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Cromwell as Dictator.

WE see to-day a reaction against democracy, such as fifty years ago no one even dreamed he would ever witness. Dictatorship is an accomplished fact in Italy and Germany, and shows signs of making headway elsewhere. Indeed, it begins to look as though the day may not be far distant when England will stand alone in Europe for a constitutional monarchy.

For that she does stand. Constitutionalism is as deeply engrained in our political being as absolute monarchism is in the German's. It is the outcome of our centuries-long history as a nation—a history in which we have experimented with various forms of Government, and learned to repudiate or adhere to them, according as they brought us ill or good. Among them was dictatorship—or so at least our histories tell us. This may be no unfitting moment to ask how far Cromwell was a dictator; how he came to be such, and in what spirit, and to what issues, he exercised the office.

What is a dictator? "Absolute ruler, usually temporary or irregular, of a State, especially one who suppresses or succeeds a republican government." So says the *Oxford Dictionary*, and its definition will serve our purpose as well as another. And it must be confessed at once that the cap fits Cromwell, so aptly indeed, that the definition might well have been drawn in view primarily of Cromwell himself. He suppressed and succeeded a Republican Government. His position was irregular, despite all his earnest attempts to give it a constitutional appearance. It was temporary, lasting only for the few years till his death, and then speedily disappearing once for all. And if it was not absolute, it was, perhaps, as nearly so as that of any dictator known to actual history.

Let us next proceed to enquire what manner of man this English dictator was.

His very name may seem ominous. He was a direct descendant of a sister of that Thomas Cromwell, secretary to Henry VIII, whose name is a byword for utterly unscrupulous pursuit of his own self-aggrandising aims, and whose spoliation of the monasteries was the source of the wealth of the Cromwells. Naturally, the family were staunch and militant Protestants. And a day was to come when Oliver himself would be in the van of those who demanded the abolition of episcopacy,

and another when he would approve drastic confiscation of the property of Royalists. But for all that, he was a man of an entirely different spirit from Thomas Cromwell. Thomas had not the fear of God before his eyes. Oliver always had; and it was not to private, but to great public purposes that he appropriated the proceeds of ecclesiastical or political confiscations.

He had always the fear of God before his eyes. It will be well to emphasise this at the outset. For it is the indispensable key to the understanding of his whole life and work. Nothing in either was apart from his religion. Mistakes of course he made, but in all things he tried honestly to know and do the will of God. I make bold to say that if anyone, after reading through his speeches in Parliament, his dispatches to Government, and his private letters, can still seriously doubt *that,* there is nothing for it but to leave him to what must be regarded as a judicial blindness!

But the question may fairly be asked whether Cromwell's personal religion did not belong to a type that, to say the least of it, readily lends itself to a dictatorial attitude—a type that fosters confidence in one's own perception of what is right, and a consequent disposition to thrust this on the acceptance of others, will they, nill they. It was, as we all know, a sturdy Independency. And among the Independents of his day were not a few who laid claim to private intimations of the mind and will of Heaven, and even appealed to them in support of the political programmes which they themselves advocated. Such men were indeed to make trouble enough for Cromwell. It is important therefore to note that Cromwell made no such appeal to private revelations. It is true that his behaviour at times suggested that he had a source of knowledge or anticipation of God's purposes that was inaccessible to others. On the eve of Naseby hardly anyone dared to hope for the success of the raw recruits who formed a great part of the Parliamentary army. Yet we find Cromwell writing thus, a month after the victory: "When I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we a company of poor, ignorant men, to seek how to order our battle . . . I could not . . . but smile out to God in praises, in assurance of victory, because God would, by things that are not, bring to naught things that are." But it will be observed that Cromwell was founding himself here on a promise of Scripture. It would moreover be a great mistake to suppose that such confidence in God ever made Cromwell negligent of such expedients for achieving victory as lay within his own power. On the contrary, he owed his unique record as a successful general not least to the unfailing

vigilance, industry and promptitude of action which he devoted to the direction of his campaigns.

He was correspondingly distrustful of people who proposed their own inspirations as a short and easy way to the settlement of political difficulties. "I know a man may answer all difficulties with faith, and faith will answer all difficulties, where it really is; but we are very apt, all of us, to call that faith which perhaps may be but carnal imagination and carnal reasoning." At a meeting where some present had claimed such inspirations, he frankly avowed, "I cannot say that I have received anything that I can speak as in the name of the Lord." His own way of ascertaining the purposes of God was less pretentious—and more laborious. It was to study the logic of events. "Let us look into Providences; surely they mean somewhat. They hang so together; have been so constant, so clear, so unclouded." His reference here is to the almost uniform series of victories whereby, as he believed, God had declared His judgment against Charles I and his despotic government. But the trend of events was not by itself the sole means of Providential manifestation. There was also the mind of God's people. "What think you of Providence disposing the hearts of so many of God's people this way?" "Briefly stated," says Firth, "Cromwell's argument was that the victory of the army, and the convictions of the godly, were external and internal evidence of God's will, to be obeyed as a duty."[1] (In passing, we may note, again with Firth, that this method of Cromwell's helps to explain both his occasional slowness in coming to a decision, and also his apparently inconsistent changes of policy at times.)

If this is the way to ascertain the will of God, then the fitting method of bringing others to your view of it is not by the exercise of authority or force, but by persuasion. This was fully recognised by Cromwell. Naturally hot-tempered as he was, and sometimes liable to passionate outbursts that broke down his habitual self-control, he was always averse to violent methods of procedure. Even when he was Protector, he was distinguished by the readiness with which he allowed subjects access to himself, and listened to the representations of opponents. "If ever," says S. R. Gardiner, "there was a man who suffered fools gladly, who sought to influence and persuade, and who was ready to get something tolerable done by consent, rather than get something better done by forcing it on unwilling minds, that man was Cromwell."[2]

[1] Firth's *Oliver Cromwell* (Heroes of the Nations): the best biography, to which this paper is heavily indebted throughout.

[2] *Cromwell's Place in History*, p. 46.

Particularly in religion was Cromwell tolerant of differing opinions. In this matter also his inward conviction was confirmed by the logic of events. He found that Independents made as good soldiers as Presbyterians, if not better. He insisted on the removal of a major-general because the latter had cashiered an officer on no more convincing ground than that he was an "Anabaptist." Cromwell stood for religion that was inward and spiritual, and for the unity for which such religion affords the basis. "All that believe have the real unity, which is most glorious because inward and spiritual. . . . For . . . Uniformity, every Christian will for peace sake study and do as far as conscience will permit. And from brethren in things of the mind we look for no compulsion, but that of light and reason." In truth Cromwell "was intolerant [only] of everything opposed to the highest and most spiritual religion, and of the forms which, as he thought, choked and hindered its development."[3] Popish ceremonies to him were "poisonous," because they "eat out the core and power and heart and life of all reigion." Prelacy was inadmissible, because it was allied with the persecuting rule of the Stuarts. But short of these, and of blasphemous infidelity, he could make room for almost any honest belief. "I desire from my heart . . . union and right understanding between the godly people—Scots, English, Jews, Gentiles, Presbyterians, Anabaptists, and all." Nay, elsewhere he affirms, "I had rather that Mohametanism were permitted amongst us, than that one of God's children should be persecuted." He was opposed to depriving a man of his natural liberty "upon a supposition he may abuse it. When he doth abuse it, judge." The securing of religious liberty became eventually the supreme object of his political activity. "Religion was not the thing at first contested for, but . . . at last it proved to be that which was most dear to us. And wherein consisted this more than in obtaining that liberty from the tyranny of the bishops to all species of Protestants to worship God according to their own light and conscience?"

"The thing at first contested for" was civil freedom—the constitutional rights of an Englishman. For these too Cromwell was prepared to fight. In his young manhood it looked as if England were following the lead of the Continental powers towards absolute monarchy. "We are the last monarchy in Christendom that maintains its rights," a speaker had declared in Parliament in 1625; and Cromwell doubtless shared his apprehensions. He had himself suffered fine and imprisonment under the oppressive measures of Charles I's government. His

[3] Gardiner, op. cit., p. 45.

maiden speech in the House was made in order to complain of a bishop for countenancing a clergyman who preached "flat Popery" at St. Paul's Cross, and attempting to silence a Puritan preacher who refuted him. And in the ever-memorable Long Parliament of 1640 he came forward to present the petition of John Lilburn, confined in the Fleet for his outspoken condemnation of the Queen's dancing, and also to support an agitation for the abolition of the high-handed bishops. How came such an ardent champion of the constitutional liberties of the subject himself to exercise the office of dictator?

I think it must be clear to any open-minded reader of the story that it was contrary to his own deepest desires. What we see there is the spectacle of a man struggling desperately to avoid something towards which nevertheless he is irresistibly borne by the force of circumstances. Throughout, we see him opposing extremists, and striving to make moderate counsels prevail. When, after the first civil war, negotiations were on foot for a new settlement of the government of the country, and a rupture between Parliament and Army, and consequent anarchy, seemed imminent, Cromwell did his best to get the Army to bow to the authority of Parliament. "If that authority falls to nothing, nothing can follow but confusion." When, notwithstanding, the Army mutinied, Cromwell did indeed join them, but because it seeemed the only way to prevent the outbreak of civil war or anarchy. He was on principle against the employment of force, except in the last resort. "That you have by force, I look upon as nothing. I do not know that force is to be used except we cannot get what is for the good of the Kingdom without it." When the Army leaders pressed for a written constitution, setting up a democratic republic, Cromwell again demurred. Abstractly, a republic might be desirable, but he held that it was not practicable. More important than the best of all possible governments was a form of government acceptable to the majority of the people. And for this reason he was for retaining monarchy and a second chamber, and he held them needful to the security of life and property. Once more, when extremer sections in the Army began to clamour for the prosecution and punishment of the King, Cromwell sought to find terms by acceptance of which the King's life might yet be saved. Only when it became manifest that Charles would not accept conditions needful to protect the nation against abuse of his royal power, did Cromwell consent to his trial. Then indeed, and characteristically, he acted resolutely, and even helped to keep steadfast others of the Regicides who showed signs of wavering.

A contemporary story credits him with muttering, as he gazed on the corpse of the King, "Cruel necessity." Whether the story be true or not, the utterance certainly reflects his view of the execution.

The House of Commons proceeded to vote the abolition both of Monarchy and the House of Lords. But it had been forcibly purged successively of its Royalist and its Presbyterian members, and was thus not representative of the nation. Essentially it depended on the support of the Army. The soldiers, however, wanted it to pass their proposed republican constitution, and then dissolve itself. Parliament for its part would neither "get on nor get out." The situation became increasingly menacing. The Army itself was divided. Part of it followed the "Levellers," radicals who demanded the *immediate* setting up of a democratic republic. Cromwell himself saw that, unless the war was to have been fought in vain, they must be summarily dealt with. "I tell you [the Council of State], you have no other way to deal with these men but to break them, or they will break you; yea, and . . . frustrate and make void all that work that with so many years' industry, toil and pains you have done." On the other hand, English Royalists were plotting for Charles's son; Ireland, and then Scotland, declared for him. Cromwell was appointed commander-in-chief of all the country's forces to crush the Scotch. When he had done so, he returned to the constitutional question. He brought together in conference representatives of the Army and the Parliament. Again Parliament proved dilatory or obstructive. Cromwell grew impatient. "What if a man should take upon him to be King?" he exclaimed in a *tête-à-tête* with Whitelocke. The Army threatened to turn out the Parliament by force. Cromwell complained to a friend that he was being driven on to do something, "the consideration of the issue whereof made his hair to stand on end." He proposed one more compromise. Parliament rejected it; and then Cromwell forcibly dissolved them. "It is you that have forced me to this, for I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work."

