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Methodism and Baptism.

IN writing of Methodist doctrine on any subject it is well to remember that Methodism began as an Evangelistic movement and not as a church. When Wesley and his preachers joyfully traversed the length and breadth of England, they were set upon one thing only—to "beseech sinners to return to God." Rightly or wrongly, they did not think that they needed to say anything much about Baptism. The subject was sometimes thrust upon them, as will appear directly, but they knew that the great mass of their hearers had been baptised in infancy, and, if others had been content to leave the matter there, probably they would have said nothing about it.

Others, however, soon began to say something about it. One source of information on this subject, as on many others, is John Wesley's *Journal*.[1] It shows that in the days of his mighty evangelism adults sometimes asked him to baptise them. They seem usually to have been Quakers, but one was an "Anabaptist" and another a Portuguese Jew.[2] More than once Wesley notes how great seasons of blessing these adult baptisms were. I can well believe it, for though I have never been present at a Baptist administration of this Sacrament, one of the memories of my life is of an adult baptism at our little Marathi Church in Bombay. The other references to Baptism in the *Journal* concern the Baptists of Wesley's day. I regret to say that he uniformly depicts Baptists as a controversial folk! Here are two instances—"I had a visit from Mr. S., an honest, zealous Anabaptist teacher. Finding he *would* dispute, I let him dispute, and held him to the point till between eleven and twelve o'clock. By that time he was willing to take breath. Perhaps he may be less fond of dispute for the time to come."[3] "At one I preached at Tipton Green, where the Baptists have been making havoc of the flock; which constrained me, in speaking on those words, 'Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins,' to spend near ten minutes in controversy; which is more than I had done in

[1] This shows that in Georgia—that is, of course, before his heart was "strangely warmed"—the young High Churchman refused to baptise children except by immersion, as he thought this had been the custom of the Early Church.—*Journal*, May 5th, 1736.

[2] *Journal*, January 25th, 1739; April 6th, 1748; October 16th, 1756; December 5th, 1757.

[3] *Journal*, January 13th, 1746. It will be noticed that Wesley, like many others, connected the Anabaptist movement on the Continent with the Baptist movement in England.

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public for many months (perhaps years) before."[4] It would be interesting to have a version of these encounters from the other side!

Yet disputes with Baptists seem to have been occasional and sporadic. In one place, indeed, Wesley refers to "the smallness of their number" in England.[5] The chief difficulty of the evangelists on this subject lay elsewhere. For this we must turn to Wesley's *Sermons*. One of his favourite subjects was Regeneration or "The New Birth," and it was his custom to urge that if a man is "born again" he may know it. Indeed, in his earlier preaching he said that he must know it. This, of course, is the famous Evangelical doctrine of "assurance." For any member of the Anglican Church the retort was obvious—"Well, but I was born again when I was baptised in infancy," for it is undoubted that in the twenty-seventh of the Thirty-Nine Articles a form of the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration is taught. It is taught also in the Order in the Prayer Book for the "Ministration of Publick Baptism of Infants" (1662), and in the Catechism. Wesley claimed all his life to be a faithful member of the Church of England. What was he to say to this challenge?

His answer fell into two parts. First, he had an answer as an evangelist. A quotation from his sermon on "The Marks of the New Birth" will illustrate this. After defining these "marks" as faith, hope and love, and exhibiting the true scope and depth of the three great qualities, he goes on "Every one of you . . . cannot but feel and know of a truth, whether at this hour (answer to God and not to man!) you are thus a child of God or no. The question is not what you was made[6] in baptism (do not evade); but, what are you now? Is the Spirit of Adoption now in your heart? To your own heart let the appeal be made. I ask not whether you *was* born of water and of the Spirit; but are you *now* the temple of the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in you? I allow you was 'circumcised with the circumcision of the heart' (as St. Paul emphatically terms baptism); but does the Spirit of God and of glory *now* rest upon you? Else, 'your circumcision is become uncircumcision.' Say not then in your heart, 'I *was once* baptised, therefore I *am now* a child of God.' Alas, that consequence will by no means hold. How many are the baptised gluttons and drunkards, the baptised liars and common swearers, the baptised railers and evil-speakers, the baptised whoremongers, thieves, extortioners? . . . Lean no

[4] *Journal*, April 3rd, 1751.
[5] *A Further Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, III., 3.
[6] Wesley is here addressing his hearers individually. In the eighteenth century "you was" was often used in speaking to a single person.

more on the staff of that broken reed, that ye *were* born again in baptism. Who denies that ye were then made children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven? But, notwithstanding this, ye are now children of the devil. Therefore, ye must be born again."

Is this an evasion? Or is it not rather an instance of the way in which a great preacher, knowing that there are intellectual difficulties attending a great doctrine and that he cannot deal with these adequately within the compass of a single sermon, keeps to his practical purpose and refuses to let his hearers "ride off" on excuses? It seems to me to be the latter. Yet, of course, Wesley knew that there was an apparent inconsistency and that he ought to deal with it. There is a hint on his way of escape in the quotation just given, but it appears more clearly in his *Treatise on Baptism,* published in 1756. In effect he declares that the word "regeneration" may be used in two senses and that one is apposite to Baptism and the other to Conversion. The second sense will have sufficiently appeared above. What was the first? The *Treatise on Baptism* is in the main a typical eighteenth-century exposition of the doctrine of Infant Baptism, but one of the immediately relative sentences runs, "What are the benefits we receive in baptism? . . . The first of these is the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death." I need not stay to examine the theology implied here, nor need I say that no Methodist would use such terms to-day. I think that beneath the unfortunate phrase "original sin" there lies a grim truth, and I could call Freud in to witness what it is, but the word "guilt" seems to me quite inadmissible of a new-born child. None the less, it will be seen that Wesley did save his consistency. "Baptism," he says in effect, "saves us from the guilt of original sin, but, my hearers, what about your own personal sins? To be saved from these, ye must be born again." Again, later in the same paragraph Wesley does not scruple to say that baptism is "the ordinary instrument of our justification." He means that a baptised child, if it die, is saved by the grace of God, for he goes on to point out that the Anglican Church, at the end of the Baptismal Office, has this rubric—"It is certain, by God's word, that children who are baptised, dying before they commit actual sin, are saved." But neither the rubric nor Wesley says what happens to *unbaptised* children who die "before they commit actual sin." The only hint here is the use of the word "ordinary" in the phrase quoted above.[7]

[7] Some further details of Wesley's beliefs about Baptism may be gathered from his pamphlet *A Roman Catechism,* but these are omitted here for want of space.

Happily the *Treatise on Baptism* has never been one of the authoritative documents of Methodism, and it is time to turn to these. In 1743 Wesley drew up "Rules" for his "United Societies." In these there is no mention of Baptism at all. This is only one instance of the general phenomenon that no formal creed was required of the Members of the Societies on any doctrine whatsoever. It is to be remembered that Wesley was thinking of his "Societies," not of a church. There is no doubt that he counted Baptism as integral to the Church of Christ. None the less the Rules were not altered when his Societies grew into a church, and to this day no formal creed on any subject is demanded of Members of the Methodist Church. From Preachers, as distinct from Members, Wesley did ask some degree of agreement about doctrine. While the ultimate authority, of course, was to be the New Testament, Wesley's exposition of it as contained in two of his works, the *Notes on the New Testament,* and the first forty-four of his *Sermons,* was to be the "standard" exposition for Methodist Preachers. People outside Methodism often smile at this way of dealing with creeds, especially those who haven't read the two volumes, and I am tempted to point out some of the advantages of the method, but I will content myself by saying that after trying it for a century and a half, Methodists are so satisfied with it that these two works find a place in the constitution of the new Methodist Church. What do they say about Baptism? Nothing, I think, that has not been already said. I have illustrated above the practical way in which the subject was thrust upon the early Methodist Preachers, and Wesley's method in reply. In the *Forty-Four Sermons* there is practically nothing else. Even in a sermon on "The Means of Grace," while great emphasis is laid on the Lord's Supper, Baptism isn't named. As for "*the Notes,*" the chief passage is the comment on the words, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit." This runs as follows—"Except he experience that great inward change by the Spirit, and be baptised (wherever baptism can be had) as the outward sign and means of it." This, of course, does not face all the difficulties. If now it is asked why so little is said on the subject in the Methodist "Standards," the reply again is that Wesley was thinking of the preaching of a number of itinerating evangelists, not of the formulation of a technical creed. Further, it was not his wish that his Preachers should administer either Sacrament. I need not trace the way in which he found it impossible altogether to follow this wish. So far as he could, he followed it. For instance, in his final hymnbook of 1780 there are no hymns for either Sacrament. I think it is true that in his two standard volumes he said as little as he could

about the problems of Baptism, especially Infant Baptism, for he said as little as he could on any Christian controversy. He sent his preachers not to settle problems but to proclaim a gospel.

To pass to the century that followed Wesley's death—and, since I know *Wesleyan* Methodism best, to confine ourselves to that—we find that the demand of the Methodist people that their own Ministers should administer the Sacraments to them, which had been held in check during Wesley's lifetime by reverence for him, grew quickly irresistible. There were indeed still two opinions on the question, and the Conference—which now became the ultimate authority in Methodism—cautiously declared that its Preachers should only administer the Sacraments in those places where the people *unanimously* desired it. Yet even so the practice spread until it was universal. I need hardly say that, while on occasion adults were baptised, this was regarded as exceptional, and that by Baptism the Methodist people meant Infant Baptism. What Order of Service did the Preachers use? Sometimes the Order of the Prayer Book and sometimes one of Wesley's own. For, as it happened, he had drawn up an Order in 1784 for the Methodists of America. At the close of the Revolutionary War most of the Anglican clergy and some of the Methodist Preachers left the United States, and the people were left "as sheep not having a shepherd." There is here another long story, but it must suffice to say that the Methodists of America wrote and wrote and wrote to Wesley, imploring him either to come himself to set things in order, or, if that were impossible, to send some representative to do so. At length he sent Dr. Coke, and with him he sent a Book of Offices. One of the chief proofs of his marvellous influence is that the American Methodists received both enthusiastically. So that, when the English Methodists were in need of an Order for Baptism, they had one of Wesley's to their hand. It was based on the Anglican Liturgy, but it differed from it both by omission and alteration. It omitted the large part of the Anglican Form that has to do with sponsors, and the passage about the Sign of the Cross. In two of the three places where the word "regenerate" occurs, the phrase is changed—for instance, for "Seeing now that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's church," Wesley substituted "Seeing now that this child is admitted into the body of Christ's visible church," but it is left in the third. This is in the opening exhortation, where the passage in the Third of John is paraphrased. It will be seen that this is consonant with his distinction, described above, between the benefit of Baptism, the removal of the "guilt of original sin," and the Pauline "New Birth." This Form was in use in the Wesleyan Methodist Church till 1882, and it was never formally forbidden.

Indeed, in 1840 the Conference directed that the two Sacraments "shall always be administered according to the Liturgy of the Church of England, or according to the Abridgement of that Liturgy by Mr. Wesley." I suspect that, like their brethren of later days, the Ministers often abbreviated even the shorter Form. For one thing, as Baptism was usually administered in the course of Sunday Morning worship, the service needed to be brief. For another, questions began to be asked about the doctrine apparently implied in some of its phrases.[8]

These questions found voice in the Conference of 1836. In that year Jabez Bunting was President for the third time. He was the "strong man" in Wesleyan Methodism, for good and for ill, from about 1820 to about 1860. In Gregory's *Side-lights on the Conflicts of Methodism*[9] we find that in the year named a leading Minister named Atherton, who was himself President ten years later, "pronounced" the Baptismal Service "to be at some points at variance with our doctrinal standards," whereupon Bunting himself said, "There are many things in that Form which nothing in the world could induce me to use." Clearly he, at least, was accustomed to abbreviate the Service! And when a Minister asked whether the Sign of the Cross could be used in Baptism, the President indignantly replied that "we should not allow such questions to be proposed." Again, in 1844, when a Minister named Powell said that "he believed in baptismal regeneration and that Mr. Wesley did so," Bunting replied that "Mr. Powell must attach some peculiar meaning to the word 'regeneration'"—that is, peculiar for a Methodist—and went on to draw attention to the distinction made by Wesley in his *Sermons*, as noted above. Dr. Bunting's son, W. M. Bunting, went so far as to say, "I could not remain a member of this Body if I did not abjure the doctrine of Baptismal regeneration."[10]

Here the dates are important. The Oxford Movement, with its strong assertion of Baptismal Regeneration, began in 1833, and there was a reaction against it in Methodism, as elsewhere. At the Conference of 1840 the same Mr. Atherton declared that he would rather use no Form at all than that of the Anglican Church, for the latter "is full of heresy." Again, the "Book-

[8] In passing it may be noted that Methodists took some part in discussions with Baptists. These, no doubt, followed familiar lines, though one of the doughtier Methodist disputants, Rev. Daniel Isaac, who died in 1834, made an original contribution. I haven't read his book, but Dr. A. W. Harrison tells me that he maintained that there are only three instances of Immersion in the Scriptures—the drowning of the sinners at the Flood, the overwhelming of the Egyptians in the Red Sea at the Exodus, and the plunge of the Gadarene swine! What about Jonah?

