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# William Medley and Friedrich von Hügel.

WHEN a man finds himself in mid life considerably influenced by two men so widely separated ecclesiastically as William Medley and Baron von Hügel, the fact seems to call for some interpretation. It was with the idea of reviewing such a situation so as to clarify its significance, mainly for myself, that I began to make the notes which form the genesis of this article.

William Medley was for thirty-nine years the beloved tutor of men who entered Rawdon College in preparation for the Baptist ministry, and though it is over twenty years since the day when his body was carried to its resting place one autumn morning along the lanes he loved to tread, he yet remains a constant influence in the lives of many men now scattered over the world in the service of Christ. It was one of the greatest days in the writer's life when he first entered the wide-windowed room overlooking the terrace and woods where Medley taught; and it was almost as great a day when a few years later, while roaming about in a Norwich library, he came across two soberly-bound volumes entitled *The Mystical Element of Religion,* by Friedrich von Hügel. One glance at the remarkable index and it was evident that another door in the Kingdom had opened for me; and yet the vista was not wholly strange. Those paths of deductive logic, scientific method, philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, and theism, along which Medley delighted to lead his students, were clearly discernible, and they were seen to be lit up by the same central Sun in Whose light all life became transfigured. Thus without any deliberate seeking two men had quietly come into my life and have dwelt there for some years now with scarcely any conscious friction, though the churches to which they belonged are wide as the poles asunder.

Baron von Hügel, "one of the greatest religious personalities of his time—if not the greatest," was born at Florence, the son of a distinguished Austrian diplomat and a Scotswoman of noble birth. He married a daughter of Lord Lea, one of Gladstone's colleagues, became a naturalised Englishman, and lived latterly at Kensington, where he died in 1925. Oxford and St. Andrew's Universities honoured him with

degrees, and he was appointed Gifford lecturer, but failing health prevented the fulfilment of this task. By his courageous advocacy of the balanced rights of intellectual freedom and ecclesiastical authority he became an acknowledged leader of a movement which came under Papal condemnation and resulted in the excommunication of some of his friends, among them George Tyrrell. His friendships were numerous, including scholars in many countries and various churches, and one of the massive studies in the second volume of his *Essays and Addresses* was delivered to invited friends in the Presbyterian Manse of Dr. Alexander Whyte. At the back of much of his teaching was the generously-admitted influence of such virile Protestant thinkers as Eucken and Troeltsch. But von Hügel was not only a scholar of international repute, he was also a man of unusual humility and devoutness. One who knew him recalls seeing the Baron, after engaging vigorously in some keen debate, slip away into the nearest church and kneel with the simplicity and absorption of a child; and one of his daughters declares that the sight of her father with head bent in adoration before his God was enough to rekindle the dying flame in any doubting soul. More than once in his writings he refers to "a washerwoman with whom I had the honour of worshipping,"—"a sweet saint of God, whose feet I wish I could become worthy to kiss." (*Essays and Addresses,* I., 110, 289.) Men felt a similar influence in the presence of William Medley, especially at College Communions, though it was not absent from the class room. "I always have the same feeling as comes over me when I enter a cathedral," wrote one of his students (Rev. James Mursell). "I think and feel and am more deeply and intensely than ever, but I cannot talk." Both men gave the impression of "a holy marvelling delight in God," together with a certain genial leisurely expansion of mind. Medley was over sixty before his published Angus lectures on *Christ the Truth* gave us his first volume, and von Hügel was already fifty-seven when he issued his first book. Of his second volume, *Eternal Life,* he said to a niece, "I wrote the thing praying; read it as written, child." (*Letters to a Niece,* 72.) Both men had made slight appearances in print during earlier years, Medley, in a pamphlet on the organic unity of the New Testament, and von Hügel in published correspondence on the Pentateuch. Each had also received an early grounding in Hebrew, the former by Ewald at Göttingen, the latter by Gustav Bickell and a Jewish Rabbi, and in both cases something similar appears to have resulted—Hebrew and textual studies gave way to philosophical and psychological interests, and the experience of God became the ultimate reality they sought to interpret. Yet to the end each maintained a love for ancient

Greek and Roman authors, Medley's *Interpretations of Horace* appearing posthumously, and von Hügel's *Selected Letters* revealing a scholar's zeal for the classics up to a short time before his death. It is scarcely surprising that with such similar *attraits* Medley and von Hügel should, despite ecclesiastical differences, reveal interesting resemblances and suggest significant comparisons.

First approaches to these men through their writings have for some proved somewhat baffling owing to complexities of style and unfamiliar orientations of thought. "Solid, liquid, gas—are the three forms in which thought can be presented; the last for an audience, the second for a book, the first for an archangel in retreat," wrote Tyrrell complainingly to von Hügel, and he does seem at times to have had the archangels in mind rather than average human beings. (*Letters*, 13.) But it would be a mistake to conclude that either Medley or von Hügel was indifferent in matters of clear thinking and accurate statement. Medley took his students through a steady course in deductive logic and scientific method before advancing to philosophical studies, and von Hügel insisted on the value of "the purgatorial function of severe scientific methods and habits" for the full development of the religious life. (*Letters*, 192.) But they recognised that although reality presents an aspect towards the reason, yet in its fulness it transcends logical expression. "The higher you rise in the scale of values the less amenable to tabulation are its items found to be," was one of Medley's aphorisms, and von Hügel similarly declared that "the richer is any reality in the scale of being the less immediately transferable is our knowledge of the reality." (*Essays*, I., 11.) For both men reality at its highest is a personal spiritual power continually seeking to penetrate our human life. Medley speaks of "that transcendent reality which environs us, and which in the experience of us all is every now and again breaking through the narrow range of our actual sensible experience" (*Christ the Truth*, 11); and von Hügel writes of "the existence of a personal reality sufficiently like us to be able to penetrate and move us through and through, the which, by so doing, is the original and persistent cause of this our noblest dissatisfaction with anything and all things merely human." (*Essays*, I., 40-41.) Essentially at one in their conceptions of reality their ideas of ultimate truth are similar. To Medley truth was a trust culminating "in the hush of silence when we find ourselves wrapped in the closest embrace of reality." (*Christ the Truth*, 17.) To von Hügel "a centre of light losing itself gradually in utter darkness." (*Readings from F. v. H.*, Ed. by A. Thorold, xii.) It is in such a surplusage of increasing inarticulateness and

dimness that they found place for a valid mysticism. But Medley utters a warning that "the mere idle escape from the controversial pursuer into a darkness or mist where the fugitive can no longer be traced deserves all the censure, and even contemptuous denunciation, which in the lips of many is deemed the only method of dealing with mysticism." (*Christ the Truth,* 181, 182.) Von Hügel, too, insists that mysticism needs to be balanced by the scientific habit, that "man will have carefully to keep in living touch with that secondary and preliminary reality, the Thing-world, Physical Science and Determinist Law." (*Mystical Element,* II., 378.) And he practised what he preached. About the time of the completion of his great work on mysticism he wrote to Tyrrell—"I was fifty-seven yesterday, and am giving myself a set of newer geological books, a geological hammer, and a set of geological type specimens, so expect you to tramp about with me to gravel pits and quarries, please." Thus both men realized the peril of a spurious mysticism which sentimentally shrinks from hard fact and bracing thought; indeed, von Hügel's famous work is partly a protest against an unduly simplified subjective pietism which ignores those other valid human interests which go to the making of a healthy, full-orbed religious life. "Religion is not clear but vivid; not simple but rich." (*Essays,* I., 102-103.) The secret of fruitful living, they agreed, consists in a recognition of the needs of light and darkness, movement and repose, reason and faith, nature and supernature, for the soul's development. Thus Medley: "An absolute trust, abiding alone, is but a dead, inert thing, a stone built into a wall. On the other hand an ever continuous movement, cut off from repose, is a vain, empty restlessness; neither of these is life. But the two in balanced harmony give us in outline the perfected ideal of human life." (*Christ the Truth,* 197.) And so von Hügel: "The soul can live, to be fully normal in normal circumstances, only by a double process; occupation with the concrete, and then abstraction from it, and this alternately, on and on. If it has not the latter it will grow empty and hazy; if it has not the former it will grow earthly and heavy." (*Letters,* 72.) But this ideal of a balanced relationship between rest and movement, faith and reason, is difficult to actualize; in expression it involves paradox, in ethics a costly tension. And here it is interesting to note that both Medley and von Hügel use the suggestive idea of "polarity" to describe certain aspects of this dualism in experience. "A sphere," says Medley, "by virtue of its characteristic nature, is constituted by a centre and polar opposites. To one who is surveying it from without, these opposing poles can never be viewed together in the harmony of their mutual relationships.

But let the spectator be admitted to the interior and take up a position at the centre, then these polar opposites, with no change of place, lose their recalcitrant antagonism and melt into the satisfying harmony of perfect form." (*Christ the Truth,* 25.) Von Hügel's use of the idea is different but more fundamental. "Religious experience," he repeats, "possesses a double polarity —of Otherworldliness and detachment, and of This-worldliness and attachment." (*Eternal Life,* 199.) But whereas Medley saw this double polarity mainly as a strain to one outside the sphere of Christianity, von Hügel perceived it to be a characteristic tension of life within the Kingdom. "The movement of the specifically Christian life and conviction," he declares, "is not a circle round a single centre—detachment; but an ellipse round two centres—detachment and attachment. And precisely in this difficult but immensely fruitful oscillation and rhythm between, as it were, the two poles of the spiritual life . . . consists the completion and culmination of the Christian life." (*Mystical Element,* II., 127.)

Medley conceived the trained Christian mind as a wheel with its spokes radiating from a common centre, or as a Jacob's ladder up which his student "angels of the churches" were taught to ascend to Christian truth and descend with its transfiguring light, the rungs of that ladder being the various categories of knowledge. He began with the logic of deduction as a necessary first step towards valid reasoning, but pointed out that its chief value lies in the sphere of the abstract; it can give us no "access to the concrete." When we advance to scientific method we are in touch with the facts of nature and its uniformities of operation. But the discovery and application of these so-called "laws" of nature impel the awakened mind to seek some unifying idea which shall explain their origin and purpose. This is the concern of philosophy. Aesthetics come in here as attempts at creative embodiments of ideas expressive of the beautiful. However, man's soul cannot live by ideas alone; he requires also ideals to regulate conduct, hence ethics finds its place as helping him to achieve "a completely fashioned will" and attain to "the beauty of holiness." But in this further search the mystery of conscience meets us and we ask what can be the significance of that "categorical imperative" which speaks within saying "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not." It is merely a personal consciousness of corporate custom, or may it be the utterance of a divine will? With this problem we are led on to theism and the direct search for God. But when we are convinced of His existence we yearn, "*Show* us the Father, and it sufficeth us." To meet this ultimate desire Christianity comes with the great word of Jesus—"He that hath seen Me hath seen

the Father." Thus the secret of life is found in fellowship with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Trained to organize his thinking thus, The Christian, said Medley, "may pass easily from one to another, from lower to higher, with no sense of jolt or jar; while from the highest, where beyond dispute his own best life is lived, there will be shed down a kindling and interpreting light even upon subjects which are most remote, and to common apprehension perhaps out of all connection with what is denominated the spiritual life." (*Christ the Truth,* 246-247.)

