be in the future. It is true that there is much evidence to show that the first Christians thought that the time between the Resurrection and the Parousia would be short. This is only an error of perspective. They realised that the turning point of history had come and that the decisive battle had been fought, so they naturally expected the final victory soon. They forgot—as we sometimes forget—and as the writer of 2 Peter reminded them that they should: "Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" (iii, 8). They forgot, too, the parting

words of our Lord that it was not for them " to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put into His own power . . ." They were absolutely right, however, in their conviction that the final victorious stage in God's plan of salvation for mankind would come in God's own time with the Parousia.

As their perspective of the past was Christ-centred so was their looking forward. This is most clearly expressed in Ephesians i, 9 and 10: " Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." I would ask your indulgence and quote Brunner again as he comments on this verse: " This goal of history, whose inmost meaning is the Kingdom of God, the perfect dominion and perfect self communication of God, is destined for the whole universe. God is the God of all nations; He has created them all; He guides them all; He leads them all, in a way which we cannot see, towards the eternal Goal." After Christ the line broadens out again and the One becomes the many. In addition we should not forget the Pauline vision reflected in Romans viii, 22, which would seem to include the redemption of nature itself.

We can now see the outline of the history of mankind from the creation of man and his fall through Israel to the One, and from the One through the Apostles and the Church to the goal of history, the new creation of mankind when all things are made new in Christ. We have seen, and should take note, that for the first Christians the line from the Incarnation both backwards and forwards was a Christ line—for them any suspicion of a dualism between creation and redemption was out of the question and when such a dualistic challenge came—as it soon did in Gnosticism —they resisted it fiercely.

As we look out on the world of to-day it is—if we are honest—often difficult to believe that God is the God of history and that mankind is in fact moving towards the goal of history in Christ. Yet we cannot separate into different compartments a conception of " secular " history of mankind and a conception of " salvation " history. To do this would lead straight to the dualism of creation and redemption which the early church resisted so sternly and would result in a world renouncing Christianity. Salvation history may perhaps be rather dangerously described as a circle within the wider circle of secular history. It is our faith that Christ the Lord reigns invisibly over all things even now and that, as the first Christians believed, the time will come when that world Lordship of Christ will become visible, when the two circles will become identical. To falter in our belief that God is in ultimate control of the history of mankind, and is saving us, is to remove the foundation of our faith. We should never forget two things: firstly, that " as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways

higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts," and secondly, that to tread the way of the cross is inevitably a hard, strange road, and its meaning was not made clear to the disciples until the light of the resurrection morning shone on it.

It is not for us, however, to sit down and wait, as it were, for that morning. By the very nature of our faith in God as the God of history our policy is world affirming. We stand between the Resurrection and the Parousia—between D day and V day. There is much work to be done by those who serve the One who fought that decisive battle. We are part of the many who now serve Christ. We are called upon by God to help make history. To-day men are seeking for signs of the victory won by Christ and it is the task of the Church to show unmistakably the evidence of that victory. It is in the Missionary proclamation of the Church, the preaching of the Gospel, that we in the present stage of history play our part. It is given to us to know the Lordship of Christ and we are to preach and to teach this Lordship to those who do not know it, and yet who are subject to it, that they may come to play their part in history.

"What do you Christians say about the course of history?" It is a question that no doubt is asked in villages in India as well as in Oxfordshire. It is an urgent and relevant question in our present missionary situation. Our answer is that God is in control of history, He always has been, He always will be, and that He is saving mankind. It is a big answer, but for Christians surely the only answer. We shall convince the questioner of the truth of our answer only if it is crystal clear that God is in control of that fragment of history being made by our own lives.

W. Morris S. West.

ESCHATOLOGY AND MISSIONS

OUT of the controversies that have raged around the apocalyptic teaching of the New Testament since first Schweitzer revealed its importance, a generally acceptable view of eschatology is emerging and we are seeing afresh its significance for the work of the Church in these days. The circumstances of our work are continually changing; we are meeting new opportunities and facing new discouragements in this world of flux and change. If we can catch a glimpse of God's final purpose for His world we shall the more effectively be able to work towards it.

The Eschatology of the New Testament

Since interpretations of the apocalyptic and eschatological teachings of the New Testament are still many and varied, it is necessary briefly to outline the interpretation which lies behind this article. It can best be done under three heads:

(*a*) *The Kingdom is present.* Many Synoptic references could be quoted in support of the contention that with the "Christ-deed," to use Cullmann's comprehensive term which includes

the incarnation, teaching, death and resurrection of our Lord, the Kingdom has come on earth. It is " among you," men enter it violently, it is the dividing line between past preparation and future fulfilment, for that which prophets and kings wish to see is now seen, the least in the kingdom is greater than the greatest that went before. This is all summed up in Calvary in which the Lord Jesus fought a battle of cosmic significance, the decisive battle whose outcome controls the issue of the Christian's warfare against evil.

(*b*) *The Kingdom is future.* Together with references showing that the Kingdom is present there is ample evidence to show that our Lord Himself anticipated a future glorious fulfilment of His work in a final consummation when God would break into time to bring an end to this world's story. The Little Apocalypse of *Mark* xiii includes teaching on the fall of Jerusalem and also on the eschatological hope. Jesus denies knowledge of the *hour* of the Father's inbreaking into history, for the *kairos* was of God's own choosing, but He asserts the essential truth that the " Son of Man would come with great power and glory." This teaching was carried by numerous parables, of the two men working and sleeping, of the good and bad servants, of the Talents, of the wise and foolish virgins, of the thief in the night, each parable containing its own distinctive message of warning, surprise or delay. Many other passages refer to the future Judgment and the return of the Son of Man.

(*c*) *The Kingdom growing.* Between the Kingdom present and the Kingdom future lies the Kingdom growing. Thus is the tension resolved. The parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven show the Kingdom's intensive and extensive growth, the parable of the seed growing secretly points to an inner power which makes it grow. But the New Testament knows nothing of a kingdom which evolves or progresses to perfection! " When the Son of Man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?" Between the coming at the first advent and the consummation at the second, the Kingdom grows, it expands, but the speed of growth does not determine when the End shall be, for that comes at a time of God's own choosing.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS DOCTRINE FOR MISSIONS.

Each aspect of the Kingdom, present, future and growing, has its significance for Missionary endeavour and we may at once notice how, when the work is set in this eschatological framework, it is immediately given a richer meaning. The eschatological teaching of the New Testament sets our missionary work against a cosmic background. This great task of bringing Christ to the nations is more than an attempt to spread our influence, more indeed than that lofty purpose of bringing greater glory to our Lord's Name by expanding His Church. This movement is that upon

which the whole of God's creation waits. The history of man has been long and it has been filled with a mixture of base deeds and noble achievements. This story of man's pilgrimage is as nothing when compared with the long processes of creation which science has so clearly revealed to us. But from the first act of creation God has been working towards that Day when all shall be complete in Him, that Day of the Lord to which prophet and apocalyptist have looked forward, that Day for which the " whole creation travaileth and groaneth together until now." The long battle against evil in the world and in man's heart will be concluded in that Day when, the New Testament teaches, all shall be renewed. Summing up his studies on the cosmic significance of Christ's work, Galloway (*The Cosmic Christ*, p. 55) says " there can be no doubt of the general currency of the notion that Christ came not only to individuals, but to the whole universe and that His work is significant for the whole of creation."

The important place which Missionary work holds in preparing for this hour of glorious consummation cannot be over-estimated. Our Lord Himself said, " This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached to the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come " (Matt. xxiv, 14). This reference from Jesus' teaching clearly indicates the apocalyptic nature of world-wide evangelism. God chooses the time for that consummation but He waits until the Gospel has been preached to every creature. To use Paul's words, " The Gospel must first be preached to the Gentiles." It is upon this work that we are engaged and the purpose of the work must surely give the work itself greater urgency and glory.

This statement will immediately raise problems in many minds. Does not this doctrine open us to the dangers of frantic urgency—or of insipid passivity? Does it not place all our emphasis on the future glory at the expense of the immediate dark problems of the present? Is not this a foolish hope? As we answer these difficulties we shall see in a more detailed way the importance of considering Missionary work from an eschatological standpoint.

