

# THE FRATERNAL.

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## The Perils of the Pulpit.

BY E. J. WIDDOWS, B.A., B.D.

The perils of our pulpit are obviously connected with the perils of our polity. The sermon is the centre and the pulpit is the power. If the man in the pulpit be a man of God, and the power of the pulpit be the power of God, the emphasis need not be a matter for reproach. But it involves a great responsibility for what we preach.

There are perennial perils of the pulpit; others are peculiarly pregnant at the present day. Religious seismometers reveal serious disturbances of faith, and in the general unrest the pulpit cannot but be implicated.

There is the danger of a *spurious simplicity*. Of meeting the demand of a new age of science, philosophy and criticism by a recoil—a falling back on what is called the *simple Gospel*, the watchword of people too often more lazy than evangelistic; content with reiterations of bare commonplaces, which sink the teaching aspect of the ministry.

The Gospel is simple, but it is also deep. It is profound because it is simple and we only appreciate its simplicity when we try to fathom its depth. The Lamb is on the Throne. The Gospel means the kingdom—a grander ideal than the church. The cross of Christ is at the heart of all true ethics, politics and sociology, and we can no longer divorce government from gospel, or commerce from cross; we need not be afraid of missing heaven in seeking to secure a better earth.

God's interpreter art thou to the waiting ones below,  
Twixt them and its light, midway, heralding the perfect day;  
Catching gleams of temple spires—hearing notes of angel choirs,  
Where as yet unseen of them—comes the New Jerusalem.

There is the danger of a *censurable silence*. Much has been said of late about pulpit reserve, and serious charges have been made. Sneers at the coward's castle are by those

who do not understand, but there is much truth in what is said.

The New Theology has reached circles unused to frank discussion and roused a spirit of enquiry which demands satisfaction—a situation full of interest and peril. Summer schools won't meet the case. It raises the whole question of religious teaching in the churches to which we must ultimately look for adequate solution. Reproach is involved in the panic which the New Theology aroused. Religion has outpaced theology. Criticism, philosophy, and science have profoundly modified our views and demand a restatement of Christian faith, and people who wake with surprise, like Rip Van Winkles, to discover this, have just cause of complaint against teachers who have kept them in the dark.

We want more *teaching*: in our colleges where lectures on theology and criticism written twenty—thirty years ago are still retailed to present students as if all these years had marked an intellectual blank; in our Sunday schools where children still are fed upon the sickly stories and licentious literalisms from the after-influence of which it is so hard to free them; in our pulpit where, with or without itinerancy, sermons still are preached, unmodified by newer light, that were the product of a darker age. Sermons too often are confined to the devotional, historical, or ethical, and real instruction in the fundamentals of the faith omitted. Yet it is here that doubts most frequently arise, as evidence the correspondence columns of our papers. Too frequently the pulpit leaves without assistance the incipient sceptic. Too many have assimilated liberal views themselves, but hesitate to pass them on to those they should enlighten. The relation of science to religion, the value for theology of evolution, the proper scope of inspiration, Old Testament views of God and of morality, the future life, the evidence and significance of the Resurrection and Ascension, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit—how little of the new light and thought upon great themes like these is handed on to congregations! Much though not definitely taught is still assumed by preachers in a literal sense to the great perplexity of those who think.

At back of much mistaken silence is the dubious consideration that discussion would unsettle and suggest

misgiving where it did not hitherto exist. But the longer an ostrich policy is pursued the harder is the awakening in the end. It is good to be cautious, but caution may easily degenerate to cowardice. We must know where prudence ends and treachery begins. We have to demonstrate that faith in focal doctrines can be kept without surrendering integrity of mind—to restore spiritual confidence by readjusting old faith to new material of knowledge, to show “that mind and soul, according well, may make one music as before—but vaster.”

New occasions teach new duties,  
Time makes ancient good uncouth;  
They must upward still and onward,  
Who would be abreast of Truth.

