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Editorial Notes.

The University Presses of Oxford and Cambridge have agreed to bear all the expenses of preparing and publishing a new translation of the Bible and this has now been undertaken by a Joint Committee of the Churches. What is in view is not a revision of the Authorised Version or the Revised Version, but a completely new translation from the original languages; and not the translation of one man, such as that prepared some years ago by the late Dr. James Moffatt, but a version representing an authoritative consensus of opinion, submitted not only to groups of scholars but also to a panel of literary men.

This is a substantial and notable enterprise, which will be followed with sympathetic interest by all who hear of it. The English Bible has been a decisive influence on our English heritage by reason of its language as well as its content, but neither of the standard versions is adequate to modern needs. Whether scholarship is sufficiently of one mind at the present time to be able to produce agreement on the most difficult texts and passages, and whether our language is just now a sufficiently living and creative medium remain to be seen. The example of the Revised Version is a warning against undue optimism.

We are glad, however, to see that Baptists are playing no small part in the preparation of the new version. Dr. Joseph Angus and Dr. Benjamin Davies were among the Revisers of seventy years ago, and both acquitted themselves with distinction. This time the Baptist Union is officially represented on the Joint Committee by Dr. P. W. Evans and Dr. Theodore Robinson, with Dr. M. E. Aubrey as an alternate. The Committee is working through three panels, one of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, one for the New Testament and one of men of letters. Of the first of these Dr. Theodore Robinson is the convener. We are not surprised to learn that at his invitation a number of our younger Baptist Old Testament scholars are likely to have a share in the work.

The Joint Committee issues a warning that its task will take many years and that no public developments can be expected for a considerable time. It is not proposed to publish anything until the whole Bible, or at least the New Testament, is complete.

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In the *Christian World* of March 10th, 1949, Dr. Albert Peel refers to a recent editorial note in these pages on the

statement on Congregationalism issued by the International Congregational Council (see *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. XII, pp. 353-5). The main point at issue is whether it is satisfactory to say that "the instrument whereby Christ rules in the local Church is the Church Meeting." Dr. Peel admits that in many modern Baptist and Congregational Churches it is an instrument all too little used. He still, however, desires to describe it as *the* instrument of Christ's rule in the *local* Church. The admission Dr. Peel has to make is so serious a one, and the limitations that have had to be placed on the doctrine and practice of complete "independency"—through fuller appreciation of truths and responsibilities clearly witnessed to in other ecclesiastical traditions, which have inadequately stressed individual responsibility—make us feel that it would be better to say "*an* instrument by which the local Church seeks to discover the mind of Christ and to be obedient thereto is the Church Meeting." The dilemma is this: are we to say that Christ does not rule in the local fellowships of other Christian bodies, or are we to deny them the title of churches?

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In November, 1945, the Archbishop of Canterbury invited a group of Anglicans of the "Catholic" school of thought to examine the causes of the deadlock which occurs in discussions between Catholics and Protestants and to consider whether any synthesis between Catholicism and Protestantism is possible. Their report appeared two years later under the title *Catholicity: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West* (Dacre Press, 2s. 6d.). Among the signatories were Dom Gregory Dix, Father Hebert, Father Leslie Thornton, the Warden of Keble College and Mr. T. S. Eliot. The report has, therefore, naturally and rightly attracted considerable attention. It exercised a considerable influence on discussions at Amsterdam on the nature of the Church. Its setting forth of the reason for and nature of the tensions in Christendom has not gone unchallenged, however. In the pages of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* (Vol. II. No. 1, March, 1949), Dr. Torrance has submitted the report to searching scrutiny, concentrating particularly on what is said about an alleged primitive "wholeness" of tradition—an idea expounded elsewhere by Dom Gregory Dix and underlying a number of the contributions to *The Apostolic Ministry*. In the pages of *Theology* (Vol. LII, No. 345, March, 1949) Bishop Aulén of Strangnäs, Sweden, asserts vigorously that he does not recognise Lutheranism in the account of it given by the authors of the report. We understand that further contributions to this most important theological discussion may shortly be expected, one

from a group of Free Churchmen of whom Dr. Newton Flew has been convener, and one from a group of evangelical Anglicans. Frank, scholarly and constructive theological argument of this kind is warmly to be welcomed and will in the long run advance the cause of Christian understanding better than any compromising schemes and formulae.

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A few years ago a Roman Catholic, Father Maximin Piette, Professor of History at Brussels, produced a most stimulating book entitled, *John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism.* The veteran Methodist historian, Dr. Workman, gave it high praise when it appeared in an English translation in 1938. Recently a Swedish scholar, Dr. Harald Lindström has published in English *Wesley and Sanctification* (Stockholm, 1946) the most comprehensive and systematic study of Wesley's theology that has yet appeared. In these pages attention has already been called to the important book on William Carey by Dr. Oussoren, of the Dutch Reformed Church. There has now appeared a study of Bunyan by a French scholar, Henri A. Talon. All these books are welcome evidence of the increasing attention which is being given to the English Free Church tradition by continental scholars of other communions. They should be a challenge to the younger generation of Free Church scholars in this country.

KIERKEGAARD FELLOWSHIP.

The privately-endowed David F. Swenson-Kierkegaard Memorial Fund is making available for 1949-50 and every year thereafter a fellowship of at least $500 to be used for the study of Soren A. Kierkegaard, 1813-1855. Persons of any creed, nationality or colour are eligible. Each recipient is free to choose his own place of study. In view of the character of the subject matter, a religious interest and a reading knowledge of Danish are required. Information or application forms may be obtained from the Secretary of the Swenson-Kierkegaard Memorial Committee, Dr. Paul L. Holmer, Department of Philosophy, 300 Folwell Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14, Minn., U.S.A.

The Free Churches Today.

"SINCE the great Liberal landslide in 1906, one of the greatest changes in the English religious and social landscape has been the decline of Nonconformity." Such is the striking judgment of Professor D. W. Brogan, expressed in his book *The English People*. Many remember the great Liberal victory of 1906 and the Government which came into power as a result. In the Cabinet were men like Asquith, Simon, Runciman, Lloyd George and Hewart—all of them directly or indirectly connected with the Free Churches; while in the House of Commons there were no less than 157 members who were in active membership with some Free Church. That victory probably represented the high water mark of the political influence of British Nonconformity. The Nonconformist Conscience was then a power in the land with which the politicians had seriously to reckon.

In those days the Free Churches possessed a galaxy of great preachers whose names were household words. Their regular Sunday congregations formed the largest section of the worshipping community of this country. Their Sunday Schools were crowded with children and, more significant still, with young men and women. Nonconformity was undoubtedly the strongest religious force in the country at that time.

Today, the Free Churches are but a shadow of their former selves. Their congregations are sadly diminished. Their Sunday Schools also have shrunk alarmingly, particularly at the senior end. Only about nine per cent of the Armed Forces of the Crown are now registered as Nonconformists. No longer, therefore, do politicians feel that they need attach very much importance to Free Church resolutions. Of course, the Free Churches are not alone in experiencing a serious diminution in numbers and influence. The Church of England has also suffered severely during these last fifty years; while, contrary to popular opinion, even Roman Catholic authorities in England are concerned about their lessened hold on their people. Nevertheless, the Free Churches have suffered more heavily than either the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church. What are the reasons for this exceptional decline on the part of the Free Churches?

There are several minor reasons—political and social. The sinking of the Liberal party into comparative political impotence is one, for at the beginning of this century most Free Churchmen were Liberals. The growing gulf between the Free Churches and

the working-classes is another. This, in particular, is a tragedy for the Free Churches. They have so largely lost hold of the working-classes at the very time when these are coming into power and when the influence of the middle-classes is waning. The workers, who owe so much to the Free Churches historically, no longer, unfortunately, look to them for the fulfilment of their social aspirations. It is a tragedy also for the Labour Party itself, which is being progressively cut off from those sources which in its early days provided most of its finest inspirations and greatest leaders. If this continues, nothing will save Labour from the grip of materialism.

There is, however, a much deeper, and indeed a fundamental reason for the unique decline of Nonconformity within the last half-century. It is spiritual. The great Evangelical Revival, which began in the eighteenth century under the Wesleys and Whitfield, seems to have spent itself by the end of the nineteenth century. Ever since the beginning of the twentieth century, a spiritual decline has set in with ever increasing severity, which in time has affected the whole world and caused materialism of various kinds—practical, scientific, dialectic—to flourish. This spiritual decline has affected the Free Churches more than others because there is an intimate connection between the Free Churches and revival.

The Free Churches came into being at successive stages in our history and in different forms, through re-discoveries of vital elements of New Testament Christianity. Now, New Testament Christianity is essentially revival Christianity. The New Testament, apart from the Gospels, is the record of the faith, experience and practice of Christians in the full tide of that spiritual revival which began on the Day of Pentecost. *The Acts of the Apostles* and the Epistles have all the characteristics of revival Christianity—the vivid realization by ordinary believers of an inward and personal relationship with God, giving them intense joy, deep peace, and great power. Now the Free Churches, in their early days were marked by this same vivid experience of an intimate personal relationship with God, enjoyed by so many of their ordinary members. Their distinctive witness and practice were derived from it. Naturally, therefore, churches which came into being as a result of great movements of revival are most likely to be the first to suffer when the tides of spiritual life begin to ebb rapidly. The other sections of the Christian Church, which have laid stress on the institutional and corporate rather than on the inward and personal elements in religion, have been less susceptible to the influence of either spiritual revival or spiritual declension.

We can see how this works out in practice. Consider the

question of worship, for example. Historically, the Free Churches have stood for simplicity of worship. This is revealed in the usual plainness of their buildings and their worship. In his essay on Milton, Lord Macaulay wrote concerning the Puritans: "They reject in contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substitute for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil they aspire to gaze full on His intolerable brightness and to commune with Him face to face." We may think this a little harsh and even unjust to those who indulge in ceremonious worship and find it most helpful. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly true that our Free Church forefathers, in their best days, experienced such a vivid sense of the presence of God when they met for worship, and enjoyed so intimate and immediate a fellowship with Him, that they were not conscious of the need of sensual aids to worship and were indifferent to the plainness of their places of worship. Their plain sanctuaries did indeed become to them the house of God and the very gate into heaven. They beheld the *shekina* glory. Now, however, the tides of revival have ebbed from our sanctuaries. The consciousness of the Divine Presence is not so intense as once it was. The sense of the Divine Glory has faded. Therefore, our people are complaining more and more about the inadequacy and poverty of our public worship and of the bareness and even ugliness of some of our sancturies. There is an unceasing call for external aids to worship and for liturgical enrichments. Anglican worship does not suffer to the same extent in these days of spiritual decline, especially where the church is ancient. Here the worshipper may be impressed by the architecture, the historic associations, the sense of the centuries, the long tradition of worship, the beauty of the interior, the incomparable liturgy, the charm of the music, etc. Even if there is no particular spiritual power in the service, there is not under such conditions, the same sense of bleakness and barrenness. There is at least a strong appeal to the aesthetic and devotional nature of man, and to certain special interests in addition.

These days of spiritual declension have had another peculiarly adverse effect upon the Free Churches. The distinctive witness of the Free Churches may be conveniently summarized as a witness to "the priesthood of all believers." We have no monopoly of this witness, it is true, but we have given it a much fuller expression in teaching and practice than it has received elsewhere. "The priesthood of all believers" stresses the spiritual privileges which according to the New Testament are conferred on every believer. These privileges are related to the one supreme privilege—the right through Christ to enter the Holy of Holies

and to have direct access to God Himself. From this all the other features of our distinctive witness spring, as, for example, the right of the believer to his own private judgment in things spiritual, and to share in the spiritual and temporal functioning of the church (according to his gifts). But where this vital personal relationship with God is lacking, as it so often is in these days of spiritual declension, the distinctive witness of the Free Churches can have no real meaning or significance. What, for example, does the right of the direct access of the soul to God—surely the most wonderful and thrilling and ennobling privilege ever conferred upon man—mean to those who are strangers to inward communion with God? What does the consequent right of private judgement mean to those who, having no personal knowledge of the things of God, have therefore not qualified for the exercise of this privilege?