The twin dangers of frantic urgency and insipid passivity. That apocalyptic teaching has resulted in both of these evils cannot be denied, for even in New Testament times they were present, as the Pauline letters reveal. Some of the Mission work done by sects accepting an extreme view of Second Advent teaching has, to say the least, been very shallow as a result of their sense of urgency, and it has added difficulties to the work of our Missionaries in the field. Recent scholarship should help us to avoid both dangers. Urgency there is, for the Gospel must be proclaimed throughout the world, but there is certainly no need for frantic, slipshod work. The work is God's work, just as the determining of the Day is His also. Within the Kingdom is His *dynamis*, the power of the Spirit, working to bring that Day near. As the missionary submits himself to the Spirit's leading and opens his heart to His grace, the

work will go forward according to God's own plan. Quietly, but irresistibly, the movement spreads, like the leaven, as the Kingdom grows. Equally so we are saved from passivity, for if the times and seasons are in God's hands, He has also called us to be labourers together with Him. The coming of the Kingdom does not depend upon us but without us the coming is delayed. Foolish indeed were the virgins who slept while the bridegroom tarried.

The very magnitude of the eschatological task before our Missionary Societies should steel us to persistent efforts to advance the present Kingdom as it moves forward to the Day of His appearing. Because the Coming is not dependent upon the progress which we achieve, let us not be tempted, by the urgency of the task, to hasten the time by unworthy workmanship; because the Kingdom does not evolve mechanically, let us beware of the temptation to wait and not labour. A balanced view of a Kingdom which is present but yet to come will enable us to work urgently with quiet persistence as God reveals His plan for the ages.

The danger of an " other-worldly " emphasis. When one has one's eyes upon a future glorious state of perfection are not the problems of this imperfect world likely to be ignored? This mistake will certainly be made when the tension between the present and future Kingdom is ignored. The New Testament teaches us to have our eyes on the future—but that future is already present, it already casts its light on the dark things of the present. In one of Christ's most dramatic eschatological stories—of the Great Assize (Matt. xxv)—he links the cup of cold water, the sick and prison visiting of this present time, with the Judgment which is to come. This is the work of the growing Kingdom. A balanced Bible view of eschatology, so far from stressing " other-worldliness," brings the whole of man's life and his surroundings into the picture. The educational, medical, agricultural work of modern missions are as much a part of their eschatological mission as their work of direct evangelism. From this point of view we can regard these social aspects of Missions from a higher level. There is the idea abroad to-day that the work of missions has prepared the way for, and provided in part, the answer to the Communist menace in Africa and Asia. We can thank God that this is so, but our Gospel is more than an answer to a political threat. It should not be thought of only as a ready solution to our immediate problems. The present and the future are one, and we work towards that final victory as we triumph over the evils of this present world. Though we labour with our eyes on the glories of Christ's future universal reign, we do so with our feet taking the message of salvation to this present generation, with our hands ministering in Christ's name to the people of our own day—for the present Kingdom moves on through this world to the Day when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth.

The danger of disillusionment. Many of our contemporaries are afraid of this eschatological hope because of disappointments

which sincere Christians have known since the days of Paul, as they have looked in vain for an early return of the Lord. To return to such an emphasis would, in their opinion, imperil our missionary work and condemn it to hope*less*ness. This is to use that word " Hope " unscripturally and without faith. J. E. L. Newbigin, has done us a great service in his article " The Christian Hope" (*Missions under the Cross*, p. 108) by stressing the reality, the guaranteed security of this Hope. " Because the word ' hope ' in ordinary use is so debased, so much merely a matter of desire projected into the unknown future, I want again and again to stress the fact that the Christian hope is an utterly unshakable assurance of that which shall be because God has promised it." Cullmann in *Christ and Time* points out that the final victory is assured because of the decisive victory of Christ on the Cross when Satan and his forces were defeated. The missionary cause would appear hopeless in its present situation apart from this great Hope. " Backward " peoples cry out for material advantages and not for spiritual food, the flood of nationalism creates new problems, Communism closes territories, financial difficulties reduce mission staffs. Is there any hope ? The eschatological message comes clear and plain. " The Kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ." And this is no idle hope. It is rooted in the very nature of the God who created all things and maintains all things and who will, one day, bring all things to their reasonable conclusion. It is this hope which can encourage the man fighting the jungle of superstition in Africa, the man facing the barriers of ancient tradition in India, the man protecting the tender plant of the Church against the weeds of nationalism in Malaya. The Kingdom has come and is already established; at a time of God's own choosing it will finally be consummated. With this certain hope we can all go forward, whether our mission be in the homeland or overseas. " Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

A. STUART ARNOLD.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE MINISTRY

THE discussion of Church relations always turns ultimately upon the question of the Ministry. The meeting of Christian believers of different bodies in the place where their real unity ought to find expression—the Communion Table—is made to wait upon the settlement of questions regarding the validity of the Ministry. It is not surprising that the " younger Churches " should be a little impatient, for to them these questions have not the long, sometimes painful history that we know. They may well feel that the Western Church has become so rigid in its patterns that the implications of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and His relation to the Church are in danger of being overlooked.

We are not here concerned with Church relations as such, but with the bearing of the doctrine of the Spirit upon the Ministry, particularly as this issue has arisen in a pressing form in the Mission field.

In thinking of the Church in the New Testament we dwell much on the powerful metaphor of the Body of Christ. In that figure personal relations with Christ are an axiom: what is stressed is the mutual necessity of members in Christ and the unity of an organism: there is also the absolute assumption of the sovereignty of Christ in His own community. The figure naturally contains the suggestion of activity, as that of a body controlled by the mind. But when the functions of the Church are in question, the thought is of the Holy Spirit who dispenses " gifts " within the Church and directs the use of them. In the *locus classicus*, 1 Corinthians xii, the metaphor of the Body merges into the concept of the Church as the fellowship and organ of the Holy Spirit. This is no mere metaphor, but a description of the Church.

The ecclesia is established by God's historic acts in Christ. Because the Holy Spirit is given to believers, they are gathered, in a common relationship with Christ, into a community which continues because it is indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. It is by the activity of the Spirit that the Church is constituted (Acts ii; 1 Cor. xii, 13) and that it continues. In believers, individually and corporately, the Spirit is active in the whole realm of Redemption, initially and continuously. As we see it, the Church lives, not by the preservation of certain traditions and doctrines, nor by securing a formal continuity of leadership, but only by the indwelling activity and guidance of the Holy Spirit which is manifested in its worship, fellowship and witness. Moreover, the sphere of His activity is pre-eminently the Church which He has brought into being to fulfil the Divine purpose.

In this connection, we think of the Church in and for itself, and again in its relation to the world outside itself. For our purpose we may regard the two aspects separately, though they are so intimately connected as to be really inseparable. The Church itself, the company of the redeemed, the " Bride of Christ "—here the Holy Spirit is active in guiding believers into fuller truth and in perfecting their salvation, a process in which the fellowship is essential. In all that is done within the Church, the Spirit is, ideally, active for building up the Body. But in God's purpose the Church exists for the world. It is His means of speaking to men and of manifesting the reality of redeeming and reconciling grace. The Spirit seeks to make and lead a Church which shall be effective in fulfilling this purpose. For this mission to men the health and strength of the Church must be assured: on the other hand, if this mission is not being carried out, the inner health of the Church is impaired.

Within the community, whatever service is given by any member becomes a ministry. In the wider sense of the word,

there are many and varied ministries, operations of the Spirit for the health and efficacy of the Church. Natural talents, given in creation, are directed and co-ordinated in the common life of the Church. By the Spirit's guidance the Church discerns and directs the gifts of individual members. There are general ministries which members should exercise by virtue of their Christian profession. There are more particular ministries where the Church, by the Holy Spirit, sets apart certain individuals to discharge functions for which they are deemed adequate and which are especially vital to the health and efficacy of the whole Church (Acts xiii, 2: *cf.* xv, 28).

The duty of evangelism, the witnessing to the saving power of Christ is involved in discipleship itself, and its exercise, whether by personal contacts or more public testimony, is not subject to the formal consent of the Church. Happily, there are definite signs among us that more attention is being given to the training especially of young people in this direction. We are here, however, concerned with the ministry in the more particular sense, envisaged as the Pastoral function, the interpretation of the Word in the congregation, leadership in the Sacraments and the general care of the Church.

