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Church Union by Federation.

MOST Christians feel to-day the need for more intimate fellowship, not only of persons, but of churches. Some are impressed with their geographical limitations and desire a better understanding with groups on the Continent; others are grieved at local overlapping, and wish for a better knowledge of those in their own village. All feel that they do not attain what was the purpose of their Founder, "that they may be one, even as We," the Father and the Son.

There has been much earnest exploration from many angles. But generally there has been one tacit assumption, that unity involves one corporation organised on lines quite familiar in English politics, with one code of laws, one governing body; when carried to its logical issue, with one visible supreme ruler. The text quoted above supplies no warrant for this: unity is desired, but a unity by no means mechanical, a unity of spirit, life, purpose. This may be expressed in many methods of organisation. It is proposed to indicate another of such methods, familiar enough in political and economic life, but not seriously explored for ecclesiastical organisation; the plan of Federation.

Such an examination is not purely academic. In 1926 the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, which had been carefully considering overtures made six years earlier from Lambeth, returned the reply that it would not unite on the basis proposed, but that it was ready to join in exploring the possibility of a Federal Union. And in 1930, at a meeting of the Continuation Committee of the Conference on Faith and Order, Professor Adolf Deissmann spoke at length on somewhat similar lines. When the British section of a great communion thrice the size of the Anglican, and a great Continental leader, independently look in the same direction, that deserves practical attention.

Federation is a method well tried in political affairs, with a history of two and a half millenniums. Switzerland, America, Australia, work on this line; India and the Commonwealth of British Nations are exploring. Let us make sure of its salient points.

A Federal State is composed of several groups; each of which has a large measure of internal self-government; each of which recognises the validity of the methods of its sisters, though possibly different from its own; all of which have agreed to unite for certain mutual purposes internally, and for all purposes externally.

To illustrate from the Dominion of Canada. The Province of Quebec regulates property and civil rights and all municipal affairs; neither the province of New Brunswick nor the Dominion as a whole intervenes in these matters; though Quebec may be very different from its sister provinces in its laws, their validity is recognised on all hands. A company may be incorporated under the laws of Ontario, and work wholly within its borders, on lines quite independent of those adopted in Alberta, where a company with the same general objects may be organised on a very different pattern; each company is quite legal, and is recognised in all provincial and Dominion courts. Nova Scotia has seven sorts of judicial courts, much resembling English; while Manitoba is content with a King's Bench, county courts, police magistrates: there is no attempt at a standardised pattern. But matters of criminal law, customs duties, passports and all external relations, are dealt with by the Dominion as a whole.

Here then is a style of union very congenial to people of our blood, working as between people of differing races in Switzerland, tested in different places, approving itself for nearly 150 years, and being regarded with increasing attraction in political circles. Can it be adopted for ecclesiastical purposes?

Something approaching it has a promising record. The Orthodox Churches of the East have long associated on lines of this kind; considering how they were originally Greek, and how Greeks had had federal union of cities long before the Christian era, this is most natural. Each patriarch with his synod has oversight of one group; by subdivision or by transplantation, new groups have been formed, notably in Russia and in Greece. For many purposes each manages its own affairs; for a few great purposes each is loath to act independently, but at least takes counsel with its sisters.

In the Anglican Communion a similar evolution is taking place. The province of Canterbury is independent of the province of York; the historic organisation has been different, the rules have been different, yet each respected the method of the other. Other provinces have been organised, without any complications due to action of any State. Each province behaves independently in a great many matters, yet respects the differing practice of other provinces. Consultative conferences are held frequently, and there is a general disposition to accept the advices given at Lambeth throughout the whole Communion.

Both in America and in England there have been formed Federal Councils of Evangelical Free Churches. In England the Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and three smaller bodies have found a common basis in their beliefs,

their views on the ministry, their purpose of evangelisation; they have therefore instituted a Council to which their supreme authorities appoint members. Among its objects are, to co-ordinate the activities and resources of the Evangelical Free Churches, so as most effectively to promote the evangelisation of the people, and to enter into united action with other branches of the Church of Christ throughout the world.

In this last instance the federating bodies exist and work in the same area, which is not the case with the Orthodox or the Anglicans. This feature deserves closer attention, and we may recognise similar cases in economic life, Trades Unions, Caste.

A single town will see branches of various trades unions, carpenters, bricklayers, railwaymen. Each branch manages its own internal affairs, without referring to the branch of another union in the same town; and each branch respects the decisions of another. But the unions have their own Congress and their machinery for concerted decision and action; they may see differently on great questions, but they have agreed to consult and adopt a common policy; they are federated, and find no difficulty in their geographical overlapping, while they have differences of function. The same system is well known in India, where indeed the caste or trades union is hereditary.

Hence it seems that in ecclesiastical matters, there need be no insuperable bar to a federation of churches all at work in the same area. And indeed the Mediaeval Church and the modern Roman Catholic Church will afford instances how such a system has worked. In one English county, there were scores of parish priests under the supervision of the diocesan bishop; each had a jurisdiction over a limited area and none outside it, each recognised the acts of his brethren and his Father in Christ. But they collectively represented only one system, the Diocesan; and in the same county, there were many other organisations. There were Benedictine monks under abbots, each absolutely independent of any one save the Pope. There were Cluniac monks with priors, dependent to some extent on a foreign abbey. There were Premonstratensian canons, similarly dependent on a foreign abbey. There were Cistercian monks, governed by an oligarchic convention. There were four orders of Friars, each self-governing, with headquarters abroad. There were preceptories where knights were trained to go and defend the Temple at Jerusalem; there were commanderies where Hospitallers were trained for Jerusalem or Acre or Rhodes; and the English recruiting establishments rendered often some local service. The Middle Ages did not see one plain Diocesan system where within one area there was uniform government and method; monks, friars and other orders rejoiced in their variety and their

immunity from the local bishops. Attempts were made for some co-ordination, and the solution was not local. Each Order organised itself more completely, and the governing bodies at headquarters were the links, when links were devised. But a single county would see parish priests distributed so as to cover the whole area, Benedictines specialising in study, Cistercians in sheep-breeding, Dominicans in preaching, Franciscans in Salvation Army work. There was an immense ground common to all, yet a different flavour in each; and with certain jealousies, yet each acknowledged the other groups. Hence we may hope that a Federal union of churches to-day, working over the same area, is capable of being devised, and of working. Can we imagine some of the lines it would take?

First, there must be an agreement on some things as fundamental. There have been enquiries on matters of Faith, and of Order; far too much attention has been paid to points of difference, with a hasty assent to many points of agreement. The great preponderance of these latter has not received general recognition. In the course of centuries, there has been careful examination of many points of theology, and results have been summed up by Thomas Aquinas, the Westminster Assembly and others, at very great length. These, however, are not unanimously accepted, and for half a century there has been a tendency to say that much is not fundamental, and to go back to the Nicene and the Apostles' creeds. "Back to Christ" is a more recent motto well known; and its implications in this connection are obvious: His crucial test was whether a man was with Him, not even with the apostles. He regarded as fundamental the recognition of Himself as the Christ, the Son of the living God. That statement included a Jewish term, of which the Gentile version was, Jesus is Lord. Such recognition of supremacy involves the acceptance of commands; the first gospel leads up to its climax in a brief command, based expressly on the fulness of authority in Jesus: Win Me disciples, pledge them in baptism, teach them My ways. In matters of Faith and Obedience, is there any need to go further?

In matters of Order, is there any need of uniformity? The early churches did not think so; some were governed by Elders, one by Bishops and Deacons; scholars recognise great variety for 150 years. The Middle Ages did not think so; the East was content with a hierarchy up to Patriarchs, the West admitted a Pope, but enriched the system with Austin Canons, Austin Friars, Carthusians, &c. In the political world, uniformity is not stipulated for: there are limited monarchies, republics on different patterns, Fascist and Socialist states, all recognising one another and joining in a League of Nations. Why should there

not be, within England for example, a frank recognition that Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, &c. are free to organise on any pattern they find congenial and useful, and will recognise one another as inter-dependent groups? If Anglicans are content to leave the last word to Parliament, that is their affair, and other communions should not interfere in their internal concerns. If Presbyterians choose to district out the land on their lines, and govern by a Synod, again that is their affair. If Congregationalists begin to arrange provinces and appoint moderators, what business is it of the Moravians?

The internal matters of each federating body would naturally include not only questions of government, but of membership, of worship, perhaps of property. Fortunately in the most important of these, membership, there is substantial agreement. Each body seems to stipulate that for all practical purposes, a man becomes a member by his own choice. The Electoral Rolls of the Church of England are not made up automatically as by a revising barrister, but by a man desiring his name to be placed thereon. At the other extreme, the roll of a Baptist Church is augmented on the request of the person, and is purged after the reluctant recognition that he is no longer fulfilling his duties. Whatever be the ceremony of admission, the conditions of membership are in essence the same—an avowal of loyalty to Jesus Christ.

In worship there is not much uniformity anywhere, and most bodies do not even pretend to aim at it. There is no reason why any one body should be concerned with the practices found useful to others. So, too, with property. Whether a society lives by weekly or annual contributions, by endowments, by help from a pool, has little or nothing to do with religion; no one society need interfere with another as to its revenue. Perhaps, however, buildings might be pooled, and perhaps endowments, and probably new revenue can be raised.

The greatest difficulty has been felt over the officers; but this will disappear if it be agreed that each federating body may have what officers it likes, and may change its methods as it finds need. Canada has its lieutenant-governors appointed by the Governor-general, Australia by the King, the United States has one plan on paper, another in practice. A governor of Tennessee has no powers outside his own state, but is recognised and honoured as a governor wherever he travels in the United States. If then Baptists certify that a man is of good standing as a minister, then where he exercises his ministry, and in what exact capacity, is a matter of Baptist concern only; but it will be expected that other bodies will recognise him as a Baptist minister, which does not involve granting him any standing in a Methodist Church. If Anglicans consecrate a man bishop, it is a

purely Anglican affair whether he be diocesan, suffragan, assistant, and what his duties are; other churches will recognise him as an Anglican bishop, but he will have no jurisdiction in any of their congregations or assemblies. When Presbyterians ordain a man, they will have their own rite, their own men to ordain; Congregationalist and Anglican ministers will be welcome to witness, and may be treated as honoured guests, but as guests and spectators alone.

What, then, is the gain of federation? First, frank mutual recognition. And secondly, the wise utilisation of all Christian forces for evangelisation, instead of haphazard or historical or competitive distribution. These two points deserve expansion.

There is still an aloofness in many parts between different bodies of Christians; "church" and "chapel" may not be on speaking terms; and the most polite of clergymen may often have the inward conviction that he possesses spiritual powers not owned by the Wesleyan preacher. No hostility is found as a rule between the customers of Barclay's and of Lloyd's banks; a director of the G.W.R. can meet one of the L.M.S. without condescension on either side. If, however, a girl to-day finds that an Anglican rector dislikes meeting a Congregationalist minister even on a Bible Society platform, that a fine old Methodist is repelled from the Breaking of Bread by the Brethren, what will she think of the Christianity which all alike profess? Federation implies the full recognition of every member of every federating body as a member of the Universal Church of Christ, so that he is welcome at every act of worship in every section; but not that he has rights of government outside his own. It implies the full recognition of every minister as a minister, with jurisdiction within his own body as that body recognises. It is not for the Presbyterian to feel that a man ordained without laying on of hands is lacking something important; nor for the Baptist to feel that a man merely christened in infancy has never even been baptised; in each case the man stands or falls to his Master, and the judgment of his own body upholds his own convictions. Full mutual recognition is a first condition, and a first gain.