Now there is much in all this with which von Hügel would agree, however he might suspect the system as a whole. "Ethics, philosophy, science, and all other special strivings of man," he writes, "have indeed their right and duty persistently to contribute their share in awakening, widening, sweetening, man's imagination, mind, emotions, will; and thus to aid him also in his preparation for, and his interpretation of, the visitations of God's spirit." (*Essays,* I., 47, 48.) And he assesses the values of these various realms of knowledge much as Medley does. He, too, is careful to point out that deductive logic can guarantee validity of inference but not truth of fact. "It is all absolutely clear, yes; but just because here we have nowhere affirmed the *existence* or *reality* of anything whatsoever." (*Essays,* I., 101.) He is at one with Medley on certain aspects of the scientific quest. "What is every scientific discovery, when we penetrate to its centre, but the vital contact of two minds, the individual mind and the universal mind," suggests Medley (*Christ the Truth,* 79, 80); and similarly von Hügel says, concerning the fundamental correspondence between the human reason and the rationality of nature, that "the immensity of this success is an unanswerable proof that this rationality is not imposed but found there by man. Thus faith in science is faith in God." (*Essays,* I., 71.) But he was careful to claim for the sciences the right to pursue their own methods of research independent of theologcial procedures and prepossessions. And as clearly as Medley he perceives the extent and limitations of philosophy. "Philosophy ends, surely, with certain desiderata and possibilities which religion meets, traverses, restates. . . . And yet how can philosophy, and such philosophy (*i.e.,* Hegel's) be man's ultimate faith, an outlook that ignores or minimizes temptation, doubt, sin?" (*Eternal Life,* 222.) In their theories of aesthetics there are again helpful mutual reinforcements, and it is significant that Medley, Baptist though he was, found himself led by his theories to admit the validity and value of symbolism and ritual for some souls. (*Christ the Truth,* 269.) Alluding to the

joy of poet and artist in their allegiance to truth and beauty, Medley finds "a certain implication that there must be found, existing above and behind them all, a Supreme Personality with whom they themselves are in some undiscovered yet assuredly vital relation." (*Christ the Truth,* 279.) And von Hügel, commenting on the emotion that runs through Plato's deepest writings, concludes it to be more than merely personal. "No, the emotion which permeates those deepest passages is stirred by, and given to, a reality . . . which has thus itself found and then holds him." (*Essays,* II., 176.) Coming to the realm of ethics Medley believes that the transfiguration of duty consists in realizing that "it is not only the Will Supreme that in every duty is in vital contact with the will of man, but also that it is the will of Him who loves us with an infinite love." (*Christ the Truth,* 287.) So also von Hügel sees that "the religious soul, in proportion to the strength of its religion, always reaches beyond all abstract law, all mere sense of duty and obligation . . . to this unique personalist Reality, to God as beatitude and Beatifier." (*Essays,* II., 221.) "God is in duty," he reminds his niece. As regards theism, a fundamental conception, common to both men, of a transcendent personal reality seeking to penetrate this soiled and sinning life of ours has already been indicated, but it might be noted here that both men insisted that this reality is not to be discovered as one fact among other facts to be scientifically demonstrated. "God can never be discovered as one object among many," said Medley, (*Notes on Theism*), and "God is certainly not just one object among other objects," sounds like an echo in one of von Hügel's essays. (*Essays,* I., 50.) And they were equally insistent that "that which consummates the process exhibits the true bearing and function of all that has preceded it," (*Christ the Truth,* 263), and were a little scornful of "the obsession of origins." (*Christ the Truth,* 125; *Essays,* I., 141.)

In the preface to the second edition of his *Mystical Element of Religion* (1923) von Hügel confessed to a gradual change of mind in one matter since its first publication (1908), declaring his matured conviction that "religion has no subtler, and yet no deadlier enemy in the region of the mind, than every and all Monism," expressing agreement with Troeltsch's judgement when, in reviewing Edward Caird's *Evolution of Religion,* he pointed out "how slender was the *religious* power and fruitfulness of all Hegelian interpretations of religion." Von Hügel overstrains language in his endeavour to press home the truth that "the Christian life begins, proceeds, and ends with the Given. . . . The otherness, the prevenience of God, the one-sided relation between God and man, these constitute the deepest measure and

touchstone of all religion." (*Mystical Element,* I., xvi.) It was this emphasis in von Hügel which helped me to correct a somewhat unbalanced application of Medley's teaching. I had begun to realize how much one is compelled to ignore in the New Testament when unduly dominated by the attempt to arrive at an intellectually unified system of belief, and found myself asking the question von Hügel asks when summarizing Hegel's philosophy—"Gethsemane and Calvary, are they truly, fully here?" (*Eternal Life,* 223.) But when Medley published *Christ the Truth,* he added as a sub-title—"An essay towards the organization of Christian thinking," and it is perhaps a needful reminder that in his work as a tutor he was not attempting to lead men to Christ, but rather helping them to bring every thought into captivity to Him by whom they had already been redeemed. But unless a man had a very vital and enduring redemptive experience as a convert he might find a too devoted and limited absorption of Medley's teaching weakening a Pauline interpretation of the Gospel. However, if there are three doctrinal strands in the New Testament—the Pauline, the Petrine and the Johannine—this might only mean that Medley emphasized the Johannine strand without denying the necessity of the other two. In his pamphlet *The New Testament an Organic Unity* (which Dr. Dale characterized as opening "an argument of great interest, depth, and power"), he notes three strands running through the Book, relates them to the three great types of humanity, the Jew, the Greek, and the Roman, and finds them expressed in the delineation of the Person and teaching of Jesus and the presentation of the Gospel. And here again von Hügel comes to reinforce and develop the teaching of Medley, for his famous chapter on "The Three Elements of Religion" is a massive expansion of much that is explicit and implicit in Medley's early essay, and indeed in his teaching as a whole. (*Mystical Element,* I., 3-82.) But von Hügel goes further back than Medley to discover the sources of the three elements of religion, and advances further in his applicaiton of them. He traces their unfoldings through childhood, youth, and manhood, giving us respectively the three factors of tradition, reason and experience, factors which are found in varying order and degree sublimated in every mature Christian life. In organised religion they help to determine our main ecclesiastical divisions, the traditional or authoritative element finding its expression in various forms of Catholicism; the intellectual or speculative in Modernism and other liberal theological movements; the experimental or mystical in certain phases of Pietism and Evangelism. Each element has some essential value, and wherever one wholly cancels out another the religious life,

whether individual or corporate, suffers loss. "The forward advance of religion should be made on the whole front, and not upon any one section." (*Letters,* 30.) Von Hügel is thus led to recognize the validity of vital Nonconformist movements as tonic reminders to the church of the experimental element, instancing, among others, John Newton and John Bunyan as typical English representatives of this element. (*Mystical Element,* I., 63.) Yet it would be a mistake to regard von Hügel as an eclectic; he remained to the end a convinced worshipper within the Roman communion, though he was a courageous and penetrating critic of some of its sins and weaknesses. But it was a fundamental principle with him that Christians should remain within their own churches unless convinced that it would be a sin not to leave them, and thus he never set out to win converts to his own church; "that would be an odious presumption," he once said. (*Letters,* 312.) "God makes lovely little flowers grow everywhere, but someone always comes and sits on them," he complained, and was careful himself not to do it, but he had little sympathy with people "who water broomsticks to grow roses." (*Letters to a Niece,* x. xi.) How reminiscent of William Medley is all this in its charity and humour. In an address to ministers on "Ideals," Medley spoke of three types of ministry as expressing the great principles of Truth, Righteousness and Love. The function of the ministry is to commend Christianity to the minds, consciences, and hearts of men; but ministers will find themselves by grace, nature and training more fitted to exercise one type than another. "It is of the utmost consequence," he concludes, "that acknowledging this we should cherish no invidious affection for our own type, but cultivate an ever-deepening and enlarging sympathy with that which is not ours." And von Hügel strikes the same note in an address on the Church. "We can have conflict of priests with prophets and professors," he knows, "but man is a complex creature; he will do well not to mutilate himself, but instead to check, supplement, purify, ever anew, each constituent and range of his religion by the others." (*Essays,* II., 68.)

Medley died in 1908; von Hügel in 1925. The years are significant, for between them occurred that world-war which not only overthrew empires and shook the social order, but also unsettled Christian institutions and disturbed religious thought. Medley knew nothing of all this; von Hügel lived through it and found himself compelled to face many of its resultant problems. This may have hastened the change in his thinking already mentioned, and may partly account for differences of emphasis in Medley and von Hügel on certain matters. Medley had little room in his thinking for dualisms, complexes and

cataclysms; von Hügel, on the other hand, saw spiritual value in distressing antagonisms, and "costly, complex, but consoling" tensions. He became one of the greatest modern apologists for organized religion, though he sometimes spoke of it as being "his hairshirt!" (*Letters to a Niece,* xxxviii.), and he was almost a voice crying in the wilderness in his plea for a patient and enlightened consideration of the doctrine of an imminent, sudden, personal return of Christ.[1] Here is a characteristic sentence occurring in an exposition of Christ's teaching regarding war—"The time is short, eternity is long, God is the great Reality, before Him we are about to stand. Our Lord's heart and will are *there.*" (*The German Soul,* 41.) These dualistic, ecclesiastic, and apocalyptic accents were rarely detected in Medley's teaching: whether they would have developed had he lived through the war years it is, of course, impossible to say, but it may be said with certainty that nothing would have shaken his belief that Christianity is essentially fellowship, just as nothing weakened von Hügel's conviction that religion is adoration.

Limitations of space prevent much further use of material accumulated slowly for some years from the teachings of these two Christian thinkers; the comparisons, if fully noted and worked out, would require a volume. They are remarkable and significant; nearly all the characteristic elements of Medley's teaching are found elaborated in von Hügel's writings, but they will not be apparent to a desultory or hasty reader. These two men were separated ecclesiastically by a great gulf, yet no Papal anathemas or Protestant antagonisms could deprive either of the realization of abiding joy in God. "I feel I am slipping away, but I have had such a complete life," Medley said to his minister, the Rev. C. E. Shipley. "With me, during the last few years, praise has sadly encroached on prayer, but the two best Psalms are the 23rd and the 103rd, and there is not a word of prayer in them, they are all praise." And a few days before von Hügel passed away he said—"I wait for the breath of God, God's breath. Perhaps He will call me to-day—to-night. Don't let us be niggardly towards God. He is never niggardly towards us. . . . I would like to finish my book[2]—but if not I shall live it out in the Beyond." (*Letters to a Niece,* xlii.) Recently there came into my possession some of Medley's note books. In one of them, on a page by itself, he had written the words—"Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." And those words were included upon von Hügel's Memorial Card.

[1] For review of von Hügel's teaching on the Second Coming, see article in "The Student Movement," December 1928, by the present writer.

[2] *The Reality of God.* The book was unfinished and unpublished.

In an unpublished letter Lady von Hügel wrote—"Dante's 'Thy Will is my Peace' is another I should have liked to have added"; and many of Medley's students will remember how he cherished that sentence of the great Florentine, quoting its more usual rendering—"His will is our peace." On his memorial tablet in Shipley Baptist Church are the words—"A great scholar, and a revered teacher of the divine mysteries, he dwelt in the secret place of the Most High."—"God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

P. FRANKLIN CHAMBERS.

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MARTEN OF SUSSEX. John Marten, yeoman of Cuckfield, in 1608 married Elizabeth Tiltman, was churchwarden 1617, died December, 1621. His third son, Michael, settled at Ardingly and married Katherine Jenner of Cuckfield in 1622; he too was a yeoman, and died in 1663. His sixth child was born in 1637, and settled at Franklands in Keymer; he married Elizabeth Marchant of Ditchling. He it was who became Baptist, and was reported as the head and teacher at the conventicle held at the house of his son-in-law, James Wood, in Twineham. The influence he wielded is shown in his being chosen, nevertheless, as churchwarden of Ditchling in 1677. His fellow-churchwarden, John Chatfield, soon yielded Baptist recruits, and Robert became another son-in-law. Marten died in 1706, and was succeeded by a younger son, Peter. The eldest son, Thomas, was already a freeholder of Fragbarrow in Ditchling. He was followed by his eldest son Michael, who lived till 1753; he was one of the first trustees for the Baptist Meeting at Ditchling, built by Robert Chatfield of Lewes. The family ramified in many directions; a pedigree was published in 1926, but it does not cover a number of Baptists:—Benjamin of Chichester in 1737, Benjamin of Sevenoaks in 1768, Peter of Bessels Green till 1833, Benjamin of Headcorn and Dover, 1797-1819, Joseph of Ditchling 1798, Joseph of Saffron Walden 1843, John of Peckham 1874.

