

Entre Nous.

Alfred E. Garvie.

The name of Dr. A. E. Garvie needs no introduction to the readers of this magazine or for that matter to any who are interested in religious life. But whatever the degree of knowledge of this outstanding personality the details of his life and work given by him in such a fine objective way in *Memories and Meanings of my Life*, just issued by Allen & Unwin (8s. 6d. net), cannot fail to be of great interest.

The autobiography opens in Poland in the town of Zyrardow where his father was one of the directors of a textile factory. His grandparents had emigrated to Poland as a result of financial difficulties after the Napoleonic wars. Garvie was one of a large family, all closely united in family affection. He cherished a pardonable pride in his father as the ideal captain of industry, as much concerned for the welfare of the workers as the profits of the shareholders. His brother Thomas was a man of the same type, and there is a fine story told of his last journey from Archangel to Mourmansk where he died, in 1918, after undergoing great privations. 'A fellow-traveller sent me an account of his last days. As we knew him, he was a tall and stout man, but she described him as the small white-haired old gentleman who was like a ministering angel to the refugees, advising and helping whenever he could. On the steamer he insisted, ill as he was, on giving up his cabin to a mother with children. His end was as his life had been—unselfish service.'

The early chapters of the volume contain a valuable historical picture of Poland under Russian rule. Many of his memories were painful, and a number of unforgettable stories are told. These experiences of his youth, he says, 'may explain why, although I strive by God's grace to be as meek as Moses, I sometimes blaze with indignation at any instances of tyranny, and am very jealous of any infringement of personal liberty.' In Poland Garvie laid the foundations of his mastery of foreign languages so useful in his international work. When he came to Scotland at the age of twelve he already spoke Polish, French, Russian and German.

After his school days at George Watson's college—where he left as Dux of the commercial side—he was apprenticed for four years to the drapery trade, working in a wholesale warehouse in Glasgow. He found the business training of value later, and he says of it in his engaging way, 'I trust that those

with whom I have had to do since have discovered that a minister and even a professor can be business-like and a man of affairs.'

His keenest interest, however, was already the spread of the gospel and Christian ideals, and the lad who each Sunday evening planned and prepared three or four addresses for the following Sunday, and who had already presided over one meeting at nine-thirty, another at eleven, attended Church service in the afternoon, given the address at a mission-hall meeting, and in the evening spoken at an evangelistic meeting, was the protagonist of the man whose almost incredibly numerous and many-sided Christian activities have been the admiration and envy of those who know him.

After four years Garvie found that it was not business but the preaching of the gospel that was to be his life's work. His call was to the Congregational Ministry—the Presbyterian church of which he was then a member not offering him at that time sufficient religious liberty. But 'all the narrowness and even harshness which I met in these evangelical circles, much as I disliked it, did not provoke a reaction against evangelical theology; and, although all my doubts and difficulties were not at once removed, gradually the conviction was deepened that so sinful a world needed so great a Saviour as God in His love had given.'

Dr. Garvie took his Arts course at Glasgow and his Theological at Mansfield College, Oxford. After two short pastorates in Scotland (Morley wrote of him while he was in Montrose: 'It did me good to think of a bright light of thought, knowledge, interest, burning away on this far-off shore') he went to London where he spent the next thirty years, only retiring from the Principalship of Hackney and New College in 1933. His influence during these years has been as great as his activities have been outstanding. The college work that would have been more than enough for most men took only a part of his time. Preaching, church work, committee work, international and ecumenical conferences—he was Chairman of the Congregational Union, Chairman of the London Missionary Society, Vice-chairman of Copec, took an important part in the Stockholm Conference of 1925, and was deputy Chairman of the Lausanne Faith and Order Conference—and much important literary work were all fitted in.

Some of Dr. Garvie's earliest literary work appeared in this magazine to which he is still a

valued contributor. He began to write for it in 1893 when he was at Montrose—his first contribution apparently being a review of Dr. Bruce's *Apologetics*. We may be excused if we quote his tribute to Dr. Hastings. 'A more considerate and courteous editor I have never met.' (We notice a slight slip in referring to the articles which he contributed to the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. He speaks of the first five volumes as being edited by Dr. James Hastings instead of all the twelve volumes).

He has always had an 'itch for writing,' and the Bibliography contains the titles of thirty-eight books in addition to all his contributions to dictionaries and encyclopædias, magazines and newspapers. It is an amazing output, and when one remembers his many other activities one wonders how it has been possible.

It is doubtful if Dr. Garvie could have carried through all these multifarious activities had it not been for his happy home life. After his wife's death he speaks of her as 'my life's best gift,' and she herself said just before the end, 'Ours has been a perfect marriage.'

