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John Smyth and the Freedom of Faith

ALL Englishmen who know anything of their own history are proud of the Elizabethan age. The last of the Tudors was a great queen, in spite of her obvious littlenesses. She brought her country out from the shadow of Roman Catholic tyranny which had fallen upon it during the reign of her sister, and she saw the utter destruction of its most elaborate attempt to conquer England in the overthrow of the Armada. Her great sea-captains are noble and picturesque figures, and the story of Sir Richard Grenville's brave fight on the little *Revenge* for fifteen hours against fifteen battleships of Spain will live for ever. A larger world was opened up before men's eyes with the colonization of America, and the name borne by the state of Virginia dates this expansion (as begun under the Virgin Queen of England). But the greatest glory of the Elizabethan age is its literature, and especially its drama, in which that age is so brilliantly reflected. The freedom of the nation from foreign peril inspired a liberation of the imagination also; Shakespeare's "cloudless, boundless, human view" and exuberant vitality are but the expression through genius of the spirit of the age, exulting in its new freedom.

But to the Elizabethan age there also belongs the beginning of another movement of thought and life, which seems in strongest contrast with this sense of freedom and spacious expansiveness. To many people, the name "Puritan" still means a narrow and warped view of life, pedantically concerned with the mint and anise and cummin of a misconceived law, and blind to the larger humanities. It is quite true that the Puritans would have suppressed the drama then, as they did later, had it been possible. A Puritan sermon from St. Paul's Cross comments on the closing of the theatres because of the plague: "I like the policy well if it hold still, for a disease is but lodged or patched up that is not cured in the cause, and the cause of plagues is sin, if you look to it well: and the cause of sin are plays: therefore the cause of plagues are plays" (Thomas White, 1578). However much we may sympathise with the Puritan condemnation of the immorality associated with plays or their performance, we

may be glad that they have not robbed our English literature of an adornment which ranks next to the English Bible. We may do more. We may see in the Puritanism of the Elizabethan age, in spite of its direct challenge of much contemporary use of freedom, a parallel and related movement for the liberation of moral and religious life. History often teaches us to see the underlying unity of two irreconcilable opponents, to see that all unconsciously they were but working out different applications of the same truth. The Puritans, no less than the sea-captains and the dramatists, were working out a larger liberty, though their path led them through seeming constraints. The Puritans have helped to bring us into that civil and religious freedom which we take for granted to-day. Freedom means something more than large horizons and exuberant life on land and sea; it means the vision of the sky above as well as of the earth beneath, and the right to seek and find and worship Him of whose spiritual dwelling that sky is the emblem. There is a world within as well as a world without; there is a freedom of spirit as well as of body, a freedom of faith that seeks more than deliverance from the Spanish Armada, and the thumb-screws of the Inquisition.

John Smyth was an Elizabethan Puritan, the close contemporary of Shakespeare. The year in which Smyth matriculated at Christ's College, Cambridge (1586) was the year in which Shakespeare matriculated in the larger University of London life. The year of Smyth's death (1612) was that by which Shakespeare's literary productivity seems to have closed. It would be difficult to conceive a stronger contrast than that between the scholar-preacher, destined to be the pioneer of the Baptist faith, and the actor-dramatist, destined to be the world's greatest poet. What would they have made of one another, if they had met, and if the genial tolerance of Shakespeare had overcome the Puritan's aversion from him and his trade? We can imagine Smyth feeling bound to utter a protest against "all proud persons that minde nothing but the trimming of themselves, gay apparrell, and the credit of the world; all wanton persons that minde nothing but the pleasures of the flesh" (*A Patern of True Prayer*, p. 144). We can imagine Shakespeare listening lightly to Smyth's denunciation of the Established Church, and murmuring, "A plague on both your houses." Yet both were the children, in their different ways, of that new passion for freedom which characterised their age, and both of them, in their larger and smaller spheres of action, were to help in the creation of a new world.

The peculiar interest of Smyth's life (apart from his historical place as the first English Baptist from whom our

denominational history can be traced), is that his development can be so clearly seen from stage to stage. First, he is before us as a Puritan, remaining within the Anglican Church, and seeking to reform it from within. Then he is seen as a Separatist Puritan, leaving the Anglican Church to gather a separate group of true Christians. Then, though not in this country, he is led onward by his study of the New Testament to the conviction that such a Church should be constituted by Believers' Baptism. Finally he passes into the true Church Catholic by abjuring his own controversial spirit, and showing the serenity of a mind at peace with God and man. From each of these phases there remain books which he wrote, so that we may get to know him at first hand in each of them. They give us an epitome of the movements of the time as these affected some of the most earnest spirits, for we learn more of men in general by studying one life in particular. The stage on which he acts his part is narrow enough in visible shape—we see him at Lincoln as city chaplain, the involuntary centre of municipal jealousies and wire-pulling, at Gainsborough amongst a little group of like-minded seekers after liberty, and finally at Amsterdam, the pastor of a very small and by no means united Church. Yet a man's significance lies in the issues which find expression through him, rather than in the magnitude of their display. The existence to-day of more than ten millions of Baptists shows that their pioneer, John Smyth, was finding his way to something that really did matter, something that was going to count.

It is easy to see in such a development as this the sign of an unstable mind, carried away by every wind of doctrine, as did some of Smyth's contemporaries—it is easy, but it is wrong. There is a deeper consistency than that of formal agreement and rigorous uniformity of utterance. John Smyth was a man who obeyed the exhortation of Richard Hooker, the most gifted contemporary opponent of Puritanism—"If truth do any where manifest itself, seek not to smother it with glosing delusions, acknowledge the greatness thereof, and think it your best victory when the same doth prevail over you" (Preface to the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, IX. 1). At each stage, Smyth yielded himself captive to the truth he saw, conscious to an unusual degree that there was larger truth into which he might yet enter. This consciousness is one of the finest things in Smyth, and he has not received the credit due to him for it. All who know anything of the Puritan Fathers know the noble words of John Robinson, when at Leyden he bade farewell to those who were to cross the sea. "He charged us," says one who heard him, "to follow him no farther than he followed Christ. And if God should reveal

anything to us by any other instrument of His, to be as ready to receive it as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry; for he was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy Word." Those are words of true magnanimity, with the hall-mark of truth, the humble yet progressive spirit, clearly upon them. But John Robinson learnt that spirit from John Smyth, whose assistant he had been. We find it expressed already in the covenant of the Separatist group at Gainsborough, led by Smyth: "So many, therefore, of these professors as saw the evil of these things in these parts, and whose hearts the Lord had touched with heavenly zeal for His truth, they shook off this yoke of anti-Christian bondage and as the Lord's free people joined themselves, by a covenant of the Lord, into a Church estate in the fellowship of the Gospel *to walk in all his ways made known, or to be made known, according to their best endeavours whatsoever it should cost them.*" We ought to be proud that the pioneer of our freedom of faith himself conceived that freedom in such lofty terms as a freedom within the truth, not beyond it, and a knowledge of truth destined to grow with our growth. It is only a bastard Baptist who conceives truth to be static instead of dynamic, and such a Baptist is no true son of John Smyth, or indeed of the Apostle who said, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part."

I. The first phase of Smyth's pilgrimage into the freedom which faith demands in order to be itself was that of Puritanism. So far as the Elizabethan age is concerned, this means the continuation of the Protestant Reformation within the Anglican Church. The English Reformation of religion in the sixteenth century had followed a most peculiar course into a unique compromise, and I am not surprised that Lindsay, in his coloured map of the Reformation in Europe, has to find a peculiar colour—a sort of faded purple—to indicate the difference of the result from that in any other country. The peculiar character of the Reformation in this country was due to three principal causes: (1) the entanglement of anti-Papal feeling with the divorce-suit of Henry VIII, (2) the varying policy of four successive sovereigns, Henry, Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, (3) the absence of any dominating Reformer, comparable in influence or personality with Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, or Knox. The result of this peculiar development, with its comparative lack of doctrinal unity, is to be seen partly in the rise of various types of Nonconformity in the seventeenth century, each seeking to carry out Reformation principles to their more logical issue, and partly in the subsequent history and present character of the Anglican Church itself, marked as it is by wide elasticity of interpretation in respect of liturgy, ministry and sacraments. The compromising

character of the established religion is well typified in the clauses in the Communion Service dealing with the Elements. The First Prayer Book of Edward VI, following the ancient Catholic formula, said, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." But the Second Prayer Book of 1552, framed under the influence of continental reformers, read, "Take, and eat this, in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving." "Drink this, in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful." The object of the change was, of course, to avoid any doctrine of the Real Presence implied in calling the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ. What did the Elizabethan Prayer Book of 1559 say on such a vital issue of doctrine? It shrewdly, if not cynically, threw the two opposing statements together, leaving people to dwell on which they preferred, so that to-day the Anglican priest is ordered to say both of them in the administration of the elements. No doubt, it may be said that such a compromise was the only thing possible, since the majority of the people were not ready for any violent change. Life in the country parishes went on without nearly as much change as we are apt to think when we speak of "Reformation." I remember two brasses in the Coleshill Church (Warwickshire) to the memory of former vicars, one before and one after the "Reformation." The earlier is in priestly vestments and holds a chalice; the later is in cassock and gown and holds a Bible. The parson dressed a little differently; and religious life went on without real break of continuity.

This, then, was the position faced by more ardent reformers who came back from the Calvinistic influences of the continent, hopeful of great things under the Protestant Elizabeth. They objected to the fixed liturgy, the use of vestments and certain ceremonies, to the royal supremacy and the episcopal constitution, to the laxity of discipline and of Sabbath observance. In 1570, Thomas Cartwright was deprived of his Cambridge Professorship for attacking the constitution of the Anglican Church from the Puritan standpoint. Cambridge was a Puritan stronghold, and it was here that John Smyth must have imbibed his Puritanism, for his tutor was Francis Johnson, who ultimately became a Separatist. We must not, however, think of the Puritans as necessarily Separatists. They had no intention of leaving the Anglican Church, but wished to reform it from within in the Protestant interest. Their position may be compared with that of the Anglo-Catholics to-day, much as both parties might resent

the comparison. They were earnest and conscientious in their evasion of the law, and they were the most living and active people in the Church. It was not until the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 that Puritanism was seen to be incompatible with Anglicanism and the way prepared for its wider and more belligerent history in politics and religion, outside the Anglican Church.

John Smyth remained at Cambridge for twelve years (1586-1598), becoming a Fellow of Christ's College. He was appointed in 1600 as Lecturer, or, as we should say, Chaplain to the City of Lincoln. His preaching, as recorded in the two books of his that come from this period, shows him to have been a Puritan of the more moderate type, who did not, for example, object to a liturgy as such. Thus, he writes of his former Cambridge tutor Johnson, "There are some (whom we will account brethren, though they do not so reckon of us, seeing they have separated from us) which think it unlawful to use the Lord's Prayer as a set prayer, or any other prescribed form of prayer." This occurs in the book called *A Paterne of True Prayer*, still worth reading. Smyth's argument makes the Lord's Prayer the ground-plan or synopsis of all prayers: "there is no prayer in the holy Scripture but it may be referred unto this prayer: and all the prayers which have been, are, or shall be made, must be measured by this prayer, and so far forth are they commendable and acceptable as they are agreeable hereunto." Yet the mere repetition of this perfect form of words is valueless: "It is one thing to say the Lord's prayer, another thing to pray it." Wisely to build the house on this ground-plan is no light task, and it calls for earnest and diligent preparation: "It is our duty to strengthen our soul before prayer with premeditate matter: that so coming to pray and having our hearts filled with matter, we may better continue in prayer: for as a man that hath filled his belly with meat is better able to hold out at his labour than being fasting; even so, he that first replenisheth his soul with meditations of his own sins and wants, of God's judgements and blessings upon himself and others, shall be better furnished to continue longer in hearty and fervent prayer, than coming suddenly to pray without strengthening himself aforehand thereunto." In fact, Smyth links the sermon and the prayer together, in a way that dignifies both: "There is no difference betwixt preaching and praying but this: that preaching is directed to men from God, prayer is directed from man to God, both preaching and prayer is the word of God, or ought to be so." Smyth is, however, sadly conscious how far our actual praying falls below this ideal of public prayer; for example, through wandering thoughts, "as about our dinner, our money, our cattle, our pleasures, our suits and adversaries,

and a thousand of like quality: so that if our prayers were written as we conceive them, and our by-thoughts as parentheses interlaced, they would be so ridiculous as that we might very well be ashamed of them."