The second gain is of efficiency. The supply of candidates for the ministry is insufficient, judged by the past. One great communion has used up all its reserves, is losing hundreds yearly, sees the average age of its ministers over fifty-five, and is compelled to adopt the Methodist plan of grouping. Meanwhile the population is shifting. Towns are building new suburbs and demolishing slums; new industries create new towns, Domesday manors are depleted, garden cities are planted. In such cases, railways and motor-coach lines soon adjust services to meet the conditions; the directors of multiple-shops soon decide where to

close and where to open. But there is as yet no machinery of any single Communion to meet the situation. In the centre of one town, embedded in shops and offices, there may be two buildings with mere skeleton congregations, yet staffed by two men; while on three sides of it are arising many streets with hundreds of families, distant a mile and a half from any place of worship. Federation might be accomplished on lines that would permit the sale of useless buildings, the erection of new, the re-distribution of the ministers. Such adjustments would, of course, grieve much sentiment, but sentiment is equally grieved by seeing a splendid pile of buildings, fifty years ago a hive of happy Christian life, but now with galleries closed and deep in dust, structure decaying because there are no funds to keep in repair.

Imagine England divided into two hundred areas, each containing about 180,000 people; the size of Oxford or West Sussex; such a unit has proved very workable in Italy and France. Imagine each area with a council on which all the federating bodies are represented; this council being not merely consultative, but having power to act—that is the essence of federation. Such a council could study its area, note what buildings exist, what types of worship were desired, what men were available; and could plan for better distribution of ministers, new buildings, closure or adaptation of existing places. At present, every denomination faces the problem as though no other denomination existed; while action of any kind is rare and timid. It might possibly prove that at first the *status quo* would have to be preserved, in so far that demolition and removals must be left to each federated body; but we do not live in an unchanging *status*, and for new districts the council should be entrusted with authority. To put it otherwise, Extension would be a federal prerogative.

For we must never forget that Union is not an end in itself, only a means to the one end of extending the kingdom of God. Some advocates of Union have spoken at times as though once Free Church ministers have been ordained by bishops, they could sing *Nunc Dimittis*. Free Church ministers do not intend to be ordained by bishops, any more than bishops intend to be baptised by Baptists. Union is valuable not in itself, but that the world generally may once again take notice how Christians love one another, and that Christians may unitedly prosecute their business of winning the world for Christ. For the world is larger than England; if nine out of ten Englishmen are out of touch with any church, what is the proportion in Asia and Africa? A better organisation of Christian effort is needed for the direction of missions overseas.

Union is most desirable. Politically, we see at times great empires shattered to fragments, but soon the fragments begin to cohere. Apart from forcible conquest, what are the familiar lines? Either Savoy may grow into Sardinia, into Italy; or scores of German states, with all sorts of governments, may federate into one Reich. Union may be on unitary lines, or on federal; both may be successful. Now in the present ecclesiastical situation, it seems that the unitary method has been studied, and definitely refused by some important sections. It would seem wise to explore most carefully the possibilities along Federal lines, that in one way, if not in the other, our Lord's wish may be fulfilled, and all may be one, as He is with the Father, in order that the world may be won for Him.

A History of the Baptist Church, Earl Shilton. By H. W. Fursdon, M.A. 61 pages, illustrated.

Tercentenary volumes may be steadily expected henceforward, and it is good to have such an excellent model; though indeed the earliest date verified for this Leicestershire church is only 1651. Search has been made in national and county public records, in denominational minutes and magazines, with profitable results. The plan has been well conceived, space has not been wasted on general history, or on expounding Baptist principles. A dozen chapters set out the story of the village community in attractive fashion. The growth of the premises can be traced, with the advance from an open-air baptistery whence water was sold, to one in an aisle, and at length one in a place of honour. Glimpses are afforded at finance, one minister keeping school, another's wife keeping a draper's shop. The enrichment of worship can be traced, from early days when singing was unknown, to the glorious days of clarinet, hautboy, bassoon and bass viols, to the mechanical age of an organ, and the blossoming of a drum and fife band. Relations with other churches are noted, both in the early Leicestershire Association, the General Assembly, the New Connection, the Union, and three sister churches; here a long-standing libel on Elder Richard Green is nailed to the counter. We gain ideas of many ordinary members, and their diligent service; of support to denominational work, especially Indian missions. Not only was a Sunday school started in 1801, which has been a steady piece of home work, but the premises also housed a day school, which seems to have held on its way nearly to the time of School Boards; we wonder how far we are over-generous in admitting that the "National Society" was largely responsible for rural education. The church is to be congratulated on its life, the pastor on his power to present the story of the past.

George Hay Morgan, K.C.

SCHILLER said that "Death cannot be an evil because it is universal." The passing of those whom we love, and who have entered deeply into our lives, leaves gaps which can never be bridged, however profound may be our faith. Our sorrow is not for those who are gone, but for ourselves. As some of us know so well, with increasing years there comes a sense of loneliness as one after another of our friends go into the unknown. That the sudden call of George Hay Morgan came as a shock to many all over the country has been abundantly evidenced. In every sphere of life wherein he had entered there are those who have hardly as yet realised that they will see and hear him no more on earth. This is supremely the case with Mrs. Morgan, who, after forty years of the greatest of all human associations, is now left desolate. One can only tender to her the deepest and most loving sympathy, as also to their adopted children, praying that the rich memories remaining to them may be their comfort at all times and under all circumstances.

To me has been committed, the oldest living friend of Mr. Morgan, the writing of some notes as to his varied career. These are not intended to be in any sense a memoir, but a tribute to his personality and activities. What is said cannot express all I feel. It, however, may in some measure, record a friendship which has extended over nearly forty-one years. Had there been any anticipation of this being my lot, it might have been more worthy of him. The fact is that I had hoped, when my task on earth is o'er, he would have been the one to conduct the last offices for me.

Our first meeting was in 1890, when I was Secretary of the Woodberry Down Church. The first minister of that church was the late Rev. W. R. Skerry, who baptised me during his ministry at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Our friendship continued through his time at Counterslip, Bristol. Meanwhile I had removed to London, and when Mr. Skerry took up the work at Woodberry Down I joined that church, was elected a Deacon, and ultimately Secretary, holding that position for several years. When Mr. Skerry left in 1899 for Camberwell, the church gave a unanimous invitation to the late Dr. J. E. Roberts, then a student at Regent's Park, which he accepted to take effect when his college course was completed six months later. Shortly after-

wards he was approached to become assistant to Dr. Maclaren, at Manchester. Upon the appeal of the late Principal Gould, the Church, recognising the importance of this call, absolved Mr. Roberts from his promise and made way for his greater service in Lancashire. That was our first disappointment. Afterwards there was another to which it is not necessary to refer.

In April 1890, the late Dr. Booth, Secretary of the Baptist Union, gave me the name of Mr. Morgan, formerly of Pontypool College, then a student at Cardiff University, and spoke very highly of him. Shortly before he had been invited to consider an invitation to Collins Street Church, Melbourne, Australia, which he had declined solely on the ground that he did not feel justified in leaving the country so long as his mother was alive. So many were Mr. Morgan's engagements that he could not come to us until the following June. He then stayed with me, captivating all the members of my household by his charm and loveable nature, which affection has remained throughout his life. His conduct of the devotional part of the church services, his sermons, his earnestness and humility made a deep impression, remarkably so upon the younger portion of the congregation, and whom we regarded as of supreme importance. A second visit confirmed the first impressions, and a unanimous call was given to him, which he accepted to take effect after he had sat for the B.Sc. examination at the London University, for which he had been preparing.

Often have we recalled what took place subsequently when he came to London for the examination named. Like others of small means, and especially from an earnest desire to help as soon as possible his widowed mother, he had worked at great pressure to abbreviate by a year the University course. The result was that, when he entered the examination room, he could not even see to write his name on the sheets, and he was advised to postpone any attempt at that time. It was a crushed man who came to tell me of what seemed to be disaster. He feared that it would mean cancelling the invitation to Woodberry Down. It was my privilege to help him at a time of deep depression and disappointment, and to assure him that his breakdown at this stage would make no difference. That was confirmed by the Church which, three years afterwards, afforded opportunities for renewing his preparations for the degree named, and he was at that time successful in the examination for which he sat. His explanation of taking a Science instead of the usual Arts degree was that he felt the former would help him to be of greater service in reaching the hearts and minds of his hearers, and especially the younger generation. There were those who did not agree with him and were very critical of his decision. One

of his firmest supporters in this and other respects was Dr. John Clifford, who remained his friend to the last, and often invited him to Westbourne Park. Even when he decided to change from the Ministry to the Bar, Dr. Clifford said that a man should be permitted to decide for himself in all such questions, and that God's ways could not be circumscribed by man's judgments. As an indication of the greatness of Dr. Clifford, who gave the charge to the church at Mr. Morgan's recognition, on the occasion of a difficulty which appeared to be very serious, a visit of Mr. Morgan to the Doctor, and the advice given, armed him with fresh vision and courage, in which latter characteristic Mr. Morgan was seldom wanting. He came back from that interview a different man.

Ten years were spent at Woodberry Down. It was a great ministry. The first twelve months were devoted to the Church. For that the writer was responsible. The Church needed its new pastor, and he needed time to delve into many of the deeper questions which could not be dealt with during a collegiate or University course of studies. A young minister is often hindered rather than helped by the dissemination of his powers in preaching and speaking here, there and everywhere. He is run after as an attraction by other churches, not for any higher motive. Popularity of this nature may be attractive. It is none the less a positive danger. In answer to the innumerable invitations received, a circular letter was sent stating that he could not respond during the first year, as he desired to devote himself to his own church. More than once my friend told me that this was the best piece of advice he had ever received, and for which he was deeply grateful. It enabled him to continue his studies and in the wider fields. A further point may be mentioned, namely, that the Church agreed to his exchanging with some other minister once every month. That was an arrangement good for him, the church, and others also.

There is no need for me to emphasise the fascination of his personality. That has been recognised by all who met him, most of all by those who have entertained him in their homes. He had the capacity of entering into the interests and feelings of everyone. Children and young people worshipped him; older folk admired him. He was always interesting, as much by his ability to listen as well as to speak. By some mystic influence nearly all who knew him were proud of the fact. Even when many disagreed with what he said and did, these were disarmed by his recognition of their point of view. Never was I prouder of him than when, on the occasion of his first parliamentary contest in the Khaki election of 1900, at a time of bitterness seldom equalled, in the hour of his defeat, when seconding a vote of thanks to the

returning officer, he said that he had the satisfaction of being defeated by a good man, referring to his victorious opponent, the late James Howard, who was astounded yet deeply gratified by this tribute to his high character. Only a big-souled man could have done that.

Mr. Morgan was born at Hay, in the Wye Valley, in 1866. The beautiful country there influenced his whole life. His early conditions were humble in the extreme, especially after the early death of his father, a small farmer. As is so often the case, everything he was and did was primarily due to his mother, who evidently realised his latent powers and sacrificed herself to his welfare. His devotion to her as long as she lived was beautiful to behold. A great tribute to mother and son was paid when he was first elected to Parliament in 1906 for the Truro division of Cornwall. Some of those who had known both, on receipt of the news of his victory, decorated her grave at Hay with beautiful flowers. That, as a boy, he was recognised for his potential abilities is evident from the fact that the clergyman at Hay offered to provide the cost of his education if he would prepare for the Church. It must have been a great temptation to the aspiring youth. The offer was declined on principle. He had been baptised and joined the little Baptist Church at Hay in his thirteenth year, and remained faithful to his principles and denomination throughout his life, in which respect not a few budding politicians have failed, tempted by social and other influences.

