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The Fraternal

APRIL, 1944

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A GREAT ADVANCE

THE launching of the Short Term Policy of the B.U. represents, in many directions, a signal advance.

The ministry benefits. No longer will a married minister be expected to keep house and home on the minimum of £160 a year. When at length he retires from his labours, the annuity awaiting him, while pitifully small, will be an advance on the present position. Widows' allowances are substantially increased and the services of deaconesses are more worthily recognised.

Departments of the B.U. will benefit. Dr. Dunning, in his manifold activities, is given the help of an assistant. An additional worker is provided for the Women's Department, and their great humanitarian project is financially underwritten.

The fact that the policy is described as Short Term indicates that more is to be attempted; but, even so, the present advance is worthy of our denomination.

The credit for implementing this plan goes to Mr. Aubrey, who here, once again, gives evidence of his practical sympathy with the ministry, and to him we accord unstinted thanks. Our Fellowship may justly claim that in this scheme it reaps the fruit of long and arduous labour. The Polity Commission, which included many of these reforms in its report, was itself the outcome of the work of the B.M.F., while for years, in council and committee, Fellowship members have voiced the needs of the lower salaried ministers. Leading laymen have consistently advocated the same cause, and to them also we tender heartfelt thanks.

While we express sincere gratitude, yet we are sure that no minister worthy of his salt will rest content with a mere word of appreciation. More is required of us and more will be forthcoming.

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First, there is a need for deepened loyalty to our denomination, Irritation amounting to indignation is justly felt when occasionally men are heard decrying the Church that has reared them and trained them for their ministry and maintained them therein. Here is a scheme which affords abundant evidence of the Union's concern for its ministers. Let us one and all reciprocate that feeling in loving and prayerful loyalty. Then it is for every minister to enlist the support of his church for this many-sided reform. The wherewithal to carry it into effect will not be forthcoming as the result of one annual collection, but rather in the continued interest shown by the members of the congregation. Now, in most instances, the minister is the key man who, by his wise planning and sympathetic enlightenment, may encourage his people to systematic support, or may hinder the same by pursuing an opposite policy. Already there are evidences that our churches awaited such a call as this, and it is for us ministers to encourage them in their generous endeavours.

Most important of all, let us see in this plan a call to increased devotion to Christ and His Church. None will under-estimate the difficulties that beset many of our brethren; but here at least is tangible evidence that those who love our Lord are deeply concerned for the well-being of His servants. Surely this is an urge, as from God Himself, to renewed consecration and a zeal not easily quenched. Given this, these material plans will be a means, by God's blessing, to a worthier ministry, a more spiritual Church, a Christian country, and a better world.

THE POLITY REPORT

THE B.U. Council has accepted the Polity Report and has commended it to the churches. The Commission, having concluded its labours, has been discharged. Thanks are due to the members and especially to the Chairman, Mr. Norman Town, who has made long journeys, night and day, in order to attend its meetings. Mr. Town is one of the many laymen to whom our denomination is deeply indebted. May he be spared to us all to continue his labours. Thanks are due also to J. O. Barrett for his strenuous work as Associate Secretary.

One important recommendation has already been adopted, having been incorporated into the B.U. policy regarding ministerial stipends. This alone justified the labours of the Commission. The Time-Limit has been eliminated from pastoral invitations given under the Settlement Scheme, and this will remove what many have felt to be an irksome condition. It does not follow that in future no Time-Limit clause can be inserted, seeing that no authority has power to dictate to the churches, but it is good that its compulsory insertion is now at an end. The Settlement Covenant provides an excellent alternative and goes far to meet the desires of all concerned. Suggestions for the grouping of churches into district Fellowships are already being acted upon in several localities, and this section of the Report is likely to bear further fruit. The place and service of lay preachers forms another important element in the Report, and the recently constituted Lay Preachers' Association is an early outcome of the Commission's lead. In these, and in other directions, the long labour of the Commission is having practical results, and will be given wider publicity in the Presidential programme of Mr. Seymour Price. We believe that the Report and the Short Term Policy of the Union will each in its own way contribute to the increased usefulness of our Baptist churches.

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF BAPTIST MINISTERIAL TRAINING IN SOUTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE.

MANY movements emerged from the Evangelical Revival of the Eighteenth Century, social, missionary and educational: of these not of least importance was an awakened interest in the value of education. It became part of the spirit of the time.

THE TROSNANT SCHOOL, 1732-1770

The Baptists of Gwent and Morgannwg were among the earliest of the Sects to feel the need of training for the ministry. This feeling was voiced at a Conference held at Maesyberllan in Breconshire as early as 1720, at which some of the oldest Churches of the Principality were represented, such as Olchon (modern Capel-fryn), a meeting place with which the name of Sir John Oldcastle is associated: Ilston, the scene of the labours of John Miles; and Hengoed, the scene of the labours of Morgan Griffiths, who not only built up a great Church at Hengoed, but was instrumental in the founding and in the stimulation of many other causes.

Nothing, however, materialised until 1732 when John Griffiths, son of Morgan Griffiths of Hengoed, Manager of the Iron Works at Pontypool, secured a house at Trostant which was used as a place of worship on Sundays, and as a school for ministerial students during week-days. John Griffiths was followed by a succession of men who served as teachers. During the thirty-eight years of the School's existence about forty students received training there, among them Morgan Edwards, M.A., who went to America in 1761 and opened in that continent the first seminary, free of religious tests, viz.:—Brown University at Providence, Rhode Island; and Thomas Llewellyn, M.A. LL.D., who settled in London, where he started a school for training preachers. Several of the Trostant students must have proceeded to the Bristol Educational Society for the completion of their training. The School was closed in 1770, the year in which the Bristol Educational Society was re-organised. It was probably felt that Bristol College now provided all the facilities that were needed, seeing that at that time the Baptist Churches in Wales numbered not more than about twenty.

THE ABERGAVENNY ACADEMY, 1807-1836.

Between the years 1770 and 1836 there was a considerable increase in the number of English Baptists in the Principality, particularly in Gwent, but there was a dearth of ministers who could preach in English. The position had been talked about freely for some time, but it was at the Association Meetings at Penygarn, Pontypool, that matters came to a head, when it was decided to open a School forthwith. The aim of the School is set forth in the first printed Report of the Society which appeared in May, 1809, viz.: "To instruct young men called to the Baptist Ministry out of the Particular Baptist Churches in Wales, in the English language, to advance their knowledge in the Divinity, and afford them the rules of just composition." The Report then goes on to say: "Be it known to you that there are some parts of Glamorgan and the County of Pembroke as dark, comparatively, as the regions of Africa, or Asia, for want of English Preachers."

