

# THE FRATERNAL.

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## Politics in the Pulpit.

The relation of the pulpit to controversial politics becomes an acute question whenever cross divisions show themselves in the established parties. This was the case in 1886, when "Home Rule" divided the Liberal party; and more recently, in the days of the Boer war. A cross division is beginning to show itself to-day of more serious portent than either of the foregoing. The controversy between individualism and collectivism will become more exasperated than even the Irish question, and will be flagrant far into the future. Already the Social problem is thrusting us on a review of our pulpit duty. Our incursion into politics over the education laws seemed to be sanctified by its religious motive, and we ran little risk of offending our usual hearers. But the Social problem is far more complicated. As soon as we descend to details the trouble begins. If we denounce the housing conditions there are property owners listening to us. If we speak of wages we risk a reproof from the superior knowledge of the business man. At every step we may be trampling on the pet flower beds of the Gladstonian Liberal, and may seem to lend countenance to his new enemy—the Socialist. The risk is real enough to compel the question: "Ought I to keep clear of these thorny questions for the sake of my spiritual influence with men of various politics?" This question does not admit a simple answer. We are urged into the Social controversy not only by the pressure of the times and by our own sympathy with democracy, but in a special manner by the spirit of the Hebrew prophets and the Gospels. When the cry of the oppressed goes up the Christian minister cannot help listening. Few or none of our number have been able to keep silence. The Social problem weighs much heavier on the hearts of some than others; but I am sure they who have touched the subject lightest will find themselves brought back to it by public

events, and will be compelled to choose a side either for or against the new collectivism.

The first step for those who are seeking a clear road is to desist from vague generalities expressive of their sympathy with social reform. The question is, What social reform and by what means? Our practice in public speech makes it very easy for us to seem to say much when saying very little. But in the long run neither our hearers nor our own consciences will be satisfied with such painted fire. Our sincerity will compel us to pass from symptoms to causes of the social unrest. To do this it will not be enough to read the cold-blooded text-books of men like Mill, Fawcett, or Jevons. There is a prolific literature, warm from the heart of the people, which we must read if we are to understand the question we are handling.

The second thing to do is to throw cold water over some of our antipathies, and to block up resolutely the side issues which the newspapers would seduce us into. The reputed atheism of Robert Blatchford has nothing to do with the question. Our business is not to estimate the personnel of present day socialism, but to learn what socialism itself is in its essential principles and immediate proposals.

But this still leaves our main question unanswered. If we decide that the labour movement is fallacious and mischievous, are we to preach against it and help to build the wall higher between the church and the masses? If we are converted to Socialism, is its moral significance so tremendous that we must give our open support to it, and risk our own position and the peace of the churches? The latter course is quite conceivable. It might be an error of judgment, but its motive would be above suspicion. The true answer, I think, lies here. The pulpit belongs to no political party, but every moral question belongs to the pulpit. The questions we have to deal with as preachers are always particular questions. Our public duty arises when a specific question is to the front involving a clear battle of right and wrong. On such a subject we must not be silent, but it is our business to keep the question under the pure light of Christian ethics. Outside the church it may be tossed about in the scales of party tactics, but in

the church it has no place except as involving the kingdom of God.

It is in this way the noblest work of the church has been done. The politics of humanity she can never refuse. It was so William Knibb acted. It is humanity which to-day brings the churches into politics on the licensing question. And now new calls are sounding in the ears of the church. There are definite proposals going to the root of social inequalities on which we must pronounce. The tyranny of massed money, the hopeless disadvantage of the children of the poor, the waste in commercial competition and consequent low wages, the precariousness of employment, are questions wet with human tears, and belong to the followers of Christ as to no one else.

HARRY YOULDEN.

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### The Minister's Recreations.