# Authority.

*A paper read at the Rawdon College Reunion.*

AMONG the topics for religious discussion the subject of Authority has undoubtedly come into prominence again in recent years.

It will be readily conceded that all men are conscious of a higher law of life, and that the normal man orders his life under its constraining influence. The healthy life is governed by a regulative principle which gathers up the enduring significance of every experience and co-ordinates the vast complexities of life into systematic unity. Under its influence we live, *i.e.*, our thoughts, feelings and actions are under its control. Undoubtedly there are occasions of rebellion against it, due to the temporary loss of the magnetism in the ideal or because of the untoward calamitous experiences to which all life is subject. In some cases, this principle is unworthy of life's solemn obligations, but in most men there are times when it hovers around the borderland of the sublime. Its chief feature is that it is always something higher than man's actual life—something that, whether by constraint or compulsion, influences man towards a nobler form of life. Thus it comes to man authoritatively. It beckons from the heights for man to make the ascent, but behind that beckoning is a "must" and an "ought" for the man who truly lives.

For our purposes, we would discard those lower forms of Authority, such as social conventions and legal systems. They savour too oft of the negative and prohibitive. Our need is for something positive and capable of quickening the individual's initiative. If Authority be degraded to a tyrant's palace where hangs the sword of Damocles, it must inevitably fail to achieve its object, and herald in its own disaster. For Authority to succeed, it must elicit not only willing acquiescence but active co-operation. Furthermore, we would preclude those spasmodic intermittent forms of Authority, regarding some as exceptions to the general rule and others as peaks in the upland reaches of life. We would focus thought on some enduring principles to which man's life is lived in abeyance and which holds the solution for our varying experiences. This principle or law must be of such a character that its influence upon man is not only enduring but cumulative or progressive. In other words, its net result must be that the "soul of man goes marching on."

To produce such an effect it must appeal to man as a unified

entity. For good or ill, man is the arbiter of his own fate. He is so constituted that he has the capacity to apprehend, within limits, life's *summum bonum.* Life would be an unworthy existence unless we had this progressive power to comprehend with increasing fulness the nature of that Authority that demands our allegiance. As we are able to bear it the truth is revealed to us. But no true advance can ever be made until the component parts of our life are all active. It is conceivable that the fervour of a glowing ideal may hold a man in complete homage for some time. But experience, both corporate and individual, has testified to its lack of durability and sane perspective. Perspective fails equally when reason would demonstrate with mathematical precision the dictates of this overruling power. Since man both thinks and feels, Authority must evoke allegiance from mind and heart. Submission is by reason and faith, but we endeavour to give a reason for our faith, and faith supplements intellectual limitations. Thus comes life's vaster music when mind and soul are in complete accordance. But submission, to be complete, depends also upon another element in man's nature. Reason and faith, or mind and feeling must together result in arousing the will to action. We must " will to do the will " of that Authority over life. Without it, there would be no progressive advance whereby reason could further explore the intricacies of Authority and faith could give its warmest allegiance.

But mind, soul and will constitute personality, and Authority makes its appeal to the whole personality, and from it seeks allegiance. Its avenue of approach may vary, but the healthy response is undoubtedly from the life in which all the phases are in harmonious co-operation.

The question arises, Is this Authority internal or external, is it simply a matter of subjective experience, or does it rest on some objective fact? Is there an inner light in my own being, or is there some reality without which controls my life? Are we qualified to decide this issue? We are the products of heredity and environment. Our life has been so made for us before we took the helm that it cannot be our judgment solely. We are so hedged in by presuppositions that an unbiased view seems impossible. Yet, notwithstanding, the unalterable fact remains. Man has faced the issue and must continually face it. Intelligent personality were a wasted gift if we refused to seek all the enlightenment we can upon so vital a problem.

The wisdom of the ages has postulated an objective authority. Our being is such that we cannot formulate any contrary statement. If in the pursuit of an unbiased judgment we could eradicate the past from man's nature, there would be no intelligent personality to deliver the verdict. We can only

deal with life as we know it, and life demands a principle, cause or power beyond itself. This something beyond must be greater than our actual life,—something that we can rest upon,—something that can speak to us with authority. The contention may be raised that this external power is only an inward idealization of our own. Life needs some such bulwark, and hence we affirm it. To accept this theory would be to shatter the whole fabric of metaphysic and religion. Our individual belief is that ultimate power is strengthened by the testimony of the ages.

Since man possesses personality he needs an ultimate power that is personal. Some may be unable to postulate more than a first cause, principle, or power. But our contention is that personality could never intelligently submit to such an Authority. Our complete confidence can only be granted to one who is like us in nature and being. He must have the warm, loving heart, the rational mind, and the good will. He must be like us, but immeasurably above us. He must be the Author of life in its highest forms—not merely the originator of cosmic forces but the creator of personality, and we discover such a one in the God of Christianity. His is the authority to which human personality can give allegiance.

But humanity can never rest content with an unknown God, and humanity of itself could never with confidence ascribe these attributes to God. The metaphysician can tell you nothing about his first cause except in so far as that cause is operative in the world. The God of Christianity would be an insoluble enigma unless He had manifested Himself unto men. Here we are absolutely dependent upon divine self-revelation and our interpretation of that revelation. God has given self-expression to Himself specifically in Nature, the Bible, the Church, Jesus Christ, and the Inner Light of the individual. All these exercise authority over us, but their authority is vested ultimately in God, and through them we are led to that final and supreme authority.

Our interpretation of these forms of divine revelation imposes a solemn responsibility upon the individual. Like the Bereans we must receive, examine and accept. Scientific methods of investigation are invaluable assets in determining how far these secondary authorities can lead us to the ultimate Authority, God. These are the subject-matter with which human intelligence can deal in its honest endeavour to discover the eternal truth in the divine nature. To discard these methods would be beneath the dignity of manhood as created by God, dishonouring unto God Himself, and flinging wide open the door to innumerable sources of error. Blind belief can never be enthroned, where belief need not be blind.

These subsidiary authorities are invaluable as correctives of each other. Assuming that each individual must build up his own spiritual world where God reigns supreme, the liability to error is self-evident. All the data at his disposal must be examined ruthlessly, and advance steps must be delayed until, as with Newton, no conflicting evidence remains. It may conceivably arise that the individual's inner light may discern a way of God, but confirmation would assuredly come from God's revelation in the Bible, Church, or Jesus Christ, before whole-hearted adherence is justified. Man's spiritual cosmos where God reigns as the supreme Authority can only include those elements or truths verified by manifestations of the deity in other media.

A unique place as an external authority has ever justly been ascribed to the Bible. The contribution of the sacred books to the individual's cosmos consists of the records of the lives of righteous people and their inspired utterances, and also of the progressive moral development of a race culminating in Jesus Christ, humanity's best and deity's most complete manifestation. Omitting the considerations of Jesus Christ as an Authority for the moment, we regard the Jewish people, individually and racially, as a human channel for divine revelation. Deity's Authority was vested in those people subject to human limitations. Admitting that divine omnipotence could use an imperfect medium for a perfect expression of His will, such a course of action would not commend itself to us. It would violate our conception of deity and the ordered intelligence with which man is endowed. The most definite declarations of Authority are contained in the Sinaitic Commandments and the prophetic "Thus saith the Lord." Declarations such as these are not deprived of authority, but rather is their force enhanced in the life of a man who examines and seeks to verify them by reference to other forms of divine revelation. To such a man verbal inspiration is an immaterial side issue. The only point at issue for him is to what extent were the divine mind and character revealed in the utterances and lives of the Jewish people. This is the message that comes with Authority to his own soul—the manifested authority of the Eternal Being.

Sections of the Christian Church have claimed external authority and exercised it over their adherents. The church is an invaluable aid to the individual in discerning the mind of God, but a sectional authority can never be applicable to the whole fellowship of believers. Priestly mediation may prove to be a help in difficulty and sorrow, but it is a delegation of our spiritual birthright of access to God through Christ. The Church cannot be infallible as long as it is composed of fallible Christians. But

the Church Universal has an authoritative message for mankind. Like the Bible its history is a record of saintly lives, and in its treasure-house is gathered the sanctified wisdom of men who lived in the fear of God.

Thus the Bible and the Church lead us to men who lived as we are trying to live—men who found God in their experience—men to whom the consciousness of God came as a supreme controlling power in life. In so far as these lives are an effulgence of the eternal glory, so far does their authoritative influence over us extend. Similarly the corporate wisdom of these men as contained in the Bible and Church teaching contains authoritative precepts for our guidance.

The contemplation of spiritual personalities in the Bible and Church leads us to the supreme example in Jesus Christ. The Christian world regards His life as an authoritative example and His teachings as authoritative precepts for all time. But let us here insist that it is the character and spirit behind their expression in life and utterance that are of primary importance. Our Lord might not turn the water into wine in modern England or advocate the gift of the cloak to him who took the coat. The incidental and circumstantial are not necessarily of permanent value, but the divine character in Christ lives and endures for all time, and as such exercises authority over man.

Our Lord is the supreme Authority for man, because He is the Perfect Revelation of God—as complete a manifestation of the divine nature as earthly limitations would admit. Such limitations are due not to Christ Himself, for He was the Son of God, but to a God revealing Himself amid world conditions and comprehensible to finite minds. Even the portraiture of Christ in the gospels has been given us through the finite intelligence of their authors.

Our Lord's Authority is supreme because He Himself was completely surrendered to the Divine Will. Was it spiritual vision that impelled the centurion to discern this characteristic in Christ, when he declared that he himself was "*also* a man under authority"? We behold Him in nightly prayer and Gethsemane's garden. "Not My will, but Thine be done," was the undercurrent of His life. Life thus surrendered unto God could not fail to learn the divine will and become the highest revelation of God to man. Inasmuch as God was "Lord of the conscience" to Christ, so He stands in that same relationship to us.

One gracious characteristic of our Lord's Authority is that it is persuasive in method. Authority in its noblest forms must succeed not by compulsion, but by constraint. It must win allegiance, not drive men to it. Though in Christ's sway over

men, there is the dark background of stern penalties for human sin, yet the foreground is radiant with the picture of a supplicating Lord. He reasoned at length with honest enquirers, He taught in parables, He strove to interest the soul through the healing of the body. He gave His life on Calvary as the sublime example of a love that sought to win men. Acclaiming Himself Lord and Master, He becomes for man's sake the suffering servant. Love has an Authority all its own, and it is this form of Authority that has enthroned Christ in the lives of men.

We ascribe supremacy to our Lord's Authority because it tends to impart a moral grandeur to life. There is a growing consensus of opinion that the world's salvation lies in a better way of life. We are the grateful recipients of moral precepts from every uplifting religion, but we see them reach their zenith in the Christian teaching. We become disciples of every inspired teacher, but the character of the Christ stands as a lone star in the firmament. It is the *ne plus ultra* of human aspiration, and the human ideal reaches its noblest in the Christ way of life. The disciple would be as his Master, not in doing or saying what He did, but in being what He was in nobility of character. Men visualise life at its best. The Christian consciousness ever touches up with fresh details the soul's picture of the Christ. Living in the fellowship of that ideal, we grow consciously and unconsciously more like unto it, until finally alienation ceases and we acclaim Him, " My Lord and my God."