The reference to "our suits and adversaries" has the personal note in it, for Smyth lost his chaplaincy after two years of it, being displaced by the nominee of a rival party on the town council, and was involved in protracted legal proceedings; one of the aldermen felt that he had been preached at, and Smyth's party acted injudiciously. Smyth also had put himself in the wrong by not securing a licence from the bishop of Lincoln.

II. He reappears at Gainsborough in 1606, and this brings us to the second phase of his development in which he becomes a Separatist Puritan. He was not a Separatist at Lincoln. He tells us explicitly in the preface to the book from which I have been quoting, published in 1605: "I doe here ingenuously confesse that I am far from the opinion of them which separate from our Church concerning the set forme of prayer (although from some of them I received part of my education in Cambridge)."

Who were these Separatists who led the way for Smyth? He is here doubtless referring to his Cambridge tutor, Francis Johnson, who had been deprived of his Fellowship for Puritanism in 1590, but was so zealous against Separatism that he superintended the public burning of Separatist literature. Yet he kept a book from the pile to see their errors, read it, and was converted to Separatism by it (1592). There had been Separatist tendencies much earlier, at least from 1567 (Fitz), but Robert Browne of Norwich is justly regarded as the first to establish in England (1580) a self-governing community of the regenerate, in opposition to the Anglican unity of the parish. But, though Browne is thus the founder of Congregationalism as we know it to-day, after five years he abandoned the cause he had started, and returned to the Anglican Church. The book which converted Johnson was by Barrowe and Greenwood, two Cambridge men, who were hanged at Tyburn for publishing what were regarded as seditious books. Francis Johnson became a minister of the Separatist Church to which they had belonged in London, the Church which migrated to Amsterdam. Another Congregationalist martyr of the time was John Penry, hanged in 1593 in connection with the "Martin Marprelate" tracts.

John Smyth became a Separatist only after much thought and discussion with his Puritan friends, many of whom were within easy reach of Gainsborough. He meets the charge of vacillation made by Richard Bernard, one of these friends, by

saying, "I remayned doubting alwayes till I saw the truth after I once doubted, but during the tyme of my doubting which was 9. Months at the least I did many actions arguing, doubting, but that I ever fel back from any truth I saw, I praise God, I can with a good conscience deny it." The words are characteristic of the man; his progress towards the decisive step of Separatism was but slow, the first step being the rejection of that episcopal authority which was pressing on him and his Puritan fellows, the next, the recognition that the Anglican Church was corrupt in ministry and worship, though valid as a Church, the final step his conviction that the constitution of the established Church was itself wrong. External events doubtless helped to shape inner convictions, as they always do. The voluntary work he sought to do at Gainsborough within the Anglican community was officially checked; the failure of the Hampton Court Conference to redress Puritan grievances was followed by increased pressure on Puritans. On the other hand, when Smyth did commit himself to the formation of a Separatist Church, it was not on the "Presbyterian" lines which Puritans in general had desired, but on what we should call "Congregational." The basis of the Church was that voluntary covenant to which I have already referred, with its notable emphasis on the truth yet to be known, the truth into which these believers had not yet fully grown. How notable that feature was to be Smyth's whole career will illustrate.

Smyth was pastor of this Gainsborough Church for two years (1606-8), after which the legal pressure upon them, including the imprisonment of some of them, led to the migration of the group as a whole to Amsterdam, where Johnson's Separatist Church already was. John Robinson had been a friend and helper of Smyth, ministering to the closely connected group of Separatists at Scrooby, and he followed him to Amsterdam a little later, there forming a distinct church, and subsequently migrating to Leyden, the starting-point of the "Pilgrim Fathers." The reason for this general migration of English Separatists to Holland was that the Dutch used the liberty they had so bravely won from the tyranny of Spain in the previous century to give religious freedom to all within their borders.

There is an interesting account of the worship of Smyth's Separatist Church in Amsterdam in a letter written by one of his people to a relative in England.

We begin with a prayer, after read some one or two chapters of the Bible; give the sense thereof and confer upon the same; that done, we lay aside our books, and after a solemn prayer made by the first speaker he propoundeth

some text out of the Scripture and prophesieth out of the same by the space of one hour or three quarters of an hour. After him standeth up a second speaker and prophesieth out of the said text the like time and space, sometimes more, sometimes less. After him, the third, the fourth, the fifth, etc. as the time will give leave. Then the first speaker concludeth with prayer as he began with prayer, with an exhortation to contribution to the poor, which collection being made is also concluded with prayer. This morning exercise begins at eight of the clock and continueth unto twelve of the clock. The like course of exercise is observed in the afternoon from two of the clock unto five or six of the clock. Last of all the execution of the government of the Church is handled (*Hughe and Anne Bromehead*).

The reference to the laying aside of the Bible is significant. The rigorous conscientiousness and scrupulosity of Smyth is nowhere more marked than in his attitude to the formal reading of Scripture and the use of translations. Worship, as he told us in the account given of prayer, must be free from mere formality to be worship. The sermon, like prayer, was part of worship, but not the formal reading of the Scripture, though this might fitly precede worship. Smyth felt that formality quenched the Spirit, and that though the Hebrew and Greek originals were inspired, the translations were not, since none of them perfectly reproduced those originals. It must certainly seem to us a case of hair-splitting, to which that age as well as Smyth was prone, when we are told that it is lawful to read from the Bible before we begin to worship God, but unlawful to have the Bible as a help to the eye whilst we are actually prophesying, or that we may sing a psalm spiritually as part of worship, but not if we have the book before us. The *reductio ad absurdum* of this kind of distinction comes when Smyth gravely raises as a question to which he has not yet found the answer this knotty point :

Whither in a Psalme a man must be tyed to meter and Rithme, & tune, & whither voluntary be not as necessary in tune & wordes as in matter?

If Smyth's congregation sang psalms each to his own tune, the effect may have been spiritual, but it certainly was not harmonious. Nor was the insistence on such points as these harmonious in a more figurative sense, for it formed one of the points of contention with Johnson's Church, another being that Church's distinction of Pastors, Teachers and Rulers in the government of the Church. Perhaps some of the things that separate men to-day may seem as foolish to a later generation as do most of these points to us. There is something pathetic in the way Smyth and others rushed into vehement print in the

discussion of such matters which to us have become largely or wholly negligible.¹

III. But Smyth was now to raise another point which differentiated him from the Separatists of his time, and a point proved by subsequent history to be by no means a trivial one. From being a Separatist Puritan, he now became a Baptist Separatist Puritan, and the founder of Baptist Churches. He was not, indeed, the first to raise that issue, since the days when the Church in general had abandoned Believers' Baptism. In the eighth century a Christian sect of the Eastern Empire called the Paulicians practised it. In the twelfth century a movement led by Peter of Bruys was the first to revive it in the Western Church. In the sixteenth century there arose the great Anabaptist movement over the whole of Europe, about which there has been, and still is, so much misconception. It represents the continuation of certain evangelical movements of the Middle Ages, notably that of the Waldensians, in alliance with a deep sense of social and economic injustice. But though the men who belonged to it, in one shape or another, received the nickname of "Anabaptists," i.e., re-baptizers, the most notorious activities of the movement have very little to do with Baptists. The socialistic tendencies which issued in the Peasants' Revolt, and the apocalyptic tendencies which culminated in the excesses of the "Kingdom of God" at Muenster have nothing to do with the principle of Believers' Baptism. Only in Switzerland amongst friends of Zwingli does Anabaptism so-called form a link in the chain. The saner form of Anabaptism was organised by Menno Simons, and the Mennonite Church was represented in Holland, where it may possibly have influenced Smyth as well as certain individuals who raised the question before him.

The direct line of influence upon Smyth is, however, that of the New Testament. When, as a Separatist in England, he formed a church on the basis of a covenant, he was consciously following Old Testament precedents. The use of such a covenant was itself a virtual rejection of infant baptism, though Smyth did not at first see the logic of this. But in Amsterdam he came to see that he was illogical in rejecting the ordination of the Anglican Church whilst retaining, in form at least, her baptism. This led him to see that the New Testament offered

¹ We may compare the excessive conscientiousness of another Baptist pioneer of liberty, Roger Williams. In Massachusetts, Williams had taught that a man should not call on an unregenerate child to give thanks for his food. A Puritan opponent "proved to the satisfaction of everybody but the culprit that it was not lawful for Williams, with his opinions, to set food before his unregenerate child, since he did not allow an irreligious child to go through the form of giving thanks" (Eggleston, p. 289).

no warrant at all for infant baptism, and that his own church was not constituted on a New Testament basis. The admirable thing about Smyth is that he always had the courage of his convictions, as soon as they were formed, so he forthwith resolved to put things right, and persuaded his followers to act with him. They dissolved their Church and started afresh, regardless of the scorn or indignation of their Separatist friends. But how were they to begin? Smyth did not realise, apparently, that they might have sought baptism at the hands of that branch of the Mennonite Church which was in Amsterdam, a fact which implies that he was not consciously influenced by their teaching and practice. The only alternative was for one of them to baptise himself, and then baptise the others. Smyth did not shrink from this, though it provoked much ridicule and made him notorious. The most courteous account of their proceedings, in which the sense of humour is apparent, is that gathered at first hand by John Robinson :

Mr. Smyth, Mr. Helwisse, and the rest, having utterly dissolved and disclaimed their former church state and ministry, came together to erect a new church by baptism unto which they also ascribed so great virtue as that they would not so much as pray together before they had it. And after some straining of courtesy who should begin, and that of John Baptist (I have need to be baptised of thee and comest thou to me) misalleged, Matt. iii. 14, Mr. Smyth baptised first himself and next Mr. Helwisse and so the rest, making their particular confessions.

Thomas Helwys, who is mentioned in this satirical account, had been a close friend and helper of Smyth in England, and speaks of him in the warmest tones of affection to the very end: "All our love was too little for him and not worthy of him." But though Helwys had followed Smyth so far as Believers' Baptism in his pilgrimage of faith, Smyth was to put a strain on his loyalty too great for it. For, subsequently to this re-constitution of the Church, which gave Smyth his epithet of the se-Baptist, or self-baptiser, Smyth came to realise that he might have sought baptism from the Mennonites, and accordingly proposed that the Church should do this, as more in accordance with the New Testament. This was too much for Helwys and some of the rest, especially as doctrinal differences from the Mennonite Church were also involved. Accordingly, after embittered controversy, Helwys and others returned to London in 1612, to found the first Baptist Church in England. Thus was evil over-ruled for good. In the same year Smyth died, before his desire for union with the Mennonites was consummated.

