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The Gospel in the Miracles.

MANY of us have been disquieted by the scant respect often accorded to-day to the miracles of Jesus. The modern mind, proud of its mighty works, tends to set its own achievement as the limit of possibility for the ages that are past, and accordingly finds no place for the miraculous even in the Gospel. We resent this verdict the more because the question is rarely treated primarily as a question of evidence. For the most part, the evidence is not really considered. The miraculous is first rejected, and then reasons are sought to justify its rejection. It is the scepticism that creates the reasons, not the reasons that create the scepticism. This method frequently treats the Gospel records with the utmost contempt. A personal bias against miracles is made the measure of their reliability. That events are recorded in them receives little or no consideration. It is enough that miracles are outside modern experience; that the spirit of the age finds no place for them; that they are found by some Christians to be embarrassing in their approach to the world: on such flimsy grounds the reliability of the New Testament writers is easily set aside.

There are many, of course, who, while rejecting the miracles, earnestly desire to retain the spiritual teaching of Jesus, and whole-heartedly acknowledge its authority. But it rarely appears to occur to them how seriously they have impaired the trustworthiness even of that teaching. For the same Gospels, whose reliability they so easily surrender in the matter of miracles, constitute the sole authority for the teaching of Jesus; and, indeed, the evidence for what the critics would keep is no stronger than for what they reject.

Underlying this attitude to the miracles there is the assumption that miracles in no way form a vital part of Jesus' work, that they can be dispensed with and set aside without any impoverishing of the spiritual content of His message. It is that assumption I desire to challenge by emphasising the gospel in the miracles.

In the first place, we have still to insist that the Gospels are not built up of two well defined and clearly limited strata, miracles and doctrine, the one super-imposed upon the other, and either capable of being removed without loss or hurt to the other. Rather are the Gospels like a fabric, in which miracles and doctrine are the warp and woof, combining to

make not only the fabric itself, but the pattern that runs all through it. Take away either warp or woof, and you destroy both fabric and pattern. You cannot take the miracles out of the Gospel story without at the same time taking a great deal more than the miracles. Much of Jesus' teaching about faith stands in closest connection with accounts of miracles. Almost all His teaching concerning the Sabbath is inseparably bound up with cases of healing on the sabbath day. His rebuke of Pharisaism is largely linked with accounts of wonders He worked; one of the sternest passages directed against them arose out of the charge that He healed with the help of the devil. All this goes if we take out the miracles. The long discourse about the Bread of Life goes; for it arose immediately out of the feeding of the five thousand. We lose such words of Jesus as "I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life which the Son of Man shall give unto you. He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." The great word goes too—"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." For that word is firmly embedded in the story of the raising of Lazarus.

And with the removal of miracles, we lose not only precious doctrine. I doubt whether we should be able to keep the temptation in the wilderness, unless we can believe that Jesus possessed miraculous powers. We lose the answer of Jesus to the enquiry of John the Baptist—"Go and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and to the poor the gospel is preached." We lose the explanation of the popular enthusiasm for Jesus, of the desire to make Him a king, of the alarm of the rulers, of the desire of Herod to see Him; all so easily understood in the light of miracles, but very difficult apart from them. We lose too, much of our thought of Jesus. We have learned of the quality and the breadth of His compassion, of His tenderness, largely from the deeds of which some would deprive us. It was from His ministry to the sick that the Church took example, when it amazed the pagan world by its care for the diseased and the stricken. Men cannot reject the miracles without rejecting a great deal more. Take away the woof of miracles, and the whole fabric and pattern of the Gospel story is shockingly mutilated.

Then in the second place, the miracles may be said to be a vital part of the Gospel in that they are essential to the spiritual

glory of Jesus. When a man of great mind appears in the world, we are confident that he will so master the laws which express the Divine method in governing the material order, as to make that order his servant in a special degree. Such a man will find for himself ministries and helps of which other men will be ignorant. Is there no peculiar power that we may look for in the man who keeps in perfect communion with the Spirit that underlies and sustains the physical universe? Can we conceive a unique relationship to God that does not carry with it a unique power over God's world? Can we conceive a spiritual lordship that is only a lordship of the spiritual, and that has no manifestation in the material order? The miracles of Jesus are surely demanded by His spiritual pre-eminence. It is because He was immeasurably different from others, and different precisely where difference counts most, in the realm of the spirit that is the spirit of creation; it is because of that difference that we expect to find in Him such deeds as never man did.

He walked among eternal things with sure step, and was the one man earth has known who was more at home with the spiritual than with the material—passing strange will it be if such a man performed no wondrous works! Yet the rejection of the miracles leaves Jesus with less direct power over the material than an ordinary successful man of the world; and not only insulates the physical world from the influence of the spiritual, but leaves the glory of Jesus lacking the confirmation of such works as we feel we have reason to expect. I think it was Hudson Taylor who said "If Christ be not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all." Surely we may say that in this connection. We hail Jesus as Lord of Heaven, and because of that, not Lord of Heaven alone, but Lord of Heaven and earth and sea.

Then I would suggest that the miracles are of the essence of the Gospel in that they confirm, and in a measure fulfil, the longing of the human heart for what the Bible calls a new earth. We all have felt that pain and disease and death, and Nature's age-long and relentless affliction of man, do not represent God's final purpose for this world, but are only a stage in the development of a diviner order. Looking back over the dim past, we have a sense of how in those far-off days that are almost beyond recall, Nature presented to man an even fiercer aspect than she does to-day. In a measure her fierceness has been tamed, and to-day we are less at her mercy than was primitive man. It is not only that man has developed; but with the development of man there has taken place a kind of redemption of nature. May we not look for a day when that

redemption of nature shall be complete, and man shall no longer have anything to fear in all her ways? We admit the educative value of pain and death and uncertainty. But is it God's will that man should for ever be a pupil in this stern school? Is man never to master its lessons, and to graduate into a higher course? And if, and when, man graduates, will the old discipline be continued? If the spirit of man through ages of discipline comes to walk with God, will not the course of training be adapted to his new standing, and nature be changed so that man shall be freed from the pains and fears that helped to redeem him? Such a hope appears in the first chapter of Genesis, when God makes man to have dominion over all things. It was such a hope of the redemption of nature that Paul outlined in his words: "Even the creation waits with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed. For creation was not rendered futile by its own choice, but by the will of Him who thus made it subject, the hope being that creation as well as man would one day be freed from its thralldom to decay and gain the glorious freedom of God. To this day, we know, the entire creation sighs and throbs with pain." Clearly Paul looked for a redemption of nature; not merely a redemption of man that should lift him above the menace of nature, but a redemption of nature itself that should remove the menace. Of that hope, the miracles of Jesus are a confirmation, showing as they do, that when the perfect man of God walked the earth, nature turned upon Him a kinder face, and brought to Him amazing ministries; so that where Jesus came, death and the curse were in a measure known no more. To such a day we may turn our hearts. As the writer of Hebrews says, we see it not yet; "Now we see not yet all things put under man; but we see Jesus." In Christ, we may dream of the day when the last fierceness of nature towards man shall be tamed; when with the final redemption of man, nature itself shall be redeemed; "when the lion will lie down with the calf, and the wolf with the lamb, and the leopard with the kid, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all the holy mountain." The miracles of Jesus are a confirming of that hope, a foreshadowing of that day.

There is even more to be said. The miracles are such a vital part of the Gospel that apart from them the glory of the cross of Jesus is dimmed. The glory of the cross is not only that Jesus died there but that He died there a willing sacrifice, that He deliberately chose to die in that way. He was no helpless victim unable to break from the hold of His enemies and from the strength of the nails. At any moment He could have broken from every hold upon Him. He did not submit to the cross merely by entering Jerusalem. In one sense that

entry did make the cross inevitable. But really the cross was never inevitable save by reason of Jesus' preparedness to endure it. He submitted to the cross every moment He hung upon it, submitted to it in the sense that even then He might have saved Himself from it. The taunt of the Jews: "Save Thyself; if Thou be the Son of God come down from the cross. He saved others, Himself He cannot save," means so much to us because of our conviction that all they asked Jesus to do was possible to Him; He could have saved Himself. But if Jesus' miracles are rejected; if we are left with a Jesus who had no power over the material such as the miracles manifested, then the cross takes a new and a lesser significance. In that case Jesus would hang there a helpless victim; as helpless over His cross as either of the thieves was over his. It is no longer the Son of God laying down His life of Himself, with power to lay it down and to take it again, who hangs there; the Son of God going forth to war, never so surely fighting for the soul of man as there, never more surely choosing His way, never more free; it is not that Christ, but one who has no alternative but to hang there, and no power to save Himself. Not but that such a Jesus would have His glory; but it would not be the glory of the Jesus who hung there when at any moment He could have come down from the cross. The miracles are vital to the glory of His cross.

Of the resurrection I will only say with Paul: "If Christ be not risen, then is your faith vain," and point out that in the early days this miracle was the Gospel with which the Apostles evangelised the world. It was the Gospel of the resurrection that they preached, the Gospel of a miracle.

But we need to be reminded that when confronted with the facts of disease and calamity and death, there have been an innumerable company who have found a Gospel for their need in the miracles that show Jesus as having power to heal, able to impose His will upon wind and wave, and to command even death. They have not asked for miracles to be worked again; but that Jesus worked them once has been, and is, to them a Gospel of God. The miracles assure them that His hand controls whatever they fear, and that if God does not to-day work for faith as He worked of old, it is only because He has some better thing for them.

So I plead for a recognition of the Gospel in the miracles. We have more reason for a bias in favour of miracle than for a bias against it. It is not for us to define the nature of miracle or the process of miracle. It is enough that we know what we mean when we speak of the miracles of Jesus. We have seen what mighty changes have been worked in the world by

the discovery of electricity; yet no one can tell us what electricity is. So we believe yet mightier changes can be worked by that discovery which is union with God; and we have a glimpse of those changes in the wonders of Jesus. We believe that a knowledge of the totality of things will show His miracles to have been natural happenings. That science with only a partial knowledge even of the material universe should reject them, need not trouble us; for science is admittedly most ignorant in respect of those very factors that are creative of miracle, the factors which are spiritual. It is no more than if a scientist of past ages should have mocked at the possibility of men speaking to each other across the world, when he was ignorant of the forces that made wireless possible. It is not for Christians to accept the verdict of science upon the issue of miracles. It is for us to look for the day when an enlargement of its knowledge will set science recognising the possibility of works that to-day lie outside its ken. In part, this has already come about. For not so long ago, science rejected all the miracles of Jesus. To-day the growth of mental medicine has led those who rejected all to grant that the healings of Jesus are authentic, and this in spite of the fact that no modern medicine can produce cases at all comparable with the miracles of Jesus.

So we may look to the day when a larger and a truer science shall establish all those miracles. Till then, we may possess our souls in quiet confidence, accepting the miracles of Jesus as a vital part of His Gospel of God; not, as Dr. Cairns has suggested, "seals attached to the document of salvation, but integral parts of the document itself."

H. H. SUTTON.

The Place of the Evangelist in the Life and Work of the Church.

