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Three Overseas Contributors.

BARON STOW has been dead fifty-six years. His chief work was done in Boston, Massachusetts, as pastor for thirty-five years. He was a member of the executive of the Missionary Union, and played a leading part in the matters which led to the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention. The nature of his action may be judged from the letter printed here. This is made accessible by H. F. Cross, Croydon, England; Baron Stow hailed from Croydon, New Hampshire.

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DR. DARGAN belongs to the Southern Baptist Convention of America, of which he has been president. He has filled important pastorates, notably at Macon in Georgia: he has been professor of homiletic at Louisville, and has published a large history of preaching: he is now editorial secretary of the Sunday School Board at Nashville.

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JOSEF NOVOTNY is son of Henry Novotny, who founded the first Baptist church in Bohemia, 1885. Joseph was born next year, was educated at Prague, at the Hamburg Baptist seminary, at the Midland College in Nottingham, at the universities of Vienna and Geneva. He succeeded to his father's leadership in 1912, and five years later opened a fine church in Prague.

The Southern Baptist Convention.

ADDRESS BY ITS OFFICIAL DELEGATE, TO THE BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, AT THE ANNUAL MEETINGS, APRIL 30TH, 1925.

MR. PRESIDENT AND BRETHREN,—I am deeply sensible of the honour and privilege of bringing to you on this occasion the fraternal greetings of American Baptists, and especially of the Southern Baptist Convention. I recall with pleasure that many years ago, namely May, 1889, at Memphis, Tennessee, the Southern Baptist Convention received with great enthusiasm messengers bringing greetings from British Baptists. These were the Reverend Dr. Edward Parker, then President of Manchester Baptist College, and Mr. William Dale Shaw, who was also officially connected with the same institution. After all these years it gratifies me, as a Southern Baptist, to be the bearer of congratulations and good will to our brethren of the United Kingdom. We cherish a strong and hearty appreciation of your history and works through the modern centuries. We hold in sincere fraternal affection your great personalities, past and present. We have a joyful sense of our common message to the world to-day. We rejoice that a recent president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dr. E. Y. Mullins, is now President of the Baptist World Alliance, and well known to many of you. We are grateful for the achievements of your former distinguished and official secretary, Dr. Shakespeare, and we rejoice in the statesmanlike and efficient work of your esteemed Dr. Rushbrooke. Many of us enjoy greater or less acquaintance with others of the notable and distinguished members of your body. On account of all these things, and many others, I rejoice to bring you to-day a message of fellowship in the great work of our denomination around the world, while to me personally it is a privilege beyond words to share in that fellowship at this meeting.

A hasty glance at the history and present life of the Southern Baptist Convention may not be devoid of interest to you. We do not know who were the first Baptists to come from England to the colonies of North America, but early in the colonial history a few appeared in New England, later in Virginia, and then in the other colonies. You know that some of these men were persecuted in both of the oldest colonies. The attempt was made

to silence them by whipping and imprisonment, but Baptists have never been put down by persecution. You have heard the story of the Welshman, Roger Williams, and his brief but fruitful contact with the Baptists of New England. Through him and others a foothold was gained, and slowly the little band of Baptists founded churches in all of the original thirteen colonies. They had some correspondence with each other and with Baptists in England, but they were a weak and slowly-developing sect. The Great Awakening under the preaching of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield, in the middle and latter part of the eighteenth century, contributed much to the growth of the Baptists. The Philadelphia Association came into being in 1707, and the Charleston Association in 1751. From the organisation of these historic bodies the general Baptist Movement spread. The beginning of American Foreign Missionary organisations about 1810 interested the Baptists, and when two of the missionaries sent out by the American Board of Commissioners became Baptists, the call of Providence was recognized. In order to care for these two men, Adoniram Judson, of Burma, and Luther Rice, and others who might follow, a general organisation of Baptists came into being. This was due largely to the labours of Luther Rice, who returned to America to stir the Baptists to united effort in behalf of Missions and education. Among the leaders who were profoundly moved by Rice were two South Carolinians, Richard Furman and Wm. B. Johnson. Thus was formed in 1814 the first General Convention of Baptists in the United States. It met every three years, and hence became known as the Triennial Convention. Its work was conducted by an executive committee in the interim of its sessions. This continued to the year 1845, when the split between Northern and Southern Baptists came over negro slavery. This is no time or place to discuss that great issue. Suffice it to say that the people of the South were involuntary, and many of them reluctant heirs to an institution fraught with much evil, but which the vast majority of slave-owners endeavoured to mitigate and to employ as far as possible for the benefit of the unfortunate slaves themselves. It is only necesary to explain briefly why the Southern Baptists withdrew and set up a work of their own. The sections were becoming embittered in the quarrel over slavery, and this ill-feeling affected their relations at every point, including religion. All Southerners of means were slave owners. This class constituted the leadership and wealth of the country. Question arose whether a Southern Baptist could be appointed as a misionary to foreign countries, especially Africa. After a controversy, the Committee declared its policy that no Southerner could be appointed. Let us heartily recognize the elements of

justice and right on both sides. The committee was no doubt conscientious, but was willing to accept the money drawn from the labour of slaves, though not to appoint as a missionary one who was in any way connected with the institution. In other words, Southern Baptists were asked to contribute their full share of the expenses, but were denied personal representation on the foreign field. Southern Baptist leaders decided to withdraw and set up a convention of their own. Accordingly, in the city of Augusta, Georgia, in May, 1845, a number of representative Baptists in the Southern States, gathered and formed the Southern Baptist Convention for fellowship and co-operation in the work of missions at home and abroad.

It is impossible to trace, even briefly, the history of the body. It needs only to be said that it began and carried on its work with fine prosperity for fifteen years, when the great Civil War arose over political issues, and for four years the country was racked by that fearful strife. In 1865, just twenty years from their organisation, and after the terrors of war, the impoverished Baptists of the South once more met in convention to see what could be done to revive and carry forward their crippled missionary work at home and abroad.

From then until now the body has enjoyed steady, though at first very slow, growth. The meetings were made annual, and every year from 1866 until the present the Southern Baptist Convention has met. Long years of poverty and struggle followed the Civil War. Many brethren in both sections of the country desired that there should be a reunion with the Baptists of the North, and various proposals looking to that end were from time to time submitted and considered. But the issue was finally decided at the meeting of the Convention in 1879, at Atlanta, Georgia. A motion to appoint a commission to consider closer fellowship with the Northern Baptist Societies was overwhelmingly voted down, and the Southern Baptist Convention decided, under the help of God, to keep their separate organisation and work. There was little or no ill-feeling. It was simply deemed better for all parties that the independent and self-regulating Southern body should maintain its own existence. Time has justified the wisdom of that decision.

With that question settled, the poverty-stricken Baptist churches of the South set out upon a new and prospering course. The work of Missions at home and abroad, and of encouragment to educational, benevolent, and other Christian enterprises, has gone steadily on. The Women's Missionary Union Auxiliary to the Convention came into being, and a vast and glorious work has been developed among our sisters. The Baptist Young People's Union for the South was formed, and the movement

for local unions in the churches has had a great and beneficent growth. The Sunday School Board was founded in 1891, and has had a phenomenal success in the development of Sunday-school and other publications, and the encouraging of Sunday-school work throughout our territory. More recently Boards have been formed for the aid of aged ministers and for the development of education, so that now the work of the Convention has grown more complicated and powerful with the years. We may say that the period from 1866 to 1919 is the distinctly marked epoch of slow but successful growth into a position of vast power and prospect. With 1919 the Convention entered upon still a new era of its existence, for in that year, at Atlanta, Georgia, again, and just forty years after the decision to remain separate, a new movement was put on which has greatly developed and unified our Baptist work. This was the launching of what we have called the Seventy-five Million Dollar Campaign.

By this time great material prosperity had come to the stricken South. It was no longer proper to speak of the poverty of the Southern States. Baptists shared in this prosperity, and their number had grown astonishingly through evangelism and the growth of churches in the recent years. But gifts to missionary and other religious causes had been woefully behind what they should have been. We had got so accustomed to being poor that we did not realize how rich we had become. But somehow in that meeting there came a divine movement, a breath of power from on high, and a strong committee in consultation determined on a new development. They brought to the Convention a proposal that the Baptist Churches of the South should raise within a five year period the great sum of $75,000,000.00 for the work of the Convention, especially its Home and Foreign Missionary Boards. It was a momentous occasion. A feeling of joy and happiness ran high. The high prices of products on account of the World War made everybody feel wealthy, and this along with the religious fervour produced too much optimism. Yet, under forceful management, the vast sum was promised in the fervour of a great campaign. Soon prices began to fall, a period of depression ensued, and the shadow even of a financial panic was felt. Many subscriptions had been hastily and perhaps thoughtlessly made, and at the end of the period, instead of $75,000,000.00, we found we had raised $58,591,713.69. Though we have fallen short of the goal which we had set for ourselves, and though many feel grieved and ashamed that we did not reach the mark, it is proper to say that except for the financial gap between promise and fulfilment, the movement has been in itself a great and powerful stimulus to our work. The amount itself is a large one. It is many times over what we had ever done in

any previous five years of our history. It made possible the enlargement of our work in every branch. It helped to quicken the sense of fellowship and of solidarity in our vast host of church members. It brought weak churches into line and strengthened those that were strong. Incidentally, there was much religious zeal and fervour, and the spirit of evangelism was awakened. More souls were converted, and more members added to the churches annually than ever before in our history. One cannot doubt that when the depression which we are now suffering from, and reaction passes by, that great movement will have left a permanent and inestimable influence for good upon every phase of our work.

The territory of the Southern Baptist Convention includes seventeen States of the Union and the District of Columbia. In three or four of these the alignment is divided. Some of the churches in Southern Illinois co-operate with us. Some of those in the District of Columbia belong to the Northern Convention, and some also in the State of Missouri. The line is not sharply drawn. Churches are free to co-operate as they may desire. The number of churches co-operating with the Southern Baptist Convention in 1923 was 26,843, members 3,175,409, Sunday schools 20,412. Besides these, the negro Baptists in the South had 23,035 churches, with a membership of 2,971,268. Besides these, there are some 140,000 churches which do not co-operate with either of these bodies, and there are various smaller groups that carry the name of Baptists. The total Baptist strength in the South, therefore, probably amounts to 60,000 churches, with a membership of 6,500,000. This means one Baptist to every 5.7 persons in the South. About half of the entire Baptist membership in the South is, therefore, represented in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Of this great multitude it must be frankly admitted that a large majority is in some respects a liability rather than an asset. This will appear from the statement in the report of a Committee of the Convention last year that 88.5 per cent. of all our churches are situated in the open country, or in villages of less than one thousand inhabitants. Besides that, many of the churches in our larger towns and cities are weak and struggling suburban or mission churches. The great problem among Southern Baptists to-day is how to enlist into active denominational life this vast host of retarded, backward, uninformed, and in some cases even illiterate church members. We are persuaded that a condition like this does not exist anywhere else in the world. Our leaders are bravely facing this problem, and the best thought of the denomination for years to come will be directed to the development and enlightenment of our backward churches and people.

But we must not fail to consider the other side. Our institutions of learning are numerous, and for the most part efficient. We have two theological seminaries of high standing for the training of ministers, and an institute for the training of ministers and other workers. Many of the colleges have departments or chairs of Biblical and theological instruction. Not a few of our leading men have attained distinction in the fields of religious scholarship and of world leadership. Among our laymen are many strong and influential men. As already pointed out, our women, through their organised societies, and in other ways, are doing a colossal work for the Master at home and abroad. Thus on a survey of our actual condition, we have much to be thankful for, nothing to boast of, something to depress and occasion thought, but a vast deal to encourage, as we press on in the midst of many projects, difficulties, and problems to do our work for our Lord and for the world in a manner worthy of our principles and our goal.