The way of advance in life was presented through the teaching profession. He was educated in the British School at Hay, where he became a pupil teacher. Afterwards he served as Assistant Master at Stafford and Merthyr Tydfil. At the latter place his future career was determined. I believe, though no date is available, that he first began to preach in his sixteenth year, from which time onwards wherever he was, and through his college and University courses, there were few Sundays when he was not so engaged. It was not long before he was strongly pressed to enter college in preparation for the ministry. Even then, as in later years, he did not feel that the regular ministry was his field of greatest service. This was indicated to me soon after he came to us at Woodberry Down. It was, and is, difficult to understand why. The fact, however, remains. At Merthyr Tydfil he was led to change his mind. At a week-evening service in the local chapel where he had given an address, one of the older deacons who had shown him great kindnesses, and for whom he had a warm affection, in his prayer asked that God would show his young friend His will, and break down the pride of spirit which was keeping him from devoting himself to

the work to which all believed him to be called. That presented a new aspect. He was compelled to ask himself whether he was refusing to follow the Divine leading. The result was that shortly afterwards he entered Pontypool College, to the great joy of his mother and all who knew him. There he spent a year under the late Principal Edwards, of whom he always spoke with deep affection and respect. Then he entered Cardiff University for the reason already given. The four years at Cardiff were only made possible by the 10s. and 15s. paid him for his Sunday services. It was a hard time, as he had to live on less than 10s. per week in very humble lodgings. In this connection one fact may be emphasised and has always won my admiration, namely, that my friend was never ashamed of his humble origin, and of his early struggles.

It only remains to refer to the other phases of his varied and interesting career. In 1891 he married Margaret Jane Lewis, of Sunnybank, Pontnewynydd, South Wales, a member of a well-known Baptist family. It would be impossible to say too much as to how Mrs. Morgan helped her husband in every part and at every stage of his life's work. His last words were to her. They are too sacred to record. These told of devotion to him, and of his gratitude for all she had been. She grew with him and won the love of all who have known her. We pray that God's comfort may ever sustain her.

By 1897 we felt that a change was coming. Although some of us regretted it, yet we supported him in what he thought to be right. That year he became a member of the Tottenham School Board, and was for three years Chairman of the School Management Committee. During this period he was studying for the Bar, to which he was admitted in 1899, and took silk fourteen years later. In 1900 he fought his first Parliamentary contest, in the Khaki election of that year, but was unsuccessful. In 1906 he won for the Liberal party the Truro division of Cornwall, and confirmed his position in the two succeeding elections. Then the Truro division was absorbed under the redistribution of constituencies, and he stood on several occasions for other constituencies, but was never successful again, due to the cross-currents which have characterised the war and post-war years. Whilst Member of Parliament he was secretary for the Nonconformist group of the House of Commons, in which he rendered great service, though many of us have always thought that the group named was lacking in an independence which ought to have been displayed. It was, however, a period of great difficulty and complexity owing to the divisions which supervened soon after the great Liberal victory of 1906, and have continued to the present day. His attention was turned also

into other channels. He was for several years a Director of the Tottenham Gas Company. Later he occupied a like position in the Abbey Road Building Society, to which he devoted considerable time and energy. His colleagues in both spheres have paid high tributes to his services. In each he won the confidence of all who were associated with him by his diligence, courtesy, and wise judgment. In these his legal training has been a great asset.

Mr. Morgan was essentially a preacher, in which respect he rendered a greater service than would have been possible in a regular pastorate. Scarcely a Sunday through all the intervening years when he was not preaching. Nor was his service restricted to his own denomination. Those who had him once desired him again and yet again. He was not a theologian. His message had an appeal, especially to the younger men and women, an application to life in its varied aspects, one which it is difficult to characterise, and was peculiarly his own. It never lost freshness from first to last, nor was it ever stilted. When Dr. Townley Lord, at Bloomsbury Chapel in the evening service on January 25th, made the announcement of his death, there was a wave of emotion evinced by the congregation which was striking in the extreme—a tribute to Mr. Morgan's influence and personality. It revealed a sense of individual loss and sorrow that no longer would his presence be seen and his voice be heard from the historic pulpit which he had occupied so often. And the same was felt all over the country. To me the memory of our long friendship is very precious, and will continue throughout the days remaining, whether these be many or few.

EDWARD BROWN.

Some Notes on the history of the Dorford Baptist Church in Dorchester, 1645-1930. By Douglas Jackman, M.B.E., eight pages, four pictures.

Mr. Jackman, who bears a name honoured in early annals, has been very successful in recovering the story of the first eighty years. There was a dim century, when all continuity was lost, with all property. Then from Weymouth a re-foundation. It is interesting to read of Thomas Hardy attending a prayer-meeting rather than go to the circus! He paid a queer tribute in one poem that seems suggested by old Dorford:—

“I wonder Dissenters sing Ken:
It shows them more liberal in spirit
At this little chapel down here
Than at certain new others I know.”

Baptists and Downtown Churches.

I WANT to assume at the outset that those who care to read this article are fairly acquainted with the facts. Twenty years of intensive study of the problem in Liverpool have given a tolerable knowledge of an intolerable situation; and the inevitable temptation is to write at large on "The Arrested Progress of the Church," with a display of terrible facts, and illustrations of many attempts to "mollify with ointment" sores that are deep seated. The Report of Liverpool's Commission of Enquiry in 1908 led to the establishment of the Free Church Centre, where I continued the enquiries and discussed them in numerous committees and with multitudes of individuals, getting my facts at first hand and exploring every possible means of finding a remedy. In London my old friend and colleague, Arthur Black, has made it clear that a situation exists if possible even more terrible than that in Liverpool; and if I write with the experience of the latter city at the back of my mind it is with the certainty that similar conditions prevail in all our large centres of population. With capable organisation, adequate investigations can be made everywhere. It does not require much organisation, and certainly *much* less in the way of brains, to criticise the investigations—every newspaper correspondent can, and does, do that; but to find a remedy is another proposition. If I dare to make the attempt, it is solely because I have the experience of one who has *tried*. Of one thing I am convinced, that it is possible, granted adequate organisation and plenty of money, to gather a crowd and create a hectic atmosphere almost anywhere—possible also when people are massed together, to induce them to do things under the stress of emotion that have an inevitable reaction. But it is doubtful whether the satisfaction of the spectacular and transient is worth the assured collapse. Furthermore, the service of the Kingdom of God by advertising "stunts," even if they are not a type of deception, is not likely to have a permanent spiritual value.

There is no doubt that the downtown areas are difficult. They tend, particularly in cities where there are large Roman Catholic, Jewish, and foreign populations, to classify themselves; for this type of people, by many cunning methods, works towards the exclusion of outside influences, and a block is formed. No wonder, for these are not usually comfortable neighbours. In

given circumstances it may be even dangerous to live amongst them. But have we no duty even there? In any case vast populations are huddled close together in these unsavoury spots; while our churches stand there, either as a witness for vital truth and righteousness or as a confession of defeat. It is true that other agencies are at work, such as the Salvation Army and unattached missions, with varying success.

Some of these areas still contain the beautiful houses where, down to fifty years ago, the leading workers and supporters of our Free Churches used to live. To-day they are slums, inhabited by multitudes whose insistent problem is how to live. Meanwhile the public houses flourish.

There are two main difficulties staring us in the face when we try to find a way out. The first is the independence of the churches concerned. Their buildings have a history, and once were crowded to the doors. When they were built the men in their pulpits were preachers of outstanding influence, and their supporters were immensely proud of their places of worship and flocked to the services. The sons and daughters of those men have moved far out and have either settled down to work in other churches of the same or different denomination (it is noteworthy how disastrously the Baptists have suffered in this way in Liverpool) or have drifted altogether away from religious influences. Some explanation is also to be found in the fact, often mentioned to me, that association with the work of downtown churches involves a sacrifice of social standing, so that young people are not likely to meet the type of husband or wife to satisfy the ambition of their parents! So we find the "faithful few," generally dispirited beyond words, clinging to the old traditions tenaciously, and resisting change. They often travel great distances, and, in addition to the cost of transport, give with extraordinary generosity, only to keep a mere preaching centre in being. They can do little aggressive work, because they lack the helpers. And they are very sensitive to outside suggestion.

The other difficulty is in the extraordinary selfishness of many of the more prosperous churches. Frankly I find it hard to understand their interpretation of their mission. Are they evangelising agencies or simply social clubs? With a substantial membership and constant accessions of strength, it is often a perfect marvel to see how many and varied are the agencies for keeping the people—particularly the young people—*there*. Even when there is a good Christian Endeavour Society—an organisation, rightly managed, of immense spiritual value—it is amazing how little encouragement is given to external evangelisation. I am not theorising in this, for I have had more opportunity than

most of contact with societies of this sort, and am conscious of the wealth of young life that is eager to be used in the service of the Kingdom. Yet to put in a plea for their help elsewhere is to receive a sharp snub for "impertinence," or the bland assurance that "they can't be spared." Treated like this they often "spare" themselves, and drift away from religion. I used to wonder in early days how my father could bear to miss from his congregation the considerable number of people who were engaged in outside work. They were his best helpers, yet he cheerfully sent them forth to evangelise the villages and growing suburbs round Oxford—building better than he knew, as present developments bear eloquent testimony. That was by no means an isolated case, and I think that no church that equipped and sent forth workers in like manner suffered in its own life.

To make constructive suggestions would be easier if it were possible to give specific instances. That cannot be done, however, for the real heroes of some of these struggling causes would conceivably be hurt, and I should never have been consulted in any case if I had been thought capable of publishing the facts far and wide. But I drafted three schemes, and in part two others, for churches of different denominations. In one I had the help of a committee and a fundamental principle that the new organisation should be built round the existing nucleus, of which I shall speak shortly, was put on one side, so that it became visionary. With one exception the others failed because of the two difficulties mentioned in previous paragraphs—chiefly the first. One only was adopted in its entirety and the denomination concerned took it up with enthusiasm, promised workers, and raised a large sum of money. But the chosen leader was seldom on the premises except on Sunday, and frequently away even then, while no effort was made by him to enrol the necessary workers. It is small wonder that under the circumstances the place was finally sold to the Roman Catholics. There is no consolation in knowing that a new church has been built in a growing suburb. What grieves me is that the old district is left without evangelical witness, and there is a huge available population sorely in need of heroic Christianity. With these instances at the back of my mind I venture to approach the suggestion of a remedy. An expert commission could undoubtedly make considerable expansion and improvement.

First then—to find a remedy for the condition of the downtown churches *it is vitally necessary that there should be some sacrifice of independence*. A frank recognition of the facts makes it inevitable that no such church can stand alone. It is possible for two or three people (I have known it so) to decline further support if the character of the work is to be funda-

mentally altered. To insist on maintaining a mere preaching station where the usual congregation has to travel miles, while a large population, craving another sort of ministry, is at the doors, is hardly making the best use of the building. It is only by the use of denominational guidance and help that the necessary adjustments can be made, and the forces gathered for adequate service. In this respect other denominations are better adapted than ours for the task; but even they are handicapped when their wealthy men resist innovation and prefer to put their money into more spectacular effort elsewhere rather than to the evangelisation of the depressed masses in the old centres. One would not be troubled if the more visible schemes brought help to the other, but in the main they don't. Their authors are too busy justifying the lavish and wasteful expenditure in buildings to find time and workers for the greater need.

The second condition for a successful approach to a remedy lies in *personal service*. This is the main and vital factor. I am growingly convinced that *it is not a question of money*. That will be needed in any case, but if the work is properly and sympathetically undertaken, the quantity required will not be excessive, and will not be abnormally difficult to find. The people on the spot already raise, by sacrificial giving, sums altogether out of proportion to those forthcoming in the less difficult centres, and the *normal* work would be largely self-supporting with the revival of heart, life, and interest. The running expenses of these churches, depressed and nearly empty, are disproportionate and wasteful. If they could become centres of active life, even though the congregations were composed of the poorest, it is astonishing what financial results would be obtained. The poor are extraordinarily generous and full of self-denial, more particularly in circumstances of need known to themselves. There is nothing spectacular in their giving, of course; it is even almost furtive. But it is there.