We discover, moreover, an Authority in Christ that gives stability to life in all its phases. The two chief causes of unrest are intellectual and emotional. When youth would find a reason for its faith, it oft turns away sickened at heart from the old shibboleths, but it clings to a true-hearted man who has fought his way through to a deeper faith. Then it contemplates Jesus calmly thinking things out in the quiet seclusion of the Nazareth home, beholds the unruffled serenity amid growing hostility of that unconquerable personality, and finally sees the ultimate surrender in Gethsemane. Though youth confesses its inability to comprehend it all, yet it does feel that here was One who was true to Himself and had found what it wants to find. Thus the conviction steadily grows that it must hold on to Christ, until like Him it wins its way through to moral peace. Similarly we turn instinctively to Him in life's calamitous experiences. We behold a wondrous wealth of sympathy. Sympathy unlocks the door of rebellious hearts, and once again the fevered mind and tortured soul find peace. From His Gethsemane He comes to us in ours, and His mantle of victory and peace falls upon our shoulders. So through Him we reach the Christian's goal and become men well-established in the faith.

Finally, Christ's Authority is supreme, because it persuades the will to action. Christian progress ensues when there is a definite determination on the part of the individual to make the Christ life his own standard. Men fall under the spell of the magnetic splendour of the Christ and passionately long to be more like Him. Or thinking Christ's thoughts after Him, they are led by reflection to make Him the foundation of their reasoned faith. But both avenues of approach lead to that fuller way of life where the definite stand for Christ is taken. Thus by successive decisions, the surrender of the human will becomes so complete that the moral shock is experienced not when some fresh act of self-abnegation is demanded, but in the momentary lapses from rectitude. By this means we approximate nearest to the example of Christ, who in life's darkest hour could pray, "Not My will, but Thine, be done."

For these reasons we regard our Lord as the supreme manifested Authority of God. Looking unto the latter we are led to say, "Our Father," and give to Him the children's obedience. Some aspects of that divine authority we cannot fully comprehend, but eternal wisdom and love so permeate the known that with filial love we follow Him into the unknown. He has given His Son as the supreme objective standard for man. Our aim to to realise within ourselves its subjective counterpart—"the Christ in the heart." In this we are helped by the gift of the Holy Spirit—which some would describe as the Inner Light—which shall guide us into all truth. In the truest sense every man must make his own Christ—the Christ of his own soul verified by the great objective standards. Such a subjective Christ must inevitably fall below the objective standard, but God has ordained that this should be the Christian procedure, and man's privilege and glory consist in bringing his human limitations down to an irreducible minimum. To such a Lord Jesus Christ and to God through Him we accord the highest type of Authority, for in them "we live, and move, and have our being."

S. R. WARD.

# Christian Traditions: Their Value and their Channels.

"I HAVE read somewhere a reputed saying of the Saviour, and whether some one attributed it to Him, or remembered it, I query whether it is genuine." So remarked Origen, suggesting two tests for any reputed fact—it must be repeated by credible people, it must be intrinsically credible. His critical faculty had been trained in Alexandria, a factory of literature, which sometimes challenged attention on its own merits, sometimes claimed a respectable origin. He knew several semi-Christian Gospels and Acts, and occasionally cited a sentence from them; but said broadly that their authors undertook their task rashly without the needful gifts of grace. He was evidently ready to admit that they might contain a real fact here and there, but he expected both external evidence and internal probability, before accepting any.

When he reached Palestine, he was in close touch with Jews, who had long considered the question of tradition, and had come to the conclusion that nothing was to be accepted unless every link in the chain was known, and guaranteed in character. The Mishna was a collection of trustworthy traditions, in gathering which Rabbi Aqiba had been prominent. One of these is that Rabbi Eliezer was told at Sepphoris by Jacob of Kephar Sekhanya that Jesus of Nazareth expounded Micah i. 7, (Of the hire of a harlot hath she gathered them, and unto the hire of a harlot shall they return) as meaning, "From filth it came, to the place of filth it shall go."

That is the one saying attributed to our Lord which has a guaranteed pedigree, outside Christian circles. Muslims inherited the sense that a tradition is not to be considered, unless the chain of its transmitters is known; this was illustrated by Miss McLean in these pages last July. We propose now to apply the principle not only to reputed sayings of the Lord, but to other alleged happenings of apostolic days. When we can trace a statement being copied, we often note that it gains in detail; every embellishment must be discarded unless its own pedigree can be traced.

We shall be content when the first link is of the apostolic age, and shall not go into minute criticism of the synoptic gospels. It will suffice to notice that the importance of accurate

information and accurate transmission was recognized from the first. Paul declared that he had received from the Lord several things that he had told the Corinthians; and in relation to conduct he emphasized to the Thessalonians that tradition might be either oral or written. Timothy was bidden hand on to another generation what he had heard, that this tradition might be further transmitted. The epistle to the Hebrews was avowedly by one of the second generation, who relied on what he had been told by actual hearers of the Lord. Luke contrasted the procedure of some narrators with his own; he offered certainty because he had carefully enquired from eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.

More than a hundred anecdotes or sayings of the Lord are found outside the New Testament; most of them have no vouchers at all. A very few, in the gospels according to the Hebrews and according to the Egyptians, can be traced up to Julius Cassianus; as he flourished more than a century after Christ, he is no good witness. For the others we will work downwards, not upwards.

Clement, writing from Rome about A.D. 95, says that Paul reached the farthest bounds of the West; that the apostles, preaching everywhere in country and town, appointed their first converts, when they had tested them, to be bishops and deacons; and further, that they provided a continuance so that on their death other tested men should succeed. While the letter was probably penned by Clement, it went as a letter of the church at Rome, and for these statements is good evidence.

A sermon which used to be attributed to Clement, makes no such claim, and opinions differ both as to its date and as to its place. Under these circumstances, two sayings here attributed to the Lord have no guarantee.

Another anonymous work has been entitled, The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, but it makes no such claim for itself. The "testing" of which Paul had spoken was now very necessary, and the tests to be applied are mentioned, they are almost entirely of moral conduct. Nothing fresh is given as a tradition. Rather it is admitted that prophets may still appear, speaking with direct inspiration.

Such a prophet was Ignatius of Antioch. As he was also bishop of a church founded in apostolic days, he was in a position to hand on much tradition. Seven letters of his survive, which were at once collected and circulated by Polycarp of Smyrna. He was deeply concerned with sound teaching, and with a certain pattern of church government. Yet never once does he appeal to tradition. He refers to a written gospel, evidently Matthew; and to the apostles, which apparently mean Paul and the

"Teaching" just referred to. Once he did profess to speak by inspiration, but twice he contrasts his own advocacy with the ordinances of apostles—which unfortunately he does not specify.

In the letter of Polycarp to Philippi, covering copies of the letters of Ignatius, his only appeal to authority is to Paul, Peter, John and our Lord as reported in the synoptics; never to tradition.

There is an anonymous letter, whose date and place are uncertain; called the Epistle of Barnabas; its author disclaims being even an authoritative teacher, laying stress only on ordinances of the Lord. These are summed in a section closely akin to the anonymous Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. Of any other tradition there is no hint.

We come at last to a man who, sending a fine appeal that Diognetus will accept Jesus as his Saviour, distinctly claims to be a disciple of apostles as well as a teacher of the nations, passing on lessons handed down to him. He is little concerned with externals, emphasizing that it is only through the grace of the eternal Word that "the faith of the gospels is established and the tradition of the apostles is preserved." He only quotes a single sentence from an apostle, but he re-states apostolic doctrine most attractively, without any addition.

Next we come to a man who was an assiduous, if uncritical, collector of traditions, Papias of Hierapolis. His main work was to expound the Oracles of the Lord, but in his preface he avows that he did not limit himself to such oracles as were in general circulation. "I will not hesitate to set forth for you along with my interpretations, whatever I learned carefully from the Elders, and remembered carefully, guaranteeing their truth. . . . If anywhere a man came who had followed the Elders, I used to ask about the words of the Elders; what Andrew or Peter said, or Philip or Thomas or James or John or Matthew or any other of the disciples of the Lord; also what Aristion and the Elder John say, the disciples of the Lord. For not the things out of the books seemed to profit me as much as the things from a living and surviving voice." He probably meant that he could cross-examine his informant and make perfectly sure of the incident and its bearings, whereas a book was a mere blank wall. At least he is quite emphatic as to his preference, and he took pains about securing information; there was only one link between him and several named disciples of the Lord. What could happen with more links may be seen by the twenty references to Papias gathered by Lightfoot: one retailer makes Papias the bishop of Hierapolis, this was copied by another; the same man makes him disciple of John, and this was copied by four others; the two statements are combined again by yet

another compiler: such instances of embellishment warn us of the need to test every link. Unfortunately Papias never names his direct informant, and we can never test that link; we can only rely on his cross-examination, and then depend on the disciples who were his ultimate authorities.

His information as it has come to us by fragmentary quotations, is of two kinds; anecdotes as to the disciples, sayings of the Lord. We may take these one by one, and test their inherent credibility.

First, we may take a famous passage which seems to contain both what the Elder said and what Papias commented:—The Elder said this also: "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered, without however recording in order what was either said or done by Christ." For neither did he hear the Lord nor did he follow him; but afterwards, as I said, followed Peter, who suited his teachings to their needs, but not as though making a synopsis of the Lord's words. So then Mark made no error, thus writing some things as he remembered them; for he made it his one care to omit nothing he heard or to falsify what was therein.

Now what the Elder said is quite credible; that Mark wrote only after he followed Peter (to Caesarea?), that he wrote down correctly what he himself remembered, that everything else he put down was not arranged in order. If this be taken by itself, it calls attention to what is frequently overlooked, that Mark himself was an eye-witness, a first-class authority for everything that happened at Jerusalem. The Elder discriminated between that, and the miscellaneous anecdotes prefixed, which were only second-hand.

The comment of Papias is not very illuminating. He starts by what contradicts the Elder and is not probable: Mark probably did hear the Lord in the temple, probably did follow Him to Gethsemane. That Peter suited his teachings to the occasion is obvious on comparing his speeches at Pentecost, before the Council, to the disciples, at Samaria, at Caesarea, defending himself to the church at Jerusalem, backing Paul at Jerusalem; he never professed to edit the words of the Lord: in this case Papias does show some insight. But when he goes on to say that Mark made no mistake, took pains, put down everything he heard,—then Papias mistook his sense of what was fitting, for an ascertained fact. In other words, he embellished his information. It deserves notice that it became customary, on the basis of this comment of Papias, to emphasize precisely what Papias thought little of: he noted that the anecdotes about Galilee were not arranged; but others credited them because they depended on Peter.

A second statement is made by him, So then Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew tongue, and every one interpreted them as he could. Eusebius does not say that this was the tradition as Papias received it; it reads like his paraphrase of what he had heard. And it almost certainly has been distorted in the re-statement; for no one can believe that the existing gospel credited to Matthew is a translation from the Aramaic, and few people believe that as it stands it was the work of Matthew.

Other anecdotes told to Papias have been re-stated by later writers; that John the Divine and James his brother were killed by the Jews; that Barsabas Justus when challenged by unbelievers drank serpents' poison in the name of the Lord, and suffered no harm (told him by the daughters of Philip); that the mother of Manaen was raised from the dead; that others raised from the dead survived till the days of Hadrian. Only one anecdote survives as he wrote it down:—"Judas walked about in this world a terrible example of impiety; his flesh swollen to such an extent that, where a waggon can pass with ease, he was not able to pass, no, not even the mass of his head merely: they say that his eyelids swelled to such an extent that he could not see the light at all, while as for his eyes they were not visible even by a doctor looking through an instrument, so far had they sunk from the surface." It is credible that dropsy could thus embed the eyes, but barely credible that elephantiasis could swell a man beyond 18 feet round: the first gospel suggests that Judas hanged himself on the day of the crucifixion, Luke's note to Peter's speech would however tally with the anecdote of Papias. The other anecdotes present no difficulty, and may well be true.