The Baptists of the South are for the most part true to the great traditions that have come down to us. We hold the evangelical Christian faith without fear and without apology. We believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, and our regulative authority for doctrine and practice. We accept with reverence and gratitude the revelation of God in the holy threeness of His being, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We hold to the deity and vicarious atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the fact of His resurrection, the reality of His lordship, and the promise of His coming. We recognise that upon us rests a great burden of responsibility and duty to make known these essential Christian truths to the world of mankind. We cherish with pride the hard-won but glorious doctrine of religious liberty for ourselves and for the world. We stand unabashed and unafraid before criticism, as our fathers did before persecution. We join with our Baptist brethren in every land and clime in defence of those principles which are irrevocably attached to the Baptist name. And we pray that our brethren here in Great Britain and Ireland may be led and strengthened of God, that we English-speaking Baptists may stand together and contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. Holding fervently and joyously to this great Baptist slogan, LOYALTY TO CHRIST AND LIBERTY IN CHRIST, let us solemnly lift our hearts to God in the words our divine Master has taught us, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

E. C. DARGAN.

Czecho-Slovaks.

WHEN in the fourth century the nations were seeking their new homes, and the Slavs, who had their cradle in the South of Russia, parted in different groups, the Czecho-Slovak, although he was the least with regard to the number of his subjects, had the greatest energy, and went the westernmost of all his Slav brethren. There were just a few Slavs more who went still further west, but they soon drowned in the German sea. The Czecho-Slovak remained in the west, and his land looks as a finger of the great Slav hand, showing to other Slavs the Western culture, of which he became the interpreter. His situation being the very centre of Europe, and having high mountains as his natural frontier, the Czecho-Slovak was able, during the many hundreds of years of Germanizing efforts of his neighbours, to remain a Czechish peninsula into the German sea, his only connection with his Slav brethren being the Poles and a short frontier with the Russians.

The Czecho-Slovaks accepted soon Christianizing when it was preached to them by the two noble Greek brethren, Cyril and Methodius. The fact that Christianity was introduced to them by Greeks produced the second fact: the Czecho-Slovaks were never true followers of Rome.

The Reformation ideas found a good home in Bohemia and in the rest of the Czecho-Slovak countries. The greatest man that the Czecho-Slovak nation produced, John Hus, was not the first reformer, and by no means the only one; he had many forerunners. His very clever colleague, Jerome of Prague, and his spiritual successor, Peter Chelcicky, are men of world's importance. The last one, a man who was born too soon, an apostle of world's peace and separation of State and church, the spiritual father of the "Unitas Fratrum," and the introducer of believer's baptism in the Bohemian Brethren Church, an unknown Baptist saint of the fifteenth century, is the man of whom Tolstoy professed himself an admirer and disciple. And the Bohemian Brethren Church is generally recognized to-day as the most beautiful blossom on the tree of Christianity since the time of the apostles. Comenius, the greatest and last religious leader of the "Unitas Fratum," the teacher of nations, is a man who is not valued enough; and we are only at the beginning of trying to understand what he meant, not only for the Czecho-Slovaks but for the culture of the whole world.

Czecho-Slovaks are the only Slav nation who had a full Reformation which succeeded for two hundred years. It was an eminently religious country: "The land of Book and Cup." They printed the second Bible in a living tongue; New Testament in 1475, full Bible in 1488. So attached were they to the scripture that for a man who daily reads and meditates in the Bible they coined a single word, *Pismak*. Nowhere in the world is held so high the Lord's Supper as in the country of the Czecho-Slovaks, because they suffered so much for the "cup." The independent Protestant Czecho-Slovak State was really a paradise with the king-democrat George of Podiebrad, who was just a Czecho-Slovak citizen, chosen a king because of his spiritual nobility

There is another fact which not only shows the missionary spirit of the Czecho-Slovaks in the dawn of the Reformation, but which is of spiritual interest to all Anglo-Saxons. When Scotland was still Roman Catholic but had already some friends of Reformation ideals, they sent to Prague a message in which they asked for some good representative of the Reformation-ideas in the cradle of Reformation. The Czechs sent their best people, a whole expedition, the leader of which, Pavel Kravar, was professor of the Prague University. In his adopted country he became known as Paul Crawer, or Craw; he preached the gospel in Scotland for three years, and was burned as a heretic at St. Andrews in 1431.

When America was discovered, and at the same time when in many inhuman souls was discovered a selfish thirst after wealth, and many people left their own country to seek gold—at that very time the Czecho-Slovaks discovered in their hearts a healthy thirst after pure religion. Therefore they sent abroad a whole expedition to travel round and to find out the best Christians in the world and to bring home their valuable gold of experience.

Meanwhile the religious divisions were serious, and when civil war broke out in 1618, the Austrians invaded with a great army. The tragical battle on the White Mountain, near Prague, meant the beginning of the end of the independent Protestant Czecho-Slovak State. The Emperor Ferdinand proclaimed he would rather see Czecho-Slovakia a desert than a Protestant country. In the history of the world, there are few pages so dark as the pages of the persecution of Protestants in Bohemia by German Catholic Austria. After the terrible battle the Jesuits with soldiers entered the land and tried to "convert" the people to Romen Catholicism. They did it with sword and fire. First of all they beheaded twenty-seven Czechish religious leaders in the chief square in Prague before the eyes of the nation. Then they passed a law that everybody who will not be Roman Catholic

must leave the country, but without any property, or die. Many died, many left the country; and so, although Bohemia had before the thirty years war over three millions of inhabitants, after the war there were only 800,000 people. The property of the Protestant Czechs (which amounted at that time to 500 million crowns) was given to the Roman Catholic Church, Roman Catholic nobility, and to the Emperor. Three hundred years of terrible persecution followed, the history of which a Czech can read only with a blood-shedding heart. The Roman Catholic German Austrian tried and partly succeeded to make out of a Czechish Protestant country a Roman Catholic German country.

In order that the nation may forget their national hero, their big John (Hus), the Jesuits brought out another John (Nepomuk), a man who never existed, as the historians of to-day found out, and this Roman Catholic "saint" John Nepomuk was given to the nation as their patron saint in 1729, so that the real big saint and martyr John Hus may be forgotten.

After the glorious first part of the Czecho-Slovak history a dark intermezzo followed. But the enemy could not destroy all, although he could destroy something. In the forests and mountains remained always true "pismaks," readers of the Bible, although the Bible was proclaimed a poisoned book. From the pulpits the Jesuits advised people not to touch a Bible; it happened many times that the church janitors, who were true servants of the priests, brought Bibles which they had taken away from their owners by force. In order not to touch the poisoned book they carried them bound in chains, and their lords, the priests, burned them solemnly in the churchyards. One Jesuit leader proclaimed openly that he himself had burned 60,000 Bohemian Bibles and religious books. In order to find the hidden Bibles the Jesuits used to go round having shoes with nails; and they went to the fields were the people were working bare-foot, and trampling on their feet, they asked them where they had their Bibles. But the spiritual hunger deserved to be satisfied. Therefore it often happened that there came people with a big loaf of bread from one village where there was no Bible, to a village where they knew there still was a Bible, and asked to be allowed to read and learn parts by heart, in order to be able to share its contents with their neighbours when they returned.

Very dark three hundred years passed away, in which the Protestant Czecho-Slovak nation had to fight with two enemies: with Vienna and with Rome, who together tried to Germanize and to Romanize the nation. It was no real life, it was a poor existence, which the Czecho-Slovak nation had as its share. Therefore it became a psychological necessity that every Czecho-

Slovak was born already with a hatred against this dualism, and when he started to read his history the hatred was doubled.

The third period of the Czecho-Slovak nation starts at the moment when the great world war broke out. It was only natural that every Czecho-Slovak was meditating as follows: Our oppressor, from whom we expect nothing, as the last three hundred years have taught us, is in fight with the Entente. The Czecho-Slovaks at once resolved to be on the side of the Entente, as they saw in her the liberator. The resolution was natural, but how to realize it when officially they were Austrian subjects? Many came with the problem to the leader of the nation, to Prof. Masaryk, and proposed a revolution. But his plan was better. He foresaw that a revolution at that time would mean a suicide for the nation, and that it would not help anybody. Therefore he recommended another plan: the leaders ought to divide their task—part of them ought to go abroad to inform the Entente and to organise the revolution outside of the native country, and part of the leaders ought to stay at home to lead the nation. The soldiers he advised to follow the Austrian mobilisation orders, to get their guns and ammunition, but to try in the front to go over to the Entente as soon as possible. And this really happened. Whole regiments, with their colonels, and with music in front, marched to the other side. Thus it happened that the Czecho-Slovaks had a considerable army in Russia, France, and Italy. For this deed the Entente recognised the right for independence of the Czecho-Slovaks. But, of course, this deed, and the passive resistance at home, was not appreciated by Austria. And Austria punished the Czecho-Slovaks for their thirst after freedom in a most terrible way.

The children suffered especially. "Who saw the sufferings of men, did not see anything, he must see the sufferings of women; who saw the suffering of women, did not see anything, he must see the suffering of children," says one poet. The children were found on the streets seeking in ashes remainders of food. Many of them knocked on their knees at the door for a piece of bread. Many mothers were obliged to hide the bread from their children, that they might not eat on Monday what ought to last for the whole week. Children were sleeping in the schools because they were weak, and when they awoke they started to weep because of hunger. And when the war was nearly at an end, the Austrian minister for foreign affairs dared to say to the Czecho-Slovak leaders: "When we shall be bound to leave your country we shall leave a cemetery." And they tried to do it. A terrible message was sent to America by an American medical expedition just after the armistice: eighty-two per cent. of the Czecho-

Slovak children had consumption, and two children out of three who were born in the last year of the war died because of the weakness of their mothers. But in spite of this persecution the nation kept the motto of John Hus: "Woe to those who, for a piece of bread, sell the truth!"

When the war was near to an end, the Czecho-Slovaks had no patience any more to wait for the armistice, or even the peace. When they saw that their oppressor grew weaker and weaker, and their friends on the Entente side stronger and stronger, then they thought that the psychological moment had arrived for their liberation. It was the 28th of October, 1918, the greatest day in their history. The capital city, Prague, was in enthusiasm which scarcely can be described. Crowds crying, "Liberty, hurrah for the Entente!" were marching through the ancient streets. The nation, which to that time only dreamed about liberty, was making poems and songs on liberty—had to see their dreams fulfilled. People were kissing each other and embracing each other because of joy. The Czecho-Slovaks are proud that their greatest day was not spoiled by a single drop of blood, even blood of the enemy. The Germans feared that the day of liberation of the Czecho-Slovaks would be a day of vengeance—therefore they closed the doors and windows of their houses and in fear they expected what would come. But the new government sent their messengers at once to the Germans to open their houses, with the message that they ought not to be afraid as the nation did not intend to persecute anybody in the new state, not even the enemy.

When Czecho-Slovakia was liberated from national oppression, it seemed only natural that the national liberation should be crowned by a religious liberation. The Czecho-Slovak Government prescribed for the first time in the new state a census. Everybody had to say to what nationality he belonged, and what kind of religion he professed.

In the old Austria it was not easy to leave the church, but the conditions changed in the liberated state. There is complete religious liberty now. And there starts the new movement. Many a Czecho-Slovak who was even a nominal Roman Catholic was ashamed to put down that he belonged to the church which burned the greatest Czecho-Slovak that ever lived, John Hus, the church which robbed our greatest men of their property, and either killed them or sent them abroad as beggars, and which, with this dishonest property, made the cruel propaganda of their "faith" in our land. "We do not wish to be any longer in a society of executioners and robbers," said many. "Our leaving is a protest against keeping our name in the statistics of that church to which we never belonged. We cannot read the history

of our nation and not feel ashamed that we still belong to those people who destroyed the whole life of our nation."

Now the statistics will show how many people left the church. The Roman Catholic Church admits that "no more" than one-third of the population left the church, and that the worst people left the church; that she has cleansed herself now. . . . But the movement is only at the beginning and is continuing. It started formally, it is true. But there are signs already of a pure religious movement. Some of these people remained "without confession," but not all. Great numbers join the new Czecho-Slovak church. This church broke all ties with Rome, recognizes the great men of our Reformation as their spiritual leaders, uses the Czecho-Slovak language in the church, has pictures of John Hus on the altars, sings old Husitic hymns, the priests marry, and the church is growing in members as well as in inward evolution daily. They are eagerly learning from the Protestant churches new methods, such as the Sunday school and young people's societies.