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By the term recreation, we must be understood to mean all forms of pleasureable repair to the waste of physical and mental power which follow the exercise of a man's legitimate occupations. That may seem a somewhat forbidding definition for a small matter, but a man with a calling will need to have an honest idea of the spheres of work and play. He may suffer physically from disregard of the latter; and he will certainly suffer morally if he should treat the former lightly. We all know the contemptuous jest that Englishmen take their pleasures sadly. That is not a mortal offence so long as it does not mean that they take their work flippantly.

By recreation then we do not mean exercise taken to neutralise the effects of what is called a liberal diet. Nor do we mean measures for recovery from the effects of gross and long continued misuse of physical powers. We do mean the regular repair of waste, or, to use another symbol, the constant attempt to keep the bow in perfect condition by leaving it with slack string at proper times.

Many men can do without recreations for a whole life time and apparently never suffer, either in themselves or

their work. Many can do it for a long stretch of years and only come to repentance when nature begins her vengeance. It may be doubted whether, in any case, the man who does not "recreate" ever puts his best work into life.

A minister's recreations should be suitably chosen and well-timed. They have to free the mind from its accustomed strain as well as to give the body needful exercise. Hence for some men walking, although a fine exercise, is not a recreation. The muscles which keep all the organs of the body in proper condition need to have strength imparted to them by suitable use. The great question for many men then is this: when they have done an honest spell of toil, and have taken both the moderate quantity of sound food upon which a man does his best work, and the rest which the body needs, what are they to do in order to counteract the slow depletion of strength of nerve and physique which work entails?

The happy men in the country turn to their garden, and gardening to which a man goes with his heart in the work, is delightful and helpful to body and mind. But duty-gardening, to which a man goes as nimbly as the average boy to school, is a bore and a delusion from the point of view of health. To begin with, gardening is not physically comfortable unless it be regularly undertaken. An occasional morning of it means an encumbering stiffness, and very probably an unconquerable inclination to sleep. It may be doubted whether hard gardening is compatible with a full and efficient ministry. Nevertheless, as a sustained and regular hobby, occupying the mind of the man as well as his body, it would be foolish to decry the primitive toil of our race. But it must be remembered that it has failed in its purpose, so far as we are concerned, when it no longer leaves the mind free from its accustomed strain. It has the advantage of leaving the mind free for quiet and profitable meditation; but therein lies its risk as well as its charm.

To some of us the bench or lathe, or kindred apparatus, give both mental rest and bodily exercise; while they also develop the perceptive faculties, and keep the habit of observation and judgment alert. The greatest difficulty with both of these forms of recreation, is that the manse

has seldom a room where they can be properly pursued, and, as a consequence, the man who is a craftsman by instinct, has to burrow in some cellar, or fly to some attic, to find space for his hobby. This is much to be regretted, because it means exercise in a vitiated atmosphere, and that is worse than passiveness in the same circumstances. Still, it is much to be wished that many a minister might be a competent craftsman. Sheraton of old made good furniture and preached passable sermons for Baptist churches. He might, perhaps, have preached better sermons if he had made worse chairs; but we may fancy that he did not fret about the question of a call, and he was certainly apostolic in his position as preacher and craftsman.

To many desiring merely an intelligent hobby, photography has been very helpful. It gives relaxation to the mind and pleasure to all except those whom our German friends would call its "portraits-victims." But it is not a restful occupation; it is work if it be well done, and a good deal of it again is mostly done in a somewhat doubtful atmosphere.

Of sports pure and simple, it would be possible to say much. Most of the healthiest are quite unsuitable for a minister's purpose, inasmuch as they subject him to risks of injury which he cannot afford to take. Against the violent ones, too, the same charge lies as against heavy gardening—they are incompatible with the full use of a man's other and more important powers.

