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The Present Inspiration of the Bible.

THE conflict of faith in our day is sharp and strenuous. We live in an age of intense and vivid mental action, in which every question of religion is being sifted, and the methods of science are creating at once a dissatisfaction with the reasonings of the past and a demand for a more real theology, and a more stringent verification of the facts upon which it is based. "Never before did men so long for the evidence of things not seen, and never before did the road to the unseen appear so impassable and steep."[1] Some are giving up the quest in despair, and are disposed to accept a barren agnosticism; some are vainly seeking to substitute for the faith of the Christian Church a religion which consists of a few scanty spiritual abstractions which have no foothold in man's history, while others hover perpetually between doubt and certitude, always learning, but never coming to a knowledge of the truth. Within our churches and congregations, too, this spirit, so fatal to shams and mere traditions, may be seen actively at work. There are among us, in larger number than at any previous period, two classes which are ever tending to become larger and increasingly influential. The one is composed of young and ingenuous minds, conversant with books, eager after knowledge, reverent toward the religion of their fathers, with a true adoration for the Jesus of history, but beginning to think that many of the old beliefs are unsound and worthless, and who demand, before accepting the Christian faith, that it shall be expressed in new ways and be put in new settings. Then there are in membership with us earnest, open-eyed men and women who, while holding fast the great verities of the Gospel, are outgrowing some of its forms, and are disturbed by misgivings in regard to various doctrines which once seemed to them inseparable parts of the Christian system. Especially are they impressed by the results of modern Biblical criticism, which have shaken inherited traditions about the Bible, and which, if true, compel them in simple honesty to readjust their views of its authority and inspiration, and to recast some of their beliefs even in regard to vital questions. But the task is one from which they are tempted to shrink, through fear of losing that which is good, and through a sense of the difficulty and strain which it would involve. To them there is no short or easy method of settling these high and grave problems. They realise that to distinguish between

[1] *E. Paxton Hood, Poet and Preacher*, p. 46.

the essential, which is eternal, and the husk enclosing it, which is destined to burst and to be thrown aside, to determine where revelation ends and speculation begins, to see through the encumbrances of theological theories, and the cant phrases of religious circles the very face of the living Christ, and the glory of the primitive gospel—that to do this requires the deepest insight, and the effectual aid of the all-discerning Spirit of God. Yet they confess that necessity is laid upon them to make the attempt, and with more or less of confidence and thoroughness they are shaping for themselves a creed which, whatever its defects, has Christ for its centre, and is especially distinguished by this peculiarity that it is content to *leave out* much upon which man in the past has dogmatised with an authority which resented all criticism and disputation.

In this crisis and transition of religious thought, it devolves upon us who are ministers and representatives of the Churches, and who, having passed through this ordeal, have beaten our way, by God's help, to Christian certitude and joyful assurance of the things which are commonly believed among us, to afford what aid we can in the direction of thought and inquiry for those who are struggling amid difficulties, so that they may issue in a living faith. "Christian faith," as Professor Orr says, "in every age must be a battle. That battle will have to be fought, if I mistake not, in the first instance around the fortress of the worth and authority of holy Scripture. A doctrine of Scripture adapted to the needs of the hour in harmonising the demands at once of science and of faith, is perhaps the most clamant want at present in theology."[2] Sharing that conviction, I propose, as the subject of this article, "The Present Inspiration of the Bible."

All Christians are agreed in maintaining that the Bible is a divinely inspired book; that it was written by holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It is a book absolutely unique. To compare it with the scriptures of other religions is only to bring out by contrast its divineness, its transcendent majesty, its fulness of revelation, its undimmed purity, and its wonderful adaptation to the diversified needs of man. It was suited to men in the early centuries; it is just as suited to men to-day; it will be equally suited to those who shall come after us. We outlive other books; but the Bible will never be outlived. I take up some book on religion written in the eighteenth century, and I find myself in a different atmosphere from that which it breathes. The whole doctrinal perspective and mode of conception is altered since it was written: a vast range of problems has arisen which did not come within the author's purview. But it is far otherwise with the Bible; it

[2] *The Progress of Dogma*, p. 352.

has a modern voice; it speaks to me in language which is ever new—the language of the heart; it has a *present* inspiration. And it is all this to men, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, because it is the eternal word, coming from the heart of God, and speaking in a tongue which all can understand and interpret for themselves.

Excepting, however, *the facts* of this inspiration of the Bible, various questions in regard to the nature and degree, the qualities and the limits of it, are being forced upon us. We are compelled to a change of view by the study of the Bible itself. A few, indeed, still cling to the theory of verbal inspiration, in spite of its being manifestly contrary to fact, and although it is really a low and mechanical conception which robs the Bible of its reality and freshness and manifold exhibition of man's thought and life fructified by the Spirit of God. Others adhere to the term plenary, as if it were a good word to conjure with, but differ in their application of it. But why should we not face the facts and welcome everything which throws light upon the composition and the growth of the Bible? Nothing can change the Bible itself, though we may be led to alter some of our inherited or hastily formed opinions about it. It will bear the strictest, most searching scrutiny, and after criticism has finished its task, the old book loved by our fathers will remain the same—not a truth of it expunged, not a promise deprived of its lustre, not a jot or tittle of it robbed of its intrinsic worth.

There are two distinctions bearing upon this subject, the consideration of which will serve to remove difficulties and to settle doubts. The first is the distinction between revelation and inspiration. Revelation is both higher in its nature and wider in its range than inspiration. It consists in the self-manifestation of God to man, either through the vesture of the visible universe or by the interposition of His hand in the history of nations, and the lives of individuals, or by the communication of His truth and will through men whom He inspires and directs. It is with this last that we have to do. The writers of the Bible are inspired in this unique sense that they reveal to us the thoughts and purposes of God; show us the point where the divine touches the human; make known to us the way of life. Sometimes humbler tasks are set them, such as recording natural facts or portraying the passions and motives of men. Thus the writer of the Books of Samuel relates how Saul in his jealous anger cast a javelin at David; how David feigned madness before Achish of Gath; how, when David was king, his son Absalom conspired against him. So far as he does this he is merely a chronicler, like Herodotus or Caesar, and the value of his narrative depends solely upon its historical accuracy. Or, to cite an instance from the

New Testament, take the passage from one of Paul's Epistles in which he asks Timothy to bring his cloak which he had left at Troas, with the books, and especially the parchments. In making this request there is nothing to distinguish Paul from Cicero or Pliny; and if it should have turned out that his cloak had been left at Ephesus instead of at Troas, it would only prove that Paul's memory in his old age had failed him, and would not invalidate in the least his teaching upon the doctrines of the cross and the resurrection.[3] But on reading the books of Samuel and the Epistles of Paul, we find shining upon the history and the argument which they contain a light that comes from heaven. The author of Samuel not only recounts the actions of Saul and David and Absalom, but shows us how God's will was working itself out in their rise or fall, and how the larger ends of His providence were being promoted. Paul fills his letter with authoritative statements about Christ's gospel—the relation of faith and salvation, and the resurrection to eternal life, which were not his guesses at truth, but something which he had received by *revelation of Jesus Christ.* This is the divine element running through the Scriptures which makes the Bible God's word to man, and which separates it from all other books. Its historians and prophets, its psalmists and apostles, were granted an open vision of the eternal. We call them inspired, not because they were men of lofty gifts, but because God made known to them, through faith, His word, and enabled them, amidst idolatry and unbelief, to bear witness of Him and His righteousness to their generation. It is this quality which distinguishes the inspiration of a Samuel, an Isaiah, a Paul, from the so-called inspiration of a Dante, or Milton, or great modern preacher. "A moment's reflection shows us that the word means something quite different when it is employed to express the effect which men of genius produce upon us. We call them inspired because they see more than we *do,* but not more than we *can.* They reveal the unobserved to us, but not the unknown or the unknowable. But we call the Bible inspired because it reveals another order—a Kingdom of Heaven—a view of human nature and of human destiny which lies beyond our ken. There is poetry in the Bible of a high order; but it is not as poets that we call Isaiah or David inspired; it is as revealers of God, of God's purposes, of God's methods. It is not so much the unobserved, it is the unknown, the otherwise unknowable that they reveal to us." [4]

Then there is the distinction between divine revelation and the record of it contained in the Scriptures. The revelation which

[3] See Acts vii. 16, where the land purchased by Abraham of Ephron is confounded with that which Jacob bought of Hamor.

[4] Horton, *Inspiration and the Bible,* p. 12.

God made to the Hebrews consisted of divine interpositions of mercy and judgment; of guidance of the national life through judge and prophet; of promises, warnings, and admonitions, addressed to them sometimes by inspired men, at other times through startling events. God revealed Himself to Abraham by a vision of the night; to the Israelites by the plagues of Egypt and the passage of the Red Sea; at the end of the kingdom by national calamities terminating in the Exile; in these last days by His incarnate Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. In the history of the Hebrews this superintendence of God is clearly manifested. It is not an inference from facts, or an opinion of men of religious genius, but something open, significant, undisputed, and indisputable. And the Bible of the Old and New Testaments is a record of it all, a narrative of the way in which God blessed and chastised His people; a written memorial of what their prophets spoke and their psalmists sang; of what Jesus Christ said and did and suffered.

From this important distinction it follows that revelation is independent of the Scriptures; that it preceded and might outlive them. If the Bible were to be suddenly removed or obliterated it would not affect in the slightest degree the facts which the Bible records, or the truths which it embodies. It may be proved that the books of the Bible are a growth and not the production of single writers; that the authorship of some of them is doubtful; and that the composition of a few, or even of many of them, is of a later date than formerly assumed; but these conclusions do not touch the divine realities and Gospel verities to which it bears witness. Take for example the faithful saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. This is an historical fact, embodying a sublime atonement, which no dispute about the authorship or date of John's gospel, or the genuineness of any of Paul's epistles, can disprove or disturb. Suppose it should be demonstrated that the second epistle of Peter is spurious, or that the Apocalypse was written not by John the apostle but by John a presbyter—how would these discoveries militate against the great and glorious fact—the proofs of which are with us and all around us to-day—that Jesus Christ died for our sins? No more than a theory of colour affects the existence of the sun, or a theory of lunar attraction the reality and grandeur of the ocean.

When, however, we turn from God's revelation of Himself in former ages through prophets, and in these last days through His Son, to the record of it contained in the Old and New Testaments we are still on *safe and immoveable ground.* The Bible partakes of the glory and immortality of Him in whose name it speaks, and of whom it bears witness. "There are good men," said the eloquent Professor Elmslie, "who tremble for the Bible

just now. Tremble for the Bible! Tremble for the Ark of God! No, tremble at it, and let us beware of putting up a presumptuous hand to steady it. God can take care of His own." In order to assure ourselves that the Bible is a true record of a veritable divine revelation, all we have to do is to read it; for if we read it we shall be brought face to face with God. For the inspiration of the Bible is not something which belongs only to a long distant past; it is a *present* reality and power. The Bible is not a dead book, containing so many pages of letterpress, but a living voice, the voice of a living God, sometimes terrible as that which shook Sinai, sometimes tender as that which breathed out its love on Calvary.

"In the Bible," wrote Coleridge, in a memorable passage, "there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit." [5] "For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."

It has been too common to put the Bible to inferior uses. Either it is studied for the sake of constructing or defending a body of opinions calling itself a system of theology, or selected and brief portions are read as a manual of devotion morning by morning. As a text-book of theology the Bible does not lend itself readily to the builder of systems, and so it has been sadly treated; its poetry turned into prose, its divine pleadings and arguments interpreted in the terms of logic, its separate sayings wrenched from their context to serve the purposes of proof, its divine revelations of truth and life, high as the heavens, manifold as nature, forced into the rigid swathing bands of human creeds, where they look pitiful enough. Much of the glory and beauty and pathos of the Bible perishes under this process. As a manual of devotion the Bible is, indeed, unapproachable, and in this use of it a good end is realised. How many can say with gratitude of this book, "I have found in it words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterances for my hidden griefs, and pleading for my shame and my feebleness." [6] How often has it made the hour of prayer radiant with the light which it sheds upon the soul. At such times we have felt the rapture of the psalmist when he wrote:

> How sweet are thy words unto my taste:
> Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

[5] Coleridge's *Confessions*, 14, p. 74.

[6] *Confessions*, p. 47.