What is *not there* is a sufficiency of sympathetic workers. In any case there will have to be a lot of open-air work, and constant home visitation—frequently house to house—will be necessary. It will soon be evident what a *variety* of helpers will be required, and it is only possible to secure them by denominational influence. There are sources of supply at present untouched. Assuming a determined attempt to tackle the problem, the students from our colleges could be sent—as *part of their training*—for six or twelve months to work under the superintendent. They would gain invaluable experience, and would learn the secret of expressing only the truths (and that in homely and direct language) that matter in the stress of life. Outdoor congregations *can go away* during an address if it doesn't grip, and there

is no more valuable experience for a preacher. Furthermore, home visitation would teach much and tend to humanise preaching. Then there is that nucleus of brilliant young people who are to be found in some of our churches, and are deeply concerned about the alleged failure of "organised religion." That is a phrase largely confined to the newspapers and to small coteries of intellectuals. It is possible that some of our principal preachers come into contact with considerable numbers of this type—indeed they sometimes get hysterical about it—but the fact is that they are a small fraction of the people to whom we are sent. The great bulk of the people is completely indifferent to questions of abstruse theology and Biblical criticism. Religion is a matter of bread and butter to them, and they don't care whether the minister is orthodox, or heterodox, if he will only help them to live their difficult lives. I am aware that many of these young people are really anxious to serve, and do serve, but that service would be infinitely more valuable if one heard less of the expression, "The Church doesn't help me," and saw more of the determination to get on with the job and expect the "problems" to settle themselves. These are the people from whom most can be expected and whose help is most to be desired. After all, these manifestations of intellectual doubt are often only the growing pains of a fine character. Why not persuade them to put their *faith* to work in heroic self-sacrificing effort? In addition to these two types of available workers, there is the vast supply of ordinary members for whom little or nothing has been found by way of service in their own churches. They live busy lives, and only have selected times, principally at nights, when their help is available. They are often the life and soul of the social and devotional circles in their own church, and only in special cases should they be expected to serve for more than a limited time beyond its borders. Nevertheless many of them are specialists, and could far more profitably employ one evening a week in serving the needs of the downtown church than merely spending all in their own. Organising an imaginary "Lord Mayor's Banquet", or a mock parliament, may have its uses for some people who have time to waste, but is not comparable in value to teaching slum boys to cobble shoes or learn habits of discipline and study that will fit them for better things in life.

Assuming that volunteers can be secured for what is admittedly a herculean task, it remains to be said that wise guidance will be necessary to see that each has a proper place and specific duty. That is where efficient leadership comes in.

What then of the *organisation*? The word makes some people frantic. Great leaders of the Church are assumed to have created and sustained vast efforts simply by preaching and the

power of their intense spirituality. They haven't—behind them all there has been the body of able, consecrated men and women who have effaced themselves and given the very best of their business knowledge and ability—often after severe toil elsewhere—to the service of the Church.

Everything will be futile without a *good leader*—call him what you will. And it is precisely here that the local church needs denominational guidance. Too often churches seek a minister with an eye to one department of life and work, forgetting the rest. That blunder doesn't matter—so much—in a prosperous community. It is fatal in an enterprise that is many-sided and of such a character that experience must be allied to ability if success is to be achieved. This sort of job is not one for the "brilliant" man. Look rather for a man well trained and mentally disciplined, experienced, of sunny, optimistic, sympathetic disposition, caring nothing for the rewards of life, ambitious only to serve and keep on serving, patient under all circumstances, alert in brain and, though this is secondary provided other suitable help is available, a capable man of business. Put such an one to live on or near the premises and trust him fully to carry on. *That* may sound risky, but if the right man cannot be induced to take on the task, even if by so doing he leaves other more attractive and better-paid work, it is of little use to undertake the responsibility. The *premises* may need some adaptation, probably will if anything like all the following suggestions are adopted. But some useful start may be made in almost any one of the great buildings that are mainly in our mind. I think they should be continued as *churches*. There is nothing wrong with "missions," but there is in the use of the title a certain confession of defeat, a lowering of the standard, and a type of condescension that I can conceive to be loathsome to the thoughtful among those we want to reach. After all, is not evangelism the *raison d'être* of the Church? The buildings should never be shut. If they are in centres of population where the homeless and destitute are to be found, I can conceive that some of their best work will be done in sheltering those whose only refuge would otherwise be the streets, casual wards, or lodging-houses of the worst type. The old pews should go, for the main building would be in constant use for evangelistic and other preaching services—formal and informal—lectures, concerts, and miscellaneous entertainments. There is no doubt that plenty of willing help would be available for this kind of work; and it is fundamental that the House of God should be as homely and attractive as its ever-present rival, the public-house. Both on Sunday and weekdays numerous classes could be arranged, and there should be a forum at which every possible kind of debate could take place on any subject that

has the remotest connection with religion. In time men and women of every type of thought could be gathered to voice their grievances and discontents against God and man. This may seem anomalous, but they do it now at the street corners, pouring out to greedy listeners all kinds of undigested and indigestible scepticism without much in the way of contradiction. How much better to win them to stating their case where what is unreasonable can be patiently heard and shown to be so, while legitimate grievances can be discussed in an atmosphere of sympathy where the supreme desire is to help. The late Stephen Walsh told me not many months before he died that the working classes are not, as a whole, hostile to religion, and he was of opinion that such a course would soon win the support of the best of them, and have influence on the rest. It is essential, I think, that there should be something of a club, open every night of the week and managed by a committee composed mostly of its own members. Restrictions should only apply to practices and speech inimical to comfort, and of course gambling would be taboo. The fee should be very small, indeed the superintendent should have power to make it possible for *anybody* in need to get the shelter and companionship of the place. Those tragic legions of the unemployed could be enormously helped by the sympathy evidenced in such an arrangement. But above all—no condescension.

There is a great need for work among the women. I have attended and addressed many meetings of the poorest women in Liverpool. It is quite impossible either to forget or adequately describe the ghastly hopelessness written on their faces. The wife of a casual labourer is simply schooled in hopeless misery. But they respond to the sympathy that invites them to bring their babies—without whom they are immobile—out of the dreary dens they call home to the light, warmth, welcome, music, and sympathetic talks that good women know so well how to provide.

The opportunities for work among boys and girls are legion. The play centres arranged by Education Authorities are evidence of that where they exist. Their activities can be supplemented and extended by the churches. For they are open for a comparatively short time and suffer the limitations (and the virtues) of salaried labour. There is need for more complete organisation even where they exist, and the Christian urge should make it possible to organise boys' and girls' clubs for almost every conceivable purpose. Brigades, Scouts, Guides, and their more juvenile counterparts; sports of all kinds, indoor and outdoor; bands—of different instruments—arts and handicrafts; classes for shoemaking, carpentry, metal-work, &c., dancing and physical exercises, sewing and knitting circles, with their allied occupations

—these and all manner of others could be arranged if the help of the young people in the other churches could be obtained. The children are there in swarms, coming from sordid homes, with their only playgrounds the streets. What better service could there be than to make them happy and direct their splendid enthusiasms into useful channels? Think also of the hosts of domestic servants, away from home in a strange city. Often free on Sunday afternoon and evening and with nowhere to go and nothing to do. Where *do* they go? And what do they *do*?

For all—men, women, and children—don't forget Thrift and Holiday Clubs. Managed under proper control, with finances adequately safeguarded, they could be of immense value, as many who have organised them can testify. And the caretakers! How the unsuitable can hinder! But how the strong, good-natured, consecrated man and wife could win the affections of a large clientele and make a happy atmosphere!

What of *Sunday*? I know a certain mission in Liverpool where it has been calculated that nearly 12,000 attendances are made on Sunday at the various services and other gatherings. True, it is not altogether a fair criterion in our connection, for it is largely under the control of a well-to-do layman, a large local employer of labour, who sees to it that nothing is lacking in buildings, equipment, and organisation. And it is not a down-town church. But its type of activity is just what is required. There are adequate meetings for prayer; there are fully graded Sunday Schools, well staffed; there are properly conducted, separate and special services for children and young people, in separate halls, with music by their own bands. And after the service in the evening there are social gatherings, where young and old may meet—the homeless lad and his lass can be sheltered instead of being driven into the streets in any weather. All these things have been thought out. It is seldom that so complete an equipment of suitable buildings can be found, and existing limitations would, of course, curtail a lot that is desirable. But much can be attempted by Christians of vision and determination, with an ample store of faith and patience.

The services need never be cheap and tawdry in character. A quiet, reverent worship in the morning would give the opportunity for the exposition of Scripture. In the evening there is no room for anything but the evangelistic. Before the service the doors should be thrown open so that the people could gather for community singing. A sympathetic organist (and no other type is worthy of so sacred an opportunity) would have no difficulty in accepting the choice of favourite hymns and choruses from Sankey's Book—and others that contain popular

numbers. Let them sing, too, in the service. Of course, that will settle itself—apart from the occasional endurance of a well-sung anthem, or preferably a *simple* solo—they won't come if they are not allowed to express themselves in song. Many of my readers may remember the name and fame of George Wise, of the Protestant Reformers' Church, Liverpool. He is dead, and nobody can be hurt if I say something of his work. He was much misunderstood (and very much hated in Roman Catholic quarters); but I was privileged to know him well and to see his work at first hand. Unfortunately, the organisation that supported him was undoubtedly political, but his Christian personality was so strong that, apart from his militant Protestantism, he did some of the finest Christian work in the city. His cultural gifts were as sure as his spiritual outlook was gigantic. His morning service was crowded, his afternoon Bible Class for men, where big themes were discussed, was 900 strong; and the evening service was always in a church packed to suffocation. With barely time to air the buildings after the afternoon class, the doors were thrown open to those who came to sing, and the evening service frequently began over half an hour before the appointed time because there was no room to put in any more people. They were drawn, not by the man's wide reading and ability to deal with everything that is fascinating in passing phases of theological thought and political and social activity, but by the fact that he knew the circumstances of his hearers and addressed his message to their hearts. So they responded, and an erstwhile derelict church became a centre of vital Christian life and energy.

The same is true of *some* of the big, unattached missions. They are attended, as to a large proportion, by those who used to attend the ordinary churches. Why have they left? The answer may be manifold. It is more to the purpose to ask *why have they gone there?* If we could supply the answer to that and rule our actions by our appreciation of the facts, some part of our problem might be solved.

T. R. DANN.

Little Wild Street.

THE closing and sale of the chapel on Wild Street suggests that the story of Baptists there be recalled; it will form a background to the article by Mr. Dann.

In 1691 there were high hopes as to progress possible with toleration assured. Six General Baptist churches existed in London: the original church of 1612 worshipped in White's Alley between Coleman and Moorgate Streets; its daughter of 1624 was at Dockhead on the Surrey side; an offshoot from this was in Winchester Park, which has long since been built over, so that Southwark Bridge Road nearly crosses the site of the Baptist premises and grave-yard; John Griffith headed a fourth church in Dunnings Alley, west of Bishopsgate; a fifth took advantage of Goodman's Fields being cut up for building, to acquire a home on Looking-glass Alley; the sixth had been gathered by Francis Smith the bookseller, and met in Glasshouse Alley just west of Goswell Street and south of the Charterhouse.

There were men of vision and of property in this group. They induced the churches to combine for a forward movement, and noting that the West End was devoid of Baptist witness, they searched for premises. These they found on the upper part of Bow Street near Hart Street; and they took a lease of the "Two Golden Balls" from Lewis du Moulin, at £15 yearly; here they planned to hold services on Sunday, and one afternoon a month probably for a business meeting. It is an interesting question how they dealt with the premises on the whole; if there had been three golden balls, we could imagine a flourishing business in fashionable raiment and jewellery. Work began in November 1691, and succeeded so well that on 12 April, 1692, a seventh General Baptist church was constituted, on terms agreed with the five which had been responsible—Dunning's Alley was engrossed with extension in Bucks. Two Elders were appointed; the senior, John Piggott, was to baptize and to visit, to take service in the afternoon and on fast days, for which he was to receive £20; Mark Key was only to take the morning service, and receive £15.