*An address delivered to the Ministers' Bible Fellowship,
Metropolitan Tabernacle.*

THAT place is a very lowly one. It would scarcely be possible for language to put the evangelist in a more humble position than that in which the Lord Himself places him in John iv. Christ's words are: "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour; other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours." The figure here, of course, is the method used by the farmer in sowing and reaping. He will take great care into whose hands he puts the precious seed at the time for sowing: but when the harvest has grown any passing tramp can take a sickle and help to reap it. The skilled and trustworthy hands into which the seed is committed are not so necessary in the reaping. If ever an evangelist is tempted to pride, this passage in the Word alone is quite sufficient to keep him very humble in the presence of his Lord. A further passage, almost depreciating the ordinary work of an evangelist, is found in the words of the Apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians x., "Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours, but having hope . . . to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in any man's line of things made ready to our hand." Paul desired the work of the pioneer rather than that of the evangelist supplementing the labours of the ordinary ministry.

But while the evangelist is thus to be kept in a lowly position, his work is fully recognised in the Word; in fact, the first words of the Master, as quoted above, may be taken as His commission, even where the Gospel seed has been plentifully and wisely scattered: "I sent you to reap." In Ephesians iv. 11, he is given a place with other appointed messengers of Divine Truth. "Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers." Though the texts quoted above remind the evangelist of his humble place, the last quoted puts him before the pastor and teacher, lest perhaps the pastor should be tempted to "exalt himself above measure." Timothy, the young minister, is exhorted to "do the work of an evangelist." Where a pastor feels other pressing duties make obedience to the exhortation a virtual impossibility for himself, it is evidently wise that he

should secure the services of another to take up the task. Neither is special training for the work of an evangelist greatly emphasised in the Word. In Acts xi. 19 we read, "They that were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled . . . preaching the Word." These were evidently persons untrained for the ministry, and in the ordinary walks of life.

In modern days the visit of an evangelist to a Church, as a general thing, represents a certain period in the Church's history. The ideal, of course, is, when the officers and people believe that they can say: "The fields are white already unto harvest." Faithful preaching and teaching have been owned by the Divine Spirit, and there are indications of His work in the desire after better things. There may have been a number coming forward to confess Christ before the Mission commences; or, the hanging back of those who seem interested but make no decision. In either case, when the pastor and Church are convinced there are many undecided ones, who appear to be on the verge of yielding to the Saviour; then it is indeed the grand opportunity for successfully holding an aggressive Evangelistic Mission.

But sometimes the case is different. The pastor has faithfully taught the Truth, but has not taken any special means for a length of time to lead his hearers definitely to accept the Saviour; neither have Sunday School workers made any such special effort to lead their scholars in numbers to confess Christ. There is to-day at the head of one of our Colleges an esteemed Principal, who is also a well-known author, who, when pastor of a small church in Yorkshire, invited the writer to conduct evangelistic services. He met the evangelist at the railway station, and on his way to the Manse, where the visitor was to be entertained, he said: "I know how to teach my people, but I do not feel I can lead them to decision for Christ." It soon became evident that the faithful work of this pastor in teaching the Truth had been owned by God to create a desire for salvation in the hearts of many. The enquiry room was visited by numbers who came burdened, but went out happy in a new-found Saviour.

Still another crisis may call for a special missionary and his testimony. The Church may, alas, have receded from her first earnest efforts to bring the neighbourhood in which she is placed to the feet of the Saviour. Still more, there may have been actual backsliding in the Church to mourn over. Now the word "revival" is very often misused. Life can only be revived where it has already existed. It is not strictly correct to speak of the conversion of souls as a revival: but there is

such a state of things, as has just been hinted at, when the Blessed Spirit may be called upon to revive His work, and the visit of an evangelist may be His means of so doing. Of course, the evangelist should be informed when this special state of things is in evidence. Evangelistic services in general are not to be entered upon unless the Church is in a state to work with the visiting preacher: still, there are exceptions, and where the pastor and evangelist have considered the matter, and believe that a Mission may be the means of bringing the church to increased consistency and consecration of life to the Master, the effort may be largely rewarded.

The call for an evangelistic mission is very clear when the neighbourhood around the church has been greatly increased by new dwellings; or when a new church has been formed in the midst of such surroundings. The writer was invited a few months ago to hold a mission in a School Chapel which had been opened but two months before his visit. The wisdom of such a course was made very evident, when folks who had come in for the first time from the new neighbourhood, walked forward to claim the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour. Both ordinary church work and missions are the urgent need now all over the land, in these new neighbourhoods; and where such an effort is commenced, whatever the building to which the people are invited, there is perhaps nothing more likely to stir the interest of the community in the things of God than for a few nights to carry on special evangelistic services.

Again and again in the history of the Church, the time for an in-gathering of souls is indicated by the Spirit's working in the hearts of individuals amongst His people. Sometimes it is the pastor himself, sometimes an official, or Christian worker, at other times a humble member of the church, who may be burdened with the spiritual destitution around, and so made prayerful and earnest to stir up fellow believers to make the effort to win souls. C. H. Spurgeon often told of a blacksmith who thus was led into the travail for souls. He went to his pastor and urged special services. The pastor did not feel the need of such, but appointed a few nights. The humble child of God was right. The time had come for an in-gathering. It was soon evidenced that the burdened soul was precursor of the heavenly showers. The story of Elijah upon Carmel is much the same. He was burdened with the thought of the Godless nation, and had his prayer answered by the fire from heaven.

In some cases the Church makes a yearly mission a part of her annual programme. This is the case at Spurgeon's Tabernacle in connection with the Sunday School. Every

October a special missionary is invited, and after special prayer has been offered by the church and the school, he conducts a series of services extending over a week or ten days, especially for the young people. Probably not a year, of late, has gone by without the church being increased by the addition of some from the ranks of the scholars through the agency of this regular aggressive effort. The writer has been acquainted with at least one church where the same course has been pursued; but with the special aim of in-gathering to the Saviour the elder folk as well as the younger; and again a regular harvest has been reaped through the yearly effort. It would be a sad mistake for any Church to include a mission in its yearly programme unless it feels that it is definitely called upon to do so. The multiplication of agencies increases the machinery, that is already large enough. But at the same time, so many of the institutions do not aim definitely at bringing souls to decision for Christ, which the evangelistic effort does, if it is worth the name. This extra endeavour for the spread of Christ's Kingdom might be annually made by many Churches.

These are practical considerations concerning the evangelist's work, but it yet remains to justify his office.

It will help us to take up the subject more easily and memorably if we first consider the work of the evangelist himself; secondly, that work in connection with the Church; and, thirdly, his association with the ordinary pastor.

1. *The Evangelist.* He is privileged with special advantages. He is unimpeded by the many cares of a settled pastor. After spending forty-two years in preaching to the same people, with only occasional visits to other churches, the writer of these lines found the change great indeed, when free from local ministry he found himself unencumbered with details, which pastoral work must always involve. He comes to the church to bring souls to decision for his Lord, and the work is plain and straightforward.

He comes with a single aim. The ordinary evangelist is not a Conference speaker. The work of the latter comes under the office of teacher. Of course, he will seek by an address or two wisely to prepare the Church for co-operation with him in soul-winning; but still he does not come with aim for the spiritual uplift of the people of God excepting as that is needed by the Church to fit her to be a channel of blessing for the Holy Spirit's saving grace.

What are called intensive missions have not generally succeeded in the increase of Church Membership. The term is not analogous with evangelistic services; but, at the same time, it must be remembered that in leading the membership in a line

with his work of soul-winning, he has often provided the people of God with the richest means of sanctification. Proverbs xi. 25 reminds us: "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he who watereth shall be watered also himself."

It is the privilege and great advantage of a wise evangelist to bring back his audience to the first principles of the Faith. The pastor has wisely dealt with a number of doctrinal or practical truths from the Word of God, suited for those who have made progress in the divine life, or are already matured saints; but such are not the subjects with which an evangelist is called to deal. He brings the message of repentance, giving a whole discourse to the subject, whereas it may only have been referred to casually in the pastoral preaching before he came. He will deal faithfully concerning punishment of sin in the world to come. Here is a subject so seldom dealt with now in the ordinary ministry. He will wisely and scripturally picture the last judgement, seeking to bring his audiences, in imagination, to stand at the Bar of God. He will depict the atoning Cross in details, from the arrest in the Garden to the closing scene on Calvary. He will give, at all events, one address entirely to the doctrine of the New Birth. Saving Faith will be pictured by him in as many types and parables as he can find time to use. Instead of "leaving the first principles of the doctrine of Christ"—as a wise pastor must do, who will lead his church into the deeper experiences of the people of God—the evangelist must return to those first principles. It is through them the Spirit works conviction and regeneration in the sinful soul.

Another great advantage for the evangelist is being enabled to use personal methods more freely than the settled pastor is likely to feel it is wise for him to do. The writer of these lines cannot soon forget the conversation at the door of a Baptist Chapel, in a provincial town one Sunday morning, with a young man of evidently cultured mind. The talk was so lengthy that no one was left in the building, excepting the two engaged in conversation and a gentleman who was going from pew to pew busying himself amongst the books. When the young man had ultimately decided to yield heart and life to the Saviour, and had bidden the evangelist goodbye, what was the delight of the latter to find that the gentleman remaining behind was an officer of the church and the father of the young man who had just yielded. The ordinary minister would probably have felt it was out of place for him to keep his valued deacon so long from returning home, and he might also fear that the young man would consider a personal talk at that time was not appropriate: but such considerations do not hinder an evangelist in his work. Reference might be made here to far more public

and general methods of seeking the decision of souls for Christ than the personal conversation with one here and another there. However urgently the appeal for decision is needed, perhaps the generality of our ministers would have their reasons for not calling upon their congregations for a public avowal of deciding for the Saviour. But such manifestations of the soul's decision are the very motives for the invitation of an evangelist, and for the arranging of evangelistic services. It would take far too much time just now to describe the various methods by which the avowal of faith in Christ is to be sought. The point here is simply to emphasise the fact that it is almost to be expected that the evangelist will use methods of his own which few, if any, pastors would think of introducing into the ordinary services.

If the evangelist succeeds early in the mission in securing the trust and respect of the church and congregation to which he ministers, he is likely to be the recipient of confidences which are withheld from the pastor because of the latter's familiarity with the history and circumstances of his flock. This is a great advantage to the visitor. He is enabled, from these private conversations, to see where the difficulty lies between the soul and its response to the gospel; oft-times, in the course of a few minutes, obstacles are swept away.

We have said nothing here concerning the spiritual preparation of the soul of the evangelist himself. Our subject is his place in the church life and work. But let the occasional preacher take warning that no blessing will be brought to the community unless he himself is in all respects right with his God. It has been well said: "Our influence over other souls entirely depends upon the state of our own." All Christian workers would do well to memorise such a sentence. Christian biography is a mine of spiritual instruction concerning preparation for soul-winning. Varying gifts of evangelists do but very partially account for their success in God's work. The secret is found in their times of private devotion; in the state of their hearts; in their victory over self and the world; and in the measure in which they are possessed by the Spirit of God. Let those who believe they are called to this special branch of Christian service solemnly consider the words of Paul to Timothy in 1 Timothy iv. 16, "Take heed to thyself and unto the doctrine; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." The attention to preparation of the heart is put there even before a correct creed.