The same applies to elements of our Free Church witness, which peculiarly characterise particular Free Church denominations. To those who have never exercised personal "saving" faith in Christ, the witness to Believers' Baptism can mean very little. To those who are not consciously "born again", the principle of "the Gathered Church" may seem an impertinence. Those who have never known "the witness of the Spirit" may well regard the doctrine of "Assurance" as a form of spiritual pride. Anybody who has tried to explain to people who have no living personal experience of God the significance of these vital elements of Free Church witness will appreciate how extremely difficult it is to do so effectually. There are many things you have to experience to know or even to understand. It is not surprising, therefore, that a great number of our own Free Church people, who have grown up during these last thirty or forty years of declension, have no real appreciation of the glory and significance of our distinctive witness or therefore of the justification of our continued separate existence. Some of these are now in positions of leadership and responsibility in the Free Churches. This in turn has led to a loss of confidence on the part of the Free Churches in their own distinctive mission to the world—a loss of confidence which does not seem to affect the other great branches of the Christian Church. Thus there has been a growing tendency in the Free Churches of late years to lay more stress on the visible Church and the ministry, on creeds, sacraments, liturgies, authority—on things, that is, which are external and corporate, rather than on things which are inward and personal and historically more characteristic of Catholicism (using the term broadly) than of Evangelicalism. This lack of confidence can only lead to further serious weakening of our position as Free Churches.

But enough of diagnosis. It is more important to attempt to indicate what are the remedies for the unsatisfactory condition in which the Free Churches as a whole find themselves. The Free Churches, which have so much in common should certainly come closer together in these days for fellowship, co-operation and consultation. There are those who urge the Free Churches to unite and form one Free Church of England. There is much to be said for this, but there are many difficulties. Indeed, the path to organic union is always difficult. The negotiations between the Congregational Union and the Presbyterian Church of England are the latest illustration of that fact. Actually, if only the Free Church leaders could see it, the Free Church Federal Council rightly, fully and enthusiastically implemented, provides here and now the means of achieving a real measure of organic union, common witness, full co-operation and fruitful fellowship. A whole-hearted turning to this organisation on the part of the Free Churches would work wonders. Thus coming together, the Free Churches should give serious attention to their distinctive testimony to see whether it is indeed a vital part of the teaching and practice of the New Testament, whether it has been rendered superfluous or irrelevant by the march of time or by changes in the other great Christian Communions. Within the limits allowed, it is impossible to deal with both these issues. We shall therefore assume that our witness is a vital part of New Testament teaching and practice and concentrate on the question as to whether it is really very relevant to the modern situation.

The great issue in the world of politics at present, overshadowing everything else, is the kind of democracy that is to prevail—free spiritual democracy such as we have known in this country and in America, or totalitarian democracy which denies individual freedom and rests upon a materialistic basis. Now it is no accident that the latter type of democracy first took root in Russia, where the prevalent form of Christianity (the Orthodox) was authoritarian and sacerdotal, and that free democracy has flourished in countries like Great Britain and America which have been saturated for centuries with the distinctive Free Church witness in doctrine and practice. We in England are apt to make the serious mistake of thinking that all countries should be able to adopt and run successfully free democratic institutions. We all too easily forget that a successful free democracy is a great achievement indeed, and makes tremendous demands upon the people who compose it. For this achievement a long and special preparation is needed. The people must have acquired a certain stability of character, a love of freedom, a sense of fair play, a capacity for responsibility, a political sagacity, a willingness to abide by majority decisions.

Some at least must have had experience elsewhere of the working of democratic institutions. The Free Churches have given, and are giving, thousands of people in this country and America precisely this long and special preparation, to a degree which is still without parallel. There is an intimate connection between free democracy and the Free Churches. Indeed, free democracy has been described as "the priesthood of all believers applied to politics." No other section of the Christian Church has given, or is giving, such full expression in practice as well as preaching to this great emancipating doctrine. In the Free Churches, laymen are given adequate scope for self-expression and development. They share in all the spiritual functions of the church and take their part in the government of the Church at all levels. They therefore receive a training which develops their spiritual gifts and enhances their personality—a training which accustoms them to the exercise of the privileges and responsibilities of democratic institutions, and which in fact, gives them an all-round and most effective preparation for citizenship and leadership in free democracies. The Right Honourable Jack Lawson, M.P., describes a visit to a little chapel in a Durham colliery village in the following terms:

> "Sunday evening in mid-September. A sky of blue and gold. Small gardens in full flower, rich coloured and fragrant. People coming along the streets of the colliery village to the Chapel at the end. As we enter the organ rolls low. The organist is a workman. There is . . . . a miner. He has three tall sons, members of the Chapel, two are local preachers. The choirmaster is a local preacher, an unemployed miner. The steward is a preacher. Without stopping, I count eight young men, members with us, who are preachers. One of them was conducting service tonight. There is . . . forthright, likes to speak his mind; and carefully reads the lesson from his Bible. Men who do the necessary humble things of life, with their wives and daughters. These men are loyal to their Union; advanced in politics; proud of their own and their homes. Resting there, reflecting, mind quieted to meditation, prayer. The salt of the earth."

There is no parallel to this outside the Free Churches. It is not therefore spiritual arrogance or mere denominational pride to claim that the thousands of such "little Bethels," which stud our countryside, have made and are making, a unique and priceless contribution to the leavening, training and preparation of our people for the responsibilities and privileges of free democracy, and to say that, if the witness of the Free Churches in teaching and practice is seriously impaired, or ceases to be given, it is

doubtful whether free democracies can long continue to function successfully. Our witness, therefore, is supremely relevant today.

This conviction will be strengthened if we consider another great and related issue confronting us at the present time. Free democracy depends ultimately on the quality and development of the individual. But it is just here where the danger lies nowadays. The individual is being assailed by many factors in our modern life which rob him of personality and significance, and the chance of self-development. These are days of specialisation, mechanisation and socialisation. All three may be inevitable and in varying degrees right, but this does not remove the danger of their combining to rob the ordinary man of his individuality, and of a proper sense of his dignity, personal worth and significance, and of the opportunity to express and develop his own gifts and graces. Specialisation, for example, is increasing. The field of modern knowledge is being sub-divided and parcelled out, in ever-diminishing plots, to the experts. But the vast majority of men are not experts in anything. They are mere "laymen" in every realm—that is, men without any opinion on any subject which is regarded as worth expressing or acknowledged as authoritative. This depersonalising and belittling effect of specialization is aided and abetted by the increasing mechanization we observe everywhere. Craft is being eliminated from industry. Men increasingly are serving machines in repetitive processes, and tending themselves to become mechanised as a result. Workers are increasingly bored by work in which they can take little interest or pride.

Then there is the modern State which threatens to carry this process of depersonalisation a stage further, indeed to its final Nemesis. The writer does not intend to disparage Socialism—far from it—but there is a grave danger of an omni-competent State taking charge of us, at every stage of life, from the cradle to the grave. If this ever really comes to pass, our demoralisation will be complete.

This, of course, is an exaggerated account, but the exaggeration is deliberate. We need to see the tendencies which increasingly threaten our personality, individuality, and significance and development—in short, our manhood. We are in danger of creating a race of morons, incapable of real thought, initiative or responsibility. If we are not careful, a few super-intelligent and super-trained people will eventually control the entire life of us all. Clearly then, the distinctive Free Church witness to the priesthood of all believers is more needed than ever as an antidote to these baneful modern tendencies. In our Free Churches the ordinary man should find escape from the world and its belittling influences and hear God's call, not to

submit his soul to external religious authority but, in a fellowship of brethren, to stand on his feet, to quit him like a man, to work out his salvation with fear and trembling, to became indeed a king and priest, and even a son of God. He should discover opportunity of expressing and developing his personality by being invited to share appropriately his gifts both spiritual and temporal. In short, he should find the antidote to the de-personalising belittling and soul-destroying influences of modern life.

The Free Church witness is obviously a matter of primary importance for the world today and a vital part of the Gospel of Christ. We should therefore consider together how we can best instruct our people, particularly our young people, in this witness. The young people of the Free Churches are sadly lacking here. A Methodist minister told the writer some time ago that his daughter had informed him that she was thinking of becoming a Roman Catholic. When he enquired why, he discovered that the girl with whom she worked was a devout Roman Catholic, and instead of the Methodist influencing the Roman Catholic, the Roman Catholic had influenced the Methodist. The simple reason for this was that the Roman Catholic girl had been well instructed in the tenets of her faith. She knew what she believed and loved what she knew; whereas the Methodist girl was ill-informed and nebulous about the distinctive doctrines and principles of Methodism. We have indeed been shamefully remiss in this matter. Our intelligent young people are probably less informed about their own distinctive witness than their counterparts in the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church. This situation we must remedy.

Finally, we should consider how the work of God in our churches can be revived. Only thus can our witness become real, living and potent. In revival the Free Churches were born; in revival alone can they be re-born. As they were the first to wilt when the tides of the Spirit began to ebb, so they will be the first to revive when the tides of the Spirit begin to flow in again. A revival on the scale of Pentecost, the Reformation, or the Great Evangelical Awakening of the eighteenth century (which is our real need) is not ours to command. Such times and seasons the Father hath put under His own authority. But there is a real sense in which we can command here and now the Spirit's mighty power. There can be local revivals wherever certain conditions are fulfilled, and these conditions are laid down for us in the New Testament. If we fall in line with Apostolic precept and practice, we can have revival here and now in our churches.

Summing up briefly, we may say that while the position of the Free Churches today is such as to cause serious concern

to all with deep Free Church convictions, there is no need to be pessimistic, still less to despair. The things for which we peculiarly stand are a vital and integral part of the Gospel and more relevant to the world's need than ever. Moreover, a great spiritual re-awakening is coming soon. When it comes there will be a fresh discovery of the glory and power of the Gospel. In that day it will not be the catholic but the evangelical expression of Christianity which will be most mightily revived. The future is with that presentation of the Christian religion which to a unique degree has characterised the Free Churches in their best days. If therefore the Free Churchs will come together more in fellowship and service, and really bestir and prepare themselves, they will find it easier than any other section of the Church because of their distinctive witness in teaching and practice, to receive the outpouring of the Spirit, without let or hindrance, and to mediate its power and its blessing to mankind.

HENRY T. WIGLEY.

Ones Man's Testimony by Norman Goodall. (Independent Press. 6s.)

The Rev. Norman Goodall, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, tells us in his foreword to this book that it is the answer to a question often put to him by his friends: "How can we keep our hold on the Faith while so many things seem to be going from bad to worse?" In reflecting on this question it seemed to Mr. Goodall that with him it was a case of the Faith keeping hold on him through two world wars and their aftermath. He has given us a delightful and refreshing book, an affirmation of faith and at the same time in part a spiritual autobiography that is modest, extremely honest, and the product of a mind at grips with the contemporary world. It is a book of encouragement and illumination, and is marked by literary grace. It is much to be hoped that Mr. Goodall will manage to find time in his very busy life to give us more from his pen.

JOHN O. BARRETT.

Some Rare Seventeenth Century Pamphlets.

IN his *History of the English Baptists*, Dr. A. C. Underwood refers to the Particular Baptists of seven London churches and the publication of their first Confession of Faith in 1644. The repeated editions called for and the subject matter of the preamble bear witness to the keenness of the theological controversy of the time. This controversy was no academic or dry-as-dust affair: an interested historical imagination can detect purposeful Christian believers wrestling with statements of faith, because they were aware that beliefs determine our nature and destiny. The Reformation was not very old, and the "displaced persons" from an abandoned Roman territory of faith could not easily reach a settled dwelling in the confidence that they had discovered the city whose builder and maker was God; and nothing less would satisfy them. Pioneers say and do strange things but they must be judged by their purpose, and in this light the Baptists of the Commonwealth period exhibit worthy valour.

The Preamble to the London Confession disclaims such calumnies as "holding free-will, falling away from grace, denying original sin," it bears witness to the desire for an adequate dogmatic statement of the faith for the practical purpose of helping the churches and their members to live well. The ferment of inquiry, this search for facts, that faith will give boldness to interpret, was not confined to London: there were centres of similar persuasion in the West.

Miss E. K. Adams, or Kingsbridge, Devon, has recently presented to Bristol Baptist College Library a bound volume, 8 in. x 5 in., entitled *A Confession of Faith* and certain pamphlets bound up with the confession are of considerable historical value.

The full title of the Confession is, "A Confession of the Faith of several churches of Christ, in the county of Somerset and of some churches in the counties adjacent." At the bottom of the title page, there is added, "London, printed by Henry Hills, and are to be sold by Thomas Brewster, at the three Bibles at the West End of Pauls, 1656." The Dedicatory to this Confession is signed by Thomas Collier. Of this man the Dictionary of National Biography says, "A Baptist who owned land in Godalming in 1634, a Baptist preacher in Guernsey and Yorkshire in 1646 and in the south and west of England, and one who

published polemical tracts 1645-1691." Dr. Underwood says, "Collier was the leader of the Particular Baptists of the West, but little is known of his life, except that the Western Association in 1655 appointed and ordained him General Superintendent and Messenger to all the associated churches." (p. 109.)