The last danger to which I refer is a perennial one, but is accentuated surely by the theological position of to-day. The most tragic thing of all occurs when the preacher is not certain of himself, when old truths have lost their grip—the mind becomes chaotic and the heart has lost the music of the “bells below the sea.” When a man is preaching what he does not quite believe, when the truth—the river clear as crystal from the throne of God—that should be like a spring of water fresh and clear, becomes instead a stagnant pool; then one’s own life grows green and murky and corrupt, and people wait wistfully at the place of healing, for the moving of the waters that can only stir when the spring within the preacher’s heart is full to overflowing. When the work becomes professional routine, the minister unspiritual and insincere, then his heart grows worldly and selfish and the change in himself is seen in his sermons—for a man cannot long preach sermons better than himself. This is the subtlest of the preacher’s perils, the slow leaking of spiritual power—the loss of first love when aspiration is content with lower levels, when moral aims become mere worldly ambitions, when the fervour of faith degenerates to frigid conformity, when the soul is blighted by a *searing secularity*. The demands of Christian service are so multiplied, the days so full, the nights so occupied, it is increasingly difficult to get time for lonely meditation on the great themes which *must* be pondered to be adequately realised—time for prolonged and close communion with God which is the only secret of freshness

—of full rich spiritual force without which the ministry soon becomes a drudgery, but which makes the humblest pastorate a pleasure.

Our work too reacts upon our spiritual life and largely moulds our creed. A ministry that is filled with Christ's pity for souls and his passion to save, that is conscious of the great issues of life, that realises the fact of human sin and the only sacrifice for sin, will confess through all the confusion of minds and the strife of tongues, "that for it at least there is no power in any creed that hides the cross, no life in any theology that denies the infinite glory of the Son of God."

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### The Mid-Week Service.

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Many interesting letters have been received dealing with this important service. A few extracts are appended:—

My experience has been that for these services a connected series of addresses is more popular than ordinary sermons. I have found that the people get interested in the subject, and make an effort to be present when they know they will lose the connection by their absence. What the usual attendant wants is something less formal than the "sermon," and less exacting than a "study." I choose my subject before the winter's work begins, and map out the evenings, giving to each its section. I then read whatever books I can get which will help me to make the addresses interesting and profitable. I find this an education to myself, because, of course, one reads much which, while it is of no direct service, is very valuable from the student's point of view. The following are some of the subjects which I have found interested the people:—"The Parables of Christ" (Bruce, Trench, Dods, and others on the "Teaching"), "The Miracles" (Lindsay, Trench, Taylor), "Life of Paul" (Ramsey, Expositor's Greek Testament on "Acts," and Sabatier), "The Pilgrim's Progress" (Grace Abounding, Kerr Bain, Whyte), "Various Lives from the Old Testament," "The Pilgrim Psalms," &c.

B. G. COLLINS (Bluntisham).

I have on various occasions given consecutive expository lectures on books of scripture. On the whole, I have thought the interest greatest, perhaps, in topical preaching, different subjects every week. As matters are at present, the strain on the minister is great. What is known as the prayer meeting is just a third service, demanding most thorough preparation, and differing from others in the addition of prayers by friends in the meeting. Districts differ. No other plan promises better results in many neighbourhoods.

J. T. FORBES (Glasgow).

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We get four or five prayers, and an address of about twenty minutes on some subject of *Christian Experience*, a lesson, and five hymns. I tried an exposition of the Sunday school lesson for a time, but whilst that interested the teachers and drew a few more of them, it did not keep the others much, and they called out for the old style of address on every day life. I have taken an Old Testament life—Abraham, Moses, &c.—and this has gone well, but not so well as a bit of experience. I try to give the people something to help them in the fight; and when I have been able to put my finger on their difficulties, such as the mystery of life, affliction, trouble, temptation, misfortune, &c., I have found the people interested, and in their prayers I learn that they have received a blessing. Nothing, in my opinion and experience, does so well as a bit of *sympathetic* talking, quietly and simply done, without any attempt at profound thought or dazzling rhetoric.