But the practice of reading short passages, selected from different books of Scripture, which is generally adopted when the Bible is used as a manual of devotion, does not do justice to the sacred volume. It should be read as a whole. Its object is to reveal God's Fatherhood and His purposes of grace in Christ Jesus; to lift human lives into fellowship with God, and fill them with His life, His love, His power; to nurture and train a redeemed humanity that shall be sanctified in spirit, word, and act, and that shall be mighty in the world as witnesses for His truth, and righteousness, and the everlasting Gospel. The inspiration with which it is filled from its opening hymn of creation to its apocalypse of a conquering Saviour, is a present energy which succeeds only as it kindles in men all down the ages a corresponding inspiration. Unless God is real to us through it, as He was to those by whom He speaks to us by their words; unless the Christ whom it unveils is our life, moulding us after the image of His perfect loveliness; unless the forces, moral and spiritual, embodied in Him who is the Spirit of Holiness, are operating powerfully upon our natures—it matters little what is our theory of the book, or whether or not we can pronounce the evangelical shibboleth with exactness. This book is given that it may both tell us how to live, and impart to us the motives and power by which to live. Its truths are not offered as matters for speculation, but as food for the soul. "The words that I speak unto you," said our Lord, "they are spirit and they are life." If we read God's word more simply, with the single-minded object of knowing God, and learning His will, many of its doctrines which appear mysterious would unfold themselves to us; for the truths of the Bible are spiritually discerned and become vital only through personal experience.

Let us put this Book of Books to this its noblest use. It was designed to be a lamp to our feet and a light unto our path. God Himself speaks to us through it. He gives us in it not a system of doctrines so much as glimpses of His glory, insight into His love, revelations of Himself in Jesus Christ. Let us not put the Book between Him and us, but by its help obtain for ourselves that vision of God of which it testifies, and which is "the one thing needful for worship and for conduct." [7]

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[7] *The Book of Isaiah*, by Principal Sir G. A. Smith, p. 68.

Life after Death; and Immortality.

THE two things are not quite the same. It is, of course, impossible to believe in immortality and not in life after death, but it is possible to believe in life after death and not in immortality. The various forms of the doctrine of conditional immortality posit this. They hold that there is a life beyond, but it is not eternal in duration for all. In due course the soul that sinneth, and persisteth therein, shall die.

The present age has been very aptly described as that of the question mark. Its note is that of interrogation. It regards nothing as outside the range of inquiry. It upholds the right of criticism and investigation. Often it pushes this mood and temper to extremes, and one sometimes feels that the questioning is superficial rather than deep. Nevertheless, it is there, and has to be met. Positions old and new have to defend themselves. Mere assertion does not suffice. The grounds of belief have to be stated as clearly as possible, and be shown that they are not unreasonable even though they may transcend reason. How stands the belief in life after death in this questioning age? What can be said on its behalf? If, in the final result, we are not able to give proof of a future life to satisfy all minds, we shall have accomplished something if we can come to the conclusion and conviction for ourselves that death is not the end of our personality.

To my mind one of the most interesting and important things to ascertain, not only in regard to this but other beliefs also, is, What does the ordinary man think? What is his outlook? So far as one can discover, the average man does believe in a hereafter; at least, he is not prepared to deny; and, moreover, he holds fairly generally that the hereafter is affected by the kind of life lived now. The belief may not be held very intensely, nor may it often occupy the thought, but it is there. His answer to the old question, "If a man die, shall he live?" is, on the whole, in the affirmative, though the affirmation is in many cases made rather faintly. When death comes and robs him of one that is very dear, he clings to the belief for comfort and cherishes it in hope. The problem of a life beyond then becomes to him a personal one, for, as Mark Rutherford says, "Whenever anyone we love dies, we discover that although death is commonplace, it is terribly original." To every minister there is given more than

one opportunity of seeing the ordinary man's view of death, and by the ordinary man we mean, for the moment, the man who makes no religious profession and very rarely is to be found in our churches. The majority do not deny a life beyond, or at least the possibility of it. It is accepted as a kind of traditional belief not often thought upon. It may not in many cases represent more than this, that man is something more than flesh and blood. He has a spirit which lives on. It is what we should rather expect. Where the conception of God is very nebulous and the experience of fellowship very feeble, the thought of an after-life is not likely to be much considered. We all need to clarify our own ideas if they are to be of any real value. Our beliefs may be quite as vague as those of the man in the street.

The belief in human immortality has been challenged and defended in modern times from many points of view, and much literature has appeared upon the subject. We will concern ourselves in this paper with some of the lines of defence. The appeal has been made to faith and revelation, to science and philosophy, to spiritualism and the evidences of survival. One can but note some of these lines of defence and emphasise that which seems to have the greatest value. In attempting to write anything on such an admittedly difficult subject one is bound to be influenced by one's own prejudices and experience. If we have given any serious consideration to the problem at all we come to it with our own predispositions.

It is always difficult to classify, for the lines of defence so converge. The scientist may set out to write purely from the standpoint of science, but introduces a good deal which really belongs to the realm of philosophy or faith. Nevertheless, certain classifications can be made.

From the standpoint of science, particularly that of organic evolution, Dr. Simpson has given us a fascinating treatment of the subject in his *Man and the Attainment of Immortality*. The thesis is that evolution is a fact. That in the case of man it has been a process of winning freedom and individuality; that in him we have something which has survival value, and when that which has survival-value appears it is perpetuated, it endures. Human personality is the product of a long and costly struggle, in which new qualities and values appear. It comes to have that which cannot be equated with the purely physical, and which detaches itself more and more from that order. In short, man gains for himself a soul, a capacity for God, powers and potencies which lift him far above the rest of creation. Man is the product of evolution—anything but mechanically conceived—which has brought him to where he is. Evolution instead of

overthrowing teleology sets it on its feet again in a nobler and vaster way. Its purpose is seen in the appearance of man, and in him it is interpreted. He is destined for eternal life, and achieves it in fellowship with God. "Eternal life is a matter of union with, of keeping hold of, God. The reward of the good life simply is its persistence, because it is in relationship with God" (p. 286). Immortality, therefore, is something man attains to. He wins it and keeps it by his right and true relationship to life. He may fail to attain.

Now the theory of evolution meets with wide, if not almost universal, acceptance to-day. If it be true, and the contention stands, that human personality is the product of a long and costly struggle in which it becomes richer in content and value as the ages pass, then one does feel that there is much to say for the possibility of the triumph of personality over death. Shall that which has cost so much be finally thrown away? On this basis does not science need to make an act of faith in the interests of the rationality of the process it describes? Dr. Simpson makes that act of faith. Christianity comes in to substantiate it. Dr. Simpson says as much as can be said, perhaps, from the standpoint of organic evolution. To some his line of reasoning will seem very convincing.

Spiritualism seeks to go beyond faith and establish real proof of human survival. In spite of the evidence given and the great names which can be quoted as supporters of spiritualism, one does not feel that the phenomena are incapable of other explanation. If telepathy be admitted, for instance, very much could be accounted for by it. We are but at the beginning of the exploration of the mystery of personality and its powers. We need not introduce the Devil to account for the phenomena of spiritualism, as some do. We can straightway admit the integrity and good faith of many engaged in psychical research. But before spiritualism can meet with wide acceptance its evidence and communications will need to be far more impressive than at present, and it will have to rid itself of a certain stigma which it has certainly gained through the ages. Having read a good deal of the evidence, one remains unconvinced still of definite communication with those in the Unseen, and the assurance of immortality seems to be of greater moral and spiritual value when held on a basis of a faith sure of its grounds. There are spiritualists and spiritualists, as indeed there are Christians and Christians, and therefore one should speak with a certain hesitancy. But none can deny that there have been very real reasons for the attitude of the Church generally to spiritualism. It has had, and still has, its moral dangers, and has not yet given anything of greater worth and ministry than that which the

New Testament has taught. The fact is that the majority of those who feel they can accept the Resurrection do not seem to need the evidence of spiritualism. They believe on other grounds, and the séance does not appeal. In many instances also the utterance of mediums seems very like the projection or copy of earthly ideas. It may appear to some unreasonable, but before accepting the spiritualist's explanation of the evidence he gives one wants to feel convinced that it is not capable of being otherwise explained. As has been said already, if telepathy be admitted, there is much phenomena which can be accounted for thereby. Dr. Hadfield, in his essay on "The Mind and the Brain," gives one striking example of this. "In a series of séances arranged by the Society for Psychical Research, with Mrs. Piper as medium, the investigators sought to obtain an account of a certain conversation which took place between Mrs. Sidgwick and Mr. F. W. H. Myers, some time before his death. This conversation was known to none except to the two participants. In her trance Mrs. Piper claimed to have access to 'Myers,' and an attempt was made to induce the spirit of 'Myers' to reproduce the conversation through Mrs. Piper. As long as Mrs. Sidgwick was absent and did not come into contact with Mrs. Piper, the medium failed to reproduce the conversation. When, however, Mrs. Sidgwick came into contact with Mrs. Piper, there was a remarkable, though not perfectly accurate, account given of the conversation. That is to say, it was the proximity of Mrs. Sidgwick, *who knew the conversation*, that made the difference. Mrs. Sidgwick, therefore, concludes, and rightly so in my opinion, that the medium became possessed of the information, not from the spirit of 'Myers,' but by mental transference from Mrs. Sidgwick herself. In other words, though it did not prove communication with the spirit world, it did afford important evidence of telepathy" (p. 55, *Immortality*, by Dr. Streeter and others). Other very striking examples are also given in the same essay which seem to point to the reality of telepathy and of the tendency of the mind to function independently of the brain. The conclusion of Dr. Hadfield is that, whilst there is not proof that the mind will survive the body, it is not an unreasonable hypothesis, and that there are signs which point that way. Professor William James also, in his Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality, argues on the line that the mind may still function when the body has fallen into decay. That the machinery has run down does not carry with it necessarily the fact that the operative is no more.

If science cannot deny the possibility of immortality, neither can it conclusively prove it. Strictly speaking, the subject is out of its domain, yet it can give us such facts of man's past, and tell of

what he is now, in such a way that we feel he should be conqueror over death. We gladly accept any contribution science can give to the body of knowledge and use it in our interpretation of life as a whole. It may yet furnish us with that which is of the utmost value and of vital importance to the subject. Philosophy and metaphysics are continually showing their indebtedness to scientific gains. This must be so if we believe in the rationality and unity of things.

It would seem, however, that it is not so much to science and philosophy we should look for light on immortality as to religion and the affirmations of religious experience. It is along that line man has come to belief and assurance. He has gained a real conviction, "an earned belief."

> Thou wilt not leave him in the dust:
> Thou madest man, he knows not why;
> He thinks he was not made to die;
> And Thou hast made him: Thou art just.

Undoubtedly some have passed beyond the mood of these lines, and have risen to passionate belief and firm conviction. The words of Job have been taken and filled with an enriched meaning: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

An interesting and impressive Pilgrim's Progress can be traced in two directions at least, that of the Greek and that of the Hebrew. In both cases we may start with fairly similar ideas of the Hereafter; the Greek Hades and the Hebrew Sheol. There is in man, soul, or spirit, as well as body, and at death the soul or spirit enters the world of shades, to live a dim, ghostly life. But in both cases we find men rising to the conception of something nobler, to belief in a future life which is more, not less, than life on earth. In the case of the Greek such belief was reached through the experience of fellowship afforded by the Mystery Cults and Religions. In that of the Hebrew it was gained through the fellowship of the soul with Yahweh and the increasing realisation of the implications of that fellowship. It is the latter progress we should consider, for it leads us on to the New Testament and the revelation of God in Christ.

The subject of the Hebrew mind in relation to the Hereafter has been dealt with by a number of writers and students of Old Testament thought, but one of the most valuable treatments is to be found in Dr. Charles' little book, *Religious Development between the Old and the New Testaments*.[1] Chapter four is given to a consideration of "The Rise and Development in Israel of the Doctrine of a Blessed Future Life." "This belief in Israel,"

[1] Home University Library, Williams & Norgate.

he says, " arose not in the abstract reasoning of the schools, but in the mortal strife of spiritual experience, and thus . . . is full of practical importance for all who are seeking to live the life, not of nature's ephemera, but of the children of God. For in this progress from the complete absence of such belief in Israel to a positive and spiritual faith in a blessed future life, all alike can read writ large in the page of history from 800 B.C. to A.D. 100 a transcript of their own spiritual struggles as they toil up the steep ascent that leads to the city of God. It is a national Pilgrim's Progress, which every child of man must repeat in his own spiritual experience " (pp. 96-97). In the early stages of the religion the eschatology of the individual was not the pressing problem. The idea of corporate personality predominated and the future of the tribe or nation was the main concern. There was first the concentration on the national future, especially in the strain and stress of such experiences as the exile. With the rise and development of the idea of the Messianic kingdom, and the thoughts of a restoration and a glorious future for the nation, we have the birth of the idea of the resurrection. " Not only should the surviving righteous participate in the Messianic kingdom, but the righteous dead of Israel should rise to share therein. Thus the righteous individual and the righteous nations should be blessed together." [2]

> Thy dead men (Israel) shall arise,
> And the inhabitants of the dust shall awake and shout for joy.
> —*Isa.* xxvi. 19.