In the "Epistle Dedicatory" to the Confession, it is emphasised that the churches in London are not alone in their stand: in the West also "to our knowledge many . . . churches . . . stand fast in the profession of the unchangeable love of God in Jesus Christ to his people." The confession has been shaped because of the "great distractions and divisions among professing people in the nation," "the great departing from the faith and that under glorious notions of spiritualness and holiness." Collier and his fellow signatories show their pastoral concern for practical issues when they urge, "that it be your care and that which may daily lie next your heart to have a high and precious esteem of Jesus Christ and of him crucified; God having made him to his people, to be the way, the truth and the life." This Dedicatory is concerned with no trivial matters that disappear with the passing of time: such believing people, who speak here have penetrated to the heart of the New Testament religion and know what corresponds to a healthy blood circulation. "Oh be not easily cheated out of your esteem and interest in a crucified Jesus," they say: "Oh little do souls think what they lose when they part with the man Christ Jesus . . . for nothing but wind and vanity, they sow the wind and shall reap the whirlwind." Again, "let it be your care to press after and live more in the power of the Gospel." These seventeen century preachers in their condemnation of "pride and covetousness," and an undue regard for the outward adornment of dress, were seeking a true religion, such as Isaiah sought when he spoke of a vital faith that would turn weapons of destruction, "swords," into instruments of creative goodness, "pruninghooks," for it was recognised that the very lusts that destroy become saving as they are turned into wholesome ministries, "clothing the backs and refreshing the hovels of the poor." The Epistle closes with the signatures of those appointed by the several churches and contains the names of persons from Somerset, Wilts., Devon, Gloucester and Dorset, with the name Thomas Collier, boldly signed at the end.

It will be obvious to all who are aware of the revived interest in theology today and in particular the earnest debate concerning the nature of the Church that this book emerged from the urgency of deep need. Truly understood, if the Baptist Church understands its real genius, it will be seen as the most significant fellowship in any town. Collier, and all who are in the succession, take their stand on the knowledge that "true freedom," to quote

Kierkegaard, "consists in freely appropriating that which is given and consequently in being absolutely dependent through freedom." The given is the Deed of God in Christ, the one event in time that has meaning for all time. We are free in Christ and never apart from Him. It is with such deep things that the seventeenth century Baptists were concerned. The confessions were calls to action not sentimental musings or enervating complainings like the man, to whom the Danish philosopher referred, who when caught in the quicksands, began to calculate how far down he had already sunk, forgetting that all the while he was sinking all the deeper.

This Somerset Confession, of which we have written, together with the dedicatory epistle in full was published by E. B. Underhill in his *Confession of Faith,* pp. 61f. The Confession alone appears in McGlothlin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith,* pp. 202f. *It is thus accessible* to all. It would appear that the pamphlets bound up with Miss Adams' copy are of even greater interest and reference will be made to them. In all there are seven pamphlets included.

The first pamphlet is entitled, *An antidote against the Infection of the Times,* with a sub title, "a faithful watch-word from Mount Sion, to prevent the ruin of souls." The same page says that it is published for the good of all by the appointment of the Elders and Messengers of the several churches of Ilston, Abergavenny, Tredinog, Carmarthen, Hereford, Bredwardin, Cledock and Llangors meeting at Brecknock upon "the 29 and 30 daies of the fifth moneth 1656." Seventeen pages of the *Antidote* are devoted to some nine "considerations presented to sinners," Adam's sin with its consequences in man; God sending forth a deliverer, even Jesus the Righteous, whose earthly life and ascension are outlined with meaning in terms of the perfecting of the saints "by consecrating a way forth to Heaven" and the "rule in the height of majesty and glory"; the expectation of the second coming of Christ. Such objective facts from the Scriptures are boldly interpreted in the appeal of the final considerations; there is no other way "for miserable man to be saved but by him alone who of God is made unto such as receive him, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption"; the warning against false Christs even when the sinner is "inquiring for him," and the plea to search the scriptures, to look upon the ministers of the Gospel as God's ambassadors and "to frequent the ministry of the word."

Some twenty-two pages of the *Antidote* are taken up with "Admonitions to Saints." Here are warnings against "the reigning sins of these perilous times"; spiritual pride, hypocrisy contempt of magistracy with its despising of government,

"presumptuous are they and self-willed"; worldly-mindedness; decay of love, which "wounds the souls of the followers of the Lamb," with a final appeal to "give over censurings and tyrannical lording over the consciences of your brethren," to seek above all things fervent charity, since without it "all your gifts and other religious flourishes, are nothing worth."

The last pages of this pamphlet contain "Invitations to Backsliders," and the earnest appeal is directed to many motives for the desired return: the misery of the back-slidden state; the good that back sliders once found in the ways of God; the great loss that a back slider is at; the sad consequences and the ingratitude that back-sliders show to God; the shortness of a man's life; the readiness of the Lord to receive such. "Delay not therefore," "forsake every false way," "return to the Lord thy God, who is ready to receive thee into his grace and glory" are the last words of this earnest tract.

The second pamphlet is entitled *A brief answer to some of the objections and demurs made against the coming in and inhabiting of the Jews in this Commonwealth,* with a plea on their behalf to give them liberty and protection in this nation. *Isaiah* xvi. 3 is quoted on this title page, "hide the outcasts: betray not him that wandereth" and also xvi. 4, "Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler." The Epistle Dedicatory is signed by "The unworthiest of the Lord's servants, Thomas Collier." The writing takes the form of a stated objection with its answer. Such objections encountered by Collier were, that "notwithstanding they were the people beloved of God . . . yet they were always a rebellious and stiffnecked people; because they are enemies of Christ . . . and we are commanded not to receive such into our houses; because of their bad demeanour in the nation formerly and by their ill behaviour were a burden; because they are likely to draw away disciples after them and make proselytes; because their ends in desiring to come are their own advantage, they being a covetous people; if God doth intend conversion to them, yet it is not to be expected but in a miraculous way, therefore to let them come in on such an account is but in vain; their liberty in other protestant countries meant little or no good; their coming would be a means to ruin trade since they were so exercised on merchandizing; the favour that Christians show them, so far from drawing them to Christ rather hardens them; now they are out it is better to keep them out; if they be permitted to come in, papists and jesuits may come over in pretence of being Jews. Each of the objections is squarely met by Collier: for example, on the issue of trade he says, "I suppose there might be and are as well ways of exportation

as of importation, the more is brought in, the more may be carried out: if it should be some loss to some rich merchants, yet it could be advantage to the people in general, the more is brought in the plentier and cheaper it would be, what a few rich men might lose, a great many poor men might gain and that would be in deed and in truth no loss at all." Since attack is recognised as the best defence, Collier moves to a more positive appeal: he declares, "it is not only lawful but a duty to permit the Jews a being in the nation"; "God still owns them as his people . . . and shall we be enemies to them that God owns . . . what if they be accounted as the worst of men, yet if God esteem them let us not be enemies;" the "grafting" verses of *Romans* xi., are quoted and the comment is made "let it be enough that we have their riches, let us not be unmerciful to them"; the scriptures make it clear that God is correcting his people with a view to their salvation and since this is so, "would it be a seemly or acceptable thing when a father is correcting a child . . . that a brother should come and lay on stripes too." Collier quotes the appeal to Moab (*Isaiah* xvi. 4) "be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler," and adds although we know not whether we are of the posterity of Moab, he is sure that "God hath made them, viz. Abraham, Christ and his apostles, friends to us that believe, hence it is that believing Gentiles are called and accounted Abraham's children, and shall we be unkind to them who are the natural seed in their affliction"; it would be a sin for christians so to do, says Collier. The closing pages of this *Brief Answer* are in similar vein and many queries are presented such as the last wherein it is asked, "whether now the day of their deliverance drawing near, we may not expect that an act of mercy of this kind be very acceptable to the God of mercy, who will have mercy on these people, and they that upon a good account do show them mercy, shall obtain mercy."

Dr. Whitley, in his *Baptist Bibliography* notes a copy of *A Brief Answer* as in the British Museum, but not in any of the other libraries he examined, which included the Bodleian, Cambridge University, and all our Baptist Colleges.

Another pamphlet is entitled *The Seventh Day Sabbath opened and discovered, as it is brought forth, and to be observed now in the Days of the Gospel; and the first day of the week, the Time for Public Worship.* The subject is a matter for keen concern and Collier delays writing on it, not desiring to provoke vain controversy; he asks that the reader will suspend judgment, "till he hath gone through" and although he is confident that the "sober inquiring christian will do so," he expects little less than "hard censures from all parties." Collier proceeds, "I shall, therefore, with as much evidence from the scripture

as I may, give some grounds why the seventh day Sabbath is not to be observed as the Sabbath of Believers in the Gospel day under the New Testament ministration, by virtue of an institution or command of Jesus Christ the Lord of the Sabbath and of the Gospel Ministration." The grounds are duly set forth and one can sense the atmosphere of keen critical controversy that prevailed at the time, since at the end Collier says, "in the meantime, let there be love and union: avoid rentings and divisions, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you, which is the prayer of him that waiteth Zion's Glory."

Professor E. A. Payne, of Regent's Park College, in a letter, says that another pamphlet, *An answer to an Epistle written by Thomas Salthouse, to the churches of the Anabaptists, so called,"* appears to be even rarer than that to which we have referred, *A Brief Answer.* Dr. Whitley, says Professor Payne, did not discover any copy at all, though its issue is proved by the replies which it provoked. This "Answer" by Collier, contains a vigourous comment on Salthouse, "a man of note among the people called Quakers," and his Epistle which according to Collier has been "weighed in the balance and is found too light."

A similar theme is found in the pamphlet written by T. Higgenson, *A Testimony to the true Jesus and the Faith of him"* and aims to set forth "wherein the way of the People called Quakers is in meekness and righteousness summed and weighed," the principles of the Quakers being examined as they are found in a book of theirs called *Love to the Lost.*

The pamphlet in this book which may prove to be a fresh discovery, since it is not catalogued by Dr. Whitley at all, is styled *The Personal Appearing and Reign of Christ's Kingdom upon the Earth, and the State of the Saints till then proved to be a state of suffering and not of reigning and conquering with a material sword as some imagine."* Thomas Collier here has Mr. Tillinghast in view who in his book called *The Signs of the Times* gives his grounds for the practice. This Tillinghast was a Fifth Monarchy Man, a graduate of Caius College, Cambridge, who after being rector of Streat, 1637, became an Independent and a publisher of religious works. Collier in his preface, says he has endeavoured to clear three things: (1) the personal Reign of Christ upon the Earth; (2) that the state of the saints will be a suffering state until that time; (3) to answer such grounds as are produced by Mr. Tillinghast for the introduction of the Kingdom of Christ by the material sword in the hands of the saints. Collier says, that "the danger to me appears in seeking Sion's good in such a way of war and force as is by some so much spoken of and prayed for, to me appears the high way both to dishonour God and ruin Sion." Collier quickly passes from the pages which

prove from the Scripture that Christ shall personally reign on the earth, to the paragraphs which present his answers to Mr. Tillinghast. A few sentences will indicate Collier's thought carefully extended in the pamphlet: "believing Gentiles under the Gospel ministration is clearly stated in the New Testament to be a suffering state, and that till Christ comes": "Jesus Christ was a pattern in his own person to all his people, . . . whose life was a life of suffering": "the Kingdom is promised to the meek and suffering Lamb of Jesus and not to the froward that would gain the Kingdom by a worldly wayfare": "because Christ's Kingdom is not of this world"; "the endeavouring to set up the Kingdom by a worldly warfare is inconsistent with the Gospel ministration of peace": "the saints are to exercise faith in believing and patience in waiting, until the Lord's time is come": "the saints are not in a capacity to reign before Christ comes," they must be judged themselves before they can judge others, Collier says who is arrested by the thought that all men are sinners and not to be trusted as complete rulers of society. Moved by such convictions Collier devotes the last nineteen pages of his writing to a consideration of each of Tillinghast's eight grounds for his doctrine, set out in the book called *The Signs of the Times.*

Such is the book which, through the kindness and thought of Miss Adams, will now form a significant addition to the treasures of Bristol Baptist College Library. It will be fitting to add that we, as Baptists, are in this Collier succession. We have the freedom, which he claimed, to interpret with all boldness of imagination and gathered intuitive experience the objective and unalterable facts of the Gospel, but like Collier, we have to bring our judgments to the test of God's revealed word lest we be lost in speculation with no anchorage in the truth that abides. We are one with our seventeenth century brethren in seeking sound doctrine only that we may live soundly and herein we are building on the New Testament where doctrine and duty, creed and conduct, walk in holy alliance. We are one with Collier and his fellow questers in that we seek a faith and a practice which our children can grow up into and not grow out of, and thus find that all things are theirs because they "are Christ's and Christ is God's."