IV. If it were not for history, and for our own insight as Baptists into the real significance of the issues raised by Believers' Baptism, we might easily join in the chorus of disapproval and scorn which was raised then by Smyth's humble loyalty to conscience. His controversial writings display the man in his faults and limitations, though these were by no means peculiar to himself. It gives us something of a shock to realise that the title of his Baptist book, *The Mark of the Beast*, refers to the infant baptism of the Anglican Church. His transition from one phase to another does at first sight and to a superficial observer give the impression of instability of purpose. Yet it is not so. In the discovery or the re-discovery of religious truth there must be the same exposure to error, the same trial experiments with negative results, the same re-tracing of steps till the clue is reached, as in the work of a scientific laboratory. It is the cost and yet the deep significance of such religious discovery that it involves the whole man, and that his mistakes cannot be decently shrouded behind locked doors, whilst the clear-cut result alone is exposed to the public eye. John Smyth was a great re-discoverer of New Testament truth, as the reward of his fidelity to conscience, and his passion for the freedom of faith. His return to Believers' Baptism was the reassertion of a vital principle in its most effective and its most consecrated form of expression. That vital principle was the true constitution of the Church, as "a company of the faithful, baptised after confession of faith and of sins, which is endowed with the power of Christ." The other Separatists also professed this, but obscured it then, as they do still, by their retention of the baptism of infants. Of such, Smyth's logic still holds, that "the Separation must either go back to England (i.e., to the Anglican Church) or go forward to true baptism." It is not a question of the precise mode of baptism, the quantity of water, as is sometimes said by those who are ignorant of the issue. As a matter of fact, Smyth's baptism was by affusion, and it was not for some thirty years that Baptist churches in England returned to the New Testament mode of immersion. The mode is quite secondary to the principle, and the principle is that of intelligent faith as the only adequate basis for the constitution of the Church.

If we have any lingering doubts about our right to be proud of our great pioneer, it can be removed by reading the last book Smyth wrote, in which he shows that he has passed into the true catholicity of the Christian man, the freedom of the Catholic Christian, no longer fettered and bound by his own prejudices. In this fine utterance, worthy to rank with the better-known confessions of Richard Baxter, Smyth humbly expresses his

regret for his censure of others, and his failure adequately to recognise the true Christianity of his many opponents. His entanglement in so many controversies has prevented him from seeing how large an extent of common ground he occupied with them. He is conscious of having put too great an emphasis on outward things, instead of on the inner brotherhood of all true Christians, in spite of their external differences. He has been wrong, in so far as he has contended for outward things and broken the rules of love and charity. But he has the rights of one who has kept his independence, for he has been chargeable to no man (as a matter of fact, he made his living as a physician, whilst ministering to the Church). He is quite aware of the impression made upon others by his own changes of conviction, but his answer is ready, and is adequate: "I have in all my writings hitherto, received instruction of others, and professed my readiness to be taught by others, and therefore have I so oftentimes been accused of inconstancy: well, let them think of me as they please; I profess I have changed, and shall be ready still to change, for the better." There rings out the old principle of the Gainsborough covenant, which it was to cost Smyth so much searching of heart, and so much obloquy, faithfully to retain: "to walk in all His ways made known, or to be made known." The spirit of peace breathes through these pages, without any abandonment of principle, and peace, true peace, within, is the rarest of all the fruit of the Spirit. That peace of God guards John Smyth's death-bed, and is uttered in his last recorded words: "The Lord hath holpen me; the Lord hath holpen me. . . . I praise the Lord, He hath now holpen me, and hath taken away my sins." We shall not think, if we read the story, that Mandell Creighton's words about Smyth are any exaggeration, words which honour the broad-minded sympathy of an Anglican scholar as much as they do John Smyth: "None of the English Separatists had a finer mind or a more beautiful soul." On the Sunday when I worshipped in that Amsterdam Church in which John Smyth was buried, the text of the sermon, by a singular appropriateness, was, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The deepest sense of that rest is not the sleep of death after life's fitful fever, or even simply the peace of life beyond this world (as in the Epistle to the Hebrews), but the peace of heart which is its present earnest, the peace of a service which is perfect freedom.

The successors of Smyth have claimed a foremost place in the liberation of the world from outward constraints and tyrannies, and in winning a freedom *for* faith. Let them learn of him the lesson he teaches so well, that true freedom of faith is always progressive, always criticising its own assumptions and

prejudices, always seeking more light. There is a tyranny of thought within as well as of monarch without. There are fetters of custom as well as of the dungeon. It may be that we have not yet fully occupied the territory that John Smyth re-discovered for us, and that, even as Baptists, there is a baptism of the Spirit which the New Testament has yet to teach us, and a larger meaning in our own testimony than we have yet realised. We shall learn it only if we live, like John Smyth, with our minds to the light, ever striving to enter into more and more knowledge of the truth which makes men free.

H. WHEELER ROBINSON.

Our Inheritance in Faith and Practice.

A Paper read by Bernard L. Manning, M.A., Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, before a Joint Assembly of the Hertfordshire Baptist Association and the Hertfordshire Congregational Union in their Jubilee Year (1878-1928) on Thursday, October 18th, 1928.

WE meet to celebrate jubilee and to remember our inheritance. We who meet are Baptists and Congregationalists; but, as before you had a Baptist and a Congregational Union in Hertfordshire, you had, I believe, a Union of Christians, I remind you that before we are Baptists and Congregationalists, we are Christians. I am to speak most of our peculiar inheritance as Baptists and Congregationalists, but before I do that let me assert our claim to the whole inheritance of apostolic, catholic, and evangelical Christianity. You may have observed that when a Unitarian minister of a Midland town recently joined the Established Church he expressed the opinion, if we may believe the newspapers, that the generality of Non-conformists would do well to follow him because there is in Anglicanism more fully than in any other section of the Church, the manifold inheritance of historic Christianity. I begin by repelling with violence and indignation the reflexion upon orthodox Dissenters contained in that remark. It is no business of yours and mine to ascertain nicely the relative merits of Unitarianism and the several schools of Anglicanism; but before anyone outside our communion offers us advice about the places in which we shall find a fuller inheritance of historical Christianity, let him explore for himself the inheritance that is ours.

I say temperately and emphatically for myself, and I hope for you, that I am not in the least disposed to receive advice about a fuller content of historical Christianity than we know from either Unitarians or Anglicans—no, nor even from those who occupy both positions. If asked, I am willing to suggest that from such a tradition as yours the Anglican may learn something more than he appears to know about the Crown Rights of the Head of the Church; and the Unitarian more than he appears to know of the faith once delivered to the saints. I say this, not from peevishness, but to remind you that the fulness of the inheritance of the faith is yours. Whatever faith or hope or love, whatever grace or glory or power, God has poured upon His Church by the Word and the Sacraments, by the sacred Ministry,

by the order and discipline of the Divine Society is yours where you stand. With St. Ignatius, you confess, "Our Charter is Jesus Christ: our infallible Charter is His Cross, His Death and His Passion, and Faith through Him." You are come in this year of jubilee to no inferior mount of an invalid or irregular covenant. "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."

This said about our common inheritance with all saints, I will suggest three points in faith and two in practice where our fathers received a peculiarly rich inheritance;

First, we have received, though it is hard to give it a name, an inheritance of intensity. A mark of Congregationalists and Baptists in the past has been a certain desperate concern about sacred things. They were not content with the usual ordinary decencies of religion. Like the men of Athens they were "too religious." The special sort of obloquy they suffered, the taunts of religiosity, fanaticism, otherworldliness were all aimed at their excess in what many of their critics believed in itself and in moderation to be no bad thing. I will call three witnesses: a great writer, a rather great writer, and a rather small writer. How does the great Gibbon sneer at us? "I will not, like the fanatics of the last age, attempt to define the moment of grace." *Fanatics*: you recognise your fathers. That rather great writer, Thomas Hardy, more kindly notes the same quality in *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

"I believe ye be a chapel-member, Joseph," says the inn-keeper. "That I do."

"Oh, no, no. I don't go so far as that."

"For my part, I'm staunch Church of England" . . .

"Chapel-folk be more hand-in-glove with them above than we," said Joseph thoughtfully.

"Yes," said Coggan, "we know very well that if anybody do go to heaven, they will. They've worked hard for it, and they deserve to have it, such as 'tis. I bain't such a fool as to pretend that we who stick to the Church have the same chance as they, because we know we have not." And that rather small writer, Mr. Arnold Bennett, until his writings began to move in a world so fashionable as not to know what a Dissenter is, bore wearisome testimony in book after book to this same quality: how the Dissenter overdoes his nasty religion.

And here let me administer to you a little comfort. Amid all the distressing phenomena of our times and the defects in

our Churches which our rather unmanly self-consciousness constantly drags to publicity, there is good evidence that our churches have not lost this note of intensity. We still pass on to other Churches, as we have always passed on, no inconsiderable number of persons who leave us (if the truth be told) because they want a less intense, less wearing, easier religion. Some of course leave for better reasons, but many (you know it) for this. They go where the benefits of religion may be had with less strain in conditions more decent and comfortable. It is easy at first sight to regret that with the removal of our legal disabilities and the blurring of social distinctions the old stigma on Dissent seemed but to come out more plainly, that whilst the parish church and the golf links are both socially sound on Sunday morning, Ebenezer and Sion are still not only not quite nice, but quite distinctly the wrong thing. But such regret is mistaken. We may rejoice that this drift from Dissent continues. It is evidence that we have not lost the old character of intensity. It is a different kind of intensity, but it is there. The men that do not lap with their tongues as a dog lappeth still go out from among us.

I should like to stop there. It is agreeable to be complacent. But what does this inheritance of intensity mean? It means that Christ's religion, as it comes to us, comes not as a sort of natural religion, part of the complete behaviour of the complete man, a thing which finds a place easily and naturally in life unless we crush it wantonly. Religion comes to us as something that we could by no means acquire for ourselves or from ourselves. The old phrase to "get religion" as you get measles or small-pox conveys a truth. Religion is, as the fashionable phrase goes, something given.

This has practical importance, because one of the most obvious things that is happening to-day is this: men and women who used to find an expression of natural religion in the services and ordinances of the Christian faith are finding that they can get along with their natural religion without the services and ordinances of the Christian faith. It is not merely that church-going is no longer necessary for respectability. A deeper change than that is come. If you ask the ordinary, quite decent, honourable, charitable, kindly person in no way opposed to religion why, whereas his father, just such a person as himself, attended service twice, he takes his family for a Sunday picnic, he will often tell you without the slightest insincerity, with perfect faith in the soundness of his position: "I find it does me as much good, more good. I believe refreshment for the body is good for the soul. The quiet you get once you are off the main roads refreshes and purifies my mind quite as much as an hour in church. After

all, God cannot speak to me better than through His own works. If I am going to be made good, I can't be in a better place." I often overhear such conversation, and almost as often I am surprised at the misdirected arguments put up on the church-going side. It is, surely, plain enough that if a man honestly says he gets as much from a Sunday picnic as from Divine Service he has no notion of what Divine Service exists to give him. Such a man possesses what I call natural religion: a sense of the mystery of creation, of its beauty, bounty, pathos, of its Maker; he values a pause in the activities of life, a chance to review his doings and consider his ways. This natural religion his father exercised in Church; but if that was all he had from Church the son is right in supposing that he misses little by not going there. That vague sense of mystery and peace which many found in Gothic architecture and a dim religious light, our generation satisfies at less expense in woods and rocks and sky, nature's cathedral. The Church service no longer provides the only oasis in work, the only glimpse into peace and mystery, the only convenient social fellowship (have we not women's institutes and rotary clubs?). If in the supply of such things only the Church hoped to exist, it is of all institutions most pitiable.