[9] p. 219.

[10] Gregory, *Side-lights*, pp. 358f.

room"—that is, the publishing house under the control of the Conference—issued a series of threepenny tracts in reply to the famous Tracts of the Oxford Movement. These were entitled "Wesleyan Tracts for the Times," and the eighth took the subject "Baptism Not Regeneration."

On the other hand there were those, sometimes led by Bunting himself, who began to cry "Halt!" In 1838, for instance, the Tractarian Controversy "came up" in Conference, and Bunting said, "We are in danger of going to the opposite extreme," and appealed to the article on Baptism in the Wesleyan Catechism.[11] And, as we have seen, the Conference of 1840 directed that either the Anglican Form or Wesley's Abridgement should be used in the Baptismal Service. This is the more remarkable because the famous "Gedney Case," in which a Lincolnshire clergyman refused to bury any one baptised by a Methodist, fell in that year.[12]

What was the ground of this seeming vacillation? It was in part due to the fact that many Methodists, like Wesley before them, wished to do two things at once—to keep as close as possible to the Church of England, and to expound doctrine in accordance with the great Evangelical proclamation of "assurance." Sometimes these two endeavours pulled them in opposite directions. When this was so, slowly but surely the belief in "assurance" won. Yet, in the case of Baptism, there was something more. The article in the Catechism to which Bunting appealed uses the famous old phrase that Baptism is a "means of grace." In other words, while Baptismal Regeneration was repudiated, it was believed that in Baptism a child receives *some* spiritual blessing which an unbaptised child does not receive. It will be seen that this doctrine, while it silently omits Wesley's account of this blessing—that in Baptism "the guilt of original sin" is taken away—is still a modified form of his belief. It was the doctrine held both by Richard Watson and Dr. W. B. Pope, and these are the two chief systematic theologians of Methodism in the Nineteenth Century. I do not myself hold it, but, as my business just now is to describe and not to discuss, I will only add that it is still widely held in Methodism. It is quite a mistake to confuse it with Baptismal Regeneration. As we have seen, the distinction was made quite early. None the less, so reluctant was the Conference to draw further away from the Church of England, that the Form for Infant Baptism was not revised till 1882. In that year a Form was adopted that followed as far as possible the Anglican "use" but avoided everything

[11] Gregory, *Side-lights*, pp. 256f.

[12] The Wesleyan "Committee of Privileges" carried the issue to the Courts and won.

that could possibly be interpreted as Baptismal Regeneration. In consequence two Ministers, one of them a Tutor at Richmond, left Methodism and entered the Anglican Church.

Yet, while the doctrine just described was the dominant one in Wesleyan Methodism through the greater part of the nineteenth century, another began to intrude. Its best-known exponents did not belong to Methodism. Perhaps its most famous exposition is in F. W. Robertson's two Sermons on Baptism, but it had other advocates in Maurice, Kingsley and Dr. Dale. Under this belief every child born into the world is God's child, and baptism only asserts this. As Dale put it, it is a "declaratory act." There was a favourite comparison with the coronation of an English king—this, says Robertson, does not *make* him king, but asserts that he *is* king. These teachers said much else, of course, but this is the new point in their teaching, and they make much—but not too much, as I think—of the value of such "declaratory acts." It may be that this doctrine, at least in part, was a reaction against the emphasis of the Oxford Movement on Baptismal Regeneration. For evidence of the spread of this interpretation among Methodist Ministers we may turn to Gregory's *Scriptural Church Principles,* published in 1888. He is at pains both to repudiate Baptismal Regeneration and to combat Maurice and Robertson's teaching.[13] He would not spend so much time as he does over the latter, I think, unless it had got some hold in Methodism. Since his day it has spread widely—with an addition. Its exponents insist that, if Baptism is rightly used, it is a true and effective "Means of grace" *to the child's parents and to the Church.* Not only does it remind them of their high duties to the child, but in and through it Christ gives them grace for the fulfilment of those duties. This, of course, is only to say of Baptism what Christians say of all true "Means of grace." Many who like myself hold this doctrine would add that both good and evil—in old technical terms "prevenient grace" and "original sin"—are at work in every child from birth, but that, unless and until he himself sides with evil, good predominates. So a basis is found for the belief, common among Methodists, that *every* child that dies "enters into the kingdom of heaven."

There are, then, two concepts of Baptism in Methodism to-day. The Conference of the United Church has appointed a Committee to draw up a Form of Service and also "a Memorandum of Infant Baptism for the future guidance of the Church." This Committee has not yet finally reported and it remains to be seen what the Conference will do with its report, but its constant endeavour is to draw up such a Form and such

[13] pp. 42-65.

a Memorandum as shall be acceptable to those who hold either of the doctrines described above. It is perhaps hardly necessary to add that Methodists, rightly or wrongly, still adhere steadfastly to the practice of Infant Baptism. They do so because they believe, not only that children belong to Christ and therefore to His Church, but because they think that Baptism is His appointed way of proclaiming this. Perhaps a quotation from the last-named book of Dr. Gregory relates this conviction to their belief in "assurance" as well as any. The book is in catechetical form, and the author says[14] "Baptism, then, is initiation into discipleship. Is it also initiation into Church membership?" The answer begins, "Not into *full* membership in the case of an infant, but into incipient and provisional Church membership. To *full* Church membership free personal consent is indispensable." [15]

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[14] p. 37.

[15] The writer may perhaps be allowed to add that he has fully expounded his own concept of the Sacramental principle in his Fernley Lecture on "The Sacramental Society."

PLYMOUTH. The records of the church are meagre for half a century. Josiah Thompson in 1779 made some notes which are here expanded. Nathanael Hodges, of Warren's academy at Taunton, was pastor 1698-1701, then left for London, when Samuel Buttall resumed his care of the church. In 1707 Caleb Jope was invited from Davisson's Baptist academy at Trowbridge, and the Western Association approved; but he proceeded to Jones' academy at Tewkesbury, to qualify as tutor at the Bristol academy. So Plymouth at once called John Bryan, though he was not ordained till 1710. John Bennick followed, 1718-1720, then Caleb Jope did come till 1723. Elkanah Widgery from Newbury spent two years, then on to Bampton. John Ridley was next, 1726-1730, and after a short stay in London settled at Ingham. Abraham Deodate Hoare was pastor 1734-1739 at least. Then John Bennick took office again, but about 1747 went to Lyme. The way then opened for Philip Gibbs from Kingsbridge, who set the church on a good footing, and they rebuilt the premises in 1752, a century after the first building.

Christian Problems: Settled; and Awaiting Further Exploration.

I CANNOT claim the distinction of being a centenarian, or even a septuagenarian, but fifty years have passed since I passed, as a boy of thirteen, through the waters of baptism on a cold winter's day in a mountain stream a tributary of the Ebbw in the western valleys of Monmouthshire. In no part of Great Britain are Baptists so strong as in those western valleys. It is said that if you sow there non-Baptist seeds, all the chances are that they grow up into Baptist plants. As to my own case I was brought up in a home with a Congregationalist father and a Baptist mother, but all of us ten children turned out Baptists. I was brought up as a strict Baptist of the old Welsh type. Whether I can claim that distinction now, in my humility I leave others to decide. I think there must be something of my early standpoint left in my blood. At any rate I thoroughly understand the position of close communion Baptists—which, assuming their premises are correct, is a very strong one—and I am in no danger of annoying them through misinterpreting their cherished convictions. An old Indian friend of mine, a bishop of the Orthodox Syrian Church in South India, once described me as a man with a Catholic heart, a Protestant brain, and a rationalistic stomach. I presume he meant to be complimentary, and I do not object to this characterisation of my internal organs. I do not, however, wish to be regarded as a Jesuit in disguise, and I am not a member of the Protestant Truth Society, or still less of the Rationalist Press Association. Yet truth is many-sided, and as I see things, nothing but a balanced recognition of all that is good and true in the Catholic, Protestant and Rationalistic temperaments can do justice to the comprehensive genius of the Christian faith. My present purpose is to discuss quite informally certain problems bound up with our systems of theological truth and Christian life. But living Christianity is infinitely greater than all problems arising out of it.

Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

Man is a thinking animal, and, like other members of the species, I have tried in my little way to think out my own theological system. But my Christianity in essence is in no way bound up with my little system of theology, but consists in loyalty to the leadership and lordship of Christ; and all my ministerial activity has been governed through and through by this standpoint. All I claim is the same freedom, within their limitations, to express my own standpoint, as I willingly and cordially grant to others. There can in my experience be a very real brotherhood of the spirit even though the intellectual temperament be fundamentally different.

I have spent thirty-five years of my working life in the East, cut off to a large extent from the main currents of Western life and thought. But perhaps prolonged residence in the back waters of world life has one advantage. It enables one to watch the great conflict of ideals in the Western Christian world as a spectator, rather than as an active participator. In the space at my disposal, naturally I can only make comparatively brief reference to and comment on what I consider the dominant issues in my time that have troubled or are still troubling the waters of Christian life and thought in Western lands. Three of these issues I consider practically settled, and four of them as awaiting further exploration. Some no doubt would choose other problems as more important, but perhaps most will regard my own selection as fairly representative. Intricate, though important, philosophical problems I must avoid for my present purpose.

I. ISSUES PRACTICALLY SETTLED.

(1) When I entered Regent's Park College, London, in 1888, a raw lad of seventeen from a Welsh Grammar School, the down-grade controversy was at its height. Certain ministers in the denomination, not to mention many others outside, had dared to question the eternity of hell-flames for sinners, on the ground that everlasting torment for lost souls was inconsistent with the Fatherhood of God. A large number of Christian people in those days believed in a hell veritably material in character, and to suggest that the flames were not real ones, was regarded as rank disloyalty to the Word of God. Many a stirring sermon on hell did I hear as a boy, which made my hair stand on end. I confess I rather liked the sensation. It gave me a delightful sense of horror more thrilling than anything I found in a penny dreadful. Not long after I entered college one of the senior students did me the honour of asking me to go for a walk. In the course of the walk, this reverend

and learned senior ventured to express some doubts about the eternity of hell. I can vividly recall the terrible shock I suffered. If he had confessed to a murder the shock would not have been so great. Yet I knew him to be helpful and Christian in his whole walk and conversation, and the perplexity of my soul was increased correspondingly. All this, however, gave me food for thought. Some few months later an old minister visiting the college was asked by the Principal to conduct morning prayers. He must have felt that the college, notwithstanding the unbending orthodoxy of the Principal, the venerable Dr. Angus, was under suspicion of heresy, and so thought it his duty in talking to the Almighty to say something that would help to keep us students in the straight path on this great issue. I can recall his words as if they were uttered yesterday, "And, Oh God," he tenderly pleaded, "when we hear the shrieks of the damned ascending from the everlasting flames of the bottomless pit, give us grace to shout, Hallelujah, Hallelujah." This was too much for me, and I came to the conclusion that I would rather risk sharing the agonies of the damned, than join in the Hallelujah of the saints. This conflict, known as the down-grade controversy, very keen and real though it was at the time, has been settled by the silent omission of lurid pictures of hell from the modern pulpit. Most Christian people to-day are content to leave the future in the hands of our Father God, and to rest in the assurance "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Our ceasing to believe in the old idea of hell, does not mean that we have ceased to believe in the moral government of God. Good always and everywhere brings forth good, and evil evil, so that man reaps as he has sown, "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him. Woe unto the wicked! It shall be ill with him." Retribution is of the very nature of God as moral governor, no deed of good or evil can fall out of the circle of the Divine Government. If we had reason to believe that "God was cool and comfortable about the evil that is defying His will, and devouring His children, we should cease to call Him Father." But the wrath of God against sinners is not rage, venting itself in the eternal torment of such of His children as have taken the wrong turning. Even a mother may forget her sucking child, but the door of divine mercy can never be closed against any of God's erring children. Rather the wrath of God must be a holy passion, worthily expressive of the divine righteousness, consistent with fair dealing and magnanimity. We may be sure of this, that the government of God, whether in this world, or in the next, will be absolutely faithful to all demands of fair dealing and magnanimity. We know a magnanimous man when we come in touch with him. He makes all allowance for human

weakness and ignorance, and he never passes judgment without taking into account all circumstances that have a reasonable claim to be considered. The largest and most generous ideals of fair dealing that have grown up in the hearts of men, must have been implanted there by God, and He Himself must be the most magnanimous of beings. "The judgment of God is according to truth," and must be an expression of His undying love, for God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in Him. The grave problems of the future world, shrouded in impenetrable darkness, we may in the utmost confidence and faith leave to Him.