It is almost impossible to speak of a minister's recreations and not mention that one particular form of sport which has become so attractive to the men of our vocation. Frequently we hear and read comments on the "craze of golf." To this there is one reply: there are probably thousands of men to-day who are indebted to this new-fangled game, which Chalmers played a century ago, for a new lease of strength and health. It has come to them with all the charm of the spaciousness of the places where it is played, and the quietness of the conduct of the game. It is associated, as in the mind of the present writer, with the memory of returning vigour and fitness of body, with the added memory of beautiful surroundings of wooded slopes and fine stretches of level turf, seen in the

crisp air of spring or the haze of autumn days. For some it has done so much that the question for them now is not so much "Can I afford to play?" as "Can I afford not to?" For as soon as a man has done his work, with unstinting zeal and diligent application, he may know that in every hour spent upon the open spaces where the game of golf is played, he is finding training for hand, eye, and temper. Moreover, every moment he is acquiring physical capital for the high uses for his vocation. And not least, he may acquire, from his contact with other men, a valuable asset in a deeper knowledge of masculine human nature—a training in the exercise of Christian courtesy and fair play, and an opportunity for manly testimony in things of righteousness.

F. GOLDSMITH FRENCH.

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### The Mid-Week Service.

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From a further series of letters on this important topic, the following extracts will be of interest:—

The week-evening service is the one service with which I should be least disposed to experiment. You cannot greatly do so without changing what we have come to regard as its historic nature. It seems to me that it must be devotional and spiritual. Mere political reviews and expositions of current events are not fit *constant* themes for the week-night service as such. Although these subjects may draw bigger congregations, I question whether the augmentation in numbers is any compensation whatever for the loss of the old spiritual and devotional idea which we have taken to be embodied in these services. The aim of the week-evening service I take to be restfulness. It supplies "a quiet hour" amidst the mad rush and incessant toil of the week. A man comes out of his business worries and absorptions, jaded, spent, perhaps gloomy and disappointed. A woman comes from the crowd of anxieties that troop daily into and out of her household; perhaps there is some thorny irritation in her heart. I cannot imagine that the echoes of political strife and the clash of

human tongues are going to hearten and assure such people. In my humble judgment, they will go from what they desired to be God's House and heaven's gate, uncomposed and unblest. It is the sense of spiritual realities that such hearts need. Whilst, as a general thing, you will not get great numbers to these services, they come who most need help. I get about 80 people to my week-evening service. Sometimes a solo is introduced, but that is as big a change as I would be inclined to admit.

ANON.

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The week-evening service at St. Mary's is a prayer meeting. I attribute the strength of our church life to the fact that in past years, and even still, the most prominent position is given to the evening of prayer. The deacons have long made it a rule not to accept social or other engagements on the night when the prayer meeting is held, and this has had a salutary influence upon the church as a whole. We have a large attendance, though regretfully I admit, we do not get a proportionate attendance of men. I always give an address of ten to fifteen minutes' duration upon some aspect of church life, of social obligation, or of missionary enterprise. Having tried every method of conducting prayer meetings known to me, and finding advantages and disadvantages in each, I now adopt the method of calling upon brethren by name to pray. If the meeting is thrown entirely open, the results are often unpleasant, and occasionally even disastrous. We are not all constituted alike, and under such conditions the most unsuitable seem compelled to offer prayer, chiefly because they are made to feel uncomfortable if there is any pause. They have not yet grasped the truth: "*Be still*, and know that I am God." Communion with God is interpreted as man speaking to his Maker. But it also means God speaking to man. A church rich in the spirit of prayer is a church filled with the spirit of power. While we have many and varied methods of giving expression to our Christian life during the week, I feel convinced we are right in giving the foremost place to the prayer meeting.

J. GLYNN EDWARDS (St. Mary's, Norwich).

## Round the "Victory."

*An epitome of introductory work among sailors and marines at Portsmouth.*

By DAVID BARRON.

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No visitor to Portsmouth, possessed of the slenderest historical knowledge and moved by the most tepid feelings of patriotism, fails to seek the moorings of Nelson's old flag-ship. She lies in the harbour, which the stranger is informed is sufficiently capacious to contain the whole navy of England. Neither timidity nor infirmity compels her to hug the shore on the Gosport side. She is scarcely a "pensioner," for she is officially distinguished as the flagship of the Port Admiral. Functions grave and gay are still held on board; recalled regretfully by the delinquent who thinks of the last court-martial, and pleasantly by the foolish tourist who smiled at the brass plate upon the spot where Nelson fell.