In his own view, Cromwell, as commander-in-chief, was the only constituted authority surviving. He felt that this situation must be ended as soon as possible. On his writ was summoned a Parliament consisting of 140 persons, chosen by the Army Council from those nominated by the Independent churches in the various counties, and, accordingly, not truly representative of the nation at large. We need not review its proceedings in detail. From the first, serious divisions disclosed themselves. On the important question of a State establishment

of religion, the parties for and against were almost equally balanced. At the same time the menace of royalist reaction grew more serious. Cromwell tried in vain to reconcile the warring interests. He came to regret his part in calling the Parliament, and asked himself whether it was not "due to a desire, I am afraid sinful enough, to be quit of the power God had most clearly by His providence put into my hands, before He called me to lay it down." Hence, when the Moderates got a vote through the House in favour of restoring to him the power he had put into their hands, he concurred with them. And when a section of the Army, led by General Lambert, offered him the Protectorate, again he accepted. At a later date he declared, "I did out of necessity undertake that business, which place I undertook . . . out of a desire to prevent mischief and evil which I did see was imminent in the nation." And to a warning that nine in ten of the nation would be against him he is said to have replied, "Very well, but what if I should disarm the nine and put a sword in the tenth man's hands? Would not that do the business?"

This Protectorate, however, did not amount to an irresponsible dictatorship. There was a written constitution, the "Instrument of Government." This provided for a Parliament every third year, and a Council of State, whose members, most of them named in the Instrument, held office for life, and had the choice of the Protector's successor. The Dictator could only veto such laws passed by Parliament as contravened the constitution. He had the executive power, but "in domestic administration and foreign affairs, he could not act without the consent of the Council; in taxation and for the employment of the Army, he needed the consent of Parliament or Council." None the less, his powers were undeniably formidable, as was speedily apparent. In the nine months before Parliament could meet, he with his Council issued eighty-two ordinances (nearly all of which were subsequently confirmed by Parliament). These I cannot stay to particularise. One feature, however, of his administration I cannot omit here. He strove unweariedly for religious toleration, and for mitigation of sentences on individuals accused of "heresy." It was thanks to him, says Firth, that "Nonconformity had time to take root and to grow so strong in England that the storm which followed the Restoration had no power to root it up."

When Parliament did meet, the clash between it and the Army promptly revived. It was for asserting itself as supreme authority in the State, and for reducing the Army, and this at a time when wars abroad and conspiracies at home rendered such reduction a perilous measure. Cromwell refused, and

dissolved it. "I think it my duty to tell you that it is not for the profit of these nations, nor for common and public good, for you to continue here any longer."

After suppressing insurrection, Cromwell did somewhat reduce the military establishment. But he proceeded presently to the most unpopular act of his whole administration. He divided England into twelve districts, and set over each a major-general, who was responsible, not only for dealing with disloyal movements in his area, but also for enforcing the government's Puritanical laws against crime and in restraint of popular amusements. By this arrangement "the Protectorate stood revealed as a military despotism" (Firth, p. 417). But lawyers now began to question the validity of these laws themselves, and judges to refuse to administer them. Cromwell repressed them by the strong hand. Further, Republican leaders declined to acknowledge the Government's authority. Ludlow insisted that the nation ought to be governed by its own consent. "I am as much for government by consent as anyone," was Cromwell's retort, "but where shall we find that consent?"

Ere long financial needs constrained him to call a second Parliament. Of those elected, the Council excluded one hundred, as disaffected to government. Even so, Parliament proved not wholly tractable. True, it made it high treason to plot against the Protectorate. But it disregarded Cromwell's plea for mitigation of its barbarous sentence on the Quaker Naylor, and it rejected by an overwhelming majority a government bill for continuing the harsh tax on Cavaliers. On the other hand, the discovery of a plot to assassinate Cromwell aroused the desire for more efficient protection of the Protector. The title of King was more familiar and reverend to the nation. The Commons voted a "Humble Petition and Advice" that Cromwell should accept that title. But acceptance would have rent the army in twain, and after some hesitation Cromwell declined. Thereupon the Protectorate was renewed, but in a form more agreeable to his feelings. For one thing, he could now feel that his office had the authority of the Parliament as well as the Army. Also he was empowered to name his own successor, and, subject to Parliament's approval, the members of a Second Chamber. The powers of Parliament, on the other hand, were extended at the expense of those of the Council. In particular, the Council could no longer exclude elected members of Parliament.

But when Parliament met, history repeated itself. It presently put forward a scheme that aimed at securing the ultimate supremacy in the State to the Commons, and at limiting the Protector's control of the Army. Cromwell summoned both

Houses to meet him, and told them their proceedings tended "to nothing else but the playing of the King of Scots' game. I do dissolve this Parliament. And let God be judge between you and me." One more Parliament he called, but before it met he was dead. And the life of Cromwell was the only force that could postpone the Restoration.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. It can be summed up in a few words. It is clear—is it not?—that Cromwell had no desire for a personal dictatorship; resisted it as long as he could; only accepted it to obviate what seemed to him still greater evils; and when it thus thrust itself upon him, administered it not for his own satisfaction or glory, but for what he took to be the highest welfare of his nation. And in fact he wrought great things for England. He secured just and efficient administration at home, and made her name and power respected abroad. He made absolute monarchy impossible once for all, and ultimately it was he who secured our religious liberty. But if his exercise of the office was thus excellent, only the more apparent does it become that dictatorship itself will never do. To say no more, it carries within it its own nemesis. Inevitably it provokes reaction. You cannot thrust the will of an individual on a nation. You cannot dragoon a nation even into goodness, if it is not ready for it. Further, the goodness itself is not only questionable to many, it is actually deficient, from the limitations inevitably arising from the individual's ignorance or prejudice. And the irritation provoked by the dragooning is aggravated by burdensome taxation necessary to the maintenance of the armed force that dragoons. In the end, the dictatorship is felt to be at least as intolerable as the evils which it was instituted to remove!

A. J. D. FARRER.

THE UNITARIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY has completed the fifth volume of its Transactions. The great feature is Joseph Priestley, about whom many writers contribute articles; two letters of his own to James Bilbrough, of Gildersome, in 1828, have been sent by Harold Kriott. The quality of the Society's work is high, with research by Walter H. Burgess, George Eyre Evans and Ernest Axon; with only £45 income it is hard to do more. The next volume will be edited by Miss Anne Holt; Mr. Burgess, secretary since 1915, now becomes president.

Science, a Friend of Religion.

A SMALL friend of mine, aged four, was recently presented by a kindly acquaintance with some small leaden soldiers. Noticing that he looked at them in a rather curious way the donor asked, "Don't you like toy soldiers, Richard?" To which he replied, holding one of them in his hand: "Well, I like these little men; but they are enemies, you know!"

It can hardly be denied that religious people in general have been prone to regard the scientist as an enemy rather than as a man with whom they might co-operate. They have appreciated the value of applied science in its practical inventions and discoveries. But in the realm of religion they have not infrequently had an uneasy sense that this great new phenomenon, science, boded danger and must be watched with jealous suspicion. The reasons for this attitude need not be elaborated, for they are sufficiently obvious, besides being at least partially justified. The first is the undiscriminating enthusiasm which has sometimes led scientists and others to exalt science at the expense of religion, and still causes some of them to behave as if the latter were nothing but an exploded superstition destined speedily to be discarded. The second reason is that the advance of scientific knowledge has indeed challenged so many beliefs popularly, if erroneously, supposed to be fundamental to religion as to encourage the idea that its action in religious matters is almost if not entirely negative and destructive.

There is therefore room for some attempt to view science under a different and more constructive aspect, and to think of the scientist not as necessarily an enemy of religion but as a man who has a contribution to make to religious thought and practice. The scientist is, after all, only human; and as such he has as great a stake as the rest of mankind in the eternal truths of religion. The meaning and worth of his life and work depend, no less than those of other people, upon realities which lie beyond the power of science to prove or disprove. And, therefore, although his attitude to current religion may be critical, it is the more important that we should endeavour to understand what it is that excites his criticism, and what positive contribution he has to offer as a substitute for what he condemns. Further, the proper persons to speak of the contribution of

science to religion are those who are conscious of having benefited by that contribution, and preferably those who are not scientists. The views and claims of scientists about religion have been widely proclaimed; there is a call now for some testimony from the religious side as to what—if anything—science has done to help men in their quest for God.

In speaking of the contributions of science to religion, I would put first in order, if not in importance, the fact that *science has revealed mankind to be living in a vastly bigger and more wonderful universe* than had formerly been supposed. The telescope and the microscope—to say nothing of any other scientific apparatus—have between them revolutionized our conceptions of the world in which we live. It is true that our minds cannot fully grasp the astounding rows of figures with which physicists, geologists and astronomers make play. Nobody really knows what it means to say that "travelling at the rate of 180,000 miles a second" the light of certain nebulae takes 140 million years to reach this earth; or that the age of the universe is 200 million million years; or that atoms are measurable by 100 millionths of an inch. One questions whether, in this respect, scientists themselves are any better off than the rest of mankind. Such figures are, after all, only counters and tokens as it were, and are not meant to be completely understood. But, in so far as they serve to represent the immense periods of time during which the universe has been evolving, and the colossal distances and velocities which belong to its constitution, their meaning is sufficiently plain to fill the least sensitive of men with awe and wonder. Whatever else they mean, they mean at least this: that the drama of human life is being enacted on a stage of inconceivable grandeur, and one which both renders for ever impossible former views of the universe and also must modify our conceptions of the Being who upholds it by the word of His power. There is a story told of an astronomer who had been showing a friend some of the wonders of the heavens through a telescope, and as the observer moved away from the instrument he said: "Well, anyhow, that does away with a six-foot God!" The universe which science reveals may not be as neat and tidy, nor as easily comprehensible, as that which an ingenious bishop once calculated to have been created at half-past nine in the morning of October 25th, 4004 B.C. But it is infinitely more grand and awe-inspiring; and to the religious mind it is simply inconceivable that such a universe, with its marvellous wealth of animate and inanimate being, could ever have come into existence, were there not above, as well as within it, a Creative Mind, whose power and patience, whose skill and wisdom are beyond all

human effort to understand or describe. In other words, science has interpreted afresh the majesty of God, and has given a new and more wonderful meaning to the words of one of the most ancient of religious poets: "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard? that the everlasting God, the Lord, fainteth not neither is weary. There is no searching of His understanding."

The religious man is indebted to the scientist not merely for a new vision of the splendour of the Universe and its Maker, but also for *a new instrument with which to cope with his own special problems in the realm of religious truth and experience.* Professor Whitehead says somewhere that the greatest invention of the nineteenth century was the invention of the method of invention. We may paraphrase this and say, that the most significant of all the discoveries of science has been the discovery of a new method of making discoveries. Behind all the amazing scientific development of our time there lies, in fact, a simple but profound technique, which may be concisely described in two words: "Facts first." No matter what may be the material with which the scientist is called upon to deal, his characteristic method of apprehending it is always the same. He moves from facts to theories rather than from theories to facts; or—since no one can approach even the simplest fact without some theory in his mind—perhaps we had better say, he tries to frame his theories at the bidding of the facts, and not *vice versa.* Whether he be a chemist studying the properties of gases, or an astronomer watching the disposition of the stars in space, or a psychologist probing the mind of a patient, the first question to him is: "What are the facts?" The facts, when he discovers them, may be pleasant or unpleasant; they may be familiar or startlingly new; they may confirm accepted theories or refute them; but scientific method insists that, whatever their nature, the facts must be allowed to control the course of the investigation if fruitful and valuable results are to be expected.

