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# The Fraternal.

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*Members' Subscriptions should be sent to :*

Rev. W. H. PRATT,  
Nocton Rise, Stratford Road, Watford, Herts.

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## DR. W. E. BLOMFIELD: LEADER AND FRIEND.

THE designation, a Minister's Friend, is usually reserved for laymen, but it is specially applicable to Dr. W. E. Blomfield, who passed to his reward on Sunday, July 22nd, 1934. The record of his purposeful life and affectionate tributes from his friends have appeared in the religious press, but we must express our own gratitude for one who has enriched our ministry and led us, as President of the Fraternal Union, in 1929-30. He revealed himself when he wrote, in a Presidential Message—"I greet you all, and I wish for you fidelity, joy, and spiritual prosperity in the work you have been commissioned to do for your Master. . . . To know God in Jesus Christ, to apply the religion of Jesus in all its manysidedness to the minds and hearts of men, and to live in the lives of our people—*this is our business.*"

Dr. Blomfield had a great conception of our calling. To him, every true minister was "a prophet commissioned from above—the object of God's choice, neither a mere volunteer nor the servant of a congregation." He used his influence and eloquence to impress the denomination with an adequate sense of its responsibility for a trained and consecrated ministry. His soul was moved by the inadequacy of ministerial stipends, and his was the first effective voice raised in the Baptist Union Assembly on behalf of Sustentation. As far back as the Spring Assembly of 1902, he moved "that a new Fund be created, to be called the Baptist Union Sustentation Fund" and submitted definite proposals for its formation. It took thirteen years for the seed to germinate, but the present Sustentation

and Settlement Scheme had its human origin in that cogent speech of 1902. While jealous for the honour and adequate maintenance of the ministry, he was almost contemptuous of those who thought more of themselves than of their calling. Talk of "ministerial security" saddened him, while those who funk'd Hill Difficulty made him blaze. "Take care of Christ's interests," he would say, "and Christ will take care of you. Our fathers took risks. Their sense of security was a prison. Endure hardship. Don't regard every difficulty as a reason for a change of pastorate. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood. Endure to the end."

Along with this high conception of the ministry, Dr. Blomfield had a deep love for the men who had been called to its ranks—his brethren. A distinguished academic course at Regent's Park College, followed by varied and successful pastorates at Beckenham, Ipswich and Coventry, formed an ideal preparation for his supreme work as Principal of Rawdon College, which commenced in 1904. He offered to his students the fruits of scholarship, ripened by patient study and twenty years of strenuous ministerial service. He was unusually balanced in his aims, and coveted an all-round equipment for his men as scholars, preachers, pastors and organisers. It is significant that of the eighty-five men, trained under him for the home ministry, eight of them are to-day members of the Baptist Union Council. His estimate of men was both rapid and sound, and on the few occasions when time suggested that he had misjudged he rose to great heights of magnanimity in making the *amende honorable*. An interesting instance of this sure instinct was furnished by his first meeting with Dr. A. C. Underwood in 1919. It was a brief interview and his own resignation was still seven years ahead; but, to the first friend he met, the intelligence was confided: "I have found my successor!" Having selected his students, Dr. Blomfield trusted them and few Colleges were less encumbered by rules. He identified his interests with theirs and exhibited an almost boyish glee in their successes whether in examinations or ministerial service. It is not every Doctor of Divinity who would, or could, tell you—on a post card—that he was "dancing with delight"! His ministry was not confined to the class room. Like a true Father in God he visited our homes and was fond of saying, "I must meet your wife, for I cannot picture your life until I know you all." His letters were as vital as his

sermons, and will long be treasured in our manses for their wise counsel and affectionate interest. They were all written by hand—typewriters were too expressionless for his eager spirit—and most of them were underlined. He believed in utilising the post for personal evangelism and pastoral service.

While Dr. Blomfield had a natural pride in his own men, he loved all the brethren and would make large personal sacrifices for any who sought his aid. In retirement he found delight in coaching men who were preparing for the Baptist Union Examinations, and his exhaustive notes are still profitable treasure after their original purpose has been served.

We shall remember our leader for the many contributions he made to our lives and our cause, but perhaps the outstanding memory will be of his rugged honesty. Two pictures are prominent in my mind. The first concerns a Baptist Union Council Meeting. Dr. Blomfield was greatly perturbed by one of Dr. Shakespeare's policies. Prior to the meeting, he wrote to Dr. Shakespeare, stated the grounds of his objection and the line he intended to take in the debate. The letter was uncompromising, but contained an assurance of abiding personal regard. He fought with clean weapons, but never allowed personal feeling to bias his conception of truth. The second picture is of the great Immanuelskyrkan, during the Stockholm Congress, when the Executive had submitted a Baptist Message which it was proposed to issue to the Christians and peoples of the world. An attempt was made to impart theological ambiguity into the message and there seemed some danger that the Assembly might adopt the suggested wording in the interests of unanimity. Dr. Blomfield rose from his seat on the platform and captured the attention of the two thousand delegates with his opening words, "Mental honesty compels me to protest," and they were convinced by his transparent integrity and cogent reasoning. In consequence, the original motion was carried with one dissident.