To go "round the Victory" is not, in local parlance, to inspect the brave old battleship, but to travel the area comprising the jurisdiction of the port. Portsmouth, Portsea, Landport and Southsea, situated at the south-west point of the Island of Portsea, form, with Portsmouth Harbour and Gosport on the opposite shore, the seaport called Portsmouth. The harbour expands from an entrance narrower than the Thames at London Bridge into a spacious lake four miles long and two miles wide. To go "round the Victory" in the interests of the Baptist denomination means, conscientiously, a circular tour of over twenty miles!

It is now three years since my name appeared in the "Orders Book" as an accredited chaplain to Baptist sailors and marines. The accident of my pastoral connection with a church more conveniently situated than any other of our faith in Portsmouth for a naval parade service explains my nomination and appointment. I had no guidance from the Baptist Church House with regard to any special course of procedure. Mr. Shakespeare knows most things and many men; but he could not be expected to pose as an authority on battleships, or to read the cryptic mind of the naval official. He sent me his benison and commended me to the tender mercies of the Admiralty. Concern for the honour



of the denomination, and a prudent regard for the titled dignitaries with whom I had to deal, determined a series of cautious interrogations. No communication had reached me from Whitehall. Probably the silence was due to the bewildering significance of the word "Baptist." I have since discovered in stimulating conversations with distinguished officers, ignorant of the unhappy divisions of Christendom, that the term conveyed just nothing to their intelligence. Ultimately I wrote to Sir Evan MacGregor, Secretary to the Admiralty, who supplied me with the necessary passport to the Commander-in-Chief's presence. Here I must pay tribute to the fraternal kindness of the local Wesleyan chaplain, the Rev. W. L. Brimmell, who did more to lighten my darkness than any number of communications from Whitehall. Coached by him I found no further difficulty, and soon found it necessary to alter the hour of morning service on Sundays from eleven to ten o'clock. Jack dines at noon. He prefers a hot collation to a cold one. Allowing for the time occupied in mustering at a predetermined rendezvous, and in rowing from the jetty to the ships, the men must be dismissed from service quite by fifteen minutes post eleven. The attendance at this service varies from a dozen to sixty blue jackets, boy-artificers, and marines. It is difficult at present to state with precision how many Baptists there are in the Navy. Roughly I should say three hundred "declared" Baptists. Greater care is now being taken in registering the men and boys. Many sailors must still be unaware that provision is now made for the care of Baptists and Congregationalists, and so have become attached to the Wesleyan or Anglican Churches. It is always possible to find the wandered Baptist (if he be such by conviction), and it is not difficult to arrange that he "change his religion."

A curious and distressing feature of my investigations is the large number of Baptists I have found *in the naval prison*. But readers must remember that they are not all Baptists "inwardly" who are nominally identified with our church. In such cases the connection has usually been merely formal. It is none the less sad that the son of Baptist parents should know the degradation of a prison cell. This however is a department of my work as chaplain, in which I anticipate the most gratifying results.

The comparatively small proportion of men attending morning service is explained by two terms, "duty" and "leave." It may and does happen (so I am officially informed) that most of our men, otherwise certain to be present, are told off for particular engagements on board. Or the larger number may be found on a Saturday evening hastening to the railway station *en route* for some quiet village with permission to spend Sunday among their kinsfolk.