Now it would be absurd to suggest that religious men had never faced facts until they were forced to do so by science. It was a very early religious writer who said: "We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty." Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that some of the most far-reaching developments in religious life to-day have had their humble beginnings in nothing more mysterious than the faithful application of this familiar scientific principle. Out of numerous illustrations we may take two. Has it been generally realised by religious people that we are indebted

to the scientific approach to the Bible for giving to our generation a new and more vivid picture of Jesus Christ? Until the rise of Biblical criticism the phrase "The Jesus of History," which is now so familiar, would have been almost unintelligible. Christian people did not think of Jesus Christ as being "in history" at all, in the usual sense of that word. He was the Divine object of their faith and worship, who had come down into history from outside it, and it would have seemed to many of them almost blasphemous to speak of His "personality" as we do to-day. The fact of the matter is that men to-day may, if they will, know more of Jesus of Nazareth in all His uniqueness as a living Person in history than any other body of Christian people have done since the beginning. Never has the history of the people of Israel up to the time of Christ been better known than it is to-day; never before have we been able to see Jesus, as we may to-day, in the setting of the ideas and practices of His own time, and thus receive fresh guidance in judging what are the vital and permanent elements in the tradition that has come down to us. The time in which He lived has been reconstructed under our very eyes. And for all this and much more, through which the Person of Jesus has become more real to men, we have to thank a multitude of scholars who have applied to the study of the Bible and other relevant material a technique which was first made familiar through science.

A similar thing is true of the story of the Christian Church. The history and claims of ecclesiastical organisations of all kinds have been submitted during the last few years to scientific scrutiny of the most searching kind. The time is rapidly passing when any Church can expect support from reflective people merely on the ground of assertions that its ministry derives in unbroken succession from the apostles, or that its organisation was settled in the first century by Divine appointment, or that its peculiar rites are essential to salvation. All such claims have inevitably to face to-day the question: "What are the facts?" And, did men but realise it, there lies such power in that simple but drastic enquiry that it is rapidly changing the whole substance of ecclesiastical controversy, and making possible between Christians a new fellowship in the truth. We owe to the scientist, I say, a method of handling our religious problems which has already re-vitalised large areas of faith. And if that be the case, it will be found to be because this appeal to the facts turns out, on examination, to be something more than a mere instrument or method. It is in the end a spirit—rather, a *faith* of a very high order. For it presupposes that, in endeavouring to come face to face with facts in any sphere we

are really harking back to the source of all authority and are seeking to be guided by the God of truth who utters His mind and will through history.

So we come finally to the greatest claim of all which science makes upon sympathetic understanding and appreciation. For *the ultimate significance of science is only revealed when we see it, not merely as an effective method of gaining command over the raw material of life, but as an attitude of mind towards life itself—a spirit in which to live.* There are three qualities at least which belong to this attitude or spirit which is characteristic of science. The first is that of enquiry—an insatiable curiosity about the nature of the universe and about the creatures who inhabit it. Inquiry is to the scientist the very breath of life. Give him but a problem to solve and he pursues it with the zest of a lover. It matters little to him that the quest may be long and arduous; or that its practical usefulness may be negligible. It is not the goal but the search which fascinates him. It is related of Charles Darwin that, out of a desire to understand the structure and functions of a peculiar kind of barnacle, he engaged upon an investigation which he expected to complete in a few weeks. The enquiry was ultimately finished at the end of eight years. If the scientist thus lives in the spirit of questioning, the reason is not because he is at bottom a sceptic, but rather because he is a somewhat obstinate kind of believer; that is to say, he believes that all that men have found out already is as nothing compared with what is waiting to be revealed, and that ultimately all reality will be found to be rational through and through. Thus the effort to understand and know more about life in its varying aspects wears for him the character of a sacred obligation which he may not repudiate save at the sacrifice of his own integrity. It follows naturally from this that the scientific temper *at its best* is essentially experimental and undogmatic. The qualification is important, for the scientific spirit is so potent that its first effect upon the mind is apt to be to make it strangely positive and opinionated. True scientific research, however, is a voyage of discovery into uncharted seas; and those who set out upon it must keep their minds open and never be too proud to learn. Someone has said, "A clash of doctrines to a scientist is not a disaster but an opportunity." It reveals unsuspected possibilities waiting to be further explored, and lays upon the experimenter the duty of further enquiry. Science aims at impartiality. "Every individual science," says a great physicist, "sets about its task by the explicit renunciation of the egocentric and anthropocentric standpoint." In other words, the search for truth can only advance as men seek to put on one side their personal pre-

dilections and to follow the truth whithersoever it may lead them.

It must be apparent by this time that in discussing these various qualities of the scientific temper we have really been describing in action nothing less than *the passion for Truth.* This is what the passion for Truth means: to follow Truth eagerly, humbly, and with single-minded devotion, no matter what the consequences to oneself may be. And it is perhaps the greatest contribution of science to religion that it helps to keep alive the reverence for Truth. No one can say that religion can afford to neglect or despise such a contribution as that. One of the greatest and most persistent temptations of the religious life is to eliminate the element of uncertainty in its faith. The average institutional religionist—says Baron von Hügel in his Essays—"finds it all but impossible not to tidy up reality." The tendency is always there; to reduce faith to a docile assent to some time-honoured statement of beliefs; to scale down the cost at which living religious experience can be gained; to conserve and defend formulae and institutions as if the whole of Truth had been successfully captured and embalmed therein. A good and devout elder said to John Oman, as a youth of seventeen, in Edinburgh: "Granted that Robertson Smith is right, if it is truth it is dangerous truth, and he has no right, as a professor of the Church, to upset the Church by declaring it." Dr. Oman says that this attitude affected him as a call to his own life's work. We may take that as a sign that science has a mission of God to perform in breaking up the assumptions and dogmatisms to which religious people are prone to cling, and in thrusting us forth afresh upon the quest for religious reality. Matthew Arnold says of Wordsworth: "He was a priest to us all of the wonder and bloom of the world." So might we say of the work of the true scientist: He is a priest to us all; a priest who by the passionate devotion and disinterestedness with which he serves Truth puts many of us to shame and illumines afresh the wonder of Life, the majesty and beauty of Truth, and the glory of loyal discipleship.

What is my purpose in thus pleading that religious people should recognise science as a friend of religion? Certainly not to suggest that science can ever take the place of religion in the life of mankind. But simply to urge that they need one another. A reconciliation between them is vitally necessary, first of all, for the sake of science. We have already had sufficient experience of science and its fruits to realise that these may be a curse as well as a blessing to mankind, and that science is of itself powerless to choose what its ultimate issue shall be. Civilisation itself stands to be destroyed by the very power

which, rightly employed, might be its salvation. The only thing which can ultimately save science from destroying itself and the race along with it is that it should be brought under the control of a greater than itself and be dedicated to the glory of God and the service of His purpose in the world.

But a reconcilation between science and religion is needed too for the sake of religion. It is said that the German scientist who translated Darwin's "Origin of Species" expressed his sense of the epoch-making character of the book by prefacing his translation with these words: "How will it be with you, dear reader, after you have read this book?" Whether we like it or no, this mighty movement of the human spirit to which we give the name "science" is changing the mental and spiritual landscape of the whole world; and the future of religion, for individuals and churches alike, depends upon the way in which they react to it. The Christian Church can only survive as it will take its life in its hands—as often before in its long history—and go out to meet the scientific movement with the conviction that it is of God, and must be faced not as an enemy but as at least a potential friend.

We must not be blind to the cost of such an attitude. There is that in the scientific temper and outlook which by its very nature can never be completely assimilated by religion and which must remain as a perpetual challenge to faith. That is, perhaps, the function designed for it by God. But nobody who has followed me thus far can doubt that, taken as a whole, science represents nothing less than a movement of the Spirit of God within humanity, and as such we cannot but pray that its challenging vivifying power should be felt to the remotest recesses of all religious life. "The desire and pursuit of Truth," says Dr. Hort, "is an essential part of a holy worship." It is for religious people to show that they feel no hostility but only friendship towards all who seek to offer to God that kind of worship.

R. L. CHILD.

Australia: Its Vital Importance and its Problems.

THE knowledge of Australia among a large number of English people is woefully scrappy. In many cases it seems to begin and end with associations connected with such words—great words admittedly—as Bradman, Crawford, and The Ashes. The blissful ignorance of the real Australia prompts me to say that it is an island continent of about 3,000,000 square miles situated in the far distance of the southern hemisphere, a land of amazing natural resources, one of the few countries of the world that can be entirely self-supporting; a land, moreover, of grave problems and enormous possibilities, and one among several countries which contain a serious menace to world-peace.

It is from the point of view of its problems that I would speak of the religious life and especially of the Baptist life of Australia.

The first problem is distance. Distance from what has been and still is the centre of things in England, Europe, America. There is the "unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea," and out of sight is too often out of mind. This difficulty, it is hoped, will be somewhat overcome by the inclusion of Australia as a member of the Council of the League of Nations. Also, the recent remarkable developments in communication by air prove that Melbourne can be brought as near to London as Edinburgh was to London in stage-coach days.

Distance within its own borders. Each of the six Australian States, including Tasmania, has its own Baptist Union, and all are banded together in a Federal Union. The difficulty of Federalisation in a huge and sparsely populated continent where the city of Brisbane, in which I have been working, is 3,500 miles from Perth in Western Australia, and the difficulty of Home Mission work in such a country where the State of Queensland alone would contain quite comfortably the combined areas of France, Germany, Italy and the British Isles—these difficulties are being tackled with splendid devotion and generous enthusiasm, but it is a struggle of an undermanned boat against the tide.

One form of that adverse tide which constitutes another religious problem is the weather. Australia is one of the two healthiest countries in the world. The average sunshine is seven hours a day. The people get so much of heaven on earth that they are apt to grow careless about the heaven beyond. Beauty spots and coastal paradises abound. In Sydney Harbour alone there is a beach for every day of the year. As a result, paganism and Sunday picnics are the order of the day; they constitute a strong challenge to the organised Church, and a problem to be considered wisely and sympathetically by Christian people generally.

Another vital denominational problem is that of ministerial training. In these great, youthful, truth-demanding days when the severest pains of the world are growing-pains, Christian ministers need more than evangelical fervour. That is an essential factor in every minister's equipment, but he needs, too, the adequate resources of an education gained in the atmosphere of our best seats of learning. In Australia we are doing what we can in the almost complete absence of first-rate scholarship and properly equipped university colleges. In Queensland, for example, we have a most scholarly and highly-cultured Principal; we have really good material in the young men who offer for training, but we have no college building; the students meet for classes for one week only in each month; every student is also a Home Missionary in charge of a church and several out-stations, and some of them have to travel from two to four hundred miles to their training centre. Ten Commandments, or no ten Commandments, we covet the training institutions of America and Great Britain, and the people's appreciation of essentials which has made them possible.

Hinging partly on this pivotal matter of ministerial education is the further problem of the gap—the growing gap—between church and people. There are notable exceptions, but in the main what we call the working classes, and the university students, *i.e.*, those who come to real grips with the complicated experiences of life, are leaving the Protestant churches alone. Time has made ancient good uncouth, and numbers of people, bewildered by modern problems, and unsatisfied and vexed by crudely dogmatic and superficial preaching, are bending to the authority of Roman Catholicism or drifting into the nebulous region of Agnosticism.

