

Theology on *the Web.org.uk*

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes.
Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit
or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the
copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the
ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the
links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbadshaw>

A table of contents for *The Fraternal / Baptist Ministers Journal* can
be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bmj-06.php

The Fraternal

SEPTEMBER, 1944

No. 55

EDITORIAL.

TO EVERY CHURCH A MINISTER.

THAT every Baptist Church should have the advantage of a whole-time ministry is at present an unattainable ideal. Even the Church of England, with its immense financial resources finds it necessary to unite its Parishes, while in our Denomination the shortage of ministers and the financial stringency make the grouping of churches increasingly necessary. If, however, it is impossible to secure for each church the services of a minister, it is surely possible, by mutual arrangement, to provide for every church some measure of ministerial oversight and service. We are not unmindful of the help afforded by lay preachers, both men and women, nor the many instances where a church has a lay pastor; such leadership will be needed in the future. Our present plea is, that in addition, every church should have the opportunity of the service of an accredited Baptist Minister. There are many instances where the guidance of a Moderator during a pastoral vacancy would greatly benefit the church. Such a course is recommended in the report of the Polity Commission, but there are scores, we had almost said hundreds of our smaller churches in town and village, where, as a regular thing, such experienced oversight is urgently needed.

In many villages our Baptist church is on the verge of collapse and it is hardly too much to say that this calamity could be averted by the wise counsel and practical help which ministerial oversight could render. There are churches in which this would not be welcomed. We know of one village church where the kindly offer of a minister in a nearby town, to give one day a week and an occasional Sunday, was refused. The younger people were enthusiastic to take advantage of the offer, but the octogenarian deacons in charge, would have none of it, and even refused to call a church meeting to consider the proposal. On the other hand, we know of another instance where an old-established church in a country district, situated within a few miles of three towns where there are three resident Baptist ministers, is unable to secure assistance from any one of them. These are probably extreme and exceptional cases and, generally speaking, the needed leadership would be welcomed by the church and readily afforded by the ministers if the necessary arrangements could be made. The short-term policy of the B.U. has reminded our people of the financial strain so long endured by many of our ministers, and to some extent has provided a remedy. The Polity Report has, in addition, visualised the urgent need of churches which cannot be provided with the services of a whole-time ministry. Is it not possible, nay, should it not be made possible, by the combined efforts of ministers and Association committees, to impress upon smaller and weaker churches the advantage of regular ministerial oversight and to place such service at the disposal of every congregation? It is hardly an exaggeration to repeat that, without such help, not a few of our village causes will be lost.

THE FRATERNAL TOWARDS A DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.

I.

THE greatest step in the organization of the church in the early days was from the inchoate organization of New Testament days to the time when the bishops came to be regarded as the church and a conference of bishops as the authoritative body. This came about partly through the action of the state, the emperors naturally dealing with the leaders in times of persecution and Constantine subordinating the church to his own scheme as is the wont of all dictators. The end of the development was the primacy of Rome and the absolute rule of the hierarchy, with orders, the theory of apostolic succession and so on to buttress the system.

At the Reformation this idea of the rule of the hierarchy persisted. Luther and Calvin only substituted their version of it for that of Rome. To this day almost all churches have a central authority whose findings are binding on all members. It was left for the Independents to break away from this position.

The Independents re-discovered the ordinary Christian. They insisted that the church consists of all its members. Therefore they, the members, must rule—under God of course. Here was the fountain spring of democracy in the modern world.

It is necessary to emphasize that this view gives a high place to the average Christian and that it is just this fact which constitutes its distinctiveness. It sees every man in Christ as a man in Christ. And it has a high doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the reality of divine grace. The catholic view inevitably tends to disparage the average Christian as against the official. In fact clericalism always tends toward dictatorship and that in the Baptist denomination as much as in any other. As I see it this is the essential principle for which we stand—all equal before God and the rule of the church closely connected with this equality in the realm of grace.

Now we seem to have reached a crisis. Our democracy in the church is breaking down. It can succeed only as most of the members face and discharge their responsibility. This many of them are not doing to-day. They tend to leave it all to the minister and some ministers would gladly have it so. I gather that many of our ministers are in fact impatient of the whole system and not willing to pay the price which the system certainly demands of the ministry. Hence there emerges a cry for a measure of central control, though frankness requires the statement that not all those who cry for it are themselves willing to be controlled.

Here then is the situation. Half the world is fighting for this very principle of democracy in secular affairs. Yet at this very time we in our church life are faced with a sort of internal crisis on this very issue. Are we to stick to our principles now in the church at a time when those very principles range us in line with the prevailing trend in secular affairs, or shall we abandon them and move in the opposite direction?

My personal view is that just as our fathers launched the idea of democracy into the world in the seventeenth century so it is our task in the twentieth century to show the world that democracy can work, and how.

For this we require a new faith in our form of church government on the part of the ministers themselves. We are the people who suffer most by its defects. We then are the people who, if we are willing, can do most to make it a success. Our authority in the ministry comes from Christ and the Gospel. But the point at which that authority turns into responsibility is in our relationship with our own local church. It is fatal to shirk the authority at that point. We ministers need to think it out again (1) in its relation to the world life, and (2) in its relation to the

essential principles of the gospel. Does this form of government express what the gospel implies? Does it preserve the true Christian values? We need perhaps to remind ourselves that our aim is not to rule people, but rather to help them to find, each his own true life in the fellowship of God. Not conformity, but Christianity is our goal. To train people in Christian responsibility and service is a greater thing than to achieve a perfect bee-hive community.

Then also we need to teach our people the principles of our church government and what it is we are after. In this we have failed. We have taken it for granted that they knew. And we have allowed the pressure of other ecclesiastical organizations to work on them without correction. Being different we can survive only by repeatedly re-asserting the principles that actuate us and the value that underlies our organization.

I need hardly say that this does not mean the isolation of the individual church or the evils of a false independency. It could, and ought to, mean the maximum of co-operation and brotherhood. But here again it is for the ministers to set the example. My experience in this regard is that where the minister leads, the people are ready to follow. We might perhaps do worse than look again at J. H. Shakespeare's idea—one Baptist church in each locality combining all the individual churches in the defined area. United service by a group might be the first step towards a more effective polity.

(Notes of Address delivered at B.M.F. Annual Meeting).

A. DAKIN.

TOWARDS A DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.

II

THE fundamental need of our churches is a rediscovery of the reality of the third clause of the Apostolic Benediction—"the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit." For "the love of God" which was manifested in "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" can be known and experienced only in "the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit"—the fellowship of believers with the Living God and with one another through Jesus Christ. But both in doctrine and in practice we have "put asunder" that which God hath joined together, namely being "in Christ" and being "in the community." We shall have no true family life and no true doctrine of the Church until these two are reconciled and made "one flesh."