While the "St. Vincent" training ship lay in Portsmouth Harbour I was able to conduct a Bible-class on board every Thursday evening. I exceedingly regret the removal of the lads to Harwich. It was an agreeable break in the monotonous respectability of a Baptist minister's existence to steam in a pinnace through wind and rain across the black waters of the harbour to the picturesque hulk, where the boys were singing hymns lustily until my arrival; to climb with unaccustomed daring the rope ladder flung carelessly by practised hands, to swing dizzily yet pleasantly—like a buccaneer boarding a prize—while feeling like a criminal depending from a noose, and finally to reach slippery decks with a sense of completed adventure thereafter to become a new creature in an old coat, young enough for "make-believe," and old and (I think) wise enough to begin a glad task with Christian discretion. I am hopeful however of forming a similar class among the bright faced lads of the "Nelson," where young artificers are trained for the engine-rooms of our terrible Dreadnoughts. I have been fortunate in securing the warm and capable co-operation of members of my church in this delightful work.

Visitation of the hospital at Haslar, the day school at Eastney, the ships during dinner-hour, and the prison as often as a Baptist is escorted there, complete the routine work to which I am now habituated. But there are other ways of forwarding the interests of the denomination and of serving the men. These latter are encouraged to visit the chaplain at his home, to write to him from abroad, to seek him in trouble. Now and then the last offices of faith and love must be recited over Jack's grave, a solemn and impressive duty never desired but gladly done.

Recently I have entered into friendly alliance with the Rev. E. W. Berry, of Gosport, who is appointed for

that side of the harbour. With time I am most sanguine that the work will increase sufficiently to warrant a special order of ministry to which men unfettered by pastoral charge may be called. It is much to be desired that a "home" should one day be established in Portsmouth for Baptist sailors. Meanwhile my colleague and I must work up the constituency.

Already a number of the men have entered heartily and serviceably into Christian work, and in a large institutional movement among the slum children of Portsea none is more welcome and none so loyal and self-denying as the light-hearted blue-jacket. I am accustomed to take some hundreds of the poorest and sickliest "bairns" in Portsmouth into the country every year. This is the work in which the "handy man" has proved of inestimable value. The children "all love Jack."

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THE PRAYER UNION AND OURSELVES.—From the very outset the B.M.F.U. has desired to co-operate with the Prayer Union. It seems now as though this desire might be satisfied. The remarks of Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., at Liverpool, and of the Editor of *Remembrancer* in its current issue encourage us to look hopefully in this direction. The Editor of the FRATERNAL, of course, is ready to do his part, but the matter really lies in the hands of the constituents of the two societies, and it is hoped that at our respective annual meetings, some happy solution of any difficulties that exist may be found.

THE SECRETARY'S NOTICE BOARD.—The secretary, on behalf of the committee, hereby gives notice of the following resolution, to be moved at the next annual meeting:—"That Clause (2) of the CONSTITUTION of the Fraternal Union be amended so that it reads as follows:—'CONSTITUENCY (i.) All whose names are included in the Baptist Union Ministers' List, or Probationers' List, shall be eligible for membership. (ii.) The Baptist Ministers' Fraternal Union shall have the right to become affiliated, and to appoint from amongst its membership two students of each of the colleges as delegates to meetings of the Union, the Students' Union subscribing one shilling for each of the delegates.'"

## FRATERNAL READING COURSES.

## 4.—Comparative Religion.

## ISLAM.

Like Mr. Phillips, I find it difficult to conduct this Reading Course, as I have the uneasy suspicion that perhaps no one is attending to what I write in *THE FRATERNAL*. Over 500 subscribers take in our Magazine, but not one, as yet, has let me know that he is reading Menzies' little book on the "History of Religion," or any other of the volumes that I named in my first paper; and as to any response to my request for essays on the relation between Christianity, Islam and Judaism, even the little bribe I offered has had no result. However, as in my capacity as editor I have been urging the leaders of other courses to take up their task again, I must not fail in this respect myself. Here are a few notes on Islam, the last of the religions dealt with in the section of our text-book set for our reading.