(2) Another burning question, burning in another sense, fifty years ago, was the doctrine of evolution. The great body of Christian people were stubbornly resisting the thought on the ground that it was inconsistent with the early chapters of Genesis, and they claimed that if science came in conflict with the Bible as the Infallible Word of God, it is science must go. Not a few good Christian souls were ready to send supporters of Darwin and Huxley to the stake, for venturing to suggest that the Biblical account of creation was to be treated as religious poetry rather than exact science. In my first year in college, I attended a lecture on this problem in a London church, delivered by the great Old Testament scholar, Professor Elmslie, whose early death was such a loss to the Christian life and scholarship of this country. I can remember the painful intensity of thought and mental anxiety mirrored in the faces of the large audience as they listened to the lecturer unfolding his exposition, having as its object the reconciliation of the evolution hypothesis and the Genesis narrative. This was characteristic of the time, and only painfully was the battle won, until evolution has become a commonplace of general and Christian thinking. There are still, it is true, sharply conflicting theories of evolution. No one now believes in the precise type of evolution propounded by Darwin, which tended to give support to a materialist or mechanistic view of the world. The old materialism is dead, if not buried, killed by scientists themselves, and, in its place, philosophers and leading scientists are propounding the creative or energent aspect of evolution with an immanent principle or life force at the root of the world organism, and determining its growth into new forms of ever expanding life. The Mosaic programme of the creation of the world in six days of twenty-four hours each is now generally recognised as a poetic legend, and in its place we have eras of unimaginable length in the formation of the earth's crust, and vast ranges of space and time thrown open with a perspective of developing life. Surely here is something infinitely grander and more inspiring than the grotesque cos-

mology of mediaeval times with its universe of three floors, which for a thousand years formed the working background of men's thoughts of the universe and which no one was permitted to question on pain of torture and excommunication. Progressive Christians have everywhere now come to see that an enlightened theory of evolution, recognising all the factors of the case as we know them, does not banish God from His universe, but thinks of the world as the product of a long creative process, in which as Milton sang

> God from the first was present,
> And with mighty wings outspread,
> Dovelike sat brooding on the vast abyss
> And made it pregnant.

True we still occasionally get echoes of the old unbending attitude. The Principal of a theological college told me that when he was preaching in a Leeds church a little time ago, he happened to mention the word evolution, in a quite innocent way. Straightaway a lady in the congregation rose from her seat, and walked out of the church in stately indignation. It is, however, probably true that in the years that are gone many more have walked out, or silently kept away for quite contrary reasons, turning in repugnance from a creed which seemed to them to be associated with a series of beliefs which their own studies had proved to them to be impossible. Freedom of thought and expression may be dangerous to some minds, but lack of candour or a reactionary attitude on the great fundamental religious issues of our time is attended with far greater perils.

(3) Another issue, so dominant a religious problem in the life of fifty years ago, but now in the main settled, is that of Biblical Criticism. To suggest that Moses did not write the whole of the Pentateuch, that David did not write all the Psalms ascribed to him by Jewish tradition embodied in the superscriptions, that a large part of the Book of Isaiah was composed by another prophet of a different age, that the book of Jonah was a parable, that the Book of Daniel was written not in the sixth century B.C., but in the second, was regarded by the great body of Christian people as unfaithfulness to the inspired word, bound to result in pure atheism. During my college days, Dr. R. F. Horton wrote what would now be considered a very moderate book on Inspiration and Biblical Criticism, and for it he was virulently attacked in all directions. A short time before the publication of the book he had received an invitation to address the Baptist Union, but after the publication the invitation was promptly withdrawn. An incident that happened at New College, London, when I was at Regent's Park, is indicative of the general religious environment of the time. A ministerial

candidate up for the entrance examination was asked if he had read any books on Atheism. He replied that he had, referring to books by writers like Bradlaugh and Ingersoll, finishing up with Horton on Inspiration, and Dr. Horton himself happened to be present as a member of the examining committee. This young man without a doubt reflected the general Christian outlook of his time. We have travelled far since then. Before I entered college, I had to undergo an examination in Biblical knowledge by a committee of Monmouthshire ministers to test my fitness to preach in the churches of the association. I remember proving very conclusively to them that St. Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews and needless to say I came out of the examination with flying colours. Fifty years ago, the old theory of the Bible as a Book verbally inspired and dictated by the Spirit of God, and equally authoritative in all its parts, dominated the Christian outlook. I was brought up on it, and it occurred to no one in the environment I lived in as a boy to question it. We felt as much bound to defend the crude morality of the Book of Judges, the croaking pessimism of Ecclesiastes, and the terrible imprecations of some of the Psalms as if they were an integral part of our Christian faith and life. But we are to-day freed from the bondage of this slavery to the letter by the recognition of the principle that Revelation is progressive, and religious knowledge an evolutionary growth. We have come to see that emphatically everything in the Bible is not of equal value. Literal loyalty to the Bible in all its details means essential disloyalty to a higher principle fully recognised by Christ Himself, " It was said to them of old time, but I say unto you " : that is the voice of God's spirit through the ages, as human ideals under divine guidance take a loftier form, and conscience becomes more sensitive. Revelation, like the rising of the sun, is not a sudden bursting forth of perfect blinding light, but a shining more and more to the perfect day. " God, who in ancient days spoke to ancestors in many fragments and by many methods, through the prophets, has at the end of these days spoken to us through a Son! " God's revelation to His children has always and necessarily been as they have been able to receive the witness. The human messengers through whom He worked, the various prophetic voices of all the passing centuries, have themselves been very imperfect instruments, and the people to whom they were sent much more so. But Christ Himself is able to speak to men of all classes and civilisations in a way that knows no parallel. He has become the touchstone for the teaching of all other forms of truth and revelation, yet not in any mechanical or literalistic way " My words," He said, " they are spirit and they are life." His authority is not some-

thing imposed on us from without, and is not concerned with trifling details. "To love God with all the soul, and one's neighbour as one's self, on these hang all the law and the prophets," this was to Him the summing up of life's duty and privilege. He is, through His spirit, revealing the Divine Purpose to us in all the movements of our time. New light is ever breaking forth from His word, and it is available in all its fulness for all His people to-day, if we do not close our eyes against its approach. We shall never go back to the slavery of the letter involved in the conception of a mechanically inspired Bible, equally infallible in all its parts. We have entered into the freedom with which Christ has made us free. But there is, I am afraid, still a considerable percentage of Jews in our churches, not in blood, but in spirit. To many Christians the Old Testament is a far more living book than the New. To them the Ten Commandments mean much more than the Beatitudes, they are so much easier to keep. Some time ago I listened to a debate on Sunday observance in a certain Christian gathering. Someone gave in faithful detail the teaching of St. Paul on the Sabbath. One good brother, deeply concerned, replied with the remark, "But that will be most dangerous teaching to give to our churches." Yes, there is still much dangerous teaching in the New Testament, dangerous from the standpoint of those whose attitude to religion and the Bible is legalistic, and literalistic like the Jews of old, and like the Jews as we see them in every Christian Church to-day, sometimes in appreciable numbers. But the soul of the Christianity of Christ goes marching on, and in its conquering march it is destined to turn the world upside down.

II.—ISSUES STILL REQUIRING EXPLORATION.

Such issues as in my judgment are still in need of further serious thought and exploration are serious and many, and I cannot pretend to deal with them in any adequate way.

(1) The signs of the times make it clear that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is in need of restatement in terms adapted to the modern mind. I think it must be admitted that there is a considerable amount of what is practically Tritheism in our churches—the worship of three Gods. Perhaps equally common is a certain type of monotheism which conceives of God purely in terms of Christ or in other cases in terms of the Holy Spirit. There is confusion of thought in a variety of directions, and not many people these days get help from resorting to such a document as the Athanasian Creed. One thing to me is clear: that no Trinitarian conception of God must be allowed to tamper with the ethical monotheism proclaimed by Jesus and the great

Hebrew prophets. "The Lord our God is one" must continue to remain the bedrock of our theology. Yet I think nothing but harm would come to religious faith and life if modern Christianity ignored the intimation of God as triune that we find in the New Testament, such as in the threefold benediction, and the baptismal formula. My close personal touch with varied forms of religious belief in India, ranging from a crude animism and polytheism on the one side, to a refined Deism and Pantheism on the other, has driven me to regard the Trinitarian conception of God wisely stated, not as a blot on the Christian faith, but as one of the chief bulwarks of an ethical and spiritual monotheism, for it saves us on the one side from the excesses of an exuberant polytheism, and on the other side from the perils of a bare deistic or theistic unitarianism, or a pantheism lacking firm ethical foundations. A Christianity purely unitarian and rationalistic in its outlook has no message for mystically-minded seekers after God in Eastern lands. I am sure that an experience like mine has some reality in it, from the standpoint of the need of doctrinal restatement of the Christian view of God in Trinitarian terms. Some of the more impatient radicals in our ministry need to remember that Christianity must be restated, not merely from the view point of an enlightened proletariat in this country, but from the view point of an audience world-wide in extent. Ours is a Gospel for all the nations, and our theology must have a world-wide vision. The God of Christianity is no isolated transcendent deity as in the Unitarianism of Islam, no God of pure immanence, as in the orthodox Vedanta of India, no multiplicity of rival powers as in polytheism, but a Triune God transcendent, yet immanent, incarnate through His Son in terms of man, and through His Holy Spirit bringing all men as regenerate sons into the social fellowship of the Kingdom. For men of all races, alienated from God and one another, any Gospel of God, short of this, is no Gospel at all.

(2) Another issue that I consider is in need of more patient exploration is our attitude to the problem of Christian Union. By way of illustration I may be allowed to refer to the attitude of many of our Christian people to the powerful militaristic elements still dominating to a large degree our international outlook. I have met many in our churches who see nothing wrong in any nation piling up armaments of offence or defence against other nations without reference to their use on the basis of the findings of any judicial tribunal. This is a relic of a barbaric age, when every village, as in some parts of Africa to-day, was practically an independent kingdom, with its own weapons ever in readiness against neighbouring villages. That is the mental complex underlying the ecclesiastic policy still

prevailing in many of the churches of modern Europe. We resolutely abandoned such a policy in the Christian enterprise of India a generation ago. Some time back I met a man who remarked, "We are doing badly in our Church, but thank God our plight is not so bad as the Methodist church over the way." Our ecclesiastical methods in this country have still clinging to them far too much of the spirit of competition and *laissez faire* characteristic of the industrial revolution, and the ideals of the Manchester school whose individualism we inherit. In my judgment the church is lagging behind the broader vision characteristic of much that is best in the international economics and politics of our time. In view of the secularistic humanism dominating the modern outlook to such an appalling extent, the call is surely as clamant for a league of churches as there is for a League of Nations. We need the co-operation of all men of spiritual outlook, whether they are able to pronounce our shibboleths or not, yet many Christians have not advanced one whit since the time when the disciples approached Jesus with the indignant complaint, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbad him, because he followed not us." I sometimes wonder whether our increasingly empty churches may not in the long run be found a blessing in disguise. In time even the most stubborn among us may be driven to a realisation of the stark truth that unless we hang together, we may have to hang separately. The compulsions of God are often difficult to understand, and it may in due time dawn upon us, that the words of the old hymn,

> God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform,

may have an important application to the ecclesiastical situation of our own time. If there is to be a solution of this problem, the open mind is indispensable, a readiness to explore and understand the attitude of the other fellow, and the other ecclesiastic system in the interests of Christ's great ideal for His Church. "As Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, I pray that these may be one in us."