Many join the different Protestant churches. There are Protestant churches which have accepted in few weeks more members than their own church had formerly, not hundreds only, but thousands. In the west of Bohemia, in a country town with a big Romish church, all the population left the Romish church, and all joined the Protestant church; in the Romish church there remained only three members—the priest, his lady-cook, and the janitor of the church.

In the Protestant churches are many people who appeal for deepening of our spiritual life. Denominational polemics cease, dogmatic battles are at an end; but everybody feels that we must start to be more pious, better, deeper, nearer to Christ. The Protestant churches resolved to send their pastors from the lukewarm churches to those religious regions where there is the greatest work and the deepest movement, in order that they may influenced by that movement and bring it home.

There is no doubt this time means a great responsibility for all the Protestant churches. They feel it, and they have conferences in which they discuss what to do with the new members. It is true they cannot in one night become full-blooded Protestants, but it is touching to see how eager they are to learn and to know what they ought to do to be real "Bohemian Brethren."

And again, it has a great effect on the Protestant churches. Many a lukewarm church became a living force because of the new opportunity. The greatest movement is in the south-west of Bohemia, just where there was the greatest stronghold of the Romish church; but it is a holy ground—it is the birthplace of John Hus and the Czecho-Slovak Reformers.

It is just as in the Reformation time: people in the street, in the railroad cars, in the public places, speak about religious topics. No other topic is so popular in Czecho-Slovakia to-day. "Have you yet left the Roman Catholic church?" "Which church did you join?" "What is your idea about the Lord's Supper?" "What do you believe about God?" These are the questions which you would hear mostly in the streets of Czecho-Slovakia.

The most favourable kind of meetings is the discussion. If you wish to get the people together, announce a public discussion about religion. Let me describe one of these meetings. Two representatives of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism meet on the platform in a dogmatic battle. The Protestant representative criticizes the life of the Popes in the past. The Roman Catholic priest tries to defend the attacked Popes by the fact that even Christ had among His disciples one traitor, Judas. The ready Protestant answers, "Yes, but Judas had so much sense of honour that he went, took a rope, and hanged himself; so the immoral Popes ought to have hanged themselves and not deceive the world by playing at being Holy Fathers."

Czecho-Slovakia is the window to the East, the door by which everybody from the West must pass if he wishes to reach the Slavs. Win the Czecho-Slovaks and you have done a great step towards winning all the Slavs. Win the Czecho-Slovaks and you can use them as successful missionaries to the rest of the Slavs. Win Prague, the "Slav mother," and you have won the heart of the Slavs.

JOSEF NOVOTNY.

The Cross and the Problem of Evil.

FROM the days of the apostles until now the Cross has been central in the faith and message of the Church. "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," wrote Paul long ago. And the Church of to-day sings: "In the cross of Christ I glory." Again, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, month by month, if not more often, gives to the cross a place of special prominence in the Church's worship. What clear meaning does it have for the modern mind which, after all, is the one to which we have to minister? From the New Testament, especially the Epistles, from the Fathers, and the many treatises on the Atonement, which have appeared at various times, and from different schools, we may see some measure of its meaning for the past. The question is, what significance does it have for the mind of to-day? Is it a mystery to be accepted by faith, or a central fact and focal point of revelation, wherein the heart of God is unveiled in His relation to the world's waywardness and sin? Only to the extent that we see any truth clearly and believe, are we able to teach it, and win men to its acceptance. We cannot be effective in that concerning which we are misty, and the repetition of old statements and formulae will be of no avail unless our own thought and experience has made them our own.

"The modern mind" is, of course, a very wide phrase, covering very much, and with it some are very impatient; nevertheless, it stands for something which is very real. In its widest extent it includes all sorts and conditions of men, an almost infinite variety of thought and outlook, but in this article we are thinking more especially of those who are under the influence of the higher and wider education of to-day. And the majority of those with whom we have to deal are, to some extent at least, affected by the mental currency of the times. If our work brings us into contact with such we realize the necessity of building upon facts, whether of history of experience, and from them demonstrating the reasonableness and worth of the Christian faith. On the whole it is true to say that the modern mind is not prepared to believe on mere authority. It is impatient of tradition, and asks for reasons and explanations. In the realm of religion it is characterised by open-mindedness and freedom in its attitude to the dogmas and teaching of the Church. It is unwilling to take things for granted. In so far as it is educated and thoughtful its temper

is scientific, and in so far as it is religious it believes that "all facts are God's facts." The breach between the past and present generation is, in many respects, very wide, and it is the fault of neither. Each has been brought up under different conditions and ideas. The modern mind presents a challenge to the Church and her task is to win it for the service of Christ. To do this we must meet the age on its own level, think along with it, and try to lead it up to the great truths of the Christian faith. It may be that, as we think things through concerning the Cross we shall find that we are not at heart very far from our forefathers. Perhaps the fact that so many still love to sing the great hymns of the Church which centre in the cross is evidence of this. Theology is but man's attempt to express the inexpressible, the effort to think God's thoughts after Him as honestly as we can, and every effort of the past to interpret the cross has elements in it of permanent worth if it really sought to tell of what Christ had wrought in the soul.

One begins with the fact of the Cross and asks why that particular cross has been thrust into prominence? Thousands must have perished on a cross, and many, no doubt, innocently. There has been more than one such miscarriage of justice. Yet out of all those crucifixions, man only thinks of one. The Cross for him means Calvary. The explanation is to be found surely in the Person. Jesus was not as other men. That is just what the Gospels tell us. When we have made every allowance for reasonable criticism, we have good grounds for holding that the Gospels give us a substantially true portrait of Jesus as He really was. The stamp of reality is upon the picture; and when we accept the portrait of the Person we can understand the tremendous problem to faith the Cross was at the first to the disciples. Only something beyond it, a resurrection, is sufficient to account for the subsequent recovery of belief. We take that portrait of Christ. We think of the manner and quality of His life, His unique consciousness of God, His love towards God and man, His purity and holiness, all that He did and was; then placing our selves at the Cross we begin to understand something of its darkness and why it shattered for awhile the faith of the disciples. Given the fact of the Cross, and left at that, then we still have a great problem to faith. We are left with evil on the throne. Sin is triumphant. In the Cross we have first of all a revelation of sin, and because of the life and character of the crucified the evil of it is all the more thrown into relief.

The fact of the Cross brings us immediately up against the problem of sin, and God's relation to it. Is there such a thing as a Divine government in this world? If so, what is God's way with sin for its conquest and eradication from the heart of man?

We have to make room for the fact of the Cross. God permitted it as He seems to permit evil every day. What we see in the Cross, looked at as an event, we see right through history, and in the present. We have atrocities and wars, the suffering of the innocent, the apparent triumph of cruelty and wrong. The blundering and the sin of man is still active and working havoc in human life and happiness. As an event the cross takes its place with all those other events wherein evil has its way and the innocent suffer. When, during the war, we were called to minister to those sorely perplexed in faith, and especially those who suffered bitter loss, did we seek to relate what was transpiring to the fact of the Cross? We had the same problem in essence, that of moral evil and God's way with it. If we had found any light at the Cross, then we had light on these things. Apparently, as many thought, God seemed to be doing nothing; but in reality, if the Cross is a place of revelation, He was doing everything. The revelation of God in Christ must be our guiding thought as we essay the great problem of moral evil. We must think of God as somehow involved in the travail of His creation and ever winning victory over wrong.

Granted human freedom, limited though it may be, there must be the possibility of the Cross and moral evil. God permitted the Cross because freedom is a reality, and He deals with man as a moral being. Because free, man may work righteousness or wrong. In the parable of the Prodigal we have the problem put in picture form. The son can go into the far country or stay at home, because he is a son and not a slave. The father only wishes to have the son in the home as he loved to be there. He will not keep him by force, whatever the cost of his son's going may mean. The son chooses the far country, learns the cost of it to himself and his home, then he comes to himself. He realizes the folly, the wickedness, and selfishness of sin. In penitence he returns, and though he knows himself to be unworthy, he is given the place of a son. The father has won his victory. He now has a true son, free to go or to stay; but who remains in his father's house desiring to be nowhere else. The son has learned his lesson. He has discovered there is no true freedom or happiness save in his father's service. All the tragedy of the far country could have been spared had the father withheld his goods and denied the son his freedom. But there would have been no joy in the father's heart and no true son in his home. He suffers him to go and waits to win his heart whilst leaving him free. This victory the father has in the end.

May we not say that we have a somewhat similar problem before us as we think of the Cross? If one may put it so, the problem to God is that of bringing this prodigal world home to

Himself. The victory that He seeks over man is moral and spiritual. He would have man gladly accepting and doing His will. He wants sons, not slaves. Whilst leaving man free He would win him from evil. He not only waits, but works, for man's turning from selfishness and sin, for his penitence and surrender, that in the Father's house he may find forgiveness, renewal, and truest freedom. He wants man to realize the nature of sin, the cost of it to himself and his fellows, and above all to his God and Father. Is it not this we get in the Cross? "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Granted freedom, and man as sinful, the Cross must be. It revealed the measure of man's alienation from God. It revealed not only the sinfulness of man, but the cost of it to God. "God was in Christ," and it is that fact which above all gives to the Cross its significance. He suffered His Holy One to be crucified. He let man do his worst to His best, but instead of it proving to be the victory of man it has proved to be the victory of God. Through the Cross God has won many souls unto Himself, and He shall yet see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. If there had been no resurrection, no assurance that Jesus lived, the last word would have seemed to be with sin, and, it may be, we might have heard no more of the Cross. It was what followed that made men write the story. But with the record of the life which preceded, and with the resurrection on the other side of it. we see the Cross as central and focal. It is the manifestation of God in Christ, paying the price of sin, showing His love to the uttermost, seeking to win man unto Himself. With true insight Studdert Kennedy, in his poem, "The Sorrow of God," makes the soldier say, as he thinks of the horror of the conflict, and then of his son who went astray, in spite of all:

Well, may be, that's 'ow it is with God,
'Is sons 'ave got to be free;
Their wills are their own, and their lives their own,
And that's 'ow it 'as to be.
So the Father God goes sorrowing still
For 'Is world what 'as gone to see,
But 'E runs up a light on Calvary's 'ight
That beckons to you and me.

That cross which God permitted in a world of sons free to sin seemed to be the crowning hour of evil, but in reality it was the hour of its defeat. It is God known in the whole fact of Christ, and supremely in the Cross, which has drawn men unto Himself and made them His true sons. It is out of that real unity of God and Christ, and the self-identification of Christ with men, we may deduce all the interpretive value of the cross as we think of the problem of sin. There we see the Divine way for the redemption of the world from evil. Whilst God seems to permit

it He is ever opposing it with His own holiness and love. He leaves man free to work that which is dark and sinful, but in the very working of evil man in the long run defeats himself. We turn from the crucifiers to the Crucified. Christ wins through His cross which men intended should end His power. We are won by the love which identifies itself to the uttermost with the cause of man's redemption. "His own Self bare our sins in His own body on the tree," says Peter, "that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." Human sin brought Him there, that the sin of the world might be done away. On the human side this at least we see, the redemptive value of the Cross lies in what it works in us. We behold sin. We see its character and what it can do. We realize the cost of it to God and His world, and as in true surrender we respond to the love manifested we are forgiven, restored to fellowship; made by the surrender of our wills true sons of God, henceforth to be fellow-workers together with Him for the building up of His Kingdom. The Cross turns from sin to righteousness as it becomes to us a place of revelation, and it sets before us a way of life and service wherein is found the liberty of the sons of God. If the vision of sin and its cost will not set up moral revolt in the soul, then men are indeed lost; but where there is that moral revolt, which is true penitence, then God's grace comes to forgive, strengthen, and renew.