Another problem is due to the curse of gambling, common to the world, but especially virulent in Australia. It is indulged in as a matter of course by the bulk of the population and even by some church members. In Queensland, and also in some of the other States, the cloak of respectability is thrown

over it by reason of the fact that the State Government controls a lottery in aid of the hospitals. This lottery is comprised of 100,000 tickets; it takes about a fortnight to fill; it goes on all the year round and the first prize in each drawing is £6,000. A periodical lottery, perhaps twice or three times a year, is also run with tickets at £1 each and a first prize of £25,000. Many of the shops in the main streets of Brisbane are Government agents for these lotteries. (I know of only one hairdressing and tobacconist's shop in the whole of the centre of the city that is not a duly authorised lottery-ticket seller, and the proprietor recently told me that he was on his last legs and would soon either have to give up business or become a Government agent.) The windows of these shops are plastered with black cats and notices asking passers-by why they should work when they can win £6,000 for 5s. 6d. The Government has recently issued one-sixth share tickets at 1s. each, and it is no uncommon thing for four school children to put in threepence each and form a syndicate. One feels that a country whose Government so undermines morality cannot run very far. Such a state of things is a first-rate hindrance to the Kingdom of God, a subtle incitement to dishonesty in business, and a terribly evil influence in the community generally.

Another problem which, while it is peculiarly Australian, may yet disturb the world, is that of population. The Australian Government, and indeed every political party in the Commonwealth, has declared emphatically for a White Australia. It is a worthy ideal, and no fault could be found with it if that great Continent were fully occupied by white people, and its teeming resources worked and utilised. But here is the fact. Australia, on a low computation, is capable of carrying and maintaining fifty million people, and the actual population for some time has been almost stationary at about six million. As things are in the world to-day, is this playing the game? "The earth is the Lord's," and not far from Australia is another part of God's family, a nation capable, ambitious, enterprising, whose great problem is elbow-room, with a teeming and rapidly increasing population, and only one sixth of its land is arable. One feels that in Divine justice some amicable arrangement ought to be made, for if it be unwise to have other than a *white* Australia, it is surely dangerous to have an unoccupied Australia.

A further problem is that of Leisure. In almost every country in the world the problem of production has been solved. In Australia, with its suicidal and war-breeding policy of high tariffs, export of manufactured goods is practically impossible; the home market can be supplied, with boots for example, by

the available workmen working less than half the year at present hours. With the increasing invention and use of labour-saving machinery it is not fantastic to talk of a four-hour working day in the near future. And that is not only not to be deplored but to be welcomed by those who look and strive for the Kingdom of God. Work is a divinely beneficent ordinance, but men and women are getting too much of monotonous, grinding, personality-crushing, adventure-killing labour. Every privilege has its risk and real progress is never advance into an easier kind of life. The *danger* of shorter working hours is the wilderness of moral flabbiness, tawdry amusement, and spiritual blindness, but the *opportunity* is that of a promised land, a land whose citizens shall be equal in length of real selfhood, breadth of brotherhood, and height of godliness. It is an opportunity for much-needed education in music and the arts, and for the all-round development of humanity with means to achieve it such as has never before presented itself. And the responsibility of the church as the channel of spiritual power which alone can supply the essential vision, steadiness and courage, is as great as her opportunity.

The last problem I will mention is that of the church itself. The reason why with all our elaborate machinery we are not producing more results and making a greater impact upon the world is that the fire at the centre burns but feebly. It has not always been violence from outside but rottenness within that has disrupted Empires. The thing to be feared among us is not so much the badness of the bad man, as the indifference of the good man. Our churches are largely composed of people who do not take Jesus seriously—people, often, who search the Scriptures for texts to back up this or that fad, but who will not come to Jesus that they may catch His spirit of love, sincerity, and sacrifice. Christianity is a "Way," an open road for activity and for pushing on to somewhere. We often hear the great word quoted from the New Testament about "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the Saints," and far too frequently it is made to sound as though the faith were something valuable but lifeless like a diamond, to be merely preserved in a formal creed or an ecclesiastical deposit vault. And Christian faith is not like a diamond; it is living like a tree, and the only way we ever can keep a living thing is to let it grow.

One of my friends at the recent Berlin Congress of the Baptist World Alliance, unacquainted with German lettering, read Oncken's classic phrase "Every Baptist a Missionary" in this way: "Every Baptist a Millionaire." There is infinite truth in his mistake. Let us put our wealth into circulation;

let every Baptist be a missionary, not only with his lips but with his life. Let us believe our beliefs, let us realise that Jesus is greater than any book that ever was written about Him, even though the book be the letters of Paul; and let us realise that the salvation of this needy, stricken world, and the hope for the Kingdom of God lie, not in the insistence upon denominational differences, some of which are now non-existent and others only of secondary importance, but that they lie in the faithful following of Jesus the Son of God, whose greatest words were: "Love God—Love one another."

W. E. HURST.

THE EARLIEST known publication in which full liberty of conscience is openly advocated, according to Professor Masson, is Leonard Busher's *Religions Peace*, which was reprinted in 1646 and again in 1846. But two years earlier, Thomas Helwys from Nottingham and Amsterdam had published "A short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity," whose title showed a study of the epistle to the Thessalonians, and adopted the interpretation of Henry Barrow that the Church of England, compound of Church and State, was that very mystery. Helwys, like Barrowe and Francis Bacon, was a gentleman, trained at Gray's Inn. In studying law he had special occasion to consider religious liberty, and this book displays his thought on it. His experience was many-sided. He was in London when parliament passed the first Conventicle Act, 1593; and was in the thick of that society which could eagerly discuss precedents and consequences. He was in Basford when the act was enforced against his wife, who was taken to York Castle. He was in Amsterdam where he found the State permitting the free exercise of religion to all Protestants, without enquiry or interference. He therefore wrote this book, handicapping it by a distracting and irritating title, came to London where his uncles were prominent in city and at court, and sent a copy of his book to the king.

Edward Harrison of Petty France.

EDWARD HARRISON sprang from a family which had interests in Sedbergh in 1561, though one member had then become a citizen and grocer in London. Fifty years later, his ancestors were near Ashford in Kent, at Smeeth and Nettlestead and Orleston. At this last parish, Lancelot Harrison, M.A., of Jesus College, Cambridge, became rector in 1626. He sent his son Edward to the same college in 1634, but Edward went next year to St. John's, where he took his B.A. in 1637-8; he then migrated to Hart's Hall in Oxford, and became M.A. in 1640. He was ordained, and as seems a family custom, went to live at Smeeth, with Sir Edward Scott of Scott's Hall. In 1641 his father died, leaving to Edward £35 and his Latin books and his desk; the widow Katharine took a house and lands for life, after which Edward inherited; children Lancelot, Priscilla, Hugh, John and Katharine were to take cash when they came of age and again when the widow died; Elizabeth having had her portion on marrying Henry Collet.

Edward became vicar of Kensworth, a hamlet close to Watling Street, in a northern promontory of Hertfordshire, two miles south of Dunstable in Bedfordshire, a mile east of Whipsnade. In the next three or four years, Baptist principles were canvassed on a new scale, and in February 1643/4 complaint was made to the House of Lords that George Kendall, whom they had appointed vicar of Hemel Hempstead, had allowed Robert Baldwin to preach against the baptism of infants. Dr. Burgess was sent from Watford to enquire, and reported "the people there much possessed with Anabaptism and Antinomianism." This was not checked by sending Kendall and Baldwin to Newgate prison, for next Edward Harrison adopted Baptist views. He therefore resigned the vicarage, as he expressly stated after the Restoration when twitted with inconsistency.

The dates of this period are not clear, before 1646. The vicar in 1643 was John Syddall, who was deprived after twenty-eight years, with the approval of the parishioners, who nevertheless agreed to provide for Mrs. Syddall and her children, and on August 2nd, 1645, were ordered by the Committee for Plundered Ministers to do so at once. Walker implies that Syddall was allowed to live in the vicarage for some while after

sequestration, but was driven out, and died within two months; apparently the parishioners thought that his death ended the agreement. Walker says that soon afterwards, the vicarage was supplied by one Stratford, a loyalist, then successively by a weaver and two ploughmen.[1]

It seems probable that Edward Harrison had resigned before September 2nd, 1645, for on that date he was at Newport Pagnell, acting as treasurer for the Eastern Association, that body of counties which maintained a fine army under the Earl of Manchester. This army in 1644 had marched north to besiege York, and had taken part in the victory of Marston Moor; it had a cavalry regiment under Fleetwood, whose major was Thomas Harrison from Newcastle-under-Lyme. Now each regiment had a chaplain; one had invited Baxter when he had fled to Coventry, but he declined, to his deep regret afterwards. The army was new-modelled, and Fairfax became Lord General; in June, 1645, he defeated the king at Naseby, and within a year the war was over. Parliament ordered the entrenchments at Newport Pagnell to be slighted, and the garrison paid off. It is noteworthy that in the county militia there, was a lad of eighteen or nineteen, John Bunyan.

Edward Harrison published a pamphlet, Pædobaptism Oppugned, about March 4th, 1645/46, which was answered in November by John Geree of St. Albans. He did not reply, apparently because he had left Hertfordshire, for Thomas Edwards, when he published the third part of his Gangræna in December, 1646, said he had gone from near St. Albans, and was at Petty France in London. And he was being caught up in another military movement. In 1647, Major Thomas Harrison was promoted to be colonel of horse, and Edward Harrison became preacher to it. There is no evidence, and no likelihood, that the two men were related. Edward would probably be in the thick of the meeting at Ware in November, 1647, then would go north to meet an invasion by the Scotch, passing Manchester, Appleby, Ripon and seeing the utter rout at Preston. It is a curious question whether his preaching had anything to do with the foundation of the church at Warrington and Hill Cliffe in Cheshire, which emerged soon afterwards, with military leaders, and which in later days was in touch with his London church.

By 1649 the second civil war was over, and Edward Harrison returned to civil life. He published a pamphlet in May, called

[1] A petition to the Lords on July 24th, 1646, by ministers in Hertfordshire was signed by John Wright, whom Urwick identifies as then at Kensworth; but he shows clearly that Wright had been at Letchworth since the sequestration of Yardley till September, 1646.

"Plain Dealing; or, the countryman's doleful complaint and faithful watchword to the statesmen of the times, whether in the parliament or army." Henceforth his concerns were with Baptists.

Tradition has attributed to him the "church at Kensworth," and this should be examined. The Commissioners of 1650 mentioned him as officiating at Kensworth, apparently using the parish church again: and there is no evidence of any new vicar till April 30th, 1657, when John Goodman was certified; then followed James Baileman, Isaac Bringhurst, and Bishop Lyster, within six years. It does seem as if he lived in the village, on land of his own which was bequeathed in a later will, not drawing tithes, but using the parish church for worship. At least it is perfectly clear when the earliest MS. minutes of the Baptist church at Kensworth are examined in 1675, that there had been a widespread movement. Members were then on a church roll over a stretch of country from Brickhill in Buckingham to Mimms and Ridge on the borders of Middlesex, twenty-eight miles along Watling Street, and from Welwyn across to Berkhampstead. As there were over 300 members, after twelve years of persecution, the work done in the quiet season 1650-1657 must have been fine.

But Edward Harrison came of a family with wide connections, and he was well educated, and had taken a share in national affairs. Towns such as Luton, Dunstable, St. Albans, could not absorb all his energies. When in 1651 the London churches issued a third edition of their Baptist Confession, he signed. He was in some way linked with a church known from 1642, with such members as Mark Lucar, Thomas Kilcop, Benjamin Cox, another clergyman, and Richard Graves.

The regiment to which he had been preacher went to Ireland, and there many men took their discharge and settled down, forming Baptist churches, to one of which, at Kilkenny, Benjamin Cox went. These Irish churches took a hint from their military organisation, and suggested that Baptist churches everywhere should group in Associations. The idea was welcomed in London, and on July 24th, 1653, a circular was sent throughout England, recommending the plan. It was signed by nine men, second of whom was Edward Harrison; another signatory was Robert Bowes.

The custom of Confirmation had been introduced into some Baptist churches by other ex-clergy, and was being justified from Hebrews vi. 2, as the Laying on of Hands. Harrison applied to it the touchstone of other scriptures, and declared it no gold, but a counterfeit. This led to a rejoinder in 1654 by John Griffith, of London and Amersham.