2. *The Evangelist in the Life and Work of the Church.* One of the greatest blessings of special evangelistic work to the local church is that it provides a unique occasion for

heart-searching. C. G. Finney laid great stress upon this whenever he visited a new field. "Breaking up fallow ground" in the church and congregation he rightly considered an essential for the harvest that was to follow. The members of our churches are in great danger, because of their apparent separation from the world, of falling into a careless self-content. Are not their names upon the Church Roll? Do they not sit down to the Table of the Lord regularly? Are not their pew rents regularly paid? Have they not a pastor of whom they are fond, and church institutions which they rightly value? What more can be desired? And so the spiritual life becomes thin, and in cases inconsistent, because too little care is taken concerning the state of the heart. There must be careful preparation in the church if the Spirit of God is to use her as His channel through which His mighty energies are to flow. The little card so often used in Dr. Torrey's Missions is still needed to echo in the heart, if not to hang up in the home, before special services commence: "O God, send a revival, and begin in me." The present writer cannot forget a conversation with the late C. H. Spurgeon not long before his promotion to the glory, when he quoted solemnly the words of Paul to Timothy: "If a man therefore purge himself from these"—sins of creed and conduct are both mentioned in the context—"he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." This calling of the church to care for her own spiritual condition in view of a mission, is the work of the settled pastor, but should be emphasised by the evangelist upon the threshold of his services. Many a pastor has said that this preparation for holy service on the part of the church has produced so much good in the hearts and lives of the membership that the effort was well rewarded before its commencement.

The advent of a missionary is the signal for a new spirit of prayer amongst the people of God. Strange, but true, is it that when the Prayer Meeting has been neglected for months, because the urgency of supplication in the ordinary history of the church is not recognised, the looking forward to a mission often means the return to the Mercy-Seat on the part of the church almost as a whole. A new interest is attached to supplication and intercession. Prayer circles are sometimes formed; private prayer centres itself very much upon the one object; the children of God find themselves burdened with the desire for the outpouring of the Spirit, which they express in silent intercessions, even in their business and in the midst of house-work. It is impossible to exaggerate the lasting good which comes to many a church through this prayerful preparation for

special services, and when the season of the effort is over and the evangelist gone, this spirit of prayer is often maintained to an extent the church has not enjoyed for a number of years.

Akin to this attitude of revived prayer is the subject of special intercession for individual cases. This is very noticeable in the church both before the coming of the evangelist, and during his visit. A prayer list is begun by many of the members; and still more will have an individual case laid upon their hearts to pray about: and in numberless instances that particular prayer is heard and answered. Parents for their children; Sunday School teachers for their classes; neighbours for their unevangelised neighbours; cry to God and are graciously heard. Instances from many missions could be easily quoted to show how repeatedly God will make the prayer for the individual His means for the conversion of that person.

The coming of the evangelist is the signal for the church's awakening to special effort. Very frequently a wise pastor will form a number of committees, each body having some special duty in connection with the mission to perform. This revival of personal service is an untold boon to the church. One will take in hand the advertising; another the open-air work; another the special singing; and yet another—and the most important—arrangements for the invitation of enquirers into the instruction room, and dealing with them therein. There comes a holy "bustle" into the church before the evangelist arrives, which is in itself a sacred preparation for the coming effort.

In fact, the church recovers her taste for soul-winning. A young lady—headmistress of the junior department of a council school—was asked by her pastor to be ready to look out for strangers and undecided persons, to invite them into the instruction room. She replied that indeed she could not undertake any such duty; she had never attempted it, and would shrink from it. The pastor left it as a matter to be settled between herself and God. Timidly she began the work, against her personal wish, and was so useful that, during the special mission there was no one else so successful in leading souls through the enquiry room to the feet of Jesus Christ. The wife of the secretary in another mission told, on the last day, of having led nearly forty persons into the instruction room, over thirty of whom had decided for the Saviour. Seeking the lost outside the church circle becomes a work of peculiar interest. An evangelist was accompanied during a mission by a youthful church member, who had never before done public house visitation. So interested did she become, that the more experienced servant of God looked round for her in the bar of a public house, but found she had gone into another saloon in

her enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of, the work. It is not only the evangelist and minister who taste the bliss of leading souls to the Saviour in an evangelistic effort, but church members who will surrender themselves to the same blessed employment are rewarded beyond all language to express. The experience then enjoyed is a benefit to the future history of the church, as soul-winning once engaged in has always a lasting attraction.

One of the greatest benefits to a church in the anticipated arrival of the evangelist, is the expectation of blessing aroused; and here again is a definite fruit of evangelistic work. Churches which have been content with the sowing of the gospel seed from the pulpit and in the Bible Class and Sunday School, expect that now a harvest will be reaped. That expectation is another spelling of the word "faith." It is always honoured by God. "According to your faith so be it unto you." "O woman, great is thy faith! be it unto thee even as thou wilt." The dear Master has not lost His love for this expectant assurance of the putting forth of His power in answer to the prayer of faith. Alas, for the church and people where there is little hope for result of present labours! Dr. McLaren explained the failure of the disciples to cast out the demon from the boy, with the wise word: "They did not succeed because they were not sure they would." That is the sort of faith which honours God, i.e., assurance resting on "Have faith in God," that is, Divinely created, Divinely strengthened, and worthy of the Divine Being.

3. *The Evangelist in association with the ordinary Pastor.*

The first remark to be made here is, that the pastor should never be put out of his place. For the evangelist to come and at once to assume the chair at every meeting, putting the pastor on one side, has been a means of discrediting the work in days gone by, and should be most rigorously avoided. The old practice too often meant that, with the departure of the evangelist, it has been expected that the ingathering of souls will cease. But if the pastor is rightly honoured by being always left to take the central and leading position in the work, then, when the evangelist goes, the church may hope for the special work of God to go on. The pilot may depart, but the captain remains.

The evangelist is to be regarded as the pastor's ally. As Wellington was never ashamed to own that the arrival of the Prussians turned the tide of battle into sure victory at Waterloo, so the alliance of the missionary with the pastor and church may be made of God a combination to His glory. The pastor is to be consulted constantly by the evangelist to the advantage of both. The information the pastor can give is beyond value; while the hints and advice tendered by the missionary should be for the pastor's encouragement as well as future guidance. In fact, every

mission should be looked upon as a sort of spiritual clinic; the ordinary practitioner and the specialist consulting together about individual cases.

The great advantage to a pastor during a mission is, that he is set free from pulpit duties. How frequently does he wish for an opportunity of getting amongst his people at the close of a service, before this one or that one—about whom he is anxious—leaves the building. But how seldom can his wish be fulfilled. During evangelistic services all this is changed. The writer of these lines can look back upon a church, only lately missioned, where the pastor again and again—almost nightly—during the mission, would go down from the platform while a hymn was sung after the address, and invite dear friends of his in the congregation not yet decided for Christ, to accompany him into the instruction room. Happy man of God! His efforts were well rewarded, as indeed such earnest work is sure to be.

It is impossible to over-estimate the value of the co-operation of minister with evangelist in the matter of visitation. Recollections of devoted pastors who have taken the evangelist to the very houses where his visit was most needed crowd upon the mind. This, of course, is not the ordinary ministerial visitation. Visits to the sick and aged, and such consolatory kindnesses must usually be left to the pastor; but a wise pastor will know where the special spiritual help is needed in a family. All ministers do not feel called to this personal work, and yet they can take the evangelist to houses where the visit may be useful.

The necessary work of the visiting evangelist to the Church of Jesus Christ can never go out of use, although it may be less popular to-day than it was a century ago. The putting of the evangelist aside is the refusal of the use of means clearly appointed as the divine will in the Word, and blessedly used in the experience of the Churches in days gone by. Let the prejudice against missions on the part of the Churches, and any suspicion towards the missionary on the part of the ministers be swept aside, and a return be made to a wise, and not infrequent use of men, who may be clearly appointed by the sealing of the Spirit of God as instruments for aggressive work among the churches.

WILLIAM OLNEY.

Baptist Trust Deeds.

(Concluded from page 176.)

Following the fusion in 1891 of the main bodies of General and Particular Baptists, a trust deed suitable to the whole denomination became desirable. At intervals, spread over several years, the matter was considered by the Baptist Union Council and specially appointed committees. Ultimately, at the 1902 Assembly, the Council reported

“That the Model Trust Deeds, after careful revision and submission to counsel, have now been issued and may be had of the Secretary. . . .

There are two deeds, viz :—(1) Baptist Union Corporation being Trustee (2) Certain Persons being Trustees.”

The following clauses dealing with the use of the buildings, with the ministry, and with the *cestui que* trust are important for our purpose :

UPON TRUST to permit the same to be used occupied and enjoyed as a place of Public Worship for the service of Almighty God by a Church of Protestant Dissenters consisting only of persons who hold the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the sole authority of the Holy Scriptures and that interpretation of them usually called Evangelical and constituted as hereinafter mentioned and have made [and been baptised (that is to say immersed) upon]¹ a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

AND UPON TRUST to permit to Officiate in the said Chapel and premises such stated Pastor or Pastors as the said Church shall in Special Church Meeting from time to time elect holding the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the sole authority of the Holy Scriptures and that interpretation of them usually called Evangelical and having been immersed on a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and maintaining and practising the doctrine and rite of the Immersion of Believers and no other Baptism.

AND IT IS HEREBY EXPRESSLY AGREED AND DECLARED that if at any time the membership of the said Church shall fall below twelve registered Members who have

¹ The words in square brackets to be omitted for “open membership” churches.

communed with the said Church at the Lord's Table within the previous six calendar months or in case the regular public Worship of God in the said Chapel and buildings shall be discontinued for the space of six calendar months then the Trustees shall stand possessed of the said land and premises upon trust for the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland² and to be held or disposed of in such manner as the Council of the said Union shall direct.

This Baptist Union Model Trust Deed has been widely used, and has met with much appreciation. Its simplicity, which could hardly go further, makes a strong appeal. Calvinistic and Arminian issues are ignored; and matters of domestic concern, such as "open" or "close" communion and membership, are advisedly left to the judgement of the individual church. Since the deed was drawn up, however, Baptists have become a finely organised denomination. The days of rigid independency have gone. Churches in association have achieved much that was impossible previously. Privileges thus won have brought responsibilities which can only be discharged by continued fellowship with other churches. The Model Deed does nothing to secure this. In its widest form, if the minister has been immersed on a confession of faith, no other Baptist connection is necessary. There need be no Baptists among the officers nor in the membership, and the church need have no fellowship with other Baptist churches, nor in any way support the Union, the Missionary Society, or the local Association.