The Academy was opened on January 1st, 1807. The location was Abergavenny, and its President was Rev. Micah Thomas, pastor of Frogmore Street Baptist Church, who has been described as "an erudite scholar, good disciplinarian, able theologian, and a consecrated man." The School was opened with three students, and, except on rare occasions, the number in residence at one time did not exceed seven. The period

of training was two years. The students received their board as well as their tuition in the Manse. About 106 students passed through the School, among them men who became very distinguished, such as Francis Hiley, who was known as the Silver Trumpet of Wales; Thomas Thomas, a future President of the College; John Pritchard, the first President of Llangollen; John Jones, of Merthyr Tydvil, one of the most powerful orators of the day; and David Davies, the first President of Haverfordwest Baptist College.

In 1836 Micah Thomas resigned the Presidency, not on the ground of age or declining strength, because he continued in the pastorate of Frogmore Street for some years after this. One suggestion is, that some of the old students of the College, who were Hyper-Calvinists, had been indulging in bitter criticism of Micah Thomas's theological views. Micah Thomas was a moderate Calvinist, whose views approximated to those of Andrew Fuller, who had found a middle course between Calvinism on the one hand, and Arminianism on the other.

PONTYPOOL, 1836—1893.

The resignation of the Rev. Micah Thomas as President of the Abergavenny Academy created a serious problem for the Denomination. The financial position of the College did not guarantee the maintenance of a full-time President. A Committee was formed to consider the situation. A way out of the impasse was found by the formation of an English cause at Crane Street, Pontypool, and by the securing of a pastor who would fill the dual position of pastor of Crane Street and President of the College. This, of course, necessitated the transfer of the College from Abergavenny to Pontypool. The Rev. Thomas Thomas, an old student of Abergavenny and of Stepney College, London, and pastor of Henrietta Street Baptist Church, London, accepted the position. At first the classes were held in the Manse, but in due course a residential College was erected on the brow of Penygarn, a commanding site overlooking the town. Mr. Thomas held the presidency and filled it with distinction for 41 years. Among those who shared the work as Classical Tutors are several scholars of distinction, such as George Thomas, M.A., James Sully, M.A., and W. Mortimer Lewis, M.A. The last-named succeeded Dr. Thomas in 1877, and, in turn, was succeeded by Prof. William Edwards, B.A., Classical Tutor of Haverfordwest, who held the Presidency for 45 years. Rev. David Thomas, B.A., served as Classical Tutor from 1877 to 1885, when he was succeeded by Professor J. M. Davies, M.A., who laboured with Dr. Edwards for forty years. Both were old students of Pontypool, both were Ward Scholars, and both completed their training at Regents Park College. The eminence of these two men as scholars and preachers, and their work without, as well as within, the College, are so well known that there is no need to dwell upon them here.

It is not possible, within the limits of this article, to mention a title of the alumni of Pontypool College who became famous in their respective spheres, but we cannot pass by the names of Thomas Evans, Daniel Jones, and W. R. James, who distinguished themselves as Missionaries in India; scholars, such as Silas Morris, M.A., tutor and Principal of the North Wales Baptist College, and John Thomas, of Salendine Nook and Liverpool, one of the most eloquent pulpiteers of our time.

THE SOUTH WALES BAPTIST COLLEGE, 1893.

The establishment of University Colleges in Wales was an event that could not fail to influence ministerial education, and ultimately to determine the location of its Theological Institutions. Dr. Edwards, the young Principal of Pontypool College, ever a man of vision as well as of action, was among the first to realise the cultural advantages that would accrue

to the Theological Colleges from close association with one or other of the University Colleges. As early as 1890 he advocated the removal of Pontypool College to Cardiff. Considerable opposition had to be overcome, and it was not until 1893 that the decision was made to leave the fine premises at Pontypool, amidst the sylvan surroundings of Penygarn, and to migrate to Cardiff. It was a great venture of faith, in view of the fact that no premises had been secured, neither were any in sight, beyond the use of the Longcross Street Baptist Church Schoolroom. The move, however, was more than justified by the wider cultural benefits that were made available for the students.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, as we have already seen, stress was laid on the importance of Theological training for ministerial students. By the end of the century the need was felt for a good training in Arts or Science as the ground-work for studies in Theology.

Another event of importance was the Charter granted to the University of Wales, which enabled the University to confer Degrees in Arts, Science and Theology. In the B.D. curriculum four Departments of Study were recognised: Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, and Church History. One of the conditions of association with the University was that a special teacher should be provided for each Department of Study. To meet this requirement, the Staff at the College was increased from two to four. The Rev. Tyssil Evans, M.A., B.Sc., was appointed as Professor of Old Testament studies, and the writer of this sketch took charge of the Church History Department. This was in January, 1904.

The B.D. Degree was regarded as an Honours Degree, and could not be entered upon without an initial Degree in Arts or Science. At first the candidates were few and far between, but what was the exception has now become the rule. The majority of students successfully negotiate the double degree course.

The number of students trained in the Abergavenny, Pontypool, and Cardiff College, is 830. To this number must be added the students trained at Haverfordwest and afterwards at Aberystwyth, who chose, when the College ceased, to be counted as alumni of the South Wales Baptist College.

THE CARDIFF SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY.

The formation of the School of Theology was due in no small measure to the persistent efforts of Dr. Theodore H. Robinson. In this he received much help and encouragement from the Principal of the University, Mr. J. F. Rees, M.Com. This development was one of far-reaching importance for the Baptist College, which is now a wing of the Cardiff School of Theology, under the aegis of the University College. By this arrangement our students have the benefit in their B.D. and Diploma Courses of the training provided in the well-staffed departments of Semitics and Philosophy in the University. Furthermore, all the B.D. and Diploma students are registered as students of the School of Theology. They enjoy the privilege of association with the general body of students at the University, and they have the benefit of the facilities provided for the social and recreational, as well as the devotional and cultural life of the general body of students.

On the other hand, Divinity students of other Denominations who are preparing for the B.D. examinations of the University of Wales, enjoy the privilege of the tuition provided at the Baptist College—an arrangement which cannot fail to foster inter-denominational fellowship.

FACING THE FUTURE.

Certain changes seem to be inevitable. The time is surely approaching when all students who have the ability and desire should proceed to

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Regents Park College to complete their training. This was surely in the mind of Dr. Wheeler Robinson when Regents Park was removed from London to Oxford. It may be argued that this would entail too long a course, particularly for those whose call to the ministry comes after some years spent in secular employment. For such men a double-degree course and an Oxford finish would involve too long a period of training. The only remedy for this would be to convince the University of Wales of the necessity of providing a B.A. course in Theology such as they have in some of the English Universities.

Another welcome change would be the establishment of a Hostel for our students. Properties have recently been acquired adjacent to the College, capable of accommodating at least thirty students, but the present moment is not opportune, either for the adaptation of the buildings, or for the furnishing that would be necessary.

Some changes, too, must necessarily be effected in the College curriculum. The College Senate is being urged by the Baptist Sunday School Union of Wales to provide training for our students in applied Psychology, so that they may become qualified to train Sunday School Teachers for their important tasks. There is also a demand for special training in the conduct of the various Young People's organisations that have come into existence in recent years.