Early in 1657, a new Instrument of Government was being drafted, and many lawyers wished Cromwell to take the title of King. There were two obvious advantages; that then by a well-established law, his title as King *de facto* would protect all who obeyed; and that his powers, where not expressly defined, would be the old customary powers, instead of arbitrary. But there was much opposition from many quarters, especially military. On April 3rd an address was presented to him, begging him to decline the title, and dreading his " fearful apostacy." It was signed by nineteen Baptists, including clergy such as Henry Jessey, Hanserd Knollys and Edward Harrison, Baptist pastors who earned their living such as John Spilsbury, Samuel Tull, with John Clarke the doctor in Rhode Island, a very mixed body; while others equally prominent held their peace.

Harrison threw in his lot with London entirely after 1657, residing in his house on Petty France, a site now covered by Broad Street railway station; he retained a friendly interest in Kensworth, as will yet be seen. He was probably the publisher of a petition next year which had been intended for the parliament that the Protector dissolved in sadness at being unable to get on a constitutional and effective basis. Henceforth he took no further part in politics, that has been traced.

In 1658, Robert Bowes made his will, of which his wife and Samuel Tull were executors, bequeathing money in trust with Harrison, Tull, Spilsbury, Daniel King and Hanserd Knowles, for the church to which he belonged—apparently then meeting at Glaziers' Hall, and certainly the most important of all the Baptist churches.

With the Restoration, the future of Baptists became uncertain; the rising of the Fifth Monarchists in 1661 excited fears of many conventicles; and when the Cavalier Parliament started on a course of repressive legislation, a reign of terror set in. A pamphlet, " Behold a Cry," details many outrages. The meeting at Petty France was raided on June 15th, 1662, by soldiers who wounded a boy and put the preacher in Newgate. A fortnight later they broke down the gallery, made much spoil, and wounded more people.

Harrison was not daunted, and a note stuck into a Spy Book relating to some period between 1663 and 1665, shows that he and Tull and Cox were joining together. Harrison preached at his own house, and in Bunhill Fields, Cox in Thames Street above the bridge, Tull in Cheapside at the Seven Stars. With 1665, the old Conventicle Act of Elizabeth under which all legal proceedings had hitherto taken place, was practically superseded by a new one, to hold for three years. So little was Harrison afraid, that on June 28th, 1666, he took part in ordaining

Thomas Patient as co-pastor with Kiffin at Devonshire Square; and as Patient died in the plague, ordaining his successor Daniel Dyke on February 17th, 1668. He was named next year in a proclamation against conventicles, and was indicted at Hicks Hall for regularly conducting one near Bishopsgate Church—evidently in his own house.

With March 1671/2 the tide turned, and the king offered to consider applications for licences to preach in specified houses. This would leave the open-air work on Bunhill Fields still illegal; but Harrison obtained one for his own house. He seems, however, to have had a wide vision, planning on a national scale, and recognising the advantage of grouping not merely ministers and local congregations, but Associations throughout the kingdom. After January 1673/4, he largely retired from active pastoral work at Petty France, being found henceforth chiefly in wider fields.

The Declaration of Indulgence, under which the licences were issued, was cancelled in March 1672/3, but it made no immediate difference, and work was carried on at Petty France, as in many other places. Negotiations were opened with John Child of Bucks, but they came to nothing. Then Nehemiah Cox, son of Edward's old friend Benjamin, who had been called to the ministry at Bedford, was invited, and on September 21st, 1675, he and William Collins, a Westminster scholar, were ordained joint-elders at Petty France.

Now the opportunity came for re-organisation, and we seem to trace Harrison's guidance in the earliest documents at St. Albans and of Petty France. On July 9th, 1675, the names of all the members of the "Church of Kinsworth" were taken, and on March 22nd, 1675/6 were entered in a new book. They lived in thirty places, Kensworth itself housing only three members; thirteen at Leighton, thirty-three at Houghton, forty at Dunstable, thirty at Luton, forty-four near St. Albans, indicate the strong centres. On July 31st, 1676, a similar roll was prepared of the members at Petty France, and it shows five Harrisons.

The next step was to provide a rallying-point for many churches. The London Confession of 1644 was tacitly abandoned, and attention was given to the Westminster Confession of 1646. Its teaching on organisation had already been replaced among Congregationalists by a chapter drawn up in 1658; its teaching on baptism was now replaced by another chapter; and on August 26th, 1677, this revision was read by the Petty France church, and after consideration, was published. Next came Association revival. In 1678 we hear that a meeting was held on April 2nd at Hempstead; with another on

September 24th at Abingdon; in 1679, on April 20th, in London, October 6th at Hempstead again; in 1680 on February 29th, and on March 16th at St. Albans; in 1681 at Abingdon on April 3rd; in 1682 at Hempstead; in 1683 in London. These notices are all derived from the minutes of the Petty France church, and with the frequency of the Herts meetings they suggest that Edward Harrison was the moving spirit; though there is no sign that he ever used the title of Messenger or General Superintendent, such as was given at this time to Thomas Collier in the west. In the correspondence minuted, there are notes as to members received from Hemel Hempstead, St. Albans, Kensworth and Luton, from Warrington and from Abingdon.

It is surprising that a spy, reporting in 1676 to Danby about conventicles in London, Westminster, Southwark, had nothing to say about Petty France, though he heard of Kiffin at Devonshire House, with Thomas Hardcastle. In 1682 another spy was better informed, and said that Harrison, with five helpers, taught 600 people at three different places. These three may conceivably be the same as in 1663; though Tull of Cheapside had died in 1677, perhaps William Collins preached there, while Nehemiah Cox may have followed his father in Thames Street. John Gammon was another helper, till in 1684 he became pastor of a church in Boars Head Yard, off Petticoat Lane, where Bunyan preached his last sermon four years later.

The persecution that began in 1682 was very fierce. On May 27th, 1683, the church was excluded from Petty France. Association could meet no longer. The church book has only three entries in two years, and not till October, 1687, under a new Declaration of Indulgence by James, could the church resume work, and revise its roll. Edward Harrison lived to see liberty return, and to see a reprint of the 1677 Confession. In January, 1689, administration was taken out, as he died intestate, showing that he had lived lately in St. Martin's Fields, Westminster; his son Lancelot died a few months earlier, leaving legacies to Collins and Cox. His son Thomas was soon called to the ministry, and was needed, for Cox seems to have died, as a subscription was made on June 12th for his son.

A call was sent on July 28th, 1689, to all Calvinistic Baptist churches in England, improving the precedent of 1653. More than 100 churches answered; Petty France was represented by Wm. Collins, Thomas Harrison, and a relation John Collet; Hempstead sent its pastor Samuel Ewer; Kensworth sent two ministers, James Hardinge and Daniel Finch, and the Assembly met September 3rd-12th. It was decided to raise a Baptist Fund, and among the nine treasurers were three from Petty France, Robert Bristow, John Collet and Edward Harrison. This was

another son of the elder Edward, a goldsmith, living at the Hen and Chickens on Cheapside, and he was to receive all moneys. The minute of this appointment was signed by thirty-three men, including Collins and Finch. The Assembly approved the revised Confession, and sent it out with a commendation signed by Collins, Finch and Ewer, amongst others. Thus the work of Harrison was not only crowned with success, but it was handed on to a new generation in which two sons were taking leading parts.

A word or two as to his family may close this account. His wife Rebecca bore him two sons, Edward and Thomas. Of the younger enough has been said on pages 124-126, 134. The second Edward, goldsmith and treasurer, married Rebecca Lock, perhaps of a Baptist family known at Watford, and had three children. Joseph and Elizabeth (Jackson) died before him, and on his death in 1715, a third Edward inherited the family property at Kensworth.

W. T. WHITLEY.

HELWYS' "MYSTERY OF INIQUITY" survives in three copies, at Dublin, Oxford and London. The Bodleian copy has his autograph address to King James, with the bold claim that he had "no power over the immortall soules of his subjects, to make lawes & ordinances for them, and to set spiritual Lords over them." This was sent from Spitalfields, and within three or four years Helwys died in the prison of Newgate. Such a pioneer work deserved rescue from oblivion; and the Baptist Historical Society will publish a photographic reprint before Easter. Principal Robinson will prefix an introduction, dealing with the man and his theme. It will be illustrated with the autograph, with the family arms, and with pictures of the three homes of Helwys; his Hall, the Bake-house where he wrote, and Newgate.

Dr. Johannes Elias Feisser: Baptist Pioneer in Holland.

HOLLAND has plenty of imported articles, from coffee to Communism and Christian Science; but the Baptist movement is a plant of her own soil. It germinated under inhospitable circumstances in the east of Drente, her poorest and most barren province, and so sings the praise of the divine law that the loftiest influences for the benefit of mankind often originate in unthought-of places. The man of God whom history honours as the father of the denomination in Holland is Johannes Elias Feisser.

I. *How he came to Christ.*

He was born at Winsum on the 10th December, 1805, and two years later his parents moved to Veendam, where the father had accepted the post of collector of the Royal taxes. The Feissers belonged to the well-to-do middle classes. They enjoyed life without much restraint, and attended divine services regularly according to the social etiquette of those days. Their favourite desire was a military career for their eldest son, but through the influence of a pious grandmother it was decided to educate him for the ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church.[1]

From the preparatory school at Veendam, young Johannes Elias entered the University of Groningen at the age of seventeen, and studied literature and theology. Five years later he wrote his dissertation "*de vita Basilii Magni Caesareae in Cappadocia Episcopi,*" and received the degree of Doctor of Divinity. After marrying Geertruida Elisabeth Barbara Orck, Baroness of Heekeren, he settled as pastor in a village church. In 1833 he accepted the call to Franeker, the Frisian Athens of that time. Preaching was the joy of his heart, and his oratorical gifts drew large congregations; but the Christ he

[1] The Dutch Reformed Church is a product of the Reformation, being in fact the reformed continuation of the Roman Catholic Church. It resembles the Church of Scotland and the Swiss Reformed Church. It is constitutionally Presbyterian, and adheres to the Heidelberg Catechism, but admits all liberty of thought. Though not a State Church—Holland has not such a Church—it derives much support from the State, from 600 to 2,000 gulden or more per living. Besides the Dutch Reformed, the State subsidises the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, Mennonite and Remonstrant Churches.

commended was not the Saviour of the lost. He was the stainless example and the source of wisdom, in harmony with the prevailing theological notions. Feisser was a welcome guest in the homes of the learned and rich, and popular amongst the masses. In this seeming paradise he had to drink deep draughts of the cup of sorrow. The climate undermined his health; two of his children died; soon afterwards he had to lay the mortal remains of his beloved wife in the grave. And to all this was added an almost total blindness of his right eye.

Broken in body and spirit, he relinquished the shepherd's crook and sought comfort in his parents' home. Restored to health after half a year's rest, he preached his inaugural sermon in the church at the small town of Gasselter-Nyveen on Sunday morning, March 3rd, 1839. Though receiving much "praise of men"—for one reason because the pew-rents and the collections doubled!—he found himself very dissatisfied. His parishioners were good-natured people but spiritually dead. He could open his heart to nobody on spiritual themes. Thus it came about that in the autumn of 1841 Feisser, weary of his superficial popularity and probably under the influence of Newton's *Cardiphonia,* a book which met with a loving welcome in many circles, admitted the Saviour in all His glory.

II. *How he came to the New Testament conception of the Church.*

The worshippers soon discovered in his preaching that he was a changed man. He no longer leaned on himself and his own wisdom but on the grace of God alone. He saw a sharp dividing line between the elect to whom the grace of conversion is given, and the hardened of heart who are disobedient unto the truth. He proclaimed without fear the absolute sovereignty of God in the whole plan and work of salvation and the great difference between face-Christianity and faith-Christianity.