The passage could be paralleled elsewhere. In Daniel xxii. 2ff, resurrection is bound up with the thought of the Messianic kingdom, but here some of the wicked also rise, and not to life but to judgment.

It is, however, chiefly along the lines of the rise of religious individualism we should trace the growth of the belief in immortality and a blessed future life. We may see this in such writings as Ezekiel, Job, Jeremiah, and certain of the Psalms. As corporate personality counted for less, though the idea is always there to some extent, and the sense of individual relationship to God became more realised, we get a greater concentration on the eschatology of the individual. For the soul that has known and rejoiced in personal fellowship with God on earth must there not be a continuation of that fellowship even beyond death? Hence the utterance of the psalmist's faith, " Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption " (Ps. xvi. 10). That the hope of the Psalmist was not vain was shown in the resurrection of Jesus

[2] Ibid, p. 113.

Christ, is the use Peter made of the passage at Pentecost. Legitimate as may be the Christian use of this passage, we must not forget its original meaning to the psalmist. There is in the Old Testament, in the later and higher stages of its thought, evidence of a growing belief that there will be for the soul which seeks fellowship with God, and rejoices in His ways, a real life beyond death; something better than the gloom of Sheol where the light of the divine favour does not shine.

Until comparatively recent times the general conception of the period between the Old and New Testaments was that it was a dead and barren time. It is now conclusively proved that this is not the case. We have the witness of such writings as Enoch, Testaments of the Twelve, Jubilees, the Book of Wisdom, the Psalms of Solomon, the Assumption of Moses, and many others. These show the ferment of thought and the development of ideas on the future of the nation, the Messianic kingdom, and the destined lot of the righteous and unrighteous. Many of these ideas were carried forward into the Christian era and help us to interpret some hitherto dark passages, such, for instance as we find in Jude, Second Peter, the Apocalypse, and even Paul. Space forbids more than this passing reference. The writings show that in the pre-Christian era many in Israel had come to believe very definitely that there was to be a blessed future life for the righteous, and retribution for the ungodly. The conception of the future life is the attainment of a resurrection, not immortality on the Greek line of thought.

What did Christianity add? Its contribution centres in the Person of Christ. The gospel of the early days was that of "Jesus and the Resurrection." It was the burden of the message of Paul at Athens and elsewhere. He who had been crucified was alive from the dead, and the apostles preached that belief with all the power of a personal conviction. The rise and progress of the Church becomes unintelligible apart from the resurrection, and all efforts to explain it away demand more faith than the acceptance of the fact. The disciples were sure Jesus had arisen from the dead and appeared to them. They never wavered in that belief, but held it in the face of all denial and incredulity. Without dealing with the evidence of the resurrection, which would demand a special paper, we assume here its truth and see what the apostles deduced therefrom. The chief thing was this, that because Jesus had arisen from the dead there was sure and certain victory over death for them, through their faith in Him which gave a like quality of life. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you"

(Rom. viii. 11). As death could not hold Christ in its power because His was an immortal life, neither could it annihilate those in whom dwelt the life derived from Christ. He that had the Son had life, eternal life.

This was the firm conviction of the Church, and a perfectly reasonable one. If men were really one with Christ, then death could not be the master of them any more than it was of Him. Because He lives we shall live also. The nature of that future life is developed by Paul in his doctrine of the resurrection body (1 Cor. xv.; 2 Cor. v.). As personality has that body which is suitable for terrestrial existence now, so it will have that which is suitable for the celestial. And after all these centuries since Paul many still feel that no better mode of considering the future has been given us than by the great apostle. In this life we build up in us, through the activity of the indwelling Spirit of God in Christ, the body that shall be. Then at death, when the earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved, "we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1). The pre-Christian era, at its best, was one of hope. The Christian, through the resurrection, is one of assurance. Faith gives fellowship, and fellowship gives assurance—the sense of possession. If our estimate of the person of Christ be a right one, we ought not to doubt the reality of a future life, and one which is higher in value than this. It was certainly the outlook of Paul.

We therefore come to the conclusion that there is a life of immortality for the Christian; he reaches this conviction on the basis of his faith. What about the rest of men? In the main there are three views held: that of eternal punishment, that of universalism, and that of conditional immortality. Some measure of support can be found in Scripture for each of these points of view, and there are objections to all. There can be no doubt but that ancient dogmatism has given place to hesitancy regarding those who live and die out of any avowed faith in Christ or concern about the soul. Two things we would stress. The first is that men cannot come to the highest life save in Christ who has manifested it. And the other is that God is the Judge of all men, "the quick and the dead." Moreover, no doctrine of the future state will commend itself to faith which is not in harmony with the revelation of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. That which the conscience feels to be unjust will be rejected, and it is on moral grounds men have refused to believe many views of the fate of the ungodly at one time very prevalent.

There were questions Christ refused to answer. One was this: "Are there few that be saved? And He said, Strive to enter in at the strait gate" (Luke xiii. 23-4). It is manifestly

the solemn duty of the Church to hold up eternal life as a prize to be won, and to interpret eternal life through Christ. He lived "in the power of the endless life." If men make the "great refusal," they must of necessity suffer loss. All that that means we cannot say;

> There was a Door to which I found no Key:
> There was a Veil past which I could not see.

Let us frankly admit it. "We know in part and prophesy in part." It is ours to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life, remembering as Amiel says, "The eternal life is to be eternally rewon."

F. T. BLOICE-SMITH.

STONY STRATFORD had a sermon from Dan Taylor at the end of June, 1778. He had come straight from preaching for John Brittain in London, and was presently to train John Brittain Shenstone. Nothing is said as to any minister then in the church. Taylor dined next day with his friend John Sutcliff at Olney, and preached at Burton Latimer; on Wednesday at Moulton, on Thursday at Loughborough; called at Nottingham on Friday and got home to Wadsworth on Saturday in time to preach, and to start haying on Monday.

28-678. [Roger Williams.] An answer to a letter from Mr. Coddington of Rhode Island, to governor Leveret of Boston in what concerns Roger Williams of Providence.

The ten-page original in the library of the R.I. Historical Society has been reproduced in photostat by the Massachusetts Historical Society, as also other pamphlets relevant to 33-676 and 17-678.

41-784. Philip Chapman and Sampson Kingsford. An address to the society of Baptized Believers meeting in the Black-friars, Canterbury.

Kingsford was 34 years old, joint Elder, just ordained Messenger, destined to be a leader for 37 years. The only known copy of these exhortations is owned by the Rev. Arthur F. Taylor, of Canterbury.

The first Baptist Church composed entirely of negroes is supposed to have been organised in South Carolina at Silver Bluff, between 1773 and 1775.

The Ideal Training for the Ministry.

APART from an editorial suggestion, I should not have chosen to write upon such a subject. The ideal person to dilate upon it would be a newly-fledged minister. For one reason or another it commonly happens that the recently graduated student is in the mood to criticise the training from which he has just escaped, though these criticisms tend to be revised in the light of later experience. It is not improbable that Saul of Tarsus occasionally thought Gamaliel a little slow and heavy, although later, after some experience in teaching, he came to name his preceptor with pride and reverence.

However that may be, the church has no greater interest than the perfecting of ministerial equipment, and it is worth while to listen to criticisms and suggestions from every quarter. This article cannot claim to be the product of experience, but it may have the value which attaches to first impressions.

One criticism which comes from almost every type of student is that our systems of training lack elasticity. A rigid course of study is said to be prescribed for each man, irrespective of differing aptitudes or desires. Why must the non-linguist learn Hebrew (he doesn't!)? Why should the preacher who is capable of poetic flights be compelled to study the dry details of dogmatics? Should the gaze of the ardent social reformer be diverted from present-day problems to the unedifying proceedings of ancient Councils?

The answer is manifold. For one thing, few students enter college at a stage sufficiently advanced to allow of wise and profitable specialisation. The most necessary thing for the average student is the discipline of unwelcomed drudgery. A man must learn to apply to himself the Parable of the Treasure hidden in a field. It is beneath the surface of the unattractive subjects that intellectual wealth is to be found. I have studied with interest the "catalogs" of various American colleges where elasticity is the chief aim, without being deeply impressed. The method has been called one of "soft options," and seems to be one long inducement to take the path of least resistance. Should we breed a virile ministry in this manner?

One very practical consideration is that the possibility of adaptation to individual tastes and aptitudes is, in most of our colleges, limited by considerations of ways and means, whilst in

any case there are very few subjects of theological study which can well be treated as optional. The London B.D. syllabus, for instance, contains nothing of which a competent minister ought to be entirely ignorant.

When we consider the courses of study required for entrants to any other profession, we discover that there is the same insistence upon a practically uniform list of subjects. What freedom of choice is given to the would-be solicitor or the budding physician? I draw the conclusion that we must still continue to prescribe one pathway for students, and forbid wanderings in bye-paths till they leave college territory.

Another complaint is that of the apparent irrelevance of some theological studies to the pressing needs of the day. It would be well expressed in the words of H. G. Wells, in *The New Machiavelli.* He writes thus of a certain philosophical lecturer at Cambridge:

> "All his woven thoughts lay across my perception of the realities of things, as flimsy and irrelevant and clever and beautiful, oh!—as a dew-wet spider's web slung in the morning sunshine across the black mouth of a gun."

It is a striking comparison, and every teacher needs to remember that his business is to render ineffective the threatening guns, and no cobwebs will do this. But is the criticism quite just? After all, relevance or irrelevance is a matter of standpoint. Is the student the best judge? A good deal of modern literature is erratic because authors have judged philosophy irrelevant.

A third criticism can best be put in words quoted from the *Life of Phillips Brooks* (vol. I., p. 318):

> "I shall never forget my first experience of a divinity school. I had come from a college where men studied hard, but said nothing about faith. I had never been at a prayer meeting in my life. The first place I was taken to at the seminary was the prayer meeting; and never shall I lose the impression of the devoutness with which these men prayed and exhorted one another. Their whole souls seemed exalted and their natures were on fire. I sat bewildered and ashamed, and went away depressed. On the next day I met some of those men at a Greek recitation. It would be little to say of some of the devoutest of them that they had never learned their lessons. Their whole way showed that they never learned their lessons; that they had not got hold of the first principles of hard, faithful conscientious study. The boiler had no connection with the engine. The devotion did not touch the work which then and there was the work, and the only work, for them to do."

Sometimes our colleges are criticised because it is said that they spoil devotion and exalt study. Adapting Phillips Brooks's figure, the engine has no boiler at all. None of us wishes to deprecate either devotion or work, but what is the use of setting any man in pastoral charge if he has not already learnt to blend these two essentials in his own life? In principle, the problem of combining these two things is not peculiar to the minister; it confronts the layman, too; but if the minister cannot solve it, is he fit for his calling? The sorry divorce between devotion and work is not a problem which any college can solve; it is a challenge which each student must meet, in the strength of God.

From the consideration of all these criticisms, I have come to the modest conclusion that the cause of most of the trouble lies, not so much with the colleges, or with the students, as with the pre-collegiate years, and it is worth while inquiring whether we cannot do more in the way of preparatory training. What a pitiful business it is when the student, who entered college six months before with pride and high hope, has to be told that he had better return to his former calling, since it has become evident that he lacks the mental capacity to profit by a college course! Apart from the disappointment involved, there is the very practical consideration in these days that often no place is open to him. He has burned his boats behind him. The colleges dare not let their compassion lead them into retaining such a man, for the tasks of the ministry are too sacred to be committed to the proved incompetent. Is there no possible way of testing vocation and aptitude beforehand, and so avoiding all this perplexity?