(3) Another problem awaiting solution is the relation of Christian truth and experience to corresponding truths and experiences in all the religions of mankind. I am not one of those who think that one religion is as good as another. Being made as we are we must assign values in the sphere of religion, as we do in every other sphere of life. Religions, as is the case with all things and persons, may, like an egg, be good in parts, but unsound as a whole. True, we generally throw away an egg when to all appearances there is only one small spot of corruption, but if we did the same with all other things, there

would be nothing left, including ourselves, in this imperfect world. Our popular Christianity would not bear the test, for it is often reeking with paganism, and the beggarly elements of an effete Judaism. Christianity is still viewed by many in our churches in the light of a great body of rules and regulations, commands and prohibitions, as a religion of authority rather than a spirit and a life. Yet it is worth preserving in the hope of a gradual transformation in the direction of the dominant purpose of its founder, the kingdom of God within. There is no doubt justification for a certain superiority complex when exponents of Christianity come into contact with the animism and polytheism of a religion like Hinduism. But the ethnic religions, including Hinduism, produce, in very limited numbers no doubt, their great saints, who will bear comparison with the saints of Christianity itself. It has been my privilege to come into intimate touch with many such, and they have made me humble. The inner spiritual experience of real sainthood is practically one and the same in all religions. It is fellowship with God, and the great ocean of His redeeming love. It is nothing but Western arrogance, if in our Christian zeal we deem it our duty to smash to pieces everything good and bad in the old faiths. Truth is divine wherever it is found, and under no conditions can we be disloyal to the God of truth. We are, in my judgment, living in a fools' paradise if we think that ethnic religions are going to collapse in the face of Christianity as presented to-day in the thought and, above all, in the life of Western Christian nations. Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam stand for great truths that deserve to live, and the Christianity of to-morrow must find adequate place for such truths in the restatement of its faith. In view of the rapid spread of secularism and atheism among certain classes of people in great countries like Russia, India and China, there is room not only for a league of Churches, but a league of religions, otherwise the expression of the religious spirit may in such circles be engulfed in universal ruin. The Christian Church, and Christian Theology, stand above all for Christ, and not for any particular system with its vested interests, and as He was the completion of all that was best in Judaism, so is He the completion of all that is best in the deep yearnings of the ethnic faiths, witnessing as they do in their dim way to the silent workings of the Spirit of God in all His children.

(4) Another problem awaiting solution—the greatest of them all—is the detailed application of the Christian ideal to the varied problems of our time. The incarnation has no real meaning for us unless we are ready to carry out its implications in our own life and the life of our time. The essence of the incarnation is God emptying Himself to share our burdens, and

we are called upon as sons of God sharing this Holy passion to share one another's burdens in the spirit of His incarnate Son. The social inequalities existing in Church and State is still a problem that the Church of Christ as a whole has not squarely faced. Vested interests still too often stand in the way as an insuperable barrier. Why some should be rich and others poor, why some should have abundance of this world's goods and opportunities, and others suffer all the degrading restrictions inherent in poverty, has always been a perplexing problem to the thinking mind and the sensitive conscience. Indian sages pored over this problem four thousand years ago, and they arrived at a solution that seemed to them thoroughly adequate and satisfying. Every man, said they, in this life is enjoying the fruits of his good conduct in a former birth, or enduring the penalty of evil conduct. There is no injustice at the heart of things, but everything is meted out to men in this life exactly as the law of strict, unerring justice demands. But India, consciously or unconsciously, has been, during the past century, under the pressure of Western and Christian influences, turning her back on this solution. As I have seen things in India the people of India of all classes are becoming as sensitive as other peoples in recognising essential injustice when they see it, and are by no means as ready as their forefathers were in submitting to it as something deserved and sent by God as punishment for sins in a former birth. All this is gratifying from the standpoint of general world progress, though from the standpoint of the highly placed in India, whether the high castes among their own countrymen, or the ruling classes from abroad, it is attended with anxieties that may have grave issues for the future of India and our own country.

The problem as it presents itself in Western lands has much in it that corresponds to the situation in the East. We have never resorted to transmigration and the law of Karma for an explanation of our own social inequalities. With us rather it has been the thought of an over-ruling Providence who gives men what they deserve, and places them in stations for which they are fitted. That was in essence the basis of the rule of the squire and the parson under the influence of feudal ideals. The substance of the religious service in our parish churches in years gone by is said to have been summed in the prayer

> God bless the squire and his relations
> And keep us in our proper stations.

The swing of the pendulum has come with terrific force in most Western lands. Abundant evidence of such a swing is manifest in our own country in all departments of our life, political, social, industrial and religious, and we shall do well if we observe the

signs of the times. Our modern system must undergo radical transformation if it is to stand the test of present-day thinking, and become a substantial reflection of the highest Christian ideal. Compared with the situation as it was when I was a boy, great advance has been made within the limits of our present political system. Libraries, educational opportunities, medical assistance, Unemployment and Old Age Insurance, facilities for recreation, better housing, and a multitude of other things which are now to a large extent communal responsibilities, have gone far to remove scandalous inequalities in our own land, but so much still remains to be done. Millions of our people, in most cases through no fault of their own, live within or on the verge of the poverty line, and are housed under practically slum conditions. God clothes the flowers, and feeds all living things. The life of lilies and of birds is one of splendour and of song, and God's plan for His children cannot be one of carking care. Twenty years ago we began a grim fight with a foreign foe, a fight that required for its successful completion the commandeering of all the life-blood of the country. No man's life was his own. What shall a man give in exchange for his life? Yet all had to be ready to make the supreme sacrifice when the call of the country came. We are engaged in a fight to-day against social inequalities and unemployment far more vital to the future of the country and the race than even the great world war. The nation claimed to dispose of its life-blood as it pleased in order to conquer the foreign foe. In this conflict with poverty and slumdom is property more sacred than personality? We are on Christian ground when we say that rights of property must not be allowed to stand in the way of the rights of personality, committed as we are to the quest of a kingdom where human life shall wear the garb of gladness, and none shall be in want of suitable food and raiment and healthy shelter. As a matter of fact we live to-day in a world of plenty. Machines and methods of production have improved to such an extent that all might live in comfort with a minimum of manual toil. The soil was never more bountiful with chemicals to increase its yield, and efficient machinery to work it. A modern mill can make three thousand barrels of flour per man per day, where only one barrel was possible by primitive methods. Yet in an age of plenty large numbers of our fellow men, women and children are in daily want, badly fed, badly clothed, badly housed. But economists are using their brains to curtail production, with the damnable implication that scarcity in the larders of the people is necessary if there is to be prosperity in the money markets of the world. Wheat is fired in the field, coffee and cotton and oranges are dumped into the sea because men have not the money to buy. Many years ago the

world roared with laughter when an American statesman, the late Mr. W. J. Bryan, declared that humanity was being crucified on a cross of gold. To-day large numbers of us believe that he said nothing but sober truth. Our money system, it is recognised on all hands, has broken down, and has proved utterly inadequate to meet the changed circumstances of the twentieth century. The banks have become the virtual proprietors of a large proportion of our land and industrial plant, probably to an extent not less than was the case with the Roman Church in mediaeval times. It is therefore perhaps hardly a matter of surprise that our great bankers and economists cling with a pathetic faith to the money mechanism in which modern industry functions, and regard its laws as mystically sacred and inevitable. "Very readily we grant," to quote the words of the Dean of Canterbury, himself an economist and engineer, "that the laws of the present system inevitably produce certain results: it is just because those results are so disastrous that we challenge the system, and urge that financial and other systems are made for man, and not man for systems." This much I feel sure of as a Christian, that any system that requires us to destroy the bountiful gifts of Providence when men are starving, and to thank God not for a good harvest but for a bad, in the interests of financial stability on the basis of an out-of-date currency, even though men and women and children may starve, is in itself an outrage on the Christian conscience that the Church of Christ cannot continue to countenance. Our present economic plight has a moral aspect that we cannot ignore, and the Church has no right to pass by on the other side. If we as Churches fail to put our whole weight on the side of radical social progress worthy of the Christian brotherhood, others will do the job for us, and in a way that will mean incalculable injury to the highest Christian ideals.

Another problem requiring detailed investigation and action in the light of Christian ideals is the problem of war and disarmament. Many of us feel that the Christian Church was drugged into forgetfulness of its principles during the Great War. It is a startling fact that the Christian Churches, in all the lands where the conflict raged, entered into the struggle with an outlook through and through national. In general Christians in Great Britain, Protestant and Catholic, advocated with all fervour the British cause. Our Christian brethren in Germany, Protestant and Roman, in an equally fervent way sided with their own country. Our boasted claim that the religion we profess rises above race, and that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond or free, fell to pieces, and the echo of the crash is still with us, and will remain to trouble us for many a

long year. Perhaps it was the most deplorable collapse of the Christian ideal in the whole history of the Church, and critical minds outside the Church will not easily allow us to forget it. I am prepared to admit that unscrupulous propaganda in each country accounts for much. We were allowed to hear only as much truth as the Government considered convenient. Even to a modern civilised government, everything is fair in war, and when the national interests seem to require it, moral principles and Christian ideals are thrown to the winds. In this respect all governments are equally unscrupulous. Perhaps in the Providence of God such a terrible world-wide conflict was necessary in order to bring home to the consciences of men all the horror and dirt that war under modern conditions inevitably involves. I hate war as at present understood with all my soul, and yet I confess I cannot bring myself to endorse a position of pure pacifism, in the strictest sense of the term. I believe the maintenance of law and order requires force in the background. A police force is indispensable if hooligans are not to take possession of country, town and village without let or hindrance. I have never yet met a pacifist who is ready to allow a visitor to enter his home, and do what he likes, and take what he likes, without resorting to resistance, and calling in the aid of the police. If there be any such, I shall be glad to have his name and address, as I have need of a few things. Grant the necessity of force in any form for the maintenance of law and order, and the restraint of the evil doer, and the case for an international police force is won. War as at present waged, without reference to any judicial tribunal, is nothing but lawless banditry, even though committed in the name of great nations. Under the conditions existing to-day, surely the way is open for Christians of all persuasions, and all true lovers of peace, now that there is an international tribunal available for passing judgment on issues dividing nation from nation, to take a resolute and united stand for the total abolition of war as hitherto understood and to say with one heart and voice, "Never again." Yet with all my heart I am in favour of Lord Davies when he pleads for an International Police Force for effective use by the League of Nations, when any one of its number breaks loose and adopts hooligan methods in the pursuit of its own selfish purposes. A town is not a family, and a community of nations is not a church. In the interests of peace and order, whether national or international, we dare not refuse to recognise realities, and thereby give the hooligan his opportunity to terrorise the world. I want peace, but my pacifism refuses to be blind in the realities of an imperfect world, in which the devil's influence is still far from negligible. If we as Christian Churches remain hesitant on the great issue

of international peace, and refuse to pull our whole weight against a selfish and unchecked nationalism, we shall be guilty of treason to the kingdom of God.