Above all, men leaving College need training in the work of Evangelism. In many of the American Colleges they have a Chair of Evangelism. As Baptists we can claim to be more evangelical in our outlook than most of the Free Churches, but even we need to become more aggressive in our witness. Carey dreamed with the map of the world in front of him. The world is shrinking, and we need the global vision. Defence has shown itself to be obsolete in modern warfare. The best form of defence is attack. The Maginot Line mentality will not save the Church from extinction. Attack is the best form of defence. "Go ye into all the world," is the mandate; "Preach the Gospel," is the command. No changes of curriculum can compensate for the loss of the soul-winning passion. I pray that we Baptists may never lose this passion.

T. W. CHANCE.

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY

IS there such a thing? If so, what does it mean? How does it work? What is the test of its validity? How can a man satisfy himself that it once came to him with a solemn urgency of irresistible appeal? Is it a mere conventional designation appertaining to the ministerial office, useful as a formula to safeguard the status of the man who holds it, or does it actually imply the rule and drive of a great imperative which lays a spell upon the spirit of a man and sends him forth to "catch men alive for God?" Has it an authentic ring by which we can identify it? We hear the murmur of the sea in the convolutions of the shell; but do the rich cadences of the Divine Voice which spoke to Peter, James and John on the seashore, linger in the inmost soul of him who speaks to men in the name of God to-day?

Is this putting the ministerial calling upon too high a level? It is where the New Testament puts it. "Paul . . . called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel" (Rom. 1: 1). The man who wrote those words was in the grip of a mighty certitude; it possessed him, mastered him, ruled him, and held his spirit until the day when he died for his faith on the Appian Way outside the gates of Rome.

Know we anything of this certitude? No one of us was called to the ministry as Paul was; but we are in it to-day because we believe that a call once sounded in our hearts. One's ministry looks such a poverty-stricken affair against the background of that solemn fact, that we are tempted to gloss it over in silence; but the fact of the Call remains. There was nothing spectacular about it: perhaps a hand upon the shoulder, a challenging query which set the kindling ablaze, followed by an urgency of soul which refused to be quieted, a hush in the heart, and a "small voice of stillness." Then the Church stepped in; for it is not enough for a man to feel that he is called to the ministry of the Word of God. The Church in whose fellowship he has a place must share the persuasion and open the door. After that, the Churches served must be able to testify to the quality of the message, until at last a great conviction is born in the heart that the Call has come to break unto men the Bread of Life. The reality of that imperative is the strength of the minister's life. Where it is lacking, or where the initial certitude has become impaired, a pathetic figure charged with pathos comes into view: a voiceless and sightless watchman on the ramparts of a besieged city.

If we are satisfied that we have received this Call to the ministry, ours is the solemn obligation to make it the regulating thing in life. An old minister warned the late J. Morgan Gibbon, of Stamford Hill, that death was the supreme danger of the ministry—soul death. He said that there were men who had lost their souls in the pulpit. Not that they had become bad men, but soul-less men. Their words might be polished, but their souls were dead. No one believed their report, because they couldn't convince their hearers that they believed it themselves. When this is true we are facing sheer tragedy. So we have to "guard the deposit" and keep the fire burning. The mercenary spirit, vanity, intellectual sloth, content to be an echo and let others do our thinking for us, the neglect of the devotional spirit, the shirking of self-examination; these are the roads which lead to soul-death, and turn preachers into mere word-mongers, eloquent proclaimers of nothing. "The mirrors must be finely polished," said A. B. Bruce, "that are designed to reflect the image of Christ." And it was the Master of us all who said to His Apostles: "*Have the salt in yourselves.*"

The clamant need for the right type of minister for the testing days ahead suggests a service which the minister is best fitted to render. To keep a watchful eye for promising youth, to hold before young people the high ideal of the Christian ministry, to encourage only the best to prepare for it, to offer guidance in the choice of books, and private tuition in the elements of preaching, are some of the ways in which ministers can influence the Churches in the selection of candidates for the ministry. We keep the Call to the ministry on its New Testament level when we take pains to ensure that only the best are encouraged to think of the ministry as a vocation.

Our Colleges share the responsibility for maintaining the standard of the ministry. Most of us owe a debt to College tutors which we can never repay, and it is with diffidence that counsel is offered to men who have rendered, and are still rendering, valued service to the denomination. But this needs to be said: **MEN ARE CALLED TO BE PREACHERS OF THE WORD**, and the Colleges must turn out men with a message—who can put their message over to the congregation in language which the people can understand. A number of Free Church Ministers were asked to address a series of meetings in a certain town, each one undertaking to present one of the doctrines of the faith in simple English. They were to imagine a number of people from the street in the back row, and make their message clear to them. Only one or two came any-

where near to succeeding. The addresses were enjoyed by the audience, but the back row was sound asleep! It is so hard for us ministers to avoid theological language. In the crucial days before us, this is what we must do, if we are going to build up our congregations. So we say to College authorities: Put the emphasis upon preaching. Send us men who can preach living sermons and not deliver lectures. Give them all the intellectual equipment which is necessary for an efficient ministry, but train them to preach the Word of God with simplicity and passion, or they are going to fail, and the Churches will come nigh to death. Give us preachers who have something to say; and when you place them in the ministry, let it be in the setting of a great, dignified and impressive Ordination Service, worthy of the solemn occasion. In addition, do urge them to substitute an Induction Service for the conventional Recognition Meeting with its inane pleasantries. If God has anything to do with the movement of men within the ministry, a reverent service of induction is alone adequate to the solemn hour. The Call to the ministry is a call to sincerity and earnestness. The next twenty years will be decisive for Christianity in this island of ours. We have a message; but it must be presented by men with a fire in their bones, and their spirits armed with a dynamic and relevant Christianity. Such men will be listened to, for they are men sent from God.

EVAN WILLIAMS.

THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN PREACHING.

FOR the origin of Christian preaching we go back to Christ Himself, and the significance of His life to those who believed. He gave to them a fuller and more satisfying sense of God. Through their experience God pressed forward to the fulfilment of all human need. Preaching was the expression of that movement.

There was a deep note of urgency in the Saviour's life. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." "And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for Thee—and He said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth."

It was the same note of urgency that marked the earliest Christian preaching. These early witnesses knew themselves as having been sent. When praying to His Father, Christ said of them, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." "Go your ways." The deep human response is expressed in such declarations as, "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And again, "Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel."

In this way the Divine pressure upon the world was sustained.

The preaching of those days took place in an intensely religious setting. It was a time when religion was taken seriously. The reality of the unseen world was generally accepted. Life was coloured and determined by religious beliefs. The importance of man's relationship to God was acknowledged.

It was a time of quickened religious interest, both among the people of Israel and in the outside pagan world. This revival, however, happened in religion only at an imperfect stage. There was within it a sense of incompleteness. Further re-adjustment in man's relationship to God was necessary. Renewed interest would accentuate this fundamental need. Religion itself pressed forward towards its satisfaction. It contained this promise with a definite forward look. It was marked by a sense of holy unrest. A fuller and profounder knowledge of God was possible.