In the New Testament to be "in Christ" and to be "in the Body" are simply two ways of saying the same thing. It is, of course, true that the two are not identical, for the one is the medium of the other. The Risen Saviour encounters men through that fellowship which is the Spirit's creation, and He can be met and known only there. As the report of the Church of Scotland puts it—"Men can find God and Christ only in finding one another, and they can find one another only in finding God and Christ." And so, as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized by one Spirit into one Body, and these two aspects are inseparable. The living stones are the temple of the Spirit of God because they are *built together* on the one foundation, which is Christ; the members of Christ's Body, participating in the common blood-stream of the Spirit, are thereby members one of another. Discipleship and Brotherhood are inseparable—nor does the one precede the other: rather they are the warp and the woof of the new garment of the Spirit.

But we are the victims of three centuries of individualism, and have become conformed to the Spirit of this evil age—indeed, so conformed that not merely our thought, but the very presuppositions of our thinking are individualistic. How hardly shall they that are the victims of

THE FRATERNAL

centuries of atomistic individualism enter into the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit! And so we have not entered, but have interpreted the Christian life in terms of Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, as an affair between God and my own soul. Of course, religion is a fellowship between God and my own soul, but if it is only, or even mainly that, then the Church is at the most secondary; it is an optional extra to an individual who can be a Christian, if he wishes, without it. The weakness of much modern Protestantism is that people have been told *so often* that religion is a matter between the individual and God, that they have come to believe it and to act on the belief. Canvass any street in any English town, and most people will assure you that they are Christians, although they have nothing to do with the fellowship of any Christian community. We have become the victims of our own individualistic distortion of the Apostolic gospel. This distortion appears in much of our preaching and literature, and makes impossible a true doctrine of the Church. I give an example from a publication issued by our own Union for the instruction of Candidates for Baptism. It is typical of what our young people are being taught to believe. After Christian discipleship has been presented, *almost* entirely in individualistic terms, we are told "Salvation is a personal matter between Christ and ourselves. It depends upon our spiritual relationship to Him, and not upon *any* external relationships of *any* kind." That statement is simply untrue. Of course Christian life is a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, but it is a personal relationship corporately mediated, and no one can be in right personal relationship with Christ without being at the same time in right relationship with the disciples of Christ. "For this is His commandment, that we should believe on the Name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another"—and that is *one* commandment. The truth is, of course, that the terms "personal" and "corporate" are correlatives—Christian personality apart from the Christian society is a non-existent abstraction, just as Christian society apart from Christian persons is an abstraction. It is not suggested that we should abandon our emphasis on the need for a personal committal to Jesus Christ, and emphasize instead the corporate nature of our Christian faith. On the contrary, we have stressed that they are simply two aspects of one and the same reality. As the Scottish report puts it—"We must correct the widespread notion that Christianity is merely an affair of the individual soul. It is not an affair merely of the individual precisely because it is an affair of personality, while only in community can the personality of the individual be realized. We must therefore teach men afresh that the blessing of the gospel cannot be enjoyed by the single individual in his singleness, but only in his incorporation into Christ's mystical body, the Holy Catholic Church."

Now because "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" is known only in "the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit," it is essential to belong to the new redeemed community, if one is to be a disciple. We must cease, therefore, to think of church membership as if it were something added to one, who was already a Christian apart from it. One is not a Christian first and then a member of the fellowship afterwards. That is another of the errors of the pamphlet previously quoted, in which we read—"Our first duty is to accept Christ as our personal Saviour, our next is to join the fellowship of those who believe in Him." But personal submission to Christ who confronts us in the redeemed community, is also the same act by which we enter the new community. One is not subsequent to the other, for the one cannot exist without the other. In baptism we are baptized into Christ Jesus and into the one Body. It is as impossible to be a Christian outside the fellowship as it is to be

a Christian outside Christ. As John Wesley was once reminded—"The New Testament knows nothing of solitary religion."

Our urgent need is not so much a doctrine of the Church, as the restoration of that which created the doctrine, community in the Holy Spirit. If we are to see that revival for which we all long, we must stretch out two hands—one to God in prayer, the other to our Christian brothers in fellowship and *agape*. To do the former without the latter will avail us nothing, for at Pentecost they not only continued steadfastly in prayer, but were "of one mind in one place." Three things are required of the ministry at the present time if true *koinonia* is to be restored:—

(i) Community in the Holy Spirit must be given a central place in our teaching if the individualistic distortion of the gospel is to be corrected. We must proclaim the truth that the object of Christ's redeeming work was the salvation of a people, and we must show that life in Christ and life in Christian community are inseparable. The speaker attended a Baptist church for about ten years in his early youth, and cannot recall ever having heard a single sermon or address on the Church. We must preach *koinonia*, for this is an essential part of the Apostolic faith, without which the grace of the Lord Jesus is offered to men in a vacuum.. The Apostolic letter which contains the glorious statement "we preach Christ Crucified" also contains a chapter on the Body of Christ, and a hymn in praise of *agape*. We must cease to define a Christian in purely individualistic terms, for "a Christian is a person who has met God in Christ and is obeying Him as Lord in the fellowship created by the Holy Spirit."

(ii) We must seek to express community in the Holy Spirit in our worship, for at present our congregations are, to some extent, collections of unrelated individuals listening to a ministerial monologue. The Pastor's true task is not to "conduct" the service, but to train the priesthood of believers to worship corporately. In this connection the *koinonia* meal should be restored, as the Reformers desired, to its central place as the main weekly act of worship of the whole fellowship. The Lord's Supper both expresses and builds up the *koinonia*. Our worship needs drastic reformation according to the word of God, if the priesthood of believers is to be anything more than a mere theory.

(iii) *Koinonia*, above all, must be expressed in common life. We should build up cells of fellowship in the homes of our people, or at their places of work: we should recover the house-churches of the Apostolic Age as part of the local church: we should encourage the formation of teams for common witness and work: ministers should work together as a team with a common discipline, attempting a common task: we should express *koinonia* in our economic life, and that is essential if we are to say anything to this present age: we should express *koinonia* in our polity, and take that as our watchword instead of the pagan word "independency."

I conclude with another sentence from the Church of Scotland's report—"The rising generation is hot in the quest of some form of corporate life." This is the world's hunger to-day, and the tragedy of much of our church life is this—we are offering for the satisfaction of that hunger the stone of individualism instead of the loaf of true community in Christ. Let us turn again and proclaim in our words, express in our worship, and embody in our living, the full glorious Apostolic gospel that it is God's good purpose to gather all things together into ONE in Christ.

Notes of address delivered by Stephen F. Winward at B.M.F. Annual Meeting.

S. F. WINWARD.

THE BAPTIST THEORY OF THE MINISTRY.