There were two questions agitated in all Baptist churches then:—Was it necessary to lay hands on all people at their baptism, in prayer that they might receive the Holy Spirit, as in apostolic days? Was it wise to sing at worship, and if so, should psalms be sung as in the Church of England, or hymns as by Christ and the apostles? Such trouble developed here, that the new church broke off relations with its five founders, and Mark Key resigned, going to Reading. The church naturally vacated the premises provided by the Association, and built itself a new

home on St. John's Court. It secured a second Elder in Nathanael Foxwell, a butcher. But in the next few years, the doctrinal opinions of Matthew Caffin at Horsham gravely disquieted all the General Baptists. Piggott considered deeply, and at last adopted Calvinistic views; with a large number of the members he quitted the church in 1699. This held on its way for another thirty-nine years, and then disbanded, most of the members joining the mother-church in White's Alley.

Piggott and his followers decided to found a new church, and they were fortunate in finding excellent premises. A Dorset Catholic family, Weld of Lulworth, had a town-house in Holborn, which had been leased to the Spanish embassy. The ambassador had built in 1665 within its grounds a fine chapel for Roman Catholic worship. At the explosion of popular feeling at the end of James' reign, the mob sacked and burned the chapel. William of Orange was anxious to keep on good terms, so ample apology was made to the ambassador, with a guard of honour; and a new chapel was built at the public expense. But he at once vacated the premises. And the chapel was hired by a Huguenot church, "La Piramide," till it went to Newport Market. Piggott, who had in May, 1699, baptized a Benedictine monk, saw his opportunity. In January 1699-1700 he took a lease of this new chapel, which was henceforth approached by a cross-street named Little Weld Street, afterwards corrupted into Little Wild Street.

Piggott had been a schoolmaster, and was in the front rank of Baptist ministers. He threw himself into hard work, and was instrumental in reviving the Particular Baptist Association. The church grew rapidly, and the chapel was equipped with three galleries and a vestry. The pastor was very popular, and his chapel drew many who were not Baptists; Defoe was often to be seen here. When Piggott died in 1713, a volume of his sermons was issued, with a portrait by a fashionable engraver. He had brought Baptists into notice in the West End.

Under his successor, Thomas Harrison, another educated man, the church continued in the front rank, and took part in founding the Particular Baptist Fund. One of the deacons, who had given largely from his stock to ministers in Pennsylvania, was so impressed by his deliverance in the storm of 1703 that he left £40 for an annual sermon to commemorate it. The church did not subscribe towards either of the co-operative baptisteries erected at this time; it seems a fair inference that it had one of its own.

When the pastor conformed to the Church of England, the church looked to Bristol, where one of its former members, Bernard Foskett, was tutor of the Academy. Andrew Gifford,

who had been trained at the fine academy in Tewkesbury also, came in 1730, and carried the church to greater heights, being in touch with Court and Parliament. In political affairs, there was need to maintain the civil rights of Dissenters, and regain those which had been taken away under Charles II; at the formation of the Dissenting Deputies, the church was to the fore, and it proved that one of its deacons provided a test case which he won triumphantly when on his deathbed in 1767. The church flourished financially, buying the freehold in 1735; also spiritually, providing a pastor to Maze Pond.

But a slip of Gifford when a student, years before, became known, and the church was divided on the question whether it could be condoned. He left, with many members, and founded a new church on Eagle Street, north of Holborn. The remainder began a new church-book, and by October 1736 secured another educated man, Joseph Stennett, with experience at Exeter; that he personally observed Saturday as the sabbath was no obstacle. Two of his sons were called to the ministry, besides Caleb Evans; and he himself was awarded a D.D. from St. Andrew's on the recommendation of the Duke of Cumberland, for the church had been actively loyal at the Jacobite rebellion.

His son Samuel Stennett succeeded in 1758, and soon received an Aberdeen degree. From the membership in his days, which was "rather select than numerous," being only about sixty, went Clarke to be pastor at Unicorn Yard, Jenkins to Shrewsbury and Walworth, Hughes to Battersea and the Bible Society, John Thomas the first missionary in India, James Smith to be treasurer of the Particular Baptist Fund for forty-three years; while John Howard the great philanthropist attended so regularly that though strictly a Congregationalist he wrote to Stennett from Smyrna as "my minister." So flourishing was the cause that the building of 1689 was taken down, together with an adjoining house, and a larger chapel was erected in 1788, the finest in London for the denomination, with spacious vaults for interments.

Later pastorates were of less length, but the fine tradition was maintained for a time. Under Coxhead a Sunday-school was started in 1806; Anderson was called to the ministry, and afterwards became tutor at Bristol. Waters, from the daughter church of Battersea, saw the last link with the past snap, when a member, Thomas Laughner, died at the age of 112, old enough to have seen Piggott enter on the former chapel. Edwards of Accrington and Hargreaves of Ogden brought an entirely new style of ministry which lasted for twelve years. In their day the leading man was William Paxon, who filled many offices, becoming the first Honorary Solicitor to the Baptist Union. But

conditions in the neighbourhood had changed, and there was no London Baptist Association at work. When Hargreaves resigned in 1829, the chapel was closed, the church lost heart, and Paxon drew up its epitaph.

Some Londoners were stung with shame, and re-opened the premises after some time. It was hard to find any minister willing to face the problems, but at last Christopher Woollacott came from Westminster. On the stern lines of the conservatives, he kept the flag flying till 1863, and others continued eleven years longer, with a roll under thirty. Woollacott compiled a short account of the church, but did not bring out the existence of three different churches; and even some of his statements of facts are questionable.

Meanwhile the Bloomsbury church had developed work of a new kind, employing a missionary, George Hatton. He found ample scope in the district, but the work was cramped by being scattered in little halls. It was an obvious solution that the fine premises of Samuel Stennett should become the centre of this group of missions; and by 1874 there was again a strong church of 267 members, which steadily increased, and allied itself with the L.B.A.

What was once the West End, was now an area of slums, and radical measures were adopted towards the end of the century. Clearances and rebuilding left the mission-church with fine new premises, now facing on to Wild Street itself, with huge blocks of flats opposite, housing hundreds of respectable families. Once again a new church faced new conditions. It continued, however, to specialize in the work of the St. Giles Christian Mission even at the expense of loosening its ties with the L.B.A. And this latest chapter has now closed.

It will be seen that on this spot there have been four successive chapels; the embassy Catholic chapel; the chapel built at national expense, used successively by Huguenots and Baptists; the chapel built by Stennett's congregation; the chapel built by the London County Council. Besides the General Baptist church in St. John's Court, three Particular Baptist churches have worshipped here; one fashionable, one Strict, one mission.

Starting from Wild Street, a man can "touch the doors" within ten minutes of a crowded day-school, the Methodist Kingsway Hall, the parish church of Holy Trinity, the Roman church of St. Anselm, the Kingsgate Baptist church, a second crowded day-school, the parish church of St. John, an Ethical Society that started as a Baptist church, and the fine building where Harington Evans and Baptist Noel ministered. Honour the men who face their problems, and may they have the wit to deal with the thousands dwelling around them.

The Blight Family.

GENEALOGY is curiously elusive, and comparatively few outside the ranks of the ancient nobility can trace their lineage earlier than the third George. Far smaller is the circle of those who can point to a family tree with its roots deep in the Elizabethan era; but a recently published volume of considerable interest (*Francis J. Blight, F.R.S.E., Publisher*, by George Hawker, with a Foreword by J. W. Ewing, M.A., D.D., Elliot Stock, 10s. 6d. net) reveals the honoured treasurer of our Historical Society occupying a worthy place in that select circle.

Elizabeth had been on the throne but ten years, and the adventure with the Spanish Armada was still ten years distant, when, in 1578, John Blight (i) was born at Exeter. His is the first of the ten names on the Birth Script; and he is not unworthy of the renown which has come to his descendants, for we learn from Izacke's *Antiquities of the City of Exeter* that, in 1608, he was appointed Bailiff or Steward of Exeter and Justice of the Peace, positions which called for dignity and a degree of stateliness. Unfortunately his religious associations are veiled in the mists of time. Fancy plays with the idea that he may have been one of the earliest Devon Baptists; that he may have counted among his friends some of the Pilgrim Fathers who two years after his death sailed in the *Mayflower*; and that, had he survived a few years, he might have joined in the correspondence with the Mennonite Church in Amsterdam. But the idea remains a fancy as information is lacking. Not until one hundred and fifty years from the birth of John Blight can the Baptist association of the family be established with certainty. In the meantime Gilbert Blight (i), who "lived six and fifty years and begat sons and daughters," in adult life found his place amongst the Puritans; and John Blight (ii), just before the close of the seventeenth century, settled the family at Topsham on the Exe, less than five miles from Exeter, where, according to *Thompson's MSS.* in Doctor Williams' Library, was a small Baptist Church, an off-shoot from Exeter. It is possible that at this little cause the Blights received their first lessons in Baptist life and doctrine, but we are still in the region of surmise. Safer ground is reached when we conjecture that the prosperous block-maker, John Blight (iii) "who, amongst other activities, was a humble follower of Ctesibius of Alexandria, who is said to have invented pumps 140 B.C.," almost certainly discussed theological questions

with fervour, for Exeter in 1718 was the cock-pit of an Arian controversy which set the whole West Country ablaze and ultimately reached London. Beginning with local Presbyterians it spread to the Baptists, and some members of the South Street Church "falling into that error, were cut off for the same." For several months scarcely any question was debated in Exeter and the surrounding country but that of the Trinity. It was discussed in families; preached about from the pulpit with such fervour that one minister was led to charge some of his fellow dissenters with "damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them"; reported in local journals; and written about in quite a library of pamphlets. The controversy waxed so hot that a Judge at the Exeter Assizes, in the course of his Grand Jury charge, thought it necessary to deliver a homily on the awful sin of Arianism. In the midst of these exciting conditions no prominent citizen could remain neutral, and there is little doubt that John Blight (iii), when attending to the parish pumps, found ample opportunities to argue for the faith that was in him.

Solid ground is gained at latest in 1742, for an old minute book of South Street discloses in that year, and in 1749, several members of the family in association with that historic church. As the direct descendants in our treasurer's line have been Baptists, the record thus emerges of almost two hundred years continuous association with Baptist churches. It is doubtful if there are more than three or four families, which could, by documentary evidence, prove a similar uninterrupted connection. Of those in fellowship with the Exeter Church, Richard, who was born in 1729, attracts attention, for writing of him his great-grandson says: "This Richard Blight is noteworthy, and his name is expressive of his nature—Richard, strong; Blight, merry and gay. In our line he stands—like Hebe in mythology—the personification of Spring-time. There is a sprightliness about him, a delightful freshness as invigorating as the morning dew. His portrait in oils, painted in his maturity, explains and supports the esteem and honour in which his memory is cherished." Richard Blight served the Exeter Church as a deacon probably more than ten years, and then, early in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, said farewell to the County of "Drake, Raleigh, Gilbert and Blight," and moved the family to London. A neighbouring Devonian, John Rippon of Tiverton, had settled at Carter Lane three or four years previously; and, therefore, to the south of the Thames, within easy reach of Carter Lane, Richard Blight naturally gravitated. Two or three years passed, and then, "before a silver thread appeared among his dark curly locks," writes his great-grandson, "with unquenchable cheerfulness the 'Spring-time' canoe glided from

the valley by the river until 'joy unspeakable' became glory on October 21st, 1780, and Richard Blight was buried at St. Olave's Burying Ground, Southwark."