The only suggestions that some to me are that we might strengthen and extend the work of the Home Preparation Union, and that ministers especially should do more than is commonly done in the intellectual testing and training of the would-be student. Men come before the Selection Committees of our colleges for whom their own pastors seem to have done nothing beyond the writing of a perfunctory recommendation. In some cases, ministers have not even taken the trouble to hear the candidate preach, and frequently there has been no guidance in reading. It is not certain in every case whether the churches ought not to bear an equal degree of blame. I hasten to say that there are splendid examples on the other side. One Baptist minister known to me has for years been doing unrecognised but most fruitful work in teaching New Testament Greek to various students, and from such tuition men have come to college days fully prepared from the outset to take advantage of every opportunity. All honour to such a man.

Further, is it possible to revive, in a form suited to modern

conditions, something analogous to the old academies, such as those conducted by Cowper's friend, the Rev. William Bull, of Newport Pagnell, and by Sutcliff at Olney? Could the problem of the rural churches be partially solved if young men could serve a novitiate under ministers, from whom they might learn habits of study and (what is even more important) the secret of an inward life of sustained and habitual devotion? Such preparation would not be sufficient in itself, but it might serve a splendid purpose as a preparatory discipline. I hesitate to make the suggestion when I recall the satire of Mark Rutherford, who paints the Rev. John Broad as engaged in such activities. There is in inimitable picture of Mr. Broad spending an hour and a half on Monday in private conclave with Mrs. Broad. "It gave them an opportunity of talking over the affairs of the congregation, and it added to Mr. Broad's importance with the missionary students, because they saw how great were the weight and fatigue of the pastoral office." Still, over against the satire, we may set the fact that so great a ministry as that of John Angell James sprang from such a training. The one drawback to the plan is that it does necessitate the abandonment of ordinary business life, with all the risks thus involved, in order to test (spiritually no less than intellectually) a man's vocation to the Christian ministry, and I see no way round that problem. It seems clear, however, that the churches must shoulder a greater load of responsibility for the discovery and testing of those who are called and fitted for the pastoral office, and for the giving to them of some training preliminary to their entrance into college.

There is very little to be said that is new or revolutionary about the college course itself, except to stress the demand that is being made in many quarters for the imparting of a really systematic and thorough knowledge of the contents of the Bible. Ignorance in this realm can have no excuse, but the remedy lies mostly with the individual student. In Spurgeon's College, two examinations are held yearly in selected books of the English Bible, at which no linguistic questions are set, nor are problems in interpretation considered, but the whole demand is for the knowledge of what the books set actually contain. No doubt much the same thing is done elsewhere; it is right and necessary. We are fortunate in possessing a wide variety of colleges, and we shall lose if they are ever too closely assimilated, though there is room and desire for growing co-operation.

How long ought the ideal college course to last? The answer varies with every individual. It ought to be as long as a man can remain; but there are limits set by the nature of our ministry. The training of a Roman Catholic priest begins at the age of twelve and lasts until he is twenty-four. Here is a completeness

of training which we may sometimes envy, and which is ruthlessly efficient in producing a well-drilled army of men cast in one mould. Yet the men whom we covet for the ministry ought to emerge, not from early and prolonged seclusion, but from actual contact with life, with character ripened and the will braced by the challenge of the office, the shop, or the factory. This means that we can scarcely hope to get our student until the early twenties, or to retain him for many years. How can we make up for this abbreviated training? By pressing for the prosecution of definite post-collegiate study. We ought to guard, with great strictness, the early years of the pastorate.. Said Phillips Brooks:

> "It is the five years after college which are the most decisive in a man's career. Any event which happens then has its full influence. The years which come before are too fluid. The years which come after are too solid."

During these early years the young minister has to discover the relevance of the apparently irrelevant studies in which he has been engaged, and he has to beware of the temptation to drop study altogether, even whilst he is spending long hours at his desk. For his own good it is well that there should be demanded from him evidence of the prosecution of a planned and exacting course of study, as a condition of his full recognition as a minister. A great deal of prejudice exists against this demand, partly in the mind of the student, who is naturally eager to concentrate exclusively on the tasks for which he has long been preparing, and partly in the thought of the churches, who are somewhat jealous of what they may consider a withdrawal of energy from pastoral duty.

I have said very little of ministerial preparation on the side of spiritual life, but that is not because the importance of it is minimised, but because it is a matter that belongs rather to the sphere of the student's own responsibility. There ought, however, to be provision for the student periodically to engage in the work of evangelisation during his college days. He should, at stated intervals, be in actual contact with the mass of indifference and even vice. This is essential for the sake of his own spiritual well-being, and because only thus can his ministry be humanised. One of Hugh Walpole's characters says: "People aren't better or worse. They are only different." We dispute the ethics of this saying, but the psychology is sound. People are different, but preaching often seems to forget the fact. Mark Rutherford wrote: "Parsons are bound to preach by rule. It's all general. It doesn't fit the ins and outs." The cure for "preaching by rule" is that men should often have to deal with the individual instead of the congregation, and with the individual

in his utter aloofness from the conventionalities of ordinary religious circles.

All the foregoing is a plea for ministerial training that begins earlier and lasts longer than the years spent in college. It requires the co-operation of the churches and the ministry with the colleges. Most of all, it needs God's grace and help, and we may be sure these will not be withheld, if we will only keep open the channels along which they may flow. P. W. EVANS.

1704, July 29. A copy of an order which my Lord [Bishop Lloyd] sent to the rector of Upton upon Severn to publish in his church.

I am required by the Bishop to give you notice that his Lordship intends to preach and confirm in this church on Tuesday next.

I am likewise to inform you that his Lordship having heard that some of the Anabaptists in this part of his diocese have made offers or demands of a public dispute or conference with the ministers of the Church of England concerning the reasons of their separation, which by the canons of our Church none of us that are ministers can undertake without leave from the Bishop.

Therefore to the end that our declining such disputes may not give occasion to any of our adversaries to boast of any such offers they have made, his Lordship has ordered me to declare that if any of that sect of Anabaptists, or any other of the Separatists from our Church, desires to be heard what he has to say, either to justify his separation or to object against the doctrine or discipline or worship of God in our Church, he shall be fully heard and also answered by our ministers in this place, either on Tuesday next between 4 and 6 in the afternoon, or on Wednesday next between 8 and 11 in the morning: and my Lord Bishop will be present himself to see that everything shall be done with all possible fairness to the Separatists, and that they likewise keeping themselves within the bounds of a fair dispute without any reflexions, shall not suffer for anything that they shall say on the heads above mentioned.

The like order was sent to the rector of Severn Stoke, and to the vicar of Hanley Castle. The like order was sent to the minister of Pershore, and Thursday in the afternoon appointed to be in that church.

No Dissenters appeared to his Lordship either at Upton or Pershore.

Diary of Francis Evans, Bishop's secretary.

Richard Baxter—The Director of Souls

THE MAN AND HIS PASTORAL METHOD.

IT is Richard Baxter—the Director of Souls—who makes us realize that the prime work of the Christian Minister is to be the Ambassador of God and the instrument of men's conversion. Our greatest glory among men is to "save a soul from death, and to cover a multitude of sins." Not a person that you see but may find you work. "In the saints themselves, how soon do the Christian graces languish if you neglect them; how easily they are drawn into sinful ways, to the dishonour of the Gospel, and to their own loss and sorrow." It is ours to be wise in the winning of souls and to feed the flock of Christ. How to do this let the Holy Spirit teach us as we meditate upon the work of R. Baxter—the Reformed Pastor, in a day when many of the flocks were without shepherds.

One of the salient facts about him is that he stood for individualism in religion, and for spiritual freedom, while his life is almost coeval with the Stuart monarchy.

If I were asked what, in the year 1640, was one of the most unpromising towns in England to which a young man could be sent, who was starting his career as preacher and pastor, I should feel inclined to point to the town of Kidderminster. With a population between three and four thousand, mostly carpet weavers, it had been, morally and spiritually, so grossly neglected as to have sunk into practical heathenism. The majority of the people were ignorant beyond the ignorance of the time, debased beyond its defilement, disorderly beyond rudeness. The town's besetting sin was drunkenness, while swearing and Sabbath desecration abounded. Yet there was hope. The town petitioned against the vicar, an ignorant and drunken fellow named Dance, and he, to compromise the matter, offered to allow £60 a year for a preacher, on whom the main part of the duty of the parish would fall. The people concurring with the offer gave an invitation to Baxter, who willingly accepted it. Other parishes were no better. Thus the field had been overrun with briers and thorns, and abandoned to thistles and weeds.

Again, if I were asked, who of all men—taking merely physical reasons into account—would seem to be the most unlikely man to be sent as pastor to this unlikely, unpromising place, I should have said that man was Richard Baxter.

Scarcely ever has a man, who has done work at all, done it under curcumstances of such difficulty and pain as this man did. For fourteen years he had scarcely a working hour free from pain. He was engaged in one long conflict with diseases like pleurisy, nephritic and cholic. "I had several times," he says, "the advice of no less than six and thirty physicians, by whose order I used drugs without number, almost all of which God thought not fit to make successful for a cure." Over twenty times he was near to death; again and again he was brought to the very gates of the grave, and again and again he returned to life through the long and wearisome ascent of slow and difficult recovery. If Baxter had done nothing but take care of himself as an invalid, no one would have had the heart to blame a man to whom life was thus one long and weary battle with disease and pain.

And yet once more, if I were asked to single out one English town of the seventeenth century which, more almost than any other, came under the influence of the Spirit of God, and one preacher, who, more than most, was successful in winning men for Christ, and in organizing a vigorous church life under his pastorate, I should say that town was Kidderminster, and that preacher, Richard Baxter. Half a century ago that town did honour to itself by erecting a statue to the preacher; and on the occasion of unveiling, Dean Stanley said: "There have been three or four parishes in England which have been raised by their pastors to a national, almost a worldwide fame. Of these, the most conspicuous is Kidderminster; for Baxter without Kidderminster would have been but half of himself; and Kidderminster without Baxter would have had nothing but carpets.

THINK THEN OF THE MAN. He was born of poor, but genteel, parents at Rowton in Shropshire, Nov. 12th, 1615, and although he became eminent for his learning, he was not educated at any university. He first was sent to school under Mr. John Owen, of Wroxeter. Then, for a time, he was a pupil to Mr. Richard Wicksted, a scholarly man, the chaplain to the Council, at Ludlow Castle. Neglected by his tutor, all the benefit he derived was from the enjoyment of abundance of time, and plenty of books. Ludlow Castle is the romantic centre of one of the sweetest landscapes in England, and the august seat of many historical recollections, e.g., here, some three or four years afterwards, Milton presented his immortal "Comus" for the first time, and here, some thirty years afterwards, Butler wrote the first part of his Hudibras. Baxter returned to Wroxeter, after only eighteen months absence, and taught in the school where he had been a scholar while he continued his own private preparation.

In his fifteenth year he tells us, "it pleased God that a poor

pedlar came to the door that had ballads and some good books, and my father bought of him, Dr. Sibbes's *Bruised Reed.*" This also I read, and found it suited my taste and seasonably sent me, which opened more the love of God to me, and gave me a livelier apprehension of the mystery of redemption, and how much it was beholden to Jesus Christ." "Thus without any means but books was God pleased to resolve me for Himself."

Circumstances led to his turning his attention to a career at Court, under the patronage of the Master of Revels, but a short experience of this sufficed. The next four years were spent in quiet preparation for his life's task.

In 1638, Philip Foley, the Stourbridge ironmaster and brother to the speaker of the House of Commons, refounded and endowed the Grammar School at Dudley, making Baxter the Master. Therefore he was ordained by the Bishop of Worcester. His latest biographer tells us "by the terms of his licence, he had permission to teach in the school at Dudley, and to preach in the parish church, and in the villages round about. Dudley, however was a centre of Nonconformity, and with that scrupulosity in matters of belief that always characterised him, Baxter felt that he must plunge into the controversy, and master the principles of those that sought to free themselves from the jurisdiction of the bishops. It was the turning-point of his career, for Baxter, in spite of the obvious reluctance to reveal his own position, from this time onwards, betrays an increasing dissatisfaction with that of the majority of the clergy of the Established Church."