If in practice our Baptist approach has been in some respects haphazard, in theory we have sought to emphasise and relate the two sides of the work of the Holy Spirit, the vocation of the individual and the guidance of the community in confirming that vocation and giving it particular direction. The congregational order has been able to give more room to this double emphasis, even if it has been exposed to serious peril whenever the ideal is lost sight of. Throughout Christian history there has been inevitable tension between the love of order and the belief in the Freedom of the Spirit. Again and again a person or a new movement has been resisted in the name of order, only for the Church to realise later that the Holy Spirit has been indeed at work, and that authority has been quenching the Spirit. On the other hand experience has shown how the claim of the freedom of the Spirit can in human hands lead to disorder.

In the course of time, most Christian bodies, whatever their conception of the ministry or the manner of setting men apart from the ministry, a general pattern has developed. There is a broad similarity in the training for the pastoral office which assumes that the minister will devote his whole time to the work and be discouraged from every other occupation. The ideal aimed at is that each congregation should have its own minister (to this principle there have been exceptions, especially in the Free Churches).

This is the manner in which the Spirit has guided the Church through the centuries; it also seems a most natural development and is still the goal to be sought. It is the conditions in which this situation may be attained which we are called to re-examine in the light of modern conditions.

The challenge comes in the first place from the mission field and the rapid extension of the Church in the last century. The situation in South India has been set out in a small but important pamphlet by Bishop Newbigin.* Considerations of space confine us to the briefest of summaries of this pamphlet, which is concerned with the difficulty of securing pastoral care and guidance for the numerous and scattered small groups gathered by the Mission. Even with the training of full-time paid pastors from the indigenous church, the problem is only partially met, and one pastor may have the oversight of ten or even up to fifty congregations. Trained pastors are compelled to devote much of their time to administration while the spiritual care of congregations is left to people often ill equipped. The spiritual guidance of churches becomes too dependent upon economic factors, and in effect the congregation as a spiritual entity is being destroyed. " For practical purposes the unit of our Church life is the Pastorate—a unit unknown to the New Testament." If it is assumed that every congregation must be cared for by a paid " agent," the Lord's command can be fulfilled only when the budget allows.

The detailed suggestions in the pamphlet cannot be quoted here, save to say that they include the necessity to relate the divergent traditions of the Anglican and Free Churches regarding the nature of the diaconate that instead of being a stage preliminary to the presbyterate, it should include both paid and unpaid workers, and that there should be at least one *ordained* deacon in every congregation. The conception of a voluntary ministry would be but a return to the earliest pattern of the Church: in Free Church history it lies much nearer our own time.

Three brief observations may be made upon this pamphlet. First, it deals specifically with the situation in South India, where a united Church is grappling with a pressing problem; second, not all the facts stated in the pamphlet would be applicable in our own and some other mission fields, for our conception of the ministry has made experiments possible which a more rigid view has excluded; third, the situation in the mission field is probably more urgent in this respect than at home. Nevertheless, in some degree the problem is with us to an increasing extent.

A matter so vital must be the concern of the whole Christian Church, for independent treatment of it in different parts of the world might well lead to further division. As the editorial foreword to the pamphlet points out, we are confronted with similar problems in this country. Our land presents a strong missionary challenge, and conditions may be calling in question many of our assumptions. A shortage of trained and full-time ministers is demanding a grouping of congregations, and economic considerations make it harder for many congregations to support a full-time ministry. In some Baptist communities experiments have long

* The Ministry of the Church, Ordained and Unordained, Paid and Unpaid. Edinburgh House Press, 3d.

been made with lay pastorates, but these have been spasmodic and largely the result of independent action. There is frequently a lack of special training and the status of the lay minister is indeterminate. We are also witnessing the tendency of ministers, or their wives, to seek other part-time employment to relieve an economic tension.

These issues call for grave and prayerful consideration on the part of all Christian communities. As Baptists we have always claimed the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, especially in the vocation and the choice of ministers. If we have not always been wise in discerning the leading of the Spirit we have stood in a heritage which emphasises the belief that He ever finds His own ways of leading the Church and fitting it for new conditions. For our belief is that the Holy Spirit is not bound, nor is His activity determined by past traditions, still less by economic factors.

The contribution which we are in a position to make is suggested in Bishop Newbigin's words: " We do not give to the local congregation (unless it happens to be financially independent) the dignity which the New Testament gives it. There is a truth in congregationalism which we cannot neglect if we would be faithful to the Scriptures."

W. S. DAVIES.

"CHRISTIAN VOCATION AND MISSIONARY VOCATION"

THE word " vocation " is one which may be described as worse for wear. It is nowadays widely used, but it has lost something of the richness of its original meaning. We Christians who to-day share in its degraded use, sometimes speaking of a profession as a vocation, need to go back to the Bible and study its use there.

The Latinised form " vocation " appears only in the Authorised Version in Eph. iv, 1. Elsewhere in the New Testament *klesis* is commonly translated " calling," and for those who used the word it clearly implied one who calls. It is God who calls men and women, and therefore the Christian calling is described as " holy," " high," " heavenly." To what does He call them ? Not primarily to be this or that, to pursue this kind of work or that, but to be His, to repent and to receive forgiveness and life in Christ, to live in communion with Him through Christ, to be entirely at His disposal and to live as His in the world. The call inevitably involves doing, but first and foremost it is a call to be " in Christ."

The call to be " in Christ " is, in its very nature, a call to be in a community. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews called his fellow-Christians " partakers of the heavenly calling." God calls each, but to the same calling. The disciples were called into the disciple band, not into private isolated discipleship. Paul, who so often and so loudly proclaimed his personal calling by Christ was, immediately on arrival at Damascus, visited by a representative

of the Church, baptised by the Church, and " was certain days with the disciples at Damascus." He at once became part of the Christian community. The one act which makes us Christ's makes us members of His community. Our calling is to be His, and to be one with Him—to be in Him and in His Body. To that Body He has committed the task of proclaiming the Gospel. " Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations." The Church is called to be a witnessing community and each member, called to be a part of that Body, is thereby called to witness and to take his share in the mission of the whole. The Christian calling is a missionary calling.

It appears that the New Testament writers reserved this word " calling " for the " calling " to be " in Christ," and did not use it in reference to the particular function which a man fulfilled within the life of the community. The word is not used in relation to the gifts of the Spirit. It is not said that men are called to be evangelists, teachers, healers, speakers with tongues, etc. It is said " To one is given . . . to another . . . and to another . . ." " He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." The New Testament says that gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to men and women that they may fulfil certain functions within its life, but it does not say that they are called to fulfil those functions. Is this accidental? Some people may say that I am making too much of a verbal point, but it does seem to be characteristic of New Testament language to use the word " calling " for the original calling of God in Christ. Does it not appear that, for St. Paul, his call on the Damascus Road, and his calling to be an apostle to the Gentiles, were inextricably one? In Acts it is recorded that the Lord told Ananias that Paul was a " chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel." In Galatians Paul wrote: " God who separated me even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him among the Gentiles . . ." He recognised that God who called him on the Damascus Road to be His, called him to be an apostle, a witness of His Gospel to Gentiles and to Jews. That is to say, for Paul the call to witness was contained in the call to be Christ's. He did not know all that that meant when he first called Him Lord, and it was only through the direction and enabling of the Holy Spirit that he discovered bit by bit what in God's purpose his calling involved. Is this not the significance of the word of the Holy Spirit to the Church in Antioch recorded in Acts xiii, 2. " Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I have called* them ?" Others, Paul believed, discovered that for them the holy calling involved their being teachers, healers and pastors. They were given gifts which indicated that they were intended by the Holy Spirit to fulfil these functions in the life of the community, and the community confirmed the action of the Holy Spirit by " separating " them, setting them apart for those functions, which was symbolised

by the laying on of hands. So, when Paul and Barnabas were separated, we are told that they " laid their hands on them," but also when the seven had been chosen by the Church to serve tables they were " set before the apostles, and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." Functions in the life and mission of the Church varied as the qualifying gifts varied, but there does not seem any suggestion that those who had one kind of gift were " special " or " unique." Each who is called has a part in the whole as indicated by the Spirit. All is of Him as He disposes His forces as He wills, and the Church obeys.