In thanking God for his gift to us in Dr. W. E. Blomfield, we recognise how much he owed to the gracious lady who entered so completely into all his life and ministry. She remains with us—a Mother in Israel.

H. BONSER,  
(Leeds).

## ANTI-GOD PROPAGANDA.

*(Address delivered at the Fifth Baptist World Congress,  
Berlin, August, 1934.)*

## I.

THIS is a new subject for a Christian assembly to consider. But it is one of importance and urgency. After nearly two thousand years of Christian propaganda, there is now spreading throughout the world a persistent, powerful and penetrating propaganda which aims at destroying not only Christianity but all religion. With Russia an attempt is being made forcibly to suppress all religious practice and to undermine all religious belief, and outside Russia there is a deliberate and well organised effort to inflame opinion everywhere against religious faith.

Atheism, of course, is no new thing. At the time of the French Revolution an attempt was made to dethrone God and to set the human reason in His place. One of the greatest of English Baptists, Robert Hall, became widely known for his eloquent denunciations of "Modern Infidelity." But disbelief to-day is more aggressive than ever before. The phrase "militant atheism" is no empty one. The anti-God movement of these years is unparalleled in its intensity and thoroughness, its bitterness and universality.

Christian men and women do well to pause and face the facts, though they fill them with pain and concern. Never before has there been so determined and passionate an attempt to root out religion from human life.

We have heard something of what has occurred in Russia; of how, following the Revolution of 1917, the Orthodox Church was separated from the State, and then dispossessed of her great wealth and humiliated; of how no room has been left for the priest in the new order of society; of how anti-religious propaganda has been encouraged; of how gradually a steady and relentless pressure has been put upon all religious groups with the avowed intention of destroying all so-called "superstition"; of how the scales have been hopelessly weighted against those who desire to maintain religious worship and religious freedom.

The famous Russian Five Year Plan in the economic realm has its counterpart in a Five Year Plan of Atheism which commenced in 1932, with the object that "from May 1st, 1937, there shall not remain a single house of prayer in Soviet terri-

tory. The very concept 'God,' it is claimed, "will be expelled from the Soviet Union as a survival of the Middle Ages which has served as an instrument to oppress the working classes."

This is a horrible picture to contemplate, the more horrible because there can be no doubt as to the sincerity of many of those who are painting it. Those who are in closest touch with what has been going on know also of the slander and ribaldry, the infamous cruelty, the coarse caricaturing of religion and the parodying of sacred ceremonies that has in many places accompanied the anti-God movement.

We cannot remain unmoved and unprotesting at these things. Church history has many warnings for us. The great church of the early centuries in North Africa disappeared. Missionary churches in the Far East have been completely destroyed by persecution. The remarkable Anabaptist movement in Central Europe was crushed to pieces. Hostile forces may for a long time and over a large area overwhelm Christian people. To-day not only the ancient Orthodox Church but those numerous Protestant Groups in Russia—Baptists, Evangelical Christians and others, groups that have contributed a stirring page to the religious history of their great country—are in the gravest danger.

There is, moreover, this added reason for our consideration of this subject at this Congress. Anti-God propaganda is being deliberately spread outside the borders of Russia. It is finding its way westwards and eastwards and southwards. Religious men anywhere, everywhere, may soon have to face the challenge of those who boldly and passionately, in the name of better social conditions and greater human freedom, attack religion as the opium of the people and its leaders as exploiters of their fellows.

It is not Europe alone that is affected. On both sides of the park in front of the old convent in Moscow, which is now a famous Anti-Religious Museum, are buildings which now house the foreign students of the University. Day after day students from China, Japan, India, Turkestan and the Caucasus come under the insidious influence of an anti-religious propaganda. The attitude of contempt and hatred they are carrying back to their own lands. Already special literature is being distributed attacking Christian missions as a peculiarly hypo-

critical manifestation of the capitalistic spirit. A world-wide campaign against religion is being deliberately organised, and is undoubtedly gaining strength. So experienced an observer as Dr. Julius Richler has recently suggested that perhaps the "gravest danger zone," so far as the campaign of "organised anti-Christianity" is concerned, is in China. In 1926, at the "All Union Conference of the Atheist Movement," only six nationalities were represented. To-day there are representatives in more than a hundred different nations. So far as Western Europe is concerned, the "International of Proletarian Free-thinkers," founded in 1925, with its headquarters now in Russia, though it was once directed from Berlin, has branches in at least a dozen countries.

In anti-religious museums, in newspapers and magazines, by placards and cartoons, contempt for the Christian Church and for religion in general is being stimulated. Mohammedanism, Judaism and Christianity are together in the pillory. The younger generation is being told that the fight against religion is a fight for socialism, a fight for better conditions of living and greater happiness.