There are two anecdotes about the Lord. The story about a woman accused of many sins before the Lord, which Eusebius knew also in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, is well known as interpolated into the fourth gospel. The other came from John the disciple of the Lord, who reported at great length how the Lord used to teach about the times of the kingdom after the resurrection, that corn and wine would be produced profusely. Papias added, "These things are credible to them that believe. And when Judas the traitor did not believe, and asked, How shall such growths be accomplished by the Lord?, he [John] relates that the Lord said, They who shall come to these times, shall see." The language is rather highflown, but the story is credible.

Two other traditions have been paraphrased by readers of Papias. One is indeed quite vague, "certain strange parables of the Saviour and teachings of His." The other is a bit of higher

criticism; Some people thought the Elder John was the author of the second and third epistles, because only the first epistle was accepted generally; others wrongly attributed the Apocalypse to the Elder John. It is a great pity that the actual words of Papias were not quoted, for he was only one remove from the Elder John.

Three other allusions to Papias do not record traditions, but his comments—about angels and their fall, a period of 10,000 years after the resurrection, the kingdom of Christ in material form on the earth—or a new fact, that a man rose from the dead in his own days. Eusebius was not far wrong when he inferred from such statements that Papias was a man of very mean capacity. But that need not invalidate the accuracy of his information. He certainly had high ideals as to testing tradition, and he seems to add a few trifles to our knowledge.

The next early document is a letter describing the death of Polycarp. Its importance in this connection is in the colophon: —"This account Gaius copied from the papers of Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp; the same also lived with Irenaeus. And I, Socrates, wrote it down in Corinth from the copy of Gaius; grace be with all men. And I, Pionius, again wrote it down from the copy aforementioned, gathering it together when it was now well night worn out with age, &c." This at first sight shows the care taken in other respects as to handing on information. But the colophon in another manuscript has been both expanded and altered. And Lightfoot argues that Pionius was lying. We have no problem to solve, for the letter itself contains no traditions.

Irenaeus however has a few. Seven times he quotes an unnamed person, giving his expositions or remarks; once he refers to predecessors who argued against the Valentinians; none of these involve traditions. Thrice he refers to "the divine Elder and herald of the truth," "an Elder who had heard from those who had seen the apostles and their disciples." Most of his quotations are of this Elder's own expositions, both of the Jewish scriptures and of the apostle's teaching, or of the Elder's general exhortations; there is no new fact, no new saying of the Lord or an apostle. There are also three references to the ancient disciple (or disciples) of the apostles; again only as to their own teachings and reasonings. Elders who saw John the disciple of the Lord are mentioned, but it is doubtful if they are other than the informants of Papias; anyhow the one fresh fact is that they read 666 as the number of the Beast, not 616. And the value of their testimony may be judged from this extract:— "Our Lord was of advanced age [aetas senior, forty or fifty] when he was teaching, according to the Gospel. And all the Elders who in Asia conferred with John the disciple of the Lord,

witness that John had delivered these things to them; for he abode with them till the days of Trajan. And some of them saw not John alone, but other apostles also, and heard the same things from them, and testify to the same account." If Irenaeus means that the Elders had been told by John that Jesus was over forty when He died, we are sure there was a mistake somewhere. It is possible however that what John told them was a few facts mentioned a little earlier; that Jesus was thirty at baptism, that this was the age of a Master, and that then He did actually begin to teach. In that case the blunder is only that of Irenaeus himself, misinterpreting the Gospel to which he refers, John viii. 56.

There is very little more to be gleaned. "The learned Origen affirms in his exposition of Matthew that John was martyred, declaring that he had learned this from the successors of the apostles." Whether this is a paraphrase of the tradition to Papias is not clear. When commenting on Romans vi. he said, "The Church received from the apostles the tradition of giving baptism also to infants." If he really said so, we should like to know the chain of tradition, which reached him alone. But this comment calls attention to a wider tradition than that of isolated sayings and anecdotes, a tradition of customs and teaching. Tradition in this sense had been rather fully discussed by two very different men, Irenaeus the Greek missionary theologian, Tertullian the African lawyer. They agreed that the common sense, the collective agreement, of the churches founded by the apostles, was conclusive as against novelties broached by men outside these churches, even though they individually might claim information handed down to them by a chain of named men, ultimately from the apostles. Each argument deserves study.

Irenaeus wrote against heresies, in five books. It is unfortunate that the one sentence (IV. xxxiii. 8) in which he defines true knowledge, is very long and involved, and may be understood in different ways. But again and again he reiterates that there was a traditional rule, that this was both written and oral, that the written rule was in four gospels (no others being conceivably authoritative) the Acts of the apostles, and their letters (though he does not specify them). For the oral rule, he refers to a formula which was the basis of catechetical instruction (teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you) and which was given verbatim at baptism. This formula was in substance the same at all churches founded by apostles, and not only the compact formula, but the general body of doctrine and direction: "the preaching of the Church is consistent everywhere, and continues in an even course, and

receives testimony from the prophets [of the Old Testament], the apostles, and all the disciples [since], as I have proved, through the beginnings, the means and the end; nay, through the entire dispensation of God, and that well-grounded system which tends to man's salvation; namely, our faith, which, having been received from the Church, we do preserve, and which always, by the Spirit of God, renewing its youth, as if it were some precious deposit in an excellent vessel, causes the vessel itself containing it to renew its youth also." This line of thought suggests that an ever-inspired Church may be divinely guided in its evolution, and may properly develop its teaching, its methods, its organization; but development is active, tradition is passive.

As to the channels through which tradition passed, he refers to the churches founded by the apostles: he styles Jerusalem "the church from which every church had its origin, the metropolis of the citizens of the new covenant"; but as that church was now very out of touch with Gentile churches, and was displaced from its old home, he never cites its contemporary witness. It is more strange that he ignores Antioch; Alexandria did not claim to be of apostolic foundation. He refers to Ephesus and Smyrna, but illustrates his point from the nearer city of Rome, familiar to all. As to the precise spokesman of a church, his language is not quite uniform. "Tradition which originates from the apostles is preserved by means of the successions of Elders in the churches," and, "We are in a position to reckon up those who were by the apostles instituted Bishops in the churches, and the succession of these men to our own times," agree in singling out unbroken series of officers: the difference of titles may be postponed. The theory of Irenaeus was generally adopted and Eusebius of Caesarea, an apostolic church, confronted with a Greek church at Ælia Capitolina, pointed out several times that though this met on the site of Jerusalem, it had no continuity with the original mother-church of Jerusalem. The guarantee of accurate transmission was a continuous body of responsible officers—such as Corinth wantonly flung away in the days of Clement, thus perhaps forfeiting any claim to apostolic succession.

Tertullian wrote a special treatise against innovators, which really developed the apostolic test "We have no such custom, neither the churches of God"; but as a lawyer he used legal terms. Here are some of his points:—"In the Lord's apostles we possess our authority, and even they did not of themselves choose to introduce anything, but faithfully delivered to the nations the discipline which they had received from Christ. . . . What was taught by Christ is with us. . . . This rule of faith [substantially the Apostles' Creed] was taught by Christ. . . .

From what, and through whom, and when, and to whom, has been handed down that rule, by which men become Christians? . . . [The apostles] founded churches in every city, from which all other churches, one after another, received the tradition of the faith and the seeds of doctrine, and are still borrowing them, that they may become churches. . . . It is incredible that [any private talks of the apostles] could have been such as to bring in some other rule of faith, differing from and contrary to that which they were proclaiming through the catholic churches. . . . When that [doctrine] which is deposited among many [churches] is found to be one and the same, it is not the result of error but of tradition. . . . [Our challenge to heretics is] Let them show the origins of their churches; let them unfold the roll of their bishops running down in due succession from the beginning, so that yonder bishop shall be able to show for his ordainer and predecessor some one of the apostles or of apostolic men; that is the way in which the apostolic churches hand down their records." In plain words, he propounds two tests—Continuous succession from apostles, identity of teaching with the apostles. He discusses the scriptures, and refers to an Integrum Instrumentum, as if he held one literal bound volume; but he expressly declines to argue with heretics from it, saying that Christians alone possess it and are entitled to interpret it.

A very different view was taken by Clement of Alexandria. He was a lecturer, who like most philosophers asked no authorization from anybody. Precedent for a Christian being a philosopher was found in Justin; precedent for a Christian philosopher to give public lectures at Alexandria was found in Pantaenus. There is no trace in Clement's published lectures that he cared anything for any church officer. He did however care greatly for tradition, insisting that his lectures were based upon what he had received. Only he deliberately declared that the true knowledge " is that which has descended by transmission to a few, having been imparted unwritten by the apostles ": this secret tradition was cardinal with him, and he argues for it at length. He declares at some length in his preface that his " Miscellanies " are simply written memoranda of oral lectures he heard from a few men; some were in the East; one was an Ionic whom he met in Greece, coming from Upper Syria, born in Assyria; the chief was a Hebrew, born in Palestine, who had taught in Magna Greecia, but whom he tracked to Egypt. " They preserving the tradition of the blessed doctrine derived directly from the holy apostles, Peter, James, John, and Paul, the sons receiving it from the father (but few were like the fathers), came by God's will to us also to deposit those ancestral and apostolic seeds." Some of them were alive when he wrote, and he

expected that they would be delighted, not with this personal tribute, "but solely on account of the preservation of the truth, according as they delivered it." The lectures are very miscellaneous, and scarcely give any new facts. But Eusebius quoted from another course, which is lost, several anecdotes as well as a few critical judgments of his own. The only things expressly given as traditions run:—Now as the blessed Elder [Pantaenus?] used to say, "Since the Lord, who was the Apostle of the Almighty, was sent to the Hebrews, Paul, as having been sent to the Gentiles, did not subscribe himself apostle of the Hebrews, both out of modesty and reverence for the Lord, and because being herald and apostle of the Gentiles, his writing to the Hebrews was something over and above [his exact duty]." On this we may note that Pantaenus does not give this as a tradition to him, but as his own opinion. Clement also gives the tradition respecting the order of the Gospels, as derived from the oldest Elders; but again Eusebius does not carry up the chain, and again the tradition is quite incredible, for it contains the statement that those gospels which contain the genealogies were written first. Fortunately we can read in Clement's own words a beautiful tale, "no mere myth but true, handed down and committed to the custody of memory, about the apostle John." It says that John was invited widely, here to appoint bishops, there to set in order whole churches. One such bishop failed in his trust, and the church sent again for John, who called the bishop to account and put matters straight.

It would take us too far afield to describe how there was an ecclesiastical revolution at Alexandria, how Demetrius the one ruler chosen by his fellow Elders to preside, assumed power over them, challenged Origen, who carried on the work of Clement, because he was a layman, quarrelled with him when he got ordained to try and please the autocrat, and when Origen settled down in Palestine, himself appointed a Head of the Catechetical School. It is only necessary to say that when Eusebius reports how Clement dedicated a book to "the above-mentioned bishop Alexander," his own list shows that this Alexander became bishop long after Clement had died, and that Alexander then did his best in a letter to Origen to atone for his predecessor's behaviour.

That revolution quite established bureaucracy at Alexandria, and henceforth we hear no more of any traditions transmitted through any other than official channels, no more of any traditions outside the written scriptures, the official property of the churches. But the idea of a private tradition, emphasized by Clement though scorned by Tertullian, brought about a transformation of the whole contents of the word Tradition, on which

we do not enter. We revert to the actual persons who transmitted the early tradition.

In two successive paragraphs, Irenaeus calls them Elders, Bishops. The latter term has become so usual that the other has been rather overlooked; but well-attested exceptions generally repay attention. Thirteen times does Irenaeus refer to an Elder or Elders who were links in his chain. In the two quotations from Papias preserved by Eusebius he too speaks of the Elders, the disciples of the Lord. In the two quotations from Clement similarly preserved, he speaks of his immediate informant, the blessed Elder, and again of the oldest Elders. And even Eusebius, when speaking about the testimony of Irenaeus, borrows once his terminology; "we refer to the declarations of the ancient Elders and historians of the Church, in which they have transmitted the traditions, &c." Two letters of Irenaeus show the same. To Florinus he spoke of "the Elders before us, who were even the immediate disciples of the apostles," and of Polycarp "that blessed and apostolic Elder." In his letter to Victor of Rome, he speaks three times of "those Elders who governed the church before Soter, &c."