You see whither I am tending. It is our peculiar inheritance to emphasise that religion is something more than, and quite different from, all these things. We stand for unnatural, for supernatural religion. When we think of our forefathers in the faith we think of men whose services offered little satisfaction to the aesthetic sense, whose buildings had no mystery and often no beauty, who did not interest themselves in what was the decent and complete behaviour of a gentleman, who simply did not touch the argument of our Sunday picnicker at any point. The quality of intensity put them in another plane. What they looked for from religious exercises could not be picked up conveniently in a neighbouring wood. The neighbouring wood might speak of the Creator. It had but a dim word of the Father and no word of the Saviour, of the cross, of the resurrection, of sanctification, of the fellowship of the Holy Ghost and the communion of saints. And it has no word to-day. It may be religious: it is not Christian. Now our inheritance is not in the gentlemanly completeness of natural religion, but in the dedicated intensity of historic Christianity.

A certain school of ill-informed persons, of which the Bishop of Durham and Mr. Chesterton may stand as examples, please themselves by suggesting that our inheritance is Judaic, of the Old Testament rather than of the New. This is, of course, a scrupulously exact reversal of the truth. It may be claimed with more than a show of truth that the so-called catholic side of

Christianity satisfies those aspirations of natural religion to which the Old Testament gives so many magnificent expressions. The natural man is a catholic; and natural religion is a large part of so-called catholicism. But the Puritan, whatever evil may be said of him, is not a natural man, who can rejoice in the nature poems of Isaiah and the Psalms, but bridles at the scholasticism of St. Paul. It is all the other way round. Our inheritance is a religion of the most uncompromising, least generalised parts of the New Testament, of intensity and supernaturalism, or it is nothing at all. "We preach Christ and Him crucified."

I suggest to you that one of the questions your Jubilee raises is this: are we in danger of losing this conception of the Faith as it has come down to us? We are not doing our duty by a public and general witness to the world. Our business is the planting of personal religion of the intensest kind—a kind that is not in danger of thinking sunset hues a substitute for the blood of the cross—in as many people as possible; but our inheritance is a belief in quality rather than quantity. Unless our people have learnt the deepest things in our holy religion we have done nothing for them. The individual covenant with God, the constant exercise of the individual in the holy society, the constant discipline of the individual by the society: those marks of our forefathers' religion mean the same thing. We cannot exist as congregations however large and enthusiastic, however small and influential. We can exist only as churches. It is not difficult to lose sight of the main thing in the multitude of our cares, but that through our labour the Lord shall add to the Church such as shall be saved is the only care that we inherit.

See how great a flame aspires,
 Kindled by a spark of grace!
 Jesu's love the nations fires,
 Sets the kingdoms on a blaze.
 To bring fire on earth He came;
 Kindled in some hearts it is;
 O, that all might catch the flame,
 All partake the glorious bliss!

A second part of our inheritance in faith is this: the free course of the Written Word. Freedom and the Bible: talk with our forefathers would not have gone far before they claimed freedom as their peculiar inheritance and a special dependence on Holy Scripture as their badge. What is more they thought of these two as dependent on each other. They were free because they held close by the Bible. It was the charter of their freedom.

When our fathers spoke of themselves as peculiarly free and owing their freedom to the Bible, they were thinking of the manifold burden of tradition and accretion that had gathered about the faith since apostolic times, and of the authority which

Holy Scripture gave them for supposing that the Gospel of Christ did not depend on the inventions and appliances of a later age, useful as these might have been in their time. Our fathers were harsh in some of their judgements. They did not see, as we can see, that in a dangerous epoch like the earlier middle ages, with a chance of the whole of Christian society going down before barbarism and Mohammedanism, a certain amount of military discipline inside the faith was needed, that this discipline easily turned into a new legalism, but that men had to be thankful that from such a peril they got the faith preserved at all, overlaid though it might be in places with non-Christian materials. Now the danger was over and our fathers looked to the Bible, as distinct from all recorded decisions of men, creeds, councils and confessions, to remove the legal conservatism that almost hid the grace of God in the multitude of ceremonies and laws and obediences by which it came.

This attitude to the Bible, giving it a unique place in the Church, many tell us to-day, was but a new shape of that old conservative legalism that it claimed to dethrone; an infallible book was as much a foe of Christian liberty as an infallible Church; and so on. You get real freedom only when you recognise that the Bible, like creeds and council decisions, is but a set of historical documents valuable in the same way and to be treated in the same way. Our inheritance of freedom is freedom to emphasise this and discard that. "We should be far better without some of it," the Rev. John Bevan, speaking of the Old Testament, told the Oxford Congregational Conference. "I could without tears part with *Leviticus, Numbers, Judges, Chronicles, Ruth, Song of Songs, Esther*, and many of the *Psalms*—the blood-thirsty ones." These naive confessions that for our part we cannot agree with the verdict of all time about the merit of the classics have always a certain attractiveness: the attractiveness of honesty. But it is a mistake to attach too much value or importance to them. They tell us more about the defective perception of the people who make the confession than about the defects, real or alleged, of the classics concerned.

I do not want to leave the matter there, however. I want to submit to you that such views of our liberty and Holy Scripture deprive us of precisely that part of our heritage that we most need at this moment.

A Church which accepts as rigidly authoritative the accumulated burden of its own traditions, traditions which it has accumulated in circumstances of all kinds unfavourable as well as favourable, a Church which cannot afford to admit a blunder or a break in continuity, a Church which binds itself legally under pain of losing its temporal possessions and its social

prestige and more solemnly by sacramental ordination oaths to certain temporary expressions of eternal truth that were enunciated by generations less well-informed than our own, such a Church is simply asking for trouble. One of two things happens, each bad; or both happen, which is worse. You have one party always jealous to see that the expressions are sincerely and completely believed because of what is behind them. You have another anxious to re-interpret, to modify, to abandon all or part. One is accused of strangling infant immature faith by ancient swaddling clothes outgrown: the other is accused of throwing out the baby with the bath water. And both charges are true. It becomes increasingly hard for either side to be intellectually honest. (I do not say neither is; but I do say that it is stupid to create unnecessary obstacles to honesty.) The Fundamentalist—I suppose we must use this pair of names deplorable alike in etymology and theology—is accused of shutting his eyes to facts, a fool if not a knave. The Modernist is accused of reciting statements in a sense different from any they naturally bear, a slippery slope that leads anywhere or nowhere. You get the hideous result of good men on each side suspicious of each other and the world made to stumble by the sight and noise of Church leaders hurling at one another that most damning of all charges in religion: insincerity. This squalid controversy has produced a very definite impression in this country in Anglicanism and in wider circles in America; and in many an ordinary man's mind the suspicion is now pretty well rooted that people who hold the creeds as they stand are fools, and that people who re-interpret them are knaves. This wide-spread suspicion has done, at least among the people whom I know, infinitely more harm than all the things put together which Fundamentalists and Modernists will unite on public platforms to deplore.

Now our inheritance is freedom. But freedom, to be of any use to us, is not a freedom from Archbishop Laud or from the Athanasian Creed or even from the New Prayer Book. We want freedom from the evils of our own time, especially from this most malignant evil in the religious life of our time; and we have it. We are (do you realise it?) if we know how to enter upon our heritage, free, gloriously free, from the twin horrors of Fundamentalism and Modernism, from the venomous uncharity of the one and the arid superficiality of the other. The problems of Fundamentalism and Modernism do not arise for a Church endowed with our heritage. As by our sacrifice of position in the state we have secured freedom for the intenser and more independent life of our Church, freedom from those humiliating controversies that have vexed the Establishment

through the Prayer Book discussion, so by sacrificing the desire for a supreme and infallible authority on earth we have secured freedom from the degrading controversies of Fundamentalist and Modernist. Our first and last and middle word to them is: "A plague on both your houses." Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled with *their* yoke of bondage.

That is one side: there is another. Part of our inheritance is the knowledge of the unique position and value of Holy Scripture in the faith. Do not set that aside as an old-fashioned conventional assertion. It is a living issue. Muddled by rumours and misunderstandings of the results of historical criticism many even of our own people are losing all sense of the unique treasure that the Church has in the Bible. People repeat as a parrot phrase that the Bible is an historical document "exactly the same as any other," until they miss entirely what that means. The Bible *is* an historical document, but no historical document is like any other. Documents vary in their importance for human life according to what they contain. It is precisely because the Bible is an historical document with a particular historical content, that it is unique and has a unique value for our faith. It is, in the New Testament, the most immediate record that we have of the impact of the Incarnate Word on human life. It is, in the Old Testament, the record of the preparation in people and place for that impact. There is no history *like* that. To say that there is as much reason for reading the historical records of England or Italy as the historical books of Israel in a religious service is to betray a total lack of the historical sense.

To make of the Bible a book of moral lessons and human experience with precisely as much authority and importance as any other record of human experience may be a legitimate secondary use of it, but overlooks its primary quality. If the value of Bible history is to provide the same sort of lessons as may be drawn from the story of the Armada it has practically no value; for the more a man knows of history the less he is prepared to say what it teaches. "When I hear a man say *All history teaches*," confessed a great historian, "I prepare to hear some thundering lie." The Bible is not a useful scrap book of illustrations for our own ideas or of snippets for devotional use. It has a value of its own. The Written Word contains and shows forth the Incarnate Word. Modern study of the Bible as an historical document underlines our inherited conviction of the unique position of Holy Scripture in the Church. The prominence which our traditions give to expository preaching needs no apology. It needs respect.

A third part of our inheritance is more definitely theological. It is two-fold. Calvinism and Evangelicalism are the two lines of thought which converged to make modern Dissent. They are historically the two main currents in our thought, and though in theory perhaps in antithesis to one another, they have in common the fundamental quality. They provide a more than adequate basis for that intensity of which I spoke first. They turn our eyes away from ourselves and our fellows to the great things in our Faith, to the things that God does: to His Will; His Grace; His Passion. They emphasise at once the objectiveness of our religion and the direct immediate contact that it gives between the soul and God. Coming from this is the note of certainty and finality and joy. The ultimate truth about the religious life, as we have received it, is not that it is a pilgrimage, a development, an education, a struggle, in which we must take our part with such help as we can get. It is Good News. Whom He did predestinate, them He also *has* called. God *was* in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. The powers of the new age are here. We have tasted the heavenly gift. We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. The rapture of certainty about something already done for us, not waiting for us to do, is a part of our inheritance.

I have left little time in which to speak of our inheritance in practice. Let me make two points. First our inheritance is a full but pure churchmanship, churchmanship without clericalism. Here, if I may say so with respect and affection, our inheritance differs from, and is fuller than, that of the other great group of Free Churchmen, the Methodists. For the Methodists were not in origin or essence or intention a Church. They were, and so they called themselves till a generation ago, a Society in a Church. They were members of the Established Church, but the fellowship from which they drew the best of their religion was not their Church. There was a divergence between their spiritual experience and their churchmanship. They thought of the Church as something other than the most sacred brotherhood. They prayed:

Let us for each other care,
Each the other's burden bear;
To Thy Church the pattern give,
Show how true believers live.

“Thy Church” and “true believers”; not synonyms but in antithesis. It is the traditional Anglican idea of the Church as the whole of society, shot through now by an intenser experience. Of course the Methodists came in time to recognise that the Society which gave them the grace of God in the Word and the Sacraments was itself the Church.

Now I mention this not in derogation of the great Methodist Church, but to show you how august is your inheritance. We Congregationalists and Baptists have never been able to conceive of a churchless Christianity, a private sect, a Christian experience that is not also an ecclesiastical experience. We have always associated the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with the communion of saints. That great vision of the Church unbroken through all our history is our inheritance, and it marks us as specially privileged above all other Christians. The Anglicans have been prepared to make of the Church something less than the free Bride of Christ, knowing only His sovereignty. The Methodists supposed that apart from the Church they could best find the Lord. The Society of Friends does not even know the value of some essential parts of churchmanship enough to care to claim them. The Romanists, like ourselves, have always recognised the supreme place of the Church in Christ's religion, but they have legalised and judaised the conception almost beyond recognition. I make bold to claim that in the despised Bethels of our denominations and in the Churches of the Presbyterians alone has the fullest inheritance of Churchmanship been preserved; emphasising equally the independence of the Church from all secular powers, the necessity of the Church for the means of grace, and the freedom of the Church under grace from clericalism, that is from judaic legalism.