Until about thirty years ago, all Baptist property was held in the names of individual trustees. To-day the majority of new trusts are placed with the Baptist Union Corporation, Ltd., the London Baptist Property Board, Ltd., or a similar Trust Institution connected with one of the Country Associations, and, in increasing numbers, old trusts are being transferred to one of such bodies. Much could be said in praise of the loyalty with which succeeding generations of individual trustees have discharged their responsibilities, and, not infrequently, shouldered heavy financial and other burdens. Nevertheless, the disadvantages of the method far outweigh the advantages. Individual trustees inevitably die, and periodically a church is faced with the trouble and expense of new appointments. Moreover, it is easy to neglect the appointment of successors, and to allow the number of trustees to fall below the requirements of the trust deed. Again, examples are known of individual trustees who have removed from the district to the Middle West, New Zealand,

² The "Baptist Building Fund established in London 1824" is now inserted in the model form as an alternative beneficiary.

or elsewhere equally remote, and lost touch with their home church; others have left the denomination, or, developing fancy speculations, have ceased to be sympathetic; while some have neglected to take steps to prevent the misuse of property and its alienation from the denomination, or, by their refusal to accept financial responsibility, have hindered the erection of buildings needed for the extension of the work. A denominational Trust Corporation is a permanent body, officered by men who are chosen by the churches because of their Christian character and special fitness for leadership, and its appointment obviates the disadvantages enumerated above.

Reference could be made to other trust deeds which have come before the writer, such as one which contains the remarkable provision that, in the event of the dispersion of the Church, the trustees shall sell the property and divide the proceeds among the remnant of the congregation; or to the experiences of the London Association which, in connection with its fine object "the erection or purchase of at least one chapel in each year in the Metropolis or its suburbs," for over fifty years acted on a singular resolution passed in 1866, "That the terms of the trust deed of any chapel erected under the auspices of the Association shall be such *as are approved by the President* for the year in which the grant in aid is voted." Such references have an interest of their own; but perhaps enough has been written to indicate the historical developments by which the denomination has arrived at to-day's medley of trust deeds; and we may now examine the conditions which prevail in other Free Churches.

Congregationalists have been faced with problems almost similar to those of Baptists. Their early deeds were of the "open trust" variety; but about 150 years ago, mainly owing to the lapsing of Dissenting congregations into Arianism, and ultimately into Unitarianism, schedules containing doctrines which the minister was required to "hold, teach, preach and maintain" became general. These doctrinal schedules varied greatly, as the local church was unrestricted in its efforts to define its own theological predilections. Dr. Dale informs us that "a few enumerated a considerable number of elaborate theological articles, while others contained four or five brief statements of the central doctrines of the Evangelical Faith so framed as to allow considerable variety of theological opinion." The Congregational Union of England and Wales (Incorporated) now publishes a "Congregational Church Trust Deed" containing fifteen trust paragraphs and about the same number of sub-paragraphs. Either the Incorporated Union just mentioned, or an Incorporated County Union, or private individuals, can serve as trustees. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 8 concern our enquiry.

They provide that the trustees shall stand possessed of the premises upon trust

1. To permit the premises to be used occupied and enjoyed as a place for the public worship of God and for preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the principles and usages for the time being of the Congregational (sometimes called the Independent) Denomination practising infant-baptism under the direction of the Church and for the instruction of children and adults and for the promotion of such other religious or charitable purposes as the Church shall from time to time direct.
2. To permit to officiate on the premises as Minister such person or persons only as shall be of the Congregational Denomination and shall practise infant-baptism and (except in the case of the present Minister) shall be elected by special resolution of the Church. And no person shall be permitted to officiate as Minister on the premises who shall be guilty of immoral conduct or shall cease to be of the Congregational Denomination and to practise infant-baptism or be removed from his office by a special resolution of the church.
8. Notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained if a Christian Church assembling on the premises shall not have been constituted
 Or the number of members of the Church entitled to vote at a Special Church meeting shall not reach ten
 Or the Church be dissolved or dispersed
 Or (unless the Church shall have removed to another locality) the regular worship of God on the premises is discontinued for six calendar months together
 Or the number of members of the Church entitled to vote at a special meeting shall be reduced to fifteen or under,

then the Trustees may in their uncontrolled discretion either let or mortgage or sell the premises or any part thereof and pay and apply the net proceeds of such letting mortgage or sale remaining after payment of all expenses for such religious purposes and in such manner as the Council or Executive Committee of the Congregational Union of the County in which the premises are situated shall direct in writing signed by the Secretary of that Union.

And if there shall be no such Council or Executive Committee in existence or if it shall fail so to signify its

directions within six months after being requested so to do in writing by the Trustees then as shall in like manner be directed by the Council of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

It will be observed that in one or two instances this Model Deed differs materially from that of the Baptist Union. Perhaps the most important differences are (1) that the church must be carried on "according to the principles and usages for the time being of the Congregational Denomination," which, from the denominational standpoint, appears much stronger than the "Church of Protestant Dissenters" mentioned in the Baptist deed, and (2) that the County Union takes precedence of the Congregational Union in directing the application of the proceeds of sale.

The early trust deed history of the Presbyterian Church of England is similar to that of Baptists and Congregationalists and need not be repeated. The Model Trust Deed was drawn up in 1879, and revised slightly in 1907 and 1920. It is recommended by the General Assembly "for adoption by Congregations where the trusts of new places of worship have to be declared." Formerly it was the custom to appoint individual trustees; but, gradually they are being superseded by the Presbyterian Church of England Trust. Clauses 2, 3, 4, 5 and 9 illustrate the matters with which we are concerned.

2. AND UPON TRUST from time to time and at all times hereafter to permit and suffer the said Church to be used and occupied for a place of Religious Worship in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England as the same is now constituted or as it may hereafter be constituted by association or union from time to time with any other body or associated bodies of Christians (which General Assembly is hereinafter referred to as the General Assembly) and to permit and suffer any other buildings to be erected as aforesaid to be used and occupied for purposes connected therewith and auxiliary thereto.
3. AND IT IS HEREBY DECLARED that the doctrines to be preached or taught in the said Church or in any School or Schools for religious or for secular and religious instruction in connection therewith shall be such as are agreeable to the body of Christian doctrine which is set forth in the following Standards of the Assembly of Divines convened at Westminster in the year 1643 (that is to say) the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms and which is briefly

expressed in the Twenty-Four Articles of the Faith adopted by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England held in 1890 with and subject to such (if any) interpretation modification or alteration of or in the said Standards and to such definition or explanation of what enters into or constitutes the body of Christian doctrines therein set forth as may from time to time be made by the General Assembly according to the constitution of the said Presbyterian Church of England for the time being PROVIDED that every such interpretation modification alteration definition or explanation shall be entered in the Minutes of General Assembly and signed by the Moderator and Clerk thereof.

4. AND IT IS HEREBY DECLARED that the worship to be observed and conducted in the said Church and the government and discipline of the Congregation from time to time belonging to the said Church and the ministrations and duties of the Ministers Elders Deacons or Managers and Members thereof shall be such as are consistent with the Presbyterian form of Church Government with and subject to such (if any) interpretation modification or alteration thereof as may from time to time be made by the General Assembly according to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church of England for the time being and also such as shall be consistent with and agreeable to such additional directions (if any) as may from time to time be prescribed or ordained by the General Assembly PROVIDED that any such interpretation modification alteration or additional directions shall be entered in the Minutes of General Assembly and signed by the Moderator and Clerk thereof.
5. AND IT IS HEREBY DECLARED that the Congregation consisting of Ministers Elders Deacons or Managers and Members shall be subject to the Judicatories of the Presbyterian Church of England and that the administration of the affairs of the Congregation in all respects shall be in accordance with such rules regulations and forms of procedure as are or may be approved and adopted from time to time by the General Assembly of the said Church.
9. AND IT IS HEREBY DECLARED that it shall be lawful for the Trustees at the request of the Deacons' Court or Managers as the case may be with the consent of the Presbytery to be signified in writing under the

hands of the Moderator and Clerk for the time being of the Presbytery at any time or times hereafter absolutely to sell and dispose of the whole or any part or parts of the said hereditaments and premises either altogether or in parcels and for such price or prices as they may be able to obtain and to assure the same to the purchaser or purchasers for all their estate and interest therein freed and absolutely discharged from the trusts of these presents and the Trustees shall apply the money which shall arise from every such sale in discharging all incumbrances and liabilities lawfully contracted or occasioned in execution of the trusts of these presents and subject thereto the surplus (if any) shall be applied by the Trustees for such religious purposes in connection with and within the bounds of the Presbytery as the Presbytery may direct in writing signed by the Moderator and Clerk thereof or the Trustees may pay the same to the Treasurer of the Presbytery for application by the Presbytery for the purposes and in manner aforesaid.

The trust in clause 2 "for a place of Religious Worship *in connection with* the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England" is vitally different from anything in Baptist and Congregational deeds, which make no provision for affiliation to the Baptist and Congregational Unions respectively. It is also worthy of notice that the clause is so worded that, in the event of the future union or association of the General Assembly with other bodies of Christians, existing trust deeds would probably be unaffected. The other clauses place the control in questions of doctrine, government and organisation in the hands of the General Assembly or the local Presbytery, and thereby link the churches in closer bonds of fellowship than is possible for those of the independent persuasion.

"The people called Methodists," more generally known as the Wesleyan Methodist Church, are highly organised; and, in the 600 pages of *A Summary of Methodist Law and Discipline*, they have ample material to guide them in Methodistical paths. Under their connexional system of church government, the Yearly Conference is supreme in all matters. Properties may be vested in local trustees, or in an incorporated body known as "The Trustees for Wesleyan Methodist Chapel Purposes (Registered)." All properties are held

"Upon such and the same trusts, and to and for such and the same ends, intents and purposes, and with and subject to such and the same powers and provisions (in such manner

as if the same were herein repeated but made applicable to the said premises hereinbefore expressed to be hereby conveyed) as are expressed, declared and contained or referred to in and by [the 'Chapel Model Deed' of the 3rd of July 1832, enrolled in Chancery the 25th of July 1832]."

This "Chapel Model Deed" provides that the chapel is

"to be used, occupied and enjoyed, as and for a place of Religious Worship, by a congregation of Protestants, of the said people called Methodists, in the Connexion established by the said late John Wesley as aforesaid, and for public and other meetings and services, held according to the General Rules and Usage of the said people called Methodists."

The General Rules and Usage are later defined as

"the General Rules, Usage and Practice of the whole body of the said people called Methodists throughout Great Britain as the same General Rules, Usage and Practice respectively appear in and by the Annual Minutes of the said Conference, from time to time printed and published by them."

Among these General Rules is one which provides that no person shall

"be permitted to Preach or Expound God's Holy Word, or to perform any of the usual acts of Religious Worship . . . who shall maintain, promulgate, or teach, any Doctrine or Practice, contrary to what is contained in certain Notes on the New Testament, commonly reputed to be the Notes of the said John Wesley, and in the First Four Volumes of Sermons, commonly reputed to be written and published by him."

Meetings of the trustees of Methodist property must be held at least once every year and minutes kept. At the annual meeting of the trustees following the audit certain enquiries, eighteen in number, must be answered. These enquiries are suggestive; and it would be an advantage if the trustees of Baptist property likewise faced them once a year. By the courtesy of the Secretary of Conference, they are reprinted as an appendix to this article.

Certain conclusions and suggestions, which may not meet with general acceptance, appear to the writer to arise inevitably from this study.