This religion should be keenly studied by British Christians. First, because so many millions of our fellow subjects profess it in Egypt, the Soudan, India, and Central Africa; and second, because it resists the progress of Christianity and itself makes such great advances that it may well be considered the most formidable rival to our faith in the world to-day. It is one of the three great monotheistic religions which have sprung from the same root. Out of Judaism has come both Christianity and Islam. Indeed, Mohammed himself found his best materials in building the new religion in the actual doctrines of the Jews and of the Christians. How was it that Mohammed, being acquainted with Christianity, failed to adopt it, and became its greatest scourge? As a young man, impressionable, imaginative, full of noble aspirations, he met with Christian people in his travels, and he studied their faith with an intense conviction that he was called to supersede it. The Christianity he knew was only capable of quickening him to the extent of stirring his criticism. This is a grave reflection upon the Christianity with which he met—a reflection which is crystallised by history in the state of things to-day when

we see the classic home of Christianity lost to our faith. Nearly all the cities and lands mentioned in the New Testament are now in the grip of Mohammedanism. When we see millions of civilised people to-day drifting away from Christianity, and expecting or even striving after some better faith, it is well that we should subject ourselves to a self-criticism of which the Syrian Christians were incapable.

The old idea that Mohammed was an imposter has long since been dead. But it is no good to look upon him as a mere colourless or innocent person. He was a prophet, though late in his career a prophet who had backslidden. A study of Mohammed's public life will show two periods. The first is the period of undoubted inspiration and divine guidance in which, in spite of trials and persecutions, Mohammed accomplished spiritual marvels, and lived so that we see him as the best type of prophet known since the great days of Hebrew prophecy. This period extends up to the year 622, when Mohammed was 52 years of age. During this period Mohammed laid the foundations of all that was good in his religion. He taught the worship of the one God and denounced idolatry. He laid down ethical doctrines far beyond the mind of his fellow-countrymen and the practice of his day. He was broad-minded and tolerant, and asserted that every man should be free to believe and practice whatever religion he would. But soon he fell from this high moral altitude and fled from Mecca to Medina. He threw aside his teaching about toleration; he taught that Judaism and Christianity were heresies; he relaxed the rigidity of his morality, and in 630 he returned to Mecca at the head of 10,000 men to found an empire. The second period now in progress was the period of apostasy from the revelation God had made to him, and constitutes one of the greatest tragedies in the spiritual history of the world. What might have been Mohammed's fate had he adhered to the vision and aspiration of his early days we cannot conjecture. His course of development, however, forms a vivid contrast with the course of the life of Jesus, who "set His face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem," and chose suffering rather than empire.

NEWTON H. MARSHALL.

## 2.—Baptist Church History.

### (3) GENERAL BAPTISTS TILL 1700.

English Baptists first appeared in print when John Smyth published his conviction that the Church of England was Antichrist, and that infant baptism was the mark or "character of the beast" foretold in the Revelation. As he died soon afterwards, leaving a long statement of doctrine published by a disciple, the leadership fell to Thomas Helwys, who defined his position as against the high Calvinists and the Mennonites, and led his little band to London. Here they soon renewed intercourse with their friends in Lincolnshire and Wilts, and with the Puritans of the midlands, so that soon there were Baptist churches in Lincoln, Salisbury, Tiverton, and Coventry. But the censorship of the press was so severe as Laud grew in power, that our glimpses of these people come from their letters to Amsterdam, or tracts found in hollow walls long after, or notices in the State papers of arrests, or the petulant anger of the Calvinist clergy. These show us that, during the dark days of James and Charles, Baptist conventicles persisted.