He preached his first sermon at the Upper Church, Dudley and evangelised the villages around. After a year he went to be curate to a clergyman at Bridgnorth, where he laboured two years. In 1640 he went to be lecturer for the Vicar of Kidderminster, where he remained for nearly two years. Originally, like his family and his friends, an unhesitating conformist, he about this time found himself led to adopt some of the nonconformist views. His learning and capacity for business made him the leader of the Presbyterian party. He was one of the greatest preachers of his own day, and consistently endeavoured to exert a moderating influence, with the result that he became the subject of attack by extremists of both views. Though siding with Parliament in the Civil War, he opposed the execution of the King and the assumption of supreme power by Cromwell. During the War he served with the army as chaplain.

It was during this period that he had at least three public disputations with the Baptists. One at Amersham in Bucks. Another in 1643, at Coventry, with Benjamin Coxe, M.A., on "Infant Baptism." Baxter issued the challenge for this, but as the outcome, Coxe was imprisoned. The most famous was on

Jan. 1st, 1650, at Bewdley, with John Tombes in an Anglican church he disputed from the infant's right to church membership to their right to infant baptism. There was a crowded audience and the debate lasted from nine in the morning until five at night.

For reasons of health he retired from the army to the house of his friend, Sir Thomas Rouse, of Rouse-Lench, Worcestershire, and there, in continual expectation of death, with one foot in the grave, he wrote the first part of the best of all his works, *The Saint's Everlasting Rest,* published in 1650. Excepting a Bible and a Concordance, Baxter had not a single book with him at the time to help him as he wrote.

On the invitation of his former parishioners he returned to Kidderminster in 1647, and, in spite of continual ill-health, he laboured there for fourteen years with eminent success. "When I came,' he says, "there was about one family in a street that worshipped God and when I came away there were some streets where there was not one poor family that did not do so."—And on the Lord's days, instead of the open profanation to which they had been accustomed, a person, in passing through the town, in the intervals of public worship, might overhear hundreds of families engaged in singing psalms, reading the Scriptures, and other good books, or such sermons as they had wrote down while they heard them from the pulpit. His care of the souls committed to his charge, and the success of his labours among them, were truly remarkable; for the number of his stated communicants rose to 600, of whom he himself declared, there were not twelve concerning whose sincere piety he had not reason to entertain good hopes.

At the Restoration, Baxter was appointed one of the King's Chaplains and took a leading part at the Savoy Conference. It is a great mistake to blame him because this Conference failed to secure agreement. Presbyterian though he was, he did not object to a modified form of Episcopacy; yet he declined the proffered Bishopric of Hereford, preferring to return as curate to Kidderminster. The Act of Uniformity having driven him out of the Established Church, he was compelled to leave Kidderminster and was subjected to much hardship. During the Plague and after the Great fire, when Parliament was meeting at Oxford, and passing measures against them, many of the Nonconformist ministers, including Baxter, returned to London and took the place of the clergy, who had fled from the post of duty, in succouring the sick and homeless people. It was at this time that Baxter was for the first time imprisoned and only got release at the end of the six months under the Habeas Corpus Act. Bunyan too, was imprisoned and that for twelve years in Bedford Jail.

Retiring to Acton, Middlesex, he spent the greater part of

nine years in the composition of some of the most important of his works. The Act of Indulgence, in 1672, permitted him to return to London, where he divided his time between preaching and writing. But in 1685, after the accession of King James II, he was brought, for alleged sedition in his *Paraphrases of the New Testament,* before the notorious Judge Jefferies, who treated him in a most brutal manner, calling him a dog, and swearing it would be no more than justice to whip such a villain through the city. Condemned to pay 500 marks, and to be imprisoned until the fine was paid, he lay in the King's Bench Prison for nearly eighteen months—during this his second imprisonment—and was only released on the mediation of Lord Powis.

It was Baxter who, when greeted by Judge Jefferies with the remark, "Richard, I see the rogue in thy face," replied, "I had not known before that my face was a mirror."

Mark you this was not the speech of a self-conceited fellow, for on one occasion on seeing a man being taken to the scaffold he said, "There goes Richard Baxter, but for the grace of God." The later years of his life were spent in tranquillity. One of his last efforts was to join in a serious attempt to unite the Presbyterians and Independents. He died on December 8th, 1691, in his seventy-fifth year, and it is said that never was there such a funeral as his.

His literary activity was marvellous in spite of ill-health and outward disturbances. He is said to have written 168 works, including two books of poetry. The best known are *The Saints' Everlasting Rest; A Call to the Unconverted;* and *The Reformed Pastor.* A copy of his *Holy Commonwealth* had the distinction of being burned at Oxford along with books written by John Milton and John Goodwin. The most diverse minds have their favourites among his books. He was a favourite with Addison and Coleridge and Dr. Johnson's too indulgent reply to Boswell's question, what works of Baxter should he read, "Read any of them, for they are all good" is well known. They have been translated into many tongues. *A Call to the Unconverted* was translated by John Eliot—the Apostle of the Red Indians—into the Indian language, and a copy of this recently sold for £6,800. Dr. Isaac Barrow says that "his practical writings were never mended, and his controversial ones seldom confuted," and Dean Stanley called him "The first English Protestant Schoolman."

He preached before the House of Commons at St. Margaret's, Westminster, 30th April, 1660. The very next day the Parliament voted for the Restoration. He preached before the Lord Mayor and Alderman and all London at St. Paul's on the day of Thanksgiving, 10th May, 1660, for General Monk's success in bringing the king back.

The claim of Baxter to stand high on the roll of English worthies must be found in his eminent example of self-sacrifice. Two simple facts may be stated at illustrative of the breadth of this illustrious man, viz :—

1. The Church of England is indebted to Baxter for procuring the charter of the Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England. He had then been ejected by his mother church, in which he had refused a mitre; but none the less earnestly did he seek to obtain a charter for that Church. His "field" was the world, and his correspondence with John Eliot shows that, far ahead of his times, he saw the possibility and urgent need of modern missions.

2. Baxter was among the first, if not the very first, Englishman to speak fearlessly out on the slave trade. Writing in 1673 he said, "They who go as pirates and take away poor Africans to make them slaves and sell them, are the worst of robbers; and ought to be considered as the common enemies of mankind; and they who buy them, and make use of them as mere beasts of burden are fitter to be called demons than Christians."

It is a remark of Dr. Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, that "it was enough for one age to produce such a man as Richard Baxter." The age that had the honour of producing this holy and great man, was the age of the Commonwealth, the age of Nonconformity. Of it W. Savage Landor truly says, "There were giants in those days; but giants who feared God, and not who fought against Him." Baxter was one of the greatest of the giants. He was to its theology what Cromwell was to its politics and Milton to its liberties.

Our study is more particularly concerned with HIS PASTORAL METHOD. Dr. Powicke rightly asserts: "Nor can I help setting down the conviction that in Baxter the Pastor—which includes Preacher—a modern Pastor may still find the richest possible incentive to all that is best and highest in his vocation, whatever may be the width of his difference from Baxter the Theologian."

The best way to undersand him is to study *Gildas Salvianus*: *The Reformed Pastor,* which was written in connection with a Day of Humiliation kept at Worcester, December 4th, 1655, by the Ministers of the County. It is really the enforcement of the text "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," Acts xx. 28. Listen to what Dr. Doddridge said of it: "*The Reformed Pastor* is a most extraordinary performance, and should be read by every young minister, before he takes a people under his stated care; and, I think, the practical part of it

reviewed every three or four years; for nothing would have a greater tendency to awaken the spirit of a minister to that zeal in his work, for want of which many good men are but shadows of what (by the blessing of God) they might be, if the maxims and measures laid down in that incomparable Treatise were strenuously pursued." No wonder that it is still among the books which probationer ministers of the Wesleyan Methodist Church are required to read, as it was thus placed by John Wesley.

Baxter regarded his ministry at Kidderminster as the principal work of his life. His work was to preach. He took it to be the chief instrument of salvation. " True Pastors and Bishops of the Church do thirst after the conversion and happiness of sinners, and spend their lives in diligent labours to these ends; not thinking it too much to stoop to the poorest for their good, nor regarding worldly wealth and glory in comparison with the winning of one soul, nor counting their lives dear if they might finish their course and ministry with joy."

As a preacher his sermons were long—never less than an hour in length. Once a month he preached a sermon above the people's heads and further he says, " I did usually put in something in my sermon which was above their own discovery, and which they had not known before, and this I did that they might be kept humble, and still perceive their ignorance and be willing to keep on a learning still." Such words express what the writer himself felt and believed when he took up his work at Kidderminster. He was there as God's ambassador. Whether the verse on the pillar in front of which stood his pulpit was inscribed by his direction or not, it was true of him—" We preache not ourselves but Jesus Christ our Lorde. We are not as the most part are who choppe and change with the word of God." He tells us that the preacher's aim should be first to convince the understanding and then to engage the heart. Light first, then heat. He was a passionate but not an emotional preacher. He had the three great principles of effective preaching—simplicity of style, directness of purpose and earnestness of manner. He had not long been preaching in the town before the large and capacious church became so full that gallery after gallery had to be added to the interior. And as years went by his preaching in the church told powerfully upon the life of the town. At first his converts—mostly young men and girls—were few so that he " took special note of every one that was humbled, reformed or converted," but later they were so many that " I could not." His success was not uniform. " Once all the ignorant rout were raging mad against me for preaching the doctrine of Original Sin." His troubles, such as they were, did not all come from without. One of the worst was of a kind he could not speak of. This, to his own

surprise, was a lapse into scepticism concerning the very foundations of the faith. In this crisis it came home to him that the only safety lay in a policy of thorough. "I was fain to dig to the very foundations . . . and at last I found that . . . nothing is so firmly believed as that which hath been sometime doubted of." From first to last, he was more or less a sufferer. He grew to regard pain as an "invaluable mercy." "It made me study and preach things necessary and a little stirred up my sluggish heart, to speak to sinners with some compassion.

I preached, as never sure to preach again,
And as a dying man to dying men."

He found, however, that his preaching, to be rendered fruitful must be followed up by direct personal converse with every family and every member of the family. Accordingly he arranged that he should be at home all the afternoons of Monday and Tuesday of each week, to a certain specific number of families from the town; while his assistant should spend all the morning of the same two days in visiting an equal number of families in the outlying parishes.

His power and the secret of his success lay in the natural way he spoke to men and the divine earnestness which possessed his soul. He spoke directly from Christ to the people. Christianity was to him not a mere set of doctrines to be received or a code of ethics to be followed; it was the power of an endless life.

Among the causes of his success Baxter gave the following: the free and open field for his work provided by the Cromwellian settlement in religion; he came to a prepared people in the negative sense, that of not being Gospel hardened; and the holy living of the converted—this quickened a conscience of divine things in home and workshop; the trade of weaving offered conveniences for study and talk; the comparative poverty of the people helped. He found, as George Herbert says,

"Gold and the Gospel never did agree,
Religion always sides with poverty."

He mentions "the acceptance of his person," though in no boasting way, and we can well understand his popularity when we note his whole-hearted interest in the practical expression of the Gospel he preached. A large part of his salary, together with what came to him through his literary work, he gave away. He maintained some of the needy youths at the universities. "And I found that Threepence or a Groat to every poor body that askt me were no great matter in a year." He considered his single state to be a blessing, and thus he did not marry until 1662.

He refused, as he put it, "to meddle with Tythes or Worldly Business"; he found that "Nature itself, being conscious of

the baseness of its earthly disposition, doth think basely of those whom it discerneth to be earthly, and is forced to reverence those whose converse is supposed to be most with God and Heaven." We feel that here Baxter is putting his finger on a weakness of much pastoral life to-day. His exercise of Church Discipline was an important part of his pastoral oversight. This consisted, after private reproofs, in more public reproof, continued with the exhortation to repentance—in prayer for the offender—in restoring the penitent—in excluding and avoiding the impenitent. Again he thought it an advantage to him that he had a long pastorate, " for he that removeth oft from place to place may sow good seed in many places, but is not like to see fruit in any, unless some other skilful hand shall follow him to water it."