## II.

We cannot, as Christian men and women, ignore this challenge. Panic and denunciation are alike useless. Our Lord said to His disciples "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake." But we do well to ask ourselves some of the reasons for the present state of affairs.

1. One of the most obvious causes of the anti-clerical and anti-religious reaction in Russia has been the condition of the Orthodox Church. Before the Revolution, it was more closely identified with the State than any other Established Church, and there is all too much evidence of the abuse of privilege and of corruption. The elaborate external ritual of its services made a largely sensuous and mystic appeal. After 1917, when there was the possibility of a new life for it of freedom and sincerity, it clung to its wealth, even in the time of the people's need, and it was not free from the charge of counter-revolutionary activity. There is an understandable impatience and anger, a disillusion and disappointment in the Russian's attitude to the Orthodox Church. And more than most we Baptists, as a result of our past experiences, and our convictions, can sym-

pathise with the Russian in this matter, though not approving of what has been done.

2. But the challenge now goes deeper than hatred of one particular organisation. Groups like the Baptists and the Evangelical Christians, which in the first years of the Revolution, enjoyed a new freedom, are now among the persecuted. Lenin's widow has pronounced the Russian Protestant a greater menace to the Revolution than the old Orthodoxy. Communist theory is explicitly hostile to religion as such. The Communist party seeks the complete allegiance of all who live in the Soviet Union. Protestant Christians with their belief in the rights of man and of individual personality, their closely-knit fellowship, their pacific attitude, their general acceptance of the right of private property, their moral standards, and above all, their acceptance of the supernatural are, therefore, anathema. As in the ancient world Christians are "a third race," "a colony of heaven," and the ardent Communist is bent upon their final destruction.

3. Hostility to the mystical and supernatural has gained strength from the fact that in Russia religion has often been linked with asceticism, fanaticism and obscurantism. The new Russia is a land where applied science is bringing fresh comforts to men. In a few years outward conditions of life have been revolutionised for very many. A mechanised civilisation is being built up, with the utmost difficulty, but with growing success. The old church was so closely linked with the old regime that it is possible to tell men that religion was a product of man's former sense of weakness, his helplessness before Nature and an oppressive governing class. Religious faith, it is urged, is pre-scientific, indeed anti-scientific. It is destined to disappear, together with the division of men into classes, when Communism is established.

4. To the Communist, religion and superstition are synonymous. The idea behind the modern atheistic movement can be traced back to the philosophy of the French Enlightenment. It is man glorying in his own might, sure that in an earthly Utopia the miseries, uncertainties, fears and isolations of the individual will have vanished, and religion therefore have lost its soil. Bakunin, one of the major prophets of Russian militant atheism, who died as long ago as 1876, declared: "Religion is collective insanity, so much the more powerful because it is traditional and has penetrated into all

the pores of the personal and social life of the people." Voltaire's epigram, "If there were no God, He should be invented," Bakunin turned into: "If there is a God, He should be destroyed."

Communist theory leaves no room for the supernatural. It rejects all idealistic philosophies, from that of Socrates to that of Bergson. The materialistic interpretation of history insists that the world is what it eats, that economic and not spiritual factors govern men's lives. There is an element of truth concealed therein which has sometimes been ignored. When to this is added the unfortunate record of many professing Christians in this and previous generations it is not so difficult to understand this uprising of men against religion and the bitter anti-God temper that has resulted.

### III.

What of the future? Are there any remedies for this tragic state of affairs?

The skies are not completely black, even in Russia.

1. There are many things in that land to-day which must be recognised as akin to fruits of the Spirit of Christ. There is a concern for the common man, for children, for criminals, that puts many other countries to shame. There has been a striking attempt to eliminate private selfishness and greed. Co-operative activity for the sake of the community has been tried on a hitherto unparalleled scale. Communism makes tremendous moral demands on its adherents in certain directions, however lax it may be in others. Time will surely show the Communist that there is need for a spiritual dynamic and for personal regeneration to secure the ideal community of which he dreams.

2. Religion, too, is proving more difficult to root out than had been imagined. There are evidences of an increasingly serious study of religion by Communist scholars. We may believe that they will be at length dissatisfied with the former superficial view of the origin and value of religious faith. The best Western thought is plainly less materialistic and less sceptical than it was a generation ago. In Russia the breaking down of superstition may prepare the way for a healthier and more satisfying faith. The divorce of Church and State, and the State oppression of the Church, may foster an inner religious life just as did the oppression of dissenters in England. Julius

Hecker, whose years of residence in Russia entitle him to be heard with respect, states that the younger generation are showing an interest in religion in spite of the fervent appeals of their leaders. The young are seriously seeking something which will satisfy their deepest needs. The negative aspect of the anti-religious movement makes little appeal. There are deeper cravings than physical cravings, bigger problems than economic problems. "Man does not live by bread alone," and even if the Communists are able to build an earthly paradise and win their fight against poverty and ignorance men's hearts will still be restless, we believe, till they rest in God.