W. WITTON JENKINS (Salendine Nook).

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I have found a partial solution of the mid-week service problem by asking the congregation on the Sunday to send to me (without disclosing names) any of their Biblical and religious difficulties, and I would deal with them at the week evening service. The people did it, and came in good numbers to the service. The "topics" were printed on a card and the people gave them away, and so interested others. These are a sample of the topics:—  
 "Did the sun stand still?" "Did God harden Pharaoh's heart or did he harden it himself?" "Should we pray

directly to Christ or to the Father?" "What is the meaning of seeing God face to face?" "Is death a temporary sleep of the body, or soul, or both?" "How do you square the phrase, 'God made man in His own image,' with modern evolution?" "What should the world expect from a Christian?" To undertake this solution means work, but it will pay, for people become interested in the things of the kingdom of God.

W. JOYNES (New Southgate).

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Our mid-week service is always well attended. It is conducted as a prayer meeting—two or sometimes three of the brethren leading our devotions. I have found, over an experience of nineteen years in Glasgow, that the best attendance is secured when the address (of twenty or twenty-five minutes) is an exposition of scripture. During the period named, I have "exposed" nearly all the epistles of the New Testament, believing that the best nourishment for the individual life, as also for the corporate service of the church is to be found in the word of God. The first Wednesday in every month is devoted to Foreign Missions, when I give an address on some aspect of that subject, frequently a brief biographical lecture.

T. H. MARTIN (Glasgow).

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Our mid-week service has excited more interest, and attracted more people, since I have adopted the plan of systematic exposition of scripture. Half the time is devoted to prayer and praise, then I take up the study of an epistle, examining minutely the nature and drift of the arguments, peculiarities of style, and other matters that give the letter its historic setting. I announce, on the previous Sunday, the portion to be dealt with, and find the people appreciate the meetings more on account of the definite instruction given.

J. MEREDITH (Hereford).

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The attendance at our mid-week service has been about doubled during the past three or four months, I would say largely through as careful preparation of address, prayer,

lesson, and hymns as on Sundays. It is purely a preaching service, with one subject dominating it all, and it lasts fifty or sixty minutes. Better attention is another feature.

J. PRINGLE (Lyme Regis).

We have tried and proved the following method of mid-week service, with considerable profit, greatly enhanced interest, and much better attendances. We study the international lesson for the following Sunday. It is expounded, not with the special object of helping the teachers present, but in a practical and devotional spirit. Once a month, on the night when the church meeting follows, we have no set service of any sort, but after an opening hymn and prayer, and a brief scripture reading, any who wish are invited to speak. At first this meeting rather flagged, for those who wax mighty eloquent in a business meeting often become strangely tongue-tied when invited to speak of spiritual experience. But now no meeting is more greatly enjoyed. We find it has tapped a vein of richest ore in our church life.

WM. WALKER (Barrow-in-Furness).

### Our Sisters.

Recently there has grown in all sections of the Free Churches a sense of the need of definite training for women who shall help in certain departments of ministerial work. Especially ministers themselves have felt that some of their duties would be much better done by a lady, and yet have resisted the notion that the minister's wife should be regarded as his curate in these matters. A serious difficulty however has stood in the way of those who desired a sister or deaconess to help in the work of the church, for where could suitable and properly trained women be found? Our denomination has always taken great interest in the training of ministers, and yet it was not until fifteen years ago that a Home for training Sisters was founded. But now that the Baptist Deaconesses' Home *does* exist the difficulty alluded to has vanished.

The Home was founded February 26th, 1892, at a meeting presided over by Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., supported

by Revs. E. Henderson and F. A. Jones, and Messrs. A. J. David, E. Stiff, and A. Towers.

The idea of a Sisterhood or Deaconesses' Mission was, of course, far from new; the novelty lay in starting an institution which was distinctively Baptist.

The present Training Home of the Mission is at 98, Guilford Street, W.C. The lady superintendent, Sister Constance, took her position in 1899, and much of the success of the work is attributable to her wise and capable leadership. Our candidates, always members of some Baptist Church, come for a period of training averaging about eighteen months.

There is in connection with the Training Home, close at hand in Gough Street, lying off the Grays Inn Road, Havelock Hall, where all the usual accompaniments of a thriving Mission are kept in healthy movement. In this hall the Sisters gain experience in the conduct of meetings, public speaking, etc., and that harder art of dealing with individual enquirers. Every Friday a Medical Dispensary is held at the hall, when Dr. Percy Lush, the hon. medical officer, sees a weekly average, throughout the year, of nearly sixty patients. Visitation in the surrounding districts occupies a large part of the Sisters' time, and is fruitful in some of the best results. Many of the Sisters have the benefit of a several months' stay at some hospital. Our present staff in training numbers ten.