It was into that religious world Jesus came, and through His fulfilment of it made clear the true nature of its quest. Man wants the satisfaction of his deeper needs through a sure knowledge of God.

The acceptance of Christ by men made clear three important aspects of religious experience. It was the satisfaction of these that expressed itself in the earliest form of Christian preaching. There has always been in man a *sense of dependence* on some unseen power. In religion he traces his being to God. The Psalmist expressed this conviction when he said, "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." This is one of the central truths of the Bible teaching. Man is utterly dependent on God.

The difficulty, however, is that man's life is not always truly adjusted to this basis. There have been all sorts of wrong dependencies. Even religion itself is exposed to this danger. Its external things have often taken the place of true religious experience. Man has been tempted to renounce all support and rely entirely on himself. But the inadequacy of this position is soon discovered.

Also he has tried the world of which he is a part. This makes an obvious appeal. But true adjustment cannot be found there.

So life's fundamental problem remains unsolved.

Then again man's life involves *the conviction that attachment should be made to something or somebody other than self*. His life should, in some way, be committed.

"Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

In this, also, man's conviction has not been satisfied—wrong attachments have been made. Life demands that some standard should be accepted. But in this, man has never enjoyed a certainty of touch. Even the loftiest ideals, as substitutes for the true object, can never provide satisfaction. So in this matter also we find confusion and uncertainty.

The third aspect of true religious experience is *man's knowledge of the world's saving powers*. This is found particularly in man's relationship to God. The divine aid had been proved. This was the central satisfaction of the Religion of Israel with its promise of a Saviour. But while awaiting that full and final expression of God's saving power, there was room for doubt and uncertainty.

When Christ came He satisfied all these deeper needs. He gave to man's dependence its true object. The life of man was placed on its true foundation. Through the knowledge of Christ, the frail nature of man found assurance and certainty. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."

And as for man's sense of obligation the object was made clear. All uncertainty is removed. There was only One to whom the life of man should be given. It was the God revealed in Christ. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The light in man finds its satisfaction in the fuller light of God.

The same is true of man's imperfect knowledge of life's saving powers. This knowledge had pressed forward to a greater fulfilment. It was found in Christ. Here at last was full salvation. Man's testimony is complete. "This is the Son of God."

It was participation in that fuller knowledge of God that inspired the earliest Christian preaching. Proof and preaching experience and exposition went together. These people preached what they had proved,

and transmitted that which they knew. The New Testament preserves their proclamation. It is their one message or one sermon for the world. And thus the saving power of God in Christ is carried on.

The religious setting was undoubtedly a great advantage to the first preachers of the Gospel. There was in it a pre-disposition towards acceptance. There was a quickened interest and expectation. They gave what the people really wanted.

Still, the outstanding difficulties arose from religious beliefs. There were some who refused to advance to the greater benefits of Christ. They rejected the Christ because they believed in God. Surely there is something wrong in this. Their beliefs did not function as they should. Their convictions did not really work. The life of the people of Israel was really pressing forward to its fulfilment in Christ. They were really seeking for the Saviour, yet they found it difficult to accept Him. We must not, however, fail to see that this was the Gospel's opportunity. It points to the way of advance. The people were confronted with the truth. The beliefs, although confused, were there, and would eventually yield to order. For the time they simply did not work. Life as yet had not yielded itself to them. But the urge, although frustrated, was there. Contact can be made.

The first Christian preachers went forth in the inspiration of the One Who said: "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me."

The Evangelist of to-day has to do his work without the aid of an extremely religious setting. In this respect the outlook for him is most unfavourable. Yet the underlying life of man remains the same. Human nature retains its traces of divine activity. The witness of *Creation, Conscience and Christ remains*. Life is still within the scope of these beliefs. They function very imperfectly. Their presence accounts for the world's unrest. It needs fundamental re-adjustment.

In spite of our disadvantage, we should face the world with a live Gospel. That is, with a message that works in us. We should then help to straighten out the beliefs of the world, and show it that nothing is truly believed unless it prepares the way for the Faith that satisfies.

"This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

EDWARD ROBERTS.

PREACHING AND THE PRESENT SITUATION.

I

IN its long history the world has frequently suffered from the evils which afflict us to-day. What is new in our situation is the magnitude of these evils, and this magnitude is due to the wonderful inventions of modern days. Weapons of war have changed, but human nature, the determining factor in every situation, has not radically changed. Consequently, the aim of preaching is still that of bringing unredeemed human nature under the sovereignty of God through Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Without this redemption of the soul, the evils of to-day will continue to torment the world despite all the pacts, charters and treaties which statesmen may devise.

That is the grim fact which makes preaching so necessary, so urgent, and so momentous, and not "an irrelevancy in the modern world." Humanity's profound need of the Gospel should be to-day the plainest fact in the world. Nevertheless, many think that we need a new Gospel to meet the present situation, and humanists, of all sorts, are busy fashioning their various brands. So far as they go I sympathise with their efforts to introduce order and decency into our muddle-headed civili-

zation, but they do not go far enough or deep enough. The evils of to-day are too strong to be mastered by the concepts of humanism. They are "human, all too human," and they insulate human life from the greater, corrective and transforming power of the Christian Gospel. If the world has no Divine meaning or purpose, and if there is no higher-being in it than man, with his dangerous impulses and selfish tendencies, it seems that the only alternative, as a remedy from chaos, is a totalitarian state. That is an awful alternative, for such a state reduces man to a robot. The Christian Gospel alone has sufficient redeeming power to meet the present desperate situation of the world, and to do so by making man, not less than human but more truly human, as we see humanity in its glory in Jesus Christ. Should any uncertainty regarding the sufficiency of the Gospel invade a preacher's mind, he will become a mere echo of politicians, or the Press, or the crowd, and Christ may be paganized and brought down to the level of the secular thought of our time. So far, then, I have stressed two points, viz., that in the present situation, despite the magnitude of its evils, we have the same human nature to address, and the same glorious Gospel of the Blessed God to preach. I know that the man of to-day has a different mental background, and that he lives in a very different world from that of previous generations, but has he, with all his knowledge, inventions, and mastery of nature, made the earth, during the last 25 years, a cosmos or a chaos? No generation in the world's history has been in greater need of the supernatural, supernational, and Divinely dynamical Christian Gospel than our own generation. Its attitude to this Gospel is a matter of life or death, and this momentous fact makes preaching a tremendous responsibility as well as a glorious privilege.

II.

At this juncture a few words on our method of preaching may not be untimely. When preaching on the present situation we should, I believe, avoid two mistakes.

(I) It is possible to "explain" it far too trivially by speaking glibly about the Judgment of God on some particular peccadillo which we happen to dislike most.

(II) It is also possible to "explain" it in a heartless way by failing to distinguish between the real judgments of God and the consequences of man's devilry. The greatest victims of this war are the oppressed people and the starving children of Europe; our own gallant dead and the folk at home who will never see them on earth again; the Jews who have been tortured and slain in tens of thousands; and I ask, is all this due to the Judgments of God or to the ghastly inhumanity of man? It is blasphemous to attribute to God, as some writers do, the unspeakable horrors of the present war, instead of tracing them to their real source in man's fierce denial of God and of all the values of the Christian religion.