It is evident then that in Asia at least, and perhaps at Rome also, the president of the church was called "The Elder" down to the times of Irenaeus. The usage dated from apostolic days, 1 Peter v. 1, 2 John 1, 3 John 1. The story about the Elder John shows that his influence was not that of a mere bishop, limited to a single congregation, but extended over a wide area, so that he was asked to appoint bishops. There is not quite enough evidence for us to infer that all "Elders" in this sense were thus superintendents over many churches.

# Dr. John Gill's Confession of 1729.

IN his *Baptist Confessions of Faith,* Mc Glothlin tells us that "in 1764 Dr. John Gill's church, in London, published their Confession in twelve articles. It is rigidly Calvinistic." This Confession, which is of importance as an example of an early privately-published Calvinistic Confession, is older than might be inferred from Mc Glothlin's statement. In 1764 the church worshipped in Carter Lane, but, for the origin of the Confession, it is necessary to go back to the Horselydown days. Exactly two hundred years ago, in 1729, Gill first drew up the document. He had accepted the pastorate of the church in 1719, and on the 15th November "was received a member in full communion with the church." In the preceding month, 24 men members and 63 women members, in order that they might "not be charged with erring from the Constitution of the Church" subscribed their names in the church minute book "to the Solemn Covenant thereof as printed by the Rev. Mr. Benj. Keech, 1697." Gill added his signature in November.

Baptists have always refused to recognise creeds and confessions as of the law of the Medes and Persians. They consider a church is free to re-express itself as new light and truth are given. Gill was a true Baptist. He was not to be bound by the credal expression of an earlier day. Apparently he found Keach's finely phrased Solemn Covenant lacking in strong doctrine. Possibly it had too much Grace and too little Law! His stern and unbending Calvinism needed something more rigid into which to fit itself, with the result that, although in the days of Keach this *Solemn Covenant of the Church at its Constitution* was subscribed by all members at the time of their admission, it dropped out of use in Gill's early years. Spurgeon, whose orientation was nearer Keach than Gill, reprinted it in 1876 in THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE: *its History and Work,* and added "It must commend itself to the judgment of all candid Christians." Gill's Declaration did not find a place in that volume.

The first reference to the Declaration was at the Horselydown church meeting on 3rd February 1728/9, when it was agreed

> yt a Declaration of ye faith & practice of the Church be drawn up by Bro. Gill to be read & assented to by members at their admission, instead of yt which was formerly called ye Church Covenant.

Seven weeks later, at the church meeting on 25th March 1729,

> A Declaration of ye Church's faith & practice being drawn up according to an order of ye Church, was read & approved of & was ordered to be transcribed into ye Church book to be read & assented to at ye admission of members, it was likewise agreed yt it should be printed.

Gill duly inscribed it in the minute book in his own handwriting (he wrote the minutes for nearly thirty years), but unfortunately no copy of the first printed edition appears to be in existence.

At the church meeting on 17th September 1739,

> The Church declaration of faith and practice being read with some amendments it was agreed yt it be reprinted & one hundred of 'em at least be purchased by ye Church & be given to every person yt proposes for communion.

This edition also appears to be out of print, but a comparison of the 1729 Confession with that of 1768, which incorporated amendments then made, does not reveal any trace of the 1739 amendments and suggests the possibility that the writer of the minutes was in error in stating there were amendments in 1739. Of the editions of 1764 and 1768 only three or four copies are known. As drawn up in 1729 and entered in the minute book following adoption by the church, the Confession was as follows:—

> A Declaration of the faith & practice of the Church of Christ at Horselye-Down under ye pastoral care of Mr. John Gill, Drawn up & agreed upon in ye year 1729 to be read & assented to at the admission of members.

Having been enabled, through divine grace, to give up ourselves to the Lord, and likewise to one another by the Will of God, We account it a duty incumbent upon us to make a declaration of our faith & practice, to the honour of Christ & the glory of his name, knowing, that as with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, so with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation, which declaration is as follows, viz.

I. We Believe that ye Scriptures of the old & new Testament are ye word of God, & the onely rule of faith & practice.

II. We Believe that there is but one onely living & true God: that there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost, who are equal in nature, power & glory, & that ye Son & ye holy Ghost are as truly & as properly God as the Father.

III. We Believe, that before the world began, God did elect a certain number of men unto everlasting Salvation whom he did predestinate to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ of his own free grace & according to the good pleasure of

his will, & that in pursuance of this gratious design, he did contrive & make a covenant of grace & peace with his Son Jesus Christ, on ye behalf of those persons, wherein a Saviour was appointed, & all Spiritual blessings provided for them; as also that their persons with all their grace & glory, were put into ye hands of Christ, & made his care & charge.

IV. We believe, that God created the first man Adam after his image, & in his likeness, an upright holy and innocent creature, capable of serving & glorifying him but he sinning, all his posterity sinned in him & came short of the glory of God ye guilt of whose sin is imputed & a corrupt nature derived to all his offspring descending from him by ordinary & natural generation that they are by their first birth carnal & unclean, averse to all that is good, uncapable of doing any & prone to every sin & are also by nature children of wrath & under a sentence of condemnation, & so are subject not onely to a corporal & involved in a moral, commonly called spiritual, but are also liable to an eternal death, from all which there is no deliverance but by Christ the Second Adam.

V. We Believe, that the Lord Jesus Christ, being set up from everlasting as the mediator of the new covenant, & he having engaged to be ye Surety of his people, did in the fullness of time, really assume humane nature, in which nature he really suffered & died, as their substitute, in their room & stead, whereby he made all that satisfaction for their sins, which ye law & justice of God could require, as well as made way for all those blessings which are needfull for them both for time & eternity.

VI. We believe, yt that Eternal Redemption which Christ has obtained by the shedding of his blood, is special & particular, that is to say, that it was onely intentionally designed for ye Elect of God, & sheep of Christ, who onely share ye special & peculiar blessings of it.

VII. We Believe, that the Justification of God's Elect, is onely by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, without ye consideration of any works of righteousness done by them, & that the full & free pardon of all their sins & transgressions past, present & to come, is onely through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of his grace.

VIII. We Believe, yt the work of regeneration, conversion, sanctification, & faith is not an act of man's free will & power, but of the mighty, efficacious & irresistible grace of God.

IX. We Believe, that all those who are chosen by the father,

redeemed by the son & sanctified by the spirit shall certainly & finally persevere, so yt not one of 'em shall ever perish, but shall have everlasting life.

X. We Believe, that there will be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the Just and unjust, & that Christ will come a second time, to Judge both quick & dead, when he will take vengeance on ye wicked, & introduce his own people into his kingdom & glory, where they shall be for ever with him.

XI. We Believe, yt Baptism & ye Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ to be continued untill his second coming, & that the former is absolutely requisite to the latter, that is to say, that those onely are to be admitted into the communion of the Church, & to participate of all ordinances in it, who upon profession of their faith, have been baptised by immersion, in the name of the father, & of the son & of the holy ghost.

XII. We also Believe, yt singing of psalms, Hymns and spiritual songs vocally, is an ordinance of the Gospel to be performed by believers, and that every one ought to be left to their liberty in using of it.

Now all & each of these doctrines & ordinances, we look upon our selves under ye greatest obligations to embrace, maintain & defend, believing it to be our duty to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for ye faith of the Gospel.

And whereas we are very sensible, yt our conversation both in the world & in ye Church, ought to be as becometh ye Gospel of Christ, we judge it our incumbent duty to walk in wisdom towards them yt are without, to exercise a conscience void of offence towards God & men, by living soberly, righteously & Godly in this present world.

And as to our regards to each other, in our church communion, we esteem it our duty to walk with each other in all humility & brotherly love, to watch over each others conversation, to stir up one another to love & good works, not forsaking the assembling of our selves together as we have opportunity, to worship God according to his revealed will; & when the case requires, to warn, rebuke & admonish one another, according to the rules of the Gospel.

Moreover we think our selves obliged to sympathise with each other, in all conditions both inward & outward, which God in his providence, may bring us into, as also to bear with one another's weaknesses, failings & infirmities, & particularly to pray for one another, & yt the Gospel & the ordinances thereof might be blessed to the edification & comfort of each others souls, & for the gathering in others to christ, besides those who are already gathered.

All which duties we desire to be found in the performance of,

thro' the gratious assistance of the holy spirit, whilst we both admire & adore the grace, which has given us a place & a name in God's house better than that of sons & daughters.

Finis.

A copy of the Confession "LONDON: Printed in the Year, 1768," is now before me. It is annotated throughout with proof texts, the spelling has been corrected, the punctuation improved, and the following additions made:—

II. At the end of the paragraph, add, "These three divine persons are distinguished from each other, by peculiar relative properties: The distinguishing character and relative property of the first person, is *begetting;* he has begotten a Son of the same nature with him, and who is the express image of his person; and therefore is with great propriety called *the Father*: The distinguishing character and relative property of the second person is that he is *begotten;* and he is called the only begotten of the Father, and his own proper Son; not a Son by creation as angels and men are nor by adoption as saints are, nor by office as civil magistrates are, but by nature, by the Father's eternal generation of him in the divine nature; and therefore he is truly called *the Son*: The distinguishing character and relative property of the third person is to be *breathed* by the Father and the Son, and to proceed from both, and is very properly called the *Spirit* or Breath of both: These three distinct divine persons, we profess to reverence, serve and worship as the one true God."

IV. After "death" in last line but two insert "as considered in the first *Adam,* fallen and sinners;"

V. After "humane nature" insert "and not before, neither in whole, nor in part, his human soul being a creature, existed not from eternity, but was created and formed in his body by him that forms the spirit of man within him, when that was conceived in the womb of the virgin; and so his human nature consists of a true body and a reasonable soul; both which, together, and at once the Son of God assumed into union with his divine person, when made of a woman and not before;"

Alter "as their substitute" to "as the substitute of his people."

XII. After "believers" omit "and that" and insert "but that as to time, place and manner,"

The occasion of these additions is found in the minutes of "a full Church Meeting, Lord's Day, August 7th, 1768" when

The Pastor reported that whereas it had been confidently affirmed that some errors that were creeping in

among us [at recent meetings one member had been removed from communion having "joyned with another Society not of the same faith and order," and a second member had been "rejected, removed and excluded" because "he declared he had been long at enmity with the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship of Christ by the Generation of the Father"] were not contrary to the Articles of the Church, he had therefore carefully revised them & found that there was no need to alter any clause or any word in them; But thought it proper with the approbation of the Church to add two or three clauses here & there in order the more to strengthen and explain the sense of them; and proposed to read them to the church which he accordingly did and which were agreed unto by them.

Such is this Confession drawn up two hundred years ago, and amended thirty-nine years later. It is strong meat, the diet of a master in Israel who thought deeply. But, to quote Spurgeon, "he cramped himself, and was therefore straitened where there was no scriptural reason for being so." The Confession lacks something that is found in the New Testament, and, if Gill were living to-day, there is little doubt that, with a spirit of freedom like to that he exercised two hundred years ago, he would refuse to be bound by his own credal expression. Possibly he would turn to the Declaration of Principle as printed in the Constitution (1926) of the Baptist Union and there find all that is needful to say.

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

# Sutton in Ashfield.

THREE miles from Mansfield, and thirteen from Nottingham, is a flourishing town, for whose traffic the Midland and the Great Northern and the Great Central used to compete; but two of these are now merged. The 15,000 people are well catered for by religious organisations; besides the Church of England, with a parish church of the fourteenth century, there are Methodists, both Wesleyan and Primitive, with an ancient Congregational church. But what interests us is the existence of three Baptist churches. To trace their story gives a picture of varied denominational life.