As long as Feisser confined his change of theology to the pulpit, people did not mind. They liked him much for his kindness, and not a bit less for the monetary prosperity of the church. But real conversion told. He set himself to the task of "reforming the Reformed Church,"[2] and began by

[2] As he states in his *Getrouw Verhaal* (Faithful Account) published in 1844 at Groningen. Feisser wrote several brochures, pamphlets and tracts, in which he revealed his soul at various stages of his life. In one of them he renounces what "he had written or spoken against the truth," praying God to put away the harm and to forgive him. A complete set of his publications is in the possession of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Kampen.

strongly advising the election of pious Christian men to the various offices, otherwise (he declared) he would not ordain those chosen. Next he wanted the presbytery to exclude certain members from the Lord's Table for serious lack of Christian understanding; among them was the headmaster of the elementary school. That noble body of overseers, however, sided with the worldlings. These and similar differences forced him to look into the nature of the Christian Church. We find him in those days lecturing to a meeting of ministerial colleagues on the subject: "What conception we ought to form of the Church of the Lord." When some time later a superior ecclesiastical authority (the consistory[3]) tried to settle the difficulties between pastor and people, Feisser made definite demands: (*a*) the removal of three elders from office; (*b*) their censure until God should change their hearts; (*c*) confirmation of the censure of those members whose names he had laid before the presbytery; (*d*) exemption from his duty to baptise and preside at the Lord's Table until a worthy presbytery should be entrusted with the care of the church. The deputation of the consistory informed him that it had no power in these matters, whereupon Feisser sent an address to the consistory requesting assent to his last request. In a covering memorandum he explained that it had become quite clear to him that the Church ought to be such a body as is described by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians xii. 12-30. The faithful in the Church must unite in order to cleanse the body of Christ from all worldly elements. As to his views of baptism, he expressed himself as follows: Paedobaptism crept into the Church long after the apostolic age, contrary to the mind and commandment of Christ. If it pleases God to raise up another Church—founded on the Lord Jesus and the apostles—the first stipulation will doubtless be that believers only may be baptised. The baptism of babies, who are destined to remain in their sins, is a crime against God, because the sign of covenant-grace is given to those with whom He has not entered into covenant, and the baptism of babies who shall be privileged to receive grace is a running ahead of the Lord, which does not become us who have no knowledge of the persons upon whom the Lord will be pleased to bestow His favours.

[3] The local Dutch Reformed Church is governed by:—

(*a*) The presbytery composed of the minister or ministers, elders and deacons;
(*b*) The consistory composed of five to seven ministers and two or three elders;
(*c*) The provincial church governing body composed of five to seven ministers and two or three elders;
(*d*) The synod composed of thirteen ministers and six elders.

The following incident sharpened the difficulties. A member wanted his baby to be baptised. Feisser enquired: "Can you accept the formula of baptism?" "No." "Do you think baptism is of some value to your child?" "No, but I want it to be baptised." The pastor refused, and the antagonism against him became intense. One October night the defenders of the babies' rights attacked the parsonage with bricks and smashed all the windows! The report of the minister who refused to baptise went through the whole of Holland and even far beyond. In vain the consistory and the provincial governing body tried to persuade Feisser to reconsider his attitude. He pointed out that it was a vital matter whether unconverted people had the right to the tokens of covenant grace. At last the Reformed Church did with its reformer what Rome had done with hers before. On the evening of December 19th, 1843, Feisser was dismissed as a minister on the ground that he refused to fulfil a part of his duty and caused disorder and scandal. He stood despised and homeless. His friends forsook him; his parents regarded him as a fool and fanatic, and closed the door against him. However, his wife, to whom he had been married three years, shared heroically all his burdens.

III. *How he came to be baptised.*

At that time the triumvirate Oncken, Köbner and Lehmann were evangelising in Germany with apostolic fire, in spite of the fierce hostility of the States and the bearers of their religion. For about six months Feisser had ministered to a few friendly people meeting in his humble home, when the news of his dismissal reached the Baptist Church at Hamburg, the mother Church of the Baptist movement in central Europe, at that time still only ten years old. The Church and its pastor, J. G. Oncken, decided to seek first-hand information, and accordingly separated Köbner and another to study the situation. Both brethren arrived at Gasselter-Nyveen on a November evening in 1844 and spent a night at the Feissers' home. Discussions on various topics widened Feisser's horizon. He had never before heard of Baptists, and he became convinced that the only right form of baptism was burial in water and that he himself had not been baptised. This visit of Köbner and his friends sowed seeds of destiny.

In the following spring Feisser made personal acquaintance with Oncken and the Church at Hamburg, and returned in company with Köbner to his native land in order there to take the decisive step. On Sunday evening, May 15th, 1845, a few brethren and sisters walked to a shed near a farmhouse and close to the canal. Seven of them had prepared themselves for

the simple ceremony. Feisser followed Köbner into the water, and after him five brethren and one sister. All were buried in baptism, and raised. After this solemn rite, the brethren went to the farmhouse for a few moments of fellowship with God and with one another. Köbner read Psalm xcii., the song of the Sabbath day, and broke the bread of life from verses 4 and 5: "For Thou, O Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work; I will triumph in the works of Thy hands. O Lord, how great are Thy works! and Thy thoughts are very deep."

After this meditation the brethren elected a deacon, and elected Feisser as pastor. Both were ordained by Köbner. Thus came into being the first Church of baptised believers in Holland. Feisser felt—to use his own words—"as if he had entered through the right gate and not as one who had climbed over the wall." In September of the same year, Feisser's faithful wife was baptised by Oncken during a visit to Gasselter-Nyveen.

IV. *How it went further with him.*

Scorn from a self-satisfied Church and from a materialistic community, and poverty, were Feisser's portion. But he bore the shame of the Cross in the spirit of one who had conquered the world. He wrote to a brother upon whom his wife had called a few days before, after a very difficult walk of two hours in old, torn boots and with swollen feet: "Oppressions for Christ's sake enable us to bear this also with patience, for if we had remained in the world we could easily afford a new pair of boots and the means to reach you in a more comfortable way. . . ."

He gathers his few remaining family treasures in order to make a little money of them. It is not hunger this time which lashes him. It is a brother, one of the six baptised, who cannot meet his financial obligations, that constrains his generous soul to sacrifice his treasured possessions. For with what shame would the merciless world cover the little company of believers if that one brother were found wanting! He was nevertheless enabled to keep his belongings, for another brother provided the money that was needed. To this noble forbearance and Christlike charity Feisser added an unquenchable hope. He hoped indeed against hope. He had hoped to reform the Reformed Church. Now he hoped to draw many believers together into a Scriptural Church. This hope saw its day, not near, but weakly glimmering on the distant horizon.

Until the end he remained a worker in hope, who refused to be shamed. Moving are the expressions of hope in all his letters. In 1849 he left Gasselter-Nyveen, where everybody

shunned him, for Nieuwe-Pekela, a town about eight miles further east, in the hope of finding there a more responsive people. Here also the soil proved very stubborn.

Already, soon after his censure by the Dutch Reformed Church, his health gave reason for anxiety as a result chiefly of the emotions in the stormy period. From a course of waters, of which Oncken and an unknown friend in Holland bore the expense, he derived much benefit but not complete restoration. Indeed, he never really recovered. Physical weakness often laid him aside for shorter or longer times and brought him eventually to the grave. On the 2nd June, 1865, when not sixty years old, Dr. Johannes Elias Feisser, once the honoured scholar and admired orator, yielded his spirit to God in hope, leaving nothing but the memory of a life full of devotion to his Master and to the truth, a handful of publications appreciated by but few, and a handful of members of two tiny churches to mourn his death.

In his lifetime he reaped very sparingly, yet he lived and laboured not in vain. To-day there are thirty-five flourishing Baptist churches in Holland breathing his spirit, fulfilling his hope, and perfecting his joy.

J. W. WEENINK.

AMSTERDAM has had at least four churches which worshipped in English. The earliest was of Londoners, who settled about 1596; their most famous ministers were Henry Ainsworth and John Canne; in 1701 they vacated their premises on the Bruinistengang, which may still be seen, and joined the next. From the days of Elizabeth, three regiments of Welsh, English, Scots, were in the service of the Dutch, disbanded only in 1796: their chaplain in 1606 was John Paget from Cheshire, and he was appointed by the Dutch Consistory minister of a new church, in full fellowship with and under the jurisdiction of the Dutch Reformed Synod, worshipping in English; it was granted a building in the Bagynhof, where was the hospital of the three regiments: this church still meets. A third church came from Gainsborough in 1608: it soon re-organized as Baptist, then divided: the larger portion, under John Smyth, remained in what is still known after them as English Alley, but later on adopted Dutch, and at length joined with the Mennonite church on the Singel: a portion under Thomas Helwys came to London in 1612, and existed here till 1898. A fourth church, on Episcopal lines, was founded in the days of William and Mary.

Church Covenants.

THE duties of a church member to-day are often left very vague, so that a boy who has committed himself to Christ in baptism, is not always informed of any special obligation to which he commits himself, when joining a company of Christ's followers.

When Free Churches were first formally gathered in England, there was much discussion as to what were the mutual relations of their members. The people round Gainsborough and Scrooby, from whom members went via Holland to New England and to London, "joyned them selves (by a covenant of the Lord) into a church estate, in the fellowship of the gospel, to walke in all his wayes, made known, or to be made known to them, according to their best endeavours, whatsoever it should cost them, the Lord assisting them." So did John Bradford phrase it, forty years later, in an atmosphere where the word Covenant had come to bear a technical meaning, of the conditions on which they associated. The great point is, that a covenant was not concerned with beliefs, but with conduct. And these people agreed to conduct themselves as they felt, from time to time, that Christ desired.

Many people cannot be content with one broad principle, but desire to expand it, and to enumerate some of the corollaries. The growth of the "Church Covenant Idea" in these circles was traced in 1904 by Champlin Burrage, who found that it was far more developed in America than in England, and among Congregationalists rather than among Baptists. He did not refer to one list of duties drawn up in 1656, and adopted by the Western Association: the "Confession of Somerset" was signed by representatives of sixteen churches, with their General Superintendent, Thomas Collier, and was published. This gave wide publicity to what an important Association considered to be "the duty of every man or woman":—Having repented and been baptized, and being thus planted in the visible church or body of Christ, to "walk together in communion, in all the commandments of Jesus." Experience had led them to mention "some of these commandments further"; and they enumerated twenty, gathered directly from the New Testament, but arranged in no intelligible order.

The idea of a Covenant took shape among the Congregationalists. In 1645 it was sharply opposed by Hanserd Knollys, who said that the London practice had been to admit on the condition of faith, repentance and baptism, and none other; without making any particular covenant with members upon admittance. And he challenged any one to show that a Covenant had any Scriptural basis. This made it by no means popular among Baptists. But when churches rejected baptism, they often did adopt a Covenant. Thus out of Holcroft's work there arose a Church at Hitchin, of the "saints-as-saints," or mixed-membership type, dear to Bunyan, who often preached to this Church. On 25th October, 1681, they renewed their covenant to the Lord and one to another, "to walke together as a Church of Jesus Christ in love to the Lord and one another, and indevor to yeld sinceare and harty obedienc to the laws, ordinances and appointments of our Lord and Law-Giver in his church."