(III) The present situation is a very complex affair, and some of its causes are deeply hidden. From a political standpoint one may risk an over-simplification by saying that it is due to the international selfishness and anarchy which prevailed throughout the world between 1919-1939. The League of Nations was made ineffective by the selfish, short-sighted and conflicting policies of all the nations which composed it; and that debacle gave Japan, Italy and Germany their opportunity to pursue a way which ended, as it was bound to end, in the present world conflict.

Viewing the situation from a religious standpoint, I would use the word "ungodliness" to indicate its main cause. That word explains the selfishness and everything else. A departure from God leads to a departure from our fellow-men and from all the higher values of life. And so we are led once more to the tremendous urgency and necessity of preaching

a Gospel which brings men to God and gives to all mankind its real centre of unity.

III.

Another important question which confronts us to-day is: Should we be always preaching about the present situation? Is it possible to preach so much on world problems that our patient listeners, feeling that they can do so little to solve them, leave our services in a state of profound depression? Is it not our first duty to relate the Gospel to the lives of those who are actually listening to us? We are not preaching to the world at large, but to men and women who attend our services with their problems, frustrations, griefs, anxieties, and fears, and are they to hear nothing but world problems? Some time ago a Dorset farmer told us in a B.B.C. Postscript that he was not farming the Empire, but that he was doing his best for the Empire by carefully cultivating his own farm in Dorset. Is it right that we should do likewise in our Churches? The question seems to suggest "a parish-pump" ministry, a limited outlook, and a narrow range of interests, but is it so? What would become of any parish without its own water supply? A lot of talk about the water supplies of the world would not fill its pails and kettles.

In the recorded teaching of our Master we do not find flamboyant references to the colossal dimensions of the universe, but we do find delightful references to flowers, grass, and birds; to simple kindnesses like giving a cup of cold water, or lending a loaf to a neighbour, or giving succour to a robbed traveller. And did He not eat with publicans and sinners, and speak with saving power to many a solitary soul?

Our Lord's ultimate aim was and is the salvation of the whole world in every aspect of its life. He was tempted to take short cuts to realize that aim, but He resolutely adopted the method of doing the duty that was nearest, of meeting the need before His eyes, and of sending men and women from His presence with new health in their bodies and a new vision in their souls. In these momentous days international, national, and civic problems must have alert and unflagging attention; and the Christian Church, forgetting for a time its marginal problems, should give light and leading to the world in its dire need. We do not forget that there was no official representation of the Christian Church at the Peace Conference of Versailles in 1919. But the leaders of Labour organisations were there, and they secured, I am glad to say, a recognition of their demands. It is obvious, I hope, that I am pleading, not for a religion of escape from our social obligations, or for a religion of selfish individualism. That would be a travesty of the Gospel. I am pleading for what is possible and practicable for a preacher to do Sunday after Sunday. If I can bring a lost soul to Christ; if I can give comfort to a sad heart; if I can make some frustrated young man or woman feel that around us there is an encompassing Divine providence; and if I can send people from a service with a nobler vision of life, and with fresh hope and courage in their hearts, I shall not regret that I did not spend my time discussing some Far Eastern problem, or making a psychological analysis of the German soul.

IV.

Lastly, what about the future? The chief eye surgeon of the R.A.F. told us recently that the darkness of the blackest night is not absolute. There is some amount of illumination in the blackest sky. And that is also true of the present dark situation. In its darkness it is well to remember that there are millions of people who have refused to submit to a military tyranny or to accept a pagan ideology; that on the Mission Field the Gospel is extending its sway; that our youth have still, and

in an amazing degree, the high heart of courage; that more people than ever are in a mood to listen to a Gospel message, and to ask, amid the crash and chaos of our time, what must they do to be saved? And our general dissatisfaction with the past, and keen expectancy for a better future is in line with the Christ who maketh all things new. Faith in a vague and uncertain future will not save us, but faith in the Gospel of God's redeeming grace in Jesus Christ will make the world an "earthly paradise." The darkness of the present situation has not put out the light of that Gospel. It is indeed shining with greater brilliance than ever, and it will shine more and more until all the Nations of the world come to "glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever."

W. ROWLAND JONES.

THE PLACE OF PREACHING IN HISTORY.

CHRISTIANITY is a historical religion, both because its roots are in a historical event and because its significance has been realised in every age in a further series of historical events. In its history the Church has both moulded events and been moulded by them. In this cycle in the progress of Christianity and civilisation one of the most powerful factors has been that of preaching. In the nature of things, the influence of preaching and events must be reciprocal, for the whole of the history of mankind in the last resort is the record of the relationships of man with God; the record of God's call to men and of its being understood (and sometimes misunderstood) in the light of the historical circumstances in which men hear that call. The preacher, like every other man, is a child of his age. No more than other men can he escape completely from the influence of his time. In one respect, however, he is different in the fact that for him all the influences and events of history are to be viewed as more than just the meaningless shuttle of the loom of time: they have significance in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As history is the record of the success or failure of men to respond to Christ's call, and as preaching is the attempt to make that call have meaning for men, there is no province of human experience in which history and preaching do not intersect and influence one another. Customs, morals, art and science are all spheres in which each has greatly reacted upon the other. In philosophy and language the names of preachers are pre-eminent: Origen, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Eckhart, Calvin, Edwards, Carey. The debt of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment to the insistence on personal responsibility and freedom maintained by Christian preachers Ficino, Colet, St. Catherine, Savonarola, von Mosheim, Bengel, Schleiermacher, is no small one, whilst the intimate relations between humanitarianism, education and preaching is clear even to the casual observer. The life and progress of nations, the very rise and fall of governments, have often been most closely connected with preaching, as mention of such great names as Chrysostom, Ambrose, Leo, Gregory, Boniface, Bernard, Luther, Knox, Bossuet, Wesley and many others, will quickly reveal. It is no extravagance to claim that the very quality of national life is to be measured in direct ratio to the standard of the preaching of the age. Ages of formal, lifeless preaching have been the Dark Ages of mankind, whereas the periods of great spiritual revival have in every other realm been the dawn of culture's re-awakening.

It is, however, as a vital element of the propagation of the Christian religion that preaching has its greatest historical warrant. The origin of preaching is older than Christianity, but its peculiar formal expression in Christian tradition it owes to the example of Jesus and His followers. From the beginning of the life of the Church two elements, proclamation

and teaching, have been combined in the Christian sermon, these having been deliberately defined apparently to explain and enforce the Will of God, as revealed in the Scriptures.