It suffices to remind you that there has never been a time when the world needed this particular inheritance of ours more than to-day. To-day the great mass of Christians in the world have no choice but between an inadequate and a false conception of churchmanship. On the one hand is a conception of the Christian Society that makes of it something less than a true Church, at best only one help among others to the religious life, desirable, but not essential, and with this conception inevitably goes a failure to understand the importance of the sacred ministry and the sacraments; on the other hand is a conception of the Church right indeed in the place that it claims for the Divine Society, as of the very essence of Christianity, but marred almost to the point of being unrecognisable by what Lord Salisbury, with that blistering irony of his, used to call the "chemical theory of Orders," turning free grace into something like private magic. It is the bane of almost all Europe that it is offered a choice between a clerical Church and no Church at all, and as the worst of Fundamentalism is that it begets Modernism, the worst of clericalism is that it begets anti-clericalism. The steady triumph of the Latin party in the Established Church brings even this country nearer and nearer to that hateful dilemma: clericalism or anti-clericalism. What can save us? Nothing, NOTHING, but

your inheritance of a full and free and pure churchmanship. Your jubilee is a call that you hold fast this inheritance alike in its fulness and its purity.

We have too an inheritance in worship. It is fashionable to decry our tradition in worship. We are said to be fair preachers, but to have no sense of what is called the art of public worship. I suspect that both statements are exaggerated. To begin with, it is our inheritance to set a due value on Divine Service and the means of grace, on what our fathers called the exercises, on the regular use of prayer, preaching and the Sacraments. We are what the Roman Catholics call practising Christians. We do not teach that these things do not matter. We do hear (I confess it with shame) talk sometimes about the sacrament of Baptism which might lead the unwary to suppose that you Baptists cared only that infants should *not* be baptised and we Congregationalists cared only that adults should *not* be; but any light esteem of that Sacrament is a denial of our inheritance. I doubt, on the other hand, if on an average the members of any other Church in Christendom receive the Lord's Supper so regularly and so frequently as we do. The steadily maintained monthly communion of so large a proportion of our communicants leaves no room for the ignorant charge that we neglect this Sacrament—especially when the charge comes, as it sometimes does, from bodies which may have an enthusiastic minority of weekly or daily communicants but a vast majority who communicate far more infrequently and irregularly than we do. Decency forbids us to parade these things, but I remind you of them, first, because it is your bounden duty to maintain and improve this inheritance in practice, and, second, because it is well to repel a charge which, if it were half as true as it is common, would be very serious. The *fact* is that we have an unusually rich inheritance in this matter.

Yes, it may be said, you do set store by worship in a sort of way; but what sort of worship is it? Your bald, disjointed worship is a poor inheritance when contrasted with the liturgical riches of other Churches. Now I am ready to admit that our worship is rather an acquired taste, and like all the best things it is easiest acquired when one is young. Our worship often does seem rather unbeautiful to those who do not catch its true meaning. I am ready to admit too that some of us, in a frivolous objection to all ceremony, have allowed Divine Service to degenerate into a kind of public meeting at once stereotyped and disordered. But that is neither our tradition nor our inheritance: it is disloyalty to both. Our inheritance is a plain, but a dignified worship. In preaching, in prayer, in the administration of the Sacraments we use little ritual, not because what we do matters

little, but because it matters so much. To call upon the name of God, to claim the presence of the Son of God, these things, if men truly know and mean what they are doing, are in themselves acts so tremendous and so full of comfort that any sensuous or artistic attempt to heighten the effect of them is not so much a painting of the lily as a varnishing of sunlight. The very phrase "the art of public worship," (that art which scornfully men say we lack), with all the conceptions that lie behind it is to men bred in the heritage of our worship something approaching blasphemy. The grace of which our services and sacraments are the means is so irresistible that in their simplest forms Christian rites are utterly and eternally adequate. To us, if we have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand, it is superfluous and worse than superfluous to add to their august simplicity. That august simplicity more than elaborated ritual shows forth the eternal Sacrifice.

Enter'd the holy place above,
Cover'd with meritorious scars,
The tokens of His dying love
Our great High Priest in glory bears.
He pleads His Passion on the tree,
He shows Himself to God for me.

Emphasis on that drama, eternal in the heavens, not on the drama of earthly ritual, however moving, is *our* inheritance in worship.

I have spoken to you very partially, very feebly, very unworthily of our inheritance. Much of it I have not mentioned. It gathers unmentioned before your eyes as I conclude. Perhaps you expected me to speak of our public and social and national services. With intention I kept silence about them. Notable as they were, needful as a repetition of them is in the wilted public life of to-day, they were not of the essence of our heritage. They were incidental by-products of it, thrown off easily and almost accidentally by men whose hearts and treasure were elsewhere. It was other-worldliness that made our fathers of service to this world. "Other-worldliness"—would to God that your Jubilee may help to revive that charge against us. In other-worldliness I sum up the treasure of our inheritance, and where our treasure is, there, according to the Saviour's word, may our heart be also.

B. L. MANNING.

The Baptists of Liverpool in the 17th Century.

IT would appear that the earliest record of Baptists in Liverpool is found in the report of Bishop Hall of Chester, who in 1661 noted their meeting there as well as in Warrington and Frodsham. Consequently several prosecutions followed, and at Wigan in December, 1661, we find that Major Henry Jones and his wife Elinor, Master Nickson, John Tempest, Arthur Hutton, each with their spouses, and Thomas Christian were "presented" for being Anabaptists, or leaving their children "unchristened."

In the Lambeth Palace MSS. No. 639 we read that "Baptists met in Leverpoole over 30 years previously to 1700," and in reply to Archbishop Sheldon's enquiry in 1669 the Bishop of Chester reported "a conventicle frequently kept at the house of Mr. Jones, an old Parliament Officer. It is surmised they are about 30 or 40 in number, most of them with property, all of them Anabaptists." Several of them are stated to be mariners. The description "mariner" has now a different meaning from that of former days. In Liverpool, at all events, it then implied a merchant-shipowner or one who navigated a vessel of which he was the owner, or at least part owner.

In 1670 we find that Arthur Hutton is closely associated with Major H. Jones in Baptist leadership, and in 1673 Thomas Christian, who had married Elizabeth Nickson, obtained a licence for worship. But before 1690 the above-named worthies appear to have passed on, and families of the names of Beanes, Seacome, and Hunter now become prominent in the Baptist church.

Daniel Beanes had some time before established a successful practice as an apothecary in a house of long standing in Everton Village. It has been surmised that he was of Dutch origin, and that his surname was a corruption of "Boon." But the name Beanes appears on the Roll of Liverpool ratepayers of that date, and was known in South Lancashire at least one hundred years previously. That he had attained some reputation prior to 1690 is attested by the recurrence of his name in local assessments. Also some corroborative evidence is afforded in a statement found in a Welsh biography. It is there stated that about the year 1685 a young Oxford student named Philip James, who had

been baptised at Swansea, came as apprentice to Daniel Beanes, who after the fashion of the time had translated his name into Latin, and was known as Fabyus. The young apprentice married the daughter of Lawrence Spooner, a Baptist minister, and became for thirty years pastor of Hemel Hempsted Baptist Church.

In Stonehouse's *History of Everton* there is a reference to a sister of Daniel Fabius (as the name was generally spelt) named Mary, who was associated with him, and did much good in the neighbourhood "in spite of the persecution of Nonconformists." Her name is among the copyholders of land in Everton, and her brother's name appears on the Rental roll in 1692, and subsequent years. That the family had associations with London is evident, since they owned houses near Hoxton Church situate in Fanshaw Street between Pitfield Street and Hoxton Street.

In Hillcliffe Burial Ground are stones to the memory of Hannah Fabius, died June 7th, 1702, and Ebenezer Fabius, 1691, and doubtless these were of the family.

On the passing of the Toleration Act, Fabius obtained a certificate of enrolment which was renewed for several years. The form was as follows:—

"This is to certify to whom it may concern that the house of Daniell Fabius or Beanes Practizer in Physick situate in Everton in the county Lancaster now certified at this Court for a meeting-place for a congregation of Protestants dissenting from the Church of England for exercise of their religious worship, by this Court and Council as such pursuant to an Act of Parliament in the case made and provided.

"Given under my hand in open Court of Quarter Sessions holden at Manchester this twenty fifth day of July in the tenth year of King William's reign and in the year of our Lord 1700
(sgd) George Kenyon

Clerk of the peace of the County Palatine."

The successful "chymist" (as he styled himself) had educated one of his sons for the medical profession and he also obtained a local practice of some reputation. In the Diary of a well-known Roman Catholic Squire, Nicholas Blundell, published in the Crosby Records, it appears that he was accustomed to consult this Baptist pioneer, and on occasion sent him a present of twenty-two adders!

At the time of his death in 1705 his family consisted of two sons, Alexander and Daniel, and two married daughters, Dorothy and Elizabeth. Only a few months prior to his passing he had executed his Will "under hand and seal," as required when dealing with freehold and copyhold properties. After more than 220 years the original Will, engrossed on both sides of an

excellent wove sheet of blue paper, remains in as perfect condition as when proved in the Chester Ecclesiastical Registry on the 25th October, 1705, and the black ink is not faded in the least. The Will reads, "In the name of God Amen this 22nd day of July 1705 I Daniel Fabyus als Beanes of Everton in the county of Lancaster Chymist do make and order this my last Will and Testament." After directions as to burial and payment of debts he directed sale of his household goods and chattels (the goods in his best chamber in his dwelling-house excepted), the payment of sums to his daughters Dorothy and Elizabeth "being the remainder and in full of their marriage portions."

His two tenements, the one in Walton-super-montem in the said County, and the other in Everton aforesaid, called Hangfield, he devised to his son Alexander, charged with above payments if his personal estate should "fall short."

Then follows the devise which is of special interest to Baptists. "As to my messuages and tenement lands and closes of ground whereof and wherein I have a customary inheritance situate lying and being in Everton aforesaid I will that my dear and loving wife Hannah shall hold the same during the term of her natural life pursuant to a surrender by me heretofore thereof to that purpose now done And after the decease of my said wife I will that my son Daniel have hold and enjoy the premises with the appurtenances to him his heirs and assigns for ever And as for and concerning that my message and tenement with the appurtenances situate lying and being in West Derby in the said County called Sandham (?) my Will is and I do hereby give devise and bequeath the said last mentioned message and tenement and all my interest therein . . . to my son Daniel Fabyus als Beanes subject to the yearly payment of five pounds to my said wife during her natural life And as to for and concerning the message tenements with the appurtenances whereof and wherein I have a title or interest in part thereof situate & lying at or near Fanshaw Street or elsewhere in or near the city of London or suburbs thereof I will give devise and bequeath the same to my said sons and daughters Daniel Alexander Dorothy & Elizabeth their heirs and assigns for ever."

After a provision in the event of the daughters dying without issue capable of inheriting and clauses as to the construction of the Will, the testator nominated his "Loving brother-in-law Isaac Gooden and his loving friends Thomas Strange & Ralph Seacome Executors."

Above the seal is written "Daniel Fabyus als Beanes," and beside it in curious handwriting "Daniel Fabius." The Will is

attested by Benjamin Millington, John Livesley, and another, a most artistic signature, which may be "H. Wolstenholme."

Thomas Strange and the other Baptist stalwart Ralph Seacome, proved the Will, which paved the way for the immediate gift of the plot at Everton by Mrs. Hannah Fabius and her son Daniel the doctor for a burial ground, on which Fabius Chapel now stands.