The Report of the B.U. Council calls attention to a discussion which threatens to become a controversy. The issue is thus stated. "On the one hand it is contended that men who are on the 'Accredited list' should be answerable to the Union rather than to their local congregations and should be sustained by a central fund making them independent in their prophetic ministry of local approval or disapproval. On the other hand, that only the call of a local church constitutes a minister, that his responsibility is, under God, to it, and that in this sacred relationship the Union has no right to interfere." Most of us feel that some *via media* is possible if the Denomination will have it so.

In "The Baptist View of the Church and Ministry" Dr. Dakin has come down uncompromisingly for the second view. He roundly declares that "There is no sense in which a man can claim to be a Baptist Minister who is not the head of a Baptist church." A Superintendent is a Superintendent, a College Principal is a College Principal, a Chaplain is a Chaplain—all honourable titles—but men holding such offices are not rightly described as Baptist Ministers. There is no such thing as "The Baptist Church." There are only Baptist Churches. It follows that no one can be a Minister of "The Baptist Church." He becomes a minister when called to be the minister of a particular church, and ceases to be a minister when he has no church.

This is an example of the "circular argument," but, perfect though it be, it works out inconsistently in practice. For example. On the "Voting Paper for the Baptist Union Council," on the "Ministerial" side of the 1944 list appeared the names of at least nine ministers who on this basis are not ministers at all!

Again, what do we suppose ourselves to mean by our Ordination Service? We agree that this service confers no peculiar ministerial grace, but that in it we recognize a grace already given and a call of Christ accepted. The gathered company gives assent to the fact that this man has been commissioned of God to the preaching and pastoral office. But what is to be the *sphere* of his ministry? Is it to be exercised in this local church only? If so, when he moves to another church, he will need to be ordained again. Let any man ask himself what were his experiences on the day of his ordination. He had been nurtured in one or more Baptist churches, trained in a Baptist College, introduced to this his first church through the offices of Superintendent or College Principal, and now all these Baptist influences are represented in the persons gathered about him, and these his people in this place who have been led to call him, conspire together solemnly to set him aside for the work of the Ministry—not only in this church, but to whatsoever place God may presently lead him. Here is a company of Baptists from many churches met together, surely in a *representative capacity*. They act for all Baptists, to whom this man may be led to minister. This service cannot be repeated. Like Baptism it is a "Once and for all" action, an outward sign of a Call of God to take an accepted place within the Body of Christ. In this case it is the place of a Baptist Minister.

If this is so, may we not regard the Accredited List as the list of those whose call to the ministry has been recognized equally by all the churches in membership with the Union? Dr. Dakin says "The Accredited List does not make a minister, nor does it pretend to." We agree. But does it not recognize that which has been accomplished by the Call of God ("It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us") and does it not define the sphere in which that ministry is free to operate? That sphere is all the churches of the Union.

But the issue is deeper than a mere question of organization. When

we consider the Church we find indeed a group of local fellowships each claiming the Presence of Christ. But we also find something much more than co-operative effort between the churches. They constitute the "Body of Christ." They are urged to consider that "By one Spirit they were baptized into one body." We find Paul claiming the right to exercise his ministry in every church. He writes concerning Titus "We have sent him whose praise is in all the churches, *and not that only*, but who was also chosen by the churches to travel with us. . . . If our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ."

The atomistic view of Dr. Dakin's book would close the door against any scheme of reunion. Even if the Universal Church came to accept our position on baptism, it is strange to reflect that, on this view, it would still be impossible to speak of "The Church." It would not be One Body, nor would the one Spirit distribute His gifts for the service of the one Body. The church would still be a group of units claiming absolute autonomy, and its pastors limited as to the sphere of their activity by the local group. It may be that we can find no clear system of church order in the N. T. The Presbyterians claim, with some reason, to possess the nearest approximation to any that may be discoverable. The Methodists say that their system was invented by John Wesley. Both claim to make some attempt to embody the principles of church life revealed in apostolic times. In the N. T. we do find certain great conceptions of unity which our Baptist polity fails to express in the ordering of its church life. We Baptists have much to learn from Paul—yes, and from Jesus Himself about that church which should be established on the confession of faith, and for which the Master prayed that it might be one.

If it be said that some such system as the Presbyterian, with its central Fund and national and local synods is undemocratic, the answer is that democracy can work successfully only by adopting the principle of delegated authority. It does so in every democratic state. Without it you would have chaos.

If it be said that according to "Baptist Principles" there can be no synod or consistory, then it would have to be declared that the council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) was an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the local churches.

There is something wrong with a system which may leave a dozen churches in one city without pastoral oversight, which permits a church to take years to make up its mind that at last it has found a man good enough for it. There is something wrong with a system which can neither meet the problem of the vast new housing estates nor of the country village, and which cannot secure the grouping of churches in many places where no other course is practicable. There is something wrong with a system which leaves our ministers in lonely isolation, and fails to make possible either the inspiration which comes from working in a team or the practical advantage of harnessing the varied gifts of several men to a common task in an area which forms a natural geographical unit. And there is something wrong with a system which seems to deny to men of real ability and spiritual power the opportunity to develop their gifts in a prosperous and well-attended church.

It seems illogical that we should plead in God's name for the "New Fund," and yet "on principle" reject the great conception of a central fund which would at once be more equitable, do away with the distinction between aided and unaided churches and ministries, and embody the conception of the Baptist ministry as a spiritual brotherhood. It seems strange to urge that all the disabilities of our present atomistic polity are a matter of Baptist principle while we claim that our faith is rooted

in the N. T. in which every metaphor used to describe the church is one of organic unity. And it is peculiar that we should declare a larger use of delegated authority to be undemocratic when every known democracy uses the machinery of delegated authority without which it would be impossible to order its affairs.

If it be urged that the Baptist Church is not a democracy, but a Christocracy—here is the ideal towards which our polity should tend. “That we grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ, from Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, . . . maketh increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.”

Is our polity the best for securing that end?

ERIC KNIGHT.

TOWARDS A DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.

III.

HUMANLY speaking, Baptist churches are accidentally distributed in any given country or countryside, they are not related together in any system of parishes. Some areas are without any organised Baptist community; in others, Baptist churches face each other across the same street. Such strategic planning as the Apostle Paul was responsible for in Asia Minor can be discerned in some areas, but, except in the attempt by the Associations, and by the Baptist Union in the Forward Movement, Baptists have not concerned themselves with covering particular districts. Because of this, Baptist churches have no necessary territorial basis. Their origin is usually obscure and spontaneous. They bear the marks of “the two or three gathered together,” whether as the result of an evangelistic effort, or by withdrawal from the membership of a mother church.