Again and again does this great truth of the Cross receive its demonstration. Evil defeats itself, over-reaches itself. God conquers sin whilst apparently permitting it. He does not annihilate human freedom. It is not that He remains passive. His holiness and righteousness and love are ever active. They were incarnate in Christ, who used weapons; but they were the weapons of the Heavenly Kingdom. With them Christ waged warfare, and He could say in the end, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And all who take the way of the Cross, serving love and righteousness to the uttermost, are like Paul, "filling up that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for His body's sake, which is the Church." They are helping to create the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. They are helping to set the world free. Tacitus tells us in his Annals that when Nero knew the people suspected him of setting fire to Rome he cast the blame on the Christians and subjected them to terrible torture. "They were not only put to death, but put to death with insult; they were either dressed up in the skins of beasts, to perish by the worrying of dogs, or else put on crosses to be set on fire, and when the daylight failed, to be burnt for use as lights by night." But he goes on to say that hate for the Christians turned to pity, for

men felt "they were not destroyed for the good of the State, but to satisfy the cruelty of an individual." The iniquity of Nero defeated its own end. "The blood of the martyrs" became "the seed of the Church." Centuries afterwards we have the Inquisition. The Papacy by its persecution and cruelty sought to crush the Reformation movement and the struggle of the soul for freedom. She tortured the martyrs but increased their cause. The Inquisition finally sounded its own death-knell. Men arose and said, "This shall not be." The vision and experience of such evil spread revolt, and that form of it was swept away, though at terrible cost.

To-day men look without rather than within. They are concerned with society rather than with the soul. They are thinking more of social and international relationships than of the individual aspects of salvation. This is a phase and reaction due to many causes. There is so much more to engage the attention of men. Knowledge of the world has increased, social unrest has thrust itself forward, the war has made us very conscious of international questions. We do not find that religious introspectiveness the past knew, and which in many cases was carried to excess. There is still the consciousness of sin, but it is less individualistic. The world breaks in upon us more. Nevertheless, amid all our concern with the world we must not forget to look within. Sin is there, as well as in society. Redemption cannot be social unless at the same time it is individual. It is still necesary to remind men of this. In the light of the Cross, what a challenge the problem of society throws out to us. Force may have its place in the affairs of men, but it will never convert the world to the way of God and establish His kingdom. Only penitence, goodwill, a new heart and a new mind will do that. And this is the continual message of God in Christ. God the Spirit uses facts and speaks through facts. His supreme fact is Christ, the whole fact of Christ in His life, death, and resurrection. We endeavour to get at the meaning of it for to-day. The nations have passed through a great and ghastly conflict. We know something of the misery, suffering, and havoc it has wrought, and is still working in poverty and unrest. God permitted it as He permitted the cross of long ago, for freedom to do evil still belongs to man. But what is the Spirit of God saying through such upheavals and catastrophes? Is it not the old word, "Come unto Me"? There is a way of life and a way of death. In place of the old antagonism of nations there must be a true League of Nations. Difficult though the task may be, men must recognize the necessity of co-operation, love, and goodwill. By refusal we may make this cross also of none effect. Men must

be taught to think and work in terms of the common good. The vision of a kingdom of righteousness must be continually held up before them and its moral demands unflinchingly stressed.

The salvation of the world lies in its own hands. If it takes the way of God revealed in Christ, there will be healing and progress. The future will be better than the past, and God will co-operate with man. The Cross is His way of dealing with selfishness and sin in the heart and in the world. It speaks of the victory of love, the impotence of wrong, the certainty of sin's final defeat. Man must still learn to sicken at the wickedness and harvest of sin. He must learn that he is lost unless he freely and gladly surrenders up his will to God. At the heart of the Cross is Christ's offering of Himself. In the surrender of His will to the Father was His perfect sacrifice. In His name man may also offer up his own will. Wherein he falls short he is "justified by faith."

We may take an old sentence from its context and speak of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and that may mean to us that Christ made manifest in history what has been eternally true of the unseen life of the Father. If love, then the Cross must belong to God whilst sin mars His creation. It is inevitable where men are free and men sin. The cost of sin to Christ was the Cross, and because "God was in Christ" we see also the cost of it to God. If in the light of that we say, "I will arise and go to my Father," then the travail of the Cross is achieved in us. It becomes then not only something to believe in but something also to live upon. So, accepting it, the grace of God works in and through us to end the reign of sin in our heart and the world without. Through surrender and consecration to God in Christ we are "made whole," and become the instruments of righteousness. It is with such who see in Christ what love is, and what sin means, that God builds His kingdom. In them is Christ born again; crucified to sin, they live to righteousness.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." That is one great part of the message of the Cross. This way Christ took for the world's redemption, and by that way we become His brethren, sharing His life and His victory. The hope of the world lies this way only. Beginning with the fact of Christ and His Cross, we may lead men to realize the call of God to them.

F. T. BLOICE SMITH.

A Great Mystic.

THE publication of Mr. C. de B. Evans' work on *Meister Eckhart* (John M. Watkins, London, 20/-), will do much to bring before English readers the genius of a great mediaeval mystic. Eckhart has not lacked attention by English writers, for Karl Pearson, Inge, Rufus Jones, Baron von Hügel and Royce, among others, have all given their estimate of him, while Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy* (E.T.) contains an excellent account of Eckharts' teaching by Lasson. But hitherto it has not been possible to make any detailed study of Eckhart without some knowledge of German. As far as the present writer knows the only English rendering of Eckhart was limited to a few sermons translated by C. Field: now, however, we have a full and careful rendering of the sermons and tractates, and we are indebted to Mr. Evans, who has brought to his task the results of eighteen years' careful study of the Meister. This volume is the first instalment: the second, which we are promised, will consist of a literary-historical introduction, with various appendices. When Mr. Evans has completed his task he will have made a great contribution to the serious study of mediaeval thought, for Eckhart takes his place not merely as an exponent of the scholastic philosophy, but also as a contributor to that undercurrent of personal religion which must be taken into account in any proper estimate of the Reformation.

Little is known of Eckhart himself. The following scanty details are taken from the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*. He was born about 1260 at Hochheim, in Thuringia (or, some argue, at Strassburg in Saxony). He made his philosophical and theological studies in the Dominican order, and in 1298 was made prior of the Dominican convent at Erfurt and vicar provincial of Thuringia. In 1300 we find him lecturing in Paris, while in 1307 he became vicar-general of Bohemia. Again in 1311 he was in Paris, occupying a professorial chair, and in 1320 he was made Professor of his Order at Cologne, where, apparently, he remained until his death (about 1327). Although he is most famous as the author and perfecter of mediaeval German mysticism, it is interesting to notice that he possessed considerable administrative ability. He was a man of affairs as well as a profound mystic—a not very usual combination—and proved himself an able reformer of the many religious houses which were in his care.

It was as preacher and teacher that he gained great influence in his own day. "He had conceived the then novel idea of

instructing the laity and the many semi-religious communities and brotherhoods of that date, no less than the religious of his Order," and to this end he used the language of the people instead of the more usual Latin. It is on this ground that he has been called the father of the German Language and the father of German philosophic prose (Lasson). His appeal in the language of the people was further strengthened by the fact that he disdained the arts of rhetoric and passion. His style is direct: there is no "introduction" leading up to any point: the point is reached in two or three sentences, as we may see from the following extract, the beginning of a sermon on Matt. xxi. 12:

> "We read in the gospel that our Lord went into the temple and cast out all them that sold and bought, and said to them that sold doves: 'Take these things hence!' It was His purpose to have the temple cleared, as though He said: This temple is by rights Mine own, and I want it to Myself to be Lord therein. This temple that God means to rule is in man's soul, which He has made exactly like Himself, as saith the Lord, 'We will make man in our image and likeness.' Which He did. So like Himself God made man's soul that nothing else in earth or heaven resembles God so closely as the human soul. God wants this temple cleared of everything but Himself. This is because this temple is so agreeable to Him, and He is so comfortable in this temple when He is there alone."

This extract illustrates not merely his direct form, but also the theme to which he ever returns—God in the soul, the soul for God. Eckhart's appeal is to intellect rather than to will. This is what we might expect when we remember that not only is he a scholastic, greatly indebted to Aquinas and Albertus Magnus, but that he also abandons the attitude of the Churchman and the traditionalist for a fuller and freer philosophic standpoint. His heart, says Karl Pearson, made him a Gospel Christian, but his mental predilection and his education turned him towards a speculative emphasis.

It is interesting to notice the main themes of his sermons, themes developed at greater length in the Tractates. The problem of the Divine Essence greatly attracted him, and the relation between God and man. He was fond of discoursing upon the faculties, gifts, and operations of the human soul, and of propounding his idea of the return of all created things to God. The Godhead, the Absolute, is the beginning and end of all things, concealed in obscurity, unknown to and unknowable by men—an emphasis which reminds us of Clement of Alexandria. But it is the nature of this Godhead to become self-conscious, and in this manner Eckhart explains the beginning of revelation. Godhead

becomes Father, with a Son, and from this point of view the personal God whom we worship may be regarded as the Divine nature as manifested in His personal character, the self-revelation or manifestation of the ultimate unknown. It is this principle of self-manifestation which explains the origin of the world and of all created beings. Everything created is in a sense a modification of God, and the world is regarded as a series of emanations from the divine being, emanations which Eckhart likens to a succession of concentric circles which are produced when a stone is thrown into a pond. All that God made, he says, is nothing other than an image, a representation of Divine Life. The affinities of Eckhart with Plato and Kant will be readily seen, for all three find reality in the supersensuous world. For Eckhart this supersensuous reality is God.

In this scheme of emanations from the divine being the soul occupies a most important place. Of all created things it is the best. It is immaterial in its essence, and according to the current scholastic conception, it is to be regarded as the simple form of the body, entire and undivided in every part. Eckhart makes an important point when he asserts that there is no distinction of essence between soul and spirit: it is in the exercise of her higher powers that soul may be regarded as spirit. The constant exercise of these higher powers is important, for the soul, so to speak, has a double face, the one turned towards the body and this world, the other directed immediately towards God. While the soul is in the body, its powers may function through bodily organs, but such activity is to be regarded as of a lower order. The true activity of the soul is that which is completely independent of all things physical. Indeed, in the innermost recess of the soul all activity ceases, for there, in the very centre, is a sphere where God lives. Again and again Eckhart insists on this, and it marks his characteristic contribution to the doctrine of the soul. It is the doctrine of the "spark," an idea which may be found in Plotinus and also in Augustine. Many writers regarded this central point in the soul as its true resemblance to God, the residue of the Divine in the human: Eckhart considered it to be the true wesen of the soul.

The true destiny of the soul is its return to God. How is this accomplished? By a complete renunciation of all that touches time and place. Not even mortifications and fastings avail without the appropriate inner spirit, for the true attitude of the soul is not so much spiritual activity as sheer passivity. It must pass through a period of unconsciousness as to the world of sense until it is absorbed in God. This is the negation of all effort: if Eckhart could have used the terminology of a modern psychologist like, say, Baudouin, he would have found an appro-

priate term in Contention, the condition of sheer passivity where the soul is entirely oblivious to the manifold things of sense, making no effort of any kind.

> "I declare," he says, in a sermon on Luke xxi. 31, "that any soul that sees God must have forgotten herself and have lost her own self; while she sees and remembers herself she neither sees nor is conscious of God. But when for God's sake she loses herself and abandons all things, then in God does she re-find herself."

Thus the return of the soul is the work of God Himself, Eckhart echoing the Augustinian conception of grace and the Thomist idea of the God-directed will.

> "As God is the mover of the starry and revolving heavens, so here in the soul He is the mover of the freedom of our will towards Himself and towards all good things."
>
> (Tractate on the "Rank and Nature of the Soul.")

We are drawn by the sacred Trinity with the cords of power, wisdom, and love.

It is interesting to notice that in this return to God the whole material creation must share, and there occurs the suggestion that this movement of spiritualisation may take place in the soul-body realm of a man. The true mystic, i.e. he who by the (paradoxical) exercise of passivity, cultivates the soul by submerging it in God, may here and now attain a state wherein the body is subservient to the higher life. Light may stream through the body itself, the powers of the soul may be ordered harmoniously, and the entire outer man may become the willing servant of the sanctified will. Even the body may renounce all creaturely joys. This idea of spiritualisation is seen in Eckhart's doctrine of the resurrection, for he states:

> "Now it is the Christian faith that this actual body will rise at the last day. Then things shall all arise, not as themselves, but in Him who has changed them into Himself. He, spiritualised and turned to spirit, shall flow in spirit back to His first cause."
>
> (Tractate on the "Nobility of the Soul.")