Has he dissipated his energies? We have no doubt of the answer ourselves, but we will put it in Dr. Garvie's own words; for he has the most disarming way of meeting possible criticism: 'I admit imperfect service everywhere, but I doubt if I could have done better by doing less. I have not an antithetic but a synthetic mind, and even, by God's reconciling Spirit, a reconciling disposition. Accordingly, I have always been led to see God, God's world, God's purpose in the world, God's summons to His Church as His dependent and subordinate organ "steadily and see it *whole*." All my interests and all my activities have had a unity of motive, whatever variety of method may have been necessary. No Christian service, for which I had opportunity, and had any capacity, was alien to me; I have not been able to say "No," whenever in a human need I heard a divine call. Two sayings of Paul's have inspired my thought, sentiment, effort: "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's" and "I am become all things to all men that I may by all means save some."

'There is a danger of losing the one thing needful, the better part, in being troubled about many things, and I have recognized and sought to guard against the danger. Dare I believe that the many books which I have written about the things of God show not only some learning from books, but also disclose a "life hid with Christ in God"—an inner life of which the aspiration, and endeavour, has been "to be crucified" to sin, and "to be raised

again in newness of life with Christ"?' I have sought as motive the constraining love of Christ, and as method the guidance of the spirit.'

Faith and Works.

During the time when he was having a business training in Glasgow—before he went to the University—A. E. Garvie was a member of Sydney Place Church. Every Sunday morning he presided over the senior meeting of a service for young people of both sexes called the Foundry Boy meeting. 'One of these lads, who caused much anxiety, told me with great excitement that he was converted. I asked him, "Does your wife know?" He answered, "I told her." He was a very unkind husband, and so I added, "What I mean is, are you treating her now as you ought?" With much surprise he asked what that had to do with his conversion. When I began to explain the moral obligations conversion involved, he said, as he went off: "I see ye dinna ken onything about it." His conversion was a flash in the pan, and we lost some of our influence over him.'

The Empty Church.

THE merits of the *Liverpool Diocesan Review*, edited by the Bishop of Liverpool, are well known. The January issue has an article by the Rev. C. W. Budden, M.A., M.D., Ch.B., Vicar of St. Mildred's, Croydon, in which he considers the reasons of the empty church. 'The late G. K. Chesterton once said in defence of his paradoxes that if one turns a thing upside down, something will fall out. . . . What do I mean by suggesting the Church has got things upside down? Well, if the question were put: What is the first purpose of a church? The answer would probably be to provide for worship. And if the question be pressed as to the most important act of worship, the reply is, generally, the service of Holy Communion. And this is exactly where I think we have got things upside down, and why the people have dropped out. The word "church" in its original conception was not used of a *building* but of a *congregation*. There were no church buildings in the first years of Christianity. The early Christians met in each other's houses. Our Lord erected no buildings and laid no foundation stones except figurative ones. He founded a fellowship. Fellowship comes first in the order of time, and if we are to build up Church life to-day, fellowship must be given the first emphasis. . . .

'The social life of the Church can be its biggest

gateway. In olden days (those blessed mediæval times when the priest had it all his own way—which makes it so attractive to a certain type of person) the Church was the centre of the life of the people. We can at least restore that healthy ideal, though we leave the priestcraft out of the programme. . . .

‘When our Lord began His ministry His first act was a social one. His second was to preach a sermon, and the test of that sermon was deeply significant. It was from Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”

‘The Church to-day says that the sacrament of Holy Communion must be given first place, but in our Lord’s ministry it came last. There we have things upside down. The Church’s first task is to convert. Conversions are not so popular to-day as a few years ago, but that is only because the word has fallen into disfavour. The *process* is as essential as ever. . . . We value the sacrament of Holy Communion, but its purpose is to strengthen and restore the faithful so that they can fight their Lord’s battles. But as no man can fight if he is a captive, he must first be released. The preaching of the gospel is the essential first step, and that was Christ’s method. In this I submit that our Church procedure is decidedly upside down, for if Evangelism is pressed, it is “by the dockside” or in some other inaccessible place. . . .

‘A few years ago, when Re-union was the topic of the day, much was said about a “Quadrilateral.” In conclusion I offer a quadrilateral. Let us pray that we may ever cultivate and retain that open ear which enables us to hear the call to high endeavour; the open mind which will welcome new light of knowledge; the open eyes which will be quick to discover God’s indwelling in the hearts of our fellow-men and women at present outside the Church; and the open hands which will be ready to share with those whom we consider less fortunate than ourselves. In short, let us first be Christians and then Christian Anglicans.’

Holy Places in Palestine.

Dr. W. M. Christie, of Haifa, has written a stirring article on Palestine in *The British Weekly* for January 6. The title is ‘No Peace Obtainable Through Partition.’ This article should receive the closest attention, and Dr. Christie’s reputation is

sufficient to ensure that it will do so. Among other things he deals with the attitude of the Jews to Christian holy places. ‘There is not a doubt that “multitudes in Israel” are determined to blot out the evidences of Christianity, and warnings have been given: “Take away your dead Christ from our Holy Land.”’