However thick upon the ground Baptist churches may be, they regard themselves as being in an ideal position when they are independent of one another. A church receiving aid from the Sustentation Fund, provided that it has not accepted such a dependent position either with complacency or as an economic necessity, is always glad to part with this measure of financial assistance, and to the measure of control which accompanies it. It belongs to its pride to be self-governing in its polity, and self-sufficient in its resources. Baptist churches desire to be independent in their choice of a minister, their arrangements for public worship, in their celebration of the ordinances and in the drawing up of doctrinal statements.

Such is the rather bleak doctrine generally proclaimed, but life rather than text-books gives a truer view, and it is interesting to note not only that this stark independency is modified in practice, but that the doctrine itself has deep and splendid potentialities demanding closer relationship between these otherwise atomistic Baptist independencies.

In what respect then is this doctrine of independency modified in practice? When does such a church turn to other like-minded churches for help? When is such help readily given and welcomed? The answer can be quickly given. It arises in connection with no less a matter than the call of a minister. A truly independent Baptist church if it really seeks to be true to its doctrines should surely follow the example of the church at Soham in its ordination of Andrew Fuller, and should call to its pastorate one of its own members. Only by so doing can it be true to its own cherished principles. But the general practice of Baptist churches is far otherwise and what almost always happens is, that the church seeking a minister looks everywhere except in the ranks of its own members. It turns to other churches and casts its eyes over their ministers. It reviews the roll of College students or invites the Super-

intendent to suggest names. It is sufficient, however, to point out that independent churches are not in the habit of fulfilling their own ministerial needs. Many such churches have never even sent one of their own members into the ministry, or have ever given a subscription to a theological college. Self-sufficient though they claim to be, in their search for a minister they look outwards to other communities, and expect their needs to be met from the outside. Such an attitude and practice, to say the least of it, is an abandonment of strict self-sufficiency at a most important point, for it is in the choice of a minister that a Baptist church particularly expresses its self-governing polity. To lose independency here is to lose it altogether. Surely the churches should face the logic of their own practice and bring their doctrines into line with their typical procedure. Ministers chosen from outside a particular community are not chosen from the void, nor when their pastorate is terminated should they disappear into it. There is quite evidently a pooling of ministerial supply. Surely it is not too much to ask that Baptist churches which are dependent upon such ministerial supply should not only be interested in the call of a minister but also in the emergence and training of ministerial candidates; the availability of men for their own and other pastorates; the financial and working conditions both of their own minister and of others, and of their future well-being. How pitiful a thing is our Baptist independency if a church's interest in a minister begins and ends with his pastorate among themselves. The Baptist Union should be given the full support of all its constituent churches in its effort to relate the ministry as a whole to the denomination as a whole. If sovereignty in respect of calling a minister is insisted upon, then surely, with equal logic, corporate responsibility in relation to the supply, status, and training of the ministry can be demanded.

Accepted Baptist theory is also being challenged in the realm of Christian action. We have seen that a local Baptist church is not *ipso facto* a territorial affair. It has no parish boundaries. Its genesis is of the spirit. Its membership is "gathered." But though it looks inwardly to the Christ in its midst, it looks outwardly with missionary purpose upon the surrounding community. It reads the needs of men in terms of the saving grace of Christ, and, because of this, no Baptist church can fail to be interested in the healing of diseased bodies, the enlightenment of closed and superstitious minds, the building of better homes, the creation of conditions of industry more nearly related to the laws of God, the banishment of war and all other sins against human brotherhood. Baptists are always stripped for action. It was no accident that William Carey was a Baptist. But the Baptists of these war-years are disturbed at their comparative ineffectiveness. With a mighty Gospel demanding to be preached; with populations without any knowledge of Christ; with men's minds open to new (or old) ideas; with an agony filling the hearts of men, Baptists are in danger of facing these titanic opportunities in local units, limited in range, resources, and personnel. Bold planning is denied to the Baptist Union, because churches refuse to delegate the necessary powers. Baptist warfare on the home front is guerilla warfare. There can be no national campaign until the Union is given the necessary personnel. Arrangements for Baptist chaplaincy service are a pointer in the right direction, and this same lead should well be followed in respect of factory chaplains and other special services. There is a ministerial vocation, as Dr. Dakin points out, which finds its sphere in the local church. Surely there is equally a ministerial vocation which finds its sphere in the service of the churches as a whole. Piecemeal adventures for the Kingdom are heroic and demand independent action and solitary courage. But an attack on the whole front makes further and additional demands. Co-operation and pooling are vitally needed. How tragic it would be if, by its proud adherence to local independency, the denomination were to

turn a deaf ear to national (and international) opportunities: if in the coils of its own strictest theory, it were tied hand and foot in the very hour when the trumpet for action sounded. Independency which is a denial of common responsibility for common action is an offence and a stumbling block!

It was suggested earlier that the doctrine of independency itself might yield deeper secrets on further investigation. The principle of independency bases itself on the spiritual fact of the "gathered" church. From the side of polity, this means that these gathered communities are democratic, that every member possesses a voice in the government of the church. But however significant may be the inner spiritual life of such a "gathered" community, there is another question which Baptists have never squarely faced. It is also a question which the democracies of the world, have never adequately handled. The question is this. Granted that Great Britain, U.S.A., and France are democracies in their internal administration, how are they to live together one with another in their external relationship? What are the proper terms upon which these democracies should co-operate? How are they to modify their corporate sovereignties in the interests of a more comprehensive society? Surely here in sharp outline is the real problem of the peace. For Baptists, however, it is also a denominational problem, and, if they can solve it, the whole world will be in their debt. Granted that each local church is independent in polity, how ought such churches to be related ideally and practically together? The search for an answer turns inquiring minds back to the first constitutive principle of every local church. It is a "gathered" church, and the One who gathers it is Christ. Every such church is related in the same dependent fashion to the same Living Lord. Its polity strives to be the instrument of "the crown rights of the Redeemer." There is, therefore, no difficulty at all on the side of doctrine to prevent Baptists from developing the most highly developed system of corporate responsibility. "The crown rights of the Redeemer" can never be safeguarded by atomistic independency. Isolation from a neighbouring Baptist community (to speak only of our own denomination) is isolation from the Christ who gathers all such communities. Independency which makes a god of itself denies the Christ it seeks to serve. Baptists are challenged, therefore, by their own principles. They have stressed the separating factor too long and too exclusively. What is it that they have in common? Surely, the guidance of the Spirit, which is available to "every two or three" whenever and wherever gathered in the name of Jesus. Are we to believe that there is no common guidance for related communities? Surely, also, the churches share together the continuing presence of Christ Himself, present in each of the churches, and seeking that each should do its proper work, not in isolation but in happy co-operation. The Baptist doctrine of the Church rests upon the conception of the "gathered" Church. It has, therefore, at its heart a sociology, and its emphasis is corporate. It seeks a beloved and obedient community. The sovereignty which the churches claim is not their own; it is the sovereignty of the Redeemer. What is it, therefore, that He would have His churches do together? What is the nature of the common life to which He calls them? What cherished rights must they surrender in obedience to the Lord of all? The Baptist churches of the world need to discover in Christ not so much the justification of their separate independency but rather the basis of their developed and developing unity.