1. The present variegation of Baptist trust deeds, which range from open trusts, through many doctrinal hues and shades, to hyper-Calvinism of the deepest dye, is thoroughly undesirable;

and, but for the good sense possessed by most Baptists, would be productive of much controversy.

2. The present Model Trust Deed is inadequate, and, from a denominational standpoint, weaker than the Model Trust Deeds of the other Free Churches. Nothing in it prevents a church from leaving an Association which may have contributed largely to its establishment; nor does it protect the denomination from the possibility that the local church may bring upon itself disrepute and a heritage of trouble, through unwisely inviting to its pastorate a theological experimentalist whose actual qualification may be nothing more than the possession of an engaging personality.

3. Unfailing gratitude to private trustees for long years of devoted and consecrated service notwithstanding, it is evident their day has past, and that greater service can be rendered by denominational Trust Corporations.

4. References to matters of domestic concern and individual taste—such as “open” or “close” communion and membership; junior membership; the method of electing deacons and other officers; and general questions of meetings and organisation—are out of place in trust deeds.

5. The new “Model Trust Deed” which is needed, should be enrolled, so that by a simple reference to it in the appropriate deed, it would be available (1) for new churches and (2) for churches at present held by deeds containing obsolete or unsatisfactory trusts, subject to their submitting to necessary legal formalities.

6. Such “Model Trust Deed” should provide *inter alia*: (1) that the church should accept the respective Constitutions of the Baptist Union and of the local Association in whose area it is situated, and be and remain in membership with both bodies; (2) that no one whose name does not appear in the accredited list of Baptist ministers and probationers should be invited to the pastorate, or remain in the pastorate, unless by permission of the local Association; (3) that questions affecting the continuance or giving up of the church should be referred to the local Association for decision and not left to a remnant of members who may have had nothing to do with the founding of the cause and done little to help it. The Yorkshire Association’s deed, which has been in use over forty years, is an excellent example drawn somewhat on these lines, and it should receive consideration from those to whom, sooner or later, will be entrusted the responsible task of drafting a deed commensurate with the present opportunities and responsibilities of the denomination.

APPENDIX.

INQUIRIES MADE ANNUALLY AT THE WESLEYAN METHODIST
TRUSTEES' MEETING FOLLOWING THE AUDIT.

- (i) Does this Trust require Renewal?
- (ii) Has the Trust been renewed recently? If so, have all the Resignations and the Documents containing the consent of the continuing Trustees to the nomination by the Superintendent Minister of only the number to be appointed, been placed in the Circuit Safe?
- (iii) If the Property is Leasehold, how long has the Lease to run? Have any steps been taken to acquire the Freehold, or to obtain a new Lease, or to insure against the expiration of the Lease?
- (iv) Is the Trust Property in good repair?
- (v) Is the Registration Certificate for Public Worship, and also the Certificate for the Solemnization of Marriages, deposited with the Deeds?
- (vi) Have the Trustees availed themselves of the Marriage Act, 1898? If so, has the Authorized Person been duly appointed? If he has removed or resigned, has notification been given to the General Register Office, Somerset House, Strand, W.C.2?
- (vii) Are the Buildings, Boilers, Fixtures, Furniture, Pew Rents and other Rentals, if any, adequately insured against fire? What relation does the insurance bear to the value of the Property, or to the cost of re-instatement?
- (viii) Have the Insurance Premiums for the current year been duly paid?
- (ix) Are the Caretaker, and any other person employed on the Premises, casually or otherwise, insured under the Employers' Liability Act?
- (x) Have the Trustees insured against Liability for Accidents to Scholars and third parties (Property Owners' Liability)? If so, in what office?
- (xi) Are there any Rights-of-Way or Rights-of-Light, etc. to be preserved? If so, are the Trustees protected either by an Agreement, or by an annual Payment? Should steps be taken to prevent the enjoyment or acquisition of such Rights over the Trust Property?

(xii) Have the Deeds been duly examined by the Superintendent and the Circuit Chapel Secretary, and are they in the Circuit Safe? Are all old Minute Books of the Trust also deposited there?

(xiii) Is there any Income arising from Rents or Investments in respect of which Income Tax has been paid or deducted? If so, has the Tax been reclaimed?

(xiv) Has the Bank Book been examined in connexion with the Audit of Accounts, and have the cancelled Securities for any debt paid off during the year been produced?

(xv) Has any new Liability been incurred during the year, either on Capital or Current Account? If so, has a Note-of-Hand, or any other Security, been given with the consent of the Trustees' Meeting?

(xvi) Is suitable provision made for the safe custody of the Baptismal Register, the old Minute Books of the Leaders' Meetings, and all other completed Books relating to the Trust or Society?

(xvii) Has any Legal Document connected with the Trust been executed during the year? If so, has the Draft been duly submitted to the General Chapel Committee?

(xviii) Is the Trust entitled to benefit from any Charitable Bequest? If so, how is the Principal invested? What is the Income for the year, and how is it to be applied?

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

Bunhill Fields :

The Place and the Records.

AT the present day, "Bunhill Fields" interest Dissenters because of a burial-ground, west of the City Road, almost opposite Wesley's chapel. But the name has meant at various times many parts of a much larger area, bounded roughly by Old Street on the north, Shoreditch and Bishopsgate Street on the east, Sun Street and Chiswell Street on the south, Whitecross Street on the west. And as parts of this area were developed, the name of Bunhill was applied in rather bewildering fashion. It is worth while tracing the principal changes of use and name.

More than eight centuries ago, the manor of Finsbury was the property of St. Paul's Cathedral, whose authorities assigned to one definite prebendary "Holywell and Fensbury." This manor stretched from the city wall northwards and included the area we are concerned with, which was then a mixture of moor and fen; the holy well was just west of the modern Curtain Street, where Holywell Street joins. The Corporation of London bargained in 1315 for the use of the whole manor, a good precedent for its later interest in Epping Forest. While most was left wild, and there are stories of men with poles to leap over the boggy parts, there was firm ground here and there, and windmills arose on a little hill at the south-west of our plot. Before 1500 this section was largely used by the trained bands to exercise over.

In the time of Edward VI., the old charnel-house of St. Paul's was emptied, and hundreds of cartloads of bones were brought out here. From this time the name of Bonehill Fields frequently occurs, though a map of 1560 shows Finsbury Court standing close to this site, with Finsbury Field to the north-east. Next year the Corporation helped repair the spire of St. Paul's, and as a reward obtained leases of the prebendal property till 1783. A century later, when the Commonwealth offered for sale the lands of all deans and chapters, the Corporation bought the freehold, but that transaction was simply ignored at the Restoration.

In 1658 a map shows that a road had been laid out from the Moor Gate to six windmills on their little hill. A citizen out for a stroll thither would have walled gardens all the way on his left but more variety on the right. First, the Moor Fields laid out as a public recreation ground, with trees and cross walks. East of this lay Bedlam within a wall, with its own garden. North of Moor Fields was a second garden, walled in, with

walks from corner to corner. North of this to the windmills reached a field, also walled in. East of this field and the second garden, the ground was open as far as the private gardens to the houses facing Shore Ditch. The windmill hill was skirted on the west by a narrow track which then ran north to Golden Lane, the present Old Street. The open space west of this track is marked on the map, "Bun-hill." East of the track is a walled tenter-ground where newly woven cloth was stretched on tenter-hooks to bleach. All else is open ground, with one or two footpaths.

On 7 September, 1663, Henry Jessey was buried "in the yard joining to Old Bedlam, near Moorfields." This precise definition by Anthony Wood identifies the place, soon to be known as Petty France, now covered by Broad Street railway station. It is not in the district known as Bunhill Fields, on the most liberal reckoning.

In 1665 the Corporation decided to develop the estate, under the lease of 1561. The old Artillery Yard south of St. Mary's Hospital, east of Shoreditch, was no longer large enough for these days of muskets, though it had served for archers. A New Artillery Garden was reserved northward of Chiswell Street, from the Moor Gate Street west to "Bun Hill" (modern Bunhill Row). The windmills were cleared away, the Moor Gate Street continued north, the little track being straightened and widened, and the Artillery Garden defined as we know it still. A strip exactly the same width, on the north of the Garden, was included in the same wall, but was reserved as a "Church Yard," though no church was within it. East of the Moor Gate Street, the old Moore Fields were re-named "Lower Walkes of Moore Fields," the next section "Upper Walks," and the field opposite the New Artillery Garden was planted and laid out as "Upper Moor Fields." Where the windmills had stood, together with the open land north-eastwards, now took the name "Bun Hill Fields." Between them and the street called Bun Hill, came the prolonged Moor Gate Street and the new Church Yard. The rest of the Corporation estate was rapidly laid out with new streets and gardens.

This Yard may have been intended as a general burial-place, when the awful mortality of the plague in 1665 choked the yards within the city, but Maitland in 1739 says expressly that it was not so used. All that can be traced at that date is that a baby that died 23 July, 1665 was buried here, as a stone long showed, though the earliest now to be seen is dated 1668. The great plague-pit has been identified half a mile west, near Goswell Street.

Whereas before 1640 it was deemed a disgrace to be buried

outside consecrated ground many Dissenters now began to avoid such ground. If they buried elsewhere, the clergy of the parish had no right to interfere. So this Corporation Church Yard was peculiarly eligible. Kiffin buried his eldest son here in 1669; and next year Vavasor Powell was "entered" there at the west end, with a great crowd of mourners: an altar-tomb was erected over the grave, with a long inscription, still known by a copy, though the tomb itself has disappeared like most of the early stones. Knollys buried his wife here in 1671.

A lease of the Yard was taken by Henry Tindal, while the Society of Friends secured a separate plot further west for their own burials. It does not seem to be known whether Tindal was a mere speculator, or a Dissenter wise enough to secure this place for his friends, or an unofficial agent of the Dissenters. But in practice his Yard soon became the popular place for Dissenters in the City, though those beyond the city walls had no trouble in finding vacant land. In 1678 John Gosnold, of the Barbican church, was laid to rest here, and in 1688 Daniel Dike, of Kiffin's Devonshire Square church. That same year, John Strudwick buried here his guest, John Bunyan; whose former assistant at Bedford, Nehemiah Cox, was buried near him in 1689.

All this time, the space to the north of the Yard, and east of it across the Moor Gate Street, was still called "Bun Hill Fields." "This day Nov. 13, 1682, one Elizabeth Hoke was burnt for clipping [coin]; in Bunhill fields a place never used for that purpose; but the sheriff chose it as a void and spacious place. When shee saw shee must dye, shee owned Gods Justice in bringing her to dye in that place, where many years before shee had buryed a child with a spade in the night, being a bastard, born out of wedlock." So noted Thomas Woodcock, rector ejected from St. Andrew Undershaft, living in the village of Hackney, a few miles across open country.

With 1689 came the Toleration Act; but as this did not provide that Dissenting ministers might officiate in Parish Churchyards, it left this Corporation Churchyard just as popular. In 1691 were laid to rest here Hanserd Knollys, William Marnor and Francis Smith, three more Baptist ministers, the last with a fine monument; and as the century closed, Gamman, at whose meeting-house Bunyan had preached last in London, then Mordecai Abbot the iron-master.