When the training period is over, the deaconesses are sent to work in connection with some Baptist Church, under the superintendence of the pastor or some other responsible person. Our Out-station Sisters, who now number twenty-five, are fairly spread over London and the provinces. In London itself we have supplied Sisters to "Bloomsbury" (Rev. T. Phillips), and to Barking Road (Rev. R. R. Clifford). In the country, Reading, Birmingham, Nottingham, Northampton, Rochdale and Halifax are among the places served.

The advent of a Sister to a church often means the inauguration of work amongst young people and women which hitherto had not been attempted.

A church engaging a Sister is asked to contribute £60 per annum for her support, but in the case of churches in

poorer districts this amount is sometimes reduced, the deficiency being made up out of the General Fund.

Last year £2,000 was spent in connection with the work. Of this, not quite one half was provided by the churches supplied with Sisters. The rest was made up by collections, donations, and subscriptions. As the work increases the liabilities increase too, and our aged and honoured treasurer, Mr. S. Thompson, of Beckenham, finds the financial burden very heavy.

Surely the Baptist Deaconesses' Home and Mission may fairly claim to be a denominational work, and to receive the support of the whole Baptist constituency? It has too long been regarded as a mere private enterprise. Could not the ministers in our churches do more to strengthen this good work? Well-educated consecrated Christian young women are wanted to volunteer for training. More annual subscribers are wanted, as well as more openings at the Sunday or week evening meetings for the Sisters to tell the story of their work, and also permission to take a retiring collection in aid of the funds. Above all the prayers of our people are needed that this work may ever be guided and inspired by Him who has promised to reward even the giving of a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple.

ED. BARLOW,

*Hon. Sec. Baptist Deaconesses' Home.*

### Our Book Exchange.

**O**FFERED, Volume VI. of Robert Hall's Miscellaneous Works, including 31 Sermons, Memoir of Robert Hall, and estimate of his character by John Foster, together with Steel Engraving.—Box No. 3, c/o Editor of the **FRATERNAL**.

**W**ANTED, any Books, by authors of repute, dealing with **CONVERSION**.—Box No. 4, c/o Editor of the **FRATERNAL**.

**O**FFERED, Old Testament Criticism in New Testament Light, by Dr. Rouse; perfect copy, unsoiled.—Box No. 5, c/o Editor of the **FRATERNAL**.

## New Books for Preachers.

**LIFE ON THE UPLANDS.** BY J. D. FREEMAN. HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 2s. 6d. net.

To write a new interpretation of the Twenty-third Psalm which shall not suffer by comparison with those already in our libraries, but which shall set us thinking along fresh paths and give us new glimpses of shepherd beauties, is as difficult as any undertaking in exposition could well be. Yet Mr. Freeman has done this. He gives his reader something of the colour and simplicity of the pastoral life in such a way as to set him at the right point of view for the hard and complex duties of to-day. He does without any critical machinery, and is content to give us some moments of religious exhilaration and delight.

**THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM.** BY G. CAMPBELL MORGAN, D.D. HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 2s. 6d. net.

This little exposition is in Dr. Morgan's well-known style—emphatic, lucid and self-consistent. It is a series of Bible studies of considerable value. The view of the function and nature of parabolic teaching is sane and clear. The author suggests that the parable should be more freely used by preachers to-day. "We are a little shocked in the present day if ministers preach on subjects such as wireless telegraphy, road making, . . . yet, is not this method of the parable Christ's own method? I freely confess my own inability to such form of teaching. I dare not attempt a method so delicate and beautiful." Here Dr. Morgan seems to confuse the subject of a discourse with some illustrative parable in it. Jesus did not preach on "the drag-net," or "the sower," He preached on "the Kingdom." Dr. Morgan says all the parables in Matt. xiii. were delivered at one time. We do not agree with him, but if he is right he must treat the parables as the illustrations, not the subject, of the discourse. Internal evidence, such as repetition and the excessive use of the first personal pronoun, suggests that these studies were originally prepared for platform purposes.