A. J. WESTLAKE.

Baptists at Bewdley, 1649-1949.

BEWDLEY is a small town on the River Severn, set in the midst of lovely country, rich in history, tradition and romance. Its people have a sturdy self-consciousness born of rights conferred under an ancient charter and of their liberty to appeal direct to the Sovereign through the Lord High Steward in respect of any grievance they may feel. As one of the "towns of refuge" in bygone days it stood on many occasions as a bulwark against the avenger of blood, as the part of the town boundary known as "Catchem's End" reminds us.[1]

According to Dr. Whitley[2] the early appearance of Baptist churches in Worcestershire was due in part to the presence in the Parliamentary forces of numbers of Baptists. No less than thirteen times during ten years the contending armies in the Civil War crossed its plains, and the city of Worcester witnessed the "crowning mercy" of Cromwell's victory over the Royalists. The Bewdley church, however, owed its inception to a native of the town, one John Tombes,[3] the son of poor parents, who after passing through the local grammar school, entered Magdalen College, Oxford, at the age of fifteen. At twenty-one he was chosen public catechetical lecturer. He became vicar of Leominster, but fled to Bristol at the outbreak of the Civil War. After the taking of Bristol by the Royalists he escaped to London and was appointed minister of Fenchurch. Here he refused to allow the baptism of infants in his church, and was consequently deprived of his stipend. On his promise not to introduce the baptismal controversy into the pulpit he was made preacher of the Temple, but in 1645 was dismissed for publishing his first treatise on infant baptism. In 1646 he returned to Bewdley and was chosen minister of the chapel of St. Anne, a chapel of ease to Ribbesford, where he would not be obliged to christen. Here he put forth his *Apology for the Two Treatises on Infant Baptism,* in which he writes that he "must needs say that churches which

[1] See several references in I. L. Wedley, *Bewdley and its Surroundings* (1914).

[2] *Baptist Association Life in Worcestershire,* 1655-1926.

[3] For accounts of Tombes and his disputation with Baxter see *A History of Bewdley* (1883) by John R. Burton; *The Life of the Rev. Richard Baxter* (1934) by F. J. Powicke; *A History of the English Baptists* (1947) by A. C. Underwood.

have no other than Infant Baptism are no true churches nor their members church members." He therefore founded a separate Baptist church in the town, consisting of twenty members, while continuing to exercise the cure of St. Anne's chapel. All the churches founded by Tombes are said to have been of the open communion type. On New Year's Day, 1649 he held in St. Anne's chapel his famous disputation with Richard Baxter, of Kidderminster, the controversy lasting from nine in the morning till five in the evening before a crowded and sometimes disorderly congregation. According to Wood,[4] "their followers became like two armies, and the civil magistrate had much ado to quiet them." Writers' opinions differ as to who had the better of the argument, but from Dr. Powicke's account it appears that at any rate for courtesy Tombes shewed himself in a more favourable light than his opponent. The excitement and strain of the day's proceedings are reflected in the town's accounts, which reveal that money was afterwards paid for the repair of seats in the chapel, as well as for a quart of sack for Mr. Tombes and another minister!

Tombes, who never severed his connection with the Church of England, left Bewdley for Leominster in 1650. Among the small community he had founded were three men whom he had trained for the ministry,[5] Richard Adams, John Eckels and Thomas Boylston. Adams was later ejected from Humberstone in Leicestershire and went to London, where he succeeded Daniel Dyke at Devonshire Square. John Eckels became successor to Tombes as minister of the little group at Bewdley, and we shall take up his story later. Thomas Boylston[6] was a man of standing and influence during the Commonwealth and had probably been a captain in the New Model Army. He came in for attention at the Restoration. In 1653 he and Philip Mun were the elders of the church. The baptismal controversy did not, apparently, end with the departure of Tombes, for what is thought to be the first book published in Birmingham,[7] *The Font Guarded* etc., by Thomas Hall, B.D., of Kings Norton was "occasioned partly by a dispute at Bely (i.e. Beoley) in Worcestershire, August 13th, 1651, against Joseph Pages, Dyer; Walter Rose, John Rose, Butchers, of Bromsgrove; John Evans, a Scribe, yet anti-scripturist; Francis Loxly, Sho-Maker." "A word to one Collier and another to Mr. Tombes" is added at the end of the

[4] Wood, *Athenae Oxon*, iii, 1063.

[5] William Stokes, *The History of the Midland Association of Baptist Churches* (1855). He is wrong about "Roylston."

[6] W. T. Whitley, *op. cit.; The Corporation of Bewdley under the later Stuarts*, Philip Styles (University of Birmingham Historical Journal, vol. 1, No. 1 (1947), pp. 99ff).

[7] A. S. Langley, *Birmingham Baptists* (1939), pp. 21 and 22.

book.[7a] During these years of wordy warfare but physical liberty the church appears to have carried on its worship and witness under the leadership of the two elders and John Eckels, but the last is said to have removed to Bromsgrove in 1651,[8] from which place he continued to minister to the two churches. Eckels was called to the ministry[9] at the age of sixteen and became known as "The Boy Preacher." In an elegy written on his death in 1711 tribute is paid to his youth, popularity and success as a preacher.

> With fervent zeal the gospel seed he sows,
> Which Bromsgrove, Bewdley, largely from him mows;
> In active youth and manhood there, his charge,
> Christ's work he plies with approbation large.

The Church is said by Dr. Whitley[10] to have joined the Midland Association in 1658, but Stokes[11] says that in that year "the church proposed to join the Association, but both it and the one at Gloucester, that had made a similar proposal, were recommended first to ascertain if there was agreement in doctrine between themselves and the Association, and then, if they were found to agree, to renew the application at some future meeting. It does not appear certain that the application was repeated during that generation, and there is no evidence of the Bewdley church having actually joined the Association until the year 1718."

The return of Charles II meant the end of organised Baptist life, except perhaps for secret meetings. Many Worcestershire Baptists were carried off to prison, among them John Eckels, who is said to have been thrown into a dungeon and to have suffered much hardship. Crosby's story that a Mr. Swift, one of the members of Parliament for the county, secured Eckels' liberation by standing surety for him in the sum of £1,000 is doubted by Ford.[12] Thomas Boylston was otherwise dealt with. The Commissioners for executing the Corporation Act in Worcestershire came to Bewdley on August 1st, 1662, and, among other actions, "'thought it meet and expedient for ye publique safety' to remove Mr. Thomas Boylston—who had taken the oaths—from the office of a capital burgess."[13] During the Indulgence of 1672 no place in Bewdley was registered for

[7a] Beoley is, of course, not Bewdley, but the mention of Bromsgrove disputants is interesting.

[8] James Ford, *History of the Baptist Church, Bromsgrove* (1916), p. 4.

[9] Stokes, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

[10] *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[11] *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[12] *op. cit.*, p. 6.

[13] Styles, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

Baptist worship, but with the renewal of persecution meetings of Baptists were reported there.[14] It appears from Stokes[15] that John Eckels continued to give pastoral oversight during these trying times, until 1688, when he became pastor of Bromsgrove only. What happened at the dawn of toleration we can only surmise, but the work went on and at Easter, 1698 William Hawkyns[16] registered a building at Bewdley for Baptist worship. About 1700 a Mr. Clark[17] exercised the oversight of the Church but there is no further information about him, unless he is to be identified with the man for whose services the church at Netherton asked in a letter to Bewdley dated October 30th, 1712. It appears from the letter that at that time there were two brethren in the church at Bewdley who were qualified for the work of the ministry, and the Netherton church therefore makes the request: "We desire and entreat you for the love you have to God and the precious souls of men that you will be willing to give your consent that we may have brother Clark to serve us in the gospel of Christ." A sidelight on the size of the church at that time is indicated in the burial registers kept by William Price, rector 1706-25, who noted specially the interments of Anabaptists and Quakers. "Between 1707-13 thirteen of the former and five of the latter are thus distinguished as 'not buried by ye Publick Minister.'"[18]

The next pastorate was short and, so far as the church was concerned, troubled. William Thompson[19] came from Tewkesbury and was ordained in 1716 in a manner which seemed to the Association unsatisfactory. They sent the church a letter referring to it. "Though we don't look on it as invalid, yet we do think the management of it irregular, and that it ought not to be a precedent." In 1718 Thompson, having declined into Socinianism, the Association advised the church to cut him off from communion with them, which they did. After his separation, says Stokes, Thompson remained in the town for two years, causing much annoyance to the church. In 1719 the Association met for the first time at Bewdley, the rendezvous probably being "The Wheatsheaf," a famous coaching inn which now forms part of the Institute buildings.

By confrast the next pastorate was a long one. In 1718, on

[14] Whitley, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
[15] Stokes, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
[16] Whitley, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[17] Stokes, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
[18] Styles, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
[19] Whitley, *op. cit.*, p. 27, gives the date of Thompson as 1670, and makes his ministry last forty-eight years! This seems unlikely, and Stokes *op. cit.*, has the support of the Circular Letters in his case.

Thompson's exclusion, James Kettilby, a young member of the church and an occasional preacher, was engaged as a supply.

"After an extended probation of near eight years' duration, he became pastor, and was ordained May 20, 1725. He was a sound, judicious, humble minister, but never popular."[20] He continued faithfully to discharge his duties for fifty years, dying in 1767 in his seventy-first year. The membership in 1751 was only twenty-two.

A legacy of £100 in 1764 prompted the erection of a chapel, towards the cost of which the Baptist Board made a grant of £20 in 1767. After about three years of "supplies" the church decided to call another pastor, perhaps at the suggestion of the Association, which met again at Bewdley in 1770. John Blackshaw came from Tewkesbury (Stokes says Cheshire), was ordained in 1774 and left for Leicester five years later, after exercising a useful ministry. In 1778 Mrs. Mary Marlowe, of Leominster, left the interest on £150 to the church at Bewdley, (part of a larger bequest to benefit other Baptist churches also). The estate, however, realised only one quarter of what was anticipated in the will, and Bewdley received, instead of £6, only £1 7s. 9d., to be divided as to £1 0s. 10d. for the minister and 6s. 11d. per annum for the poor! The first payment was not made until nine years after the death of the testatrix. In 1779 Mr. Deykins, of Worcester, left £100, "the interest thereof to be paid annually for the support of the gospel in the church."

Three more pastorates cover the period from 1781 to 1799. John Pyne came from Shrewsbury and stayed until 1788, when he left for Bristol, as the church was too poor to support a pastor. In 1782 the Association met again at Bewdley and Pyne wrote the Circular Letter. For three years after Pyne's departure Richard Baylis, from Bilston, supplied the pulpit, and the church involved itself in debt on his account by building the house in the meeting-yard, so that he could have a place in which to work, "he being in the hardware business." This did not solve his problem and he gave up the pastorate, but during his short stay he had baptised a young man who was to exercise an important influence on the church in the days to come. George Williams from Wolverhampton succeeded Baylis in 1793 but returned to his trade in 1799 for the same reason that hastened Pyne's departure. He had unsuccessfully tried to run a school in order to augment his scanty income. Williams was ordained in 1794 and the Association came again to Bewdley the following

[20] Stokes, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

year. In 1796 various items were copied from an old minute book into one still in possession of the church, including the covenant and a list of members at that date. There were less than twenty. On Williams' departure he absent-mindedly or otherwise took with him the minister's baptising gown, "which he ought not to," but the church allowed him to keep it, and he used it at Bewdley on more than one occasion afterwards.