There are but few sermons left of the post-apostolic age, though enough (e.g., the Epistle of Barnabas, II Clement, Justin's Apology), to show that there was preaching of both this evangelical and didactic kind. The spread of the Gospel and particularly the onset of persecution, with its destruction of written records, would emphasise the importance of preaching as well as determine its form, as exhortation, though in some cases, as for example in the Apologists and notably in Origen, the necessity for some obscurity gave rise to the allegorical interpretation of Scripture, which has since proved so great a burden to Christian preaching. With the accession of Constantine began a new era for the Church and its preaching. The vast influx of imperial converts demanded an ability to address large congregations, so grew an increasing emphasis on oratory. This development found its highest expression in Chrysostom "the golden tongued" in the fourth century, in noble pleas for goodness and morality. In the fifth century, theological preaching found great vogue, reaching its classical expression in Basil of Cæsarea and Gregory of Nyssa amongst Greek-speaking Christians and in Latin preaching in Augustine. After these men came a period of decay both in preaching and in cultural life, both symptomatic of the spiritual enfeeblement of the Church and the collapse of the imperial world.

The peculiar relationship of preaching with events is seen in the upheaval of the Teutons. Though in the great centres of decay, preaching was also in decline, where life was vigorous, there preaching was also a power. Amongst the Germanic tribes, Arian missions flourished, whilst in other heathen centres such preachers as Patrick, Boniface and David were winning the younger nations to the standard of Christ. With the coming of quieter centuries, however, preaching again so declined that in the eighth century and early ninth, Charlemagne attempted to dictate improvements in its quality. Mental and spiritual culture, however, would not be coerced, and although there was some temporary improvement during his lifetime, after his death preaching again fell away and the Dark Ages fell upon mankind.

In the eleventh century there came a promise of dawn in the rise of scholastic theology under Lanfranc and Anselm and in the proclamation of the first Crusade by Peter the Hermit and Urban II. Although the scholastic awakening did not fulfil its promise but degenerated into fruitless and sometimes even foolish sophistry, it did, nevertheless, good service to the technical aspect of preaching in its insistence on clear structure and logical reasoning in sermons. Urban's eloquent plea to the nobles of Clermont and Peter's vehement appeal to the multitudes gave new birth to a type of popular preaching which for long centuries had been asleep and which has left its permanent mark on the function of preaching which sways great crowds and arouses men not to contemplation but to action. On the side of "pure" history, the effect of the Crusades upon the life of the world is to be seen as one of the great formative influences in world affairs. In the twelfth century, Bernard of Clairvaux added to this popular preaching a spiritual tone it had not previously possessed. In the true tradition of Bernard, in the thirteenth century arose the preaching orders of Francis and Dominic whose friars were seen by millions in many lands, preaching with an almost unknown enthusiasm, but not without care for thought and spiritual understanding, as the presence in their ranks of such men as Aquinas and Bonaventura will show.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were years of general degeneracy, whose mood is matched by the struggle between decay and reform

in church and pulpit. The moral laxity of the clergy in the fourteenth century fell to an appalling degree, but before its end Wyclif and Huss were already at work, not now being moulded by events but shaping them by the Finger of God. For them, preaching meant the declaration of the truths of the Scripture which immoral clergy were denying to the sheep of God. Persecution and even death did not silence them, for after their death the flame from their altar was carried through Europe by the searing eloquence of the Dominican Savonarola. Like Huss, Savonarola paid for his zeal with his life, without seeing of the travail of his soul. But though at his death he seemed to have done little, the dogmatic slumber of the Church, apparently so sound, is soon to be catapulted into wakefulness.

In less than twenty years after the martyrdom of Savonarola, the world was startled by the Ninety Five Theses of the young monk of Wittenberg. Then, suddenly, preaching, that had seemed to have died, took a new lease on life and revealed itself in Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Latimer, Ridley, Knox, as the most powerful force in the whole world; great enough to shake thrones, conquer continents and give birth to a new civilisation to the whole race of men; proclaiming anew with a power and clearness not heard since the time of the Apostles, the Gospel of Salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The importance of the Reformation cannot be over-estimated. All subsequent Protestant preaching, with few exceptions, has been thoroughly pervaded with its dominant doctrines. Its revolt against the authority of Rome and its assertion of the right of private judgment have had such diverse effects as to give rise to a great variety of churches and preachers, to modern capitalism and democracy, as well as very largely determining the structure of the modern sovereign national state.

Following the Reformation, however, there was a reaction of decline in Protestant preaching, though the sense of danger roused the Catholic Church to an Augustan age of eloquence. For Protestantism the story of the seventeenth century is a sad one of prolonged and oftentimes bitter inter-denominational disputes with an inevitable weakening of influence and preaching amongst the common people. In Germany, Lutheranism hardened into the set system of dogma that came to be called "dead orthodoxy," until with the preaching of Phillip Spener and Hermann Francke, the Pietist movement gave a gentler spirit, with its insistence on the importance of feeling and asceticism in the Christian life. Perhaps the most far-reaching results of Pietistic preaching was the reconstitution of the Moravian Brethren (though far from approved by the Pietists themselves), under the leadership of Graf von Zinzendorf. To these pious folk, directly or indirectly, Europe owes very largely both the Evangelical Revival and the great modern missionary movement. But besides this, the influence of the Pietist movement on the life and character of all Protestant Europe generally has been deep and profound (and, in some respects, even dangerous!!).

In England, the Reformation gave rise to a series of struggles which left the country in a state of spiritual lethargy. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the influence of the Church was hardly to be felt in public life. In the same way, in France, by this time, the Catholic Counter Reformation had spent its power. The concern of the Clergy was almost exclusively with political power. In a little time, the price of their neglect was paid in awful measure in the French Revolution. That at such a time, England was saved the excesses of its own industrial revolution was primarily due to the preaching of three men, the brothers Wesley and George Whitfield. Of their work, a great modern statesman has said: "Their labours have made England and America vastly different

from what they might have been and have put our land permanently into their debt" (Franklin D. Roosevelt, Chapel Hill, 1939). Methodism was carried to America in 1766 by Philip Embury, Thomas Webb and Francis Asbury.

The Evangelical Revival can justly be compared with the Reformation in the extent of its influence. No field of life seems to have remained untouched by it. From its enthusiasm, the other religious denominations derived new life and vigour. Because of its insistence upon the eternal value of man, new impetus was given to the great humanitarian movements of the century. Slavery received its death warrant in the preaching of John Wesley, through the devotion to the cause of the slave that was roused in the heart of William Wilberforce, one of the most eminent Evangelical laymen. By the revival, the Baptist, John Howard, was fired to concern for the lot of criminals and prisoners. Bible study and publishing and concern for child welfare and the lot of poorer women, all received vital stimulus from this revival of powerful popular preaching of the Gospel. No agency has played a greater part in the construction of the pattern of modern life.

A final example of the interplay of preaching and events might well come from the fruitful field of foreign missions. Interest in non-Christian peoples was aroused in Great Britain by the discoveries of Captain James Cook. It was these discoveries that awakened the missionary zeal of William Carey, the Baptist preacher who was to show in his own person a remarkable array of talents as scientist and linguist as well as preacher, whose vision gave rise directly to the Baptist Missionary Society and indirectly to the whole movement of modern missions. Greater movement than this last great preaching movement has never been known in the history of mankind, for in its preaching the very face of the world is being turned from darkness to Light.