**FAITH AND VERIFICATION.** BY PRINCIPAL E. GRIFFITH-JONES, B. A. JAMES CLARKE & Co., 5s.

This is a book of sermons—sermons that grapple with the thoughts of living men as well as with the theories of the dead. Mr. Griffith-Jones is eminently a preachers' preacher. His mind is wide open to all current disputes and discoveries, while his heart is enlarged with sympathy. The chief note in the sermons is the note of experimental religion. Faith is not credulity, it is verification. Religion is not a fancy or fad, it is commerce with the greatest realities. But it is an expanding, exhilarating, and progressive commerce. No preacher can read this book without a widening of his outlook. It gives many hints sure to be fruitful in many pulpits. The book contains an excellent portrait of its author.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST ACCORDING TO ST. MARK. BY  
DR. W. H. BENNETT. HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 6s.

This is a re-telling of the life of Jesus, using only such materials as the biographer can find in the Gospel of St. Mark. It makes a volume of nearly 300 well-printed pages, and so obviously contains more than a mere paraphrase of the evangel. It is in effect a running commentary as well as a re-telling, and a very good commentary at that. Its language is simple yet dignified, while at the same time it sets into vivid relief the incidents of the history, and suggests a new setting to much that has lost some of its power by our familiarity with its language. Everywhere under the clear and calm surface of the writing there is much depth of scholarship. The most striking thing about the book, from the point of view of the scholar, is the fact that it tells a connected and, in the main, consistent story without critical re-arrangement. It would be obviously impossible to treat the other synoptic Gospels in the same way. This strongly supports the position that Mark is prior to the other synoptics, and it also helps to render the familiar German theory of the "Ur-Marcus" unnecessary.

OUR CITY OF GOD. BY J. BRIERLEY, B.A. JAMES CLARKE &  
Co., 6s.

Mr. Brierley's work is so continually fresh and breezy that it is bound to be a help to any preacher. The more jaded, tired, "pumped out" a preacher is, the more he should read this book. Its philosophy and theology are utterly untrammelled. It discusses all sorts of preachers' themes with a freedom and piquancy that not only delight the reader but suggest a host of thoughts. The book is in three parts. First come eleven essays in theology. To call them essays is, perhaps, somewhat to mis-call them. They are so airy, so elusive—and sometimes so carefully stop short of the most serious aspect of the question they handle. One feels inclined to apply to them a term invented for another writer, almost as prolific as "J.B.," and call them "Birrellings." The second part contains nine papers on themes called "Social," and the third part has fourteen "Personal" Talks, many of which are very gracious and devotional. Mr. Brierley's happy gift of appropriate quotations is bound to drive his readers to books worth studying, many of which, however, are little known to the generality.

PRACTICAL LAY PREACHING AND SPEAKING TO MEN.  
BY H. JEFFS. JAMES CLARKE & Co., 2s. 6d. net.

This little book, the work of a prominent lay preacher, who is also the editor of the *Christian World Pulpit*, is as likely to be as useful to the minister as to the lay preacher. It is the result of wide experience in dealing with men. The bane of the modern pulpit is its clericalism—even amongst Freechurchmen. Clerical clothes, clerical mannerisms, clerical voice, clerical condescension—these things destroy our vitality and drive men from our pews. We want more of laity in our work if we are to get a hold on men. This excellent little book should help us.

## FRATERNAL READING COURSES.

[Ministers desiring to get the full benefit of these courses, so that their questions may be answered by the leaders of the courses in these columns or by post, should write the leaders of the courses in question and be duly registered.]

## 1.—Psychology.

I am afraid my psychological light seldom bursts into a flame, and I am certain it refuses either to burn or to shine in a vacuum. I cannot lead or teach an invisible class, and as far as any response or sign of life is concerned I might as well have addressed my first lesson to the quiet inhabitants of Bunhill Fields as to the readers of the FRATERNAL. I fear I do wrong to the sainted dead, for I have a faint belief that John Bunyan, with his keen interest in Man-Soul, would have ere this sent me a few problems and a multitude of suggestions. Let these introductory remarks serve as a resurrection trump.