The Willingen report on " Missionary Vocation and Training" sums this all up in one sentence: " The call to be Christian is a call to the total commitment of life to the Church's whole missionary task " and goes on to make the application to the individual " Wherever there is a single member of the church there is one who is called to share in the total mission of the Church by his witness in his daily life and work." Every man or woman who is a partaker of the heavenly calling is called to share in the mission of the Church under the direction of the Holy Spirit who divides " to each one severally as He will." The Willingen report categorically asserts " There is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world."

In the setting of the missionary calling which is common to all Christians the Willingen report puts the call to " foreig n missionary service." It says: " Foreign missionary responsibility can be truly seen only in the setting of the total missionary responsibility of the Church, and must never be isolated from it." It suggests that a section of the whole missionary force, a part of the witnessing body, is directed by the Holy Spirit to foreign service, and that a minority of Christian men and women is sent by the Holy Spirit to fulfil their share in the Church's mission in lands other than their own. It was careful to state that " It is not intended thereby to assert a theological distinction between this and other forms of missionary outreach." But in the minds of many there remains the question whether there is not, in fact, such a theological distinction. Dr. Norman Goodall indicates this in " Missions under the Cross " when he says (page 22, No. 4): " The more this total responsibility is emphasised the less easy it is to retain for the foreign obligation a unique element of call and separation." I ask whether we desire, or ought to desire, to retain that unique element. Dr. Goodall goes on to say: " In the vocational experience of countless millions (of varying races from younger and older churches) there appears to be a convincing testimony to this unique element in the call to foreign service." We must ask ourselves if there is such a " unique element." I find it exceedingly difficult to define it or to understand what the phrase means. Wherein lies the uniqueness? Is it in the calling or in that to which men and women are called? Surely for us the primary emphasis must be on the fact that the Holy Spirit directs and equips us, and not on the actual

work which He tells us to do. As we have seen in the New Testament Church the Holy Spirit was believed to direct and equip each and all. There was no uniqueness in it, for it was an experience common to all the members of the community. Is the difficulty which we have in our day and generation in this whole area of thinking due to the fact that we have made the job of the foreign missionary appear so special? We make so much of the young men and women of our churches who offer for such service that they, and we, come to believe that they have a unique calling, and are special people. Consequently those who are, by the Holy Spirit, directed to stay at home feel themselves less special, a sort of lesser spiritual breed, incapable of rising to such heights, and so we have lost sight of the fact that we *all* partake of one heavenly calling which for both groups involves the obligation to share, with total commitment of life, in the mission of the Church. Shall we find our way only as we approach with conviction the one calling of the whole Church, which demands that we have a " sense of bounden duty and absolute commission to go out in apostolic obedience into every unredeemed situation " ? The Willingen report says: " God calls His Church to be an organ of His cosmic redemptive purpose. This sovereign call demands the total response of the whole Church." Must we not seek to use this word " vocation " only in its New Testament sense, and cease to use it as synonymous with " profession " ?

At Willingen, some people used the phrase " the theological significance " of foreign missionary service, and I think that may lead us somewhere. I am unwilling to suggest that a foreign missionary has in himself more theological significance than a Christian teacher in a secondary modern school, a Christian minister in the home ministry, or a Christian bus conductor. If, however, it is said that the whole foreign missionary enterprise of the Church of Jesus Christ is " theologically significant " because it is part of *God's* total plan and purpose, I think we can agree. We can see that the enterprise is significant in God's purpose because we know that the Gospel is for all the world and " shall be preached to the whole world (*oikumene*) for a testimony unto all nations; and then shall the end come " (Matt. xxiv, 14). The fact that the Holy Spirit, in directing His total forces, so uses one part for the fulfilment of His eternal purpose of the redemption of mankind, is full of meaning for us and demonstrates the universal nature of Christ's work. Willingen said " The missionary outreach which does not stop short at any frontier, but moves out to the ends of the earth, has a distinctive significance for the Church as an essential witness to the cosmic reach of God's redemptive activity." To say that, however, is not to suggest a " unique element " in an individual foreign missionary's sense of call. It is a recognition that God is fulfilling His eternal purpose using those who are His, the called, as He sees fit in His wisdom and love.

So for every member of the Body of Christ there is one calling which demands a readiness to be obedient to the direction of the Holy Spirit in every area of life and through all the years of life, " the total commitment " of which the Willingen report speaks. Canon Alan Richardson says: " His call always involves a concrete decision in the here and now, and it always includes a demand that those who are called shall become ' workers ' in the distinctively New Testament sense. It may involve no change of secular occupation, or it may require the forsaking of all such worldly ties." Can we, with our little understanding and limited vision of God's activity in His world, make distinctions and comparisons between the demands that He makes on this one and on that ?

GWENYTH HUBBLE.

MISSION AND UNITY: ITS BIBLICAL BASIS

When does the Church first emerge in the Biblical revelation? Stephen, in his defence (Acts vii, 38) speaks of " the church in the wilderness " in the days of Moses. This " ecclesia " was the company of the Israelites called by God out of Egypt and now on their way to the land of promise. They were the Jewish nation in embryo; destined to be, in the providence of God, the forerunner of the Christian " ecclesia " of the New Testament, which is " called out " of the world in the name of Jesus Christ. Each, within the sweep of God's vast purpose of salvation for mankind, represents a stage in the development of the Church of God in the world.

Can we associate the idea of " mission " with this *first* ecclesia? There is no doubt that the Old Testament does this. The first commission given to the Israelite nation was to conquer the land of Canaan by defeating and exterminating the inhabitants. " Thou shalt consume all the peoples which the LORD thy God shall deliver unto thee; thine eye shall not pity them " (Deut. vii, 16). These words, given to us as Yahweh's word to Moses, represent no doubt the intention of Moses and Joshua. Although it is extremely unlikely that this commission was ever fulfilled, we of the New Testament ecclesia need have no regrets about this. For the Israelites fulfilled a higher role in ultimately defeating the idolatry of Canaan and establishing there the undisputed worship of Yahweh. That conquest took many centuries and demanded the ministry of a line of prophets and even the discipline of an Exile for its achievement. Sometime during this period the conception of the Messiah arose. He was to be God's agent in helping Israel to fulfil her " high calling." Not always was the spiritual leadership of Yahweh's " anointed " emphasised, but it is unmistakable in such passage as Isaiah xi, 2—" The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD."

Moreover, Israel's influence is not confined in this prophetic outlook to Canaan, for " the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea " (v. 9).

This larger view is especially characteristic of the great unknown prophet of the Exile. His vision of God's service stretched far beyond the borders of his homeland to which he was inviting the exiles to return. In this wider commission given to Israel, he called upon his countrymen to share with the kingdoms of the world the knowledge of their God. Yahweh appoints his " Servant " to be " a light to the Gentiles " and His " salvation unto the end of the earth " (Isaiah xlix, 6). In the conception of the " Servant " we have a reinterpretation of earlier Messianic prophecy. This conception oscillates between the nation and the individual. That the nation is called God's servant emphasises at once the unity and mission of God's people—" His ecclesia." If only Israel's mission had been then fulfilled! But post-exilic Judaism thought more of national unity than world-wide evangelism, without realising that her unity could be best secured in undertaking her missionary task. Furthermore, the ministry of the Servant through suffering made clear in the third and fourth Songs (l, 4-9; lii, 13 to liii, 12) was perhaps only dimly perceived, because it was hardly acceptable to the nation. Not until Jesus read in the synagogue at Nazareth, " He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor . . . to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD " (Luke iv, 18) was the Servant's commission beginning to be fulfilled. And because of an unresponsive nation it must be first fulfilled by Christ alone.