There is, finally, one other problem, somewhat domestic in character, to which I feel I must refer, though I do so with some hesitancy, in view of the delicate character of the issues involved. It is the problem of ministerial salaries, which in my judgment leaves much to be desired in the application of the spirit of Christian brotherhood. The application of high ideals, like charity, begins at home, and we have very little claim to say much about the lack of brotherhood in the economic, social and international issues of our time if we fail in this respect to set our own house in order. I fail to see that we can be very effective in pleading for a deeper sense of brotherhood between capital and labour, and between the nations of the world in their unbrotherly efforts to promote their own purely national interests, when we have a corresponding problem unsolved in our own denominational organisation. As I see things, there are scandalous inequalities utterly unworthy of the Christian brotherhood in the scale of ministerial salaries prevailing in Christian bodies like the Baptists, Congregationalists and Anglicans. True, our own Sustentation Scheme and Superannuation Fund have as their inspiration the principles of sharing one another's burdens, but we still have a long way to travel before justice and fair dealing come to their own. Our leaders are fond of telling us that our village congregations constitute the great bulwark of our evangelical testimony, but how many of them would be content to spend their days under the conditions characteristic of the average village minister of our day, passing rich in some cases on two or three pounds a week? We have in our ministry to-day not a few who are receiving little more than £100 a year, while some are receiving in the neighbourhood of ten times that amount. Said our Lord to His disciples, " Blessed are ye poor," but it is a form of blessedness not keenly sought after or highly honoured in the official religious organisations of the twentieth century. It is not uncommon to see ministers and clergymen, Baptists among the number, dying wealthy men. In referring to the records of the Baptist denomination as represented in its Union, it is significant that not a single village minister or working man deacon has all through the years been promoted to the giddy heights of its presidency. All our presidents, without exception, have been well-paid town or city ministers or officials or laymen living in quite comfortable circumstances. If the prophet Amos appeared in some of our religious assemblies to-day he would have abundant ground for turning on us with words of scathing indignation, " But let judgment roll down as

waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." But some of our leaders tell us that this kind of inequality is inherent in our democratic individualism, and cannot be remedied without abandoning our Baptist ideals. Nothing is easier than to find some high principle of conscience in defence of their maintenance where vested interests are involved. But if Baptist principles conflict with Christian ideals, which are to prevail? On the foreign field, though we are Baptists, we have found a way out far more, in my judgment, in accord with Christian ideals of brotherhood. Our missionaries are paid, not according to their qualifications, or the kind of service they are engaged in, but according to their needs. Every man is provided with house accommodation, and his allowances are on the basis of providing him with sufficient to free him from financial anxiety and strain. Where special medical expenses are incurred, the mission may come to his aid, and this is the invariable rule during the years of probation. A single man's allowance is less than half that of a married man, while children's allowances, travelling and furlough expenses are extra. No difference is made between evangelistic, industrial, medical and educational missionaries, and even secretaries, who are practically bishops in their area, come under the rule, apart from hospitality and other inevitable extras. What is possible abroad, is surely not beyond the power of consecrated Christian statesmanship at home. I have heard it said that missionaries are better paid than many ministers at home. I grant it, but that is because the resources available for missionary salaries are pooled, and distributed in a Christian way. Let the denomination at home go and do likewise, and the poverty problem in our ministry is solved. Have we among our leaders at home the Christian statesmen who will fairly and squarely face this issue without counting the cost to themselves? Our Methodist brethren have to all intents and purposes solved the problem, and so have the Presbyterians of Scotland, though perhaps in a lesser degree. There is a New Testament law, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." The spirit underlying this injunction, which is the spirit of the Incarnation and the Cross, is surely not less binding than the New Testament teaching on the baptism of believers to which we stedfastly adhere. If Christ visited us to-day He would surely tell us, "This ye should have done, and not left the other undone." As I see things, the scandal of infant baptism is a mere trifle compared with the scandalous inequality prevailing in our midst in regard to the support of our ministry. Some contend that the inequality of economic conditions in our ordinary church life with its profession of common brotherhood, should first be tackled, as being more in accord with our Baptist democratic

ideals. That is only a convenient way of postponing the day of advance until the millennium. It is easy to discuss at large the application of Christian principles to broad and remote issues affecting in the main the other fellow. The test of a living Christianity is to begin with ourselves in the Spirit of Him who faced the Cross with divine courage, despising the shame.

GEORGE HOWELLS.

LEOMINSTER church is due to three founders. Richard Harrison, once a trooper in the army of the Earl of Essex, then dairyman and schoolmaster, became curate of Charlton Kings, preacher in Hereford cathedral, and assistant to the county commission. His Baptist work ranged to Netherton, Dymock, Upton. Because he took tithes, the Leominster Baptists applied for advice to several Associations, whose replies are entered in their book. His work was therefore continued by Edward Price, who avoided all such entanglements; in 1672 he took licences for his own house at Hereford and the house of Frances Prichard at Leominster; in 1689 he attended the London assembly, and lived on to 1702. General Baptists sent Richard Pardoe evangelizing, and his results here were consolidated under Elder Rowland Stead, who had been a soldier and settled down as a weaver. Meanwhile the vicar, John Tombes, who had been accumulating incomes at Bewdley, Ledbury, Ross, and London, returned and gathered a third group of Baptists; in 1657 and 1660 he held here three debates with Quakers. In 1694 Thomas Holder induced all to unite, and had a church of 111 members, including John Davis of Eardisland, who gave land and a house, which was rebuilt. James Caswall, who had on the advice of Tombes, taken parish communion and gone on the borough council, became Bailiff in 1698 and came to the Baptist Church in state. They were rich in ministers, Thomas Lewis founding Glascwm, Peter Griffin founding Ludlow, John Stocking at Eyton, John and Abdiel Edwards going to Dublin, Joseph Price to Tewkesbury, Joseph Stennett to Exeter. Holder died in 1729, and after two years John Oulton came from Brassey Green in Cheshire; the Hereford members died out, only one being left when he went to Liverpool in 1749. Rees Evans from Bristol academy came on probation next year, but went on to Shrewsbury in three years, disapproved by the eleven members. Old Isaac Marlowe, the London anti-singer, had come to end his days here, and the church revived when Joshua Thomas came from Hay, and Mary Marlowe rebuilt the premises in 1771, endowing the church.

A Baptist Governor of Madras in 1716.

MINISTERS always figure largely in the story of a church or a denomination. Not so often do we have the opportunity of knowing an ordinary member of a church, who showed in his daily life the result of the teaching he received and the religious company he kept. Such an opportunity has just come by the publication of the private letter-books of Joseph Collet while he was a servant of the East India Company, 1711-1719. These glance at the part he played in commerce and public life, but being his private letters, deal rather with friends, family and his religious life. Since Miss Clara E. Collet, of University College, has appended several family facts and notes, it is possible to refer to other contemporary evidence, and get a picture of life and thought in two London Baptist families. These were ignored by Thomas Crosby when he wrote his History, just as he ignored his Baptist neighbour, Thomas Guy. That a deacon should thus be silent about important members of churches is somewhat strange; it is much to be regretted that his preoccupation with ministers set a bad denominational fashion and has given a specialised conception of the course of events.

This branch of the wide-spread family of Collets came from Maldon in Essex, through Canterbury to London. Here Henry Collet about 1641 married Elizabeth Harrison, whose brother Edward was soon made vicar of Kensworth, but became Baptist, and after evangelising over half Hertfordshire, so that four or five churches there are due to his efforts, settled down in his own home at Petty France, at the end of Broad Street, north of London Wall. Henry and Elizabeth Collet finally settled at Ratcliff in Stepney, where he died in 1676, styling himself "gentleman" in his will, which he sealed with the arms of Colet of Wendover. He had apparently made a good living by selling ironmongery and buying wheat.

Henry left a son John, living then at Long Lane in Southwark, who had married Mary Holloway, and had a son Joseph, three years old. A directory next year shows him as a merchant, partner with Nicholas Holloway in Nicholas Lane; their business linked them with the Larwoods of Amsterdam. With the Tulls and the Whites, the partners learned a new Dutch process of

dyeing scarlet with cochineal and tin; and though John Collet was a member of the Glovers Company, his business was increasingly dyeing. The partners took over works covering ten acres in the marshlands at Bow. These became Collet's property in 1693, and he was able to superintend from a new home in Hoxton Square.

Now this was a great centre for dissenters; and all the people named were such, most of them being Baptist. A mathematical school was kept by Benjamin Morland, attended by lads such as Philip Yorke, who climbed to become Lord Chancellor Hardwicke. John sent his son Joseph, who got a good education, making friends with lads of other Baptist and Presbyterian circles, such as Nathaniel Hodges.

John Collet had once entertained a conventicle in Southwark, where Kentish the Presbyterian preached. He now belonged to the church at Petty France, to which his great uncle, Edward Harrison, had ministered. Harrison died in 1689, leaving two sons; Edward the second was a goldsmith in Cheapside, Thomas was at once associated in the ministry. The senior pastor was now William Collins, once at Westminster School under Busby, and polished by the Grand Tour in France and Italy.

An important Assembly of more than a hundred Baptist churches was held in September, to which went Collins, Harrison and John Collet. Baptists then set an example to other dissenters, establishing a fund for many denominational purposes, including education for the ministry. Of the nine trustees, Isaac Marlowe came from the Southwark church of Keach and young Thomas Crosby; three were from Petty France, Richard Bristow, John Collet, and Edward Harrison the Treasurer. Bristow was in 1696 expelled the church for "renouncing the doctrine of the Trinity." This is the first time we hear of such opinions in this circle, but the theme henceforth crops out in the general religious thought of England, and will engage attention in this study.

John Collet died in 1698, and the widow inherited the dye-works for life. Joseph had married Mary Ross, and built a family of John and four daughters. He does not seem yet to have taken part in ecclesiastical affairs, but he was thinking, and the line he took deserves attention. It is closely connected with his friend, Nathaniel Hodges, and we must look at this lad's preparation for life, and at the denominational changes that brought them together again.

Nathaniel's family could afford to equip him well. The universities gave no degrees to dissenters, and their curriculum at this time was poor, as Bishop Butler acknowledged. Dissenting university men took private pupils, and an Oxonian at Taunton,

Matthew Warren, had made himself a reputation; to him Nathaniel was sent. The Presbyterians and Independents in the west had come to terms, and the "United Brethren of Devon and Cornwall" were much annoyed at Warren taking all sorts of pupils, rich or poor, especially if they were Baptist: and in 1695 they had the impertinence to pass a formal protest. He simply ignored it, and next year they reiterated their complaint, basing it this time on the possibility that the Paedobaptist position would be undermined with the skill here acquired—which does not speak well for their confidence in their position. The episode shows incidentally how independent and private were the early Academies, how a good social tone was valued in them, and how they gave a general education to fit for all careers. When Hodges went to Taunton he may have meant to follow his father or his uncle: the expostulations of the United Brethren perhaps turned his thoughts to the ministry. And on this side, Warren told Defoe later that 72 of his scholars were preachers.

In theology and philosophy Warren was not a devotee of the past; that was exactly the vice of the universities, in contrast to which these Academies flourished. He did indeed lecture on authors of repute, but he did not go further back than Derodon and Burgersdyk of Leyden and Saumur; and he recommended for private study Le Clerc, Locke, and Cumberland's refutation of Hobbes. He did not pursue any systematic course of theology based on the Creeds, the Articles, the Westminster Confession, but "encouraged the free and critical study of the scriptures." This indeed had been the practice of Milton with his pupils, though he was original enough to digest his results into a treatise on Christian Doctrine, which seemed to the government so novel and dangerous that the manuscript was confiscated, and it was published only last century.

Hodges settled in 1698 as pastor of the Baptist church at Plymouth, but this was a misfit. The church did not seem sorry when in January 1701/2 he "succeeded to earthly honours," and accepted a call to Artillery Lane in Spitalfields, where he settled on 7 June. This was the church of Harrison and Collet, reunited after a curious division which may be briefly noted.

Keach of Southwark was not content to sing the psalms of David, especially in the uncouth language of Sternhold and Hopkins. He wrote new hymns, some with foreign mission aspirations, taught his people to sing them, and published a hymnbook. Isaac Marlowe, one of his deacons, and a trustee of the Fund, was much distressed; after vainly asking the Assembly to intervene, and being censured for making trouble, he upset all London Baptist circles and split three churches. The monthly meeting of ministers was divided, Collins and Harrison

differing; when Marlowe rushed again into print, charging Collins with deceit and making other outrageous accusations, he did permanent mischief. Support of the Fund was paralysed, and the co-operative work which had begun with such promise, had practically died out.

In 1699 Thomas Harrison and those of the Petty France church who preferred to sing moved to the Lorimers' Hall on Basinghall Street, where they were joined by a contingent from the original church of 1612; within three years, both he and Collins died. As Marlowe had withdrawn to Leominster and had ceased troubling, the way seemed open for a revival. The London Baptist Association, which had suspended its meetings, was convoked again at Lorimers' Hall. The followers of Collins, who had had difficulties of their own and had been at other premises, now renewed the old ties, learned to sing, and the re-united church leased a fine meeting-house in Artillery Lane, Spitalfields. They invited Nathaniel Hodges from Plymouth and thus the school-friends met again. Collet could write afterwards that "Natt is well enough to get Artillery to cannonade me withal," and he chaffed him about "one or two of your manors."