Again, hell is a condition of alienation from God—it is nothing else than a state, he says. At the Day of Judgment man passes judgment on himself. From all this it is clear that Eckhart has little room for conceptions of a material order.

This rapid account of Eckhart's teaching along one line will indicate that his emphasis is speculative: he is more concerned with a philosophical statement than with dogmatic orthodoxy. But even within his speculative position we need to be on our guard, for it is clear that he endangers certain valuable and essential features of the Christian position. There is, for

instance, a certain disparagement of the bodily factor in human personality which does not exactly fit the Biblical teaching. Further, it is difficult to find room in his system for any real freedom of the will. But the great point of discussion is in regard to Eckhart's pantheism. It is acknowledged that many passages in his sermons and tractates lend themselves to a pantheistic interpretation. So, in a sermon on James i. 17, he remarks:

> "All creatures are a mere naught. I say not they are small, are aught: they are absolutely naught. . . . Creatures have no real being, for their being consists in the presence of God. If God turned away for an instant they would all perish."

In a fragment (for which we are indebted to Denifle) we read that God and being are the same. It is passages like these (and there are many such scattered about his works) which set the student wondering whether Eckhart preserves sufficiently the essential individuality of the soul, and whether this individuality is really maintained in his conception of the final unity of the soul in God. Most writers are agreed that Eckhart avoids pantheism, Royce, for example, holding that Eckhart never conceives the soul's unity with God to be utter absorption. But it must be confessed that the language is ambiguous, sufficiently ambiguous, at any rate, to indicate what is the real danger of mysticism . . . the inadequate safeguarding of the notion of individuality. Eckhart's conception of the "spark" in the soul, however interesting it may be to a speculative philosopher, is still a good way removed from that idea of life eternal which we find, e.g. in the Johannine view.

These dangers having been noted, any one may proceed to the study of Eckhart with the certainty of great profit. He combines an intense spirituality with acute intellectualism. He knows how to blend love and logic, and his emphasis on the direct experience of God in the soul does much to explain the later emphasis of the Reformation thinkers. Especially in these hurried and commercial days is it good for us to turn back to a preacher who, at first, seems very remote from the actual problems of life, but who, on deeper investigation, is revealed in his true light as a preacher on the themes that really count. Very sound is the advice he gave to one who complained that no one could understand his sermons. He said: "To understand my sermons a man requires three things. He must have conquered strife and be in contemplation of his highest good, and be satisfied to do God's bidding, and be a beginner with beginners and naught himself, and be so master of himself as to be incapable of anger." A similar temper in the audience would increase appreciation of many sermons to-day!

F. TOWNLEY LORD.

The Work of a General Superintendent.

NO development in church life can be understood apart from its historical background, and the work of the General Superintendent should be considered in relation to the conditions which led to his appointment. When the present century opened congregational polity was confronted by serious problems. Thoughtful men were asking three questions:

1. Can Independency maintain vigorous churches in the villages?
2. Can Independency meet the needs of new districts and keep abreast of the expanding population?
3. Can Independency secure and maintain an efficient ministry?

These were vital questions. Hitherto the village churches had supplied a good percentage of our leaders and a constant supply of clean, vigorous life to our urban churches. The traditional methods of expansion were proving too slow, and few individual churches were capable of initiating new causes. The ministry was harassed into restlessness by deplorably inadequate stipends: twenty-six per cent. of our ministers were receiving no more than £100 per annum, and eighty-five per cent. were in receipt of stipends that did not exceed £250. Our ministry was the worst paid of the great churches in Britain, with an average stipend of about £180. At least one-third of our ministers had definitely appealed for a change of sphere, and many others cherished the desire. Moreover, many pastors had outstayed their usefulness, and 160 accredited ministers were left without pastorates. The consideration of these questions revealed the necessity for greater co-operation within the denomination, for some organisation that would bring the resources of all to the help of each, and for a truer expression of the Christian law that men should bear one another's burdens while each carried his own load. What could be done to meet these clamant needs? Suggestions were made which struck at the root of congregational polity, but these were decisively rejected by the denomination. The Century Fund was raised as a temporary expedient to meet pressing needs for extension, and the denomination gave itself to long and patient investigation to discover what resources congregationalism had within itself to meet modern conditions

and make its own contribution to the Kingdom of God. The result was the Scheme of Ministerial Settlement and Sustentation, which attempts to deal comprehensively with the whole problem while retaining congregational freedom.

THE SCHEME OF MINISTERIAL SETTLEMENT AND SUSTENTATION provides:

1. A Sustentation Fund available for churches which cannot themselves provide an adequate minimum stipend.

2. A means of facilitating pastoral changes which may be desired by churches or ministers. Provision is made to ensure that no minister shall be sustained in a pastorate against the will of the church, and that financial benefit shall be provided for any minister who fails to find a settlement under the terms of the Scheme.

3. A means of raising the standard of ministerial efficiency. The financial obligations of the scheme make it imperative that care be exercised regarding admissions to the accredited lists, and that the benefits of the scheme be limited to recognized ministers or probationers of the Baptist Union.

THE WORK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT is concerned with the administration of the scheme, in co-operation with the Sustentation Executive, the Area Committee, and the local Associations; and also with furthering the purpose for which the scheme was designed, i.e. the spiritual efficiency of Baptist Churches as instruments of the Kingdom of God. It is a *ministry*, and, therefore, one cannot exactly define its scope or give any exhaustive list of its obligations. You can tabulate the duties of a caretaker, but not of a minister. No task is outside the province of the superintendent that can cheer a colleague's heart, raise the spiritual tone of a church, or draw one soul nearer to the Master. He is commissioned by the denomination and the local churches:

1. *To Exercise a Spiritual Ministry throughout the Area.* When the confidence of the churches and ministers has been gained, this ministry presents opportunities far exceeding ability, time, and strength. On the superintendent's desk are letters asking advice in difficult situations and making most varied requests. He is invited to attempt the reconciliation of alienated workers, to prescribe courses of reading, to solve problems in church and school, to interview candidates for membership, to conduct preparation classes, baptismal services, campaigns, missions, etc. There are misconceptions to remove, mischievous statements to refute, divisions to heal, tired souls under juniper trees to refresh, and youthful enthusiasms to guide into profitable channels. Confidences and intimate details cannot be divulged, but some idea of the scope of this ministry will be gathered from

a recent page in a superintendent's diary, which covers one week's engagements. They were: three preaching services, one baptismal service, one communion service, two addresses at church gatherings, one address at a young people's rally, three interviews with ministers, one interview with a church secretary, one conference with a diaconate, two interviews resulting in a reconciliation, and one interview with a young man who desired to enter the ministry. This is sufficient to show that the superintendency affords a real, full, and profitable ministry within the denomination.

2. *Watch the Interests of the Denomination throughout the Area.* If Baptists are to render their maximum contribution to the religious life of England, consideration must be given to the growth of population, the development of new districts, and the temporary depressions which visit both industrial and rural areas. The watch-tower must be occupied while the valleys are tilled. The superintendent has special opportunities for observation, as his duties are spread over shires rather than streets. He has unique facilities for recognizing strategic positions, suggesting extension work to Associations, rallying help in aid of village causes, and rendering assistance to pastorless churches. Further, the superintendent can render effective denominational service by watching legal interests, safeguarding rights, upholding principles, and disseminating information.

3. *To Co-operate with Churches and Ministers Regarding Settlements.* This is delicate and difficult work, involving considerable correspondence, numerous conferences, and many interviews. In this connection the superintendent works under the direction of an Area Committee, on which each district in the area is directly represented, but the nature of the work demands that large discretionary powers be granted to the superintendent. The Area Committee functions with the superintendent in much the same way as a diaconate functions with the minister in an ideal church. Baptists will not accept a Stationing Committee or receive a ministry imposed from without. The choice of a minister rests with the individual church, and diaconates find it easier to consult with a person than with a committee. It is not a question of taking a rigid nomination to a church, but of patiently exploring the local situation with the deacons, and making suggestions based on the ascertained needs. Changes between the areas are facilitated by frequent meetings of the General Superintendents, under the chairmanship of Mr. T. S. Penny, J.P., when careful consideration is given to the expressed desires of ministers and the requirements of individual churches. When a grant is desired from the Sustentation Fund, the approval of the local Association and the Sustentation Executive is secured

before an invitation to the pastorate is given. The advantages of the Settlement Scheme over the humiliating methods formerly adopted have been quickly appreciated by the churches, who almost invariably consult the superintendent when a vacancy occurs. Correspondence suggests that many ministers are no less appreciative of a scheme which provides equitable treatment for all, and affords a means of changing pastorates without loss of self-respect.

4. *To Organize the Simultaneous Collection.* In order to fulfil the denomination's pledges concerning sustentation, it is necessary to maintain the annual contributions at about £15,000. This requires special preparation and constant advocacy. The Fund has been seriously prejudiced by inaccurate statements concerning its purpose and administration, but recent experience shows that the contributions can be considerably increased if the working of the scheme and its beneficent results are carefully explained to the churches. It is the superintendent's privilege to organize the annual contributions to the Fund and, thereby, to ease the burden which rests upon his brethren in the smaller churches.

The purpose of this article is to explain, rather than to justify, the administration of the scheme; but it should be pointed out that present conditions show a striking contrast to those prevailing when the scheme was introduced. The average stipend has risen to £271, which represents a total increase of nearly £180,000 in the annual income of British Baptist ministers. In spite of the increased facilities for notifying a desire to change pastorate, there were only 74 names on List "A," and 132 on List "B," in January, 1925, and this number is being steadily reduced throughout the year. Even more arresting is the fact that there are now only five ministers without a pastorate under the scheme, and each of these receives financial benefit under clause 19. These results have been achieved by voluntary co-operation and without the sacrifice of principle. When the scheme was introduced, Dr. Clifford reminded us that principles were eternal, but needed applying to the necessities of the hour; and that it was our business to understand the scheme so that it should not be misinterpreted or misunderstood. The principles have been applied with some measure of success, and it is hoped that this statement may further the understanding necessary for exact appraisement. Such a scheme can neither be administered successfully, nor interpreted adequately, without full recognition of the spirituality of its purpose.

H. BONSER.

The Midland Churches of 1651.

MR. BOWSER has done well to invite a study of the thirty churches and sixty-one men who issued a joint General Baptist confession. In those days men met in private houses, and those in many villages formed one church, which might thus have a name as compound as a railway station, Blankney and Metheringham, Long Clawson and Hose. It is not hard to identify the modern churches of Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincoln, Coningsby, Boston, Spalding, Gosberton, Oakham, Wymeswould, Mountsorrel, Shepshed, Leicester, Earl Shilton, Sutton-in-the-Elms, Long Buckby.

The thirty churches held a meeting. From the records of the Fenstanton church we know of another, five years later, and of a third in Cambridgeshire. The Association habit was already formed. Forty years later, these churches grouped in two Associations, whose centres were Lincoln and Leicester. It is interesting that the New Connexion of General Baptists had its strength over exactly the same district, and absorbed many of these early churches. But now to details.

A little light is thrown on some of these men by a letter to Cromwell on the first of January, 1651/2, by the Humble Representation and Vindication, printed in 1654, by another Confession published on 15 March, 1659/60, by the Second Humble Address from Lincoln on 16 January, 1660/1, by the Third Humble Address on 23 February, 1660/1, by the licences of 1672 and 1673, issued under the Declaration of Indulgence, and even by the minute-book of the Lincolnshire Association in 1698. For the Lincolnshire references, thanks are due to the Rev. A. S. Langley, F.R.Hist.S.

LINCOLNSHIRE was a stronghold, as might be expected from the early work of John Smyth at Gainsborough and Lincoln city, and his followers in the isle of Axholm. Twelve churches sent delegates on this occasion. The most northerly was at North Willingham; this work can be traced at Cherry Willingham a score of years later, also perhaps at Kirton-in-Lindsey in 1663. One of the present delegates was young Ralph James, who signed the Second Humble Address in 1661, took out a licence in 1672, and was at the 1698 Association. The other was Daniel Cheeseman, who also signed both addresses; John Cheeseman was working at Folkestone in 1669.

Seven miles south-east lay Goulceby, where the Drewrys were leaders, as still in 1661. This appears to be the origin of the Asterby Church.