Jesus indeed accepted the rôle of the Servant in a unique way by His ministry culminating in the Passion. But the uncompleted task of evangelism (not without suffering—cp. Mark viii, 34 and Col. i, 24), refused by the Jewish people, was bequeathed to His ecclesia—" Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i, 8). The church's mission could not be stated more clearly. And for its fulfilment Christ taught that her unity was essential, " That they may all (who believe in Christ through the Apostolic preaching) be one . . . that the world may believe that Thou didst send me " (John xvii, 20-21). The standard of unity is no less than that of the Godhead, in Whom it is to be realised—" even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

Again, the unity of the church is one of the dominant themes of the Epistle to the Ephesians. This unity has been accomplished by the Cross of Christ which has slain the enmity between the erstwhile irreconcilables, Jew and Gentile, so as to " reconcile them both in one body unto God " (ii, 16). The " new man " in whom Jew and Gentile are at peace, is the mark of the Christian church, through which the " manifold wisdom of God " is to be made known. Here the mission of the united " ecclesia " is to witness partly by her very unity. It is a debatable point whether Paul suggests in this epistle that God has enlarged that mission by making the

Church the agent of reconciliation for a divided universe, as some think. But of the mission of a united Church to witness to the world by her preaching of the Gospel there can be no question. The words of Paul in the Philippian epistle support the Johannine passage already quoted, " Stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving together for the faith of the Gospel " (i, 27).

These words show also that the unity of the church, although of Divine origin, needs to be guarded by her members. They must " give diligence to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace " just because " there is one body and one Spirit," " one Lord, one faith, one baptism " (Eph. iv, 3-5). If we are inclined to think that there is less of specific teaching in the New Testament on church unity than we should like in confronting the present situation, we must remember that the divided church, as we know it, had not emerged. There were then no " denominations " nor was there any distinction drawn between home and foreign missions, although the early Church could have claimed as much justification for dividing her sphere of evangelism as we can to-day. The unity of the church as an expanding organisation was taken for granted, and when the apostle speaks of " one faith " or " one baptism " he knows he is stating an undisputed truth. What division there is in the New Testament Church is to be found within the local community. The exhortation to the Philippian Christians to make a united stand is inspired by the tendency towards division associated with the quarrel of Euodias and Syntyche. So also the divisions in the church at Corinth make Paul ask " Is Christ divided ? " Until the local church is entirely free from schismatic tendencies, the New Testament teaching on Christian unity is only too relevant to our situation. For though we are beginning to think of the church and of her evangelism as world-wide, we must not forget that whatever strategic plans may now be made in the international headquarters of the church, the spiritual battle is being fought on innumerable short fronts. It is imperative, therefore, that every local church should be united for her own essential part in the global warfare. Paul is probably consciously using military terms when he speaks to the Colossians of their " order and the steadfastness " of their faith (ii, 5).

What the New Testament says about unity within a particular church must apply, if the situation calls for it, to the church as a whole. It must needs apply in any case, because the church, as understood by the New Testament, is never only a local community, but is always conceived as the all-embracing fellowship of believers manifested in various places. From this view-point Paul addresses " the church of God which is at Corinth." Therefore, any schism in *a* church rends the spiritual fabric of the *whole* church. Perhaps this seems an oversimplification in suggesting that there is no essential difference between factions within any particular church of any denomination and the " unhappy divisions " which split up the world church into her largest sections. Many would justify

denominational divisions, whilst rightly deploring internal disharmonies within a local church. But if these divisions are allowed to weaken the power of the church to fulfil her mission they are sinful. "Is Christ divided?" was originally asked with special reference to a local church about 55 A.D. Can we be content to-day with such a narrow reference in view of the task of the church in the world situation?

G. FARR.

MISSION AND UNITY: A STUDY IN CHURCH HISTORY

WHILE Christians have always confessed that unity is one of the characteristics of the true Church, the modern movement for the reunion of the Church has no true parallel in earlier history. In the earlier centuries few would have acknowledged that the *true* Body of Christ was in fact rent. The concern of Christians was to proclaim and assert the *truth*, which was indivisible. All ecclesiastical divisions were therefore considered in terms of error or heresy, and unity could be achieved only by the reclamation of the erring or the destruction of the heretical. It is strange how little influence upon the thought and practice of the Middle Ages was exercised by the experience of schism in 1051, when the Pope and Patriarch excommunicated each other. The question at issue between Pope and Patriarch was not the nature of Church unity (both would have confessed the Church was one), but who should exercise primacy within the unity they mutually acknowledged. No Mediaeval Christian could have recognised the existence of two separate and distinct, yet valid, Churches.

The Protestant Reformers continued in their theology the mediaeval emphasis upon the essential unity of the Church, while distinguishing this one Church of Christ from the apostate catholicity of Rome. For Luther the integrity of the whole body of believers is a reflection of the common faith of those believers, rather than a common subjection to an ecclesiastical order or hierarchy. "I believe," he writes, "that there is on earth, wide as the world is, not more than one holy, general, Christian Church, which is nothing more than the community or assembly of the saints." This view distinguishes, not between the various branches of the one true Church, but rather the apostate Church from the true *communio sanctorum*. Central to the ecclesiastical theology of Calvin is the view that the visible Church is but an expression of the invisible, which is "the totality of the elect." True catholicity can be predicated of the elect only, and the visible Church is found only where the Word is truly preached and the sacraments rightly administered. Outside this Church there is, ordinarily, no salvation. The Reformation leaders

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BAPTIST MINISTERS' FRATERNAL UNION

My dear Friends,

Shepherds on Bicycles

I acknowledge with gratitude that the above title and the general idea of this letter was suggested to me by an honoured country minister. He was not thinking of shepherds who tend sheep away on lonely moor or mountainside, but of shepherds like yourselves whose work is essentially pastoral, you who have the care of souls. You travel many miles in your visitation; few of you possess motor cars, the large majority own a bicycle. I saw the other week that a Baptist minister was advertised to lecture on "100,000 miles on a push bike," while I recall a country minister telling me that some years ago he set out to visit a distant farm. He soon had a bad puncture and, leaving the cycle in the village for repair, abandoned the farmer and visited a member near at hand. She said, "Pastor, that puncture was an answer to prayer, for I have been praying that you would come to see me to-day." His suggestion that she should therefore pay for the puncture was not received in the thanksgiving spirit that it merited.

All of which leads me to say that ministers' cycles are not immune from theft and it should be remembered that the ordinary householder's policy does not insure the cycle when away from the dwelling-house. Again, a minister, however careful, may find himself involved in trouble and expense in resisting a third party claim arising out of an accident for which he was in no way to blame. Cycle risks can be insured at a low premium, and we, in the Baptist Insurance Co., Ltd., will gladly forward particulars to any who enquire.

Those ministers who are wealthy enough to own Auto-Cycles, Motor-Cycles or Motor Cars know that the law compels them to insure their third party risks. The denominational office is in a position to offer attractive terms for the insurance of these vehicles.

This letter is being written amid the rains of August. The summer for which we are waiting will probably be in full glory at the time you read this letter. The autumn, nevertheless, will then be upon us, and I wish you all a season of great blessing as you turn to the increased activity of your Churches in the autumn and winter months.

Yours very sincerely,

SEYMOUR J. PRICE,
General Manager.

considered that they had discovered the true Church rather than divided the old.

The emphasis upon the invisible unity which integrates the whole body of Christian believers, was characteristic also of the seventeenth century sects in England. The Brownists separated from the established Church of England because they refused to acknowledge that the " parish assemblies " were true Churches of Christ. They considered themselves not as schismatics but as members of the Body of Christ, demonstrating their election by their holiness of life and by their conformity in all ecclesiastical matters to the rule of the Word, which is alone authoritative in spiritual affairs. There was considerable disagreement among the second generation of the Separatists, whether the Churches of Rome and England could be regarded as Churches in error, or whether they were under the complete domination of anti-Christ and had, consequently, no relationship at all with the Truth. The Church of Christ is still one, and is known in the congregation of the faithful. The early Baptists, usually concerned with the rights of the local congregation, were also emphatic in their insistence upon the essential unity of the Church. No local congregation could live to itself. The 1646 Confession reads, " Although the particular congregations be distinct and several bodies, every one is a compact and knit city within itself: yet are all to walk by one rule of truth; so also they (by all means convenient) are to have the counsel and help one of the other if necessity require it, as members of one body, in the common faith under Christ their head." In the seventeenth century there were those who deplored the divisions in the visible Church, particularly among those who had separated from the established Church. Chief among these were those who sought to express in their lives and worship the " Religion of the Spirit." Yet the Quakers and their precursors were less concerned with the reintegration of the institutional Church than with the discovery of the true, spiritual, invisible Church of Jesus, with which most local Churches, they believed, held little relationship. All movements towards Church unity among the English Puritans were concerned with the discovery of the true pattern of Church life and order in the New Testament and then of imposing that truth upon all Christians. Truth, being for them both simple and indivisible, must be accepted in its totality, or unity becomes a means of damnation rather than of salvation. Yet in a period like this, some, like the Welsh evangelist Vavasour Powell, held that the distinction between Presbyterianism and Independency was slight and was but a hindrance to the preaching of the Gospel.