His son, Gilbert Blight (ii), who lived from 1767 to 1847, was an outstanding figure in the public and religious life of the Metropolis. A prosperous Stationer with premises at the Royal Exchange, whose business had a wider range than the title suggests, he was admitted a Freeman of the City of London in 1809, sure evidence of the esteem and respect in which he was held in City circles. But the chief interests of his life were religious. Baptised at Carter Lane in his twentieth year, his membership of that historic church continued sixty years. Deacon, minute secretary, presiding deacon during the minister's absence, senior deacon—all offices were filled with dignity and devotion. To the Christian movements of his day he gave himself unsparingly, supporting them by speech, by pen and by purse. Hardly a denominational society existed, and few inter-denominational, but his name was found among those serving on the Committee. His son, Gilbert Blight (iii), maintained the family tradition of sterling business integrity and active religious service, and, following in his father's footsteps, he also was admitted a Freeman of the City of London. In youth and early manhood he enjoyed the great privilege of association with Mare Street, when F. A. Cox was at the height of his glory as a preacher, a writer, and a political leader of Nonconformity. Subsequently he moved to the newly formed church in Camden Road, of which for a number of years he was a deacon and church secretary.

From the foregoing it will be realised that Francis J. Blight entered into a rich heritage, to which it can with truth be said he has contributed greatly added lustre. His career is a romance, and of particular interest and inspiration to young men for whom he has long had a warm regard. Born within sound of Bow Bells, and living throughout his career in London and its environs, he is every inch a Londoner, but "the call of the West has been to him a call of the blood; and the beauty of the West Country, so rich, so varied, so soft, so bold, has called forth his instinctive affection from childhood." Those who have known him at all intimately have appreciated something of his versatility. On odd occasions unexpected windows have been opened and new interests disclosed. It is not surprising, therefore, to read that many varied experiences went to the fitting of Francis Blight for the eminent position ultimately attained by him in the world of technical publishing, a position which led a high authority to say "Mr. Blight did for *technical* literature what Cassell in his time did for *popular* literature." Honours in drawing in the

Senior Cambridge Examination almost inevitably suggested draughtsmanship as a calling, and in the office of a northern engineering firm he found congenial duties. Increased architectural knowledge was gained in four years service in the private office of the architect to the Great Northern Railway; and then followed a Civil Service clerkship in the office which had charge of title maps and apportionments, under the Survey Department of the Land Office. In 1886, our treasurer started an eight years association with J. & A. Churchill, publishers; and at the close of this period became assistant manager to Charles Griffin & Co., Ltd., the firm of which five years later he was elected chairman and managing director. To these offices he was continuously re-elected for twenty-eight years. In his appreciative foreword Dr. Ewing writes of this period—"This long and intimate association with the world of letters gave opportunity for creative work of a high order which he readily availed himself of, and rose quickly to eminence, giving the world numerous volumes of technical importance. His work in this direction won him many honours, notably the Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh" . . . while in Griffin's richly ornamented Centenary Volume, Prof. T. Hudson Beare's testimony was "The present head of the firm, Mr. Francis Blight, F.R.S.E., has had the great advantage of being engaged in his earlier days on engineering work, and thus it has been always an easy task to persuade him as to the need of a book on some new development of engineering science, while his intimate knowledge of modern scientific advances in all fields has made him a qualified critic when any new manuscript is offered for publication by an author who has yet to win his spurs."

Mr. Blight rapidly gained fame as the pioneer in the publication of text books of applied science, books which proved one of the safeguards of the country during the stress of war, and which secured for his name a prominent place in articles on "Publishing" in modern national encyclopedias. Not only as already indicated did Mr. Blight become a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, but he was also admitted a Freeman of the City of London, thus following in honourable succession his father and grandfather. As Renter Warden in 1925 he had the unique distinction of entering the illustrious names of Lord Balfour, Sir James Barrie and Rudyard Kipling in the Renter Warden's Roll Book.

All the members of our Historical Society will rejoice heartily in the noteworthy position in Publishing attained by their treasurer, and in the rare distinctions in Civic life which have been conferred on him. But they will equally rejoice that, amid all business and scientific successes, he remained an ardent,

devoted Baptist, rendering consistent and whole-hearted service. Over fifty-five years have passed since, beginning with baptism at Camden Road, he entered on that Christian career which has made his name one of the best known and respected in the Baptist churches of the metropolis. During this period there have been few denominational movements in which he has not been a hard worker, but probably he feels his best and most lasting service has been done in connection with young men. Himself in his younger days a cross-country runner and cricketer of no mean distinction, he knew the virile manly note which effectively appealed to youth, and so, wherever circumstances guided him—Camden Road—Highgate Road—Camden Road again—Heath Street—Wealdstone—Alperton—inevitably he found his way to the leadership of the Young Men's Bible Class.

Writing of one of such classes, Mr. Hawker says "Mr. Blight spared no pains in ploughing and sowing, and God gave him increase. He was the friend as well as the teacher of the members of his class. A young man himself, he understood their perils and their conflicts. He received their confidences, gave them sympathy, accompanied with them in wholesome recreations, and by all means sought to win them for Christ." Members of one or other of the classes became ministers, missionaries, colporteurs, religious secretaries, while others passed on to positions in churches and Sunday Schools, and several to distinguished posts in professional life. When serving as secretary of the Western Group of the London Baptist Association, an office which he held for thirteen years, Mr. Blight was ever on the look-out for younger men who could render service in the wider life of the denomination, and the writer of this article is one of many who are indebted to him for the generous word of encouragement spoken at the right moment.

It is always the busy man who is asked to do more, and somehow he usually finds the necessary time to fit in the "extra." It was therefore almost a matter of course that, as the years passed, claims for Mr. Blight's service increased in number and intensity. His own churches elected him Sunday School secretary and superintendent, deacon, church secretary, mission leader, &c. Examples of outside service are many; a few only can be indicated: Presidency of Western Group (twice) and of London Baptist Missionary Union; committee of Regent's Park College and the Bible Society; treasurer of Dr. John Ward's Trust and of our Historical Society.

The crushing sorrow of Mr. Blight's life came in 1918, when his son, Horace Vincent Blight, M.C., A.C.A., the ninth of his line and the fifth in the succession of those known to be Baptists,

was killed in action in France, whilst leading his men in a successful attack on the enemy machine-guns. Horace was a most lovable personality of fine attainments, who, after a brilliant school career at Merchant Taylors' entered the service of Charles Griffin & Co., Ltd., as secretary and was speedily made a director. He continued the family tradition of Christian service, and as joint secretary with his father of the Western Group and joint auditor of the London Baptist Property Board, Ltd., he revealed gifts and a culture which suggested he might attain the highest position in the denomination.

The biography which has inspired this article suggests an interesting question which has already been hinted, viz., Which family can trace the longest uninterrupted association with the Baptists? The Blights can do so for nearly two hundred years, and possibly further research in Devonshire would reveal a still longer period. The Northampton Grays and the Bowers go back with certainty to the second half of the eighteenth century, and there are two or three other families which might feel justified in claiming the distinction. It would certainly be worthy of note if any family could prove association from the days of persecution to the present.

As we should expect of a book about one who was himself a publisher of *quality* books, the volume is excellently produced on paper that is a delight to handle and in print that is pleasing to the eye. Moreover, the author, whose ability for clear and melodious writing is well known, has brought to the work that personal affection which speaks the truth lovingly. The illustrative thirty-two half tone plates have a charm and interest of their own. They comprise not only family portraits and churches, but also reproductions of Mr. Blight's microscopical and pen and ink drawings. The book was prepared in the first place for private printing: we are grateful to the many whose requests led to publication.

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

A Treasurer and his College.

CHURCHES and societies owe much to the gratuitous service of ordinary members, who are often neglected in telling the story. It is only when some descendant finds a diary, or gives reminiscences, that their great value comes to light. Such an instance is afforded in the life-work of James Smith of Melbourne and Nottingham, 1764-1847. He earned his living as a joiner and cabinet-maker; he gave his money and his thought chiefly to the Academy of the New Connection.

He came of good stock. His father Francis was founder of the churches at Kirkby Woodhouse and Melbourne. When he married Elizabeth Toone in 1753, Abraham Booth was one of the witnesses, and when Francis was chosen pastor at Melbourne seven years later, Booth ordained him. He was a journeyman, and out of his scanty wage, gave eightpence weekly to the church; when a legacy of £5 fell in, that went the same way. So James had a capital start at home.

A few years later, Francis became acquainted with a Yorkshireman of kindred tastes, a stone-mason, Dan Taylor. At a farm called Hurst, in Wadsworth near Hebden Bridge, Taylor was running a day-school; and the friends of Francis Smith helped him by sending about fifteen of their sons to board at Hurst. An arithmetic exercise-book of James when he was twelve years old has been given to our Baptist Historical Society by Mr. B. B. Granger, of Nottingham, a descendant. It testifies to the goodness of the teaching, perhaps in this department by an assistant, Ingham of Heptonstall Slack; also to the neatness and accuracy of the lad.

His brother Robert was called to the ministry at Loughborough, was one of the earliest preachers at Nottingham, and became the first pastor of the church in Stoney Street. Robert had a great baptismal service in the river, just above Trent Bridges, on 30 July, 1786, when thirty-two people confessed their Lord. His joy must have been great in that James was one of these, a declared Christian at the age of twenty-two.

Abraham Booth had gone to London, but his brother Robert Booth still lived at Kirkby Woodhouse, often visiting Nottingham, where his son, also named Robert, built the first hosiery warehouse, and another son Abraham was first to stock boots and shoes ready-made. James Smith would naturally frequent their houses, and there he met their sister Mary, who agreed to cast

in her lot with him. While James' parents had been married in a Baptist chapel without the intervention of any official of Church or State, the law had been altered soon afterwards, owing to the scandals caused by bankrupt clergymen in prison marrying people off-hand. It was now necessary for banns to be called thrice in the parish churches, unless an expensive licence were bought to speed up matters. So James and Mary were wedded at St. Peter's Church in Nottingham on 12 October 1788, she being two years younger than he. Thus they entered on a happy life of twenty-four years together.

At Stoney Street they were good members. James followed in his father's footsteps so far as to be called to the ministry, though he never accepted a pastorate; in our modern phrase, he was an accredited lay preacher. He often had the joy of baptizing his own converts.

In 1795 the church for the first time invited the Association to meet at Nottingham. It proved a turning-point in the career of James Smith. No doubt the official centre was the Swan Inn on Market Hill, but equally without doubt James and Mary were glad to show off their four-year-old Mary to as many guests as they could fit into their little house. There was a fine exhibition of corporate life, church after church reporting. At Melbourne, though father Francis was "now advanced in years and infirmities," yet the place was crowded with hearers, was about to be enlarged, and a branch opened, so that an Assistant minister was working, of whom we shall hear again. Mary however heard a less encouraging account from Kirkby Woodhouse. Nine problems were brought up from the churches, and counsel was given in each.

Next year the question of an Academy to train young ministers came decisively to the front. Even when James was at Taylor's school in Hurst, his master had put on paper his convictions, and with the help of a poor blind brother there, had tried them out. But the New Connection preferred to have united action, and it was at last decided to recognize officially what had been going on privately. Although Nottingham people were hard at work building a new meeting-house, James Smith figures at once in the first list of subscribers for the Academy, with a guinea. No account was published how the capital fund of £360 was raised.

The Academy was run with economy. At the beginning there were three or four young men at a time: the total expense for their board and Taylor's tuition was £161 for the year. Many a college treasurer to-day may be envious of the good old times. Taylor laboured with energy, acquired a place in Red Cow Lane at Mile End, which they worked together. But on this side of

their preparation there was no permanent result. Nottingham sent young Hurst to be trained, and he presently went to revive Louth. It must have been pleasant to read that when Barton, the mother church of the whole Connection, sadly wanted a young, wise, active, consoling Boanerges, then Mr. Cameron of the Academy was mentioned as likely to be suitable.