Baxter was dominated by an eternal purpose and subordinated everything to it. This is the great lesson of his life. In the light of this all his studies, his preaching, his controversies, his books, fall into place, and made a consistent whole. We must never forget that he preached as he preached, and achieved the work he did, from the English Bible. In all his works he impresses you as the Man of the Book. He taught that the making sure of heaven is the main purpose of life. For him heaven meant the perfect fellowship with God which comes from moral likeness to God and above all through the Spirit of love. He believed that preaching of the right sort was more effective than ceremonies. Christ and salvation must not be made light of. The preacher ought to cultivate a plain and even diffuse manner. There must be a repetition of essential truths. The doors must be opened to all who crowd in, and the ministry must not be carried on for personal profit. He believed in personal dealing as the most effective of all methods for winning souls for God. Thus he became enthusiastic for catechising. Week after week, together with his helpers, he assiduously visited the homes of his people. " Every soul in the parish was approached with a view to its conversion or edification. Copies of the Catechism were delivered to every family, rich and poor alike. They were delivered by one of the ministers personally—this was the first step. Then it was understood that a month or six weeks later the minister would call again and begin questioning." Baxter knew what it was to have people in his congregation for years who " know not whether Christ be God or man, and wonder when I tell the story of His birth, life, and death, as if they had never heard it before."

He urges that if a minister himself cannot effectively do the pastoral work necessary to adequately feed the flock, he ought not to take a salary more than sufficient for his needs, or he ought, at his own expense, to provide the necessary assistance.

All personal profit should be entirely eliminated. To spend and be spent is the apostolic ideal. Let me, from Baxter's *Reformed Pastor*—which should be every pastor's companion—close with the words which he addressed to his brethren in the ministry, now 275 years ago. "O brethren! do you not shrink and tremble under the sense of all this work? Will a common measure of holy skill and ability, of prudence and other qualifications, serve for such a task as this? I know necessity may cause the church to tolerate the weak; but woe to us, if we tolerate and indulge our own weakness! Do not reason and conscience tell you, that if you dare venture on so high a work as this, you should spare no pains to be qualified for the performance of it? It is not now and then an idle snatch or taste of studies that will serve to make an able and sound divine. I know that laziness hath learned to allege the vanity of all our studies, and how entirely the spirit must qualify us for, and assist us in, our work—as if God commanded us the use of means, and then warranted us to neglect them—as if it were His way to cause us to thrive in a course of idleness, and to bring us to knowledge by dreams when we are asleep, or to take us up into heaven and show us His counsels, while we think of no such matter, but are idling away our time on earth! Oh, that men should dare, by their laziness, to 'quench the Spirit,' and then pretend the Spirit for the doing of it! *O inestimabile facinus et prodigiosum!* God hath required us, that we be 'not slothful in business,' but 'fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' Such we must provoke our hearers to be, and such we must be ourselves. Oh, therefore, brethren, lose no time! Study, and pray, and confer, and practise; for in these four ways your abilities must be increased. Take heed to yourselves, lest you are weak through your own negligence, and lest you mar the work of God by your weakness."

ARTHUR S. LANGLEY.

JUNE, 1660. Some Anabaptists as Disborough, Markly, and Wingforth smartly secured in Ireland for endeavouring to disturb the peace of the nation.

MARCH 23, 1660/1. Memorandum. I and Mr. George Symonds as justices, released out of the Castle gaol at Worcester this day, 44 Quakers and 14 Anabaptists upon their promise to appear at the next gaol delivery, and in the mean to keep the peace towards the king and all people. They drew up two recognizances containing three heads:—1. To acknowledge Charles the 2nd king. 2. To live peaceably. 3. To appear at the next assize. *Diary of Henry Townsend.*

The Centenary of the Baptist Building Fund.

I. At The King's Head in the Poultry.

THE Epicure's Almanack for 1815 informs us that "The King's Head Tavern in the Poultry" enjoys the distinction of being the oldest tavern in London, and the principal emporium of turtle in the whole metropolis. Many city companies and public bodies have grand dinners here; the establishment is calculated to entertain large and small parties in the highest style of splendor and comfort." Situated at the western extremity of the Stocks' Market, on the southern side of one of the oldest streets in the world, where the flow of busy life for fifteen centuries has never ceased, the tavern, originally known as "The Rose," was "approached through a long, narrow, covered passage, opening into a well lighted quadrangle, around which were the tavern rooms."[1] The date of its origin is unknown, but Machyn refers to it in his diary on the 5th January, 1560. After the Great Fire of London, the old wooden structure was replaced by a building of less flammable material. Later its name was altered to the "Royal Rose and King's Head," and finally to the "King's Head." In 1853, it ceased to be used as a tavern, and shops and offices now occupy its site.

Our interest in the tavern, however, lies not in its history, nor in its turtle, nor in the good wine for which, in the London Spy of 1709, Ned Ward tells us it was famous. The interesting fact for us is that for at least a century it occupied a notable place in the public life of Baptists and other Dissenters. A few examples of important meetings held within its walls may be given by way of illustration. So far back as Tuesday, 4th December, 1744, at the close of their ordinary business meeting, the Ministers and Messengers charged with the distribution of the Particular Baptist Fund "adjourned to the first Tuesday in March to dine at the King's Head in the Poultry." The dinner duly took place on the 5th March, 1745, and after thus fortifying themselves gastronomically, the Ministers and Messengers proceeded to the arduous labours of the Annual Meeting! With one

[1] Timbs' *Club Life of London.* Vol. II, 1866.

exception, when the King's Head was not available, they met at the tavern for the dinner and annual meeting on the first Tuesday in March, usually "at two o'clock precisely," for a further ninety-nine years, the last occasion being in 1844. Although the venue, the time of assembling and the liquid refreshment have changed, the Ministers and Messengers still continue the wholesome practice of dining together, this social function now being within ten years of its second century.[2] The Fundees also met at the tavern intermittently for other Meetings. "The Society of London Ministers of the Particular Baptist Persuasion," better known as the Baptist Board, was founded in 1724. Originally it assembled at the Gloucestershire Coffee House, but on 24th June, 1740, it transferred to Mr. Munday's at the King's Head, Swithin's Alley. Its meeting on the 1st February, 1743, was at Blackwell's Coffee House, but it is possible that this was an exceptional occasion and that the Board followed Munday to the Poultry and remained with him until the meetings were transferred to the Jamaica Coffee House about the year 1760.[3] On 6th November, 1781, a meeting of London Baptists at the tavern in which we are interested resolved "That a new history of the Baptists is a work much to be desired," the outcome of the resolution being Robinson's "large heterogenious and heterodox volume," published in 1790.[4] At a gathering of Baptists held there in May, 1785, William Fox, then a deacon of the Church in Prescott Street, first publicly proposed his plan for the universal education of the poor,[5] the result of which was the formation of the "Society for the Establishment and Support of Sunday Schools throughout the Kingdom of Great Britain," later merged in the younger but more vigorous Sunday School Union. The King's Head was the birthplace on the 10th August, 1804, of the second London Baptist Education Society; and at a meeting of

[2] The first Dinner ("Feast" the Minutes of 23rd November, 1736, describe it in anticipation) was held on Tuesday, 1st March, 1737, "at Mr. Monday's, King's Head, Swithin's Alley." The site of this Alley, otherwise known as Sweeting's Alley, is now occupied by the pavement at the back of the Royal Exchange. James Munday (not Monday as in the Minute) left Swithin's Alley for the Poultry in 1744, whence the Particular Baptist Fund followed him. The dinner originated in a bequest by John Hollis of £1,100. He directed that £3 of the dividends on the odd £100 should be spent by the Fundees in a dinner every year. A Baptist Board letter of 17th December, 1793 (*Baptist Historical Transactions*, Vol. VI.), contains a reference to the writer having dined at Mr. Munday's and obtained denominational information from him. This indicates the possibility that the Mundays were Baptists.

[3] A poorly done summary at the commencement of the Board's second Minute Book supports this but it is not conclusive.

[4] Ivimey, Vol. IV., pp. 48, 49.

[5] Ibid., p. 83.

that Society at the same place on the 2nd January, 1810, it was decided that "an Institution be established, to be distinguished by the name of 'The Baptist Academical Institution at Stepney,' for the education of pious young men, designed for the Christian ministry."[6] This Institution, more familiarly known to us as Regent's Park College, resorted to the tavern for most of its annual meetings prior to 1840.

Baptists were not alone in finding it a convenient place for meeting. Regularly for years the Deputies for protecting the Civil Rights of Dissenters assembled there and passed numerous resolutions bearing on "the inalienable right of all to liberty of conscience." On the 16th October, 1764, the Society consisting of the six ministers and seven gentlemen who then were the receivers of the Regium Donum for distribution among necessitous Dissenting Ministers "dined together at the King's Head Tavern, and audited part of the accounts."[7] Is it unreasonable to suggest that the turtle and wine hindered completion of the audit? The Society for the Relief of Aged and Infirm Protestant Dissenting Ministers, was founded at the King's Head on 2nd June, 1818; and the Congregational Board and the General Body of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers also met there occasionally. It is obvious that for a long period the tavern was in general request for meetings of Dissenters. In an age when the Baptist Church House was not even a dream of the distant future, our forefathers evidently held it in such repute and convened meetings there with such regularity as almost to bestow on it the status of London headquarters. We are not surprised, therefore, to read that there was held "a numerous and respectable Meeting of Friends, of the Baptist Denomination, convened, according to previous notice, on Wednesday, 10th November,[8] 1824, at the King's Head in the Poultry, to take into consideration the expediency of forming some new plan for the assistance of Meeting-house Cases from the country."[9] Benjamin Shaw, Treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1821-1826, and formerly M.P. for Westbury, presided, and James Hargreaves, Minister of Little Wild Street, acted as secretary. Various carefully prepared resolutions were submitted to the Meeting and parts of them have survived the changes of a hundred years, an illustration either of the clear sight of the draughtsmen or of the conservatism of those who have followed

[6] Regent's Park College Centenary Record.

[7] Ivimey, Vol. III., p. 176.

[8] The 10th November is an interesting day in London Baptist history, as forty-one years later on 10th November, 1865, the London Baptist Association was founded.

[9] *Baptist Magazine*, December, 1824.

them. The resolutions as passed,[10] *nem con.* were as follows:—

I. That the present mode of collecting Money in London, and its Vicinity, for the purposes of building, repairing and enlarging Places of Worship, in our Denomination, through the Kingdom, is attended with much inconvenience, and many serious evils, both to the Applicants and the Contributors; on which account, it is highly desirable to attempt such an alteration in the plan of collecting, as may remedy the defects of the present system and ultimately render personal application altogether unnecessary.

II. That, with this view, a Society be now formed, to be called "THE LONDON BAPTIST BUILDING FUND"; and that all persons, who have been accustomed to give to Cases of this description, be invited to become Members of the Society, by transferring their contributions to this Fund, in such form, whether regular or occasional, annual, quarterly, or otherwise, as they may think best.

III. That the business of the Society be managed by a Treasurer, Sub-Treasurer, Secretary, and a Committee of twenty-four Subscribers, who shall meet for the despatch of business, on the fourth Tuesday of every month, at six o'clock in the evening. The Treasurers and Secretary to be deemed members of the Committee; seven of whom shall be a quorum.

IV. That three Gentlemen, besides the Treasurer, shall be nominated as Trustees to the Society, in whose names any Monies may be invested, that may be given or bequeathed to the Society for that purpose; and that a Solicitor be appointed to examine the Trust deeds of all Meeting-houses, for which the aid of the Society is requested.

V. That for the special business of Distribution to those Cases which may have been examined and approved by the Committee, a Quarterly Meeting of the Society be held in the months of January, April, July, and October, at which, all subscribers be entitled to vote.

VI. That the Quarterly Meeting of the Society in January, be considered the Anniversary of the Society; when a report of the proceedings for the preceding year shall be presented; Officers, Auditors, and Committee chosen, and any other business transacted.

VII. That the following regulations be adopted for the guidance of the Committee, in the admission and relief of Cases, etc.

[10] Angus Library Pamphlets. There are slight verbal differences in the rules published in the first Annual Report, but the pamphlet is an official document apparently published immediately after the inaugural meeting and is confirmed by the Baptist Magazine. The Minute Book is missing.

1. That the Cases to be relieved from this Fund, be Cases of the Particular, or Calvinistic Baptist Denomination, from any parts of the United Kingdom: information being first obtained respecting doctrinal sentiments, etc. from friends resident in the district.

2. That, in the examination of Cases, regard be had to the following points:—

That the erection, repair, or enlargement, was necessary.

That the parties concerned sought the advice, and obtained the sanction of respectable individuals belonging to the neighbouring Churches, before they began to build.

That nothing has been expended in superfluities, or wasted by mismanagement.

That the people themselves have contributed according to their ability.