With the beginning of the nineteenth century we come to what is probably the outstanding ministry at Bewdley, not only for its length and quality—it lasted forty-two years—but for its financial effect on the future of the church. George Brookes was born in 1767, converted in his thirteenth year, and baptised by Richard Baylis in 1790. Among the mass of papers left by Brookes is an exercise book from which it appears that he received a sound education. As an apprentice at Kidderminster he took notes on Sundays of the sermons preached by the minister of the New Meeting, a habit which probably gave him insight into the proper ordering of thought in preaching. After a period of service as a deacon Brookes began to preach in 1800. In 1802, another brother, Thomas Griffin, also exercised his gifts before the church with acceptance, and these two were invited to become joint ministers. This arrangement continued until 1808, when Thomas Griffin left to form and superintend the church at Kidderminster. In 1813 Brookes was ordained as sole pastor of Bewdley. "For twenty-nine years," says Stokes,[21] "he continued to break the bread of life to his people, with a consistency and holy integrity that endeared him to all who knew his character." Being a man of substance Brookes was able to serve the church without payment, and this financial relief gave the people an opportunity of taking a wider interest in the work of the Kingdom, particularly in missionary enterprise. Gifts were sent to Jamaica. Brookes interested himself in Moravian Missions. In 1813 he sent petitions to Parliament from both Bewdley and Kidderminster in support of Lord Teignmouth's appeal for Christian Missions in India. During his ministry the church's register of births from 1776, and of deaths and burials from 1756, were deposited at Somerset House. Two years before his death Brookes set aside two thousand pounds for the support of the future ministry at Bewdley, and provided some seven hundred books for the use of the resident minister. In the same year he licensed a building in Wribbenhall[22] for Baptist worship.

About this time a British School was started in a factory

[21] *op. cit.*, p. 60.

[22] Entry copied by the Rev. A. S. Langley from the registers in the Bishop of Worcester's Registry Office.

near to the river, and afterwards transferred to the house in which Jonathan Birtwistle lived at Wribbenhall. According to Wedley services were held there on Sunday afternoons, conducted alternately by the Baptists and Congregationalists. Brookes may have had some hand in the establishment of the school as well as of the services. Birtwistle was a Baptist, and there is in the Chapel burial-ground a stone to the memory of his little son.[23]

Before passing on to the next ministeries mention should be made of a man called John Thomas,[24] a native of Bewdley, who was dismissed from the church in 1802 and became pastor of Broseley, in Shropshire, where he ministered for thirty-nine years and became the progenitor of a remarkable number of descendants whose services to the Baptist Missionary Society have added great lustre to it. "A missionary yew tree" in the graveyard at Bewdley is said to have been planted by John Thomas.

Three short pastorates succeeded Brookes' long one. In 1843 William E. White came from Horton Academy, Bradford, but left for Eckington in 1846. Two years earlier the church re-joined the Midland Association, apparently preferring old connections to those of the newly formed Worcestershire Association. George Cozens, formerly of Brettel Lane, and directly from Fakenham, ministered from 1847 to 1854. During his pastorate renovations to the church were carried out. On his departure to Kington the seven hundred books left by George Brookes were reduced to six hundred and sixty-five, but Cozens returned eight more afterwards, and perhaps he was not responsible for the disappearance of the rest! From 1855 to 1857 Josephus Bailey served the church, the membership when he came standing at seventeen. Formerly of the Darkhouse, Coseley, church, he went from Bewdley to Brettel Lane.

Unfortunately, for the next thirty years, covered by the ministry of George James,[25] who came from Llanfihangel Crucorney, and retired in 1887, there are no records. It is possible they were deliberately destroyed. We owe to Wedley a description of a second John Thomas, who succeeded James. He lived at Ticknell and "was an expert on the English concertina, and with his children frequently gave concerts in the neighbourhood. One played the 'cello, two violins, another the piano,

[23] Wedley, p. 43. His paragraph on the burial ground is interesting.

[24] See an article in the *Baptist Times*, January 1st, 1942, by A. S. Langley.

[25] George James was the father of G. Howard James, at one time of Derby, and a prominent Christian Endeavour leader. One of his daughters was head-mistress of the British School at Wribbenhall, and a painter of some note in the district.

another was a vocalist, the flute and oboe parts being filled in by himself and another daughter on their concertinas. Their concerts generally included some of the best music of the great masters." It would appear that the Bewdley church was not so deeply impressed by this musical excellence as others, since Thomas went to Budleigh Salterton in two years. The twenty years' pastorate of Francis John Aust, who followed Thomas in 1891, was marked in that year by the reception of the church into the Worcestershire Association and by his election, a little before his death in 1911, to the vice-presidency. He was buried in Wribbenhall churchyard and among the many tributes paid to his character was one from the inmates of the almshouses. Herbert Nicholls from Mansfield succeeded Aust and remained two years. In 1912 Buckridge chapel was taken over by the Bewdley church, and an Adult School for men was tried. The weekly free-will offering system was adopted, and the first mention is made in the minutes of the proposed Ministerial Settlement and Sustentation Scheme of the Baptist Union. A letter was read at one church meeting from the Baptist Spiritualist Association, but no material support was given to it! John David Hamer ministered from 1913 to 1918, a period darkened even in the country by the shadows of the first World War. During this time a new name appears on the church roll and soon after among the deacons, that of C. C. Quayle, whose children are today rendering splendid service to the cause. In 1915 the church applied to join the new Settlement and Sustentation Scheme, and some difference of opinion arose as to whether it was right for the children in the Sunday School to be asked to contribute to it, since most of their parents were not Baptists. In 1918 the first appearance of a General Superintendent is recorded, R. M. Julian being called into consultation in a difficult situation that had arisen in the church, and which he succeeded in elucidating. During this pastorate a quaint little bit of ritual between the trustee of the Brookes Fund and the minister is recalled by one who watched it. On the first Sunday evening in each month the trustee, James Teague, would place by his side in the pew seven golden sovereigns. The minister would come up and ask: "Is this for me ?" Being assured that it was, he quietly pocketed the money!

The period between the first and second World Wars was covered by four pastorates. Denis John Mills, an ex-missionary from China, in four years restored tranquillity to a troubled church and greatly increased interest in overseas missions. He went into retirement at Cheltenham in 1923. In 1924 James Briggs came from Birmingham with a fine reputation, and for nine years "worked with the zeal and energy of a man in the prime of life." He was sixty-six years old when he commenced

his ministry at Bewdley. In 1926 a new schoolroom and classrooms were built at a cost of £590. At Far Forest, the successor of the old cause at Buckridge, a church was formed and a mission hall erected. From Ossett in 1934 came Samuel George Dudley, M.C., exercising a ministry especially to men, but also introducing a number of innovations such as the use of the "Wayside Pulpit", the adoption of individual Communion cups and junior church membership. The Women's Own, which still flourishes under Miss Chapman's able leadership, and the Girls' Life Brigade came into the picture during this pastorate, which ended after three years by the acceptance of an invitation to Barnstaple.[26] In 1938 Ronald Lewis became minister, and for four years laboured with much acceptance among the people. Conditions in these years reveal the menace of total war, the blacking-out of the chapel and the use of the kitchen and classrooms as an emergency rest and feeding centre. An unprecedented frost in 1940 called forth a vote of thanks to the caretaker for the way in which he had kept the heating system from bursting. Early in this period the church was deprived by death of the services of an outstanding layman, C. C. Quayle, but two years later his name was perpetuated by the election of his son, J. C. Quayle, to the Worcestershire Association, of which he became President in 1947.

We conclude the story of three hundred years at Bewdley by mention of the quiet, but effective ministry of Frank Trout from 1943-48, who was succeeded in January 1949 by Lewis Harold Merrett of Spurgeon's College. Mr. Merrett enters upon the heritage of three centuries of Baptist witness at a time when the life of the church is more vigorous than at any period in its history. The church membership is nearly treble what it has ever been, the leadership is in the hands of comparatively young people with a good nucleus on which to work. There is a spirit of enterprise abroad among the members which has expressed itself in the determination to erect a new youth hall at a cost of more than £1,000, while the church treasurer, S. K. Quayle, has generously given the house in which the last two ministers have lived as a permanent manse. Thus the aim of George Brookes over a hundred years ago of securing the ministry at Bewdley by a trust fund for the stipend has been carried a step further. In all this we see promise for a future which shall eclipse anything the past history of the Bewdley church has known.

A. J. KLAIBER.

[26] The Chapman family came to Bewdley in 1902 and have been a great source of strength to the Church.

Grenfell of the Congo.

WHATEVER scholars may say for or against the hand of God in history, the Christian observer has no doubt about the evidence of there being a guiding providence in the association of the three major events that combined to produce the situation which culminated in the formation of the B.M.S. Congo Mission.

The first was the incentive provided by Robert Arthington, the Quaker of Leeds. Inheriting great wealth which accumulated during his lifetime more rapidly than he realised, Arthington desired passionately the return of his Lord which, according to his conviction, was delayed only until the Gospel had been preached for a witness to all the nations. To hasten this consummation Arthington assumed poverty that his fortune might be spent in promoting speedy evangelism throughout the world. His large house on the then outskirts of Leeds remained closed save for one room where he practised a life of extreme austerity and discipline. This room became an observatory from which he followed world movements and events, and kept himself abreast of new openings for the Gospel. The Congo region was among these, for Arthington, in common with other men, was fascinated by that land of mystery. He knew as did others, that the immense volume of water that surged through its mouth far into the Atlantic, indicated a great river coming from the heart of Africa. He knew of the attempts of Roman Catholic missionaries, traders and adventurers through four centuries to penetrate the formidable western land barrier and to probe a way to the land and water beyond. He believed that mid-Africa must be inhabited by a vast population that needed the Gospel. Like others, he had been moved by the tale of Livingstone's explorations and his revelations of human suffering and need. So on May 11th, 1877, he penned his epoch-making letter to the B.M.S. Committee in which he urged the sending of an expedition to the King of Kongo at San Salvador to ascertain that monarch's attitude to the settlement of missionaries in his domain, and offered to give £1,000 to meet the cost. That offer was accepted.

The second element was the presence in Cameroons, 800 miles north of Congo, of two young and eager missionaries, George Grenfell and Thomas Comber, who chafed under the limitations of their narrow coastal foothold and, with the true pioneer spirit, had had their appetities whetted by exploratory canoe journeys along Cameroons streams. They, too, looked southwards to the prospective larger Congo region, and so, when the B.M.S.

Committee invited them, on the strength of Arthington's letter, to go to San Salvador, they made their response with alacrity.

In the midst of these moves, and this is the third factor, news reached this country that H. M. Stanley the explorer, had emerged on the West African coast after an adventurous journey of 999 days in which he had travelled 3,000 miles on the Congo from its source to its mouth. His revelation that the river was mostly navigable and that big populations lived on its banks was received as a confirmation of the steps that had already been taken. So the Congo Mission was born.

Each of the five men who formed the missionary staff in the opening years is worthy of extensive notice, but our concern here is with George Grenfell, the centenary of whose birth falls on August 21st. Grenfell's birthplace was the Cornish hamlet of Sancreed, a few miles from Penzance and Land's End. The wide spaces of the Atlantic are close at hand and its gales sweep the countryside. Ennis Cottage, the family home, is still standing and Grenfell's association with it is to be commemorated by a plaque. Grenfell is a Cornish name and George could claim kinship with such notable figures as Sir Richard Grenville, Sir Wilfred Grenfell and Julian Grenfell. His own modesty and charm, his courtly bearing and consideration for others, were evidences of an innate nobility derived from worthy forebears.

Depression in trade led Grenfell's father to move to Birmingham when George was in his third year. The family was attached to the Church of England and the children attended the parish church Sunday School for some years until the unwelcome attentions of a bully led to their transferring themselves to Heneage Street Baptist Church, another instance of unexpected causes leading to far-reaching results. For Heneage Street Church, now a down town cause soon likely to be moved to another part of the city, but then pulsating with life and vigour under the leadership of the Rev. Samuel Chapman, was a determining factor in shaping Grenfell's course. In particular, the teaching and example of a godly Sunday School teacher, unlearned in the schools but wise in the things of God, played its part in his conversion and the public profession of his faith in baptism while he was in his early teens. Let this James Weston, shop porter, be held in honour for the part he played in the making of Grenfell. Thenceforward Grenfell was engaged in a round of Sunday activities from early morning until late at night, which helped further to mould his character and fit him for service. Samuel Chapman was succeeded by Benwell Bird, who showed his interest in a group of young men, of whom Grenfell was one, by meeting them at 6.30 on Monday mornings for the study of elementary Greek.