The ground was now crowded, and Tindal acquired some more, adjoining to the north; but he did not enclose it properly, so that it was used still as for tents; his term was running down, and perhaps he did not care to lay out money. A new sub-lease was granted to James Browne, on condition he walled

in the extension, and reserved it for burials. Attention being thus drawn to the insecurity of tenure, a tract was printed in 1717, containing 75 inscriptions copied from the tombstones. But Browne does not seem to have fulfilled the conditions: Rocque's map of 1745 shows the old wall at the north of the "City Burying Ground," and the part north of it, occasionally used by Tindal for burials, plainly marked "Tenter Ground." It also shows how beyond this a new street joined "The City Road" on the east with a new "Bristol Street" on the west, continuing "Bunhill Row" northwards. These three streets had frontages newly built. Beyond them was open country, with the old name, Finsbury Field. The story is that Browne's sub-lease had passed to Elizabeth Fetherstonhaugh, who developed all this extension, evidently thinking she could get more from the quick than from the dead: the new street bore her name, and bears it to this day "Featherstone Street." She drew about £700 yearly from the burial fees, and paid only £1 to the Corporation; but of course had to bear all the expense of burials and upkeep. If the ground grew too full, there was still another Tenter Ground eastward, as far as what was then recently named, with true antiquarian interest, "Windmill Hill," but to-day, "Tabernacle Street." However, new ground was acquired in 1753 out at Islington.

Now the Corporation's own lease from St. Paul's was due to run out in 1783. It decided to negotiate for an interminable lease, and then re-develop the whole large estate; in 1769 a lease was secured, but only to 1868, by some blunder never explained, and not even detected till 1842. As the sub-leases fell in, the Corporation built over Upper Moorfields, creating Finsbury Square; over Middle Moorfields; and Finsbury Circus instead of Moorfields proper; also swept away the tangle of alleys eastward, and laid out Finsbury Market, with better streets to the south.

The name "Bunhill Fields" was now restricted wholly to the little burial-ground, as enlarged; while the use of the New Ground was discontinued by the Corporation. No fresh sub-lease was granted; the City assumed direct jurisdiction. The registers kept privately by Browne and Featherstone (Tindal had kept none) were taken over, and a thorough system was inaugurated under civic control.

In 1838 all non-parochial registers were asked for, to be kept at Somerset House; and the Keeper handed over twenty-seven books covering 1713 to 1838, with four more relating to the New Ground 1753-1781.

Burials ceased in 1854, and all other documents were then deposited in the Guildhall Library. They include:—(897) Eight

volumes of inscriptions, drawn up in 1868, as then legible; with index. (1092) Eighteen volumes of interments, 1789-1834. (1093) Three volumes, alphabetical list of interments, 1827-1854. (1094) Copy of registers 1839-1854, two volumes. (1095) Six volumes of accounts, 1788-1854. (1308) Six volumes, daybooks 1795-1854. (1309) Alphabetical memorandum book. (1310) Register of stones taken for repair, 1840-1853. (2066) Copy of Museum Additional MS. 28516, Index of names, from Rippon's transcripts, volume 4. Rippon's own six volumes may be seen, by payment, at Heralds' College.

When the lease of 1769 ran out in 1868, the Corporation had not to deal with St. Paul's; the chapter estates had been handed over to a new body, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; they reclaimed the whole of the great Finsbury estate which the Corporation had held for four centuries and had twice tried to buy outright. But the burial-ground was left as an open space, and the Corporation undertakes its upkeep. This did not apply to the New Ground in Islington, which has been built over.

Baptists had two important burial-grounds, one to the east, and the other in Southwark. Yet Bunhill Fields saw many of their interments, and some may be mentioned. Kiffin in 1701, and next year two more prominent pastors, Hercules Collins of Wapping, William Collins of Petty France; the latter a favourite pupil of Busby at Westminster, who had travelled in France and Italy; he was one of the small minority who disliked singing hymns. With 1717 was laid to rest the last of the old Commonwealth men, Joseph Maisters, who had studied at Oxford where he was denied his degree in 1661. That same year John Hollis, of the Pinner's Hall church founded by Palmer (himself buried here in 1678), opened a family grave for his son Thomas, aged 30. In 1717/8 Richard Allen, successor of Gosnold. John Gale, the Leyden graduate, and John Skepp of Cripplegate, showed how both extremes of theology met in 1721. Mark Key, Kiffin's successor, 1726. Dame Mary Page, who had built herself a most stately pew in Devonshire Square, 1728; a minister who had no connection with her chose to preach a funeral sermon for her, and the quarrel with her pastor gave some scandal. Old John Hollis was laid to rest 1729, and seven years later his wife. In 1739 Abraham Mulliner, the last orthodox minister of the original church in 1612. While the Seventh-day Baptists had now a third burial-ground up Mill Yard, yet the Mauldens opened a family grave here in 1741, and Joseph Stennett buried his wife Rebecca in 1744. The publisher family of Ward opened a family grave in 1747. In March 1749/50 the last male Hollis was laid to rest, the Reverend Benjamin, aged 54; he is rather a puzzle, and where

he ministered has not been traced. Samuel Wilson of Prescott Street died in 1750. Three years later the Hollis grave was re-opened for a son-in-law; then Benjamin Seward from the Evesham valley, friend of Whitefield; and in the same year James Foster, to whom splendid tributes were paid, witness this apostrophe by Savage:—

But see th'accomplish'd orator appear,
 Refined his language, and his reasoning clear:
 Thou only, Foster, hast the pleasing art
 At once to charm the ear, and mend the heart.

In 1758 Dr. Joseph Stennett, and Professor John Ward of Gresham College: his namesake of the printing firm two years later. Then comes a pleasant touch; the fine tomb of Francis Smith had been carved in a friable freestone and was crumbling; his descendant Thomas Cox restored it in 1761, the first of many such pious deeds. Between 1765 and 1772 there was sad mortality; Brine, Anderson, Flower, Burford, a Straton, Gill, McGowan's wife, and Messer, were all laid to rest. In one way, we may be thankful, for half of these had emptied their churches with reactionary preaching; and it is with the arrival of Abraham Booth in London that the Baptist churches began to revive. A Hollis daughter, buried 1776 at the age of 92, seems the last of her family, though the name was assumed by a legatee, no Baptist. In the next decade we note Josiah Thompson senior, Dr. Llewellyn the historian, Andrew Gifford of the British Museum and Eagle Street, with McGowan, and Christopher Hall, whose church at once moved to Bunhill Row and thence to Windmill Hill, as if to be near the pastor's resting-place; while Hopkins promptly followed his predecessor Gifford. Before the century ran out, Anderson of Westminster, Reynolds of Cripplegate, Dowars of Little Alie Street (whose church died also), Dr. Samuel Stennett of Wild Street, and from across the river, Joseph Swain of Walworth. This seems to be connected with the lease of the Southwark burial-ground running out; the trustees of it and of the Duke Street meeting-house were negligent and allowed the church to lose its premises. So in 1805 Martin Ready, the Peckham schoolmaster, and Josiah Thompson junior the antiquarian, were borne across the Thames hither.

The last forty years saw no falling off; and the perpetual demand must be partly accountable for the disappearance of the oldest graves. It is impossible to bury more than 120,000 coffins in this limited space without grave destruction; not six thousand sites can be traced. Of prominent Baptists we note Gwennap of Piccadilly, Dan Taylor in 1816, which suggests that the Baptist

ground in the east was no longer available, Sowerby of a church near King's Cross that he had emptied six years before his death, Jenkins of Walworth, and Thomas Thomas the schoolmaster of Peckham, first secretary of the Baptist Union. The third decade saw Martin, formerly of Keppel Street, who had been expelled from the Board for disloyalty; Button the minister who had dabbled in publishing; John Bolton of Spencer Place; Thomas Chevalier, surgeon to the king; Horne, who had been at Grub Street, Aldersgate Street, Limehouse, and Commercial Road in the last twenty years; Hutchings of Unicorn Yard; Timothy Thomas of Devonshire Square; and Thomas Powell of Mitchell Street. In 1832, George Washington Wilks, next year Joseph Hughes of Battersea, the Tract Society and the Bible Society, also Jonathan Franklin, who had taken the church of Knollys out of fellowship with the Particular Baptist Fund; in 1834 James Upton of the Union, and Ivey the historian. With 1836 they laid to rest old John Rippon, the antiquarian who had done so much to transcribe the inscriptions. In 1838 they brought from Whitechapel Thomas Denham, who even in 1799 had been in charge of a church at Gould Lane, Limehouse; this church seems to have escaped notice. Chin of Walworth in 1839; Powell junior and William Jones the Scotch Baptist in 1846; King of Bedford in 1847; David Denham late of Unicorn Yard in 1848. Next year John Andrews Jones laid his wife to rest here; his interest was stirred in the place, and he prepared the first popular study of the place. It was in good time, for a closing order was soon made, and his own bones lie elsewhere.

Restorations of monuments are allowed, and two in particular excited much interest and popular subscription; Daniel Defoe and John Bunyan. A little pamphlet can be bought at the gate, which enables a visitor to skim the cream in seventeen minutes. A scholarly paper and chart appeared in the *Transactions* of the Congregational Historical Society of 1910; and three years later, Alfred W. Light issued a second popular account. But anyone engaged in the study of London Non-formist worthies may spend his time most profitably at the Guildhall Library. The records show the finance of the place, residences of the people, persons concerned in the burials; a mass of plain contemporary information rather different from the laudatory inscriptions cut on the stones, and in the older cases preserved only by amateur transcribers. Much has been published about the ministers; but those who are proud of their own ancestors as deacons, teachers, or undistinguished members, will be able to build up their pedigrees for perhaps two centuries.

W. T. WHITLEY

Distressed Sion Relieved, 1689.

BENJAMIN Keach had published a score of works by 1689, and was destined to publish quite thirty-four more; some of them ran to twenty editions, notably his *Primer for Children*, for which he had been pilloried, and his *War with the Devil*, an allegory six years earlier than *Pilgrim's Progress*. A copy of the political poem named in the title has just been acquired for our Society's Library from the Rev. E. A. Payne of Bugbrooke; six other copies are known. It is a pocket octavo of 154 pages, with two plates, and a six-page publisher's list of 1692. The work is dedicated to William and Mary. It is a sequel to *Sion in Distress*, as to which a bibliographical note is due.

In Sixty-Six a year of expectation
Came no relief, but still fresh Lamentation; . . .
In prospect of what I saw coming on
Poor Sion, e're her miseries would be gone,
And therefore did before that year run out,
Foretel some things time since hath brought about. . . .
But all my hopes being frustrate, I again
In the year Eighty pour'd out Tears amain,
For at that time came forth a new Addition
To Sions groans and sorrowful condition.

The address To the Reader also speaks clearly of the first impression in 1666, and of the new edition in 1680 with enlargements. Neither edition was ever advertised; and indeed in 1666 Keach was a poor unknown man, in prison. In 1683, however, an advertisement of *The Travels of True Godliness* styles him the Author of *Sion in Distress*. No copy of 1666 is known. The 1680 enlarged version was published in 1681, and six copies are known; the edition in 1691 is called the second, of 1692 the third.