Hodges then was witty and rich. He founded a club, whose name, Dic Ipse, rather hints at untrammelled thought. Besides Joseph Collet and Joseph Stennet senior of Pinners' Hall, and Giles Dent, who was perhaps of a Baptist family near Gamlingay, it seems to have included a Burroughs of Ratcliff. For nine years Joseph Collet developed in this atmosphere. Later allusions show some of the topics that interested this circle, and we can trace the kindred movements of thought.

Professor Wallis, of Oxford, had discussed the doctrine of the Trinity from a mathematical standpoint, and had initiated a long controversy, in which Locke joined from the philosophical side, and Newton from the Biblical. Another question was raised by Benjamin Hoadly of Cambridge, who from the first emphasised the ethical side of the New Testament rather than the doctrinal. In 1707 he preached an Assize sermon at Salisbury, which the grand jury ordered to be printed; he declared that the only requisites for salvation were clearly stated as Repentance towards God and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. At his London parish—for he was a terrible pluralist—he steadily opposed the accretions to Calvin's theology. Samuel Clarke, rector of Westminster, Boyle Lecturer in 1704 and 1705, dealt with the Being and Attributes of God; when he published, he initiated a great controversy, and his work proved in demand for seventy years. His line of thought was followed by Professor Whiston at Cambridge, and by a Baptist graduate of Leyden, John Gale,

who afterwards became chairman of Whiston's "Society for promoting Catholic Christianity." Now in the little Hackney club, Hodges and Collet were discussing these matters; a fact to be considered by those who estimate the quality of Baptist thought.

In these years, however, the Low Countries were the scene of great wars, in which Marlborough won such battles as Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet: Joseph conceived a great admiration for him. But wars are ruinous to ordinary business, and as the Collet dyeing was interlocked with Holland, it came to grief. It was necessary to arrange with creditors, who accepted 7s. 2d. in the £. Joseph resolved to assume the debt, a fine evidence of the high standard of probity in dissenting circles. The problem remained, how to discharge it. Now as dissenters were debarred from political and municipal careers, they had concentrated on such things as law, medicine, commerce. Among the stock-holders in the new South-Sea Company—which had a perfectly legitimate and lucrative business, despite the folly of speculators—and the more ancient East India Company, were many merchants: Gregory Page, a director of the latter, was a member of the Devonshire Square Baptist church. There was no difficulty in Joseph being appointed governor of Bencoolen, a trading post on Sumatra, subordinate to President Edward Harrison at Madras. (While the governor proved an excellent friend and adviser, there is no reason to think he was connected with the Harrisons in London Baptist circles.)

While this in itself shows the esteem in which he was held, his credit is emphasised by four friends being sureties to the company for £500 each that he might have a capital for his private trade. Another token of his high repute is that at this time he was put up for the Royal Society, and one of the first letters he received in the East announced his election as Fellow.

His wife had died; he placed his daughters in the care of friends, and embarked in 1711. He had bad fortune, for his ship was captured in Rio harbour by the French, and he had to ransom it and all his property and himself, by drawing bills on England—a further proof of the confidence he had in friends, and they in him. He resumed the voyage, and took over his duties at Bencoolen. An early report home asks that his son John be appointed to a post under the Company: he had many friends as directors, so John was sent out after a while to himself, but died within a year. So also did his brother John, who was trading independently in Persia.

The East India Company dated, by a hair's breadth, from the sixteenth century; consolidated by Cromwell and Charles II., it had established three chief trading stations, each under a

president, in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In 1689, the directors laid down a new policy, avowedly copying their rivals, the Dutch East India Company, to "increase our revenue" and "make us a nation in India" where the Great Mogul at Delhi was parting with some powers to strong native princes in whose territories the Company was trading. After disputes with private traders, an award was made in 1708 whereby a monopoly was assured as against other English, and it was recognised that the Company was free to enlist troops and build forts to protect its trade: the condition being a loan to the Government of £3,200,000. This left the company as such in competition with French, Danes, Portuguese, etc., while its relations with the Dutch were dubious. Internally, the custom was recognised by which servants of the company were at liberty to trade on their own account, and perhaps even to use the splendid East Indiamen built for the company at Deptford.

Joseph was governor of an out-station on the west of Sumatra, protected by six or seven forts against natives and Dutch. He intended to use his private rights on a great scale, and did so well that within five years he paid off his ransom, his loans from friends, and the deficit in the bankruptcy of the dyeing business. Meanwhile as governor he restored order, brought local sultans to heel, built a new Fort Marlborough, purged the service of incompetent and untrustworthy men, bought slaves and sent them home as presents, with other local curiosities. A man like this was marked for promotion, and he was appointed to the chief position, Governor and President of Madras, a post reputed to be worth £10,000 a year—in opportunities rather than direct salary. He used the opportunities, mentioning one deal of £12,000. Those who would study the commercial and political side of his life, will find ample material.

It is our concern to trace his outer ecclesiastical doings, and his inner religious development for the next four years. These things come out chiefly in letters to his relations and to his friend and pastor, Nathaniel Hodges, to whom he once sent a gold snuff-box.

From the first he assumed that the Governor governed all worship. That was the theory from Henry VIII. down to James II., and Collet put it in practice. "I have publick Prayers and a Sermon every Lord's Day . . . I look on myself here as acting a part, no matter whether that of a Prince or Peasant." Of course it was a queer situation, a Baptist to regulate worship for all the settlement; no one could object to his ordering the use of the Book of Common Prayer, read by his secretary. But he says that he himself preached; whether he wrote his own sermons is not clear; more probably he followed the "Homily" precedent

and chose printed sermons. Once we hear of one by Tillotson, whom his enemies used to twit with being the son of a Baptist. He soon had to "turn Parson," making the best of his Common Prayer Book to tie the Indissoluble knot for one of his Councillors. On the other hand, he was amused that he was daily prayed for with different rites by several kings and their subjects. "In my Dominions are a great many Religions, but no disputes as to the Civil Affairs. Every man may talk as he pleases but must do what I command." When he was promoted to be President at Madras, he found a Church built by the Company in 1680, served by two chaplains; one had to go home, the other held no service for three months, and objected to laymen reading the service in the church. He was brought to book, the place was opened, the Athanasian Creed was disused, because, as Collet wrote privately, he was not going to hear himself cursed publicly. He refused to stand godfather, avowing himself Baptist; but went to Church in the greatest pomp, the whole garrison drawn out to line the road, colours flying and drums beating. "Being myself head of the Church, Liberty of Conscience flourishes here." And he was surprised at a marriage proclaimed by sound of trumpet without any church ceremony.

Collet's attention was called to missions on his outward voyage. At the Cape of Good Hope he met a German, Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, who had been for five years working in Tranquebar, under the auspices of the King of Denmark. He formed the opinion that the German was pious, but uneducated, and biased by an Enthusiastic turn. Here too he met Hottentots, and whereas in the literary circle of Hackney he had accepted the comfortable teaching that all men were naturally reasonable, he wrote to Richard Steele, à propos of *Spectator*, No. 389, that among these people human nature was lower than in any other, except absolute atheists. When he crossed from Madras to take up his post, he was accompanied by Father Dom John Milton, a priest of the Theatine mission (and perhaps a relation of the poet) who was to be chaplain to his Portuguese half-caste garrisons. No allusion is made to any work attempted among the natives by Roman Catholics.

Collet was awakened to the needs of the people, as distinct from his garrison and the factory servants. He found that the original pagan population had been pushed inland by Mahometans, whom he considered ignorant and positive. As to their conduct, if the Indians came short of refined European wickedness, they also came short of solid European virtue; corruption was more universal than the stiffest Calvinist had averred. Reformation of manners he soon brought about, by stern discipline of the service, and once the scandal of European bad

example was removed, he made a personal frontal attack on Islam. He discussed with an Imam, and challenged a high-priest to debate. This was evaded, and his missionary work was limited to bringing over the fattest sheep of the Roman Catholic flock to attend the Church of England service.

The German missionaries were at first backed by the new English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. But its charter only empowered it to work within Britain and its colonies, and there were no colonies in the East Indies at all; dominions of the Great Mogul, within which Danes had permission to have a trading station, were clearly outside its scope. So in 1713 the S.P.G. retired. As their supplies were aboard the vessel on which Collet first went out, and were captured by the French, he had ransomed them, partly at his own expense—at a price he afterwards found was exorbitant. His autocratic behaviour at Bencoolen will explain his considered opinion that the Tranquebar Mission was in jeopardy because the Danish Governor had no regard to the design of the Germans, and they had too little for his authority. Here he touched a problem that a century later was to give grave trouble between the British Governor at Calcutta, the Danish Governor at Serampore, and the Baptist missionaries; nor is it unknown between Belgian or Portuguese Governors on the Congo, and Americans or Swedes or English missionaries. Collet also feared that such success as the Danes had achieved, was not purely religious, and he coined a phrase that has never been forgotten, speaking of their "rice Christians." But at this stage he had rather heard at second-hand, not having yet been promoted to the mainland, where he could meet them and judge for himself.

Through his brother John he developed an interest in the "Zend-Evestum," but John's death ended that enquiry, and he does not seem to have heard of the Parsees at Bombay. He referred his brother Samuel to a former chaplain, George Lewis, who had returned to London with stores of information about Persia. But Samuel's interest did not lead him to any such unusual scheme as promoting a mission to the Parsees.

Meantime the accession of the Elector of Hanover as George I, gave a new opportunity to Ziegenbalg. Under royal patronage, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge took up the project abandoned by its younger sister. And Collet met another missionary at Fort St. David, Gründler, who had planned a Charity School for teaching the Christian religion in Malabar and Portuguese. This precisely met Collet's views, and he paid the expense—the first direct bit of English work in the East. It led to the Company paying for another of Gründler's schools for company slaves, giving instruction in Portuguese;

and for a third in the Black Town for the natives, teaching in Malabar. The scheme was further developed by "a handsome Colledge" or hostel. The English residents proved by far the most charitable whom Collet had met. He sent a considered judgment to a friend, regretting the elaborate doctrinal catechisms used, preferring free search of the Bible, and extolling the plan of training children. As he wrote to several correspondents on these matters, it seems rather surprising that no Englishman came out to work under his aegis at Madras. As it was, the beginning of his government was marked by Gründler publishing a Tamil New Testament, and its close by a Portuguese Pentateuch; the first versions printed in India. But the S.P.C.K. never sent an English clergyman, and when the last Danish missionary died in 1798, the tenuous thread was just that one of his colleagues had visited the Danish settlement of Serampore and won the sympathy of the governor, who gave hospitality to the second band of men from the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

The actions of Collet are easy to trace; his inner thoughts correspond. That he brought about a great reformation of manners is clear; he would not accept the loan of wives and daughters of the sultans, as had perhaps been not unknown. In the thirty-seven letters to or about his daughters which have been printed, he shows himself most careful for their welfare in every way, and rejoices when one of them was baptized on profession of her faith. Other letters show that some of his correspondents appreciated allusions to Elisha, Agur, and a Corinthian harvest; they were well read in their Bibles. He mentions his private daily prayers, as though they were usual in his circle at home.

Theologians, however, would demur to his insistence on his hopes for a reward of his good works, though he was only like another great governor, Nehemiah. His revolt against all creeds was strong and constant. In discussing possible husbands for his daughters he stated his own four principles; that Natural Religion was the foundation of Revealed (the point made by James Foster and immortalized by Joseph Butler), that all things necessary to be believed or practised are contained in the holy scriptures, that every man ought to judge for himself, that persecution is of the devil. And these do seem to be the staple of his thought, the skeleton of his life. It is not surprising that he opened his mind to William Whiston, who ended his life a generation later as a Baptist of much the same type. A very revealing sentence to a loyal friend is, "I esteem Religion to be the perfection of human nature, and religious conversation the noblest entertainment of a reasonable mind."

At the age of forty-seven he resigned his post, having deliberately decided he had wealth enough to portion each daughter with £5,000, if they would marry not men of quality but country gentlemen, merchants or lawyers, and to start his two nephews whom he had adopted after the death of his son; his mother and other relatives he had already benefited. He had constantly followed the course of events at home, and considered it his duty to acquire an estate in the country as well as a London home, to stand for Parliament, and to throw himself into politics, especially the restoration of full religious liberty. He therefore left Madras in January, 1720/1. We may now survey what had been the developments at home in the nine years of his absence. And they may be connected with Collet's pastor and constant correspondent, Nathaniel Hodges.