W. T. WILLIAMS.

THE SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY.

THE subject on which I have been asked to write is not of my choosing. The word success in connection with the ministry, raises the question by what criteria is it to be judged? The usual criteria of the world cannot apply in our estimate of the ministry; popularity as a preacher, the receiving of a high stipend may be the lot of one who is really a failure, whilst the absence of popular gifts and the receipt of a meagre stipend may be the fate of one who is a true success. I would define the successful minister as the one who serves the Church well. If this definition be accepted, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the function of the Church.

I.

The function of the Church is two-fold. The Church is a society of Christians who, believing in Christ, accept the privileges of forgiveness, reconciliation with God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and pledge themselves to live up to that standard of life revealed to them in Jesus Christ. The Church is indispensable to the development of the Christian personality which can come to its fullness only in the Christian fellowship.

The gift which He on one bestows,
We all delight to prove.
The grace through every vessel flows,
In purest streams of love.

Again, the Christian community is organised for the propagation of the faith, the winning of "them that are without," the purifying and

illuminating of the world. Thus the Church has two sides, one towards God, and "one to face the world with."

The measure of success in the Godward activities of the Church is the measure of the Christ-likeness of the individual members. Of this, the world cannot judge, for though it can tell a good man from a bad, it cannot tell how much either the good man or the bad is the better because of the Church. Here such criteria of success as numbers, etc., are not only useless but may be even misleading. Our Lord's greatest success was not when the crowds gathered around Him, but when deliberately changing from popular to parabolic teaching He sifted His congregation, sacrificing numbers for quality, multitudes of hearers for a few sincere seekers after truth.

The world is better able to judge of the success of the Church on her world side, for here statistics may be a criterion. Even if these be ruled out as they are by the Quakers and Moravians, it is always possible for the world to estimate the influence of the Church on the community, and of her impact on the world. The most successful ministry is the ministry which serves best this two-fold function of the Church.

II.

For such a ministry three things are obviously indispensable.

First there must be a sense of vocation. Ministers are not "professional" men in the true sense of the word, they are servants—the servants of Christ and therefore of the Church which is His body. So far as the Baptist minister is concerned, he is chiefly the servant of the local Church to which he has been called. This needs to be stressed, for it is possible for us to be so consumed with the desire to be the keeper of the vineyards as to neglect to keep our own vineyard. We are not to lord it over the Church but to serve the Church, and our services must be as the New Testament word implies—the service of slaves. That is, it must be disinterested—"not for filthy lucre," nor yet for popularity.

"Not for the hope of gaining ought
Nor seeking a reward."

If men suspect that the motive of our service is the enriching or glorifying of self, then immediately it becomes a failure.

The second indispensable is the dynamic of the Divine presence. Dr. T. R. Glover says that the task of the first Christians was to bring the whole world effectively to Christ. "The task was enormous. No one, I think, can even begin to measure it who has not stood alone in the swarming population of some great city of a heathen land. Then he will understand the incredulity and contempt with which a Celsus can contemplate the Christian dream of bringing all the races, with all men differing traditions, faiths, philosophies and cultures, under the single law of Christ." It was into such a world that the Apostles went and they conquered. "Where," asks Dr. Glover, "was the dynamic? The dynamic lay in the sense of the presence of Christ with the believer. 'The Lord stood at my side and put strength into me,' wrote Paul. The New Testament is full of that thought . . . and the Christian Church was built on nothing else." Our task to-day is no less enormous and the fight is no slacker, so that still it is true that without Him we can do nothing.

The third indispensable is the motive of love. "Show me a teacher who does not love his boys," said Sir Wilfred Grenfell, "and you show me one who is of no use." That applies to preachers as well. Unless he has a love for his people the minister will find that their limitations, contrariness and cantankerousness will result in his becoming petulant, impatient with them and despairing of them. "Many waters cannot

quench love," and with love in his heart the minister will remain sympathetic, tender, confident that his labour shall not be in vain. St. Francis of Assisi left men in no shadow of doubt as to how he felt about them. "I, brother Francis, the least of your servants, pray and conjure you by that love which is God Himself, willing to throw myself at your feet and kiss them, to receive with humility and love these words of our Lord Jesus Christ, to lay them to heart and carry them out in deed." All the ministries of the Church are that men may receive the word of the Lord and carry it out in deed, and if the motive of love to Christ and love to men be absent there is no hope of success.

III.

As the function of the Church is two-fold, so also is the work of the ministry. In the first instance it is "for the perfecting of the saints . . . unto the building up of the body of Christ, till we all attain . . . unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." To that end, says Paul, were apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers given. The Baptist minister is to be all these—and more—in one! *He must be the prophet.* Dr. Campbell Morgan says that the burden of the Christian prophet is that of the word of God, embodied in the Word Incarnate, the Son in whom God has spoken to all men. There are those who say that Browning overstated the case when he said:

". . . . the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
Accepted by the reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth, and out of it":

But we believe that there is no problem burdening the hearts and minds of men to-day, but that Christ can solve it. Men are desperately anxious for the solving word, the word that will solve the problems of social and international strife, of labour and politics. We have that word in Christ, and we fail unless, as ministers of the word, we utter it with all the authority of God.

The minister must also be the teacher, leading the flock into green pastures and beside still waters. The food upon which the soul must feed if it would live, is the word of God, and the faithful minister will not leave the hungry sheep unfed. In addition to the Sunday School he will see to it that there is a Bible School, or Class, or Hour—call it what you will—for careful, systematic and intelligent study of the Scriptures. Of his teaching the minister must strive to be the example. Like Chaucer's Poor Parson we are first to do, and afterwards to teach.

"Christ's love and His apostles twelve
He taught, and first he followed it himself":

We ourselves are the message, and that message has no chance of success if the type be crooked or if the print be blurred.

The second aspect of the work of the ministry is "the care of the Church of God"—the organising and directing of her activities. The successful minister will work for a unified Church, with every organisation an integral part, not, as in too many cases, separate from the Church, with separate functions and loyalties. He will cultivate loyalty to the whole rather than to the part, and he himself will recognise that he is at least one of the links binding the parts into one whole. Then he will mobilise the resources of the unified Church, and direct them to the desired end. It has been estimated that only ten per cent. of Church members are workers. I hesitate to accept this estimate, but no one will deny that we have too many drones in our hives. The minister who seeks "to run the Church" himself is a failure. He should rather seek to develop the gifts, and to call forth the talents of the members that *they* might run the Church, subject to his oversight and guidance. There

is work for all, and if all could be got to work, the influence and power of the Church would be multiplied ten-fold. Here, too, the minister must be an example, and by his example constraining others to their duty. When St. Francis came to the Church at St. Vaneir he found it in need of repair, and, says Laurence Housman, "Since no other hands offered, he would do it himself . . . he did not mind looking a fool. The task was infinitely too much for one, but the more it overburdened him, the more he bore witness by his own insufficiency to the greatness of the need. So men were to see him day by day carrying stones to the rebuilding of the Church for which others had ceased to care. And every one who met him saw him doing, not grudgingly, or with complaint, but with a strange look of joy, tasks which he had not strength for, incumbent upon all. Very gently and humbly he shamed men with the brotherhood they wished to forget."