In one sense, all three churches look up to Abraham Booth as their spiritual father. Two of them owe their very origin to his labours in the town; the third reveres him deeply as a leading exponent of the principles they uphold to-day. We may distinguish the three churches by the titles, General, Particular, Strict, titles which they themselves have borne.

Abraham Booth has the honour of being described in the Dictionary of National Biography. He was born four miles west of Sutton in 1734, but spent 1768-1806 as pastor of the important church in London which was the very first Particular Baptist church known, a church then meeting at Little Prescot Street, later on at Commercial Street, and now at Walthamstow. He was a leading figure in London Baptist circles, well known at the Board, in connection with the Baptist Missionary Society, the Home Missionary Society, the Baptist Education Society, now merged with "Regent's Park" college. His name is enough to interest anyone in the town that saw his early work.

His earliest religious connection was with the Barton Preachers who began their work when he was eleven years old. Converted by them and their friends, he was baptized, became one of the preaching band, and was placed at the head of a group who worked in and around Kirkby Woodhouse, where a meeting-house was given them in 1755. His own work was largely at Sutton, where he was a schoolmaster. He gathered followers deeply attached to him, and invoked the Dissenting Deputies to maintain their rights. Soon after 1763 his views changed on the question of Calvinism, which was then being keenly debated between Wesley and Whitefield. This led to an amicable severance from his colleagues, and for awhile he was silent. But when he had, like Paul in Arabia, thought out his new ideas, he began again to preach. This time he registered

Bore's Hall as a place of worship, and there delivered some masterly sermons, which he repeated also at Nottingham, and then printed under the title, *The Reign of Grace*. Of this volume very few copies are known, but its effect was great, so that it was revised and enlarged in many editions. The original led directly to his being called to London, where he was ordained in 1769. Nor is it known that he ever revisited or communicated with the two groups of people to whom he had ministered. The earlier of these is represented to-day by the church at Victoria Street, the later by the church on Mansfield Road. Their stories may now be unfolded.

## I. THE GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCH.

The earlier group ranked at first as members of the church at Kirkby Woodhouse. The whole wide-spread community due to the Barton Preachers joined with some far older evangelical churches in 1770, and organised the New Connection of General Baptists. To this the Kirkby church adhered in 1773; it was rejuvenated in 1787 by T. Truman from Nottingham, and vigorous work was begun again under G. Hardstaff in Sutton, as well as in three other villages. A meeting-house was erected here in 1803, and within eight years they felt strong enough to hive off from Kirkby, with E. Allen as their own pastor in 1812. By 1819 they were recognized in the Connection as a separate church, and under Joseph Burrows they had to enlarge their meeting-house in 1824. Ths house faced south on to Wood street, in sight of another meeting-house, of which we shall hear presently.

A few years later the Baptist Union widened its constitution to admit all evangelical Baptist ministers and churches, and this band at Sutton was one of the first General Baptist churches to enter the wider fellowship, which it did in 1836. That same year S. Fox became its minister, an office which he held till 1844. The church seems to have flourished steadily, and needed larger premises still. These were built on the same plot, but now faced west on to Victoria Street. And despite this enlargement, the church again and again had to hire the chapel opposite. When, in 1891 the New Connection ceased to hold its annual family gatherings, this church entered the new East Midland Association. In that fellowship it seems to have no insignificant place; a members' roll of 168 speaks well for its brotherliness, and a school of 312 finds weekly work for 33 teachers.

## II. THE PARTICULAR BAPTIST CHURCH.

Far more complex is the story of the Calvinists who represent the second phase of Booth's activity. For example, the

church he then gathered has had four different places of worship. He left them at Bore's Hall. They soon found a second leader, Edward Briggs, of Stanton, and bought land from John Walstone in 1770 on a lane named after him. When Booth was admitted to the Baptist Board in London, that Board of Particular Baptist Ministers recommended the building case to London generosity. By January 1773 the meeting-house seems to have been erected, and into it was transported what a later age was accustomed to call Booth's pulpit. Cambridge long gazed with admiration on Robert Hall's pulpit, but generations arose which knew not Abraham nor Robert, and suffered these relics to pass away.

Briggs was evidently a man of some enterprise and vision. The little band of Calvinists was surrounded on all hands by the churches of the New Connection, founded as such in the very year he took charge. He therefore made friends both far and near. Afar off he descried the Particular Baptist Fund, and succeeded in obtaining very practical expression of its sympathy which was extended for scores of years. Near at hand was a church on Friar Lane at Nottingham, and with this he established friendly relations. Now from 1764 there had been an Association known as the Northants. Association of Particular Baptist Churches, whose guiding spirit was Robert Hall of Arnsby. This Association had originated the plan of sending an annual letter of teaching to all its constituents, and was attracting new churches steadily; Nottingham had joined in 1768, along with St. Albans, while Leicester followed next year. The Sutton church threw in its lot with this strong group in 1771, and may have been amused to find another Sutton, this time Sutton-in-the-Elms, of Leicestershire, following suit 1772. From this Association also, help was sought to defray the cost of the meeting-house on Walstone Lane, the first for Baptists in a town where hitherto the Independents alone had a building of their own. And Briggs started a register of births which noted six of recent date, and thereafter was kept up with some regularity, till all such registers were in 1837 taken into safe custody at Somerset House. Another instance of his methodical ways is a minute-book whose earliest entry is of his own call on 2 April 1770 signed by thirty members. For seven years he guided the little flock, and then resigned, though he long supplied in the county.

Joshua Burton became pastor on 25 October 1785, dismissed from Bramley in Yorkshire. That year Hall of Arnsby preached a great sermon to the Association, on " Cast ye up the Highway." This he was asked to publish: he did better, he enlarged it at leisure, and in 1781 issued " Help to Zion's Travellers." In this he taught that every soul could and should heed the gospel. Many friends at Sutton took a keen interest, which extended even

to the Independents. Burton and their minister subscribed for copies, as did seven other men, John Whitehead taking half-a-dozen; and Booth in London supported it also. This book was one of many signs that the Northants. Association was becoming a power in the land. New men were coming to the front in its ranks, such as John Sutcliff at Olney, John Collett Ryland at Northampton, Andrew Fuller at Kettering. There were calls to prayer, consideration of duties, re-examination of the Bible. We may well expect that when the Association met at Nottingham in 1784, not only Burton but other members would trudge the thirteen miles and get inspiration from the meetings. Three years later, a young shoe-maker was ordained pastor at Moulton, and perhaps among the twenty ministers who laid hands on William Carey, Burton was to be found. He certainly was in close touch by 1789, when in the little meeting at Nottingham Carey urged that we must Expect great things from God, Attempt great things for God. Next year Burton left for Foxton, and so came near to Kettering, where in 1792 he had the joy of promising half a guinea as a founder of the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen. The interest he showed affected his former church, and when accounts were published, we note subscriptions from Sutton.

Meantime Charles Briggs, who had already supplied once or twice at Nottingham, became pastor, but was soon succeeded by Robert Holmes, who began on 22 May, 1796; sixteen were added to the church that year. Five years later, the church had a windfall. The old Sherwood Forest, so dear to Robin Hood, was being enclosed, and as the church was copyholder on Walstone Lane, it became entitled to a share of the common land. And so out on the Forest Side it acquired a plot, a mile away from its meeting-house.

With 1802, the church called its sixth pastor, one of its own members, a well-to-do man named John Whitehead, who served it for ten years. In his time the General Baptists, of whom we have heard, made their successful attempt to influence the town. It deserves attention that the meeting-house they erected was within 300 yards of the Walstone Lane meeting, and on the same street, though it bore a different name at this point. The existence of these two Baptist places in sight of one another is an important fact to be borne in mind henceforward.

Whitehead was succeeded in 1815 by Joshua Burton, son of the third pastor; but he died at the end of 1817. The church dispensed awhile with a pastor, and it devoted its spare money to support the B.M.S. steadily. This period however saw this church at best standing still, while the General Baptist church along the street forged quickly ahead.

A fresh development took place in 1826, when a young man was called, who had been trained for the ministry in a Particular Baptist College. As they were in steady touch with the Particular Baptist Fund in London, which was supporting the Stepney Academy, this was looked to for help. Clement Nott was ordained on 14 November, 1826, in the presence of Particular Baptist ministers visiting from Sheffield and Nottingham, the Independent minister from Mansfield, and the popular G.B. minister along the street. His thirty years' pastorate was full of interest.

He began with a sort of Domesday Book, taking thorough stock of the position, drawing up a covenant and rules, and overhauling the deeds. Realising that a new population was settling on the lands enclosed from the Forest, he saw his opportunity to minister to them. It was soon decided to build a second chapel on the allotment owned by the church, and by 1832 the church rejoiced in what became known as Eastfield Side. True it was on a back lane, on a cramped triangular site; but there it was in a rising population. A second school was gathered there, and the two places were worked as one community. The building was soon paid for, with help from the P.B. Building Fund, and enlargement became common talk. The British School Society could promise nothing, so they arranged an internal loan, and got a grant from the Sunday School Union, with which new rooms were added.

Nott resigned in 1856, and there was another full consideration of the position. The famous Northants. Association had in 1834 arranged for all the P.B. churches in Notts. and Derby to form a new Association, so that the area covered was less, though the churches in fellowship were more; Clement Nott had been attending regularly. In 1857 the Baptist Union, which had been founded in Whitehead's time, held a series of meetings in Nottingham, and gave the opportunity of a wider fellowship.

But no pastor was called, and energy dwindled. First the Eastfield Side chapel was let to the Independents for two years, then the school at Walstone Lane was allowed to die, then it was arranged to have afternoon service at the old place, evening at the new. Nine years elapsed before the church realized that another pastor was a necessity.

S. C. Smalley came in 1865, from Nottingham, and again there was a general re-conditioning. Within a year it was clear that Eastfield Side was now the chief place, with morning and evening services, all baptisms, and a new musical instrument. A spirit of friendliness was shown in that while the General Baptists were repairing their chapel, they were welcomed to worship at Walstone Lane, and were even allowed to baptize

there. New deeds were drawn up for both places. But this halcyon time passed all too soon, for in 1868 Smalley resigned. And years elapsed before they had another pastor of the same kind, years that saw fresh developments.

The Notts. and Derby P.B. Association developed a very fatherly care of all its churches; it saw to their deeds, it would aid churches in any trouble, would provide them with supplies. And this church came to lean very heavily on the Association with its Secretary in Nottingham. Of itself it could do little, and had not even the means to use its two sets of premises. The older chapel it really never used again, unless on special occasions. The General Baptists offered to take it over, but preference was given to a new group, of which we shall hear separately, and it was let to George Corrall in 1869. Attention was concentrated on Eastfield Side, which was reconstructed and insured, while more land was bought there. This was financed by issuing shares bearing interest, an expedient that much misled people who had not known of the remarkable transaction. Then the schoolroom was let to the British School Society in the day, and the Good Templars at night. The church was now passing rich with three rents coming in, an endowment from Abraham Booth's brother, a loan from the P.B. Building Fund in London, and no minister to pay. Such a position has been the ruin of other churches too.

When one tenant died, the Association stepped in and re-let Walstone Lane to the General Baptists hard by. And it succeeded at last in inducing the church to accept a Mission Pastor, H. B. Murray, in 1884. In his time, the church began to question the wisdom of leaving its property affairs so much to others; it wanted to know what authority the General Baptists had for sub-letting to the Salvation Army; it drove a bargain for its Eastfield Side schools with the School Board and also with a Band of Hope. And when the Army offered to take over Walstone Lane altogether, it turned out that the ancient pulpit of Abraham Booth had disappeared. There were complicated negotiations between the Association, the trustees, the deacons, the church, in the course of which oil was poured abundantly by J. Gyles Williams, the second Mission Pastor, who came out constantly from Nottingham. Should Walstone Lane be sold, and the proceeds invested; should it be turned into cottages? but never, should it be re-opened for preaching.