In 1712 the London Particular Baptist Association was doing well. Among its constituent churches were Artillery Lane, and another wealthy one at Paul's Alley, Barbican, whose minister John Gale had created a sensation by a thorough and learned criticism of Wall's History of Infant Baptism; a church in Ratcliff was impressed enough to amalgamate with it, bringing in the Burroughs family. These churches were on good terms with the open-membership church at Pinners' Hall, which building was the Baptist Church House of that day. It belonged to the Hollis family, members of that church, and was used regularly by three Baptist churches. When Sir William Hodges died in 1714, Nathaniel inherited another large estate, and being thus wealthy, well connected, well educated, and pastor of a large historic church, he was evidently at the age of thirty-nine a Baptist Leader.

That year the Schism Act was passed, intended to confine all education to communicants in the Church of England, licensed by the bishops. But Queen Anne died on the very day it was to come into force, and statesmen sympathetic with dissenters had taken control. It has been said that Hodges and others were silenced by it; but this would not have been possible under its terms, and there is no evidence that in any respect it was ever put in force. On the contrary, Stinton promptly convoked all London Baptist ministers, and the record of the regular meetings they held shows that they considered an era of liberty had begun. The weak point was that the Act stood in print, and mobs might insist on its being enforced locally, or a change in the government might bring it into regular play. Twelve ministers therefore waited on the king with an address: "We desire nothing more than to enjoy our civil rights, with a just liberty"; and it was presented by Nathaniel Hodges on behalf of all dissenters.

The renewed activity of the Baptist churches was stimulated

by the generosity of Thomas Hollis, who gave Stinton 100 guineas for them to distribute among their poor. His scale shows that the church of Hodges was in the front rank, while in a lower grade was that of Little Wild Street, which had recently called to the pastorate a second Thomas Harrison, grandson of Edward the founder of Petty France.

The accession of George I. led not only to the invasion of the Pretender, but to many outbreaks of violence, in which several meeting-houses of dissenters were destroyed. On the Fifth of November next year Hoadly preached a very loyal sermon, which led to his being appointed bishop of Bangor. Disturbances continued at intervals, till in March 1716/7 the London ministers again waited on the king, and boldly claimed both protection and the repeal of the four acts, Conventicle, Test, Corporation, Schism. The Riot Act secured public peace, the damages were made good, and the king when opening parliament foreshadowed restitution of all rights. But the Lower House of Convocation was most mutinous, and matters were delayed. Hoadly preached a sermon before the king that same March, which seemed to impugn the Church as a society, and deny its authority, while it declared regular uninterrupted successions as vain words. The Lower House speedily presented a formal protest, whereupon government adjourned it, and it was not allowed to do business for the remainder of the reign. On all these proceedings Hodges wrote to Collet, who naturally sympathised with Hoadly.

The controversy was transferred to the press, and William Law laid the foundations of a great reputation by his three letters to Hoadly; scores of other pamphlets appeared, and the government grew afraid. Dissenters therefore organised meetings in their own support, and there was a trial of strength in Parliament. In the end, the act of 1718/9 left ministers free to conduct worship and keep schools, while laymen might qualify for office in boroughs or under the crown, by producing a certificate that they had taken communion at their parish Church. The compromise satisfied nobody.

Meanwhile Particular Baptists drew together in 1717, to revive the plan of 1689, when John Collet and Edward Harrison (junior) had been trustees of a fund to help young ministers. On this occasion, the experience of Bristow's defection was remembered, and a rigid constitution was drawn up, to guard very carefully the orthodoxy of subscribers and of beneficiaries. Against this limitation vigorous protests were made, by both ministers and laymen, with no success. Hodges and his church were invited to join; but it is not clear that they did. A letter to Bromsgrove that year shows him in touch with Gale, Burroughs and Stinton, of whom the last soon died.

The influence of Matthew Warren at Taunton had leavened the west, and trouble among the Presbyterians at Exeter led them to ask advice from the Committee of the Two Denominations in London. It seemed so important that leading laymen convoked all the London ministers of those Two Denominations to hear their draft Advice; and as Baptists in the west had sent a minister with a watching brief, while John Gale was very influential, Baptist ministers of London were invited also. Despite protests, they remained. At this point we can see that a grave mistake was made, in that the laymen offered to leave the matter to the ministers. Things took unexpected turns, and presently the ministers broke up into two groups, which sent different advices. They agreed so far as to say that separation was better than quarrelling within the church, and that the worshippers rather than ministers were final judges. But agreement was lost sight of in view of a difference. One party stood by the three creeds, and as by law even dissenting ministers must literally subscribe most of the thirty-nine articles, including an acceptance of these creeds, it called attention to them; the other declared that scriptures were sufficient in matters of faith. In the end, seventy-eight ministers took the conservative view, seventy-three the liberal. Among the fifteen "subscribing" Baptists was Thomas Harrison of Little Wild Street; it is not very surprising that in ten years he went further, subscribed all the thirty-nine articles, and became vicar of Radcliffe-on-the-Wreke, ending his days as his grandfather began, a clergyman of the Church of England. From surplice to surplice were three generations. Among the sixteen "non-subscribing" Baptists were Hodges and Gale. One immediate and unhappy result was that when the Barbican church offered to contribute to the Particular Baptist Fund, the offer was refused.

At Artillery Lane, Hodges resigned in 1721, and was followed by John Kinch, M.D., another well-educated "non-subscriber," from Barbican. By this time Joseph Collet had reached London, and on 21 November he transferred his membership to Barbican, where were his old friend Burroughs, and the kindred soul Gale. But Gale was dying, and the next co-pastor was another man of culture and education, who had been conducting an Academy, Isaac Kimber. He soon published a life of Cromwell, and became editor of the *Morning Chronicle*.

Collet acquired an estate at Hertford Castle, not so far from the quondam palace of Theobalds, which had been a stronghold of Baptists in his youth, and there he settled with his two unmarried daughters. This property gave him a stake in the country, and qualified him to stand at the next vacancy for a

knight of the shire. Perhaps he began to realise the difference between the all-but-absolute power of a governor in the East Indies, and the give-and-take, the intrigue, the bribery, in the House of Commons. He was not destined to be the first of the wealthy nabobs who fitted so awkwardly with parliamentary conditions; but at least his career presented no vulnerable points such as ended the public lives of Clive and Hastings. And he was spared any inglorious lingering retirement. For while he had, thanks to a clean life, come through the tropics without apparent danger, he could not endure the fogs of the Lea valley. After making a will, among whose bequests were £50 to Joseph Burroughs and £50 to Isaac Kimber, he passed away on 13 June, 1725. In death as in life he was unafraid, and the inscription he penned may still be seen in Bunhill Fields; while the gentle descent of the family is shown by the coat of arms from Colet of Wendover, he himself acknowledges "the gift of the one only supreme God the Father, by the ministration of his Son Jesus Christ."

And when his daughter Mary died, her husband Richard Warren placed a tablet to her memory in Tewin church, which speaks of Joseph Collet as "a man of extraordinary sweetness of temper, great probity and extensive knowledge."

His career shows, even accentuates, what was fairly frequent in dissenting circles. Religion was important within, commerce was important without. They were blended: if into ecclesiastical affairs a commercial spirit was creeping, religion had engrained probity into commerce: an Englishman's word was his bond. Had more men of his type been equally enterprising and equally true to their principles, the claim for religious equality could not have been resisted. If many like him had become deacons in Baptist churches, ministers might indeed have wondered who was "head of the church," but the churches would have gained in strength and influence. If many had thought, studied their Bibles as carefully, corrected their abstract thinking by comparison with the facts of the heathen world, Baptist missions would have begun two generations earlier.

Hodges resigned the pastorate; he settled nearer London, at Bethnal Green, and presently was knighted. He remained in good standing among the London ministers, but did not frequent the old Monthly Meeting we noticed in 1698, nor did he join a new one founded in 1723/4, on very exclusive lines. He lived to see a second Fund started to extend the plan of 1717, both by helping all needy Baptist churches, and to educate pious and sober young men inclined to devote themselves to the work of the ministry. This laid its finger on the crucial fact that a succession of able men seemed failing. A course of three years

at an Academy was planned, to be extended if wise to four or five; and post-graduate exhibitions of £20 were given. But he did not live long enough to endow it, dying in August 1727. And as his widow placed his handsome monument with its coat of arms, in Stepney churchyard, his memory was not cherished in all Baptist circles. There is even less excuse for forgetting Thomas Guy and his trustees, Sir Gregory Page, chairman of the East India Company, with his magnificent mansion at Blackheath, and the Hollis family, benefactors in England and the colonies.

As Crosby foresaw, indeed lamented by 1740, the quality of London Baptist ministers deteriorated. No longer did good families send their sons to be trained for this work. The only educated ministers had to be imported from the country, Foster from Dorset, Weatherley from Somerset, Gifford from Bristol, Stennet from Exeter. The others were at best self-educated, like Gill; and the lack of contact in their plastic years with other lads preparing for other careers was an irremediable loss. This, of course, told on the congregations, which might indeed be pious and orthodox, but tended to lose all people who valued culture as well. And when the narrow party hesitated to associate with the others, one Fraternal was wrecked, another shrank into a mere smoking club, and the Association ceased to function.

There was, of course, another side to this, a side put so vehemently that its truth has been mistaken for the whole truth. It is true that two churches served by cultured ministers ultimately became semi-Arian, and died out. But it should be emphasised that they were frequented by men who moved in educated and influential circles, that they made an impression on London literature and life. When Defoe was recounting in the year of Hodges' death the progress of London, out of twelve great new improvements he described, one was Guy's Hospital, one was the Bunhill Fields where Collet and Sir Gregory Page were buried, one was a large new meeting-house for Hodges' church. These churches died only when the leases of their buildings expired, and when there was no supply of enterprising educated young men to face new problems. If they tended to Arianism, so did all England, within and without the Established Church; and the remedy was not in such an orthodoxy as Gill and Brine professed, but in a fervid enthusiasm such as Whitefield exhibited. This, it is to be feared, Joseph Collet would not have valued, but as he did recognise the value of missions abroad, perhaps clear thinkers might have seen their value at home also. And that education is quite compatible with orthodoxy is shown in the careers of Gifford and Stennet; when Gill's preaching had

emptied his church, these men filled two new ones, and kept up the tradition of Hodges, Kinch, Kimber and Foster.

One other ill effect followed from the narrowness and ignorance of men like Skepp, Dewhurst, Noble, Ridgway, Rees. Such ministers lost the confidence of laymen in nearly every respect except that of personal character. They could not grasp big issues. They would not support education. They were not interested in public affairs. The General Body of Ministers, founded in 1727, was supplemented within six years by lay Deputies from the Dissenting Churches, who soon came to speak and act for all. We know nothing of equal intimacy being continued between lay and ministerial families such as is shown in the relations of Collet and Hodges.

When another west-country man came to Crosby's church in London, educated in the one Baptist Academy at Bristol, John Rippon, then at last the tide began to submerge the "continent of mud" deposited by John Gill. He built up again a church that had shrunk, he introduced again the idea of literature and founded a Baptist Register, he responded at once to the missionary appeal, till his church, now "one of the wealthiest within the pale of Nonconformity," was a most generous supporter of missions at home and abroad, and the home of a Baptist Union which revived the ideals of Edward Harrison and John Collet.

W. T. WHITLEY.

GREAT GRANSDEN in Huntingdon profited by the labours of Francis Holcroft the Cambridge evangelist. A pedo-baptist church was organised in 1703 under Jabez Conder, who died 1724. After eight years, Benjamin Dutton was called from the open-membership church at Eversholt; a meeting-house was built, and he went to America to collect for the cost, but was wrecked in 1748. Under the influence of him and his wife Ann, the church became Baptist. David Evans of Molleston and Hook Norton, was here 1749-1751 before taking up his life-work at Biggleswade. Then came Timothy Keymer, a comb-maker, who had excited much controversy round Norwich and Worstead in connection with William Cudworth's Methodism. In his time Ann Dutton endowed the church, so at his death in 1771 it was left stable.

Calendar of Letters, 1742-1831.

(*Continued from page* 91.)

153. 1825. Aug. 26.

From THOS. S. CRISP (Bristol) to MR. BARTLETT (London).