There are other characteristics of the successful minister which cannot be dealt with in the compass of a brief article. No mention has been made of pastoral visitation, without which, says Ruskin in *Sesame and Lilies*, bishops are no bishops. It is at least half the minister's work, and not the least important. It merits separate treatment. Contemplating what is involved in the exercise of a successful ministry one is compelled to cry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord." And if we are faithful He will equip us with His spirit, enabling us so to do and to be that we shall hear at last His "Well done, good and faithful servant"—the final, indisputable sign of success.

WILLIAM DAVIES.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE MINISTRY OTHER THAN PREACHING.

THERE is no substitute for preaching; it is the appointed means whereby God speaks. Through this personal encounter God confronts men and offers Himself in all the lavish generosity of His grace. "To break before dying men the very word of life"—this is the joy and costly privilege of "preaching the word." But there are features of the ministerial office which lie beyond the realm of preaching and the cure of souls entrusted to our care, and it is of these I am invited to write.

No one can undertake this fully without reference to the doctrine of the Church and ministry, which regards as ministerial functions the tasks and duties undertaken in these other realms. This is not the place to state fully the theological reasons for the doctrine, but one or two simple comments can be made. First of all, though the Church is not of the world, it is most certainly in the world, and the ministry of the word bears the same character. This means that tasks can be, and must be, performed by ministers which are not in themselves avowedly religious, and yet which have meaning only within the context of religious faith. Secondly, to be ordained to the ministry of the word carries with it a responsibility for the whole Catholic Church, and the fulfilment of this may take one into spheres which lie outside the local congregation "assembled together to pray, prophesy, break bread, and administer in all holy ordinances." But the ministry so exercised is, nevertheless, a true ministry of the Church and must be recognised as such. This is obvious if one considers college principals and tutors, chaplains to the Forces and factories, ministerial members of the administrative staff of the Baptist Union and the Baptist Missionary Society. Are all these ministers in the true sense, or have they ceased to exercise a proper ministerial function in virtue of their severance from the immediate responsibility for the local church?

Three spheres at least are open to most ministers who have had a fairly extensive and thorough college training—the educational, the social, and the international—and from my own experience I should advocate the exercise of as full a ministry as possible within them. In speaking of the educational, I have in mind experiments in evening classes, either with members of one's own church or with members of several churches in the district. In Merthyr Tydfil, for example, we had three courses of lectures, covering three winters, with an average of 26 lectures per session, on the religions of the world, the Bible, the doctrines of the Christian faith. This was primarily for men, some of whom owned, others of whom disowned church allegiance, and so successful was the class that we were invited to run it under the aegis of the University Extension scheme. We refrained from doing so lest the element of personal gain to the tutor should become a source of difficulty, and we continued as an educational fellowship. Two university dons, one from Wales and the other from Oxford, both commented on the alertness of the men, and it was certainly a revelation to the Oxford don to have a steeplejack question him most acutely about Pericles! In London, on the other hand, a course of lectures on the history of the Christian Church was arranged for one session, and the class consisted of representative young people from the neighbouring Anglican, Congregational, and Baptist churches. Although the first intention was informative, the class soon assumed such a character that it was clear that it had a religious as well as an educational significance for all members. The ministerial possibilities along educational lines are limitless, and I have found that if one undertakes a task within one's competence, whether it be sharing in a group discussion, speaking to a senior class of boys or girls in a school, or addressing a number of wounded men in an Army hospital, an unpredictable opportunity to witness to one's faith invariably presents itself.

I can best illustrate what I mean by ministerial activity within the social sphere by referring to some experiments in which I shared. The undertaking was of a two-fold character, and it had to do with the formation of two clubs, one in connection with the church itself, and the other in association with the local ministers and clergy on behalf of the unemployed. The church club was initially for men (I did not have the necessary women's leadership to undertake any work among girls), and was recreational and educational. Local doctors, educationalists, inspectors, ministers—all these came along to lecture on various topics like medicine, local government, education, psychology, denominational loyalties, and they all provided a tremendous stimulus to the fellowship of our church. Later we were able to have a joint club for a younger age group, and we had as many as a hundred young persons to our Tuesday club. It was essentially recreational, but on three occasions in the year the majority of the club members attended our church for a preaching service.

The second club was of a different kind. It was, if I may use the word without any bitterness or unkindness, a salvage club, and what we were trying to recover was human life which had been thrown on the economic scrap-heap. It was a painful and oft-times disappointing task, but we continued it for three years. The material with which we worked was intractable and difficult, but I found men responding in the most incredible fashion to the warmth and fellowship of this new ministry. Hardly any of the men went anywhere near a place of worship, many of them had no decent clothes, and even when over £70 worth of boots and shoes was secured, the fringe only of material need was touched. The one claim I would make would be that the compassion of Christ was made known to these men, and is not this a "true ministry of the word"?

The ministry in the international sphere depends very largely on local conditions, but when I think of the number of foreign troops stationed

in our country, the refugees and other victims of suffering, I am amazed at the opportunities which are opened up for ministerial activity. There is no responsible minister who does not know something of the suffering of the Jews, to say nothing of others, and it would appear to me that anyone who seeks to assume his political responsibility with the same seriousness as he assumes his religious one, must be impressed, not by the absence of opportunity to minister in this realm, but by his own appalling impotence in the face of so desperate a need. Nevertheless, here lies a task awaiting to be fulfilled. The presence of over a million Americans in our country cannot but be a matter of profound importance for the future of Anglo-American relationships; the starving peoples of Europe, of whose agonies we can only be dimly aware, must extend our sympathy, as indeed they ought to increase our political realism; the Indian deadlock is an issue concerning which we ought to make ourselves as well informed as possible, because the missionary enterprise in India is most seriously involved. These are but three examples of the complex and bewildering problems confronting us all, and the future peace of the world depends on how seriously Christians carry the burden of political responsibility. This has been brought home to me through my experience with the Student Christian Movement. This is a movement which shares with over twenty other national movements within the fellowship of the World Student Christian Federation the task of claiming the university world for Christ. But the university world, especially that of the modern universities, is becoming more and more secular, and within it the Church exercises no recognised ministry and the university itself displays no religious concern. The religious need of students is tremendous; in ever-increasing numbers they are depending more and more for pastoral care and guidance upon the travelling secretaries of the S.C.M. This is a ministerial responsibility of the first order, particularly in view of the intense interest which students display in political issues, and one can only hope that more and more properly-equipped theological students may be set apart by the Church to minister in this difficult realm as "true ministers of the Church of Jesus Christ."

EMLYN DAVIES.