3. Further, in so many ways this anti-religious movement has in it a religious note. It has a faith, a morality, even a theology, though a negative one. It has had its prophets and martyrs in earlier days. Immense spiritual energies have been diverted into its channels. There is a crusading zeal about the anti-God movement and an almost messianic hope. The writings of Marx and Lenin have not inaptly been called the Old Testament and the New Testament of Bolsheviek Russia. There is a measure of truth in the gibe that Lenin has become "the god of the godless." Though the Communist is said to "shake with fury" if charged with founding a new religion, yet there is clearly an emotional quality in the anti-God movement, a fanatical note, a missionary fervour, which are strangely inconsistent with much of its teaching. This is surely fresh evidence that the spirit of man cannot be satisfied merely by material things, nor ruled by logic alone.

4. Then we know of the combined steadfastness, under the greatest difficulties, of many Baptist and Evangelical groups.

In all this there is hope for the future. Tolstoi, Dostoievsky and Gogol may yet be proved right in their belief that the Russian people are naturally, profoundly, and incurably religious.

But speculation about the future so far as Russia is concerned is not our most pressing concern.

There has recently been on exhibition in Geneva, Paris and London a collection of anti-God posters, cartoons, articles, etc. A careful examination of the material brings great sadness of heart. Three things are borne in upon one:—

1. The Communist appeals to history and experience, to the abuses of power and privilege by Christian people, and to

evil social conditions in so-called Christian countries. But how outrageous are the misrepresentations, how gross the travesties of what has occurred and is occurring, how lacking in any true sense of historical perspective or understanding! Ours is a historical religion, rooted and grounded in history. Whatever may be our regrets about particular incidents—and we should have many—we have no need to fear the appeal to history. But if we are to ensure that in our own countries there is not this ignorant, if not deliberate, caricaturing of the past, then we must not be afraid to teach Church History, candidly, intelligently, sympathetically. We must not be afraid to appeal to experience, and to assert and justify our faith that a sense of human inadequacy and need is not treachery to the human spirit but the true way of finding greater resources, and that the greatest benefactors of the human race have been the saints.

2. The most distressing feature of anti-God propaganda is the hideous manner in which Christ is represented—as a deliberate deceiver, as the willing tool of capitalism, as a callous exploiter of the sufferings of men. Christ is pictured as worse than weak—He is wicked. That such as He should be so portrayed burns itself into the memory, and remains a torturing thought to those who know the realities of this propaganda. We cannot but share the feelings of an observer in Russia who longed that the people might hear a man like Dr. T. R. Glover speak of the “Jesus of History” and of “Jesus in the Experience of Men.” We must all share the condemnation—Orthodox and Evangelical alike—that after all these years such crude and lying representations of our Lord can anywhere find tolerance or acceptance. Something has been wrong with our witness. If we are sensible we shall turn again to the New Testament to discover and proclaim by lip and life what manner of Man He was.

A third impression left by a study of the anti-God movement and the organisations seeking to combat it is of the complete inadequacy and, more, the unsoundness of many of the measures taken against it. This hurt cannot be lightly healed. It cannot be met by denunciation and outraged protest. It cannot be met by a repetition of old phrases and formulas, or an appeal to the lingering pieties of the older generation. It can only be met by truly Christlike living. It can only be met by the presentation of a full-orbed adventurous Gospel, a faith

willing to look all the facts in the face, a devotion to truth, beauty and goodness, a patient and self-sacrificing discipleship.

As Free Churchmen and Baptists we have special advantages and opportunities, and therefore special responsibilities. Freedom has been the breath of life to us—freedom of body, freedom of mind, freedom of spirit. With the attack upon superstition, idolatry, and State control of religion we are in accord. The lesson of the tragedy that has overwhelmed the Orthodox Church is one our fathers taught us. But if anti-God propaganda is not to find fruitful soil in our countries it must be made clear to all:—

1. That our Christian faith is not inseparably bound up with any one form of social or political order. The Church has already outlived many different systems of government and will outlive more.
2. That our Christian faith is not hostile to science. When Christ spoke of His Spirit as the Spirit of Truth He meant to be taken seriously. We do not fear human knowledge.
3. That our Christian faith issues in love and fellowship, and in the service of men. We are the foes of unrighteousness and oppression wherever they may be, in the British Empire, in the United States, in Europe or in Asia.

The Church in the first century had to “out-live, out-think, out-die” the pagans. That is the challenge to us to-day. We must not only *mean* what we say; we must act upon it. We must learn to separate the permanent elements in our faith from their transient expressions. We have to prove our power to create and sustain true fellowship. We have to repudiate and work to replace evil social conditions. They are not the product of Christianity but the result of its absence.

