

diverted to other ends. The colleges and the universities at Oxford and Cambridge have needed constant re-modelling; occasionally the blindness of those within has caused forcible reconstruction from without, but now they are sufficiently alive to be sensitive to new needs, and to adjust themselves accordingly. We have enough wisdom, forethought, enterprise, to see to it that the colleges founded by our forefathers shall meet the needs of the generation to come, and provide a succession of teachers well grounded in the Word of God, able to lead men to Him, and to train in His service.

W. T. WHITLEY.

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## Dr. Clifford on the Baptist Outlook.

*The following has been compiled from notes of an interview with Dr. Clifford, who is one of the Vice-Presidents of the Historical Society.*

THE Historical Society is to be congratulated on enlarging the scope of its *Quarterly*. The literary output of the Baptists in England is very much inferior to what it was, say, in the eighties. Then we had the *Baptist Magazine*, which came out monthly at a cost of sixpence, and also Baptists had a share in other publications, such as the *British Quarterly*, to which Dr. Dale frequently contributed. Then there was the *General Baptist Magazine*, which had a splendid circulation among General Baptists, and far beyond, for some sixteen years. The more cultured members of our churches were certainly better provided for in the matter of denominational literature than they are to-day; and we certainly do need our own organ, in which all questions that concern Baptist life, and thought in general, are to be discussed. One of the greatest needs of the time is clear thinking, especially about the centrality of Christ in thought and life, and about the teaching of Jesus concerning what may be called the Fellowship of Souls. The world to-day is full of prejudices which require to be exposed and destroyed, concerning God, and religion, and the New Testament, and our Churches are

weakened by false and inaccurate thinking upon the vital elements of religious life.

Then there is the wider field, which, in a very little time, will be in as urgent need for cultivation as it was in the 'nineties—namely, the application of Christian principle to the whole social order. Though at present these questions are enmeshed in perplexity, no doubt in four or five years' time we shall get into a clearer atmosphere in politics and economics, and be able to see more clearly where Christ's teaching leads. Jesus taught that man is a spirit, and has a body, and the key to the interpretation of life is found in the real and abiding values of the spirit of man. That conviction must be restored, and we shall have to introduce and push Jesus Christ's idea of property into the very thought of our churches, getting our people to accept it and act upon it. The true use of property is in co-operation with God in the redemption, the development, and perfection of humanity. There are moral limits to accumulation, and it is our business to find them. That teaching has hardly any sway at all in this materialistic age, but though the Sermon on the Mount may be ignored, its truth will be demonstrated in experience and men will have to accept it in the end of the day. It is wise political economy which says, "lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth."

Another imperative fact we have ignored in our national and world life is that humanity is one. We are members one of another, and separated into tribes and peoples and nations that we may help each other in the upbuilding of a world commonwealth, and not that we may make war on one another. There needs to be the fullest recognition of the solidarity of humanity, and it is a good omen that the international mind is active to-day as it has never been before in any part of the world's history. The international mind is a moving mind, a conquering mind, and it is the mind of Christ.

All these matters have to be considered, and in them all we require clear thinking. Baptists have to do with them because we are Christ's people and stand for the rule of God, the rule of righteousness and goodness and truth and beauty. "In His will is our peace," and to know and do that will is national and universal well-being.

Then the historical side of the Society's work is of the

greatest importance. We must keep our young people in touch with the work of Baptists in the last three centuries, informed as to the principles, as to the grounds on which they were held, and as to the results of their working as they are presented to-day in the life of the United States and this country. Our yesterdays mould the future, and the past carries in it treasures, without whose preservation and use it is impossible for us to do the best in our time and for the life of our generation. Liberty, which is the key idea of Baptist life—second only to that of the authority of Jesus Christ over the soul, and over the souls gathered together in fellowship—is essential to the development of the higher qualities of man's nature, his faith, his conscience, his loyalty to truth, his perception and practice of goodness, and his realization of beauty in character. There is a danger at the present time in the very laudable endeavours which are being made for the realization of Christian unity, of grave and perilous compromise, and our people ought to be warned that it is necessary for an advancing and conquering Christianity that the Baptist witness should be maintained in its integrity and fullness, without any obscurantism, without any narrowing of sympathy, and without accepting any tyranny of dogmas.

Also nothing is more important to us for coming years than the tremendous task God has set up of presenting our interpretation of Christ and of his Church to the peoples of Europe. Vast breadths of Europe are blighted by the superstition and crudities of the Greek Church, and other areas by the corruptions of religion and the enslavement of the mind by the Romish Church. This is patent. Thousands upon thousands are leaving the Romish Church and are eager for a virile and living, intellectual presentation of the Gospel of Christ. This most clamant need was faced at the Baptist World Alliance in London, and speedily took its place amongst the unforgettable elements of the Baptist consciousness. Since then it has exerted its sway. It took a practical shape before the second gathering of the Baptist World Alliance at Philadelphia, and became a clearly defined piece of work for the vast populations of Russia. The war has checked that work, and the turmoil and strife of the years of peace have blocked the way to progress to a large extent, but not entirely.

American Baptists, North and South, and Swedish and other Baptists, have joined in the ministration of relief to the suffering millions of Europe, and we have now appointed a Commissioner, Dr. Rushbrooke, who is giving guidance and help to the struggling Baptist Societies in those parts of Europe where it is needed. On this the Baptists of the world must concentrate, and if they have understanding of the times, they will see that Ireland is a part of Europe, and ought to be included within the range of their endeavour.

Altogether, the future is bright with promise. There is no cause for despondency. The fires of God are cleansing the thought and life of the world. Consequences are opening our eyes to causes. A new interest in evangelism and an active spirit of propagandism is seizing our Churches, and there is every reason for faith in God and in the unmeasurable values of truth and goodness.

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## Personal Evangelism.

THE call to personal evangelism has already been widely published, eagerly endorsed, and evidently taken to heart. It has stirred ministers and members to interrogate anew the assumptions which lie behind accepted methods, to face their own reluctances, and to seek to supply what is lacking in spirit and experience. It has led to a deeper concern about the state of our Church life, the state of the country, the widespread challenge to the ethics of Christianity. It has compelled more careful study of the mind of our day, often dulled by sensationalism into spiritual insensibility, yet restless and unsatisfied; without faith, yet credulous to the last degree; superficial in thought, yet apparently eager for a moral realism which it does not always find in our sermons. In some quarters there is a feeling that time enough has been given to preparation, and that the need now is for action. It would certainly be a mistake to defer action where the time seems ripe for extensive work; yet, if we are to realize the fulness of blessing from this movement, a good deal of earnest prayer and courageous thinking will be necessary.