J. B. MIDDLEBROOK.

THE FINALITY OF THE GOSPEL.

IN one of her letters, Evelyn Underhill has this striking passage which is worth consideration—"It is more difficult than before, to meet on their own ground the people who have arrived at a sort of all-overish

theism and feel (as they say) that 'Hindus are often nearer God than Christians,' that 'there are other ways to Him,' and so forth. When they bring out all that stuff about Christ being 'a world-Teacher,' or the parallels with mystery-religions, or the high quality of Buddhist ethics, etc.—I just feel what shallow, boring, unreal twaddle it all is."

This from a writer like Evelyn Underhill should give us food for thought. She was widely read in the literature of religion, and she was accustomed to pierce beneath the outward form to the eternal reality. In fact, one of her acutest critics suggested that (like most writers on Mysticism) she was apt to treat the historical as of comparatively little importance; with the result that she sometimes gave the impression that sainthood could be produced equally well under any religion. But, as those who read her letters will see, she felt the need of a definite anchorage for her soul, and this she found in a sacramental Catholicism, which, with all its faults, rests ultimately on the historic manifestation of God in Christ, mediated for people to-day in the Church.

Is there not something in all this that we must constantly note? The tendency of liberal theology has been away from the dogmatic, and has been strengthened by the study of Comparative Religion. People are taught to see the good in every form of faith, and they often end up by thinking that the Gospel is only a higher variation of the rest.

But is it? The Gospel claims to be based on the unique fact that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself," in the Incarnation, Atonement, Resurrection, Ascension, the Heavenly Session at God's right hand—these are facts that stand entirely by themselves, and it is on these facts that our Christian Gospel rests. It follows that for us there is only one Gospel, and no other Gospel can be admitted to a place beside it. "There is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved," and there can be no compromise, no Least Common Multiple (or is it Greatest Common Measure?) which is arrived at by taking the best from everybody and calling the result the ideal religion. We must do our best to show that other religions in this respect or that do something to prepare the way of the Lord, but no one can ever truly evangelize who has any doubts about the absolute finality and sufficiency of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Many of us have a stop in our minds about Barth or Niebuhr (even if we understand them, which one man at any rate must confess he often does not). But Barth and Niebuhr and members of their school have done a real service in reminding us that the Gospel of Christ is unique, and there is a dogmatic that arises from it which we should never be ashamed to emphasize.

Paul had this whole problem to deal with long ago. It arose in different circumstances but it called for a definite reply. "Though we, or an angel from heaven" he said, "should preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you let him be anathema." Twice he repeats the phrase because he knew the temptation. We can be as liberal as we like once we have our foundation sure, but we can never tamper with the unique and final Saviourhood of Christ.

This does not mean that our preaching must be narrow and unsympathetic. No one can drink in the spirit of Jesus and be intolerant even while he stands firm in the truth he believes. But the spurious liberalism that thinks to gain a hearing by accommodating its message to meet the prejudices and innate hostilities of human nature is destined to failure. We must never forget that our sufficiency—and every one else's is in Christ.

There is a passage in von Hügel that is worth quoting in conclusion—

A Person came and lived, and loved, and died and rose again, and lives on by His power and His spirit forever within us and amongst us, so unspeakably rich and yet so simple, so sublime and yet so homely, so

divinely above us, precisely in being so divinely near us, that His character and teaching require, for an ever fuller and yet never complete understanding, the varying study, and different experiments and applications, embodiments and unrollings of all the races and civilizations, of all the individual and corporate, the simultaneous and successive experiences of the human race to the end of time.

HENRY COOK.

THE WAR AND THE PREACHER.

UNDER the title of "One Foot in Heaven" Hartzell Spence has written an interesting biography of his father, who was a Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Communion in America. The story includes the period of the Great War. We are told that Dr. Spence "had a purpose, planned long in advance, to prevent hysteria and to make sure that, in the chaos of war, God was not forgotten." There may be doubt as to the wisdom of the technique employed, but there can be no question as to the rightness of the end in view. At any rate the preacher was fully conscious that he and his hearers alike were living in abnormal conditions, and that it was incumbent upon him to adapt the presentation of his message to meet those conditions.

It is incredible that any minister should in these times continue to pursue the even tenor of his way, oblivious to the needs of men and women, living in a world at war. True, there is a sense in which our Message, like our Master, is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Yet methods of presentation, the choice of subjects, and relative emphasis upon aspects of doctrine and experience, cannot be divorced from the circumstances of our times. The fact of war impinges upon our ministry at every point. Pastoral work is more needful than ever, and infinitely more exacting. Like the Prophet we sit with a people sorely afflicted, and in direst need of the sympathetic ministrations of the Great Comforter. In our conduct of Public Worship we are mindful of the pressures to which our people are being subjected. Old hymns acquire new meanings. Eyes light up and hearts are strangely warmed in response to the reading of such lessons as the Twenty-Third Psalm, the Fortieth Chapter of Isaiah, and the Fourteenth Chapter of John. A prayer that the blessing of God may rest upon loved ones far away never leaves the people unmoved, and not infrequently calls forth a whispered "Amen" hardly to be distinguished from a sob.

Much might be written concerning all these aspects of our ministry in time of war; but it is with the difference which war makes in our preaching that we are now particularly concerned. If there should be reference to the writer's experience, such will not be misunderstood. He is simply a working minister thinking aloud, and seeking to share his insights and describe his methods in order that the reader may compare or contrast them with his own.

What difference has the war made to our preaching? How have we been influenced in the choice of subjects and in our treatment of them? Speaking for myself, I confess that for some weeks after the outbreak I dealt in almost every sermon with one or other aspect of the tragedy. On turning back to the sermons notes preached at this period, I find such titles as "The Crisis, the Christian, and the Church"; "The Church in War-Time"; "Unreported Casualties"; "The Dark Road"; and "How Far Can We Go With Christ?" The preacher was seeking to bring his people face to face with the grim realities of the situation, to indicate the nature of its demands, and to vindicate alike the relevance and the adequacy of the Christian Message. . . . Needless to say, such absorption in a tragic situation could not long be continued. There were still occasions on which war-themes would come forward into full view,

but in the main the war with all its works and ways had become just a background against which the message was set.