The uprising of atheistic Communism throughout the world is indeed a judgment on the Church as a whole. If the people of Christ had been more loyal to the Gospel of the Cross, Marxism would have had little power. Baptists, least of all, are defenders of things as they are in the political, social or ecclesiastical sphere. We have always held that “the Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from His Word.”

Maybe we have needed the torturing stabs of this anti-God propaganda to make us take our religion more seriously,

to awaken us from complacency and conventionality that we may discover afresh the true meaning of the faith and be ready to offer it again as living water to the people of Russia, to the peoples of the Far East and of Africa, and to the people of our own lands. The Christian faith is supernatural, but in no magical or superstitious sense. It is the message of God to man, giving peace and power for full and abundant life, here and now, and in the hereafter which will come for us all whether we be Communists or Fascists, Nazis or Democrats. A merely earthbound faith cannot speak the last word on the meaning of life and death.

We may recall that the years following the French Revolution when Christianity was denounced and its speedy extinction prophesied, were the years of the rise from obscure beginnings of the modern missionary movement. "God's thoughts are not our thoughts; neither are His ways our ways." "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" "By the word of God the heavens were of old and the earth." "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of Grace and truth."

"Thou—*Thou* art Being and Breath,  
And what *Thou* art can never be destroy'd."

ERNEST A. PAYNE,  
(London).

## THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.

(*Concluded.*)

### 3. OUR BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH RESTORES THIS PRIESTHOOD TO EVERY BELIEVER.

**M**ANY, if not all, of our churches have been founded by obscure and unknown disciples. Christ in us through the dwelling of the Holy Spirit is our sole authority. That Spirit is poured out upon all flesh. Our young men see visions, our old men dream dreams; servants and handmaidens prophesy.

To us, all life is a sacrament in which every moment is a fellowship with God, every act is consecrated to the task of reconciliation, every prayer is holy incense, every deed of love is a breaking of the bread of life. What is the aim of preaching by any disciple but a call to every hearer to repentance, a declaration of the free forgiveness of sin to every penitent?

In his "History of British Baptists," pp. 96-97, Dr. Whitley points out the fidelity of our forefathers to this principle.

"They put in practice the priesthood of all believers. In the country, the typical minister was a thatcher, farmer, maltster, cheese-factor. In the town, the preacher had been during the week making shoes, pins, buttons, collars, hats, clothes, etc., or selling such wares. The score of ex-clergy were lost in the multitude of common men who administered to their fellows, speaking out of the experience they shared with those they addressed. The priesthood of all believers was illustrated on a new scale."

All the authority our leaders exercise in a community is derived from that community.

John Smyth—the first English Baptist puts the case thus: "The power of the eldership or ministry is a leading, directing, overseeing power, ministry, or service both in the Kingdom and Priesthood of the Church, and . . . the last definitive, determining sentence is in the body of the Church whereto the Eldership is bound to yield. The Church may do any lawful act without the Elders, but the Elders can do nothing without the approbation of the body or contrary to the body."

Our Baptist Union Assembly of 1932 defined our ministry as an office within the Church of Christ (not a sacerdotal order) conferred through the call of the Holy Spirit and attested by a particular or local church.

By Ordination we mean the act of the Church by which it delegates to a person ministerial functions which no man can properly take upon himself.

However, in setting up a full-time and paid ministry, no denomination and no local church absolves itself from the priesthood conferred upon all believers at their conversion, and demanded from them during the whole of their Christian pilgrimage. Our ministers simply lead the worship of the congregation. The worship remains the worship of all present. Ministers simply conduct the Communion service, the communion is that of the whole body with our Lord. Every member is a living member of the body of Christ, as living as the hand is a living member of the human body.

At the beginning I spoke of our aversion as Free Churchmen to the word "priest." The popular interpretation of the term as denoting a privileged, exclusive class is responsible for

that aversion. It is this very separation of the priest from the lot and work of the ordinary Christian which has caused the trouble throughout the ages.

In the New Testament it is very noticeable that the various people called upon to teach the Christian faith or conduct worship are never called priests. They are called "prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers, overseers, elders, deacons—but never priests." The priesthood belonged to the whole church in the whole of its activity as the body of Christ. It could never be relegated to any single individual or group of individuals.

#### 4. WHY WAS THERE A DEPARTURE FROM THE SIMPLE ORDER OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH?

The break-away arose from the need of securing in each local centre a strong, permanent group of officials. The itinerant prophets or preachers often abused the hospitality accorded to them. They became self-seeking, and their call to preach and to teach was self-assumed and not genuine. This led to the elders, presbyters and deacons taking up at the bidding of the local church the sole directing authority. Eventually, by virtue of their personality and long experience, the elders and presbyters gradually gained ascendancy over the other class and became prototypes of the bishop of modern times. Later the Bishop's sanction became necessary to validate (a) the rite of baptism; (b) the celebration of Communion or Eucharist; (c) to secure the unity of the Church. Heresies also began to crop up and authentic teaching was needed. By this time the writings of the New Testament were in wide circulation, and had to be distinguished from spurious productions, and Canon of Scripture had to be compiled.