O. KNOTT.

(To be continued.)

Chinese Dilemmas.¹

CHINA is a land of problem and of chaos, and my purpose in this paper is just to sketch, with as light and rapid strokes as possible, one or two of its problems in their setting of chaos. It will be my endeavour, however, to avoid mere superficiality. To some people China's problems appear simple, and they have easy panaceas to commend to the ignorant. To me the problems seem extraordinarily complex, and I am acutely conscious of the difficulties attending them. I claim no wisdom to solve them, indeed, nor do I know of any solution that is not a mere academic evasion of the hard realities of the situation. This does not mean that I am a pessimist. For while I have no use for a shallow optimism that refuses to face problems because it is sure they will melt away of themselves, neither do I respect the pessimism that is daunted and dismayed by difficulties. I have no solution of China's problems to offer, but I am confident that a solution can be found, though equally confident that it will be no speedy process to carry it through. But the first essential is to realise the nature of the problems confronting us, and all that this paper aims to do is to contribute to clear thinking as to the complexity and difficulty of the problems that clamour for solution.

It is obviously impossible to discuss in a single paper all of China's problems. I propose, therefore, to select three. The first is one confronting the nations of the world, and our own in particular, in relation to China. The second is one confronting industrialists—in which many people in this country display an interest which is marked more by vehemence than by knowledge. The third is one confronting missionaries, and especially one which confronts us of the B.M.S. in our work in Shantung. I claim no special qualification to discuss either of the first two problems. I am neither a politician nor an industrialist. But I believe the problems concern us all. And so I have the temerity to plunge in, with nothing more to guide me than a plain man's knowledge, coupled with a keen interest in the problems and a great love of China.

¹ This paper was unavoidably held over from our last issue. Meanwhile the situation in China has not remained unchanged. But it seems best, on the whole, to print the address as delivered.

I.

To dispense with further introduction, let us approach our first problem. It is a commonplace that in recent years China has increasingly resented certain infringements on her sovereignty by Foreign Powers. There are, for instance, the Foreign Concessions. When foreigners insisted on the right to live and trade in China, the Chinese successfully resisted their free entry to the whole land, but grudgingly set apart certain unhealthy areas outside a few of their cities as suitable residential areas for the unwanted barbarians. On these unhealthy sites, by dint of very great skill, and with enormous labour and patience, large and flourishing business centres have been created, which dominate the trade and finance of the entire districts in which they are situated. It was by Chinese initiative that they were separate and distinct from the native cities. But to-day the Chinese resent their special position, and clamour for it to be surrendered.

Again, there is extraterritoriality. Britishers, for example, are not subject to the Chinese courts, but can only be tried by the British Consuls, or by the British judges in Shanghai or Tientsin. And similarly with the nationals of many other nations. This again goes back far in history, and began at the request of the Chinese government. But to-day China clamours for its abolition.

Yet again, there is the question of the Maritime Customs. The Customs service was created for China largely by the genius of a great Englishman, Sir Robert Hart, who loved China and served her with rare devotion. Its receipts have been made the security for many foreign debts of China, and foreigners have therefore a very real interest in its efficient and honest administration. It has therefore been insisted in various Treaties that there shall be a proportion of foreigners on the Customs staff, and that the Inspector General shall be British so long as British trade exceeds that of any other nation, that the Funds shall be banked with foreign Banks, and that the Customs rates shall only be varied by international agreement. To-day China clamours for complete control of her Customs, for liberty to fix her own Tariff, for liberty to choose her own Banks for the deposits, and for liberty to dispense with foreign officials at her own choice.

I have not argued the pro's and con's of the Chinese case on any of these questions. That would carry us much too far afield. I will content myself with saying that none of them is simple, and that neither sentiment nor prejudice is adequate basis for a fair judgement. I am only concerned at this point to recognise that while on each of these matters it was the Chinese

Government which took the initiative in creating the situation which is to-day complained of, China to-day with one voice demands radical changes and vigorously resents the present position. For my present purpose it is immaterial whether China's case is just or unjust. My subject is Dilemma. And dilemma is not concerned with judicial decision as to the rights and wrongs of a question, but with practical policy. *And the dilemma is just here, that with the best will in the world to concede to China what she is demanding, it is simply impossible.*

The Washington Conference in 1921 considered with very unusual sympathy China's demands, and agreed that an international Tariff Conference should meet to consider her Tariff questions, and that another international Conference should examine the Chinese codes of law and their administration, in connection with the question of extraterritoriality. The latter Conference was to have met within twelve months of the Washington Conference, but the Chinese Government was forced to request its postponement, owing to Civil War. Civil War has been almost continuous since then, and the postponement had to be a long one. Then, in response to a sudden outburst of Chinese criticism that it had not met, it assembled without waiting for the Civil War to cease. Its report was not a very cheering one, and it could only recommend very meagre advance, the Chinese as well as the foreign delegates agreeing that the complete abolition of extraterritoriality is out of the question at present.

Meanwhile, what of the Tariff Conference? That, too, had been postponed. In this case, however, the reason lay in the action—or rather, inaction—of France, in holding up the ratification of the Washington agreements, owing to a dispute she had with China over the Gold Franc question. When at last France ratified the agreements, the Conference assembled. Its first result was to precipitate a fresh outburst of Civil War. This was an unforeseen result of the Washington Conference, with its desire to respond to Chinese aspirations. Why was it that the news of the convening of the Tariff Conference caused the smouldering embers of Civil War to burst out into new flame? It was because any revision of the Customs agreements would mean that after the service of the foreign loans there would be a larger surplus to be handed over to the Chinese Government. This would give to the group that controlled Peking a stronger position. Hence the groups that were hostile to those in control of the capital at once embarked on the task of trying to oust their rivals from Peking, in order that they might fall heir to the new wealth that was anticipated. The Tariff Conference dragged on for many months, the parties at

war with the Peking groups declaring that they would not recognise any agreement made with their rivals, and warning the Foreign Powers against making any such agreement. Both sides demanded the complete surrender of the Customs, but each demanded the surrender to itself alone. Each declared that any concession made to anyone but itself would be an unwarrantable interference in the affairs of China by the Foreign Powers. Then, suddenly, the two militarists who had been working together as very ill-assorted allies in the north, split asunder, and the Chinese delegates to the Tariff Conference discovered that the Foreign Concessions of Tientsin were much better for their health than Peking. The foreign members of the Tariff Conference found that there were no Chinese delegates left for them to negotiate a new Treaty with. The Conference therefore came to an undignified and untimely end.

Here, then, was a very real dilemma. If nothing was done, Chinese denunciation of the infringement of sovereignty would continue to be unanimous. Yet what could be done? The making of a new agreement with either side would certainly amount to an interference in China's domestic quarrels, and could at the best conciliate but one side.

Meanwhile, Britain's position was a peculiarly difficult one. We had been singled out for special attack for a long time, and British interests were suffering very severely. As a matter of fact, our Government had been particularly patient under these attacks, and, moreover, had been particularly liberal in its attitude towards the Chinese aspirations. Undaunted by the sheer impossibility of meeting those aspirations, our Government had been urging on the other Powers, without avail, definite attempts to meet them. We had alienated Japanese sympathy by taking China's side against her at the Tariff Conference on the subject of the unsavoury Nishihara loans. The only gratitude we had from China was worse and ever worse attacks, and a hostility that grew rapidly more intense. British memorandums had been presented to the other Powers, which have since been published, urging a more liberal attitude than the Powers were willing to agree to. In these circumstances, it was hard to be singled out for special contumely and attack.

Hence, in December, 1926, Sir Austen Chamberlain decided to plunge yet deeper into the waters of chaos. The famous British Memorandum was issued. In this he made public the sympathetic attitude we had adopted towards the Chinese demands, and gave documentary evidence in proof. He then urged on the other Powers that certain definite steps should be taken, without waiting for a properly negotiated agreement with the Chinese Government, since there was no body which could

even pretend to be the Government of China. For by this time the number of groups in the field was increased, and there were at least five important and independent groups dividing the control of China between them.

Let me say at once that I have the utmost respect for Sir Austen's sincerity of purpose, and though I may examine somewhat critically some of the fruits of the Memorandum, my criticism is tempered by my appreciation of the intense delicacy and difficulty of his position, and my warm admiration for his high purpose. The British Memorandum sought to please everybody in China. But it simply could not be done. The much advertised unity of the Chinese demands on the Foreign Powers was but superficial, as I trust I have already made clear. The December Memorandum said in effect: "Let us recognise facts. There is no Government of China. Let us stop pretending there is. Let us for practical purposes recognise the local authorities. We have talked of the Washington surtaxes. Let us consent to their immediate collection. Our sincerity is being questioned. Let us prove it by granting these surtaxes at once. And since there is no one Government of China to which the proceeds can be handed, let us hand them to the local authorities."

This may seem common sense to an outsider. But no group in China saw it in that light. Nor did the other Powers regard it so. Most of them reluctantly came into line, so far as the Washington surtaxes were concerned. But Japan refused to do so. This meant that the surtaxes could not legally be collected. If they should be collected, it would mean that the Party which controlled Shanghai, would control the richest revenue, and Shanghai would therefore be the richest prize of Civil War in the future, as Peking had been in the past. The Peking group, perhaps naturally, protested against the proposed local arrangement, and claimed that the entire surtax receipts should be paid into the Peking Exchequer. On the other hand, the Nationalist Government, which then had its headquarters at Hankow, protested very vigorously against the Memorandum, which it regarded as hostile to itself, and claimed that while the surtaxes ought to be collected in the part of China held by the Nationalists, the Powers should not sanction them in the remaining parts of China, until the Nationalists should be in control. In other words, all Parties were really clamouring for foreign intervention on their side. And Sir Austen Chamberlain pleasantly stood for intervention on all sides.

That the liberality of the Memorandum won for us no new affection was very manifest within a few days, when a new crisis was precipitated by the over-running of the British Concession at Hankow by a Chinese mob. Sir Austen therefore

followed up the Memorandum by agreeing to the formal surrender of the Concession to the Nationalists. But immediately the cry was raised that while we had surrendered that Concession to those who had been consistently hostile to British interests, we had made no similar gesture to those authorities in North China which had made no attacks on British persons or property, and had been at least more faithful to their agreements. While the British Government announced that they would surrender nothing to violence, they were surrendering to violence, and were making no corresponding surrender where there was no violence. The British Government therefore announced that it was prepared to negotiate with the northern authorities for the handing over of other Concessions, and immediately commenced negotiations for the surrender of Tientsin. But immediately the Hankow authorities warned them against doing any such thing, and announced that nothing should be surrendered, save to themselves alone. Any agreement regarding Tientsin that should be made with the Northern Militarists they would refuse to recognise, and when they captured the control of the north—as it was then expected they would soon do—it would at once become null and void.

Meanwhile, what results was the Memorandum having? The Peking Government instructed Sir Francis Aglen, the Inspector-General of Customs, to collect the surtaxes. All the Powers, save Japan, had sanctioned them. But Sir Francis refused. For he had no option. True, he was the servant of the Chinese Government—save for the trifling fact that there was none—but he was also the Trustee for international interests. And until Japan sanctioned the surtaxes, they were illegal. But more than that. Peking wanted the machinery of the Maritime Customs to collect the taxes throughout the country, and remit the whole to Peking. This was not what Britain had suggested, or other Powers had agreed to. Moreover, the Nationalist Government threatened that any attempt to do this would mean the immediate disruption of the Customs service. They would at once seize, not merely the surtax receipts, but the entire Customs receipts in the south. Sir Francis had, therefore, no option but to refuse. Thereupon the Peking Government dismissed him. The first result of the British Memorandum, therefore, was to get a British subject into trouble. In the end, his dismissal was postponed for a year, but he ceased duty at once, being given a year's leave. Technically, Sir Francis was the servant of the Chinese Government, which had the power to appoint and dismiss the Inspector. But there was not then, and there is not now, any Government with international recognition as the Government of China. It would seem to me that if Sir Francis

was recognised as the servant of the Peking group, and if it was admitted that they had the right to dismiss him, then their claim to the proceeds of the surtax should also have been admitted. Alternatively, the British contention that there were only local administrations in China should have implied that there was no authority which could control the Maritime Customs, which is a national service, with international obligations.