There can have been few, if any, congregations in which there did not appear a certain tension between the demands of the State and the commands of Christ. Many, convinced of the justice of our cause and desirous of fulfilling the duties of citizenship, felt constrained to give unqualified support to the war-effort. A not inconsiderable minority decided that war can never be reconciled with Christian principles. While many were sorely perplexed, and were disposed to "halt between two opinions." Here was a situation which the preacher ought not to ignore. His people were entitled to know just where he personally took his stand; but his own convictions, clearly stated and firmly held, must not be thrust in season and out of season upon the congregation. Far more important would be the clarification of the issues involved, and the position which the Church should adopt. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, in the course of a sermon, the writer put the matter before his people in this way: "As you are aware I have been a Pacifist for many years, and recent events have not led me to alter my convictions. Some of you share my views, but the majority do not. There are four conceivable attitudes to military service. Two of these attitudes are in my judgment fundamentally unchristian, and will, I trust, at no time be represented in this congregation. I refer to that attitude which glorifies war for its own sake, and on the other hand the attempt to evade military service for prudential considerations. The two remaining attitudes are different. There are men who, hating and loathing war, are none the less convinced that in the present situation they must support their country by taking up arms in what they believe to be a just cause; and there are other men who, hating evil things as passionately, are convinced that in no circumstances can participation in war represent the way in which Christian men should seek to deal with them. Here we are confronted with a deep-seated difference of conviction. Yet the two sides have this in common, that they earnestly desire the conquest of evil, and not least the discrediting of war itself as a means of deciding matters of controversy between the nations. They differ only as regards the means to be adopted. Now, suppose there were two scientists engaged in research with a view to discovering a cure for cancer. Each is convinced that the other is following a false scent; but, should either find his efforts crowned with success, the other would be among the first to offer his congratulations. Very well, if you discover a way of destroying evil and eliminating war through the waging of war in a just cause, I will most surely rejoice with you. Will you reciprocate, by undertaking to rejoice with those who persist in following the way of reconciliation, in the event of their efforts proving in the end to be the more effective? And there shall be no strife between us, but mutual affection and respect, for we are Brethren in Christ." The Church responded magnificently to the appeal, and the essential unity of the fellowship has been preserved; for all felt that a solemn covenant had been signed in the Presence of the Great Head of the Church Himself.

Not the least important of the effects of the war upon the preacher has been to produce a sense of urgency. In the presence of a world-wide eruption of demonic forces, it is not surprising that preaching has come to possess a deeper note. In such days, our message must be the embodiment of sheer reality. Anything merely trivial or pretty must be discarded. Almost unconsciously we have been driven from the circumference to the centre, and have found ourselves dealing with the great central and eternal verities of the Christian Faith. Just as life itself has been stripped of non-essentials, so preaching has tended to become more simple and direct and, if the word will not be misunderstood, more *primitive*.

War-time preaching tends towards brevity. Congregations are composed largely of tired folk who come to the House of God weary, after days (and nights) of toil and strain. They are in no condition for listening to lengthy disquisitions. What men require is to be put in touch with those Divine resources which are sufficient to supply their every need. Above all, they must be comforted. True comfort is not provided by pious platitudes. To comfort is to strengthen, to fortify; and to lead his people into the Presence of the God of Strength is the function of the preacher. Hard-driven men and women must be reminded that they are living in God's world, and that the ultimate responsibility for the world does not rest upon their shoulders but upon the shoulders of the Eternal God.

It is well that on occasion the preacher should seek to lift his hearers above the warring world with its strife and tumult into a realm where the peace of God reigns supreme. We must learn that, stern as the demands of the hour may be, none the less these things which fray our nerves and torture our hearts are transient. From them we must escape into a world of truth, fellowship and love, there to be cleansed and renewed. The preacher who knows his job can guide his people into that other and higher world, and by so doing will enable them on the morrow to face the demands of these anxious days with higher hope and braver heart. If we can prevent our people from being obsessed by the happenings of the day, if we can teach them how to sojourn amid the eternal realities, we shall make it possible for them to be the masters of the present instead of being its slaves.

It is part of the responsibility of the Christian Pulpit in these days to endeavour by God's Grace to keep men sane, by inoculating them against the more extravagant forms of war-time propaganda. Irresponsible and indiscriminate condemnation of our foes, uncritical acceptance of the policies of our allies, hysterical denunciation not only of evil things but of the doers of them—against such tendencies the Christian preacher must warn, and for them he must provide the antidote.

When over a period of many years a people has developed a settled and ordered way of life; when into the social and national structure there have been incorporated elements of idealism and righteousness and religious principle; and when that way of life is suddenly disrupted by the impact of gigantic powers of evil; then there appear two strong and apparently contradictory tendencies. On one hand men feel that here is something which denies the just government of the world. God has let them down. On the other hand men become acutely conscious of the force of evil in the life of the individual and the community, and decide that the disaster which has come upon them is of the nature of a Divine Judgment. To each of these attitudes the preacher must address himself. There has undoubtedly been much that is unworthy in the life of the world, and our own nation has not been guiltless. National and domestic policies have at many points been the sheer denial alike of the brotherhood of men and of the Fatherhood of God. There should be no problem with regard to the Theodicy when such conditions lead to disaster. The real problem would emerge were it possible for a world to continue to move smoothly and happily along such lines. At the same time the study of history teaches us that recovery is always possible. We think at once of the Hebrew Captivity in Babylon and of the collapse of European civilisation in face of the pressure of the barbarian hordes during the fifth and sixth centuries. In God's world no disaster is final and irretrievable. Moreover, such is the closely-woven texture of human life, that often the innocent and the guilty alike seem to be involved in a common ruin.

"Why," men ask, "does God not intervene in the war?" God cannot prevent men from acting in wicked ways without destroying their freedom;

and were God to order things so that men did not reap what they have sown, then we should inevitably be robbed of all sense of the deep significance of human conduct. In a word, God could intervene only by ceasing to be God, or by causing us to be no longer men, that is to say free and responsible beings. Yet, though God does not "intervene," He is not indifferent. Patiently He pursues His policy of education and redemption, seeking to woo us from our folly and our sin to the paths of righteousness and service. The agony of the Cross is not ended. If we are willing to share that agony—and so the material for many sermons on the Suffering Servant, the Christ, the Cross, the Christian and the Church—and then the Kingdom!

No Christian preacher is fulfilling his ministry unless he is seeking to prepare his hearers for the day of peace. Many problems indeed await us, and who would be so bold as confidently to predict the shape of things to come? Such matters will not be unduly emphasised. Rather should we urge our people to retain in time of peace that willingness to engage in disinterested service, that capacity for manifesting faithful comradeship, which have been born amidst the horrors of the war; and to devote to the constructive tasks of the future an energy and zeal not less than those which are at present harnessed to the juggernaut of destruction. Above all, we are entitled to insist that for a new and better world we must have new and better men; and that nowhere save in Christ can there be found that redemptive power which will avail to cleanse the heart of sin and selfishness, and to create a personality strong enough to take the stresses of a corporate life based on the principles of altruism and sacrificial service.