Had the episcopacy confined itself purely to the task of directing and counselling, there might have been no cause for the revolt of the Reformation. Unfortunately, it did not stay at that point of development. Bishops began to seek not only direction, but dictation and domination, and domination not only in their own locality, but domination over fellow bishops. This led to the severance of the Eastern from the Western Church, and to the rise of the Papacy.

From this hardening process sprang up the sacerdotal conception of the Ministry and worship of the Church. Only ministries ordained by bishops could be valid. Only sacraments administered by their ordinands could be fully blessed. True

worship demands their sanction. As Dr. Fairbairn sums up the position in his "Studies in Religion and Theology" p. 122, "Without Christ . . . . no apostles; without apostles, no bishops; without bishops, no priests; without priests, no sacraments; without sacraments, no church; without the church, no Christian religion."

As Free Churchmen we refuse to limit the grace of God to one channel, or to condition it upon imperfect men. To us there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (Tim. 2: 5).

In Christ, grace is free and universal, and as infinite as every other Divine attribute in its flow to the human heart. We insist, too, that every approach to that grace must be ethical and spiritual, and not material and formal. The Church is not the kingdom but the means of establishing it. It is not the creator of religion, but religion is the creator of it. We may tersely reply to the Sacerdotalist: "Without religion, no church; without the church, no priest nor bishop nor apostle."

Christ abhorred primacy. He refused it to James and John saying: "One is your Master, all ye are brethren."

#### 5. WE MUST BE ONE WITH CHRIST.

Our Baptist doctrine of the Church as the body of Christ demands that we incarnate Christ in all His functions and Acts.

His functions were those of Prophet, Priest and King. As Prophet He told forth the word of God. As Priest He reconciled men to God by His passion and death. As King He rules as Head and Heart of the Church. As His body, His representative, those functions devolve upon us.

Then His Acts. What are they? He became flesh. He died for us men. He rose on high. He sits at the right hand of God. In other words, Incarnation, Redemption, Resurrection and Judgment.

Does joining a Baptist Church mean all that? It ought never to mean anything else. We claim to be baptised not only in body, but more still in spirit, into His death and resurrection. We are pledged to His atoning work. We have a fellowship in His sufferings. We fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in our own flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church. Co. 1: 24.

\* \* \* \*

We are the body of Christ. It took the whole of Christ to reveal the love of God to men. He had to become the lamb

of sacrifice. It will take the whole of all of us, the whole of each one of us, to reveal the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. That was the priesthood of the New Testament believer. Ours must not be less.

W. H. JONES,  
(Nottingham).

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### EMIL BRUNNER'S "THE MEDIATOR."

THE name of Emil Brunner (who is Professor of Theology at Zurich) is now as familiar in theological circles throughout Christendom as is the name of Karl Barth. They are the leaders of one of the most significant movements of thought in the religious world of to-day; and it is probably due to mere chronological accidents that this movement is known as "Barthianism" and not as "Brunnerism." Both Barth and Brunner are agreed in the main elements of their thinking; they are one in their demand for a religion which starts with God and in their protest against the anthropocentric trends and tendencies which modern theology has inherited from Ritschl and Schleiermacher. Yet there are some significant differences between them, as may be expected when two such bold thinkers deal with the fundamental problems of Christian thought. Probably Brunner is more palatable to the majority of English students than Barth. Though he insists, even against his co-leader, upon the need for a polemical theology, he is—as Dr. John McConnachie points out—less rigid and more apologetic. There is more of the speculative thinker and less of the pure dogmatist in his mentality than in the case of Barth. "Brunner is a keen speculative thinker who has been captured by the Word of God." His "apologetic interests make him less rigid and uncompromising. He does not humble men, as Barth does, and he takes a less tragic view of the human will."

Hitherto Brunner has been known to English-speaking students in his two small books, *The Theology of Crisis* and *The Word and the World*. His greatest work, which may be truly described as his *magnum opus*, however, is *Der Mittler*, which was first published in 1927, and for the past seven years it has been accessible only to readers of German. Through the splendid work of Miss Olive Wyon, the translator, and the Lutterworth Press, the publishers, this great work is now available in our own language; and those who are able to compare

the German original with its English dress are agreed that Miss Wyon has carried out her arduous task exceedingly well.

*The Mediator* is a monument of theocentric and Christocentric theology. Brunner's theme may be expressed in the great Pauline affirmation: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses." Non-Christian faiths represent man as seeking God and finding many gods worse than himself; Christianity represents God as seeking and finding man. It is this *differentia* of Christianity that Brunner expounds and enforces. Mankind, having lost God cannot unaided find its way back to Him. It is in and by Christ that God and sinful man are brought together again; He, as the God-Man, is the One Mediator who affects the reconciliation between Heaven and earth. God alone is able to save and bring man back to himself; and all true religion originates in the stupendous revealing and saving act. There is no room for subjectivity here; and all religion which starts out from man is bound to end in tragic illusion. Salvation is a gift, not a task, for man; and we are saved by trusting in the Divine Victor, and not by winning any victory for ourselves.