This little volume of 1689 makes extensive quotations from the earlier, to show how his hopes had been fulfilled. It also quotes a poem by Stephen Colledge, executed for treason 31 August, 1681; one couplet deserves note:—

But Walls and Bars cannot a Prison make,
The Free-born Soul enjoys its Liberty.

Colledge, therefore, was no narrow-minded Puritan, but was familiar with Richard Lovelace's lines to Althea:—

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage.

The poem reviews the story of suffering since the reaction after the Popish Plot.

But to return; nothing for many years
Is seen but Persecution, Blood and Tears, . . .
Did a Dissenter Law or Justice crave?
He's branded for a Rascal, Rebel, Slave.

A dozen lines are given to Titus Oates being whipped, with great eulogy; he had not yet deceived Baptists and been excommunicated by them. Abraham Holmes, who had moved in the army from Cambridge to Leith, Exeter, Burntisland, had been in the Army Council, had been involved in the Rye House plot, had been captured after Sedgemoor, called forth this apostrophe:—

Brave Colonel Holmes, Wise, Valiant and Sincere,
Who didst to Sion true affection bear,
Thy worthy name shall not forgotten be,
But shall recorded be in History
To after Ages; nor can thy Arrears
Be duly paid without a Flood of tears.
Great Soul! thy Life thou seemedst to despise,
Rather than ask it of thine Enemies. . . .
How didst thou grieve and publicly bewail
Thy undertaking should so strangely fail?
And yet Prophetically didst Divine,
It would revive again in little time, . . .
And now the sad Spectators wondring saw,
The Horses long refuse the Sledge to draw;
The poor dumb Beasts by Heavens Instinct are
Made sharp Reprovers, whilst the Lash they bear;
Yet all these warnings from the Foe are hid,
For dye they must, and dye they also did;
Although on foot to slaughter they must drudge,
To gratify a most Tyrannical Judge.

Then comes a long section on the pastor of the Baptist church at Lyme Regis; has the church there erected a tablet to him with any couplet?

The next Great Worthy 'mongst the vanquisht Host,
Which in that hour of darkness I have lost,
A Preacher was, indu'd with Holy Art,
Who did dissolve the Stone in many a Heart, . . .

Must *Sampson* fall by the Philistines hand
 Who from their bondage strove to save the Land? . . .
 Have you not seen an early rising *Lark*
 Mounting aloft, making the Sun her mark?
 Lo, here's a *Lark* that soar'd up higher, higher,
 Till he had flung himself into Heav'ns Quire.

Macaulay apparently drew on this poem, which has a section on the Hewlings, grandsons of Kiffin. Some attention is due to one vindication:—

Undaunted *Rumbold* is the next that I
 Register in my mournful Elegy,
 He both Couragious and Religious was,
 Whose Zeal for Countreys Freedom did surpass
 Most others; and although he then did lye
 Under the scandal and the infamy
 Of secretly conspiring how to slay
 His Sovereign Lord in a vile treacherous way,
 Which he deny'd, and did abominate, . . .

But Keach does not explain exactly, who, at the Rye House, did intend to assassinate Charles, though he shows how he drew the line between private murder and open rebellion. There is another long passage that seems to show how Thomas Hicks, Baptist champion against the Quakers, ended his life:—

Dear *Hicks*, shall slanderous mouths seek to defame,
 And so calumniate so sweet a name? . . .
 A worthy Preacher, who could not comply
 With what his Conscience could not justify. . . .
But he's a Rebel; Ay! that, that's the cry;
 Now as to that, let's weigh impartially
 His dying words, now printed, which relate
 He did believe Monmouth legitimate.

Keach, as a Londoner, was much excited by the death of Alderman Cornish, and only spatchcocks in to a long passage about him, a few lines as to Elizabeth Gaunt:—

Few of thy Sex ever excelled thee
 In Zeal, in Knowledge, or in Charity,
 Who wast condemn'd a cruel death to die,
 'Cause thou relievedst men in misery. . . .
 Who by a Jury at Hicks-Hall was freed,
 Yet at th' Old Bailey 'gainst her they proceed;
 A London Jury took her Life away,
 Which they may answer for another day.

When he wrote, William and Mary reigned in England, but he was concerned about the state of things in Ireland, fearing that the massacres of 1641 would be repeated:—

Is't fit such bloody Butchers should bear sway,
Whose Hearts were never changed to this day.
Here's not a Constable, ev'n so mean a place,
But what is of the Irish Popish Race.

There are always people who lament the degeneracy of their times, and the declension of Christians. Pages are filled with faithful exposure and warning. Then comes a prolonged attack on the Romanisers, who are depicted as planning to divide Protestant opinion with the 1687 Declaration of Indulgence:—

Some other of thy Children we will please,
By giving of their Consciences some ease;
We'll give them Conventicle Room that they
May let us steal the Englishman away.

We cannot wonder at the strong language used in 1689; there was a good deal in 1918. It is more pleasant to cull a few verses from the hymns, which Keach had long been training his people to appreciate and use. One sums up like a good Calvinist:—

Let all men know; The Power Divine
Is absolute, and that alone,
None ever 'gainst him did combine,
But they were surely overthrown.
'Tis He pulls down, and sets up too,
And who dares say, *What dost thou do?*

An address to the discontented subject was not intended for congregational song, but ends on a fine note:—

Can none be Loyal to the King,
But only those that roar and sing,
And drink his health each day?
Come don't mistake, for certainly
He shows the greatest Loyalty
Who for him most doth Pray.

Ireland was much on men's minds then, and Keach has one long Hymn of Praise which includes a prayer for her conversion. An even longer "Sighs for Ireland" quickens his imagination and shows how he could follow up a train of thought, and even in that day rise to the great Missionary theme of Baptists—in tropic lands at least:—

Let not thy Glorious Sun appear
To lighten only these dark Parts;
But let the Nations, far and near,
Thy Gospel-Light have in their hearts:
From Ireland, Lord, all Clouds expel,
Oh, pity there thy Israel. . . .

Let thy blest Gospel grow and work
Victoriously in every place;
Let Tartars, and the ignorant Turk
Enlightened be with Heavenly Grace:
Poor Ireland, Lord, relieve with speed,
For whom our Hearts do almost bleed.

Send forth thy Light ev'n like the Morn,
That it o're all the Earth may fly
From Cancer unto Capricorn;
That all Lands, which in darkness lye,
May see how they have gone astray,
And be reduc'd to the Right way.

Robert Booth of Kirkby Woodhouse.

ROBERT BOOTH was the second son of an elder Robert Booth of Annesley Woodhouse, on the north-western edge of Notts., and of Elizabeth Bradley of Kirkby-in-Ashfield, who died in 1800, leaving brothers Thomas and Elias. Our Robert had an elder brother Abraham, who was schoolmaster and preacher at Sutton-in-Ashfield, then from 1769 pastor at Little Prescott street, London. Another brother, Jacob, also went south to Hadley Green. At Annesley Woodhouse in 1800 was a third brother, William, about to marry; and a sister Mary who had married away, and had a daughter married at Grantham, but had come back to the old town. Robert lost three children of consumption, and was about to lose a fourth; William died at Kirkby Woodhouse in 1836, a bachelor; the eldest son Robert had moved to Nottingham, where he built the first hosiery warehouse in the town, but in December 1844 he too was buried at Kirkby Woodhouse, a bachelor; two daughters had married, the elder to James Smith, treasurer of the General Baptist Academy.

Our Robert was attached not only to his own church, but also to the Particular Baptist church at Sutton-in-Ashfield, which owed its origin to his brother Abraham: of this interest he gave tangible proof in a gift by which the church still profits. It seemed a little strange that Abraham never came back to see this church; but one of Robert's descendants has sent the Society five letters from Abraham to Robert, which indicate that his health prevented any distant travel. One of them seems interesting on many counts, and may well be printed: he was sixty-four years old, and had just over five years left:—

“ London, Dec. 5, 1800.

“ Dear Brother, I here send you an Old Great Coat for
“ uncle Elias Bradley. If, however, you think he has no occasion
“ for it, you may give it to William Alleyn, or any other person
“ whom you may consider as having the most need.

“ I should be glad to be informed by you, the first
“ opportunity, whether you think Uncle Elias stands in present
“ need of assistance, for it would be our sin & our shame to
“ suffer him to want the necessaries of life. Give my duty to
“ him: & may the Lord prepare him for his approaching end!

“ Should be glad of information, how it is with the labouring
“ Poor; what are the prices of Provisions; & what your Parish-
“ Rates are to the Poor. Should be glad to hear, whether you
“ think Sister Morrell is comfortably situated at Grantham.

“ My Cough, at present, is not violent; but I expect it will
“ be worse after a while: & my respiration is becoming rather
“ worse & worse every year. At this, however, I have no reason
“ to wonder; for I am now an old man. My Wife also is pretty
“ well. But were a sharp frost to set in, & to continue a good
“ while, it would probably be very trying to us both, & perhaps
“ finish our days: as it would probably exceedingly affect our
“ respiration. Blessed be God for *a good hope through grace!*—
“ Wm. Robinson is getting better, and attends his business; but
“ his wound heals very slowly.

“ How goes brother William on? Are you intimate one
“ with another now? How goes the cause of religion on at your
“ Meeting, & among the Baptists at Sutton? O, Brother, in such
“ times of distress as these, we have need of spiritual supports!
“ & I am very apprehensive the state of things will be worse,
“ before it be better. May the Lord fit us for his will in all
“ things! My Wife & Children unite in love & duty, as due.
“ I remain,

“ dear Brother, yours in fraternal affection, A. BOOTH.

“ Mr. Robert Booth, Kirkby Woodhouse.”

Allington in Wilts, 1867.

IN the third decade of the last century, when England had recovered from the distractions of the long continental war, many earnest people were moved to attempt something for the social, moral and spiritual welfare of the nation. Amongst these efforts the founding of Evangelical places of worship was extensive, as the date on many a town or village chapel and roadside meeting-house records. Some of these buildings are in such isolated districts as to suggest a wave of spiritual fervour and concern that can hardly now be realised. One of them stands in the quiet village of Allington near Devizes, at the foot of the Wiltshire downs. The inscription in front reads "Bethel Chapel, 1829."

Living at Andover in 1867, the announcement of the Anniversary and the presence of the Rev. J. C. Philpot, attracted me. I had heard him some years before in Nottinghamshire and he was a friend of some of my people. There were no motor-coaches in those days, so it meant a pilgrimage on foot one pleasant Saturday afternoon, past Weyhill, Ludgershall and other little hamlets; past sheep farms, along dusty roads, till at Upavon, weariness and the westering sun suggested rest.

The little village and its few shops were busy with week-end rural customers, and no place of rest responded to my inquiries; but it was suggested that at the "Charlton Cat," an inn two miles further on, I should be sure of hospitality. My informant noticing my perplexity at the strange name, explained that it was once "The Tiger," but during a renovation the sign writer depicted such a curious animal that the natives called it "The Cat." This I reached in the shadows, and the landlord, a youngish labouring man, and his wife, seemed pleased to receive me, "and so to bed."