After settling that there is an outside world, or, what is perhaps more convenient, conclusively settling that there is nothing of the kind, we must proceed to find out what are the raw materials of the inside world. For every act of the self consists of the action or the reaction of the soul plus the raw material upon which it acts or reacts. Take for example a thought or an emotion, or a movement of the will, and trace it back to its elements. A thought springs from a sensation, and a decision of the will from an impulse. Ward, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, gives the best account of sensations, while Dewey's chapters on volition and impulse ought to be invaluable to the preacher. Behind sensations are the tremors and reports of the five senses, and the study of these together with the spiritual use of them made in the Scriptures ought to be rich and suggestive. We are said to touch, to hear, and see God. If evolution be true, which is the original sense out of which the others have developed, and is there a possibility of half-a-dozen new senses emerging? Is the sermon taster, for example, the happy possessor of a sixth sense? What about clairvoyance and clair-audience—the second sight

and the second breath? If touch is the ascidian or amoebic sense, if it is the beginning of wisdom and not the fear of the Lord, as Solomon supposes, what is the crowning sense—the ripest product of evolution? Are the senses graded after this fashion in the Word of God, and is the Christian who sees the Lord more highly developed than the one who only touches him? We might carry it further and find out our own exact stage of development. Are we men of touch or men of sight? Are we men of sound or men of vision? To remember a speech must we read it aloud and become the devotees of hearing, or must we see it on the written page and become dedicated clairvoyants? To all sensible men the senses are laden with sermons. Think how Mr. Jowett would play upon these words. Then if we are clairvoyants we will see clearly the distinction between sense and sensation, between sensation and apperception, between apperception and perception, and between perception and conception. I must not forget that we are Baptists, and so suggest the question: what has the distinction between volition and impulse to do with infant baptism? If my readers can answer that question they have mastered the subject. But my function is to endeavour to solve problems rather than to set them, but how can I make bricks unless members of the circle send me consignments of straw? The vital thing to note in this study is that the raw materials supplied by the senses only enter into full and clear consciousness as they are manipulated and vitalized by the self. It is with mind making as it is with sermon making, the materials come from afar but they are reacted upon by the preacher and charged with his personality. So a man's intelligent life is not sensation or impulse plus the ego, but sensation and impulse egoized and vitalized.

Provided the harvest does not fail and straw does not run short, our next study will be "Memory." But if there is a dearth of corn then an everlasting farewell to Egypt, out to the wilderness and bound for Canaan.

THOMAS PHILLIPS.

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Our Congregational brethren are trying to form a national Fraternal like ours. We wish them all success!

## 8.—The History of Christian Doctrine.

It is important to distinguish between "the growth of doctrine" and "the history of Dogmas." The former takes into account all the variations in doctrines from time to time, whereas the latter, strictly speaking, deals with those forms of doctrine accepted as Canons of the Church and embodied in a definite Creed, *e.g.*, the Apostles' Creed, or the Creed as drawn up by the Council of Nicea.

With this definition of our task in mind we must begin by tracing the growth of doctrine in the New Testament itself. In all the books of the New Testament the person of Christ is regarded as the key-stone of the arch, or the coping-stone of the pyramid of Christian truth. In the light of the claims of Jesus it could not have been otherwise. In the New Testament, however, there seems to be "a growth of doctrine." The synoptic gospels are historical, and the writers are content with a mere statement of facts. The Johannine gospel of unquestionably later date is coloured by mature reflection, and the writer appears to have come under the influence of the Alexandrine school of philosophy, although the problem by no means belongs to the category of settled questions whether the author borrowed his doctrine of the Logos from Proverbs and the Apocryphal "Book of Wisdom," or whether he was influenced by Philo who about A.D. 40 took up the idea of the Logos and tried to propound a theory acceptable to Jews and Greeks. "Between God, who is too spiritual to be really known by man, and the world, which is too gross to be touched by God Himself, Philo places the Logos. . . . It seems doubtful, however, whether the Logos of Philo had any personal and conscious existence." Development may be discerned also in the Pauline Epistles. The later Epistles, such as Philippians, Colossians and Ephesians contain a more matured statement of the Deity of Christ, and the nature of the Atonement, than the earlier Epistles, but this was not due to any new discovery made by the great Apostle, but a gradual unfolding of the doctrines implicitly contained in Romans, I. and II. Corinthians, and Galatians. There is also another factor contributing to the development. The rise of Gnosticism