Nottingham church was flourishing extremely, with many preachers and stations: father Francis had at last gone to his reward. James therefore transferred his energies to Melbourne for a few years, and was sent thence to the Association meetings. Though members were emigrating, there were six or seven stations worked from this mother-church, mostly attended well. Almost at once, three friends at Melbourne were induced to subscribe to the Academy. As Nottingham in turn experienced peculiar trials, James transferred back again for a year or two, then reverted to Melbourne.

In 1807 the Association came again to Nottingham, when the White Lion Inn must have been much edified by its guests. Whether Mary Smith had as many, we may doubt, for the worth of James was becoming well-recognized, and he was chosen one of the three Scribes. With his brother a Moderator, and his old teacher in the Chair, we get a glimpse at the happy family conditions of the whole Connection. His entries as minute secretary ended with the remarkable note:—It having been stated in this Association that Mr. Walworth had unhappily addicted himself to the study of Astrology and other arts connected with it, this Association think it proper and necessary to express their decided disapprobation of anything of that nature.

There was a falling-off of interest in the Academy; it is not clear that any student at all was left that year, and none had entered for two years. The subscribers however were full of faith, and paid up as usual, augmenting the capital fund, while Hinckley sent John Preston, who afterwards developed a gift for starting new causes or resuscitating dying churches. There had long been some misgiving as to the students being trained in London, while most of the churches were Midland:—the committee was strengthened this year by James Smith and other laymen, whose point of view was steadily maintained. A year or two later, when churches wanted pastors, a list of eight eligible men was published, and only two were at the Academy.

With 1811 John Earp settled at Melbourne, and James transferred again to Nottingham. When he threw in all his energies at the great town, we hear at once of a Sunday School rising, to teach 400 children. The church was the largest in the Connection, outshining even Barton, Loughborough and Melbourne; more than twice as large as Dan Taylor's in London, and it was

contemplating a new church at Sheffield. But James Smith was now called to wider service, as Treasurer of the Academy.

This precipitated a change. The subscribers met at Loughborough, and requested Taylor to move into the Midlands. He felt that at seventy-five he was too old to shift, and he resigned, receiving thanks for all he had done. The subscribers then strengthened the position of the Academy, asking the Association as such to be responsible. This was an original idea. Neither in the Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Independents, the Baptists, was there anything like a college managed by the denomination. The familiar plan was to found bursaries or scholarships, tenable at approved universities or with approved tutors; in Baptist circles there were still such students under Ward's Trustees and under the General Baptist Assembly of the Old Connection. Academies at Bristol, Bradford, Abergavenny and Stepney were all governed by private subscribers. The idea of a college belonging to the New Connection seems quite a new departure; and that James Smith was at once appointed Treasurer suggests that he was a foremost advocate of the policy; his brother Robert was Secretary.

Funds did not permit a whole-time tutor, nor does it appear that such an idea was ever mooted. In medicine, the best teaching is from men who practise, and that policy was continued here. Joseph Jarrom was a man ten years younger than James, from the same district, an early student under Taylor, and now for ten years a most successful pastor at Wisbech. It was decided to entrust him with the Academy under its new auspices.

James Smith showed great energy. He got in back subscriptions, and wrote to a member of the Quorndon church who had gone to New York; Richard Raven was now keeper of the prison there, and such experience made him so tender-hearted that he at once became the most liberal supporter, and in later years increased his subscriptions. James appealed to his own relations, and Miss Mary Smith figures for £4: was this really a delicate way of indirect help, in the name of his young daughter?

This reminds us of the sad changes in the family circle. At the end of 1812, Mary his consort died, and he was left with children needing care. Now Maria Earp, a girl eleven years younger than himself, had married Edmund Whitaker, his father's assistant, who also had died in 1808. The rules of the Connection bade members marry in the Lord, and after awhile, James took Maria in the place of Mary; she seems to have mothered the children well, though she had none of her own.

The Academy took first place in the thought of James, and we can imagine his feelings when one young man drew back,

preferring a post as usher at a school, to a training for the ministry. But an Itinerant Fund was already in being, and the two fitted together well; James Smith supported it, and within ten years a score of places had profited, including Apperley Bridge below Rawdon in Yorkshire. We wonder whether he paused to contrast this Connectional system with the spontaneity of his father's days, and to question whether mechanization were altogether good. One great link with the origin was snapped, with the death of Dan Taylor in 1816.

Soon afterwards there was grave trouble in the church at Nottingham, owing to the misconduct of an assistant. There was already a new building on Broad Street, where Mary Smith's body was laid to rest; and the solution was that a third of the members made that their home, with James and his brother Robert, so long the pastor; two-thirds remained at the old home. Once the internal strain was over, each church succeeded in winning new converts.

Then James hit on a new idea, gathering a library for the Academy. He originated a fine method, appealing to the Ladies, quite an anticipation of the Baptist Women's League. It is however brother Robert who is responsible for the wording of the appeal, recalling numerous instances from the Scriptures of piety and benevolence in the fair sex, avowing the ignorance of man respecting the Female character, and appealing to the liberality of the Female lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ in our congregations in the year 1816. He offered to lay out, as far as propriety would admit, each Lady's gift in some distinct work; and he also solicited valuable books as a donation, since these might often be parted with without any inconvenience to the possessor. Quite so, Baptists did not collect first editions, but read eagerly the poems of John and Samuel Deacon and other honoured craftsmen.

Nottingham also took the lead in Foreign Missions. There had been unanswered offers to co-operate with the Particular Baptists, and a sad acknowledgement in 1802 that by themselves they could not do anything worthy. After much talk, Nottingham opened a subscription, induced the Nottingham Conference to urge the idea, so that in 1816 a Society was duly organized. This he duly supported, but continued to concentrate his attention on the Academy.

Constitution, rules, a doubled subscription list, an annual visitation, showed the advantages of his fostering care. In the list of students, we can trace some from the families he learned to know forty years before when at school in Yorkshire. In the list of subscribers, we see his own contribution doubled, and his son beginning with a modest half-guinea, also a handsome

donation of £10 acknowledged, with the hope that it might become an annual subscription.

Presently the capital fund received attention. It had apparently been lent on notes of hand, and as he had long ago been taught at school, the Laws of England did not permit a rate of interest higher than five per cent. He therefore persuaded the committee to call in the notes, and to buy two houses on Hyson Green for £150, with nine at Carrington, re-named Academy Row, for £650. It may have seemed a good stroke, for one debtor had failed, though formerly the mayor, and paid only a dividend; but another was F. Boot: if only the Academy had held on, and become a Foundation member of some Pure Drug Company, what might the income have been? As it was, the income certainly leaped up at first; but the expenses of cottage property are high, and subsequent accounts are curious reading. James Smith junior did well, with all the contracts for repairs, and a commission on the rents collected; but the Academy found the net result not materially greater. However, the trustees included young James, young John Earp of Melbourne, young Richard Ingham of Heptonstall, with Hurst of Nottingham: the ties between all active members were many, and strong.

All this time there had been another James Smith in the Connection, a minister at Thorne, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Sutterton, Tydd St. Giles, Sutton St. James. It has needed some care to keep his traces distinct, and the more so as he too was generous, re-building a meeting-house mainly at his own expense. About this time he retired to Lutton, and the Connection took a sad farewell of him as gone "to a Socinian congregation at Long Sutton." His place was promptly filled by a student from the Academy.

The same year help was given to Joseph Wallis of Loughborough, to go to the university of Glasgow; a policy well justified by results a score of years later. Communications were also opened with the fund started about 1726 with the eager support of Thomas Crosby, which had come to be known as the General Baptist Fund. From that day onwards there were friendly and profitable relations.

In 1829 James Smith suffered a double loss, and laid Maria to rest beside Mary in the Broad Street chapel, where his brother Robert had been buried four months earlier. He continued at the helm of the Academy four years longer, and then retired with the thanks of the Association for his long and gratuitous service. His successor and the auditors presently disclosed that for years he had paid all manner of expenses out of his own pocket.

He lived on to the ripe age of eighty-three, no longer in

Mary Gate, but above the market-place on Tollhouse Hill; which a later age has re-named Derby Road. In 1815 his daughter Mary had married John Granger, and she too passed away in 1873, in the same house. To their children John gave his wife's family names. James Granger imparted much family information to our first treasurer, James Ward, who incorporated it in his fine work centering round another church, Friar Lane. Elizabeth Smith Granger inherited the arithmetic book which prompted this study, and used it as a denominational scrap-book; she survived her mother six years.

The Broad Street chapel was sold in 1903, but from its vault there were reverently removed the coffins of James and Mary and Maria, to the general cemetery. The church in a new home on Arkwright Street inherits the traditions of its first pastor Robert, and his brother James.

His life-work was the Academy. Its later story has been told by W. J. Avery in our first volume. But we are grateful to the family which enables us to see something of its early struggles, from an unusual standpoint. We may now have more sympathy with college treasurers: debts, defaulted notes, light gold, low interest, bad tenants, have their counterparts still in other forms; ability to canvass, to organize, to help select the best men as tutors and students; courage to send away past the tutor to a university—such qualities are needed still. The Ladies Library that he collected became the nucleus of a fine selection, and by the generosity of the trustees, everything of an historical nature has passed to our Society: we must examine the book-plates, and see whether any gift of a Deborah or a Lydia or a Priscilla may yet recall his winsome appeal.

W. T. WHITLEY.

A Life of Köbner.

Julius Köbner. Sein Leben. von Ruth Baresel, geb. Köbner.
Kassel, 1930. Verlag von J. G. Oncken Nachfolger. 310 pp.

THE long-promised life of Julius Köbner by his daughter, to which allusion was made in the *Baptist Quarterly* for October 1929, has at length appeared. Frau Baresel was not born until 1876, when her father was nearly seventy, and he died when she was barely eight, so that her personal recollections can play only a small part in the story. She is able to give us, however, some attractive glimpses of the great pioneer during his last Barmen days and during the final months in Berlin, and for the rest she has made careful study of the materials available, and has produced a well-documented and useful life. The illustrations, which include portraits of Köbner, his father, his two wives, and scenes in Denmark, add greatly to the interest of the volume. The Baptist Publication Department at Kassel are to be congratulated on their part in the work.

It is strange to find that, apart from a series of articles by Eduard Scheve published in 1891-2, no biography of Köbner has till now been written, though histories of the German Baptist movement, and of the church in Barmen, give many details regarding him. He played so decisive a rôle in the early development of our work, not only in Germany, but in Denmark and other countries, and was himself so interesting a figure, that it is well that this gap has now been filled. Frau Baresel has told the story of his life and work in straightforward and judicious fashion. Her volume is a most useful companion to the selection from Köbner's writings published three years ago by Dr. Gieselbusch, Frau Baresel's son-in-law.

The family name is connected with Köben on the Oder, but Köbner's father was born in the colony of German Jews at Lissa in Poland. Isaac Aaron Köbner left home when he was about twenty-five, and after brief stays in several German cities, settled at Odense, on the Danish island of Fünen. There he married, and soon became the Rabbi of the local Jewish community. His eldest son, the subject of this biography, was born in 1806, and received the name of Solomon. As a boy he was serious and studious, learned early of Christianity from books, and was attracted by what seemed to him its greater spirituality and reasonableness. When he was sent, at eighteen years of age, to

Lübeck to seek employment, he at once visited the Pastor of the Reformed Church to learn more about the religion of Jesus Christ. Of that interview he afterwards wrote: "I heard then for the first time why Christ had come. I received the most worthwhile of all gifts, the teaching of the divinity of Christ." To avoid interference by his Jewish acquaintances he moved on to Hamburg, but for a while made no public profession of faith. He was a skilled engraver, and found time also to teach languages and to write poetry. It was when he wished to become engaged to one of his pupils, the daughter of a German officer, that he sought baptism, and took the names of Julius Johann Wilhelm. He was then twenty years old, and was baptised in St. Peter's, Hamburg.