The paradox of Church life, and of the relationship between mission and unity, is seen in the origins of the Methodist movement in the eighteenth century. This began as a mission of the whole Church to the world, a view expressed in Wesley's famous words, " The world is my parish." Neither Wesley nor his followers desired to be considered a new sect, or Church, not only because of

the attachment to the national Church, but also because they saw their task as the true task of the Church itself, as they knew it. Yet, because this work of mission was regarded as more important than ecclesiastical conformity, and indeed as one of the essential characteristics of the one true Church, they were prepared, when circumstances changed, to leave the fold of the national Church and ordain their own ministers.

The late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the development of two factors that made possible a change in the attitude of Christian leaders to the unity of the Church. The first was a new attitude towards Truth. The sects of the seventeenth century had advanced the belief that no man should be persecuted for his religious convictions, lest the Church should be corrupted by the influx of hypocrites. It was the outgrowth of this belief, united with the spirit of eighteenth century Rationalism, which gave rise to the belief that Truth might reside in many confessions of the Church, and that orthodoxy and apostolicity were not the exclusive possession of one sect, though this latter view still persists in the Church. More important was the second factor. The great missionary movement of the nineteenth century, by transplanting the Church into a new and foreign environment, where the traditions of the various denominations counted for little, demonstrated the limitations of all denominations in meeting the contemporary challenge. Against the background of this changing attitude of Christians towards the Church as an institution, in its unity and divisions, we must examine certain aspects of the development of the Church's mission to the world.

In the early centuries of the Christian era the expansion of the Faith was regarded as the responsibility of the whole body of the faithful, and of every member in particular; yet there were three groups of men who held an especial calling for the work of carrying the Gospel to the world, namely, Apostles, Teachers and Prophets, offices derived by the Church from its Jewish origins. The method of their evangelism was two-fold. Mission cannot be dissociated, in the first place, from apostolic preaching. The Church proclaimed to the world, as the early Apostles had done, that Jesus was Lord and Christ, and that, being Redeemer, He had died for the sins of men. This preaching had also a strong eschatological emphasis. The day of judgment was at hand, and the imminence of this was itself a call to all men that they should repent of their sins and accept the salvation offered in Christ. The other means by which the Pagan world was confronted by the fact of Christ, and led to Him, lay in the confession of the members of the Church, both in their moral conduct, particularly the brotherly love which characterised their fellowships, and in their readiness to suffer rather than deny their faith. The rise of the monarchical episcopate and the growth of papal authority affected the missionary methods of the Church, as it did almost every other aspect of its life. In the early years all members were involved in the one great task of proclaiming

the Saviour, and it was generally recognised that the impetus for all this activity emanated from the Holy Ghost. With the rise of the monarchical bishop, the functions, traditions and authority, which once were predicated of the Apostolate, were now appropriated by the bishops. From the fourth century onwards any denial of the authority of the new ecclesiastical hierarchy, as well as any divergence from the corpus of orthodox doctrine, was regarded not only as a threat to the unity of the Faith, but also as a denial of the true nature of the Gospel. There could, therefore, be no relationship at all between the missions of the sects and heresies and those of the orthodox Church.

The insistence of the Mediaeval Church that all Christians should conform to one body of doctrine and form of Church polity gave to the missions of the heretics a particular importance in the history of missions. Much of the evangelical activity of Christians in this period was undertaken with a sectarian purpose. The Arians, responsible for the disunity and scandalous quarrels in the Church of the fourth century, counted among their number some of the greatest missionary adventurers of the age, and many would account Ulfilas, the " Apostle of the Goths " to be the outstanding missionary preacher of the Nicene period. Soon Arianism spread to the other Germanic peoples, and by the middle of the fifth century was in a very strong position in the lands of the old Western Empire. The power and influence of the Catholic Church was severely limited, and in the Arian Vandal Kingdom of North Africa the Catholic clergy were persecuted, though both the Goths and the Burgundians allowed the Catholic ecclesiastical system to remain in their lands. In the east much missionary activity was undertaken by another of the heretical divisions of the Church. The Nestorians took their own form of Christianity into the Persian Empire and from there into Asia, even as far as China. The Monophysites were also a vigorously missionary sect, and accomplished much in Syria and Armenia. Thus we see that a great deal of missionary activity emanated from the Church in its divisions, being undertaken by the heretical groups. Another sphere of great missionary endeavour was the Celtic lands, and here again it is extremely difficult to trace any concept of unity underlying this outreach. The whole mission was undertaken by individual monks, who gathered about themselves groups of like-minded and enthusiastic ascetics. It is still a matter for debate how far these missionaries were comprehended in the Catholic Church and how far they owed allegiance to the Bishop of Rome. Certainly the Celtic bishops repudiated the metropolitan authority of Augustine of Canterbury, and there is little evidence that these missionaries held to any particular connection with the Catholic Church. The Papacy, in the Middle Ages, showed little interest in the missionary activity of the Church, a fact which the pontificate of Gregory the Great only throws into greater relief.

Though much of the missionary work of the Church was undertaken by members of a divided Church, once their evangelical task was accomplished, the Church in those lands was faced by the challenge of its lack of unity, especially when other branches of the Church became established in the same areas. It was many centuries before the problem of disunity confronted the Nestorian and Monophysite Churches. They had established themselves in lands, the geographical position or nature of which made contact between them and other Christian Churches most difficult. Yet, in later years attempts were made to unite these communions with the older Churches of Christendom. In Eastern Asia, where the Nestorians were numerous, the Catholic Church also conducted a mission, when, following the return of Marco Polo, the Pope, Nicholas I, sent there a Franciscan friar. Soon afterwards an attempt was made to absorb the Nestorian Church in the new Catholic mission, but was unavailing. Attempts to integrate Nestorian and Catholic in Persia proved equally unsuccessful. By the twelfth century the Armenian Church, Monophysite in doctrine, attempted to unite first with the Greek Church and then with the Latin, the latter union being effected at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The mission and unity of the Church were prime factors in the creation of that catholic civilisation which prevailed in Western Christendom from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries. The great characteristic of this period was the integration of State and Church, whereby the aim of the secular society became the worship of God and the extension of the Kingdom of Christ, while receiving from the Church a divine sanction which preserved the unity of the Western Empire against the disruptive forces of Teutonic tribalism. The development of this civilisation owes much to the unity achieved between the Celtic and Catholic Churches in England at the Synod of Whitby in 664. It was from this united Church in England that missions went to the Continent in the eighth century to convert the Teutonic peoples to Catholic Christianity, and to establish with the Carolingian line a relationship which made possible the later developments. Most famous of these English missionaries was Boniface, whose motives for undertaking this work were little different from those that characterise most missionary enterprises. One Church in one empire became the ideal of both Church and State. Missions were now conducted, often by the use of military force, in the interests of the secular as well as the spiritual powers. Throughout this whole period unity was the consequence of mission, not a means by which evangelical work was attempted.

The great missionary movement of the Reformation period was, at the same time, sectarian and catholic, one's definition depending upon one's understanding of the nature of catholicity and of the Church itself. The Society of Jesus, which was responsible for this work, began as a group of five men who gathered around Ignatius Loyola, whose prime object was that of conducting a

pilgrimage to the Holy Land and of converting the infidels. However, all access to that land was prevented by the outbreak of war, and Loyola and his friends turned their minds to the foundation of a more comprehensive society to meet the religious situation created by the Reformation. The rule of this new Order, approved by papal bull in 1540, added to the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, a fourth, whereby the members bound themselves, unreservedly, to go as missionaries to any country which might be determined by the Pope. They conducted extensive missions throughout Western Europe, and found an even more fertile field for their activities in the Portuguese colonies in India, in China and Japan, in Central and North America, in Brazil, Paraguay, Uraguay, California and the Philippines, achieving a remarkable success. This was a missionary movement that arose directly out of the division of the Church in the sixteenth century, and its object was the strengthening and re-uniting of the Church under the Papacy.