Preaching in time of war is a great experience, exacting to the Nth degree, making demands unendurably severe upon the mind and the heart of the preacher. Who, then, is sufficient for these things? Our sufficiency is of God, who has called us, and whose servants and spokesmen we are.

D. GORDON WYLIE.

WANTED!—A FAITH.

PROFESSOR Laski's recent book, "Faith, Reason and Civilisation" is among the most challenging and hopeful signs of our time. Laski is what is paradoxically called a Rationalist, but, as this book shows, he is a Rationalist with a difference. His thesis is that the urgent need of our generation is *a faith*—a faith that can impart direction and meaning to our common life. He declares that, "the most important of our war aims is the recovery of a faith by which we may live." It is the lack of such a faith that explains the calamity that has overtaken mankind. It is not merely that we are the victims of the evil designs of an evil man. He has his burden of responsibility but he is not a sufficient explanation of the haphazard drift to disaster that characterised the greater part of civilised humanity in the period between the wars. Civilisation depends on a common respect for common standards of conduct and these in turn on common beliefs concerning the meaning of human life. If these beliefs decay, anarchy must ensue. That is what has happened, and Hitler is the final flowering of this spiritual anarchy. Thus far Professor Laski is surely right, nor is he mistaken when he maintains that amid the confusion and turmoil there is a widespread longing for a faith that will give to this generation what the Christian Gospel gave to the ancient world—hope, confidence and spiritual reinforcement, a new vision of the high destiny of our troubled race. Men cannot exist without a religion. It may be good religion, or bad, but a religion they must have, which explains why, when theology goes out, ideology comes in. Where then are they to look for a faith that will meet their need, of spiritual integrity and of social peace?

(1) They may turn to nationalism as millions have already done. There is clearly a form of nationalism that is both intelligible and desirable. It would be a mean civilisation that consisted of a standardised humanity achieved through the suppression of every variety of national culture. Esperanto is at the best not the equivalent of Welsh in Wales or Italian in Italy; and we should be immeasurably poorer if we had to rely for our understanding of the great minds of the past on a "basic" Dante or Shakespeare. We need not fear, but may properly cherish, the nationalism that is rooted in the soil of our own land, as natural and innocent as the affection we feel for our own folk. Nationalism elevated to the level of religion is another thing. As Chesterton observed, the saying "My country right or wrong," cannot but disgust a decent man. It means that that is right which furthers the interests of my country, that that is wrong which conflicts with them. It is a creed that leads directly to racial suicide. For what is right for me is right for my neighbour, though his country be Germany or Japan, and he would be acting as wrongly in opposing his country as I in opposing mine. Nevertheless nationalism is an alluring creed to certain temperaments, making few demands either on the intellect or imagination and gratifying that lust for self-glory which is perhaps the commonest mark of the corruption of our nature. It is not likely that this country will ever be dotted with tiny temples adorned with a cigar-wreathed bust of Winston Churchill. Our folk have a rough humour that forbids that—and we may imagine Mr. Churchill's sardonic smile. But popular religion in Britain might easily be reduced to nationalistic sentiment, tinged on ceremonial occasions with a faint colouring of theistic phraseology—the faith of a Boy Scout—and in that event our last state would be worse than our first. Much will depend on what we permit to happen to youth in the post-war period. An aspect of the situation that we need to watch with special care.

(2) Those for whom nationalism is too narrow, may put their trust in scientific humanism. Theologians are given just now to asserting triumphantly that this is a discredited creed, but most university students and secondary school teachers still regard H. G. Wells, the arch-apostle of this creed, as their mentor and guide. Scientific humanism is the belief that the only method of ascertaining truth, of discovering the ends at which human beings should aim, and of devising means for the attainment of those ends is that of natural science. One need not dwell on the fallacies with which this philosophy is plentifully bestrewn, though it is important that they should be exposed by competent Christians and in popular language. When Messrs. Wells, Hogben and Waddington are forgotten mankind will discover Immanuel Kant and realise anew that the notion that truth consists only of what can be demonstrated in a laboratory, is merely adolescent prejudice. Scientific humanism in its starker form appeals only to a minority, but many who have never seriously considered its real significance have been deeply influenced by it. It is folly for Christian preachers to disregard the widespread feeling that the Christian Gospel has been finally discredited by the findings of modern science. There are thousands who will not listen to the Gospel until we have dealt with that stubborn prejudice.

(3) Scientific humanism is at its strongest, however, when combined with the most popular of the new religions, Marxian communism. This is a creed that can appeal to the poor and to those disturbed by the manifest inequalities of our civilisation, and to all impressed by the wonderful achievements of Soviet Russia. It finds confirmation in much that ordinary folk encounter in common experience. It offers the ordinary man what looks like a coherent interpretation of history, a convincing

philosophy of life, and can be set forth in a series of propositions clear-cut and definite:—

(a) Life is conditioned and history determined by the changing methods of producing material goods that discovery and invention periodically make possible. That is what is meant by the Materialistic Interpretation of History.

(b) History consists of a series of conflicts between those who feel that it is in their interest to hasten or to retard the movement of technological and social change. That is what is meant by the class-war.

(c) We have now reached a critical point in this long story of development and struggle. Capitalism has entered upon its inevitable decline. As larger and costlier instruments of production are devised, smaller concerns find that they cannot stand the pace. Capital, *in so far as Capital means power*, is being concentrated in fewer hands, and the independent manufacturer is superceded by the combine. The monopolists, bent on maintaining their profits, will restrict production, creating an artificial scarcity—until at last the many, realising what has happened, unite to destroy their power in a final decisive struggle. Then we shall later on enter a long interim period of consolidating their gains in the interests of common people. That is the point that has now been reached in Russia; what the Russians claim to have established is not communism, but state socialism, a necessary stage on the road to the goal. Under communism the state itself will wither and die. Beyond that—who can tell? The Communist thinks—the Golden Age.

It is not the Marxian contention that the only elements affecting the movement of history are the Economic. Morality and Religion have a part to play—but it is secondary. At any point in history they reflect the interests of the ruling class. They are devised by those who hold power, to maintain their authority over the people. Marxian communism is, as Lenin roundly declared, fundamentally Atheistic. Marxism is not only reaction to the obscurantism of the Russian Church, but it is Atheistic in its essential nature. To admit God, or even human freedom, would bring the whole structure to the ground. In theory, Communism is almost absurdly dogmatic and opportunist. It will twist and retreat on occasion, but always its concern is to find the best means of promoting its own chosen ends.