Brunner's great work is divided into books, the first of which is concerned with preliminary considerations, and prepares the way for the treatment of the Person and Work of the Mediator with which the rest of the book deals. Brunner shows that modern subjective and anthropocentric theologies—such as we get in the writings of Ritschl and Schleiermacher, Harnack and Otto, and others—never get man anywhere because they fail to realise that in Christ alone is to be found "the Way to God." Any Christology, too, which stops short of the conception of Christ as God Incarnate likewise fails of its goal; to speak of Him as the "hero of religion," as pioneer, as teacher, even as prophet, are all woefully inadequate.

Book II is divided into three sections. The first deals with the Deity of the Mediator; the second, with the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the third, with the Humanity of the Son of God. Brunner defends the "Double-Nature" theory of our Lord's Person; because Christ is the God-Man He becomes the Mediator between God and Man. Book III is likewise divided into three sub-sections. Its theme is the Work of the Mediator, which naturally follows on the Person of the Mediator treated of in the preceding book. And the three sub-sections are (a) The Revelation, (b) Reconciliation, and (c)

The Dominion of God. The second of these three sub-sections is particularly valuable because it gives to us Brunner's view of the Atoning Work of Christ. The Atonement is an objective fact, which becomes real to man in the subjective experience of faith; and Christ is able to make this Atonement as man's *Substitute*, since as the God-Man He is the Mediator between God and man.

It is impossible in the course of a short article to indicate all the aspects of his great theme to which Brunner gives consideration. It is sufficient to say that it is a comprehensive study of Christology and Soteriology and that it is thoroughly Biblical from beginning to end. Brunner is not the champion of any minimising theology. His conception of Christ is that of classic Christian thought—a great Christ Who is the All-Sufficient Revealer of God and Redeemer of man. For that we cannot but be grateful, even though we may not assent to all his conclusions. Indeed, even those who hold that there is a real sense in which theology is bound to be anthropocentric, since we can know God only in experience and can understand God only by the apprehension of Him through our own or somebody else's experience of Him, will rejoice in Brunner's sober, reverent, comprehensive and thoroughly Scriptural treatment of the most majestic theme of Christian theology. Canon Mozley, in his Foreword, speaks for all discerning Christians when he says of the book: "For the sureness of its grasp and the lucidity and adequacy of its exposition of the Gospel of our Lord's Person and Work there will be deep gratitude among all those who see no future for any Christianity except that which rests upon faith in Jesus Christ as the true and only Son of God, incarnate and atoning."

*The Mediator* costs 20s. It seems a lot of money to pay for a book. But it is well worth making a sacrifice to get this great work. Indeed, it is one of the books of which Alexander Whyte (how he would have revelled in it!) would have said: "Sell your bed and buy it." And this advice may be clinched by Prof. H. R. MacIntosh's recommendation: "I should find it hard to name any recent major work in its field which is comparable with *The Mediator* in direct relevance and power. Emphatically it is a book for the times." Does any minister need greater encouragement to part with 20s. for a book?

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(Liverpool).

## THE MINISTER'S BOOKSHELF.

DR. W. B. Selbie, of Mansfield College, Oxford, has been a leader and inspirer of ministers of the Gospel for many years. He has also been a preacher, both to undergraduates at Oxford and to ordinary congregations throughout the country. For the last two years, however, ill-health has kept him out of the pulpit, but happily it has not kept him from using his pen. His latest volume, entitled *Faith and Life* (Hodder & Stoughton, 3s. 6d.), is composed for the most part of articles that have appeared in "The Christian World" and "The Spectator" during recent months, and those who have already read them—even those who have preserved them as cuttings—will be delighted to have them in this permanent form. There is no need to praise Dr. Selbie's scholarship—it is well known. Nor is it necessary to say that he is a scholar who can get his message over—everyone who has read his articles or heard him preach is aware of this. The articles which make up the various chapters of this splendid little volume are "fugitive pieces" dealing with a number of different subjects. But they emphasise two very important points, viz. that religion is necessary to the full and healthy development of our human nature, and that Christianity stands supreme in this regard. Some of the chapters—e.g. that entitled "Salvator Mundi"—are particularly useful, but there is not a dull patch in the whole book.