Lincoln church dated from 1626 at least, and to-day may claim (with Tiverton) to be one of the oldest churches whose history can be traced continuously. One leader here was Valentine James, who signed in 1661, and in 1672 took a licence for his house at Hackthorne. The name of his colleague, "John Johnjohns," is unique, not to say suspicious.

Seven miles south-east is Blankney. Of Gregory Allen and John Lucas nothing else is known; but men of the same surname abounded in the Bucks. churches.

Tattershall proved a permanent cause, though to-day it calls itself Coningsby. Nothing more is known of Codlyn, but John Lupton was soon chosen Messenger, or General Superintendent, and vigorously executed his office. He was at the General Assembly in London, 1654; on another journey to London in 1657 he bought the first minute-book for this church; he was a baker at Coningsby, and a farthing token was issued by him in 1663; he died in 1670.

Further down the Witham lay Boston, the site of another permanent church. Besides Edward Cock it had Richard Crawford, whose name puzzled the printer and many a reader, but suggests a Scot arriving by water.

Swineshead had William Barnes and William Hart, who in 1672 licenced his house at Collingham across the Trent, while John Thorp was licensed at Frampton hard by this place.

Surfleet had John Lacy and Robert Massey. The former soon moved to Hemingford Gray, took a licence for Godmanchester in 1672, was chosen Messenger by 1697, and took a leading part in opposing Caffin. Robert Massey had to resist Puritan intolerance before 1660. His family has long been known in his district, and the church survives at Spalding. In 1672 Richard Wale took a licence for his house at Pinchbeck, and the church at Gosberton dates itself from 1666.

Inland again, on a brook that drains into the Welland, lies Leasingham, represented in 1651 by Robert Tompson and Richard (not Robert) Machyn. The Lincolnshire Association book is cited by Adam Taylor as telling of assistance given the cause at Sleaford, three miles south, about 1700. Robert Tompson on 25 May, 1653, signed a letter to Cromwell as representing a Baptist church at Cranbrook, in Kent, and though the distance is great, we know other Baptists at this time sent down there as evangelists. If we look backwards, there were Thomsons of Louth who became Baptists at Amsterdam in 1609; if forwards, W. Thompson was at South Collingham in 1719, another W.

Thompson was famous at Boston from 1762 to 1794. Machin signed a Humble Address in 1661.

Seven miles south-west lies Welby, on the moors, whence Angleshaw and Everard attended. The cause itself can be traced in 1672 by John Skerrett taking a licence for Manthorpe. Angleshaw is not known. The Everards are well known: William in 1655 was Elder of Easton, Welby, and Westby; Robert wrote a pamphlet to which the present Faith and Order is annexed; he was a captain who did good service in 1659, became a Roman Catholic, and got into further controversy; the family yielded Baptists at least till 1860.

Westby is six miles south; here John Allen and Robert Cock were members in 1651. Allen in 1672 took a licence for his house at Easton, while Henry Hitchcock took another for Ingoldsby. Robert Cock signed in 1661.

The last of the Lincolnshire churches was at Thurlby, two miles south of Bourn. It sent three representatives, an exceptional fact, perhaps due to a linking with Langtoft, a long straggling village a mile north of Market Deeping. The Fenstanton records mention the church for five years longer, with the names of many members. The group can be traced at Stamford in 1672, with Abel Laine preaching at William Collington's house; also at Thurlby, in the house of widow Perk. The causes at Bourn and Hackenby may continue the tradition.

RUTLAND had three churches in 1651. One was at Burley, and it seems to have had an uneventful existence, allying with Morcott in 1747, until in 1770 it reconstructed on a Particular Baptist basis, and took the name Oakham, joined the new Northants Association in 1773, and furnished an original subscriber to the B.M.S. in the person of Abraham Greenwood.

A second church was at Thorpe-by-Water in 1651, but a difference of opinion as to laying on of hands caused a division five years later. James Tiptaft (not Tentoft, which appears to be an error of the 1651 printer), headed the Thorpe group, which faded away; but the Tiptafts are known in other connexions. The more enduring section worshipped at Wakerley across the Welland in Northants, and at Uppingham, whence they were reported in 1715. But Anthony Snell had moved to Stickney in Lincolnshire, where he took out a licence in 1672. His name is printed here Suell, and might appear elsewhere as Sewell.

A third church was at Tixover in 1651, but soon met chiefly at Morcott or at Harringworth across the river, where the Stangers were leaders. The Lee family is well known at Spratton from 1702.

LEICESTERSHIRE again contained nine churches.

Waltham on the Wolds was evidently the meeting-place of

what afterwards centred at Knipton; this church passed on to the New Connexion. Its 1651 representative, John Parker, signed in 1661, while Henry Redgate was reported in 1669.

Wymeswould is still the seat of a church, which modestly and unnecessarily takes the date of 1780. Of William Franke nothing is known. Richard Lay was possibly related to Matthew Ley of Tixover, or the Lees of Spratton.

Normanton-on-Soar is really in Notts, though a few houses may be on the Leicestershire side. A little church still exists there, though the history has not been traced. Of William Wild nothing is known. William Parker was reported in 1669 from Loughborough, within four miles; but his work died out; when the Barton preachers began next century here, there was no Baptist foundation on which to build.

Mountsorrel is another case where the modern date of 1820 obscures the fact of a history which has one thread, albeit it wore very thin in 1788. Fielding is unknown; Kendall was reported in 1669 from Sileby.

Whitwick is in the Charnwood forest. An Association that met at Peterborough in 1656 coupled together "Whitwell and Markfield," mentioning George More again; Hebb is unknown. This may be the origin of the Shepshed church that emerges in 1690.

Leicester is another enduring church, and it is strange that Friar Lane claims only 1665 as its date, when both Coniers Conigrave and Rogers are known as corresponding with Cromwell, when George Fox met the church in 1654, when William Inge and Thomas Christian attended Association two years later, promised a subscription for evangelistic work from Leicester, and undertook to stir up Earl Shilton and Mount Sorrel. The Christians were good Baptists in the neighbourhood for scores of years; Inge was reported in 1669.

Earl Shilton's representatives in 1651 are unknown afterwards. But in 1672 William Biggs took a licence to preach here at the house of Edward Cheney; both families kept up their Baptist traditions. All around, similar work went on: Richard Boosh at Ratby, William Peasant at Bosworth, John Jones in John Oneby's house at Barwell (Onebys were also at Long Lawford, in Warwick), William Sadler at Nuneaton, John Kitchin at Shilton. In Earl Shilton itself it is not clear that work was continuous; but the ancient Leicester Association in 1758 backed the appeal of the church at Earl Shilton for a building fund, without a hint that it was a new church.

Bitteswell had Thomas Morris and Thomas Townsend. The latter continued as Elder till his death in 1704. In 1672 John

Kitchin was licensed for Lutterworth, a mile away. This is the church well known as Sutton-in-the-Elms.

Theddingworth was the only other in the county represented in 1651, when William Poole and William Burdet appeared. Both were of staunch Baptist families, and Burdett took a licence in 1672 for his house at Mowsley. The group then showed also in William Hartshorne at Harborough, Henry Hartshorne at Lubenham, Thomas Carne at Sibbertoft across the Welland.

WARWICKSHIRE had two churches, not far apart. Easenhall is two miles south of Monk's Kirby and a mile and a half from Pailton. John Oneby flourished in 1669, and in 1672 took out a licence for Barwell in Leicester; widow Oneby had her home in Long Lawford licensed for Wilcox to preach in. The family flourished at Canterbury a generation later. The Perkins family also was staunchly Baptist: John in 1672 had his house at Shilton licensed for Kitchin to preach in; he is hardly likely to be the Parson Drove uncle of Samuel Pepys; Richard in 1672 took a licence for Weston; John of Winslow is known in 1700.

The other church was at Marston, probably the Marston on the Avon, though we must remember Butlers Marston, near Kineton, Lea Marston near Water Orton, Prior's Marston three miles from Byfield in Northants, Marston Green six miles east of Birmingham, and Marston Jabbett two miles south of Nuneaton. Richard Wills and Thomas Jeffs are unknown.

The puzzle is why the Coventry church, known in 1626, and existing to-day, was not represented; or whether these two groups really represent it, though they lived six miles away.

NORTHANTS was represented only by Ravensthorpe, near Long Buckby, and West Haddon. The cause seems continuous, though the centre has shifted slightly. Under the influence of Ryland the people imbibed Particular Baptist views, built in 1812, formed a new church 1819. But in the early period Francis Stanley held the banner till 1696, while Benjamin Morley went to strengthen the cause at Winslow, in Bucks, before 1698.

OXFORD had a single church on its northern border, at Horley. This is near Burton Dassett, in Warwick, where Baptists were known in 1672, and Weston, by Weedon in Northants, where they flourished by 1681. At Horley itself the cause persisted, Nathaniel Kinch being leader in 1715, and it had apparently a meeting-house in 1724, for he came then to White's Alley in London and took up a collection for a fire. John Danvers in 1654 was at the military church at the Chequer in Aldgate; perhaps colonel Henry Danvers was of his family. John Newman perhaps survived till 1691, when one of his name was a member at Dockhead, in Southwark.

BEDFORDSHIRE had a single church, at Sundon, five miles north of Luton. There were plenty of other churches in the county, but all Calvinist, and though some would fraternize with Calvinistic pedobaptists, they would not with Arminian Baptists. Sundon is heard of at intervals till 1759. Samuel Tide may be connected with the Tidds of Dunstable. Thomas Partridge was prominent at Dover in 1660 and 1669, while Samuel Partridge was at Aylesbury soon after.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE had the church at Fenstanton. Edmund Male figures constantly in its records. The Cock family was in many General Baptist churches, such as Amersham, Berkhampstead, Ford, Chalford St. Giles, Great Missenden, Brentford, in one direction, Westby and Boston in the opposite.

From the Fenstanton records, fully published in 1854, we learn that there was an Association meeting held at Stamford on 2 and 3 July, 1656, when two men were told off as Messengers for work in the west. The churches then mentioned were Leicester, Earl Shilton, Mount Sorrell, Nottingham, Winsford, Rempstone, Peterborough, Wisbech, Fenstanton, Ravensthorpe, Newton, Whitwicke, Markfield, Twyford, Langtoft, Thurlby, Bytham, Uppingham. Other churches in the district with which Fenstanton corresponded were Bourn, Haddenham (Cambs.), Spalding, besides a large group in Cambridge, who held a meeting in that town on 28 September, 1655.

Hamlets in Surrey and Sussex.

THE road from London to Brighton, between the North Downs and St. Leonard's Forest, passes near the villages of Hookwood, Horley, Charlwood, Crawley; on the alternative route to the east, the motorist runs through Horley Row, Copthorne, Worth, and Balcomb. In a tangle of lanes further east lie Inholme in Haroldsley, Shepherd's farm, the Outwood, Cogman's farm, Horne, Smallfield, Bysshe court, Burstowe, Turner Hill, West Hoathley, with East Grinstead as an outlier on the road to Lewes and Hastings. On the main road from Reigate to Sevenoaks will be found Nutfield, Bletchingley, Godstone, Oxted, and Limpsfield. In these obscure hamlets, all within seven miles of Horne, Baptists kept open house for one another to worship in, perhaps as early as 1650, certainly as late as 1823. To-day, over the whole area, Baptists have only modern

churches at Godstone, Horley, Outwood, Crawley, and Balcomb; their customs, origin, and theology are independent of the ancient group. The story of these bye-gone villagers is worth recalling, for their heroism, their friendliness, their conservatism. They themselves did not think the story worth recording till 1727, when perhaps they were prompted by the organization taking place in London, whither they were then sending representatives to the General Baptist Assembly; but an old member wrote down the traditions of the fathers into the new book, which is now to be consulted at Dr. Williams' Library; a study of it appears in the *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society* for May, 1918. From it, and public sources, we can, however, realize something of the church life.

Of Baptist groups around, a brief word will suffice. With those at Croydon there are only late traces of intercourse. A good road linked with those at Bessels Green in Kent, and it is conceivable that the first impulse came hence, by Edward Delamaine, of St. Mary Cray, who was certainly preaching at Horley in 1668.