Communism is beset with many errors, but it is the most formidable rival facing the Christian faith in our time. It has enlisted the support of millions of eager souls, convinced of its truth, profoundly stirred by its effect on the Russian mind and life, satisfied that it explains their own experience. They are prepared to sacrifice for it with a devotion that only the great religions have thus far been able to arouse.

The most vital of all our problems is the need of a common faith by which to live.—Lenin was surely right when the end he sought was to build his heaven on earth and to write the precepts of his faith into the inner fabric of a universal humanity. Despite all its cost in blood, that dream has brought hope to one-sixth of the world.

That is Professor Laski's solution to the problem he has posed. And millions of keen folk think that it is the true solution; many of our own children among them. What is our answer to them?

H. INGLI JAMES.

SOME INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS.

THE war is entering on its sixth year. It should be of interest just now to take stock of the progress already made by the Governments of the United Nations towards the creation of an organisation that will, we trust, abolish war by something creative put into its place as an effective instrument for the settling of international disputes.

This subject is vast and difficult. Here, in so limited a space, it might, perhaps, be best to ask three questions of especial interest to us and attempt to answer them frankly, if briefly.

I. *Will there be a new "League of Nations" after the war?*

It may not be called a League of Nations. But is a new system of international co-operation actually in process? The short answer is "Yes," only the method of its creation differs radically from the method adopted last time.

Last time various inter-allied organisations were formed to assist in the prosecution of the war. When the war ended, they ended. Arrangements for co-operation in time of peace were left until there met in Paris, in 1919, an imposing Peace Conference. One of its Commissions, under the chairmanship of President Wilson, produced the Covenant of the League of Nations. That is, the whole came first—then the several parts, the international organisations which were developed in accordance with the Articles of the Covenant. Amongst them were the International Labour Office, Court of Justice, the Health Organisation of the League, etc.

This time the method is reversed. First, and during the war, have come a number of the parts; later, if all goes well, will be fashioned the whole. It is as if a number of planets had been created and set in motion while no agreement had, as yet, been reached about a co-ordinating body to exercise its sway over the international firmament.

There now exist, in addition to such sections of the old organisation which are still in being like the Labour Office, new international and official bodies, "league of nations" in themselves for specific purposes. These new organisations are "functional" inasmuch as each performs a definite task.

Let us glance at two or three of them.

(a) The first to be created was the *Organisation for Food and Agriculture*, to which 44 nations belong. On May 18th, 1943, at Hot Springs, in Virginia, the representatives of the Associated Nations met to start thinking of the world's food. Its ultimate aim is "adequate food for all people in all lands." The point to emphasise is the setting on foot, *during the war* of an organisation (including Soviet Russia, Great Britain and the U.S.A.) pledged to work together *after the war* towards a kind of "World Ministry of Agriculture."

(b) The nations in Occupied Europe will be faced with a more immediate menace than "freedom from want." It will be freedom from hunger! When the lights go up the situation in Europe will be appalling. To tackle it with promptitude and vigour 44 states through their representatives in Washington and Atlantic City in November, 1943, formed a new organisation already so well-known by its initials U.N.R.R.A.—*the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*. Its colossal job is to conquer famine and disease, and to help to bring about normal conditions in every liberated country.

(c) Yet a third illustration, in its way a still more remarkable development. It is an organisation to deal with the things of the mind

and of the spirit—an educational organisation. For the first time in history education has been officially recognised as an international concern! Here, again, only a start has been made, but when twenty states have ratified the draft Constitution drawn up by Government representatives in London in April, 1944, there will come into being—the *United Nations Organisation for Educational and Cultural Development*.

These bodies and other “functional” international organisations are not directly concerned with the main political problem—the problem of international security. Politically the capital freedom is “freedom from aggression.” Before these lines are printed the outline of the political body may have been filled in. We shall then know what is meant by the term “a general international organisation”—the term used in the Moscow Declaration of November, 1943, signed by Molotov, Cordell Hull, Eden and the Chinese Ambassador in Moscow.

Is this political body also to be “functional,” created for the one purpose of enforcing the peace, or is it meant to be the “over-all organisation” to which all the others will be attached? There must come, in some form or another, an International Authority which will command itself at once to the Kremlin and to the Senate of the United States of America, for next time no start can be made, as it was made last time, without the United States and without Soviet Russia.

II. Will the Churches be represented at the Peace Conference?

This question bristles with difficulties. It is improbable that there will be any grandiose Peace Conference as there was in Paris in 1919. There will certainly be no return to 1919 with its six months of “peace-making” before the passions of war had died down.

Then what is meant by “the Churches”? Although commendable work has been done during the war by the Protestant Churches of Great Britain and America on the kind of peace that would be acceptable to them, who is to decide how and by whom the Protestant Churches of the whole world would be represented at any official and political Conference?

The case of the Roman Church is different. It enjoys a central authority, the Vatican and an acknowledged representative, the Pope. Moreover, the Pope is the Pontiff not only of a world-wide Church, he is, since 1929, the head of a self-governing Vatican State. More than 40 nations (including Great Britain, now have diplomatic relations with the Holy See and President Roosevelt has a personal representative in Rome.

When the Vatican State was created in 1929 by Fascist Italy, the Holy See was debarred from membership of “international congresses” concerned with political affairs in the international field.

This is not the place to discuss the controversial issue of the Vatican in international politics, but Protestant bodies passing resolutions in favour of official representation of the Churches of Christendom at an official Peace Conference should think out what it would mean in practice were it conceivable that such a request would be granted.

III. What service can the Churches best render to guarantee a just and durable peace?

The answer can be put in a sentence. It is for the Churches in all lands to be able to proclaim, with power and conviction, to all their Governments, “Thus saith the Lord.”

GWIYLM DAVIES.

THE FRATERNAL ROME UP TO DATE

Safety on earth and a passport to Heaven for forty dollars! Such is the bargain offered by the Archbishop of Winnipeg in a letter issued from his house on March 1st, 1944, and addressed to his "Dear Catholic Parents." He asks—"What better guarantee for any boy exposed to all the hazards of war! A guarantee, should he be killed, that he will go at once to His Maker to be with Him for all Eternity. A guarantee, should it be God's will, that he will return to his dear mother and those who love him." The Archbishop laments what he terms a "stolid indifference" to his former appeal for dollars, and therefore goes on to ask—"Wouldn't it be better to take the best means you know, to ensure the boy's return," and adds that the forty dollars may be paid by instalments." As a final incentive he states that—"one Catholic mother in this Archdiocese enrolled her boy on February 20th, paying twenty dollars. He was killed on February 22nd. Do you not think that the mother's heart found some consolation in what she had done?"

Well; there it is, and we are back in the date of Tetzel. Rome is the same as ever. Comment is needless.