Cannot give the address of Mr. Milne, "who has already left the Academy for Scotland." He regrets that Maze Pond still has no minister, and suggests Mr. Clarke, of Waterford, who may be got at through Mr. Dyer. He knows too little of him to say much of his fitness for Maze Pond, but he spent a few days in Bristol recently and preached at Broadmead. He mentions also Mr. Ham, of Warwick, not known personally, but by repute an excellent man. Remembrances to Mr. Beddome.

[John Ham was indeed an excellent man, pioneering at Sydney and at Melbourne, where his descendants are honoured.]

154. 1825. Oct. 10.

From ASA MESSER (President of Brown's Univ. Rhode Island) to I. MANN.

Note requesting Mann to accept Diploma (M.A.) and thanking him for an essay on the Atonement of Christ.

155. 1826. Apr. 13.

From J. W. MORRIS (Ipswich) to Ms. WIGHTMAN and CRAMP (Paternoster Row).

A note to the publishers about the new edition of Morris's Memoirs of Fuller. Particularly, the new appendix to be added is not from *original* papers of Fuller. Condemns the "Baptist Mag." for 1826 as "highly improper."

156. 1826. May 30.

From ALVA WOODS (Brown Univ. Providence) to Revs. MOSES FISHER and JAMES LISTER (Liverpool).

Commending "Josiah West, son of a Baptist Minister in Dublin, Ireland," who has been a member of the College three years, and a beneficiary of the Baptist Education Society in Massachusetts—preparing for the Xn. ministry.

157. 1827. Mar. 16.

From ROBT. HALL (junr.) to Rev. JOHN MACK (Clipstone).

H. is sorry not to have seen M. on a recent visit to Leicester. H. is pleased with his reception in Bristol—"the congregation is good, but not larger than that at Leicester. The place is, however, well filled." H. is pleased that a *young* man has been given charge of Harvey Lane. He says that Mr. Clarke has met with great success, and was acceptable when preaching for him at Bristol.

158. 1827. Ap. 4.

(*a*) From the MARE ST. CHURCH, HACKNEY to the MAZE POND CHURCH.

Transfer of Mrs. Hazel. Signed F. A. COX (pastor).

(*b*) From F. A. COX to ISAAC MANN.

As to an application soliciting aid (on behalf of another) from the "P.G.", Cox says he can do nothing because applications are now so numerous, besides which "the Welsh ministers are more peculiarly my case." Advises him to write to Drs. Rippon or Newman.

159. 1827. Ap. 27.

From J. MARSHMAN (at Dublin) to STEADMAN (Bradford).

Leaves Dublin for Liverpool on May 1st and would like to spend a few days with S. en route for London. Purposes touring N. after London. 20/3: a text in M.'s handwriting "Be thou faithful unto death &c."

160. 1827. May. 5.

From JOHN HOLLOWAY (Cotton End) to I. MANN (Maze Pond).

Asking, in view that Mann will be coming to the Union (apparently at Bedford) that he would preach at Cotton End en route. Mentions that Mr. Mack and Mr. Stratton had acceded to the arrangement in previous years. States he wants a conversation about "Mr. Beetham, of Blunham, whose situation is exceedingly distressing."

[John Beetham was an unsatisfactory student under Steadman, after five short pastorates he went to America and was lost to British knowledge.]

(*To be continued.*)

Reviews.

The Katha Upanishad: An Introductory Study in the Hindu Doctrine of God, by J. N. Rawson. (London: Humphrey Milford, 12s. 6d.)

Plans for the celebration in this country of the centenary of William Carey's death are now well advanced. London, Kettering, Moulton and Leicester are all doing something worthy of the occasion and the man. Of recent years it has been the custom of the students of Serampore College to make an annual pilgrimage to Carey's tomb on the anniversary of the death of the founder of their College. This year, no doubt, the pilgrimage will have special features, which will bring out in some striking fashion the significance of Carey's life and work. The Senate of Serampore College are, however, early in the field. They have arranged for the publication of the above volume, upon which Professor Rawson has been at work for many years, as a memorial volume.

The Katha Upanishad is one of the shortest of the Upanishads, but is of great importance for an understanding of the doctrine of God in philosophical Hinduism. It has often been translated, but Mr. Rawson offers a new translation in free verse. He has also provided a verse by verse commentary with the same thoroughness and attention to detail as is accorded by Christian scholars to any of the Biblical writings. Hitherto no Western scholar has treated any one of the Upanishads in such detail. He has also printed a short introduction, which sets forth the development of Indian speculation from its beginnings to the time of the Upanishads. The Introduction is a little disappointing, as it does not gather up in a sufficiently clear and interesting fashion the results at which Mr. Rawson has arrived after such lengthy and painstaking study. But this presentation of results we may expect in a larger treatise on the Hindu Doctrine of God.

The book is a worthy tribute to William Carey, who was himself an Orientalist of real distinction. Its attempt to get at the heart of an important Hindu sacred writing would also have rejoiced the heart of William Ward, who did pioneer work of lasting value on Hindu religious beliefs and customs. Advanced students in this country will find the book serviceable, though

its full value will be appreciated only by those who have already undertaken the preliminary toil of unravelling the tangled skein of Hindu religion and philosophy. It is worth remarking that the book has been printed by the Baptist Mission Press in Calcutta. Its clear type and good paper make it a fine example of the work of a Press which has a great reputation in India.

A. C. UNDERWOOD.

Carey's "Enquiry." (Baptist Missionary Society, 2s.)

It was a happy thought on the part of our Missionary leaders to signalise the centenary year of Carey's death by the publication of his famous "*Enquiry.*" This important book, described by George Adam Smith as the charter of modern missions, was begun while Carey was a minister in Moulton. It was published in Leicester in 1792, and since few copies of the original are known to exist, it is good to have it available once again. The present edition is a facsimile of the original 1792 edition, and has been most attractively produced by the Carey Press. At the modest price of two shillings it ought to find a very large public, for its missionary apologetic is still greatly needed.

The Saktas of Bengal, by Rev. E. A. Payne, B.A., B.D., B.Litt. (Oxford University Press, 5s. 6d. net.)

We are glad to find in the series of little books on the Religious Life of India, planned by the late Dr. Farquhar, a worthy contribution from Mr. E. A. Payne of the Baptist Missionary Society. Mr. Payne refuses to be put off by the distasteful elements in Saktism, urging that "however dark some of its expressions may be, it has produced some remarkable types of genuine piety and a considerable literature." Its errors, he holds, can never be combated unless its real meaning is understood. Traces of Sakta worship are found in many parts of India, but particularly in Bengal and Assam. Its chief characteristics are its idea of the Deity as Destroyer, its conception of God as Mother, and its attention to ceremonial. Each of these features can be paralleled in other forms of Hinduism, but nowhere are they so combined and emphasised as in this sect. Mr. Payne devotes careful attention to both the literature and the practice of this form of religion, and not the least important of his chapters are those dealing with other religious phenomena which resemble those of the Sakta movement. The sense of the Numinous, the cult of the Mother-goddess, the Mystery-religions and the worship of the Virgin Mary are all considered in this connection. Mr. Payne predicts that in India Saktism will prove

but a temporary phenomenon and will gradually give place to a more rational and healthy religious faith. He has succeeded in presenting what is to most of us a little-known aspect of Indian religion in a manner at once interesting and informative, and gives the impression of moving with ease in the broad field of comparative religion.

Problem Conduct in Children, by W. J. McBride. (The Regent Press.)

This treatment of a theme all-important for the welfare of the race cannot be too cordially welcomed. It has the advantage of clarity, and while we feel there is a technical psychological background, the book can be read and appreciated by those who have no technical training. Mr. McBride begins by asserting that "the mishandled child means, in nine cases out of ten, a mishandled adult, and a mishandled adult means a mishandled society," and throughout his survey of child problems he insists on the close connection of mind and body. The determinative factors in child culture, he holds, are the mother, the teacher and the environment. He deals with such problems as backwardness, lying, night terrors, shyness, stammering and tantrums. This is a splendid book to put in the hand of parents and teachers.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS had a General Baptist church in the eighteenth century, due to William Jeffery of Bradbourne near Sevenoaks. In 1680 the members met chiefly at Pembury and Speldhurst, under John Care, who published a pamphlet on Primitive Religion. Charles Martin, and Thomas Harrison of Sevenoaks followed, till Thomas Benge took the lead in 1704, and was Elder five years later. Next year he was prominent in getting a charter for Tunbridge Wells, but the church disciplined him for attending a meeting in a public house. At the Wells, a meeting-house was given in 1732 by William Ashdowne and Matthias Copper; when Benge died in 1742, Ashdowne succeeded as Elder. Copper was now Messenger, and took temporary charge when Ashdowne died in 1754. Thomas Moorhouse was the next leader. In the disturbances of 1770, a new meeting-house was built on Mount Ephraim, and Joseph Haines became pastor. By the end of the century the congregation had vanished, the chapel was converted into cottages; in 1813 the whole property was sold, the tomb-stones being transported to Cranbrook.

Baptist Historical Society Annual Report, 1934.

WE meet at home this year amid the enthusiasm created by the Spurgeon Centenary celebrations. No excursion to historic sites has preceded our gathering, since we anticipated events two years ago by conducting a pilgrimage, under the guidance of Dr. Whitley and Dr. Ewing, over most of the important ground in South London.

The work of guiding researches in Baptist history has gone on through the year. Guinea subscribers have received copies of the Rev. E. F. Kevan's *London's Oldest Baptist Church,* and of Dr. Whitley's *Calvinism in England.* It is proposed to issue to them this year, provided it is re-edited, Carey's *Enquiry.* The publication of the Revised Baptist Church Hymnal reminds us that our President, Vice-President and Secretary are members of the Psalms and Hymns Trust, which produced it. The recent purchase by the British Government of the Codex Sinaiticus, and its appeal for public subscriptions to the cost, brought the Society early into the list of donors, thanks to the keenness of our Treasurer, Mr. Francis J. Blight. In connection with the proposed re-arrangement of the Baptist Union Library, the Committee agreed that our Bible of 1613, used by the founders of the New Connexion, should be displayed there in a show-case, with a clear indication of its present ownership.

The *Quarterly* has, on its modern side, thanks to the continued enterprise of Mr. Seymour Price, reflected current interests. A series of three articles dealt with aspects of the Spurgeon Centenary, some others with preaching, Baptist work in Jamaica, in Argentina, in Poland and in Russia received useful treatment. Our President contributed a lecture on "History and Revelation" given to extra-mural students at Oxford. Dr. Whitley wrote on the Monastery at Sinai, Mr. Pearce on the Centenary "Life" of his great-grandfather, and Professor Farrer on Papal Infallibility. The main contributions on the historical side have been the continuance of Isaac Mann's Calendar of Letters, by the Rev. F. G. Hastings, two articles by Mr. T. R. Hooper of Redhill, and another by Mr. Francis Beckwith on Richardson's *Torments of Hell,* 1658. Dr. Townley Lord has continued to review books by Baptists.

We regret to record the resignation of our Treasurer, Mr. Blight, after twelve years of invaluable service. During this period the finances of the Society have been placed upon a firm basis, and in addition over £200 of special expenditure has been incurred and met, in assisting the publication of the results of research in Baptist history. We express our deep indebtedness to Mr. Blight.

Every member of the Society will unite in sympathy with Dr. Whitley in his recent illness, with its consequent curtailment of much of his other work. We rejoice, however, that he has prevailed upon his medical advisers to allow him to continue his work with us, and we trust he may soon be restored to full health again.

A. J. KLAIBER,
Assistant Secretary.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 1933.

INCOME.

	£	s.	d.
Balance from 1932	25	15	10
Subscriptions paid in advance, 1932	3	17	0
Subscriptions for 1933	84	16	0
Sales of Publications	3	2	11
	£117	11	9

EXPENDITURE.

Printing and publishing *Baptist Quarterly*			79	9	9
Calvinism and Evangelism			9	12	5
London's Oldest Baptist Church, distribution to Honorary Members			8	7	6
Secretary's Expenses			1	1	0
Treasurer's Expenses, with Fire Insurance			1	18	11
Balance carried forward	£12	19 2			
Subscriptions paid for 1934	4	3 2			
			17	2	2
			117	11	9

Deposit Account, for Life Members £20 15 8

26 *April*, 1934.

FRANCIS J. BLIGHT,
Honorary Treasurer.