David Livingstone, then in the midst of his African discoveries and adventures, fired Grenfell with a missionary passion, as he did many others in the mid-nineteenth century and since. So did the wraithlike Alfred Saker, pioneer and Father of the B.M.S. Cameroons Mission. And any alert lad who grew to manhood in expanding and bustling Birmingham whose leaders included John Bright, Joseph Chamberlain, Richard Cadbury, R. W. Dale and Charles Vince, could not fail to be stimulated and broadened in outlook. Grenfell's decision for missionary service was made in his twenty-third year. His application for admission to Bristol College, supported by the church and endorsed by Benwell Bird, was approved, and he entered as a student in 1873. While he threw himself into college life, its academic side irked him. In any case, his stay was short, for an urgent call to become colleague and eventual successor to Saker was responded to in 1874, and by the early months of 1875 he was on African soil. Incidentally we may wonder how a man with one eye would fare with a college committee today, and what chance a man with about a year's theological training would have with a candidate board.

Grenfell's Cameroons period may be regarded as an apprenticeship. English was understood and spoken by many of the natives, the mission was well organised, and Grenfell was quickly engaged in preaching, teaching, simple medical work and industrial activities. The mission was established on or near the coast and was surrounded by great mountains. The unknown hinterland sounded a constant call and presented a compelling challenge. Grenfell explored the waterways, made contacts with the people and, with Thomas Comber, who had by now joined the mission, discussed plans for advance. During this period Grenfell married Mary Hawkes of Birmingham who, however, lived only a few months in Africa. Then in 1878 the call to Congo reached him.

While awaiting the Home Committee's letter of instructions, Grenfell and Comber paid a preliminary visit to Banana, a trading post at the mouth of the Congo, to make their first contacts and to arrange for their later trip. They even made plans for proceeding at once to San Salvador, but were prevented by the rainy season, and had to content themselvs with a letter to the king apprising him of their projected visit. They were back in Congo in the summer and set out on their eight days' journey to San Salvador on July 30th, with a band of thirty carriers. It was an exacting introduction to conditions of travel in Congo. A path had sometimes to be hacked through the forest and long grass, swamps negotiated, rivers crossed by fording or on slender improvised suspension bridges, and precipitous hills surmounted. Their reception by the king was cordial and permission for the

establishment of a mission was readily granted. The second objective, the opening of a road through the cataract region to the navigable stretch of the Congo, remained unrealised through the intractability of native chiefs who refused right of way to the white men. Comber therefore returned to London to make his report to the Home Committee and Grenfell went back to Cameroons.

By 1880 Grenfell was once more in Congo to take his place among the small missionary staff. In the interval he had linked himself with Africa by marrying Rose Patience Edgerley of Cameroons.

The way to Stanley Pool still eluded numerous attempts to find it. Comber and Hartland made efforts to break through on the south side of the river while Holman Bentley and Crudgington took the north side. Success came at length, and in 1881 Bentley and Crudgington stood on the desolate shore of the Pool gazing eastwards over the tawny swift-flowing river as it narrowed before plunging over the cataracts. The road had to be made secure by the planting of a line of posts between Musuko, the limit of navigation from the ocean, first on the south bank and then on the north up to the Pool. Grenfell's organising powers and mechanical skill here found full scope. He organised wild and undisciplined workmen, supervised building operations with local material, planned a barter system of payments and constantly applied oil to the machinery.

With a clear waterway of 1,000 miles stretching before them and the Home Committee's plan of planting ten stations on its banks at intervals of approximately a hundred miles, a steamer became a necessity. Though the Congo basin includes the main river of 3,000 miles from source to mouth, and tributaries amounting to another 13,000 miles, the course of these is mostly shallow and broken by hundreds of islands and sandbanks. Lightness in draught was essential. The boat must be capable of carrying goods as well as passengers, and be adapted for the burning of wood in the absence of coal. Grenfell returned to this country with plans and specifications which were approved by the Home Committee and experts. Robert Arthington provided the money for the steamer building and the work was carried out at Chiswick with Grenfell in daily attendance at the yard. The boat ran its trial trips on the Thames, was named *Peace*, and was on show near Westminster Bridge for several weeks. Then it was dismantled and packed into 800 bundles for overland transport in Africa. This transport was a herculean task at which Grenfell proved himself a master. The route from the river base to Stanley Pool ran for 230 miles through grim country. For each of the three sections into which it was

divided, hundreds of men had to be recruited, organised into teams under headmen and, as far as possible, trained to work to a time-table. Severe physical obstacles and the hostility of suspicious chiefs and their tribes had to be overcome. For Grenfell it meant constant travel along the line of advance in exacting tropical conditions with fret to body, mind and spirit. But, aided by his colleagues, he won through, and in six months every bundle, save two, was safely on the shore of Stanley Pool.

While waiting for the arrival of engineers who were to reconstruct the steamer, Grenfell embarked on a preliminary voyage up the Congo in a small steel boat. On this journey his talent for exploration revealed itself. He spent the time taking soundings and bearings, charting and mapping the river, visiting villages on its banks and noting sites for possible stations. After going 400 miles upstream, he began his return journey hoping to find at its end that work had begun on the *Peace*. To his dismay he found on arrival at Stanley Pool that three of the slender missionary force had been sent home ill, another had died and the two engineers had also died on their way up country. This was among his darkest hours. With much misgiving he resolved to essay the re-building with the help of his African lads, with such success that the job was completed in four months. Grenfell wrote home that often he reached an impasse which he made a matter of prayer, and that "light always came in the morning." The launching took place in July, 1884, when, to the joy of the missionaries and the unbridled excitement of the natives, the preliminary trials proved satisfactory.

Without delay the *Peace*, with Grenfell on board, made its first journey up the Congo and covered the distance made in the steel boat. All the hopes centred in the vessel were realised and thousands of natives were awed by the sight of this new wonder of the white man. For the next two years—1884-1886, the *Peace* was used for exploratory work. In five extensive journeys it travelled 15,000 miles. On them Grenfell not only charted the main river for the thousand miles from Stanley Pool to Stanley Falls, but explored many tributaries which included the Mobangi, the Lefine, the Ruki, the Lomami, the Lulongo, the Buruki, the Juapa, the Kasai, the Lilua and the Kwa to the limit of navigation. Every part of each journey was carefully recorded. The map Grenfell made was 125 feet long and is so accurate that, to this day, it is is used by captains of state and trading steamers.

This remarkable achievement might have brought personal glory and advantage to Grenfell had he so chosen. As it was it aroused intense interest in governments and learned societies. The members of the Royal Geographical Society listened with

enthralled attention to the tale of his discoveries and adventures, published his maps and conferred the Founders' Gold Medal upon him, and other honours, including some from royalty, came to him.

The record of these journeys makes thrilling reading. Often the path of the steamer was blocked by crowds of armed natives in canoes. More than once wire guards had to be placed in position to protect the crew from poisoned arrows shot by natives who surrounded the vessel or who fired from overhanging trees. On occasion it was pursued many miles along the river. These incidents sometimes had their amusing side, as when a menacing fleet of canoes was put to ignominious flight by blasts from the steamer's whistle.

Grenfell's devotion to exploration drew criticism at home. This however was effectively countered by Alfred Henry Baynes, the B.M.S. General Secretary and Grenfell's staunch supporter, and by Grenfell's colleagues who had little difficulty in proving that accurate knowledge of the country and its peoples was an essential preliminary to its effective missionary occupation.

Grenfell was always a missionary. Throughout the unsettled early years of his life in Africa and on his exploratory voyages he made and seized opportunities for evangelism. This was particularly the case with the lads who travelled with him on the *Peace*. Visits to villages were used by him as occasions for seed-sowing. Two years after the opening of Lukolela, the first up-river station, in 1886, Grenfell began the work at Bolobo where he shared in the acquisition of the local unwritten language, opened a school for boys and itinerated in neighbouring villages. He had learnt much already of the degradation of pagan life on his travels, but what he saw of its power among the virile folk of Bolobo shocked him. One can the more picture his joy when the simple school chapel was opened there on Easter Sunday, 1889, and it fell to him to tell for the first time the glad tidings of a Saviour who had conquered death and sin for all who trusted in Him.

Even now an ordered life eluded him, for it was necessary that the *Peace*, as the connecting link in the growing missionary chain along the Congo, should make three voyages each year up and down river to carry missionaries, mails, stores and other material for new stations. Other missions also availed themselves of the facilities it offered. Grenfell took the lion's share in all this. And the expanding work placed other responsibilities upon him, for he was the trusted leader and adviser of younger missionaries of the B.M.S. and other missions. New stations were opened at Monsembi and Upoto in 1891, Yakusu in 1895 and Yalemba in 1906. The state turned to him for help and, with the consent of the Home Committee, he spent over a year in 1891-1892

as leader of a Royal Commission to fix the boundary between the Congo Free State and Portugese territory.

Advance was still the order of the day at the turn of the century. Spurred once more by Robert Arthington, who offered a further £17,000 to provide and equip an expedition to explore a vast territory to the north-east towards Lake Nyanza and the Nile, Grenfell set out, a man of fifty, on this project with a fleet of canoes. He explored the Lindi, the Aruwimi and the Lualaba. These journeys involved dragging boats and equipment round cataracts, exposure to the extremes of tropical climatic conditions, and making contacts with new and strange peoples. On each journey he found large populations and openings for the Gospel which, alas, could not be seized through the shortness of staff and the absence of needed recruits.

Amid many setbacks and sorrows, Grenfell had his joys. He tells how one day in a district where on his first visit he had come upon the horrors of the Arab slave trade with burning villages, fleeing people and bodies of others who had been killed while trying to escape, the *Peace* anchored for the night while the strains of *All hail the power of Jesu's Name* came from a fleet of nearby canoes. Schoolboys had come out to hail the *Peace* and its beloved captain. Of another incident at Bolobo he wrote, "How can I get into the dumps when there are over forty young folk squatting on the floor of the next room singing a translation of *Lo, He comes with clouds descending* to *Calcutta* with a swing that makes my heart beat fast with the assurance of that blessed hope?"

The gap of eleven years between the opening of Yakusu and Yalemba stations was due partly to lack of reinforcements and partly to delaying tactics by the state authorities. When permission to begin at Yalemba was at length received, Grenfell hoped that a Yakusu missionary could be spared to undertake the task. But when he found the inadequate staff there working under high pressure through the rapidly expanding mission, he cheerfully shouldered the burden himself. With some of his loved Congo lads, he assumed once more the hazards of life in primitive conditions. Before long the strain of over thirty years in tropical Africa told upon his health and it became evident to his black helpers that he was seriously ill. They cared for him as best they could and sent a moving message in broken English to Yakusu in response to which one of the staff there hastened down river to his bedside. Little could be done, however, and on Sunday July 1st, 1906, Grenfell passed into the unseen. He was buried "as great men are buried" in the state cemetery at Basoko. Shortly after, the worn-out *Peace* was broken up.

The character of this truly great follower of his Lord can

be seen in this story told by Stapleton, a younger colleague. He was travelling with Grenfell on the *Peace*, when Grenfell suddenly exclaimed, "You know, I sometimes feel lately as though my work is nearly done. What will there be for me to do in the next life? All my life has been spent in learning how to explore. What use will God be able to make of me? Will it all be wasted?"

With a flash of inspiration his colleague replied, "You forget that there is the River of the Water of Life, and God will find you a *Peace* and exploring work to do."

"Oh!" rejoined Grenfell, "if God would use me to explore His hidden things and to reveal a pathway for His messengers, what a delight it would be!"

He spoke of this again and again. One day he said, "I shall be on that river. I shall see Livingstone. He will be on the bank for he is a better walker than I. I shall meet Bentley and Comber and many others." Then, after an interval of silence, he added, "I have begun to design my steamer for the River of the Water of Life." And, his biographer adds, he is still exploring.

H. L. HEMMENS.

Talking Drums of Africa, by John F. Carrington, Ph.D. (Carey Kingsgate Press, Ltd. 5s.).

This is a fascinating and important book. Dr. Carrington is an educational missionary at Yakusu, greatly gifted as a scientist and linguist, and with unusual powers of understanding the African mind. He has made a special study of the use of drums to send messages and has himself mastered the difficult and apparently dying technique. In very attractive fashion—aided by a number of clever illustrations of his own—Dr. Carrington here lets us into the secret of the forest language. Friends of the B.M.S. will rejoice to know that the great tradition of Grenfell, Bentley and Weeks in the sympathetic, scientific observation of African customs is being so well maintained in the present generation. This will make an admirable gift book for boys, young and old, and indeed for any interested in African life. It is also an important contribution to anthropology.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

George Grenfell: Master Builder of Foundations, by H. L. Hemmens. (Carey Kingsgate Press, Ltd. 1s. 6d.).