With the fall of Laud they sprung to sight and activity, and before long their enemies counted with horror no fewer than forty of these free-will churches, besides a newer sect evolved from the Calvinists, with whom we do not yet concern ourselves. Their evangelists were soon to be met everywhere within the area where the Parliamentary armies could shield them, and Baptist churches, upholding the general redemption of all men, sprang up around the five nuclei already named, while the Lollard district of Berks and the Anabaptist districts of Kent and Essex supplied soil ready prepared. By 1651, when the second civil war was over, thirty congregations in Lincoln, Leicester, Rutland, Warwick, Northants, Hunts, Oxon, and Beds, sent two delegates to meet and issue a statement of their faith and practice, the first united manifesto of the Connection. It is emphatic against the predestinarian doctrines, then so popular with the Puritans, and insists on the need for holy living; it stipulates for the immersion of believers as the mode of entering a church, for mutual aid in spiritual life and temporal needs, for the setting

apart of gifted brethren to evangelize and give pastoral care at the expense of the community, for arbitration within the brotherhood—not necessarily with the one church; it admits civil authority in civil matters. By what is asserted, and by what is not mentioned, it is evident that the influence of the Dutch Anabaptists had ceased, and that the movement was now naturalized to run an independent course.

It deserves notice that the general Baptists were intensely anti-clerical. Not a single case is to be found of a parish clergyman joining them, whilst in their ministers we recognise farmers, blacksmiths, soap-boilers, cornets of horse, sea-captains, postmasters, tailors, butchers, doctors, weavers, and other people honourably earning their own living, and probably not supposed by their neighbours to be ministers at all. Despite the "confession," this remained the practice, and passed over to the Friends, and to leaven the Methodists. By 1660, the habit of holding annual conferences was well established, and a more important confession was issued, which became standard; from its insistence on the foundations referred to in Hebrews vi. 1, the body was often termed "Six-principle Baptists." Whether from the Mennonites, or from the Presbyterians of Britain, the body was organised into associations, of which we know Lincoln, Northants, Essex, Kent, London, West; the associations again were subordinate to the General Assembly, whose minutes are extant from the latter part of the century, though before 1689 only a few records are preserved. Each church had an elder and several "ministers," or local preachers as we should call them; each association had a messenger, appointed for life with duties akin to those of a diocesan bishop, and he, as a rule, was the only paid officer; but there was no arch-messenger of the whole assembly. It will be noticed that these churches were not independent, and did not profess to be; they formed a connection. The brotherly feeling was strong, subscriptions were freely taken up for needy brethren in other parts, and marriage outside the connection was a grave offence, involving expulsion. If the evangelistic fervour of early days had lasted, the body would have become a force to reckon with in England.

The systematic persecutions of Clarendon prevented this, and when Charles offered toleration in 1672, we find them apparently extinct in Berks and Bucks, except near Amersham. Seventeen churches registered in Cambridge and Huntingdon, two dozen in Kent, sixteen in Leicester, twenty-nine in Lincoln and Notts, and nine in Northants and Warwick; the west country churches still existed, but were evidently depressed. All struggled on, and with the Toleration Act came forth to live in the light of day. Unhappily they did not start their messengers on a new career of evangelizing, while two elders did start some difficult questions on the natures of Christ, which remind us of the Hofmannite taint in the Anabaptists, as much as of the new Socinian speculations among the Calvinists.

In origin, doctrine, organization, and even in worship, these General Baptists were utterly different from the Particular Baptists. What has happened to them in the last two centuries will be our next theme, and provides ample scope for those who are ready to trace out obscure clues. Meantime, students are invited to send an essay on the scripturalness and the advisability of their method of their organization, extending, if desired, to a criticism of their practices of imposition of hands, anointing with oil, washing the feet, fasting. The theology of their palmy days can be studied in the "Confessions of Faith," published by the Hansard Knollys Society, or in Grantham's stately book on "Primitive Christianity." Their history has never been written properly; Adam Taylor in his first volume puts the perspective all wrong by treating them as the predecessors of the New Connection; Barclay was more sympathetic, though the valuable facts garnered in his "Inner History of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth," are narrated largely to point morals for the Society of Friends. Vedder has recently issued a new edition of his "Popular History," doubled in contents; but it is not likely to deal much with this neglected denomination, whose rise and decay alike are full of suggestiveness. [Whitgift's compilation as to the Anabaptists, referred to on page 77, was published 30 years before his death in 1604.]

W. T. WHITLEY.