made it imperative that Paul should lay special emphasis on certain doctrines in order to counteract the baneful influence of Gnostic errors. Of this the Epistle to the Colossians furnishes a splendid example in which Paul becomes more metaphysical, and shows that Christ is the link between God and the world in creation and redemption. Read in this connection "The Theology of the New Testament," by Prof. G. B. Stevens, in the International Theological Library. A history of Christian doctrine must of necessity include a history of heresies, because the presence of heresy in the church did more than ought else to develop the doctrines of the Christian faith. It was the business of the theologian and apologist to repudiate erroneous doctrines, and to state explicitly the cardinal doctrines of the Christian church. The first heretical danger arose from a Judaizing tendency. In apostolic days this had been held in check, but in post-apostolic times Hebrew Christians refused to amalgamate with Gentile Christianity. Jewish Christians may be divided into two classes: (1) those who lived with Gentiles and believed in the Deity of Jesus were called Nazarenes; (2) Jewish Christians who held views in common with Unitarians. In connection with the person of Jesus the first heretical tendency was Ebionism. The Ebionites could not harmonize divinity and suffering. If Christ suffered He was not divine. They believed in the humanity of Jesus. The Essene Ebionites kept up circumcision, observed the Jewish Sabbath, and abstained from meats. A second heretical tendency is called Docetism. The Docetists said if Christ was divine His sufferings were not real. They aimed a blow at the humanity of Jesus, and thus displayed a leaning towards Gnosticism.

The Gnostic heresy had its origin at Alexandria, and was a fusion of Oriental mysticism, Greek philosophy, Philonic, Alexandrian and Kabbalistic Judaism, Egyptian philosophy and religion, and Christian ideas of salvation. "Gnosis" may be true or false. It was the false that grew into the rank heresy called "Gnosticism," which existed in the first century, flourished in the second, and did not finally disappear until the sixth. For the principles, sects, and results of Gnosticism, read in addition to your text-book, chapter vii. in Foakes Jackson's Church History.

T. W. CHANCE.

## The Secretary's Notice Board.

October 28, 1907.

**MUTUAL BENEFIT FUND.**—Twenty-three applications for membership have been accepted up to October 28, and some others are held over. The secretary would be glad to receive further applications early, so that we may begin the first year of the fund in good force.

**BOOK FUND.**—(1) It is too early to expect a very large number of responses to the appeal inserted last week in *The Baptist Times* and other papers. Will readers please talk to their friends in the Denomination of the Benevolent Section in order to discover the Baptist Hartleys?

(2) **SECOND-HAND BOOKS.**—The secretary would be glad to hear of any good useful books ministers and others may be able to spare from their libraries to give to ministers to whom they would be a boon. Do not send them to the secretary, but write to him for the address to which they may be sent and from which they will be forwarded to those to whom they are to be given.

(3) Members do not seem to understand the advantages of the fund to *ordinary members*. Though the books will be invoiced to members at usual prices and discounts, carriage charged, members will buy at a distinct advantage. The Publication Department will, at the end of each quarter, *make a grant to the fund* in proportion to the amount of the quarter's purchases. Each member's account will be *credited with a share of that grant*. This applies to *all who buy their books through the fund*. Every minister in the Denomination is invited to become a member and enjoy the use of the fund.

**FRATERNAL UNION MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS** (*minimum one shilling*) become due on January 1st. It would be a great help to the hon. secretary if all members would kindly enclose envelopes addressed for reply.

## Wanted, Back Numbers!

The **FRATERNAL** issues 3, 4 and 5, and 6 are now out of print. The editor nevertheless is constantly receiving requests for these back numbers. Will any reader, having copies that he can spare, kindly forward them to the editor? They will be paid for (if clean), together with postage.