Westward were two Baptist centres. In Horsham a church had been gathered yet earlier, and it had passed under the influence of a farmer who had had some training at Oxford. We have definite information from the incumbent of Horne in 1669, that in his parish a farmer named John Reynolds entertained a monthly meeting of Baptists, whose "chief seducer was one Caffin of Horsham in Sussex." We may reasonably think that Caffin was influential at the other hamlets between Horne and Horsham. At Dorking about fifty people met habitually about 1669 in the house of John Barnard; and in May 1672 licences were issued for John Bernard to be a minister of a congregation of Baptists meeting at the house of Richard Humphrey, of Gadbrook, in the parish of Betchworth, two miles south-east of Dorking. From our company these people fall out, if they ever had any intercourse.

In the earliest stage remembered, there were two churches, the one in Surrey, the other in Sussex. The Elder of the former was Edmond Blundell, of Outwood. To him, tribute was paid in 1669 by the vicar of Bletchingley, who reported that no conventicle had been held in his parish since Blundell left. But the vicar was premature in his jubilation, for in the South Park Joseph Peters was keeping open house in 1678, where worship was regularly conducted by Thomas Budgen, Joseph Brown, and John Nicholas. The Surrey church called itself "Outwood and South Park people." After Blundell left, its leader was Thomas Budgen, who lived at Outwood in the parish of Horne. He was gratefully remembered by an old member as preaching

from 1678 till 1710 at eleven places. His circuit included Bletchingley, Nutfield, Horley, Smallfield, with Copthorn, Crawley, Balcomb, and Turner's Hill.

The Sussex church called itself "Turner's Hill and Hoathly people." Its leader was John Nicholas, who lived at Turner's Hill in the parish of Worth. As early as 1668 he had been preaching at Horley, in the tanyard, which remained for more than a century as a regular centre. When Blundell left, persecution was so savage that the two churches united, and Nicholas was ordained Elder of the whole group. Naturally, therefore, he preached at all the places mentioned. Only in 1716 is there a hint that his travelling days were done, and that his own house became a centre instead of the homes of Thomas Terry and Walter Arnold.

Other "ministers"—not Elders, but preachers—of these early days were Nicholas Arnold, apparently of Turner's Hill; Joseph Brown, who may be the Elder of Sevenoaks from 1692 to 1716; Ralph Bull, whose last appearance was at the London Assembly of 1712; David Chapman, of a family known at Cranbrook and Tunbridge Wells; Solomon Cooper whose family ranged from Turner's Hill to Ashford; Edward Delamaine, of St. Mary Cray; an Emery, of whom we would gladly know more; George Upton, who transferred his energies in 1672 to Chichester; and White, perhaps of the Sevenoaks family which in 1714 provided a missionary to Virginia.

Two new ministers appear about 1709, Robert Sanders and Griffell English, of Turner's Hill. In 1728 both were ordained Elders, apparently by Messenger James Richardson of Southwark. Sanders died in 1748, next year a meeting held in William Lury's house was replaced by one in Edward Stanley's house in Charlwood, and in 1753 William Bourne was ordained in the house of David Dodd, Hollyland, Horley, by Messengers Matthias Copper of Tunbridge Wells and Thomas Harrison of Bessels Green.

The church was very fraternal, and sent representatives frequently to Association and Assembly meetings. It was, however, doubtful whether the orthodox declarations made by the united Assemblies in 1733 and 1735 were in reality adhered to, what authority was claimed by the Assembly and the Messengers, whether there were not innovations of sentiments and practices. After discussion and division for three years, this church sent a letter of inquiry to the Asembly in 1756. The reply was a clever evasion, referring to the declarations of 1733 and 1735 without endorsing them or disentangling the various points as to singing, creeds, Christology; but it did say that the Assembly had often mediated happily in cases of difference, and that churches which

asked assistance were expected to recognize the authority of the Messengers. This proved satisfactory enough for regular attendance to be resumed.

Not till 1760 did the church take any advantage of the Toleration Act, and protect its places of meeting and its members by certifying the houses where they met—not necessarily buildings of their own, used chiefly for worship. But in this year they did register a place at Horley, and another at Charlwood, with perhaps two others. It may be remembered that because of Methodist propaganda, there was at this time a recrudescence of persecution, especially of mob violence, and that Baptists in other parts of the country claimed protection in this way.

The venerable Griffell English died in 1761, and four years elapsed before two more Elders were associated with Brown. Nathanael Palmer and Thomas Turll were ordained in the house of the latter by Messengers Samuel Fry of Horsley Down and William Evershed of Horsham.

In 1771 the church reaped some benefit from its fraternal relations. The Ashdownes belonged to Tunbridge Wells, and William had become Elder of Dover. He presented a library of books, which by his desire were kept by John Ellis and John Botley, in the meeting-house at Horley. Twenty years later the books were transferred to Shepherd's Farm, near Outwood; and in 1851 they were handed over to the General Assembly: apparently they have been dispersed since.

The benefaction prompted another. Robert Sale, of Limpsfield, near Oxted, charged his land at Outwood, in the occupation of John Budgen, with a rent charge of £5 yearly, payable quarterly, to such ministers as the people might choose. After the death of the last minister, the money accumulated, and by direction of the Charity Commissioners in 1878 the benefit was transferred to the kindred church at Billingshurst.

Bourne died in 1774, Palmer in 1790. Two years later Palmer's son was chosen joint Elder with Turll, and was ordained on 9 July, 1792, by the same Messenger, William Evershed, who had ordained his father. Turll died in 1803, Palmer not much later, and the church soon had no officers at all, nor any meeting-house, for about 1791 the Horley premises had been converted into a house and shop. Since 1920 they form a private house. Now the church at Ditchling was well off, with an Elder, a Deacon, two assistant ministers, and sixty-eight members. Yet about sixteen years elapsed before that church spared William Beal, who was ordained Elder in 1820 by Messenger Sampson Kingsford, of Canterbury. He was not so attached to old sentiments, and presumably styled himself Pastor. Whether on old lines or on new, the cause died down, and in 1851 Beal

acknowledged it dead by handing over the church book to the Assembly.

The church was fairly liberal, though its budget was by no means like our modern budgets. To-day, if a church sends seventeen per cent. of its total contributions to "outside objects," such as a mere B.M.S., or Union funds, it probably thinks it has done generously. But the local expenses of a church which did not pay its ministers, and met in private houses for most of its time, were negligible. The members spent their money on their own poor, on the Messengers' Fund, to defray the incidentals of the travelling evangelists, on the building funds of churches as far off as Hillsley, Castle Hedingham, Great Yarmouth, and Birchcliffe.

Like all other seventeenth-century churches, they were indefatigable in the care they exercised over one another. If members drank to excess, ran into debt, quarrelled habitually, or were slack in attending worship, and did not amend on private expostulation, then the church took formal notice, and sought to reclaim them; if it failed, it excluded them. There were two rather technical offences that troubled the church: one was attending at Presbyterian or Church of England worship; the other was marrying outside the denomination: again and again the rule was reiterated, but as in most of the General Baptist churches, the discipline weakened. A man would be excluded, but on profession of sorrow, he was soon re-admitted. The church flinched from Jane Taylor's definition: Repentance is to leave the sins we loved before, and show that we in earnest grieve, by doing so no more: not one case is recorded where husband was required to leave his wife.

The church was conservative in other matters, and its maintenance of old customs was peculiarly noticeable in its worship. Singing was not encouraged by the Tudors and Stuarts in the Established Church, except by professional choirs, though the people did insist on singing psalms. Some Puritans, however, objected to invite a miscellaneous crowd to sing sentiments they were not likely to share. Baptists were the first to invent hymns for general use, and they obviated this difficulty by making the hymns doctrinal rather than experimental. But though Benjamin Keach, a General Baptist, was the pioneer, yet the General Baptists hesitated, and in 1689 the Assembly pronounced against congregational song. The church at Turner's Hill never wavered in this, and at least once rebuked the Assembly when there was a sign of dallying with temptation. Again, there was great hesitation as to the public reading of the Bible, and while some were inclined to compromise and permit it by an ordinary member before the minister began, yet Turner's Hill was rather stiff

against even this concession. We may safely assume that there was prayer, and perhaps that several members would pray. We know that there was preaching, and that some ministers were rebuked for writing their sermons and then reading them. About once a quarter there was breaking of bread. But the most curious act was the quarterly washing of feet, following the precedent of our Lord before He broke the bread. When we add the occasional baptisms, at the tan-yard or the mill-pond or the riverside, we exhaust the usual acts of worship. And evidently by 1800 such a conservative church had no appeal to the young.

Within another half century the "pastor" ended a useless struggle, and the church had disappeared except from the books of an equally conservative denomination. Does its decay and death offer any suggestions?

Want of adaptability lies on the surface: a church which doggedly adheres to the customs of a century might as well die when the century does. How about doctrine? The church was little troubled here, and only once did it put its foot down, and say that any minister might preach his own views, but must not insist on thrusting them on the church as essential. How about meeting-houses? It tried both plans, private houses and a special building; and neither kept it alive. Is it because it never extended to a town? Reigate was within reach, and members lived there; yet we do not trace that a meeting was ever started in the town; and East Grinstead was occupied only intermittently. Now often, when we compare with a similar group in other parts of the country, we note that their salvation was opening out in a town, which gradually became the mainstay of the group; and Methodist experience rarely if ever shows a circuit of villages pure and simple. A contributory cause may have been the neglect to train new ministers; there is an amusing entry that liberty should be given to every Christian minister that is a brother, that he may be admitted to preach without examination with or without notes or writing. But probably the main reason was that the church had lost all purpose and all energy. There is no hint of any Sunday school, of any foreign mission to the heathen. Worse than that, in a church which was so terribly conservative, it failed to conserve the essential customs of its founders. They had evangelized through the villages, but it was left to the Methodists to revive that practice. They had sent messengers overseas to their kindred in Virginia and Carolina, but the later church grew so shortsighted it could barely see a mile beyond its members' homes. One thing stands to its credit in the last days: it did not pretend to be alive for the sake of drawing an endowment.

An Early Recruit from the Clergy.

SAMUEL OATES, according to Thomas Seccombe in his "Twelve Bad Men," was son of the rector of Marsham, in Norfolk, born 18 November, 1610. Oates senior was a Puritan, and in the Second Parte of a Register, edited by Dr. Peel, we find that he was in a list of ministers who in 1584 hesitated to subscribe Whitgift's articles of discipline. He became chaplain to the father of Sir John Hobart, of Blickling, according to John Browne, in his *History of Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk*, and latterly was parson of Sowthreps. He died before 1633, when his son published his exposition of Jude in forty-one sermons, which had been preached at North Walsham. These contain faithful warnings against Brownists and other Separatists. Otes senior had promoted a Supplication to the Lords of the Council which takes credit for similar opposition.

Oates junior entered at Corpus Christi College as sizar in 1627, and commenced M.A. in 1634. He was ordained 24th September, 1635, and apparently was as Puritan as his father. Ten years later he married. About the same time he adopted Baptist principles, and he evidently vacated his parish living. The circumstances are unknown, but we may infer that it was due to some General Baptist, or some publication of the General Baptists; for he entered into relations with the London church of 1612, then meeting in Bell Alley.

He gave offence to other clergy by his evangelistic work in Sussex and Surrey. No systematic attempt has been made to discover what resulted from his work; Horley and Turner's Hill may be one result. He must not be confounded with another Samuel Otes, M.A., who died vicar of Croydon in 1645, aged thirty. Our man went to evangelize Essex, and did work at Bocking and Braintree. He proved so successful that his enemies seized on the death of a convert, and indicted him at Chelmsford for murder, in baptizing her. He was acquitted, and resumed his work in the county. In 1647 the vicar of Terling published an account of a victory he esteemed himself to have won over Oates in a debate, showing that Universal Redemption was a particular error: he had had a debate on 11th January, 1643/4 with two "catabaptists denying infants' baptisme."