Written by Grenfell's biographer for the Centenary Celebrations. With seven pages of pictures.

Reviews.

The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, by B. B. Warfield. Edited by S. G. Craig, with an Introduction by C. Van Til, 1948. (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia. $3.75.)

The main part of this volume consists of a reprint of a number of essays by Dr. Warfield on subjects connected with the inspiration of the Bible. The essays were originally published at various dates between 1892 and 1915, and the general point of view is that the Bible is wholly infallible, and that there are no degrees of inspiration. It may be appealed to at any point with the assurance that whatever it may be found to say, that is the Word of God (p. 106). The author is able to maintain this position by the simple device of avoiding any study of the dilemmas it involves. Our Lord said: "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies" (*Matt.* v. 43 f.). May we really make equal appeal to the Old Testament law and to its abrogation without distinction, or has the abrogation superior authority for the Christian? When we read in 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1 that it was the Lord who moved David to number the people, and in 1 *Chron.* xxi. 1 that it was Satan who so moved David, may we really accept these two statements as of equal validity? The reviewer once met one who overcame the difficulty here by supposing that God is Satan and Satan God! It is a pity that Dr. Warfield did not give us any guidance as to how he would meet these and a vast number of other dilemmas with which he leaves us.

More important, however, than these essays from a former generation is the long Introduction, in which Professor Van Til seeks to defend Dr. Warfield's positions in the face of recent movements of thought. He holds with the strongest emphasis that the views of Dr. Warfield are the only ones which can be held by a Christian, and he claims to defend them against all comers. That he is widely acquainted with the currents of modern thought is not to be denied, and that he has an acute mind is as little to be denied. Yet the reviewer found his essay exasperating because he so often sheers off from an argument just at the point where he ought to get to grips with it, or makes completely unexceptionable statements with which his Christian

opponents would wholly agree and then leaps to a conclusion that has no relation with them.

Throughout he lumps together all who do not accept his view of the infallibility of the Scriptures, whether they belong to other sections of the Christian Church or whether they are non-Christian or anti-Christian. The rejection of the infallible Bible, he says, involves the rejection of Christianity (p. 14). He defines the basic issue between himself and modern theology in these words: "In the Christian view of things it is the self-contained God who is the final point of reference while in the case of the modern view it is the would-be self-contained man who is the final point of reference in all interpretation" (p. 18). Lest the reader should suppose from this that Professor Van Til is a Barthian, let it be said that Barth is amongst those he criticizes, and he has published a whole volume in criticism of Barth and Brunner. Many who do not share Professor Van Til's view of the nature of the authority of the Scripture would deny, as strongly as he, that man is the final point of reference in all interpretation. Similarly he is expressing the view of many who disagree with him in his view of infallibility when he says that the orthodox Christian "claims for God complete control over all the facts and forces of the universe. Hence he claims for God exhaustive knowledge of all things. All the light of men is in relation to him who is *the* Light as candlelight is in relation to the sun. All interpretation on the part of man must, to be true, be reinterpretation of the interpretation of God by which facts are what they are."

Fundamentally, Professor Van Til seeks to show by argument that all argument is invalid unless his conclusions are accepted to begin with. "Reason employed by a Christian always comes to other conclusions than reason employed by a non-Christian" (p. 25). He denies to the natural man the ability to reason correctly. "He can follow a process of reasoning intellectually. He may even have a superior intellect. But of himself he always makes the wrong use of it" (p. 39). Again, he says: "There are two positions with respect to reality and knowledge. Applied to the question of the Bible it now appears that the infallible Bible is required if a man is to have any knowledge and if his process of learning is to be intelligible" (p. 46). It is surely futile, one would suppose, if these extravagant claims are justified, to attempt to reason with those who disagree with him. If there is no arbitrament of reason to which appeal can be made, then all argument is vain, since argument is by its nature an appeal to reason. And if Professor Van Til were really persuaded that it is in vain, he would not make any show of argument—though it is merely a show, since he resorts

to unsubstantiated claims to help him over all difficulties. He claims that in the position of Warfield we have "the most consistent defense of the idea of infallibility of Scripture" (p. 29). But what is meant by a "defense" if it is not in terms of reason, and how can it be in those terms if reason is identified with faith and a monopoly of it claimed?

There are moments when Professor Van Til recognizes the logic of his own positions, though he will rarely do so clearly and steadily. He says: "It might seem that the orthodox view of authority is to be spread only by testimony and by prayer, not by argument" (p. 38). To agree to this would be to condemn his whole essay. Moreover, he continues: "But this would militate directly against the very foundations of all Christian revelation, namely, to the effect that all things in the universe are nothing if not revelational of God". If then testimony and prayer will not suffice, but argument is called for, what is its nature? Professor Van Til tells us. "The method of argument that will alone fit these conditions may be compared to preaching." But is not preaching testimony? That he contemplates no real argument he makes quite clear in the following passage, in which he denies that the natural man is able to accept a true interpretation of the revelation of God.

Here he seems to the reviewer to be confusing two quite different things. The reviewer would wholly agree that the awakening to spiritual life—what Professor Van Til compares with the raising of Lazarus—can only be achieved by the grace of God and is not to be achieved by mere argument. But this does not mean that reason has no sphere, or that in its own sphere it is not supreme. Within the realm of argument reason is supreme, and whatever cannot justify itself to reason cannot claim to be reasonable. This is not for one moment to claim that all truth is rational truth, or that the sphere of reason is all-inclusive. Professor Van Til criticizes Aquinas and Butler and all similar writers on Apologetics, by holding that their argument "allows that the natural man has the plenary ability to interpret certain fact correctly even though he wears the colored spectacles of the covenant-breaker" (pp. 21 f.). But again he seems to go much to far. That reason cannot of itself attain the knowledge of God and His ways, and that for all our knowledge of him we are dependent on his Self-revelation is undoubtedly true. Yet it can be shown that there is nothing contrary to reason, and therefore unreasonable, in the content of revelation. It is precisely here that Professor Van Til, like Dr. Warfield, fails to come to grips with his subject. Ultimately their view of the infallibility of Scripture is a dogma, that must not be too closely examined, and that must be dealt with only in safe generalities.

It should be added that the infallibility that is claimed attaches only to the original autographs of Scripture. Professor Van Til says that Christians need not be worried about the fact that these are lost (p. 46). Against Brunner's view that the infallibility is then useless, he opposes the statement that without it men "are lost in the boundless and bottomless ocean of chance," but offers no serious grounds for this remarkable statement. He adds the further observation that "the true God if he revealed himself at all could not but reveal himself infallibly." This again neatly confuses the issue. Does Professor Van Til mean to say that the Bible is infallible in its revelation of God, but not necessarily infallible in its record of human history? Does he mean to say that it is infallibly true that God's will is that we should hate our enemies or that we should love them? Which of these is the infallible revelation of the God who is unchanging? Or does Professor Van Til hold that both infallibly revealed a God whose nature changed? The reviewer would agree with the statement that the true God could not but reveal Himself infallibly, but holds that the measure of the revelation is conditioned in part by its medium. He finds a revelation of God in Nature, though less profound and significant than His revelation through Moses; he finds the revelation through Moses less profound and significant than the revelation in Christ. In so far as God reveals Himself through human personality, the infallibility of His self-revelation is clouded by the fallibility of the medium, and it was precisely for this reason that the perfect revelation could only be made through the Perfect Man. A doctrine of the infallibility of the Old Testament renders unnecessary the Incarnation. The New Testament teaches that it is Christ and Christ alone who is the effulgence of the divine glory. He is therefore the supreme revelation of God, by whom all other revelation is to be tested, and all is not therefore on a flat level of infallibility. Professor Van Til may deny the title of those who hold this new Testament faith to be called Christian, but the keys of the Kingdom will remain in other hands.

Finally a Baptist may be pardoned for wondering how one who holds Professor Van Til's views on the infallibility of the Bible can belong to a Church which practises Infant Baptism. The "infallible" Bible knows only a baptism which follows faith, and which is a dying with Christ and resurrection to newness of life in Him.

H. H. Rowley.

An Approach to Christology by Aubrey R. Vine, M.A., D.D., B.Sc., London. (Independent Press Ltd. 21s. net.)

Dr. Vine, the able minister of Broad Street Congregational Church, Reading, is to be congratulated upon writing, in the midst of a busy ministerial life, a major work of this magnitude (480 pages). The academic competence of this book is guaranteed by the fact that it was approved by the Senate of the University of London for the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

The first part of the book is an exposition of the thought of Nestorius, based upon his work *The Bazaar of Heracleides.* Although Dr. Vine believes that the views of Nestorius were rightly rejected by the Church (e.g. the denial of the title Theotokos to the Virgin Mary was justly condemned), he finds in his metaphysic and Christology valuable ideas for the reconstruction of Christology in the second part of this book. Nestorius was not a Nestorian in the sense of upholding a duality of persons in the incarnate Christ. The positive assertions of Nestorius of which Dr. Vine approves are three: (1) "Jesus Christ was God in that He was the (allogenous) prosôpon[1] of God the Word, who during the existence of Jesus Christ had no other prosôpon, and God the Word is God in that His ousia and nature is (*sic*) ousia and nature of God, an ousia and nature one and indiscriminable." (2) "Jesus Christ was man in that He had a body and animal soul just as we have, and a centre of consciousness and will capable of feeling our urges and stresses." (3) "Jesus Christ was one, because there was never any centre of consciousness and will other than God the Word, who experienced in two natures, that of His own divine ousia and that of the ousia of humanity which He Himself completed."

The second part of the book seeks in the light of the above, to interpret and justify orthodox Christology against the background of a modern metaphysic (dynamic where that of Nestorius was static and mechanical), and modern science and biology. How orthodox Dr. Vine is can be illustrated by his belief in the Virgin Birth and in the impassibility of God (rightly and philosophically understood). The Christology which the author defends roughly corresponds to the ancient doctrine of enypostasia. "God, from whom the potentiality of the human spirit derived, quite evidently contains within Himself the fulness and perfection of anything which He causes to be manifest . . . and could quite readily realise within Himself . . . the appreciation and responses suitable to an ideal human spirit" (pp 370-1). That is, the Eternal Logos always has contained within Himself the potentiality of human

[1] A "prosôpon" is the manifestation of an "ousia" (essence) according to its nature (p. 105).

nature. No opposition, therefore, could exist between the human and divine natures of Jesus. The human nature, no less than the divine, finds its hypostasis in the divine Logos. In Jesus perfect manhood was fully integrated into God by complete identification with His will and purpose; and by His exaltation the Son of God has taken His perfect manhood up into the Godhead eternally (p. 379).

The biological side of the Incarnation whereby "God the Word was able to take into His own being . . . that which arose in the Blessed Virgin Mary" is described with deep reverence, but also with an amazing wealth of technical scientific detail concerning parthenogenesis. The divine condescension involved by the incarnation is defined, not as "kenosis" (emptying), but as "anapausis" (voluntary suspension). Dr. Vine rightly says that *Phil.* ii. 7 will not bear the weight which the kenotic theories have placed upon it. But he is on more questionable ground when he denies any truth to the doctrine of kenosis. His own rival theory of *anapausis* means that throughout His incarnate life the Son of God was voluntarily suspending His omnipotence and omniscience, accepting human limitations which at any time (even in babyhood) he could have thrown off. "God the Word as the infant Jesus could have spoken words of omniscient wisdom." Jesus Christ possessed "a double awareness: an awareness of the existence of sources of knowledge and power within Himself, but which He had chosen not to use . . . and an awareness which came to Him as awareness comes to us." This theory, which seems to us imply that our Lord lived a life of pretence, will seem to many readers to be quite incredible and not far removed from the Docetism which Dr. Vine vehemently repudiates. How the Divine could become human while remaining Divine is a mystery beyond our comprehension; but if we are to attempt an explanation at all, some (perhaps modified) theory of kenosis appears to be inevitable.

The second part closes with a defence of the Chalcedonian Definition in modern terms, and is followed by an Appendix consisting of "Notes on the Bazaar of Heracleides."