That there is a reasonable prospect of the place being adequately supplied with the ministry of the Word.

3. That, in order to ascertain that the Building has been duly vested in trust, the Deeds, or attested copies thereof, be sent up for the inspection of the Committee.

4. That, when an application is made by writing, or otherwise, to the Secretary a printed letter be immediately sent, containing a series of inquiries, corresponding with the above particulars, to be returned, with the answers annexed; and that the signatures of two neighbouring Ministers be requested to such return.

5. That the Committee do not limit themselves to any given number of Cases to be assisted in the year; but that this be regulated by the amount of their Fund, etc.

6. That, except when peculiar circumstances shall, in the unanimous judgment of the Committee, render a deviation desirable, Cases be assisted in the order of their application.

7. That of the Cases requiring aid at the Institution of this Society, those which have not been collected on in London will have a decided preference; but that Cases for which personal application shall have been made, subsequently to the public adoption and announcement of this Plan, will be considered as forfeiting all claim to assistance.

8. That an engagement be entered into on the part of accepted Cases, that they be not collected for in London afterwards, and also that the Church receiving aid from this Society, exert themselves for the liquidation of their remaining debt, by making an Annual Collection, or instituting a Penny-a-week Society, for that express purpose.

9. That a Quarterly Statement of the Cases assisted,

and the Sum voted to each, be inserted in a succeeding Number of the *Baptist Magazine.*

10. That a fortnight previous to each Quarterly Meeting, a printed List of the Cases, which the Committee have examined, approved and intend to propose for assistance, be forwarded to each Subscriber.

11. That the Subscribers to this Society, be requested to pay their respective contributions, *in advance,* to the Sub-Treasurer, at the Quarterly Meetings; and that a Collector be appointed to wait on those persons whose Subscriptions may not have been so paid.

VIII. That JOHN BROADLEY WILSON, Esq., be the Treasurer of this Society; Mr. STEPHEN MARSHALL, Sub-Treasurer; Rev. JAMES HARGREAVES, Secretary; and the following gentlemen constitute the Committee:—

Mr. W. Beddome.	Mr. J. Hobson.	Mr. I. Robson.
C. Barber.	J. Luntley.	J. Russell.
W. P. Bartlett.	J. Marshall.	S. Salter.
W. Cozens.	P. Millard.	W. L. Smith.
W. Davis.	W. Napier.	J. Walkden.
J. Dawson.	R. Nichols.	J. Warmington.
W. B. Gurney.	J. Penny.	S. Watson.
J. Hanson.	T. Pewtress.	E. Wilkinson.
J. Hepburn.	S. Ridley.	

Together with all Ministers contributing to the Society.

IX. That BENJAMIN SHAW, Esq., W. B. GURNEY, Esq., and SAMUEL SALTER, Esq., be requested to act as Trustees, and Mr. SAMUEL GALE, as Solicitor to the Society.

X. That the Ministers of our Denomination in London, and its Vicinity, be requested to inform their friends of the nature and objects of this Society, and recommend it to their support.

XI. That the cordial thanks of this Meeting are due, and be hereby presented to Benjamin Shaw, Esq., for his kindness in taking the Chair on this occasion, and for the able manner in which he has conducted the business of the Meeting.

II.—The Baptist Board and Country Cases.

Attention is at once arrested by the references to an existing plan. What "mode of collecting money in London and its vicinity" was in vogue in 1824? The question introduces us to a phase of Church life that happily passed away shortly after the establishment of the Building Fund with which we are concerned. For the springs out of which it arose, it is necessary

to refer back to the late years of the seventeenth century and the early years of the eighteenth. Following the political revolution of 1689, the prevailing conditions for Baptists, as for other Dissenters, became less severe. Evangelists were able to go forth with freedom and the gathering of both "General" and "Particular" Churches proceeded. For the most part, however, the members were content to meet in barns and private houses; they were slow to realise that churches to survive must be provided with regular meeting-houses. A few buildings were erected through the sacrifice and generosity of local sympathisers, an early General Baptist illustration being at Spalding, where the local friends commenced their contributions towards a new building in February, 1689, and made the final payment in less than two years. The building cost eighty-nine pounds.[11] But cases such as the one mentioned were the exception; the majority found it needful to make a widespread appeal. Norwich, for example, in June 1698, appealed to the General Baptist Assembly at Glasshouse Yard in Goswell Street, which agreed "That what can or shall be Collected for them be paid unto Bror Gale for their Use."[12] The same Church, with praiseworthy persistence, appealed in the same year to the General Association at White's Alley, and the minutes record:

> "The Church at Norwich being Indebted about £40 for ye building of their meeting place wch they are not able to Pay, the wch is like to be very prejudicial to ye Interest of Christ there and they herevpon requesting our assistance It is Agreed that the representatives of every Church do lay this mater before their respective Congregations Very speedily and intreat their assistance in it and send vp the mony yt shall be colected to Bro. James Morris in Cheap side to be sent downe to them."[13]

In 1734, the General Baptist Assembly recommended "all the Churches belonging to it to make annuall Collection and the Money so raised" was to be used for, *inter alia*, "the building of Meetinghouses according as every Congregation shall order their Money to be disposed of."[14] On another occasion, it recommended "Great Yarmouth, Wendover, and Harringworth, . . . (and all our Friends in the like Circumstances) that they either by Messengers appointed for that Purpose or by Letters apply to such Persons and Churches within their reach, to desire their assistance in so good a Work, . . ."[15] In 1737 the Assembly asked

[11] Taylor, Vol. I., p. 317.
[12] Minutes, Vol. I., p. 54.
[13] Ibid., p. 60.
[14] Vol. II., p. 25.
[15] Ibid., p. 34.

Churches to send collections for Peterborough "to Mr. Morris at the British Coffee House in Finch Lane London, . . ." [16] and in 1741, for Castle Headingham, "Mr. Randall, in Well Close Square, London" is mentioned.[17] The financial statements of Mr. Morris and Mr. Randall are not available, so we do not know the extent to which the Churches responded, but we gain an impression of the fellowship that existed when we read that the little church at Turner's Hill on the Sussex Weald made a collection of 16s. 6d. for Great Yarmouth and "a like amount in 1744 for Castle Headingham." [18] Fairly frequent references to other building appeals recur throughout the minutes. Having, however, drawn attention to the practice of appealing to other Churches by Messengers and the connection of London with the receipt of monies, there is no need at present to follow the General Baptist stream further along its course.

Turning to the Particular Baptists, we find their indifference to Association life reflected in the absence of building appeals to their convention. In the closing years of the seventeenth century, buildings were erected or acquired in a few places, such as Bacup and Hill Cliff. More followed in the opening decade of the eighteenth century, notably in Lancashire, Wiltshire, and Worcestershire, but mainly these were the result of the generosity of friends in the various localities and immediately surrounding districts. In those early days, the local friends largely shouldered their own burdens; it was left to the next generation of Particulars to make a wider appeal.

Out of this need for the erection of new buildings, and the repair or enlargement of existing buildings, experienced alike by Generals and Particulars, arose the custom of sending the minister or occasionally a messenger, on a begging campaign, particularly to London. For appealing to the Metropolis, the Particulars were more favourably situated than the Generals, as the Baptist Board "sanctioned and recommended cases of building and repairing meeting-houses in the country to be collected for in London." The recognised procedure was for the minister or other representative of the country church to attend a meeting of the Board and present a statement of the need. This included particulars of the strength and prospects of the cause, the amount expended or proposed to be expended, the sum subscribed or promised locally, and the doctrinal conditions on which the property was held. If personal attendance could not be arranged the statement was sent to one of the ministers (J. Gill, J. Stennett, and J. Brine were the usual choices) who brought it before the

[16] Ibid., p. 42.

[17] Ibid., p. 61.

[18] Hooper: *A Surrey and Sussex Border Church.*

Board at its meeting, and if the assembled ministers approved the case, an approximate date for the minister to visit the city was indicated. When the statement had been signed or endorsed by as many of the Board members as were disposed, the minister was in possession of an "approved Board Case." In addition to visiting the homes or business premises of known and hoped-for sympathisers, the minister usually found it possible to occupy the London pulpits, either on a Sunday or at a specially arranged week-day service.

The Board Minutes [19] contain many references, which afford interesting glimpses of these cases and the Church activities out of which they arose. An early reference is in the record of the Meeting on 16th November, 1724:

> "Some brethren Comming from Woodbridge abt building a Meetinghouse were advisd to be more Modest in their Demands and were promisd all the assistance the Brethren cou'd give Personaly tho' they cou'd not Make Collections in their Churches."

Again on the 23rd September, 1728:

> "Some friends Came from Waltham Abby to ask the Advice of the Ministers abt setling a Baptiz'd Church & Building a Meeting place there, It was Agreed that it was expedient they shou'd first give up themselves to one another in the Lord in a Church State, and then Promise to give them all assistance they Can towards building a Place."

In course of time, the visits of country ministers on these begging expeditions tended to become more frequent and the Board found it necessary to prevent over-lapping. In October, 1733, in answer to one applicant, it directed that a letter be sent:

> "to acquaint him that Whereas Certain Brethren have lately been in town to obtain Mony for Building a Meeting It is the opinion of this Board that it wou'd be more Adviseable for Him to Come up about a Month after Christmass."

Within twelve months, in considering a request from the Church at Northampton for assistance to build a meeting-house, the ministers agreed *nem. con.*, "That in conformity to several Resolotions formerly made we do not as a board of Ministers receive any Such Case." (The several resolutions are not recorded.) There is no mention of the rescindment of this resolution, but it was soon ignored or forgotten, for on 9th August, 1737:

> "Mr. Simson of Floor, presented a Case, Desiring Assistance as to a Meeting place, Upon Reading & Considering it,

[19] *Baptist Historical Society Transactions*, Vols. V., VI., and VII.

Agreed He be advis'd to withdraw it, for the present, So many of the Like being recommended this Year already And it is farther agreed, if the Case appear in the same light to us, next Spring, to Give it the precedence of any other, & Incourage it as far as we Can." (The recommendations made earlier in the year are not recorded.)

Applications continued to reach the Board with regularity. Warrington in the north, Rye in the south, Yarmouth in the east, and Plymouth in the west, illustrating the wide area from which they came. In December, 1747, the case of Ashford (Kent) was considered; in February, 1748, that of Chalford (Glos.); in July, 1748, that of Reading. In the course of seven months, from July, 1750, to January, 1751, cases were presented from Rushall (Norfolk), Leicester, Bromsgrove, Warwick, and Stratton (Wilts.), and sanction was given for the five to be collected in their turn. In the ensuing nine years, applications were received from Churches in the following counties: Surrey, Cheshire, Worcester, Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Middlesex, Wiltshire, Sussex, Norfolk, and Nottingham. The Board Minutes in other connections reveal that the ministers very much disliked being hurried, and it is fairly clear that the pace set by the country churches was too strenuous for them. As a result, on 6th February, 1760, " It was unanimously agreed that no more cases relating to the building or repairing of meeting-houses be receiv'd and recommended by this Board." In his *Byepaths of Baptist History*, Goadby tells us that the Board passed this resolution " owing to the increasing number of good cases brought before them," but he does not give his authority for the statement. Dr. Whitley's suggestion [20] that the resolution was due to laziness appears more probable. Fortunately for the country churches, the resolution did not long survive, and at a meeting on the 3rd March, 1767, cases were recommended from Bewdley, Sevenoaks, King's Stanley, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottingham, Oakham, Ingham (Norfolk, Irthlingborough, Upottery, Cloughfold, Spalding, Northampton, Wrexham, Horsley, Yeovil, and Harlow. Amid the records of further cases sanctioned and one refused by the Board is an interesting resolution of 30th January, 1776, to the effect " that if any persons apply for contributions in London out of the order in which their cases have been agreed to be consider'd by this Board, their cases be not recommended by this Board." In 1777, the writing of Minutes was discontinued for five years, and the last cases of which there is a record are those of Wivelsfield and Tenterden, passed on the 5th August in that year, but there is little doubt that the Board functioned until early in 1784.

[20] *Baptist Historical Society Transactions*, Vol. VI., p. 116.