A special licence from the King of Denmark was necessary before he could marry, as the families of both parties objected. The young couple settled first in Denmark, in a little town on the west coast. Both Köbner and his wife were attracted to the town, however, and when the chance came of employment in Hamburg, they quickly took it. There a chance meeting with Oncken changed the whole course of their lives. The first Baptist church on the Continent of Europe had been formed in Hamburg in 1834; it had at first only six members. Köbner and his wife were baptised by immersion on confession of their faith in 1836.

It is difficult to overestimate all that the association of Oncken and Köbner meant to the small Baptist community. The one was a great and statesmanlike organiser as well as a burning evangelist, the other had unusual imaginative gifts, and an interest in theology, history, and literature. Together with G. W. Lehmann they made up the famous *Kleeblatt*, or cloverleaf, a threefold cord, which, though once nearly broken, was never completely severed, in spite of all the strain and stress of nearly half a century of pioneer work in the face of persecution and misunderstanding.

Köbner's pen was at once placed at the disposal of the Baptists. He wrote hymns for them. He contributed much to the early confessions of faith. He supplied them with books for edification and propaganda. All his time and energies he lavished on the growing movement. For some years he worked with Oncken in Hamburg, sharing in the sufferings which resulted from the hostility of the civil and religious authorities, and helping to reap the harvest which followed the public-spirited action of the Baptists during the fire of 1842. He journeyed over all parts of Germany as "missioner," and laid the foundations of Baptist work in Denmark, his native land. Then, in 1852, Oncken asked him to go as pastor to Barmen, the centre of

an industrial area, which was rightly regarded as a key position. For thirteen years he worked at the building-up of the church there, finding time also for much visitation throughout Germany, for work in connection with the Evangelical Alliance, and for the writing of a poetical drama, "The Waldensians," and other literary activity.

In 1865 Köbner resigned the Barmen charge, and Oncken suggested he return to Denmark as pastor of the church at Copenhagen. He would have gone with great zest and gladness but that it involved separation from his wife, who, during the Barmen days, had developed eccentricities, which caused comment and inconvenience among a somewhat critical congregation, and for some of which she undoubtedly deserved severe censure. Oncken suggested that she be left in Hamburg under his care, and there she died in 1868. Meantime Köbner had met with considerable success in his native land. Things seemed to promise well, when suddenly the whole denomination was involved in an unfortunate dispute, which, beginning in Hamburg, soon spread throughout Germany and the neighbouring lands, and in the end divided even the "cloverleaf." Into its details it is unnecessary now to enter. Many unwise things were said and done by all parties. It came gradually to concern questions not only of personalities and policy, but of organisation and principle. The time was over-ripe for some kind of stocktaking after years of expansion, but it was most unfortunate that seven crucial years should be spent in bickering. Not till 1876 did an end come to the trouble. There was a revision of the constitution of the German Union, which aimed at making it more democratic, and the personal divisions were gradually healed.

Köbner played a leading part in the work of reconciliation and rebuilding. A journey through Germany and Switzerland in 1877 showed what a hold he still had over the Baptist community. He was getting on in years, but spared himself not at all. During the long-drawn-out conflict he had married again. Dorothea Stagsted was thirty years younger than her husband, but the union was a very happy one, though all too brief. A daughter, Ruth, the author of this volume, was born in 1876, and almost at once Frau Köbner became seriously ill. She died in the early hours of 1879, to her husband's great grief. He felt he must make a new start, and at the age of seventy-three accepted an invitation to return to Barmen. There he resumed most of his old activities and added some new enthusiasms. Oncken and Lehmann were both ageing rapidly, and to Köbner there came wider influence and authority. He was still busy with his pen, and though the pamphlets and books which he issued are not of permanent significance, they show remarkable

mental alertness. When in 1882 Lehmann died, Köbner was asked to go to Berlin to succeed him. It was a strange final chapter to his life. He was nearly seventy-seven when he preached his induction sermon. For the first time in his life he started with a united and loyal people, but he had not long in which to serve them. A cold caught at Oncken's funeral in the early days of 1884 developed into his last illness, and on February 2nd he passed peacefully away.

He was a shrewd, kindly man, an able speaker, an interesting preacher, wide in his interests and sympathies, a writer and poet of no mean ability. He has left his mark deep on the life of the Baptist movement on the Continent, and since there have been few who have come near him in mental and spiritual stature in the years since his death, his importance is still great. He retained always a few marks of his origin. The Jew Spinoza was described as "God-intoxicated." Köbner was dominated throughout his life by a sense of God's majesty and power. But he was, before all else, a dedicated man, one who had surrendered all of himself to the service of Jesus Christ.

Baptists throughout the world will be grateful to Frau Baresel for having adequately told her father's story.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

THE MENNONITES IN RUSSIA continue to suffer, and stories as to their hardships reach us in very circuitous routes, through Germany, America and New Zealand. One group settled in Turkestan nearly sixty years ago, and did much to reclaim land. But the Soviet policy is to break up these self-contained colonies, however communistic each may be in itself. Their property has been socialized, their societies broken up, and they are scattered. One bishop is now in a new colony in Brazil. A careful study of the whole flight from Russia is appearing from the pen of Professor Unruh, at Cassel. After reviewing the political and economic background before 1923, he states the two incompatible aims of the government, to bring about a world revolution, and to reconstruct Russia. With 1929, each village commune was empowered to fine and to deport all who refused to join. On the economic side, this ruins the Mennonite system which reclaimed a third of Russia. On the religious, the Soviets "want to destroy everything which claims to be supernatural and superhuman." And having shattered the institutions of the former State Church, it now girds itself to wrestle with the life of the evangelicals, and last year issued at Moscow and at Kharkov two pamphlets against the Sects.

Notices.

THE ANNUAL MEETING will be held on Tuesday, 28 April. Members are invited to assemble outside the Southern Railway Station on Holborn Viaduct at 2.45, and to bring friends with them. Dr. Ewing will guide the party to sites connected with Bunyan, Milton and other Baptists, about 1,000 yards in all, by Snow Hill, Newgate, Smithfield, Aldersgate, St. Giles' Church, to Bunhill Fields, describing their associations. The Rev. George H. McNeal, M.A., will exhibit the Methodist Museum and Wesley's Chapel on City Road, where a fee of sixpence will be payable. By his courtesy a brief meeting will be held to receive reports, to elect officers and committee. Business will end about five o'clock. All who are interested in the historic sites of Holborn and Finsbury will be most welcome.

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NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICE. At the annual meeting, committee and officers for the year will be elected; the following nominations are made by the out-going committee, other nominations may be sent to the honorary secretary before 18 April:—*President*, H. Wheeler Robinson; *Vice-President*, Seymour J. Price; *Treasurer*, Francis J. Blight; *Hon. Secretary*, W. T. Whitley; *Assistant Secretary*, A. J. Klaiber; *Librarian*, F. E. Robinson; *Editorial Board*, W. T. Whitley, S. J. Price, F. Townley Lord; other members of *Committee*, W. E. Blomfield, J. Leslie Chown, Arthur Dakin, A. J. D. Farrer, A. S. Langley, G. H. R. Laslett, Hugh Martin, Cecil B. Rooke, J. W. Thirtle, A. C. Underwood.

Accounts for 1930.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
Members' subscriptions	127	19	6
Sales, Works of John Smyth	1	14	4
Sales, per Kingsgate Press	1	0	0
			<hr/>
	130	13	10
With balance brought from 1929	4	5	10
			<hr/>
	£134	19	8
			<hr/>

EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.
Printing and publishing the Baptist			
Quarterly	74	17	6
Purchase of Bugbrooke Church History ...	2	10	0
Library—shelving and carriage of books ...	6	0	5
Fire Insurance Premium	0	4	6
Subscription to Friends' Historical Society, (two years)	0	10	0
Expenses of four officers	2	9	3
Stamps on cheques	0	4	0
			<hr/>
	86	15	8
Placed on deposit, Life Members	20	0	0
Subscriptions paid in advance	7	13	0
Balance carried to account for 1931	20	11	0
			<hr/>
	£134	19	8
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SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1931. These were due on 1 January. Any not yet paid may be forwarded to Mr. Francis J. Blight, F.R.S.E., at Belstone Tor, Uphill Road, Mill Hill, London, N.W.7.

Report for 1930.

The committee has the pleasure of reporting for the twenty-third time on the activities of the society, connected with its library, its publications, its research.

The library is properly housed in the tower of the Baptist College at Bristol, under the care of Professor F. E. Robinson. During the year it has been augmented by gifts on behalf of the late Oliver Knott of Manchester, who had more than once contributed from his deep local knowledge to our periodicals, and by Matthew Gaunt of the Isle of Wight. To print a catalogue would indicate that expectation of growth had ceased; but a card catalogue can be consulted on the spot. Friends who desire to give, or to exchange, volumes of historical interest, are requested to communicate with the librarian or the secretary; sets of Baptist magazines and of Association reports are usually most welcome. On the death of aged Baptists in time past, their denominational accumulations have been offered, with great profit; in one recent case, a most valuable manuscript was mislaid, as the local friends did not know its importance; and it was only by the persistent enquiries of an overseas member through your secretary, that it was rescued. The committee invites bequests, or invitations from executors to examine what may appear to them old Baptist rubbish.

The Baptist Quarterly has appeared regularly. On the modern side it has spoken about conditions in Russia, and the experiences of the Mennonites, on the prospects of Church Union and of Education, on the eccentricities of Trust Deeds. Many of these subjects will continue to receive attention, and it is proposed to strengthen the Editorial Board for the purpose. On the antiquarian side, light has been thrown by many contributors, chiefly as to Notts. and Lancs., Devon, Somerset, Wilts. and Dorset, with London. Abundance of material is in hand, and more will be welcomed. The biography of a most unusual man, who was educated as a Jew and a Catholic, then passed through the Church of England into the Baptist ranks, was sought out with great diligence, and published in our columns, it has excited interest in many quarters. Our space for reviews is limited; so we confine ourselves to notices of history and biography bearing on Baptist life, or of books by Baptist authors.

We had expected a small volume on county history, to issue to our guinea subscribers; but as the author desired time for further enquiry, we circulated instead a pamphlet on the story of the church at Bugbrooke. During 1931 we hope to supply an account of the denomination in Norfolk and Suffolk, on which our assistant-secretary has been at work for two or three years.

These county studies are appreciated, and more are sought. Wherever a member will devote himself to this, it will be a pleasure to direct him to sources, and to advise with him, at every stage of his work. The society, however, has not an income sufficient to send a competent researcher to distant counties, and relies on the acumen and energy of its amateur members and friends. It is a help that the Institute of Historical Research now publishes both a Guide to the past, and Bulletins thrice a year, so that it will be easy to learn what has been done, and what is being done. Academic students can thus decide what remains to be done, choose their thesis, and have it registered. It is a joy to the society when its officers can aid in such choice and direction of studies. During the present year an Anglo-American Conference of Historians will meet in London, and representatives of this society have accepted invitations. Such co-operation may lead to enlarged visions, and these may be realised if more members are forthcoming.

H. WHEELER ROBINSON, *President*.

W. T. WHITLEY, *Honorary Secretary*.

THREE BOOKS WORTH STUDYING for our history have appeared recently. *The Crisis of English Liberty*, by Sir John Marriott, 15s.; *Studies in English Puritanism, 1660-1688*, by C. E. Whiting, 21s.; *A Literary History of the American People*, by Charles Angoff, two volumes 1607-1815, 40s. Who will present them to our library?