A new Acting Inspector-General was appointed, but the same difficulty was immediately encountered. It was therefore now agreed that the new surtaxes, which the British Memorandum had precipitated, should not be collected by the machinery of the Maritime Customs, but should be separately collected by the local authorities. This soon led to further trouble. The surtaxes were still not legal, but were collected, and though Japan still objected, she was not disposed to take isolated action to prevent their collection. But the appetite of the Chinese authorities was merely whetted. In various districts they added further taxes, and promised more. They were not legal. True, but neither were the surtaxes. How, therefore, could any Power which connived at the surtaxes in defiance of Japan's protest against their illegality complain of the illegality of these further taxes? Soon, however, it was clear that something must be done, for far more extravagant tax programmes to fleece foreign trade were announced, and cases were therefore brought before the American, British and Japanese courts to expose their illegality, and a very simple way of defeating them was devised. But while the British court decided that the British Consul should issue clearance papers for British-borne cargoes after the deposit with him of the legal maritime customs, plus the surtax, the Japanese court was more logical, and decided that Japanese-borne cargoes must be released on payment of the legal dues only. The simple method of Consular clearance, therefore, which was devised to check the orgy of illegal dues, proved equally effective to Japan to check the Washington surtaxes, of which she disapproved. The position now was that Japanese trade was in a more favourable position than any other, and that cargoes consigned by Japanese boats were more lightly taxed than those consigned by British boats.

The British Memorandum, therefore, brought new difficulties and irregularities into the Customs service, accentuated international differences, and incensed Japan. Nevertheless, the surtaxes have been steadily collected at all the ports on the great bulk of the foreign trade, and though the volume of foreign trade has decreased considerably, and the total customs receipts for the year 1927, including the surtax receipts, were not much more than in the

previous year without the surtaxes, all this revenue from the surtaxes has been steadily flowing into the local exchequers of the various groups in the Civil War. Most of the Provinces were squeezed almost dry by taxation. And this new source of revenue must have been a veritable godsend to some of the militarists. It has certainly been a very considerable help to them in carrying on the War during the past year and more. And the War has brought untold misery to the Chinese people.

This year has brought great changes into the situation, however. The anti-British feeling, which reached unusual heights in the months immediately following the issue of the Memorandum, is now greatly eased, and for the present it is Japan that has to face the keenest hostility. Moreover, the Nationalist cause has apparently triumphed. The armies of the Nationalists and their Allies, Governor Yen Hsi Shan and Marshal Fêng Yü Hsiang, have swept northwards, and the northern forces have withdrawn before them into Manchuria. Marshal Chang Tso Lin has passed from the stage for ever. The reunification of China would seem, on a superficial view, to be almost completed. In truth, however, it is far from completed. There are deep inner divisions in the ranks of the Nationalists, and further, neither Yen nor Fêng are either members or subordinates of the Nationalist Party. Moreover, Japan has tendered pointed advice to Manchuria not to enter the Nationalist fold. Civil control of the militarists, even within the Nationalist ranks, has not yet been achieved, and until it is achieved the Government cannot govern. Nor can it fulfil the new obligations it is anxious to shoulder. During the present year its promises and undertakings have been repeatedly violated.

In this changed situation, it is but natural that the British Memorandum should have sunk rather into the background. Nevertheless, it is still of primary importance, and is exercising an influence that is difficult to estimate. When it was first issued, it sought to recognise the existing divisions of China. To-day, it tends to perpetuate those divisions. One of the greatest obstacles the Nanking Government is meeting in its efforts to achieve unified control is the financial problem. Centralised government cannot be carried on without centralised finance. And the British Memorandum struck a blow at centralised finance, from which it is still suffering. The local exchequers, even of Hankow and Canton, refuse to remit to Nanking their local receipts. And dilemma once more arises. Any pressure to compel them to yield up their receipts would destroy the semblance of unity and provoke fresh conflict. Yet acquiescence in their retention would end all hope of real unity, and spell the

collapse of the Nanking Government and the complete disintegration of all vestiges of its authority at no distant date.

I repeat that my purpose is not criticism of Sir Austen Chamberlain and his policy. He undoubtedly had the country behind him in his policy, and its aim was both generous and conciliatory. My purpose is to show the enormous difficulty of doing anything. A negative policy in the face of Chinese demands and aspirations was unlikely to check the hostility at that time directed against us. A positive policy of conciliation produced unexpected results, was followed for several months by intensified attacks on British persons, property and trade, and to some extent isolated us internationally for a time.

II.

[The dilemma dealt with in this section of Mr. Rowley's paper was that created in the industrial sphere by the competition of native Chinese factories, with very long hours, low wages, and *child labour*. Foreign firms must either authorise similar conditions in their works, or submit to be hopelessly worsted in the competition for business.]

III.

For my third Dilemma we turn again into a totally different world. It is one that confronts us in our Church work in Shantung. The policy of the B.M.S. in Shantung has been to create an independent Chinese Church. When a group of people form themselves into a Church, it is for them to invite their own Pastor, and his maintenance is their concern. In the affairs of the Church, we, as a Mission, have no place. They have their own Associations and Unions, and missionaries can only attend as they are invited by the Chinese. The management and finance of their Churches is wholly their responsibility. Where we help with Mission Funds is in the maintenance of evangelistic work in the cities and outside Church areas. Evangelists are maintained in various centres, including our Hospitals, to which evangelists are always attached. We also maintain schools and hospitals, and contribute to the support of the Shantung Christian University, where we train various types of Chinese workers—Pastors, Evangelists, Teachers, Doctors and Nurses.

In recent years we are finding an increasingly difficult problem with our Pastorate. It is very hard to get trained men to accept the oversight of the Churches. From their point of view, the problem is twofold. On the one hand, the stipend is too small, and on the other hand, the life and work are unattractive. The Church ordinarily offers a stipend of about 30s. a

month. If the men become evangelists under the Mission, they receive about £2 a month. As against this, their fellow graduates from the Arts School, who become teachers in secondary schools, commence with £4 to £6 a month, while graduates from the medical school commence in Mission Hospitals with £6 to £8 a month.

You may say: "Oh well, doctors and teachers in this country receive more than ministers. The ministry is expected to be a sacrificial profession. And don't you find that it is the finest men you get for the ministry, who respond to the call for service without hope of reward?" No, it is not quite so simple as that. These various types of worker receive their training side by side in a Missionary University. They go out to their tasks in various branches of the Christian enterprise in China. They regard themselves, and we encourage them so to do, as sharing in the service of Christ. It is but natural that they should prefer the forms of Christian service which are at the same time more profitable. It is quite different from conditions at home here. It is true that the ministry is a sacrificial profession to a greater extent, say, than the medical profession. But then, the doctors are not paid out of the Church funds. In China we have, say, a hospital, with a Chinese doctor receiving \$70 a month, and an evangelist receiving \$20 a month, both paid out of the same exchequer. Obviously, it would appear, we regard the doctor as a more important asset to the Christian cause than the mere evangelist. There is, therefore, a tendency for the best men to prefer other forms of service, and the poorer type of men to take theological work. There are, indeed, some notable exceptions. But it must be frankly admitted that, speaking generally, we do not get the best men for the work of Pastors and Evangelists.

When we add to this financial attraction to other forms of Christian work the incomparably better conditions of life, we are bound to admit that there is not much to take a man into the pastorate. The pastoral areas are large, and each circuit comprises many Churches. The Pastor must therefore tramp many weary miles from village to village, often with his bedding over his shoulder. He will find no intellectual companionship amongst his parishioners, and will be isolated from all the amenities of town life. If he chooses medical work, or teaching, he will necessarily be in a town, and life will be altogether easier and pleasanter for him.

Why, then, should we appear so to dishonour evangelistic and pastoral work, and reward so much more highly from Mission Exchequers these other forms of service? It must be recognised that if a doctor chooses to open a medicine shop on

the street, instead of working in a Mission Hospital, he can make much more than the £6 to £8 we give him. If a teacher chooses to go into non-Mission work, he can get a much higher salary than the £4 to £6 we offer him—though in many cases his salary in a Government school is merely nominal, and he would be glad to see half of it paid regularly in good solid cash! But the Pastor or Evangelist has no "market value." "But how atrocious," you say, "to take advantage of that fact!" That is how many missionary societies feel, and they therefore pay their evangelists and pastors on a much higher scale. But they have to be paid with foreign funds. And there is no pretence or attempt to build up an independent Chinese Church. We, on the other hand, have tried from the first to build up a Church which could stand without us.

The Church simply could not afford to pay salaries of £4 or £5 a month. The members are mainly very poor indeed, and to them such a sum would seem like enormous wealth. And our resources are quite insufficient for it, even if we were convinced that it were the right policy. In order to do it we should have to close down a great deal of our work immediately. But primarily it is with us a matter of policy. We pay our Evangelists, who are supported by Mission Funds, approximately what the Church pays its Pastors—not because we feel it is enough as compared with the remuneration of the other types of worker, but because we do not wish to draw the theologically trained men from the service of the Church. Usually we are a little in advance of the salary offered by the Church, but rather with the hope that we shall thus stimulate the Church to do a little bit extra. And very real, though gradual advance, has been made. We believe this is a sounder policy than heavy subsidy for the pastorate from foreign funds, even if we had the resources. For if we made up the pastoral stipends to £4 or £5 a month with foreign help, we should separate the Pastor from his people by a very great economic gulf. For it must not be forgotten that while the present salary of the Pastor is deplorably low, the same thing is true of the economic level of the Chinese Church membership. It is not our business to take selected classes of Christians, and force up their economic position by subsidy from this country or America. We cannot lift the masses of China by subsidy to a higher economic level, greatly though we long to see them lifted out of their poverty and need. That is not our mission, nor are our funds subscribed for that purpose or more than the tiniest fraction of what would be required. We cannot even lift the whole Church membership by subsidy to a higher economic level. Nor would it be good if we could. And I strongly doubt the wisdom of artificially doing it for selected smaller groups.

Again, then, we have Dilemma. On the one hand, there is the "market value" of some of our workers, and the alternative positions they could take if they chose. Add to this the policy of other Missions, which are mostly in advance of us in forcing ever higher the salaries of doctors and teachers employed by the Missions. It is increasingly difficult for any Mission to stand to itself alone, especially if it engages in co-operative training work, as we do at Tsinan, and we are carried in the wake of other Missions to some extent by the simple fact that our doctors and teachers would migrate to them unless we offered a salary which bore some reasonable relation to what others offer. On the other hand, we are limited by our resources, and by our desire not to overthrow the established independence of the Church. We believe that the creation of a great economic difference between the Pastor and his people would not be in the interests of the Church, and that it would be unwise to convert the Pastor into a foreign paid agent. In times like these, when the Church is being so much attacked in China, when the Christians are called the "running dogs" of the foreign imperialists, it would not seem wise to turn on our tracks and destroy the independence that has been achieved.

IV.