Mr. J. D. Beresford, the novelist, has written a most interesting book entitled *The Case for Faith Healing* (Allen & Unwin, 5s.). It is a subject in which all ministers should be interested, not only because it has a definite relation to our work, but also because there is a marked revival of Faith-Healing at the present time, and the subject promises to become one of the real issues of the day. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Christ Scientist have made up their minds about Faith-Healing, though in the case of the former both the emphasis and the theological background are more specifically Christian than in the case of the latter. And within the Protestant Church we have such movements as the Elim Four Square Gospel Movement and the Bethel Evangelistic Movement which place the healing of the sick at the very centre of their work. We need to make up our minds on this

subject and Mr. Beresford's book will certainly inform our minds and stimulate our thinking. He has imbibed a considerable amount of idealistic philosophy and has read widely in modern psychology. His point of view is sympathetic towards religion, though it is by no means "orthodox!" He claims Christ as the great Faith-Healer, while his chapter on the "Nature of Faith" is one of real value. Dr. H. R. L. Sheppard gives the book his blessing in a short preface. The decisive book on Faith-Healing has yet to be written and perhaps it is too early to expect it yet; meanwhile, we may listen to Mr. J. D. Beresford with respect (for he certainly knows how to present his case) even where we do not find ourselves in full agreement with him.

The Epworth Press is issuing a series of small, yet competent, handbooks dealing with the "Great Religions of the East." Each volume is published at the modest price of 2s. 6d. and the editor of the series is Dr. Eric S. Waterhouse. Four volumes have been issued already, while four or five more volumes are in preparation; and the whole series is intended to furnish an up-to-date introduction to the Comparative Study of Religion, scholarly yet simply written so as to interest the general reader. Rev. J. W. Waterhouse has written on *Zoroastrianism*, Dr. F. H. Smith on *Hinduism*, and Dr. B. S. Bonsall on *Confucianism and Taoism*. Baptist ministers will be interested to know that the volume on *Shintoism* has been written by one of our own brotherhood, viz. Dr. A. C. Underwood. The book is a fascinating study of "The Way of the Gods" as understood and practiced by many of Japan's teeming millions. We imagine that Dr. Underwood is scrupulously fair in his treatment of the ancient religion of Japan, but he shows how defective and poverty-stricken it is from the point of view of theological thought and spiritual inspiration. Ministers who wish to refurbish and to bring up to date their studies in Comparative Religions would do well to get these volumes, while those who are working for examinations on this subject will find the series invaluable.

Messrs. Skeffington have issued a series of excellent books—at 3s. 6d. each—under the general title "The Modernist Series." This title need alarm no one, even though some of the writers are proud of the rather vague term "Modernist."

But that they are up-to-date writers on the problems of Christian faith and conduct cannot be denied; and if the two volumes which have come to hand are any indication of the excellency of the other four volumes then the whole series deserves the attention of all those who are concerned with stating the Gospel in terms of the present age. These two volumes are *Modern Light on Sex and Marriage*, by Douglas White, M.D., and *Sorrow, Sin and suffering*, by the Rev. F. T. Royds. Dr. White gives a very sane treatment of the principles underlying sex relations, and he touches most of the points with which thoughtful people are concerned at the present time. Such questions as the mental attitude towards sex, the influence of sex on human relations, the religious values involved in marriage, the justification for birth-control, etc., are all dealt with in a wise and sympathetic way. The book can be unhesitatingly recommended to all those who wish for guidance on the thorny problems connected with one of the basic factors in human life. Mr. Royds treats of the well-worn, yet ever insistent, problem of moral and physical evil. In twenty short chapters he touches suggestively on practically every aspect of his chosen subject; the problem of suffering in the Old Testament and in the New; the fall of man and original sin; the Death of Christ; the necessity of pain; the beauty of suffering, and so on. He gives his own views in answer to such questions as: Is Satan a Person? Is Life Worth Living? What is Happiness? Does God Suffer? A good deal is left hanging in the air (as indeed is inevitable in a small book dealing with a large subject), but Mr. Royds is a courageous writer, and his book is a most useful one.

There are three books which were not sent for review, but which are so excellent that I feel I must refer to them here. *Marriage, Children, and God*, by Claud Mullins (Allen & Unwin, 6s.) deals with some aspects of the problems treated of by Dr. Douglas White in the book referred to above. Mr. Mullins is a well-known London magistrate and he offers what I regard as an unanswerable case for the voluntary limitation of families. And he does so from the point of view of religion. It is by far the best book on the subject that I have come across.

*Creative Christian Living*, by Dr. W. Brooke Stabler (Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.), undertakes to show the application of the Christian Ethic to the moral chaos and confusion

of the present time. Dr. Stabler is a most inspiring writer, yet the style of his book is that of everyday speech at its best. And he is an excellent guide for young and old alike who are seeking to know just how the message of Jesus impinges on our individual and social life in these very complex days.

*The Fall of Man*, by Dr. H. T. Powell (S.P.C.K., 5s.), was originally presented to Durham University for the degree of D.D. But it is none the worse for that. It is, it is true, a really scholarly treatment of the subject of the Fall of Man, but it is written in a way that will appeal even to those who are somewhat impatient of dogmatic theology (and how many ministers are!). Dr. Powell has tackled a difficult subject with complete intellectual sincerity and honesty, and has produced a book that many will be extremely glad to read.

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