Again, in Norfolk, where Congregational churches were addicted to Covenants, and to solemn renewals, a Baptist church, newly embodied at Great Ellingham, adopted one which was "assented, and consented to, and openly confessed, and professed by us, whose names are hereunto set, upon the 29th day of the ninth month, 1699," together with seventeen articles of faith. It was kept regularly in use till 1758, every member on admission being asked, "Are you willing to give up your self wholly to this Church, to walk with this Church in all the ordinances of Christ, so long as you can walk here to the glory of God and your own edification?" After that date, only thirteen names are entered at intervals till 1789; and the fifth pastor, who came next year, opened a new book, which ignores the old Covenant. There is no sign that at any time it was amended. It ran thus:—

> We, a little handfull of the meanest, both of the Children of men and of the Children of God, being called by the grace of God, out of the Iron Furnace of the Land of Egypt, judge it our Duty to enquire by what methods we may glorify our Redeemer, in the highest Form the saints are capable of attaining to in this Life. And after a diligent enquiry into the mind of God in this great Concern; we are Satisfy'd by Holy Writ, that a Church state, is next to a state of grace, and in order to a state of glory, the most conducive to the Saints' happiness here below. & forasmuch as the Lord hath shewed us the form of his house and the fashion thereof, we Judge it our privilege as well as our Duty, to be waiting at the place of Wisdom's Doors; for it is better to be Doorkeeper in the house of

the Lord, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness: besides we find the way which God chose to lead his people in, both in the Old Testament's days, and also in the primitive times of the Gosple: he had his Church, in the Wilderness then, and he hath his churches in the Wilderness now. And we Esteem it a more Honourable thing to Follow Christ in a more Solitary path, than to Enjoy the pleasures of Sin, which are but for a season. We likewise find in holy Writ, that an Explicit covenanting with, and giving up ourselves to the Lord, and one another, is the formal cause of a particular visible gosple Church. We likewise desiring to be Added to the Lord, Do make a Sure Covenant, according to the Example of the Church, in Nehemiah's time; who made a sure Covenant, and wrote it; and we do hereby Engage our Selves, (as the Lord shall Assist us) to walk with one another to the Glory of God, and the Edification of Each other in love, for the bearing of one anothers burdens, for the strengthening of one anothers faith, for the improving of each others gifts, and the watching over one anothers Souls: and we do hereby further engage ourselves as the Lord shall Assist us, to keep close to the Ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are delivered to us in the holy Gosple, without any mixture of human Inventions. We do likewise Covenant & agree together to separate ourselves wholly from the worship of the world, and the Religion of the Times we are fallen into, that we may (thro' the strength of Christ) keep our Garments unspotted from the world. And we likewise engage our Selves to walk circumspectly in Gods house, not forsaking the Assembling our Selves together, but to Worship God in Publick, and as oft as may be in private one with another. We also engage ourselves so far as we are, or shall be Able, to keep up the Ministry of the Word, and Ordinances of Christ, amongst our Selves; that our Souls may be Edify'd, and the Church multiplied, and encreased with the Encrease of God. And this Covenant engagement of ours, we [word forgotten at turn of page] through the strength of Christ to pursue, so long as we can walk together to the glory of God, and the comfort and Edification of our own Souls. and this, so far as we have learned from the Word, is that Covenant which the son of the Stranger, and the Eunuch, viz. the Gentiles are to take hold of, that they may have a Name and a place in Gods house, and within his Walls, even a better name than of Sons, and of Daughters; and this is imply'd in giving our Selves to

> the Lord, and therein to one another by the will of God, thereby to be visibly Added to the Lord, and one another. We therefore having covenanted with each other, to walk together in the Ordinances of Christ. Judge it meet to draw up the sum of our belief in matters relating to Divinity, for the Satisfaction & encouragement of Such, as may hereafter desire to Joyn with us, in Church fellowship, and in imitation of our dear Lord Jesus, who witnessed a good Confession before Pontius Pilate. the like is said of Timothy, who professed a good profession before many witnesses, and this no doubt was the form of Sound Words, which he had heard of Paul, and which he was Commanded by him to hold fast; Upon these grounds we have delivered the Sum of our belief in these Articles following.

The seventeen articles seem original; that on Reprobation is terribly explicit; there is one on the Covenant of Grace. All are fortified by proof texts.

Elias Keach had a short and very useful career in Pennsylvania, then returned to London, where in April, 1693, a new church was constituted, of which he was ordained pastor. Till his death eight years later he was in the front rank. In 1697 he published "The solemn covenant of the church at its constitution," as also the articles of its faith, and a display of its discipline. In the same year his father Benjamin published similar documents relating to his church in Horseley-down. The eminence of these two men, and the fact that their church covenants were available in print, caused these covenants to be copied or modified in many quarters. Thus at Pershore, whose links were with the Midland Association, Wrexham and Shrewsbury, Josiah Thompson, who was pastor 1726-1736, recorded a covenant, seven of whose eight articles are the same as Keach's. But the coda of Keach is numbered 8, his original being omitted: it had run, "We do promise according to our Ability (or as God shall bless us with the good things of this World) to Communicate to our Pastor or Minister, God having ordained that they that Preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. (And now can any thing lay a greater obligation upon the Conscience, than this Covenant, what then is the Sin of such who violate it?)" This refusal to recognize the duty of supporting a pastor was very general; the Pershore ministers and others near, at Alcester, Henley, Worcester, etc., supported themselves by keeping schools. Yet there was always the Keach document; and the Confession of Somerset, in a section distinct from the Covenant it contains, is clear that their brethren's "duty it is to provide a comfortable subsistence for them."

In 1793 the church at South Lane, Downton, Wilts, which had existed from 1735, was re-settling itself under John Bain; it discovered that a Covenant was "the usage of all organized Churches of the faith of Jesus Christ," and chose the same general model, of eight clauses. As always, the differences are more important than the mere adoption, since they show what independence of thought existed. Downton did not promise to pray for one another, but it did promise "with regard to the Minister which God shall give us and set over us from time to time, that we will to the utmost of our ability, make his life Comfortable both with spirituals and temporals, knowing it to be the will of the Lord that they who Labour in the vineyard should be partakers of the fruit thereof." And whereas Keach and Thompson led their churches to promise that church proceedings should be kept private, Bain led Downton to make a proviso, "except when any are excluded from the Communion for unworthy walking." There is, however, no new clause to indicate that the old Somerset Article XXXIV., "it is the duty of his church, in his authority to send forth such brethren as are fitly gifted and qualified through the Spirit of Christ, to preach the gospel to the world," had received new illustration by the founding of the B.M.S.; not yet had Joshua Marshman of Westbury Leigh volunteered; so Downton missed the opportunity of covenanting that every member should spread the gospel; it still spoke only of internal and mutual duties.

A covenant of another type is found in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the church at Barnoldswick has preserved a long and careful account how it renewed its covenant in 1744. It mentions how all records before 1711 had been cut out of the church book, how no member had ever signed the covenant of their Communion, and how the reforming synod of New England in 1679, which renewed church covenants, was well worthy of conscientious imitation, as related by Cotton Mather in his *History of New England* (1702). And thus for the second time, American practice influenced English; it may be an interesting study to note how the simple covenant of John Smyth at Gainsborough fared at New Plymouth, what changes took place at Salem in 1636, at Charlestown and Boston, at Windsor in 1647, at Cambridge in 1648. Barnoldswick, however, started with a preface whose opening words are the badge of this family; "We a small handful of the unworthy dust of Zion," and which goes on to renew the solemn covenant of communion with God and with one another, in articles to be subscribed with the hand of every member. They are seven in number, quite unrelated to those of Somerset or of London: two seem of special interest; family worship, and "as we have given

our children to the Lord by a solemn dedication," praying for their conversion and setting them a good example.

The covenant of the church at Hog Lane, Woolwich, drawn up in 1757, was printed in 1761, and is here reprinted. It is of interest in that the church was avowedly mixed-membership, like that at Greenwich. This proved no hindrance to its pastor being admitted to the Baptist Board in 1761; evidently the Londoners were more liberal than has sometimes been thought, or else they recognised the wisdom of suburban churches taking in all Christians. This covenant may be compared with that of Stony Stratford, in our volume III, page 41.

> We, who desire to walk in the Fear of the Lord, do through the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, profess our deep and serious Humiliation for all our Transgressions; and do also solemnly, and in the Presence of God, Angels, and each other, under a Sense of our own Unworthiness, give up ourselves to the Lord, in a Church State, according to the Institution of *Jesus Christ*, whom we profess is our High Priest; to justify, sanctify and save us, and also our Prophet to teach us; likewise our King and Law-giver, to whom as King of Saints, we openly profess Subjection, and desire to be conformed to all his holy Laws and Ordinances, for our Growth, Establishment and Consolation, that we may appear an holy Spouse unto him, and to serve him in our Generation according to the Will of God, and wait for his second Appearance, as our glorious Bridegroom, who has assured us, and whom we believe, will come the second Time without Sin unto Salvation, being fully satisfied in the Way of Church Communion, according to the Word, and Truth of Grace, in some measure upon one another's Spirits, we do solemnly give up ourselves to one another, and join ourselves together in an holy Union and Fellowship, promising humbly to submit to the Discipline of the Gospel, and all holy Duties required of a People in such a spiritual Relation, according to the Word of God; and also we agree, and promise, in the Fear of God, to observe the following Things, which we judge agreeable to the Mind of *Christ*, and necessary for our Peace and Comfort as a Church.
>
> *First*, That we will, as much as in us lieth, strive to walk in all Holiness, Godliness, Humility and Brotherly Love, that we may render our Communion pleasing to God, comfortable to ourselves, and lovely to the rest of God's People; and in order here-unto, we promise to watch over each other's Conversation for Good, and not suffer Sin upon one another, so far as God shall discover it to us, and to stir up one

another to Love, and to good Works, to warn, rebuke, and admonish one another with all Meekness and Long-suffering, according to the Rules left us by *Christ Jesus* in that behalf.

Secondly, That we will, in a special manner, make Conscience of praying for one another, and for the Glory and Increase of this Church, and for the Presence of God in it, and the pouring forth of his Spirit upon it, and his Protection of it to his own Glory; and that we will cleave to each, and bear one another's Burthens in all Conditions, both outward and inward, as God shall enable us; and that we will bear, and forbear, with one another's Weaknesses, Failings, and Infirmities, with much Pity, Tenderness and Compassion; and in all Respects, endeavour to behave towards each other according to the Rules of *Jesus Christ,* and the Order of the Gospel, recorded in the written Word.

Thirdly, That we will avoid all Causes and Causers of Divisions, and endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and that we will meet together on Lord's Days and other Times, as the Lord shall give us Opportunity, to serve and glorify God in the Way of his Worship, to edify one another, and to contrive, and seek the good, and real Advantage of this Church.

Fourthly, That all those that are, or shall be convinced in their Minds, of Believers Baptism by Immersion, shall submit there-unto; and those that are otherwise minded, either as to Subject or Mode, shall also Walk according to the Dictates of their own Consciences, and that we will give no Uneasiness or Trouble to each other, or the Church, about either the Subject or Mode of Baptism, but leave each other, and exhort each other to act herein, as they shall judge most agreeable to the Mind of *Christ,* believing, that as we have received *Christ Jesus* the Lord, so we ought also to Walk in him.

Fifthly, That we will abide by, and cleave to our Pastor, and not desert him, or his Ministrations, so long as he shall take the Gospel for his Guide and Rule, and publish the Doctrine of Free Grace, as the everlasting Love of God to his Elect; free Redemption by *Jesus Christ* alone, from Sin and Wrath, and final Perseverance of the Saints in Grace here, to Glory hereafter, and his Walk and Conversation be according to Godliness, but will, as God shall bless us with the good Things of this World, according to our Abilities, communicate thereof to him, believing, that God hath ordained, that they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel; those, and all other Duties, found in the

Word, we humbly submit unto, promising, and purposing to perform them, not in our own Strength, being conscious of our own Weakness, but in the Power and Strength of the Blessed God, whose we Trust we are, and whom we desire for ever to serve, in Witness whereof, we have not only solemnly lift up our Right Hands to God, but do also subscribe our Names, agreeable to the Word, which says, one shall say, I am the Lords, and another shall subscribe with his Hand unto God, and also, come let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant, never to be forgotten.