Among the examples which he gives are the following: ‘We have the notorious case of Agrippa’s Wall. This, the Third Wall, was built between the years A.D. 42 and 44 at about 800 metres north of the present Damascus Gate. Excavations laid bare hundreds of metres. Personally, I took the works of Josephus (who knew that wall very well and has described it fully), measured the towers, studied the line in relationship to the city, examined the stones, and gathered all evidences, and was fully convinced, as all other examiners have been, as to its genuineness.

‘Even then I was not done, for on getting home, Josephus was again examined in the Greek text. A portion of this wall ought to have been left as a National Monument, but nothing has been done. The whole evidence of the wall’s existence has been blotted out, except one stone where two roads diverge, and, in the interests of motor cars, that will have to go. We asked why there had been no declaration regarding this important monument of antiquity, nor preservation of part of it, and the only answer we could get was, “there are vested interests.” . . .

‘There is the desecration of the Sea of Galilee. Away back in 1883 the late Lord Curzon wrote: “We reach its summit and suddenly at one step are presented with an entirely new and wonderful prospect. Deep down below us lies the Sea of Galilee. The most hardened sensibilities must confess to a thrill of genuine emotion. We are looking upon the most sacred sheet of water in the world, upon the now glassy but erstwhile stormy surface whereon the Saviour walked, upon the shores which He trod, upon the scenes of His most active and most successful ministrations.”

‘Now it is practically a mill dam, with levels changed at the will of, and to suit the convenience of, the Electric Corporation. Filled up to overflowing at one time, covering the paths the Saviour and Apostles trod, at other times with broad burning foreshores, stony and rough, destroying geographical relations through which the identity of sites can be proved. . . .

‘Christian rights in this most sacred site, the beloved of every thinking Christian and Bible reader, are betrayed by “Christian” *statesmen* in

the interests of Jewish dividends. And complacently the Jew accepts. "You cannot indict a whole people," the Jew tells us. We agree, but a whole people can indict itself, and not a single Jew has raised his voice as an advocate of any Christian rights in the Holy Land. . . . All that we want is that the Sea of Galilee be left as intact and inviolable to the Christian world as the Wailing Wall was left to the Jew.

In reading this article one has to remember that it has not been written by some one antagonistic to the Jews but by a man who has always been their friend. After the War, Dr. Christie did not spare himself in his work for the Jewish people, in Poland and the adjacent lands, who had been rendered destitute and homeless.

Standards.

'Many moderns to-day have surrendered to the idea that there are no standards of character, or any reliable criteria of right and wrong. . . . Go into a scientific laboratory and tell them there are no standards in their work, and they will throw you out. That is their central business—standards of induction, of verification, of technique, and behind those, profound standards of veracity and of disinterested devotion to the truth. Wherever we find great work being done, in music, art, or science, amid the infinite variety of expressions, we find at the core and centre of it all standards, concerning which men are certain that nowhere can their disregard be right and their observance wrong.

'Nor is it otherwise in great character! Show us a time or place where you really think it is right to be disloyal, insincere, cruel—right to take ruthless advantage of another's weakness, or to betray a trust! Show us a time or place where Judas Iscariot and Benedict Arnold are right! There are standards of character.'¹

War in China.

The following translation of a poem by Toyohiko Kagawa has appeared in *The Christian Century*.

Ah tears! Unbidden tears!
Familiar friends since childhood's lonely years,
Long separated we,
Why do ye come again to dwell with me?

At midnight, dawn, midday
Ye come; nor wait your coming nor delay;
Nay fearless, with what scorn
Ye picture China by my brothers torn.

¹ Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick.

Your scorn I must accept,
But I'm no coward; pray heed ere more ye've
wept;

I love Japan so fair,
And China too; this war I cannot bear.

'Is there no other way?'

Thus do I search my spirit all the day
Nor ever reach a goal;
I live, but only as a phantom soul.

Like Christ who bore our sins upon the Cross,
I, too, must bear my country's sins and dross;
Land of my love! Thy sins are grievous to be
borne,
My head hangs low upon my form forlorn.

Ah tears! Unbidden tears!
Long separated we,
Alas! has come another day
When ye must dwell with me.

Easter School of Theology, St. Andrews.

The School of Theology will be held this year in University Hall, St. Andrews, from Monday, March 28th, to Friday, April 1st. The principal lecturers are Professor T. H. Robinson from Cardiff, whose subject is Readings in Isaiah, and Professor C. J. Cadoux, from Oxford, whose subject is The Eschatology of Jesus. Members of St. Mary's College Staff will also lecture. There are opportunities for discussion and recreation. This is the only school of the kind in Scotland, and it is open to ministers of all denominations. Circulars with fuller particulars will be sent out in a few days to former members of the school. Others may obtain particulars on writing to The Secretary, Easter School, St. Mary's College, St. Andrews.

Erratum.

We regret that the word 'dependable' on p. 220, column 2, line 49, of Dr. Smart's article on *The Return of Theology to the Church* in the February number should have appeared as 'defendable.'

Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works,
and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street,
Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, Kings Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.