The book as a whole reveals an immense amount of painstaking work. Its excessively technical terminology does not make for easy reading; but to a careful and attentive reader the meaning will not be obscure. In view of the extent to which Dr. Vine uses with approval Greek philosophical terms and conceptions, it is surprising to find him rejecting the natural immortality of the spirit as "a Greek rather than a Christian concept" (p. 314). We are prompted to ask: Does not the (undoubtedly Biblical) doctrine that man is created in the image of God imply the existence of an immortal principle in man? The absence of any adequate treatment of the "imago Dei" in relation to the Logos

and to man, is, in our opinion, the most serious defect in the book.

Nevertheless this work is deserving of high praise for its valuable and, in many ways, successful attempt to show that an orthodox Christology is not incompatible with modern biological, scientific, and philosophical concepts.

(We have noted very few misprints. On p. 199 the reference to pp. 623-625 should apparently be to pp. 458-9. On p. 291 footnote 2, " parthogensis " should of course be " parthogenesis.")

A. W. ARGYLE.

The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers, by Thomas F. Torrance, D.Theol., B.D. (Oliver & Boyd. 12s. 6d.).

The writings of the sub-apostolic age are full of interest, but every reader is conscious of the great gulf which separates them from those in the New Testament, and is left asking himself the reason for the unfortunate change of atmosphere and outlook. In this monograph, approved for a doctorate of theology by the University of Basel, the seven writings known as the literature of the Apostolic Fathers are submitted to careful examination as regard their use of the word *charis* and its derivatives. Dr. Torrance, now one of the editors of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* (in the pages of which certain introductory portions of this book have already appeared) has no difficulty in showing how different is the conception of grace in the *Didache*, Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Barnabas and Hermas from the characteristic New Testament view that it is " the breaking into the world of the ineffable love of God in a deed of absolutely decisive significance which cuts across the whole of human life and sets it on a new basis." In the second century writings salvation is made to depend on sustained personal effort. " The Gospel carries with it an eternal indicative, but post-apostolic Christianity laboured only under an imperative." Grace is often thought of as a needed potency imprisoned in the Church. Dr. Torrance points out that on the mission field today the converts of the first generations often have great difficulty in apprehending the radically new features of the gospel. In the life of the early Church the legalism of Judaisers and the Hellenism of Gnostics proved all too powerful. The use of the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew Old Testament and the length of time before the Pauline letters established themselves as authoritative were contributing factors in the change that took place. Some of the true implications of the gospel—particularly as regards grace—were not recovered until the Reformation.

This is an important book for both theological students and advanced scholars, for the theology of these documents has never before been so exhaustively discussed in English. It will repay reading by all ministers, for it will drive them back upon the essential element in the good news they preach. Dr. Torrance assumes an earlier date for the *Didache* than many English scholars are ready to accept. A few small points may be noted for future printings. On p. 42 the words "do not" seem to have dropped out of his paraphrase of *Didache* 1, 3. The references in page 49, n. 6. hardly support his claim for an "almost liturgical use" of the words "commandments" and "ordinances" in 1 *Clement*. The references in notes 4 and 5 on page 62 seem misplaced. The Greek phrase on page 92 needs correction.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

The Eternal Purpose, by D. Tait Patterson. (Carey Kingsgate Press. 15s.).

In *Margaret Ogilvy*, that delightful portrait of his mother, Sir James Barrie tell us, "She begins the day by the fireside with the New Testament in her hands, an old volume with its loose pages beautifully refixed, and its cover sewn and resewn by her, so that you would say it can never fall to pieces. It is mine now, and to me the black threads with which she stitched it are as part of the contents. Other books she read in the ordinary manner, but this one differently, her lips moving with each word as if she were reading aloud, and her face very solemn. The Testament lies open on her lap long after she has ceased to read, and the expression of her face has not changed." Such quiet, unhurried, meditative reading of the Scriptures was the secret of her beautiful life; and we of this noisy, hurrying, restless generation need to rediscover this secret if we are to produce strong and winsome Christians, deeply rooted in the Faith.

This book is a sincere and valuable attempt to encourage such quiet, unhurried, meditative reading of the Bible. Its sub-title indicates that it is, "A method of devotion resting upon and sustained by the use of the Holy Scriptures." It is, in fact, entirely in the words of Holy Scripture. Mr. Tait Patterson has provided us with a Bible Reading and accompanying Devotions for every day of a whole year. There are five parts to each day's devotions. First, there is a short Adoration in Bible words. Then follows the selected Scripture passage printed in full and called The Lection which we are encouraged to read slowly and thoughtfully. This passes naturally into one of the great Bible prayers. A Scriptural Blessing follows, and the day's devotions close with The Meditation—a few sentences of Scripture which those who

use the book are advised to commit to memory and ponder throughout the day. The choice of Scriptures is imaginative and catholic and the wealth of devotion material in the Bible may well surprise those who are not familiar with such a classic as the *Preces Privatae* of Bishop Andrews.

It is the expressed hope of the compiler that, " The ordinary man or woman who finds it difficult to pray, and more difficult to read the Bible, may find in the daily use of this book a means of contact with our Lord and an increase of desire to follow more closely His way of life." It is difficult for a reviewer to decide how far the book is likely to achieve its avowed object: that can only be proved by sustained and devotional use of the book. But its very Scripturalness should make a wide appeal to members of our Baptist Churches and those who are regular in their use of the book will be richly rewarded by a steadily deepening knowledge of the Bible and by a valuable training in a disciplined prayer-life.

The book is attractively produced by the Carey Kingsgate Press and would make an admirable present to anyone whom one was trying to encourage in the devotional life.

EDGAR W. WRIGHT.

The Christian Origins of Social Revolt, by William Dale Morris. (George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 12s. 6d.)

This is a timely book. It draws attention to the way in which social revolution has been inspired by the Christian ethic, even when the majority of Church leaders have defended the "status quo." Beginning with some account of the social heresies of the Middle Ages, it concentrates attention on the Lollards and Hussites, the revolting peasants of sixteenth century Germany, the Anabaptists, the radical sects of seventeenth century England, Nonconformity at the time of the Industrial Revolution, the Chartists, the Christian Socialists of the mid-nineteenth century, and certain of the Christian pioneers of the modern Labour Party like Stewart Headlam and Keir Hardie. In all these cases inspiration was drawn directly from the Bible, and it is because in this country social revolution and Christianity have continued closely intertwined that there has not been the hostility between the organised working class and organised religion which has been so widespread on the Continent.

The book has some unsatisfactory features. It is its cumulative effect rather than the treatment of all the different sections which is impressive. Many of the chapters which are of very varied length, are little more than scissors and paste, and

in some cases better authorities might have been found. Engels did well to draw attention to the importance of Thomas Münzer, but to call him "in many respects a greater man than Luther" (p. 75) is to be guilty of exaggeration and distortion. There are a number of small errors of fact. For example, Wyclif was not himself the translator of the Bible, though he inspired others to the task (p. 26). Zwickau is in Germany, not Switzerland (p. 76 n.). Several of Walwyn's writings are now available, thanks to the work of Haller and Davies (p. 94). There are printer's errors on pages 28 and 90. Nor is it very clear from the concluding pages whether the author believes that there is continued inspiration to be drawn from the Christian religion, apart from the bald assertion of the Brotherhood of Man. The last section is headed "A New Humanism" and recalls William Morris's plea for "fellowship."

There is, however, much in these pages for Baptists to ponder. In the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries they were often among the most radical in their social sympathies. What were the causes of this change that has taken place during the last sixty years? Is there a way back into closer association with those whose passion is social justice?

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

Some Victorian Portraits and Others by Hilda Martindale. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 10s. 6d.).

This book contains a dozen appreciations of men and women, with perhaps one exception, not widely known to fame, who in their day and generation wrought a good day's work. They occupied different stations in life and expressed their personalities in varying ways, but they seem to have in common a certain loftiness of character and a disinterested love of their kind. When I had finished the book I laid it down, saying to myself, "You have been in good company."

I was especially interested in the chapter in which the writer describes an unconventional parson. She confesses to a liking for such because she has found him to be a believer in reality and to be tolerant of other people's opinions. The parson she describes was William Drury who, having served as chaplain in the South African War and in the First World War ended his life as Rector of Binsted, a little hamlet in Sussex. He was exquisitely sensitive to every expression of beauty. Once when seeing a butterfly emerging in all its glory and settling on a flower, he was heard to murmur "The Kingdom of Heaven is with us."

He was very truthful, too. Once in a talk on vocation he confessed—" Well ! I've often thought I was no good as a parson and ought to chuck it, but the only thing that keeps me from doing so is the certainty that I'd have to go back to it again next day, which is I suppose a certainty that it is my vocation."

A seat erected in the parish in memory of him bears the inscription, " He preached forgiveness."

No one will read this book and not be refreshed by it.

RHYS T. RICHARDS.

The Anabaptists of the 16th Century and their Influence in the Modern World by Ernest A. Payne. (Carey Kingsgate Press. 1s.)

" In one of the discussions at the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches, it was pointed out that a large percentage, perhaps a quarter, of those in membership with the World Council, belong not to the Orthodox, the Anglican, the Lutheran or the Reformed traditions, but to another, one which runs directly back to the continental Anabaptists," says Mr. Payne almost at the end of this Dr. Williams's Trust Lecture, delivered at the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen. This sentence is a key one, for from first to last he has in mind the second part of the title—" their influence in the modern world."

The extent to which Anabaptists have influenced the political and social atmosphere of recent times is being increasingly recognised but their gradual leavening of all branches of the Church is often lost sight of. If one may dare hope that at this time of day all the great communions have learned that in matters of religion and conscience compulsion may not be used, then it is because the Anabaptists have placarded this truth before them. The Anabaptists have their direct descendants in the modern world, on both sides of the Atlantic. The Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren represented them at Amsterdam. Although so many English Nonconformists, including Baptists, are reluctant to acknowledge them as their forefathers, this lecture states boldly that all the English Free Churches are indebted to the Anabaptists and sets forth a number of facts which point to there being a direct connection between Anabaptism on the Continent and the rise of Dissent in this country.

So much new material for assessing and interpreting the left wing of the Reformation has recently come to light and is here carefully listed that the pamphlet is invaluable for its bibliography alone. There is, however, to be found here as well a masterly outline of the movement, a timely placing of it in the oecumenical

setting and a spirited defence of its conception of the catholicity of the Church. Along with the author's other pamphlet, *The Baptist Movement in the Reformation and Onwards,* this lecture greatly helps to remedy the gaps in the literature readily accessible.

K. C. DYKES.

Sunshine and Shadows, by Joseph Willmott. (Carey Kingsgate Press, 2s. 6d.).

This attractively illustrated and well written booklet tells the story of a century of Baptist witness in Hounslow, Middlesex. The Minutes of the present church go back to 1868, but there was certainly a Baptist cause earlier than this. It was perhaps—though Mr. Willmott does not make the suggestion—a fruit of the work of what from 1825 to 1859 was known as the West London and Berkshire Association; this certainly included churches in Staines, Uxbridge and West Drayton. Much steadfast devotion under difficult and often disheartening circumstances is recorded in these pages. There have been eleven ministries in the last sixty years, and one of them was of twelve years' duration! But Mr. Willmott is able to end his story on a cheerful note. "At no time in all its long history have the prospects of our church been brighter than they are today."

The Pilgrim's Progress, by John Bunyan. (Cherry Tree Book, Withy Grove Press, Ltd. 2s.).

This unabridged reprint of Bunyan's classic is of the format and size so popular at the moment. It is sponsored by the Kemsley Newspapers Ltd., who are to be congratulated on their enterprise. A few obsolete words are explained in footnotes. It is to be hoped that this attractive edition will catch the eye of many new readers and that those who already know the riches of the book will aid in its circulation.

ANNUAL MEETING.

At the Baptist Historical Society's annual meeting, held in Dr. Williams's Library on Thursday, 28th April, 1949, tea was followed by the transaction of business under the chairmanship of the President, Mr. S. J. Price. Reports were presented by the Secretary and Treasurer, and the officers and committee were re-elected. A greatly appreciated address on "Some Implications of History for Theology" was delivered by Dr. Geoffrey F. Nuttall, of New College, London.

The
Baptist Historical Society

was founded in 1908.

It has recorded Baptist history, and published books and articles of great importance, including seven volumes of *Baptist Transactions*, and twelve volumes of the *Baptist Quarterly*.

It has assisted students engaged in research at schools and colleges, thus contributing to their training in Baptist principles.

It has helped Churches needing historical information for legal purposes, thus protecting Baptist property.

It has furnished information to Churches for Jubilee, Centenary, Bi-centenary and other celebrations.

It has arranged highly successful pilgrimages to places of historic interest.

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