Morning dawned, a golden summer Sunday morning. Breakfast and family prayer with the landlord and his little family, then to walk along the pleasant Vale of Pewsey, seeing the famous "White Horse" on the steep slope of the Downs; on through cross-country lanes to Allington, the end of my twenty-seven miles' walk.

A good congregation was assembling to fill little Bethel. More than one distinguished adherent drove over in his carriage from a distance. Friends came, some in gigs and other vehicles,

from far and near. Farm labourers and village folk—on one purpose bent, remindful of Dr. Watts' verse—

“Lord, how delightful 'tis to see
A whole assembly worship Thee;
At once they sing, at once they pray.
They hear of heaven and learn the way.”

At 10.30 the Rev. J. C. Philpot, M.A.,—erewhile Fellow and Tutor of Worcester College, Oxford, whose scholastic gifts and family connections would have led to a Bishopric had he remained in the Established Church—took the service and preached one of those deep experimental sermons that touch serious minds and anxious souls.

At the close friends welcomed friends, spoke to strangers and introduced visitors, and then many had dinner in the vestry. I was noticed and questioned, and my walk rather surprised some. One kindly farmer said, “Well young man, if ever you're tempted to think you're all wrong, remember you had enough concern for the truth as to do all that journey to hear it. I'll give you a lift part of the way back.”

The afternoon service followed; after partings and last words the congregation slowly departed; horses were harnessed to the vans and gigs, and Bethel ended its great day.

My farmer friend fulfilled his promise and drove me several miles, then set me down at the nearest cross roads, and with a few directions and a hearty handshake went on his way, leaving me to go mine, with much to think about, in the rural beauty of that sweet Sunday evening, till late and weary I reached Andover.

The little cause, like many others, alas, has declined. Old members long since dead and their places not filled up. At times “on the ebb of closing.” Now no church members but a few friends who love the place still attend on Sunday afternoons only, depending for ministry on some one coming from Devizes or other neighbouring Chapels.

The Centenary was celebrated last year, 1929, when Mr. H. E. Carr, of Chippenham, preached, as he also did at the 101st Anniversary on August 4 this year.

T. R. HOOPER.

Collecting for a Chapel.

AN old account-book, leather-bound and brass-clasped, small enough for the pocket, has been given by Mr. W. Dotisio of Bradford-on-Avon to our Society. To the superficial observer it contains sermons preached in 1836. But close inspection shows that the thrifty owner wrote these in between the lines of the record of a begging expedition on behalf of a chapel to be built at Corsham in 1828.

A Baptist cause rose there in 1822 out of the Independent church. People met at first in a converted cottage, then built a room able to hold 200. A church was formed 1823, and next year Henry Webley took the oversight with the approval of the Home Mission. He did so well that by 1828 a third home was needed. Money was promised, but this time it was decided to make an appeal to friends outside. The case was laid before the Baptist Home Missionary Society at Bath, and on 12 April 1828 it was commended, and a statement in the collecting book was signed by John Paul Porter of Bath, Thomas Gough of Westbury Leigh, Robert Aitchison of Bratton, Joseph Rodway of Bradford, Peter Anstie and W. Walton of Trowbridge, Thomas Ayres of Keynsham, Owen Clarke of Taunton, Thomas Sturges of Melksham, and John Edwards, secretary to the Society. Other signatures were soon secured; Joseph Dear of Calne, Samuel Webley of Avening, James Dunn of Hampton, Henry Hawkins of Stroud, James Biggs and J. S. Bunce of Devizes, William Cornwall of Avebury, Thomas Clarke of Paulton.

With these credentials, Webley visited Bradford-on-Avon, Chippenham, Tytherton, Norton, Melksham, Martho, Hungerford, Newbury, Oakingham, Trowbridge, Bath, Laverton, Market Lavington, Devizes, Salisbury, Downton, Forton, Ryde, Newport, Yarmouth, Weymouth, Poole, Charmouth, Hilsley, Kingswood, Midsomer Norton, Westbury, Bratton and Sherborne. Apparently this tour occupied nearly four months, and subscriptions of from half-a-crown to five pounds were gathered. At Frome in August other signatures were secured, including W. H. Murch of Stepney. Hammersmith, Maidenhead, Grittleton, Colerne, Kingston, Andover, Whitchurch, Longparish, Broughton, Weymouth again, Axminster, were visited.

The chapel was opened on 1 January 1829, before all the

funds needed were collected. Fresh appeal was made, and on 6 October 1830 the committee (of the Bristol Building Fund?) examined and approved, and added a special commendation to friends in Bristol; this was signed by Samuel Newell, William Thorp, John Wooldridge, William Lucy, Thomas Winter, Thomas Roberts and John Leifchild. A close examination of the lists shows that if a man lent the weight of his name to the appeal, he seldom gave the weight of his guinea to the collector. With a minister this is explicable. John Blakeman of Crayford had just inscribed that under existing circumstances they were not able to render assistance, but did not doubt the respectability, from the signatures borne. Nine friends at Gravesend, however, did give their crowns or half-crowns; but Canterbury and Chatham were not very helpful, though Margate led off with thirty and fifty shillings.

A fillip was given on 17 October 1831 by Thomas Fox Newman of Frome, with a new testimonial, and soon afterwards the collecting ceased. The chapel was freed from debt, and the indefatigable pastor at once inspired the church to build two more chapels, at Biddestone and Alington. Indeed within eight years there were chapels also at Moor Green, Sherstone, Sandy Lane and Yatton Keynell, while three needed enlargement, and three more villages were evangelized.

The accounts are of interest in many ways. Now that we have to pay £45 a place for an elementary school, it is tantalizing to read of chapels at £1 a place. The whole incident shows the sturdy reliance of the West Country on its own churches; London might not have existed.

Sir John Bramston's Notes on Dissenters.

CONVENTICLES being suppressed in 1686, use has been made of the houses for those meetings, for the use of the orthodox and conformable clergy and their auditors; a great ease, and of great benefit to the parishioners in great parishes. [London was chiefly in view.]

In 1687 the king changes several justices of the peace, judging that the new ones, out of hatred to the Church of England, and out of desire to have the penal laws abrogated, they will also promote the taking away the Test too. The king sends Commissioners into London, Middlesex, and into every county, to enquire what moneys had been levied on the Dissenters

of all sorts, and by whom, in matters relating to religion. [Apparently an attempt was made, and failed, to compel reimbursement.]

In 1688 the *mobile* that day the king went, grew very unruly, and in great multitudes assembled; and pulled down that night and the following day many houses where mass was said and priests lodged. They went also to Wild House, the Spanish Ambassador's; the rabble demolished that chapel. [It was rebuilt by the nation, but the ambassador ceased to use the house, and the Baptists hired it; it became famous as Little Wild Street.]

Elinor, wife of Thomas Rands, died 11 October 1691. She was the daughter of a clergyman, Mr. Colson, in Lincolnshire, but she turned Anabaptist; died in London.

I have been ill with a cold a week, and I was in fear I should not have been able to go to church on Christmas Day [1699]; but I thank God I went, received the communion at the rails; this being the first time the communion hath been celebrated since the table was railed in, and the pulpit removed. [Sir John died within six weeks, at the age of 88. This note as to the communion-rails is to be compared with a recollection of 59 years earlier, as to the doings of the royalist army raised to fight the Scots:—]

A special commission of Oyer and Terminer for trial of some soldiers, who had broken into the church at Easterford-Kelvedon, burnt the rails about the communion table, stolen the surplice and the church plate, or some of it; my father sitting there as judge.

[Sir John lived at Roxwell, four miles west of Chelmsford. In the grand-jury room of that assize-town, are monuments and portraits of the family. He was a Knight of the Bath, and member of many parliaments. He began his autobiography in 1683, so that all notes except that of 1640 are contemporary. He would have been surprised had he lived eight years longer, to find land at his park-gates bequeathed as an endowment for the Baptist church at Halstead.]

Reviews.

Contemporary Thought of India by A. C. Underwood, M.A., D.D., in *The Library of Contemporary Thought*, edited by W. Tudor Jones, M.A., D.Ph. (Williams & Norgate, 5s. net.).

India again. We cannot escape this land of fascinating and infinite variety. It is on our hearts and in our minds. At the moment when this is being written, its leaders are assembled in London at the Round Table Conference. They are articulating the modern, almost fierce, desire that the destiny of the country should be in the hands of their own countrymen. Like the adolescent struggling for the right to think for itself, India beckons the future. Emblazoned there it sees freedom; the implications of responsibility may not be visioned as clearly. India's problems are of a peculiarly intricate and difficult nature, hardly understandable apart from careful study of the country's history and a desire to catch something of the spirit of the East.

Dr. Underwood's book is an invaluable introduction to those problems. Here are the facts, marshalled with care and precision, and yet, withal, in interesting, pellucid, English. Ten years' residence in Serampore enables him to move with intimacy among the political, social and religious movements which have brought about the India of 1930. He shows how the demands of half-a-century ago for moderate nationalism developed along extremer channels and reached the revolutionary nationalism of recent days. The long chapter on "Post-War Politics" is particularly enlightening, and has the merit of bringing the reader to the summer of 1930. The two volumes of the Simon Commission Report receive careful discussion; but perhaps one's attention is more concerned with the possibilities behind the statement that "the most sinister feature of post-war politics is the emergence of secular republicanism." The risk that "Western Materialism will wield such influence in the East as to convert it into the greatest future menace to all spirituality" is obvious. Chapters on the Depressed Classes, the Masses, and the Women's Movement, "one of the most hopeful features of the present situation," precede the longest section of the book, that which deals with religious influences. "The progress of Christianity in India would have been greater than it is, were it not for the difficulty Indians have had in separating it from Western political ascendancy and Western economic exploitation."

The portraits of Tagore, who "is inexplicable apart from the impact of Christianity upon the Hindu mind," of Gandhi, who "has helped many in India to find new meaning in the suffering love of Christ on the Cross," and of Radhakrishnan, are drawn with sympathetic insight and lead to the final illuminating chapter on "Indian Christianity."

There are only 232 pages, but into that space Dr. Underwood has packed a mass of well-digested material which makes the book one to be read and retained.

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

KARL BARTH was asked to give two addresses last May to a branch of the Students' Christian Union. In translation they appear as *The Christian Life* (S.C.M., 1s. 6d.), and English students also may now profit by his direct talk. He was invited to speak on the Formation of this life, and he based his reply on Romans xii. 1 and 2. In summary it runs thus:—Though the sacrifice for sin has been made, though the Spirit now lives within, yet we are only on the way, not yet at the goal. We ourselves still need daily mercy, while we are now acknowledged by God, held by Him. The power of direction is granted to us, the problem is, how to exercise it. We act daily, act through the body; the body then is to be dedicated to God, as a response to His acknowledgement. But acts must be guided by reason. We must value this world, God's world, yet spoiled by the conflict of many selfish selves; of such a world there can be no acceptance. God's ultimate world is not ephemeral, like this; we must unceasingly aim at comprehending what He is gradually making real, and in harmony with His purpose must seek to make it apparent and actual: a world such as He desires, in unison with Himself.