To-day, many churches place in the hands of their new members a small manual, which includes a statement of the basis of the church, both as to beliefs and as to aims. While the actual word, Covenant, may be not used, the duties of the member are still put before him. It is probably an advantage to have language that is not antique or Biblical, but the ordinary speech of the day. And as the relative importance of duties varies from age to age, from country to country, the advice given and the pledge taken may well be phrased afresh at suitable intervals. A possible covenant to-day might run :—

Recognizing that the Church was called into being by Jesus Christ to win men to His leadership and to train them in His ways, We agree that

Within this church to which we have united, we will by God's help maintain a brotherly spirit; will remember the spiritual need of the young and the weak, the material need of the poor and the sick; will attend public worship, and contribute regularly towards the expenses of the church; will plan for and support such forms of activity in Christ's cause, both locally, in concert with other churches, and overseas, as seem to suit the varying conditions :

In all our relations the same spirit is to be shown; thus within the family we will maintain devotion, and will so live and speak that our conduct may lead to Christ those who see us most intimately; in commerce and in public life we will be trustworthy, doing what is honest in all things, behaving to others as we wish them to behave to us; as God may open the way, we will try directly to enlist others into Christ's church :

And as it is only by God's guidance and help that we may learn and do His will, we will maintain our private fellowship with Him in prayer, expecting thus to gain ever a clearer view of His hopes for each of us and for this His church.

Calendar of Letters, 1742-1831.

(*Concluded from page* 185.)

190. [1807 May? See Periodical Accounts III. 350.]

From SABAT to "The Man of God, the Revd. CAREE, WORD or MARSHMAN, or any other one of the ministers of the gospel at Serampur."

Refers to a "young man, Mahomed Saud of Besra" who "seems to be a true converted man," but he is sending him to Serampur for a few days, that "when thou wist he is worethy to be baptised thou mayest baptize him." There are others to follow. A collector's SIDE NOTE says; Sabat, a converted Arabian of distinction. See "The Star in the East," by Rev. Claudius Buchanan, D.D., and also the 24th Report of the L.M.S. and Appendix No. 3.

[Sabat was an Arab Christian, educated at Bagdad. He worked with Henry Martyn, who wrote of him, "He looks on the missionaries at Serampore as so many degrees below him in intellect that he says he could write so deeply on a text that not one of them would be able to follow him." Sabat's own Arabic and Persian versions were so deep that Arabs and Persians could not follow them.]

191.

From JOHN LAWSON (India) to SAM LAWSON.

Sending some shells from Amboyna for "Maria" by a returning soldier.

192. [1819.] Dec. 18.

From SAMUEL GREEN (Bluntisham) to Rev. JOSEPH BELCHER (Somersham).

Owing to engagements at Hurst and Colne, G. cannot yet come to Somersham. "Should it be the will of Providence that I should come to reside at Bluntisham, it will, I assure you, be a happiness to me to live in terms of social fellowship with you." Remembrance to Mr. Ibbott, and Mr. and Mrs. Leach.

[Samuel Green, the father, moved from Dereham to Bluntisham in 1819; and in that same year Joseph Belcher settled at Somersham. Samuel Green the son, whose letter

follows, published from Thrapston two pamphlets in 1831, the year when Mann died.]

193. [1831.]

From SAMUEL GREEN to I. MANN.

Sends copy of his Essays for review. Mentions Mr. Haddon as, with him, being equally obliged for such a criticism. (NOTE: By the handwriting, this is NOT the Green of the previous letter (192). Moreover, the spelling is bad, whereas G. of Bluntisham writes correctly.)

194. 182-.

From W. W. SIMPSON to —— (not stated).

Supporting "bro. Carleton's" application to the Fund. Though not ordained "he preached regularly to a people at Burston for many years . . . and has supplied for me at Eye."

[Simpson was ordained at Eye in 1810. Carleton and Burston were too obscure for this application to succeed.]

195. [1821.] "Mar. 29."

From J. FOSTER (Downend, Bristol) to J. SHEPPARD (Frome).

Arranging for a visit to Frome. F. states that he must soon return "to the task which I have been so long a slave." The book he is writing is now under close "revisal" and will be nearly 300 pages. Hopes Sheppard's "sermon is by this time printed."

[John Foster had published his Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance in 1820, and on March 15, 1821, he gave a long account of how busy he had been revising it. Sheppard in 1820 preached a funeral sermon for Mrs. Bunn, which was subsequently printed.]

196. "Apr. 17."

From J. FOSTER (Stapleton, Bristol) to I. MANN (Bermondsey).

The letter refers to some publications which M. has enquired about and it seems would wish to revise and re-print. The articles referred to are "Paul's Address to Agrippa"; an article in the *Eclectic Review* on the death of Hume, saying his phil. is now obsolete; "Address on behalf of the Bristol Education Socy."; the "Preface to Doddridge" (published 1825).

197.

From M. N. WHISH (Minister, St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol) to ——.

Enclosing £2 "which I should have put in the plate yesterday," and further regretting that he was unable to call on Mr. Hall, and requesting the addressee and Mr. Hall to visit him on Tuesday. (Note: this letter is a palimpsest—written over some faint, religious notes of Mr. Hall—unsigned but his writing.)

198.

JOHN RYLAND.

Some Notes: "On the Necessity of Atonement."

199. [1816?]

From TIMOTHY THOMAS (Bishopsgate St.) to B. LEPARD Devonshire Square).—"For January meeting."

T. is unable to be present, but encloses a number of letters, among which, he says, are—a large number from the Welsh Churches; one from Steadman on the Shipley case; "Mr. Wigley to Mr. Ashlin," and on the back, "my letter to Sarjant": and a letter from Mr. Rowe about "the state of interest there," and asking suppression of unfounded and unfavourable reports.

[Mann went to Shipley, 1816, W. H. Rowe died 1817; compare letter 119 for their friendship. This letter appears to be concerned with applications to the Particular Baptist Fund.]

200.

From JAMES UPTON (address not given—but accompanying photograph says "Church St., Blackfriars Rd.) to I. MANN.

Enclosing a proof received from Mr. Barfield, and Mr. Paine's letter" asking for an unbiased opinion.

201. [1772?]

PRINTED letter headed "Reverend Sir" and signed (in handwriting) by BENJAMIN WALLIN and SAMUEL STENNETT. This copy was sent to REV. THOMAS (Heptonstall).

In view of the inclination of the Govt. during the present Session to give further relief to Protestant Dissenting Ministers (which the Toleration Act affords), this letter conveys the resolution of a "General Metting of the Body of Dissenting Ministers in and about London," viz.:

"That the taking off the Subscription required of Protestant Dissenting Ministers to the Doctrinal Articles of the Church of England, and the obtaining relief for Schoolmasters and Tutors among the Dissenters, were very desirable and important objects." It asks for "a list of names of all ministers in your county or neighbourhood, who agree with the Resolution of the General Body as expressed above." Closes with a long quotation from the Ven. Dr. Owen's "Discourse on Toleration, and the Duty of the Magistrate about Religion."

[Richard Thomas was minister at Rodhill End and Slack from 1747 till his death in 1772. This circular was sent out at the instigation of Josiah Thompson. It must have reached Heptonstall just too late for Thomas to sign, but Fawcett of Wainsgate, who took charge after his death, did sign in 1773. The results were tabulated by Thompson in a book of great value, which has been printed in the Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society for 1912. The attempt failed.]

THESE 201 LETTERS have now been copied in full by Mr. Hastings. It is not often that such a varied and valuable correspondence has been allowed to drop out of sight. One owner was interested only in the signatures. To Mr. Hastings we owe the chronological arrangement, which illustrates many details of our story over ninety years. The breadth of the interests of Isaac Mann is interesting. The men who admitted him as the first student of the Northern Baptist Education Society in April 1805, must have watched his progress with thankfulness, and William Steadman may well have felt that his care was rewarded when Brown University under the guidance of Asa Messer in 1825, see letter 154, sent a diploma of A.M.; and when Mann fulfilled his course six years later.

Review.

Christian Theology: The Doctrine of God, by A. C. Headlam; Oxford, 1934. 12s. 6d.

THE Bishop of Gloucester has certainly fulfilled his hope of writing "with lucidity and accuracy" on the subject of this volume. It shows the comprehensive competence and the reasoned judgment which we have learnt to expect in his work. Its substance consists of lectures delivered to theological students in London and Oxford, and it is now published "as a manual of theology for those who desire to enter the Christian ministry in the Church of England." This does not mean that the book will not be found useful by students of theology in other Churches, but it does explain the line of approach and the method of treatment. A second volume is purposed, which will deal with "the subsidiary subjects of Creation, Redemption, Grace and the Doctrine of the Christian Church and Sacraments."

The present volume consists of two parts, the first of which discusses the sources of our knowledge of God, with special reference to the Scriptures and the Church. Here, as throughout the book, emphasis is laid on the Creeds and the Thirty-Nine Articles, as was to be expected. Dr. Headlam holds that the basis of a really Catholic Christianity must be found in agreement on four points—the Canon of Scripture, the Chalcedonion Christology and the resultant Doctrine of the Trinity, the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the three orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons (though he disclaims Apostolic Succession in the Tractarian sense). In this connection he regards the "Nicene Creed" (the Creed of Chalcedon) as the supreme theological document of the Church. At the same time, he does not take a narrow view of its authority: "I do not think that the acceptance of the traditional phraseology compels us to accept the philosophy which may have created it. It should not be looked upon as language which attempts to explain what is to the human intellect inexplicable, but as designed to guard all sides of the Christian truth" (p. 388). This statement naturally bears on the ethics of subscription to the Articles. The subscriber accepts not the creeds but the faith presented in them—a distinction which the lawyer might find it hard to accept, but one which has religious justification.

The second and larger part of the book deals at considerable

length with the doctrine of God and its alternatives, on the general lines of philosophical theism. The method here rather "dates" the lectures, and unduly holds up the exposition of the specifically Christian doctrine. This is not begun until the ninth chapter, with its approach to Christology. The Old Testament preparation is too narrowly confined to the "Messianic" hope, whereas the larger continuity should have been brought out. Four chapters are given to the Jesus of the Gospels, the miraculous elements in His life, the development of doctrine concerning Him in the New Testament and in the Patristic Church. It is a little strange to be brought up sharply at John of Damascus, and to be told that "nothing has been added since that time to the authoritative teaching of the Church" (p. 386). There is a formal sense, of course, in which this is true, but it hardly does justice even to the author's handling of doctrine. His avowed acceptance of "the higher anthropomorphism," the reality of kinship between God and man as expounded by the present Dean of St. Paul's, implies the acceptance of a principle to which the Chalcedonian doctrine of the two natures affords no justification, though we heartily agree with that principle.

The chapters on the Holy Spirit and the Trinity follow conventional lines, and are rather slight in constructive effort. It is not true to say that the Spirit meant originally the breath of man; that is a meaning which is developed later in the Old Testament, from the original meaning of "wind," and of a divine wind-like energy. (Incidentally, this correction strengthens such arguments as are here offered.) We regret to see that the author, like so many others, endorses the popular argument as to the "social" view of the Trinity, which sacrifices the real unity of the Godhead, if it is taken ontologically; if not, where lies its value? But these criticisms must not be taken to mean any blindness to the high qualities of both scholarship and expression which mark this book. If it does not mark any step forward in theological construction, it gathers up most competently what might be regarded as the middle way of Anglican theology, with its rational and cautious avoidance of the Scylla of Tractarianism and the Charybdis of Modernism.

H. WHEELER ROBINSON.