Modern Protestant missions find their origin, not in one of the major movements, but in the evangelical zeal of the pietistic Moravians. Their efforts were, however, limited in scope and influence. English missions, which, owing to the growth of English imperial power, were to become for several generations the most important, find their origin in the work of Carey, Marshman and Ward, and the foundation of the Baptist Missionary Society marks a new phase in the history of the propagation of the Faith. It is significant that this new era begins with efforts related to the "sect" tradition, though from the outset there was nothing exclusively sectarian about the movement. It is, indeed, noteworthy that modern missions from England find their origin in the Churches who first advocated in this country that all men should be tolerated for their religious beliefs. The breadth of vision that characterised the attitude of the early Baptists towards toleration is also characteristic of their attitude towards missions. It was recognised by most of those engaged with the call to evangelise the heathen that such work could not be confined to any one sect or tradition. Carey's great work, "An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathen" (1792), is characterised by a remarkable freedom from a sectarian spirit. It is true he condemns the ignorance, immorality and viciousness of the Greek, Armenian and Roman Churches, but adds in the same paragraph, "many errors and much looseness of conduct are to be found among dissenters of all denominations." Having proposed in this work the formation of a missionary society within his own denomination, he goes on to say, "I do not mean by this, in any wise to confine it to one denomination of Christians. I wish with all my heart, that every one who loves our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, would in some way or other engage in it. But in the present divided state of Christendom it would be more likely for good to be done by each denomination engaging separately in

the work, than if they were to engage in it conjointly." Carey later made further plans for co-operation between the denominations on the mission field. The formation of the London Missionary Society in 1795 emphasises that the modern movement, though dependent mainly on denominational societies, had from the beginning a sense of the unity of the Gospel which transcended denominational barriers. The formation of more and more societies as the nineteenth century opened indicates how the new spirit of mission had gripped the whole Church in England, and co-operation between these bodies at the beginning of the present century was a natural consequence of the spirit in which the enterprises began.

The relationship between mission and unity in the history of the Church has never been a constant one. It has often been true that the more the Church has emphasised her own *organisational* catholicity, the less she has achieved in the realm of her mission. The " sect-type " have usually been more fervent in their desire to preach the Gospel to the heathen than the clergy of the " Church-type," the latter having achieved their great missionary triumphs usually in response to the prior challenge of heterodoxy or disunity within the existing Church, rather than to the consciousness of the universal obligation to evangelise, laid upon all Christians. The two great Churches of this type found missionary work difficult during great periods of their history, namely, the Eastern Orthodox and Roman confessions, though this was due in no small measure to their special relationship with the secular State, both functioning with a closed society. Yet, throughout the whole history of Christendom, converts have found it difficult to accept the existence of several confessions within any one newly-evangelised area, even though the motives underlying the original mission to these areas may have been schismatic. The modern missionary movement, however, profiting by the liberal spirit of the eighteenth century and by the zeal of the Evangelical Revival, was born in the belief that though the Church, as an institution, be divided, Christians must always seek to express the fact that they are one in the Gospel and Kingdom of the Master. The task confronting the Church in our generation is that of integrating the whole body of Christians, which has been so changed and expanded, into an organic though not an institutional unity. D. MERVYN HIMBURY.

BIBLE STUDY—JEREMIAH

THE MAN (The outward pattern)

FOR historical background see 2 Kings, 22-25; 2 Chr. 34-36. Most prophetic books reveal the message but not the messenger, but Jeremiah is more than a Voice. He is a Personality. He was a member of a priestly family living in Anathoth (i, 1), who served the local shrine. His call came when

he was young and inexperienced (i, 6), and was accepted with reluctance. Cf. Isaiah's ready response (Is. vi, 8).

At that time, 626, Assyria was the dominant power. Twenty years later, Jeremiah saw the Assyrian power smashed and Egypt, her ally, routed by the Chaldaeans. Babylon replaced Egypt as the overlord of the Palestinian states.

Josiah inherited the fruits of Manasseh's long and evil reign. The book of Jeremiah gives an appalling picture of the nation's moral and spiritual condition. From the first the prophet sounded the note of judgment and saw the mighty nations of the North as the instruments of God's justice.

He supported the reforms of Josiah, introduced in 621, after the finding of a law-book in the Temple (evidently part of Deuteronomy). Its main features were the abolishing of heathen deities and worship and the centralising of the national worship in Jerusalem. Jeremiah's support of the latter may account for the enmity of his fellow townsmen (xi, 19-23), who saw their livelihood endangered. Deuteronomy exerted a strong influence on Jeremiah's thought and language (ii, 6, 7; v, 15, etc.).

Jehoiakim (608-*c.* 597) reversed his father's reforming policy. The rapidity with which the nation sank back into its old ways confirmed Jeremiah's growing conviction that the effective way of reform was not an altered ritual but by a changed heart.

He attacked the sins of king and people. *cp.* his praise of Josiah (xxii, 15, 16), with his judgment of his son (xxii, 1-19). It was inevitable that he should be unpopular. His criticism of Temple and sacrifices alienated the priests (vii, 21-23) and his indictment of their evil life infuriated the prophets (xxvi, 8, 11). Persecution increased (xviii, 18; xx, 1, 2; xxvi, 8; xxxiii, 1; xxxvi, 5). It is a wonder that he was not killed, as Urijah was (xxvi, 20-24), since to a people struggling for their lives he proclaimed their struggle hopeless (xxi, 4, 5, 10; xxxii, 1-3) and even urges desertion to the enemy (xxi, 9). What would have happened to any similar public figure in any country during a war for national existence?

Yet at dangerous moments there was usually some influential person(s) who defended or concealed him (xxvi, 16-19, 24; xxxvi,19; xxxviii, 6-13).

Jehoiakim's revolt against Babylon led, after his death, to the capture of Jerusalem and the exile in 596 of its leading men, including Ezekiel. Zedekiah, his successor, held Jeremiah in high esteem (xxvii, 17; xxxviii, 14) but was not strong enough to protect him from imprisonment or to follow his counsel. A second revolt led to the destruction of city and Temple in 586 and most of the people were carried into exile. For the next seventy years Israel had no city or Temple and the centre of life was in Babylon.

The Chaldaeans released Jeremiah and gave him leave to live where he willed (xl, 4-6). He remained in Palestine until the assassins of the Governor took him with them on their flight to

Egypt (xliii, 6). Two prophecies of his in Egypt are recorded (xliii, 8-13; xliv, 1-14, 20-30). After that—silence.

The Man (The inward spirit)

There is much here to inspire, challenge and rebuke the minister of to-day. Not his least gift to posterity was the living of his life.

1. *He was a man who knew much inner conflict.*

He was modest, retiring (i, 6), yet called to a life of public service. His natural feelings conflicted with his prophetic commission. He loved his people, identifies himself with their sorrows (viii, 21; ix, 1; xiii, 17), yet must stir up strife (xv, 10) and pronounce their doom.

2. *A man who knew loneliness.*

"I sat alone because of Thy hand" (xv, 17). His calling forbade him the joys of wife and children (xvi, 2), estranged him from his home folk (xii, 6), brought him ridicule (xx, 7, 8) and hatred ("everyone of them doth curse me," xv, 10).

3. *A man intensely convinced of the validity of his call and message.*

Proclaims his word in face of popular feeling and the teaching of other prophets (xiv, 13; xxiii, 17), and in spite of the recurring doubt whether God has deliberately misled him, since the years pass and the doom he foretells does not come to pass (xv, 18; xx, 7, 8; xxv, 3). The word burns (xx, 9) and shakes (xxiii, 9) him, and he cannot keep silent (xx, 9).

4. *A man of courage.*

He declared his message in the face of hurtful enmity, imprisonment and the threats of death. His reply to one such threat was to repeat the offending message (ch. xxvi.).