Matthew Fox ended this period. After supplying for two years, he took the unusual step of offering to be pastor; this being accepted in 1891, a forward policy was soon developed. There was indeed at this time a great shaking. For it was agreed that such friendly relations had been established between Particular Baptists and General Baptists throughout England,

there might be much closer co-operation everywhere. The result locally was that the P.B. Association of Notts. and Derby (to which Lincs. had been added) was now dissolved, as was a Midland G.B. Conference; and a new East Midland Association was formed, in which both the Eastfield Side P.B. church and the Victoria Street G.B. church enrolled themselves. This new Association inherited excellent traditions from its two predecessors, and exercised the same watchful care over the affairs of its component churches.

The Mission-Pastor system had been allowed to lapse, and the church wavered between allowing the Association to plan supplies, and getting students from Nottingham College. One of its leading adherents dropped off, and it was clear that some striking new development was needed.

In 1903 the church joined the Baptist Union. There was a Twentieth-Century Fund, one of whose objects was to erect buildings worthy of the denomination, in good positions, where the population was increasing. Sutton was exactly the place to deal with. The supine church was emboldened to buy a fine site on the main Mansfield Road. Even then, five years elapsed before a foundation stone was laid. It was November 1908 before Principal Marshall came from Manchester college to open Zion. The blunder about Booth's pulpit was not repeated, and every relic from Eastfield Side was transferred, even to the seating, which was used to panel the new schools. That deserted chapel was soon let, and presently sold to the tenant.

The new chapel being open, the church at last plucked up heart to call another pastor, after forty years; and soon Samuel Brown was the regular minister. But with the War, and the new ideas coming with the Sustentation Fund, an attempt was made to group Zion with Victoria Street and Stanton Hill under W. J. Lait. With 1920 this was abandoned, and H. R. Jenkins came as pastor here alone, a manse being provided on Garden Road. During his time, the 150th anniversary was celebrated, and a former member came, again a Principal of Manchester College, to tell of the old days of Abraham Booth, and recall the grain of mustard-seed from which the tree had grown.

## III. THE STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH.

When Smalley resigned from the Particular Baptist Church in 1868, there came to light a third group of Baptists of the hyper-Calvinist type championed at Oakham by J. C. Philpot. They had no church of their own nearer than Nottingham, and it was a great gain when George Corrall came to live in Mansfield. He soon became in practice their regular preacher, and when they found the Walstone Lane premises available, they

applied; with 1869 this venerable old place was let to Corrall and his friends. They organized a church, which never exceeded 16 in number, and gathered a congregation that may have risen to fifty. One lad baptised in 1875 has delightful recollections of those days and his initiation into Christian work.

But Corrall died in 1878, and within a few months the church broke up. The Walstone Lane premises were surrendered, and the Strict Baptists were without home or pastor. Some of them resumed attendance at Nottingham.

An evangelist named C. T. Barrett began work in the town, and in 1890 took a lease of Walstone Lane. Presently the experiences of Ephesus were repeated, when Aquila and Priscilla instructed Apollos more thoroughly. James Smith, the convert of 1875, came into contact with Barrett, and won him to the principles of the Strict Baptists. Barrett built out of his family money a new place entitled Providence Hall, and by 1906 there was again a Strict Baptist church, in a building belonging to its pastor, and singing lustily the old hymns of Gadsby.

But when in 1916 Barrett died, it was found advisable to move to the Central Schools. James Smith steered the church through a difficult time, with the help of Stonelake from Nottingham; and the church formally adopted the Articles of the *Gospel Standard,* thus winning friends of wider experience. Three years later, Walstone Lane again was vacant, and the possibility arose of obtaining a home hallowed by Baptist associations. After long negotiations the Strict church in 1929 agreed to take a lease, and it is now worshipping in the very chapel first erected by Baptists in this town.

# Julius Köbner and the German Baptists.

*Um Die Gemeinde. Ausgewählte Schriften von Julius Köbner.* Auswahl und Einleitungen von Hermann Gieselbusch. Bund der Freunde Christlicher Bücher. Berlin, 1927. lvii-213 pp. 3RM.

THIS little book is of considerable interest and importance. Dr. H. Gieselbusch, whose father was at one time Principal of the Hamburg Baptist Seminary, and who is married to a grand-daughter of Julius Köbner, has edited a selection of Köbner's writings, and prefixes to them a most suggestive essay of some thirty pages on "Julius Köbner and the German Baptist Movement." This introductory essay has been described in a German review, and not unfairly, as the first critical study of the modern Baptist movement in Germany.

J. G. Oncken, J. Köbner, and G. W. Lehmann formed the triumvirate, the "Kleeblatt," whose devoted work led to the founding of Baptist churches throughout Germany and in neighbouring countries during the middle part of the nineteenth century. Oncken as a boy spent some years in Scotland and England, and was converted in a Methodist chapel; it was years later, chiefly because of his loyalty to the New Testament, that he came to an acceptance of believers' baptism. 1834 saw him baptised in the Elbe by the American Professor Sears. Köbner was a Danish Jew, trained as an engraver, who settled in Germany in order the better to pursue his trade. From early years he busied himself with the study of early Christianity and its Founder, and in 1826 he joined the Reformed Church in Lübeck. His success in an essay competition on the employment of orphan children led to his moving to Hamburg, and there he came to know Oncken, and was by him baptised in 1836. Dr. Gieselbusch urges that there can be no doubt that his conversion from Judaism to Christianity marked the bigger change in his life: "His joining the young Baptist church was only the natural consequence of following the path on which he had set out." G. W. Lehmann, the third of the pioneers, had been influenced by the Mennonites before his friendship with Oncken. They formed an interesting trio, all of them men of decidedly more than average ability, and they met with extraordinary success,

although in the early years they had to encounter bitter persecution. At the first "Bundeskonferenz" in 1849, thirty-six churches were represented; by 1870 this number had risen to ninety-two, and there are now over 240 separate congregations. The rapid spread in the early years Dr. Gieselbusch traces to tendencies which go back to Reformation times; the repressed Anabaptist movement, Pietism and Mennonitism had prepared the soil. It is not accurate to charge the movement with being a foreign importation, out of accord with the German religious tradition.

Oncken was an organiser; that was both his strength and his weakness. It was not so much Baptist principles as Baptist churches which he wished to spread. His missionaries all made personal report to him, and in return received his instructions. Köbner was of a different type; he had varied and imaginative gifts, and was interested in history and theology. A most unfortunate and bitter controversy over organisation, in which the three leaders were involved and which led to mutual recriminations, developed towards the end of 1871 out of local differences in Hamburg. It is noteworthy, as Dr. Gieselbusch points out, that the north and east of Germany were in favour of a closer and more authoritative type of organisation, whereas the south and west clung to independency. "The development of the Reformation almost repeated itself on a small scale." Köbner's own view of what constitutes a church was clearly influenced by the older Baptist movement on the Continent, and also by Pietism; he asserted uncompromisingly the freedom of the individual, and the right to self-determination of the local congregation, which was to consist of believers only.

The promise of the early years has not been altogether fulfilled. The rate of progress has become very much slower. Köbner died in 1884, Oncken in the same year, and Lehmann two years earlier. Since about 1890, says Dr. Gieselbusch, the movement has lived spiritually from hand to mouth. Much devoted work has been done, but there has been little inquiry into principles, little practical freedom, small adjustment to changing conditions. Köbner's works, therefore, retain an importance quite independent of their literary merit.

The selection which we are offered consists of: (1) forty-eight of his "spiritual songs." Of these twenty-one are in *Glaubenstimme*, the German Baptist hymnbook, which contains in all nearly fifty of Köbner's hymns. Some few are worthy of comparison with the work of Zinzendorf and Tersteegen; all of them are of vigorous and obvious sincerity and piety. (2) *The Waldensians*, a poetical drama, published in 1861. Köbner was evidently drawn to a study of the Waldensians by the

belief that their kinship with the Early Church and with the later Baptists was close. He aimed at giving a true historical picture, and the works on which he relied followed Perrin's *Histoire des Vaudois* (Geneva, 1619). This would not now be accepted as at all an accurate account of the movement, but this does not detract from the interest of Köbner's work, which is dominated by the conception that world-history is God's drama. The dramatic strength of the piece has been increased by some re-arrangement of scenes. (3) *Manifesto to the German People* (1848), which deals with the relations of Church and State, and was written at a time when public opinion was excited on the question of religious freedom. As would be expected, Köbner rejects any idea of state connection or establishment; it leads, he urges, both within and without the church to the method of the Inquisition. (4) A pamphlet on *Sanctification,* issued in 1855, and inspired by the seventh chapter of Romans. It is clear from this that Köbner had a much wider conception of Christian fellowship and Christian duty than might be suggested by his resolute independency.

Dr. Gieselbusch, in addition to brief introductions to each of these four parts of his book, adds some useful notes. He is at times, perhaps, a little too anxious to insist on Köbner's ability and influence; but that is pardonable. It seems hardly fair to suggest, for example, that it was Köbner's influence alone that caused the rebirth of the Baptist movement in Sweden; even if Andreas Wiberg's conversion to believers' baptism be credited to him, as N. J. Nordström holds (though it was, according to Dr. Rushbrooke, a pamphlet by Pengilly that finally convinced him), yet it was while Wiberg was in America that the first church in Stockholm was founded and work in other parts begun. In any case, however, Köbner was obviously a striking and able man, with much about him that is "unbaptistisch" in the historical sense of the word, and therefore all the more worth studying. We are promised a biography by his daughter, Frau Baresal of Stuttgart. Meantime, we are grateful for this selection from his writings, and for the critical work of Dr. Gieselbusch.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

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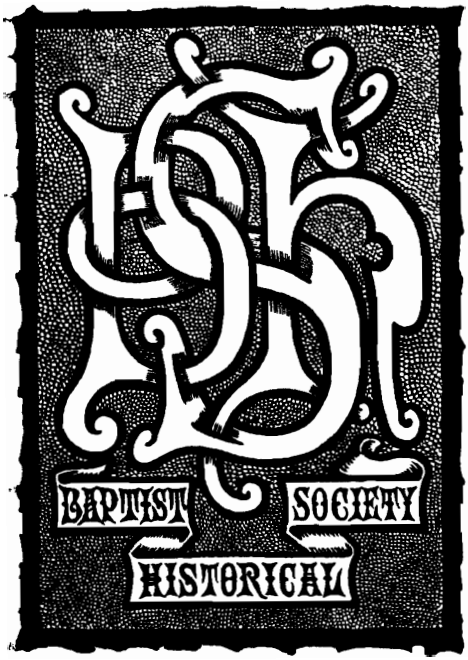
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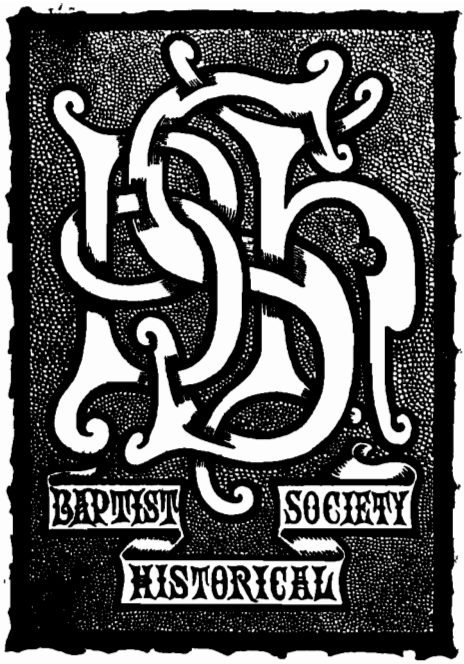
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