Here, then, I leave my Dilemmas. I have carefully refrained from suggesting even possible ways of resolving them. These are merely sample problems from China. And China's problems must increasingly be ours. My hope is that I have said enough to show their complexity, and to warn against any shallow and superficial attempt to solve them. They demand hard thinking. And no solution can be free from difficulty or proof against criticism. This does not mean that no solution must be attempted. But it does mean that our criticism of any honest endeavour to solve them shall be sympathetic.

I have a great and passionate love for China. I long to see her great and happy, taking her true place in the life of the world. None can make her great but herself, and the arduous and sustained efforts of all her sons and daughters are necessary. But we may help or hinder her. No longer can she live unto herself. There are times when it may be our duty to thwart her, and times when we must succour her. Let all be done with no selfish eye to our own interests or comfort, but in the spirit of service for China and for the world, and above all in the spirit of service for the Christ, who loved and gave Himself for us all, and who now through us seeks China and claims her for His own.

H. H. ROWLEY.

Christ in Russia.

Gott-Erleben in Ssowet-Russland. Erinnerungen aus der Freiheit und dem Gefangnis von W. Ph. Marzinkowskij. Aus dem Russischen übertragen von W. L. Jack. Missionsverlag "Licht im Osten." 1927. 310 pp. 6RM.

THIS is a remarkable book of reminiscences of experiences in Russia during the last ten years. Dr. Hermelink, the Church History Professor of Marburg University, recently recommended it to one of his classes as the best book on religious conditions under the Soviet so far written. It was completed early in 1927, and was translated almost at once from the Russian into German. In reading it one is reminded often of *The Christ of the Indian Road*, for it is the story of the power and appeal of Jesus of Nazareth, in spite of the bitter attack upon much that has been associated with Him in the past. More frequently the simplicity and directness of the narrative recall the *Acts of the Apostles*.

The book is of special interest to Baptists. The author was for years an active member of the Greek Church, but became gradually convinced that one of the things most necessary, if there is to be revival in the fortunes of that sorely persecuted body, is the adoption of adult baptism on confession of belief. Conflict with the authorities has followed, and we get many pictures of the comings and goings within the Orthodox Church during these last years. We also hear much of the Baptists themselves, and of the Evangelical Christians, who are in full agreement with them in doctrine and polity. Marzinkowski never became actually identified with them, but was always in close touch, and gives most valuable pictures of their position and activities.

It is an amazing story, vividly told by a cultured and sensitive man, with a very simple Christian faith and very great courage. The author admits that much of the book is written from memory, and it is not always easy to follow chronologically, but no one can doubt the general truthfulness of the account, nor that it is worth dozens of the ill-informed partisan writings that have appeared in this country. Marzinkowski was born in S.W. Russia in 1884. Both before and after a course at Petrograd University, he lived in Grodno, now a part of Poland.

In 1904, while a student, he came under the influence of Baron Nicholai, of the newly-formed Russian Student Christian Movement, and was converted. He was for some years engaged as a teacher, and spent his spare time as evangelist and colporteur, visiting and lecturing in factories and prisons. His marked success in all these spheres led to his appointment in 1913 as organiser of the Russian S.C.M. All through the war years, in spite of great difficulties, the work was kept together, and Marzinkowski's reputation grew. Owing to a weak heart and short sight he had been exempted from military service. Then came the Revolution. His activities, so far from ceasing, were intensified, for interest in all kinds of religious issues increased. There was great demand in town and country for his lectures on such subjects as "The Meaning of Life," "Why must a man believe in God?," "Can we live without Christ?," "The Meaning of Beauty," "Are the Gospels reliable?," and so on. He was invited in 1919 to be lecturer in Ethics at the Samara University, with special charge of a hostel. Though his health had improved, he was exempted from military service by the Bolsheviks because of his religious convictions. Long exercised over the position of the Orthodox Church, he came in 1920 to believe in adult baptism. What he describes as the spring of the Revolution, its romantic period, was by then over. Anti-religious propaganda and the persecution of the Orthodox increased. There were public debates about religion in Moscow. In March 1921 Marzinkowski was arrested, and spent seven months in prison. The most vivid pages of the book describe his experiences there, the ecclesiastical dignitaries and the criminals who were his companions, the dread in which they lived, all that they suffered, and all that he achieved in the way of evangelism. No real charge could be established against him; outside bodies, including the Baptists, agitated for his release; the man's personality compelled respect even from his opponents. So he was at length set free, and for a time continued his former work, journeying as far as Odessa. Early in 1923, however, he was again in the hands of the Moscow authorities, and was banished to Germany. He had difficulty in getting there, and only escaped being sent to Turkestan through the intervention of the Czech consul, who gave him a pass to Prague. There he arrived in April, 1923. These last years have been spent in Western Europe, partly in work among Russian refugees.

After experiences like that, it is surprising and significant to find that he left Russia with great reluctance, and shows no bitterness towards the Bolsheviks. His stay in Western Europe has inclined him to agree with Spengler that our civilization is doomed; in Russia he seems already to see new and hopeful lines

of development. It is the parodies and perversions of Christianity which have there been attacked. To genuine Christlikeness men have ever responded. The words of Merejkowski are quoted with approval: "The Church is not dead because it has been trodden under foot by the State. On the contrary, the State has been able to tread it under foot, because the Church is dead." No watered-down Christianity, no other religious faith, no merely philosophical idealism has been able to survive the testing of these last years. But through the horrors and terror, Christ has been present, and is being turned to by increasing numbers. The Mennonites, the Baptists, the Evangelical Christians, and those other free religious groups persecuted under Czardom, have at last come into their own. Reforming movements have shown themselves even within the Orthodox Church. Marzinkowski, and his German translator, Herr Jack, believe that Russia will yet give birth to a new kind of Christianity, a third form unlike that of either Rome or Byzantium, dependent neither on Wittenberg nor Geneva, a Johannine type going back directly to Jerusalem.

The question of a return to the practice of adult baptism was raised as early as 1917 at the Church Council which followed the Revolution, when Tychon was elected Patriarch of a dis-established church. There was discussion of the subject in the daily press, but it was in the end shelved. It continued to excite Marzinkowski, however, and in 1919 he prepared a memorandum on the subject, the substance of which was: "We must return to the practice of the baptism of adults on profession of faith. Conscious faith, conversion, re-birth must precede this holy ordinance, for it represents the union of a good conscience with God. So says the New Testament, so did the Apostles. Even in the fourth century, Church Fathers like Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom, although they had Christian parents, were only baptised after their twentieth year. This is confirmed by the service of baptism in the Orthodox Church, though it is not carried out consistently. The priest asks the candidate: Do you renounce the Devil? Are you one with Christ? Instead of the candidate the godparent answers, although frequently he has no idea what it is all about, and may even be himself without faith. Hence come the numerous merely formal and dead members of the Church, which itself accounts for the tremendous turning from the Church during the Revolution." The full statement was discussed with representatives of the Baptists, the Salvation Army, and other Christian bodies. It was read in an Orthodox Church in Moscow. Finally it was laid before Tychon, who was at the time a prisoner in his own house. When Marzinkowski visited him,

he found him in a purple gown, with a picture of the Virgin on his breast, and his patriarch's cap on his head. "Hallo, Reformer," he said, "I have read through your memorandum. Even if I were in agreement with you, what could I do by myself? The question is one for a Council." Marzinkowski was finally told that if he felt strongly on the matter he had better join the Baptists, and was then handed over to the Patriarch's secretary, who urged that the question of the time of baptism is no dogmatic one but a canonical, capable of change if the situation demands it. But only a Council could take such a decision, and no satisfactory council could meet till more peaceable days; which, comments Marzinkowski, was like saying that "the fire brigade will certainly come, but only when the fire is over." It was not till 1920, however, after a stay in a Mennonite colony, that he agreed to be baptised by the local pastor, and even then he continued to regard himself as a member of the Orthodox Church. When he was in prison there was some question as to whether he should be admitted to Holy Communion. His memorandum was submitted to the Metropolitan Cyril and other bishops, who were his fellow-prisoners. The scene is unforgettable, when the time and place are remembered. "The cell looked clean and attractive, the sun shining upon the flowers on the window-sill, which friends had brought. The bishops often received presents, which they naturally shared with many of their fellow-prisoners. The Metropolitan Cyril sat on his bed at the back of the cell, with the window opposite. On his left Bishop Theodor had found a place, and on his right Guri. He spoke to me in a kindly and fatherly way, while his younger colleagues examined my position more from the standpoint of theology." After hours of argument they agreed to allow him to receive the sacrament on the ground that, as a prisoner, he was in danger of losing his life, and that in such circumstances differences of belief on ecclesiastical questions become of less importance.

One of the most interesting figures who appear in these pages is Lunatscharski, the Soviet Commissioner for Education, who was one of the delegates at the Geneva Disarmament Conference, and who has recently been reported to be translating all the works of Anatole France into Russian. When controversy over religion became keen, he was one of the best known of the champions of Atheism. There is a description of a lecture on "Why we Ought not to Believe in God," which Lunatscharski delivered in Moscow, at the close of which Marzinkowski was allowed to express dissent, and to challenge the speaker to public debate. When the time came the Commissioner found his official duties prevented his appearing!

There are also vivid sketches of Archbishop Antonia, at first a supporter of the "Living Church" group of reforming priests, and later the leader of the "Regeneration" party; of old Father Georgi, who assisted with the few prison medicines, a splendid type of the "Russian orthodoxy of the heart," an acquaintance of Tolstoi, arrested because of his widespread and passionate preaching, but now released since everyone is convinced that he is harmless politically; of Sytin, the man who through ability and character rose from colporteur to be a millionaire publisher, and then, when his press had been seized and declared public property, was appointed its salaried manager, and rejoiced in the change; of the man whom Marzinkowski visited shortly before his execution, who had committed twenty-three murders, and had a large cross tattooed on his breast. ("It was a custom," he said, when asked the reason, "others had it, so I was done as well."); and of many others.

At intervals in the story there are glimpses of the author's mother, a simple, courageous woman, from whom he had evidently learned much, and whose death, since he was banished, has been a sad blow. Three pieces of advice which she gave, Marzinkowski especially treasures. "Be good, and you will everywhere receive good in return." "You use the words 'probably,' 'in my opinion,' 'as I think,' too often. Should one so speak about God?" "It is better to go to prison, than to be unfaithful to the preaching of the gospel."

Of Baptists we meet the aged W. G. Pawlow, the story of whose amazing early years has been made familiar by Mr. Byford in his *Peasants and Prophets*. We hear, also, of his son, Paul Pawlow, who after the Bolsheviki had been some time in power, was one of a committee which assisted in the drawing up of new laws for conscientious objectors to military service. I. S. Prochanow, the gifted leader of the Evangelical Christians, who was for a time at Bristol Baptist College (see Byford, *op. cit.*), appears, active in conferences with new reforming groups within and without the Orthodox Church. It is made clear that those belonging to these formerly persecuted sects have been able under the new regime to obtain positions of considerable influence, and that it is now recognised by many within the Greek Church that they have proved able to develop Christian character of a stronger and finer kind than that common among the Orthodox. It is this fact which seems to have been largely influential in bringing Marzinkowski to the Baptist position.

Almost every page lives and might be quoted. One does not easily forget the incidental allusions to the hunger and need in Moscow, nor the way in which, if summoned before the authorities, men took a bundle of necessaries with them in expectation

of prison. When Marzinkowski called on a friend he was unable to take off his wet rubber goloshes because his shoes were almost in pieces; "I sat and drank tea with him, after he had thoughtfully put an old newspaper under my feet. Such things caused no astonishment, in those days." In 1922, after his release from prison, he visited Petrograd again, and saw the famous library with the Codex Sinaiticus, unchanged save that it is now looked down upon by pictures of the revolutionary leaders.

There is much that is grim and tragic in this book, but the author is full of hope for the future. He sees "light in the East."

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

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