5. *A man of faith and prayer.*

Which explains how this diffident, affectionate prophet could persist in his task for forty years. He found that God's promise of His presence and sustaining (i, 8, 17-19) was fulfilled (x, 10-12; xv, 16; xvii, 5-8, 14, 17). Many of his prayers are recorded (*e.g.* xiv, 19-21). He prays for ten days before receiving the answer (xlii, 1-7). His very suffering brought him into a deeper experience of God and His personal, individual dealings with His servants.

The Message

Every preacher can learn much from Jeremiah. Note how direct are his words, how plain their meaning. He does not deal in generalities. He speaks to the situation (*e.g., ch.* xxxiv). He attacks specific sins rather than sin. His words beat on the ears like the strokes of hammer on anvil. Yet he can be as tender as Hosea and often one rejoices in the beauty of his language, for he is a poet as well as a preacher.

Often he echoes the message of his predecessors, pleading like Amos for justice, like Hosea for faithfulness to God, and urging with Micah the vital connection of religion with morality. He sometimes uses their very phrasing (*cp.* Jer. ii, 2; iii, 22; iv, 3, with Hos. ii, 15; vi, 1; x, 12).

His indictments throw a grim light on life in Judah in the years before the exile:—

Ignorance and faithlessness of priest and prophet (ii, 8; vi, 13).
Worship of alien gods (ii, 20; ii, 26-28, v, 7).
Injustice and untruth (v, 1, 2, 27, 28; vi, 13).
Child sacrifice (vii, 31; xix, 5; xxxii, 35).
Licentiousness (ii, 20; v, 7, 8).
Complacence (ii, 35; v, 12; vi, 14, 15).
Insensibility to the Word of God (v, 12-14; vi, 10, 17).

Hence his persistent conviction that the righteousness of God makes punishment inevitable (xiii, 22; xvi, 11-13). His pessimism is not unbroken. He promises life, revival in response to repentance (iii, 12-15, 22; vi, 16; vii, 5-7; xxii, 3, 4; xxxvi, 1-3, and notably the parable of the potter, xviii, 1-6), but at times he is certain that there is no hope of reformation (xiii, 23) and that destruction and exile are ineluctable. The first prophecy in the book is one of woe (i, 13-16) and this note runs through his prophecies to the end (iv, 6-8, or v, 15-17, to xliv, 24-27).

In his thought of the future of God's People, he is the least eschatalogical of the prophets. His older contemporaries, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk were prophets of " the Day of the Lord," but Jeremiah has hardly a trace of apocalyptic imagery. His vision of the future is of a remnant of the people recalled to their own country after seventy years of exile, with a Davidic king, and rulers chosen by themselves and not by a foreign overlord. (See xxiii, 1-8; xxix, 10-14, xxx-xxxiii).

His distinctive contribution to Hebrew prophecy is his growing certainty that religion is individual and personal as well as social. Two influences contributed to this:—

a. The failure of Josiah's reforms.

At first he supported them (xi, 1-6; xvii, 19-27; xvii, 12, 26), but came to see their ineffectiveness. The good was the enemy of the best. They trusted in the Temple, ark, sacrifices to save them, and ignored repentance and righteousness (vii, 1-11, etc., *cp.* Matt. xxiii, 23). So he taught that neither ark, sacrifice nor Temple were essential to religion (iii, 15-16; vi, 19-20). The exiles who had none of these could truly worship (xxix, 12-13; *cp.* John iv, 23-24). Piety and sin both lie in the heart (iv, 4; xvii, 9-10).

b. His own personal experience.

God met him as an individual (his call i, 4, and God's foreknowledge of him before his birth, i, 5). Hostility separated him from men and social life, but in his loneliness God was with him,

and sufficient (i, 8; xv, 20). Thus he teaches individual responsibility (xxxi, 29-30). God can speak to a nation but only as individuals can a nation speak to God and repent, trust and love Him. He taught men to say " my God " as well as " our God " (ix, 24; xvii, 10; xxxii, 19).

His convictions are summed up in " The New Covenant " (xxxi, 31-34. *cp.* xxxii, 40; l, 5). This was essential because of the inward, spiritual nature of true religion. Israel, freed from national institutions, will enter into a new relationship with God. Its marks are:—

a. Inwardness. " I will write My law in their hearts."

b. Individuality. " The least of them shall know Me." (*cp.* the emphasis on knowledge in ix, 3, 6; xxii, 16; ix, 24).

c. Forgiveness of sins. " I will forgive their iniquity."

The limitations of the Covenant are obvious. While it contains the seed of the universal, Jeremiah still thinks in terms of Israel only (xxxi, 31, *cp.* John iii, 16). Yet he freed the eternal truths of religion from temporary, national embodiment and disclosed the true foundations of friendship between God and man. He marks a turning point in the religion of Israel.

Note the importance given to this passage in the New Testament (Rom. xi, 27; Hebs. viii, 8-12; x, 16-17). Our Lord used its thought and language in reference to His death (Matt. xxvi, 28; Luke, xxii, 20).

The influence of Jeremiah was long and deep. 400 years after his death his name was still on the roll of Israel's great men of God. He is described in II Maccabees xv, 14 as " a lover of the brethren, who prayeth much for the people and for the holy city." The later Psalms and the book of Job owe much to him. His phrase " a lamb led to the slaughter " (xi, 19) is echoed in Is. liii, 7, and in the vision of the adoration of the Lamb in Rev. v, 6. Like our Lord he was opposed by his own kinsmen, rejected by ruler, priest and people. Like our Lord he wept over the land and people he loved. It is not surprising that some men saw in Jesus the return of Jeremiah (Matt. xvi, 14).

The Book

The compiler evidently gathered his material from three main sources:—

a. An autobiography, prose, in the first person, *e.g.* i, 4-19; iii, 6-18.

b. A biography of Jeremiah, prose, in third person, *e.g.* xxi, 1-10.

c. A collection(s) of his oracles and prophecies, in poetic form.

The fifty-two chapters can be broken up into fourteen groups, each of which normally consists of a heading, sometimes giving date or circumstance (i,1; iii, 6), followed by a prose passage and then the oracles, *e.g.* i, 1-3 heading, i, 4-19 autobiography, ii, 1-3, 5 oracles.

Chapters 1-25 are mostly prophetic; chapters 26-45 mostly narrative.

N.B.
1. In most groups the oracular portion contains several unconnected oracles, *e.g.* iii, 19-vi, 33 consists of iii, 19-20; iii, 21-22; iii, 23-25; iv, 1-2; iv, 2-3, etc.
2. Their order is not chronological or consecutive. The date or occasion of many of them cannot be determined.
3. The following sections provide useful groups for study: i, 1; iii, 6; vii, 1; xi, 1; xiii, 1; xiv, 11; xvii, 19; xix, 1; xxi, 1; xxii, 1; xxiv, 1; xxvi, 1; xxxii, 1; li, 59-60. Chapter lii, is an historical retrospect, duplicated in 2 Kings xxv, 1-21.

More is known of Jeremiah than of any other Old Testament prophet. The study of his work and character is greatly rewarding, not least to men who, like the prophet, are exercising their ministry in a world which is rapidly changing and among a population largely pagan and indifferent. It is hoped that these notes may encourage further study of this most human prophet, preacher and poet. Space limits them to consideration of the Man, the Message, and the structure of the Book.

FRANK BUFFARD.

We publish in this issue the last of a series of four Bible Studies prepared at great pains by Frank Buffard. We here pass on to him expressions of appreciation received. May our dear friend find health so renewed as to enable him to use voice as well as pen in the Master's service.

KESWICK CONVENTION

JULY 9TH–16TH, 1955

We learn from Mr. A. W. Bradley, Secretary of the Keswick Convention Council, that in order to avoid clashing with the B.W.A. Congress, the Keswick Convention in 1955 will be held from 9th–16th July, a week earlier than usual. Overseas and other visitors desiring accommodation, should make early application to The Registrar, Convention Office, Keswick, England. The booking charge is £8 for the week, lesser bookings cannot be accepted. The return rail fare from London is £4 7s. 6d. Attendance this year exceeded six thousand, and for next year doubtless many Baptist visits will desire to include both fixtures in their visit to the Old Country.