For sixty years, therefore, throughout a period when, as Silvester Horne tells us,[21] "the slumber of the Church was profound," and "Christianity in England had almost ceased to count," the ministers rendered this valuable service. Their perfunctory Minutes mention about seventy applications, but the entries indicate that many cases went unrecorded. Among these unrecorded cases is that of Kent Street, Portsmouth, for which in 1729 the sum of £29 2s. 6d. was collected.[22] Later collections were larger, that for Plymouth in 1751, when the minister, Philip Gibbs, visited the Metropolis, amounting to "upwards of £100 . . . Dr. Gill, Mr. Anderson, Mr. B. Wallin, and others having recommended the case."[23] It had been presented by Mr. Jocelyn, a member of the Church, in 1749, so that a period of two years elapsed before the minister was called to town. The response in this case may have been particularly generous, owing to the influence behind the appeal; but it is safe to assume that as a general rule, not less than the sum of fifty pounds was obtained from the London friends. Such an amount appears small to us to-day, and it would not go far in the erection of a twentieth-century building; but in the eighteenth century it was a substantial help towards the cost of the "neat and appropriate meeting-house" that was so characteristic of the period. Some of the Churches for which appeals were made are now among the most widely known in the country—College Street, Northampton, and George Street, Plymouth, being examples; others, whilst not achieving such fame, nevertheless maintained, and still maintain, a faithful witness. There is not one of the churches, however small, but had its part in the moulding of that sturdy Nonconformist character which is the heritage of the Free Churchman of to-day. Like Thomas Carlyle, who wrote of one of the chapels of the Secession Church in which he was brought up, there were many men who could say of these obscure meeting houses: "That poor temple of my childhood is more sacred to me than the biggest Cathedral then extant could have been; rude, rustic, bare, no temple in the world was more so: but there were sacred lambencies, tongues of authentic flame which kindled what was best in one, what has not yet gone out." The service of the London ministers and the generosity of the London laymen merit our appreciation, but the men worthy of most recognition are the little-known country ministers and messengers who paid visits to London. These faithful souls went forth imbued with the one desire to collect the funds for the erection of the bethel in which they and their congregations

[21] *Popular History of the Free Churches.*

[22] Ridoutt: *Early Baptist History of Portsmouth.*

[23] Rippon's *Register*, Vol. III., p. 381.

could worship God in a manner that would not offend their consciences. By what means they reached the Metropolis we can only surmise. Probably some of them emulated the horsemanship of John Wesley; others may have walked considerable distances and obtained an occasional lift on one of the stage waggons, sitting among the goods it was the first business of those waggons to carry; the more fortunate possibly rode in the stage coaches which, however, did not reach their golden age until the early years of the next century. The roads, infested with highwaymen, were in such a condition that in an advertisement in 1737 of "Carter's Gee-ho Stage Waggon, drawn by eight horses," it was needful to add there were "two others in reserve to pull it out of sloughs." In 1754, the "Flying Coach," which journeyed from Manchester to London, was advertised as follows: "However incredible it may appear, this coach will actually (barring accidents) arrive in London in four and a half days after leaving Manchester." [24] A symposium by these country ministers of their experiences in travelling and collecting would have proved of interest.

This supervision of cases by the Baptist Board served a valuable purpose, and doubtless it was the best that could be devised at the time, but an improved method was long overdue. The laymen who found the money were restless. They considered the cases needed fuller inquiry, and that the title deeds should be examined with greater care, as many of the country buildings were subject to unsatisfactory trusts. They also complained, apparently with some justice, of the unbusinesslike methods of the ministers, who allowed months to go by without dealing with a case, and then recommended several at express speed, with the result that there was hopeless confusion in the collecting. Early in 1784, therefore, a representative committee was called together "to consider the best mode of regulating the present disorderly practice of several country ministers being in town at the same time soliciting assistance." The outcome of the deliberations of this committee was the formation later in 1784 of the "Baptist Case Committee." This will form the subject of the next article.

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

[24] Harper: *Stage Coach and Mail in Days of Yore.*

Wales under the Penal Code, 1662—1687.

DR. RICHARDS has already published a history of the Puritan Movement in Wales from 1639 to 1653, and another of the religious developments, 1654 to 1662. This third volume, like the others, is due to a prize from the National Eisteddfod.[1] We hardly know which to congratulate more, the principality which encourages such research, or the denomination which raises such a scholar. If all secondary schools are as well staffed as that at Neath, Wales may give us more fine work.

This volume estimates carefully the effect of the ecclesiastical legislation on all classes; the politicians, the Popish recusants, the Quakers, other types of dissenters, the Established Church, schoolmasters, and physicians. There is again abundant reference to sources, and occasional courteous rectification of predecessors, including the author's earlier work. Our readers will appreciate best a sketch, extracted from the work, of how Baptists evolved in this time of persecution.

There were three types of Baptist in Wales, as in England. The Arminian or General Baptists, due to Hugh Evans of Coventry and Thomas Lamb of Colchester, were strongest in Radnor, but had been sadly weakened by the Quaker inroad. This period shows them fined and fined, till one hero lost his last cow; in 1682 most of them emigrated from Nantmel to Pennsylvania. The only deep mark they left was through a Londoner, William Rider, first elder of the church now at Borough Road, who convinced the Particular Baptists that hands should be laid on every one baptized. To the fortunes of these open and close Calvinists we now turn.

The first effect of the Conventicle Act of 1664 was to break down the rigid system favoured by John Miles of Ilston. He and most of his church had gone to the Old Colony in New England. And whereas he had tried to keep Baptists distinct from all others, adversity compelled them to have Presbyterians and Independents as bedfellows. The policy was deliberately promoted by Vavasor Powell, who was released on the fall of Chancellor Hyde, did good work in Monmouth, Glamorgan, and

[1] *Wales under the Penal Code.* By Thomas Richards, M.A., D.Litt. 172 pages, and indexes. National Eisteddfod Association, 1925.

Montgomery; when arrested, he defended himself with great legal skill, but was illegally confined; by *Habeas Corpus* he got up to London, where we are glad to hear of that "very factious man" preaching at Bunhill. In Wales we may probably credit to his organising abilities "the temporary sinking of ancient differences, a new and well-organised itinerant system, the alternation of meeting-places, and the reinforcing of the accredited preachers by" others who repeated the gist of their sermons to fresh congregations.

Dr. Richards has, however, traced the remarkable events which practically destroyed the practice of open-communion, and converted the Baptists almost wholly to strict-communion, at the expense of losing the Montgomery group.

The Olchon valley, on the edge of Hereford, close to Brecknock and Monmouth, was so inaccessible that it became the retreat of the stiffest and most uncompromising men, akin to the Scotch Cameronians: the incumbents in 1676 reported 220 dissenters over sixteen. From Cilmaenllwyd in Carmarthen, on the edge of Pembroke, William Jones had been displaced by a royal nominee in 1660; he was soon in prison at Carmarthen. Here he met the open-Baptist, Jenkin Jones, late of Llanthetty, and by him was converted. But a convert often goes beyond his teacher, as with the Tractarians and the older Papal recusants. William Jones became not only Baptist, but close-Baptist. Instead of being baptized by Jenkin Jones, he went across to Olchon, and by 1666 came back imbued with the dogged spirit of those mountaineers. He set to work on the borders of Cardigan, Carmarthen, and Pembroke, where already there were disciples of Peregrine Phillips and Stephen Hughes, and within a year had baptized thirty people, including some who had been apparently baptized by Jenkin Jones already, and the widow of another incumbent.

The crucial date, however, was 12 July, 1668, six months after the Conventicle Act had expired. Thomas Watkins paid a return visit from Olchon, with William Pritchard of Abergavenny, who had come back to the close-Baptist views of John Miles, and over to the six-principle views of William Rider. They organised the church of Rhydwilm on the basis of "baptizm & laying on of hands." The church deliberately rejected the open-communion views of Powell, revived the machinery of Miles, and became so deeply imbued with the Sixth-principle that when it built its first house in 1701 at Cilfowyr, it engraved Hebrews vi. 2 on a stone placed prominently at the door. Such was the origin of Molleston (Narberth), which at first included more than the inhabitants of the Cleddau valleys, baptizing 113 in the years of persecution.

As Dr. Richards has given a most detailed and documented

history, there are occasional tit-bits. It is delightful to read of Baptists eagerly buying the Statutes at Large, and working up their own cases to the discomfiture of magistrates. Since a "conventicle" became illegal only when five persons besides the family worshipped together, one bright house-holder in an alley got a stentorian preacher upstairs, opened his windows, and let the neighbours listen free. The Baptists were often cheerful, and sure they would win: after the Indulgence of 1667 the miller of Tredwstan broke forth into poetry, and chanted:

Does mo'ch ofon arnaf weithian;
Torwyd llawer ar eich cyrn.

BAMPTON had Baptists on the Tiverton roll at least as early as 1672, when Richard Hooper, John Ball, and Thomas Bryant took out licences. On 5 November, 1690, it was agreed that they should form a distinct church, and within a year they increased from 40 to 114; Ball and Carnall the first leaders. James White came in November 1696, but left within two years. James Murch, of Plymouth and Dalwood, settled in 1703, induced them to sing at their worship, and moved them from the Arthurshayne farmhouse to a place on High Street. He died in 1724. Elkanah Widgery settled within two years, and stayed till his death in 1766. Samuel Rowles followed in 1769, after Daniel Sprague and John Rippon senior had rendered help. He left for Rotherhithe in 1776, just as Thompson was gathering this information.

CULLOMPTON had members of Upottery worshipping here as early as 1700. Building was mooted in 1743, when ..... Vearey presented the case in London, but it took seven years to get the house erected; and Vearey, who had been there since 1736, had moved on to Lymington. Nicholas Gillard settled about 1751, was helped forty years later by Rumson from Exeter, who succeeded him in 1803, when he resigned at the age of 85.

CORNWALL has not been a good soil for Baptists. Though several were there in Commonwealth days, only at two places was there any permanence. Stephen Midhope, rector of St. Martin's, resigned his living and founded a church in Looe, to which he ministered till his death in 1652. Cowlin was minister till 1694, Clement Jackson in 1722. They had a meeting-house, still to be seen in 1862 as a lumber-store, with its burial-ground; but the church died out by 1780, and the name of no minister was recorded in 1715 or 1774. From the labours of Thomas

Tregoss, ejected from Milor and Mabe, arose a Baptist church at Trelevah, near Penryn. John Plurrett was pastor till his death in 1698, then Cowlin from Looe till his death in 1720. John Lob, the deacon, built a thatched meeting-house in 1703. John Burford, a member of Up Ottery, came from Church Stanton in Devon, 1722-1741, and opened a branch at Grampound. After his death the meeting-house was converted into tenements and the cause sank very low. Jonathan Hornblower came in 1745 from Salop, and rallied all Baptists by 1764, building a new meting-house at Chacewater, and merging the remnants of the old churches into what ultimately centred at Falmouth.

UPOTTERY had a tangled and adventurous early history. It may date from 1652, when Luppit was the chief place of meeting, and Thomas Collier was the evangelist to whom it is due. But in the times of persecution they met by stealth in woods and farms, and only in 1695 did they build the New House in Upottery, while the Old Hall at Prescott served others. The first pastor was Thomas Halwell, who piloted them from 1689 at least, till his death about 1720, being helped latterly by Bowsher and John Channin. A building was erected at Prescott in 1718. After Halwell's death there were troubles between rival ministers, and on the question of singing. Prescott organized as a separate church in 1727, but there was another crisis in 1745, settled by Isaac Hann. Prescott's first pastor was John Gillard, who went to Yeovil in 1771, after six years. Wood in a year went to Salendine Nook, Symonds ministered for a few months, then Joseph Alsop settled in 1773, and they built a new house in 1785. Next year Benjamin Thomas came from Upton and soon opened out at Uffculm; he resigned only in 1830. Meanwhile at Upottery Isaac Hann from Stockland guided the church, and promoted a rebuilding. After a year of Crisp, John Rippon senior took charge till the end of the century.

WHITTLESEY AND MARCH had a large company of General Baptists in 1710, when John Cropper, John Shearman, and Benjamin Grantham were leaders. John Catlin worked there in 1714; but to an outsider next year, Thomas Speechley seemed the elder; he had a flock of 160. But the General Baptists were very neglectful of training ministers, and by 1732 services were being conducted by Benjamin Dutton, the Particular Baptist of Wellingborough. The church dwindled; the meeting-house fell down, the property fell into private hands, and in 1774 Josiah Thompson knew nothing of any church. The New Connexion, however, did inquire, found a Thomas Grantham living there, and in 1823 made a new start.