In 1648 Oates seems to have published on A new baptism and ministry. Certainly, by April 1649 John Drew challenged him on these points, and lets us know that he was now ministering to a church in Lincolnshire. He was approached by George Fox at a conference in Barrow-on-Soar, in Leicestershire, but did not

join him. This place shows that he kept up his itinerancy; and Calamy has preserved an account how he dispersed public challenges on Leicestershire to dispute with any minister on the point of baptism, how he was gravelled in argument at Leicester castle, and was thereupon ordered by the justices to no further disturb the congregations in the county. Seccombe also informs us that in 1649 his wife was at Oakham, where his son Titus was born.

Seccombe states that Oates became chaplain to Pride's regiment in 1650. This may explain how he figures next as member of a Baptist church at the Chequer without Aldgate, which sent an address to Cromwell; for this church was chiefly of military men. And it may also explain why he, who had lately been the leader in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, was not at the 1651 conference of thirty churches.

There presently appeared a rift in the General Baptists. A Kentish clergyman, who, like Oates, had joined them, urged that hands ought to be laid on every baptized believer: this practice, of course, fitted well with the Anglican custom of confirmation. Oates declared it unnecessary, and by June 1653 he was being attacked in print, even within army circles. He kept in touch with the Midlanders, for in September the church at "Norborow" in Lincolnshire sent a long letter to Fenstanton, detailing how he had come and helped them against a man insisting on this Laying on of Hands.

As, however, Pride's regiment went to Scotland, his energies were transferred there, and we find him drawn into army intrigues. He was accused of trying to supplant George Monk by Robert Overton, and presently of plotting against Cromwell, who, at the end of March, 1655, wrote to him on the matter. Cromwell found such opposition to his autocratic rule that he set to work to purge the army of all Baptists, and sent orders to Scotland that none were to hold any post at all.

For the next few years, then, Oates was out of public employment, and as the General Baptists were now making the Laying on of Hands a condition of communion, he felt more out of touch. According to Seccombe, he became usher at various schools; he certainly did not sign the General Baptist minutes in 1654, 1656, 1660.

It is, however, surprising that he drifted back to the Church of England. In June, 1665, he entered his son Titus, now sixteen years old, at Merchant Taylors' school. Next year he was presented by Sir Richard Barker to the living of All Saints in Hastings. He sent Titus to Cambridge in 1667, and that young man was presented to the living of Bobbing, in East Kent, on 7th March, 1672/3. But within the year Titus had disgraced

himself, and the shame so told on Samuel that he resigned his living.

This was exactly the period when he might have declared himself a nonconforming clergyman, and have taken a licence from Charles under the Declaration of Indulgence, but of this there is no sign. Seccombe declares that he skulked about Bloomsbury. Crosby says that he re-united with his old church, of which Thomas Lamb was still pastor; and as Lamb was an Essex man, he may have been tender with a repentant man. But with such a record there was hardly room to take any prominent part in Baptist life again; and the career of Titus was by no means one to inspire confidence. Samuel died in obscurity, 6th February, 1683, leaving a widow, who survived till 1697.

The career is extraordinary. It shows the opportunities, and the temptations, of clergymen who became Baptists. Such men were able to do a work in itinerancy and in public debate, which was open to few others; with university training they could lead and organize. But they often had a hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt, a desire for a public post.

Slavery in Jamaica and America.

ON the first of August, 1838, all slaves in Jamaica were declared free, and full emancipation in other parts of the British dominions was not long delayed. Therefore, in that year the Baptist Union addressed a letter to the Ministers and Messengers of the Baptist Churches in the United States on the subject of slavery. The letter opens with words of esteem, and appreciation of the good work done by the churches; but a blot is on their Christian character.

"We have not been ignorant that slavery existed in the States; entailed, we are humbled and ashamed to acknowledge, by British influence, authority, and example. But we had, until of late, no conception of the extent to which multitudes of professing Christians in your land, by indifference, by connivance, by apology, or by actual participation, are implicated in it." Then follows a picture of the physical and spiritual wrongs done to the slaves, and the writers say: "Such a system, brethren, must be fruitful of oppression, injustice, and crime. And yet among yourselves, your churches, your deacons, your pastors, this system finds apologists, advocates, abettors; and unabashed by the symbols of incarnate and redeeming love, it obtrudes itself even at the table of our dying Lord.

"Brethren, are these things so? Would to God we could doubt

their reality! But that relief is denied us. Some of your provincial associations have attempted—alas, with what infatuation and dishonour!—to shield and extenuate the crime. Oh, brethren, how long shall this wickedness defile you? How long shall the cause of our common Christianity be dishonoured and injured by a vain attempt to place under its sanction a flagrant violation of the rights of man and the laws of God?

"Shall we be told that the question of slavery is political, and therefore not cognizable before a Christian tribunal? We reply, that with what political considerations soever it may be complicated, *it is as actually existing among you essentially a moral question;* and that if slavery were purified from all that is unrighteous and anti-christian, its most strenuous political defenders would abandon it. Moreover, we beseech you, brethren, not to suffer imaginary civil benefits to array themselves in hostility to paramount imperative moral obligations."

The writers note the argument that emancipation is encompassed with difficulties; but "difficulties in a righteous cause are but tests of principle, and passive resistance unto sin is binding on every Christian." . . . "Seek the immediate repeal of the law which forbids slaves to read the tidings of salvation; and meanwhile let the iniquitous enactment be promptly and boldly disregarded; let the work of redemption by Christ exert, without restraint, its equalising, uniting influence within the precincts of the Lord's house; there let the distinction between 'bond and free' melt away and disappear."

The impassioned exhortation goes on to call upon the pulpit to preach against the iniquity of using labour without paying wages. It calls upon all Christians to use their influence with the governments of slave-holding States, and proceeds: "Some amongst you, brethren, are entitled to our warmest affection and to our unreserved confidence, for you have enrolled your names in favour of prompt emancipation." . . . "We tell the bondmen of America to be of good courage, and to trust a righteous God, for that the day of their redemption draweth nigh." . . . "Let the church's moral power be consecrated to this noble and godlike service, and slavery shall speedily expire, smitten as with terror from the presence of the Lord."

(*Signed*) J. H. HINTON, *Chairman*,
W. H. MURCH, D.D.,
JOSEPH BELCHER,
EDWARD STEANE,
} *Secretaries.*

Jan. 15, 1838.

This noble appeal from the British Baptist Union was answered by the following letter, the original of which I hold.

BOSTON, 11 Jan., 1839.

Rev. and dear Sir,

Your favour of Feb. 1, 1838, has remained long unanswered; and were it not that my neglect of correspondents, both foreign and domestic, has, from the necessity of the case, been general, I should feel it incumbent upon me to make to you a special apology. During the past year, the Lord has graciously wrought among my dear people a most extraordinary work, and my time and strength have been absorbed in duties which allowed me no leisure, no relaxation. We have been favoured with *a powerful revival of religion,* during the progress of which I have baptised and admitted into the church at Baldwin Place, *one hundred and ninety-five.* My labours, therefore, though delightful in the extreme, have been very severe, and my physical health has been greatly impaired. The good work of grace, though somewhat abated, still continues, and the demand for pastoral labor is quite pressing; but I am at present laid aside from public duty, by an affliction of the bronchia, to which, at this season of the year, I am very liable.

Several of the other churches in our city have been permitted to enjoy with us the tokens of the Divine favor, particularly the church in Union Street, under the pastoral chare of the Rev. R. H. Neale, and the church in Federal Street, of which the Rev. H. Malcom was formerly the pastor. Each of these churches has received during the year past about one hundred by baptism.

"The communication of the Committee of the Baptist Union, which accompanied yours of Feb. 1, was immediately inserted in the *Christian Watchman,* and from that transferred to other religious journals which favor the cause of emancipation. Be assured, no effort shall be wanting on my part to get *such* appeals before our churches. Conceived and expressed in the kindest fraternal spirit, they cannot be turned aside without exposing a most unchristian, unmanly prejudice. That such prejudice exists, and is often developed, I admit; but I am happy to believe that it is wearing away before the light of truth, and the influence of judicious Christian effort.

Our friends in England must have patience with us, and not think us tardy in accomplishing an object which we as well as they are anxious, for humanity's sake, and for Christ's sake, to see immediately effected. We have obstacles to overcome of which they are not at all aware—or, which they do not and cannot fully appreciate. Among these obstacles I might name the inhuman prejudice against color, as the badge of servitude and abasement—the peculiar organisation of our government, reserving to the States the entire control of slavery within their own limits—the opposition of Christians, in all the slave-holding

States, to abolition, and, in the free States, to all agitation of the subject. It would not be difficult to show that the influence of the American church is at present the main pillar of American slavery!

But, my dear brother, God is on our side, and the cause will prevail. Every day it is gaining friends, and though less rapidly than we could wish, yet steadily and surely advancing towards the desired consummation. Still help us by your prayers and remonstrances, and anticipate with us the joyful day when republican America shall be purified of this foul and deadly leprosy.

In the kingdom and patience, etc.,

Your brother affectionately,

BARON STOW.

Rev. Dr. Murch,
Stepney College.

No Englishman can feel happy when he reads about the attitude of our nation when at last the men of the North rose in arms to put down slavery. For a long time Englishmen had reproached the States because of this blot of slavery. Yet, in the early days of the civil war, when the South was successful, our governing classes did not hide their sympathy with the slave-holding states. When, however, Lincoln issued his Emancipation Policy, a change came. As Cobden wrote: "From that moment our old anti-slavery feeling began to arouse itself. . . . The great rush of the public to all the public meetings called on the subject, shows how wide and deep the sympathy for personal freedom still is in the hearts of our people." We are glad to know that our Baptist Union was faithful to its principles. Refugee slaves fled to the Northern States and became a heavy charge in those trying days of war. Our Union showed a practical sympathy, and the veteran J. H. Hinton moved at the autumn meetings in 1864 the following resolution. "That on unquestionable evidence there are now far more than a million, and probably quite one and a half millions, of refugees from slavery under the sheltering care of bands of Christian benefactors from the Northern States; and that these Christian benefactors are carrying on a great and successful work with inadequate means and overtaxed strength. That these facts, in connection with the contributions by America of the munificent value of full £200,000 to Ireland and Lancashire in the time of their distress, call now on the Christian people of Great Britain for an adequate and grateful return; and this Union therefore recommend the case as one for prompt liberal contributions throughout the Baptist Churches."

H. F. CROSS.

Review.

PAUL OF TARSUS: by T. R. Glover. 243 pages, Student Christian Movement, 9s. net.

WHAT a service Dr. Glover is doing for thinking men, to make religion real and interesting, to show that the experiences of the first and of the twentieth century are fundamentally akin! Two books on the progress of religion, two on our Lord, and now one on His greatest follower. This volume would be the despair of an examinee, for it has no table of what eminent chronologers have thought as to dates, no map showing where Paul's ships coasted along. It is much more interesting to see that he was a bad sailor and preferred to walk overland, to trace his spiritual growth without having it measured off into years. Such are the things Dr. Glover does for us. He gives us a very human Paul, without the Conybeare-Ramsay background of the towns he visited. "Our present affair is not biography, nor a record of travel, but portraiture; and in every chapter the first thing must be the portrait." Why did he not get someone to work with his pencil on the contemporary description he records, and prefix a literal portrait of Paul? Only that would have been the flesh, and Paul preferred the spirit. So we have here a tracing of the mental and religious development, with its abrupt wrench at Damascus.

Critical difficulties are not evaded, but are dealt with very interestingly. Modern movements are made to illustrate Paul's experiences; Annie Besant, the obscene temple of Madura, spiritualists, Second Adventists, illuminate his life, and receive his verdict.

It is very hard to lay the book down till it is finished, with the proviso that once it has been enjoyed, it shall then be studied chapter by chapter. For who can absorb, or at once agree with, so much that is startling both in light from unexpected quarters, and in expression?

The paternal pride at the start is well balanced with the filial reverence towards the close. Epigrams abound, as might be expected from a public orator; "Apuleius lived a century after Paul, so perhaps Paul did not borrow from him," may keep us on the highway of Paul's originality; "cash and credulity" form an atmosphere for many modern movements.

Whoso studies this book will learn the value of grouping statements made in different connections, and getting an insight into the mind of an author. It is delightful to learn that while the lines of the book were laid in Simla, it is associated for Dr. Glover chiefly with America, "that home of lost causes, forsaken beliefs, and impossible loyalties."