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THE United Methodist

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The Cry for God.

BY REV. S. GORDON.*

"Oh that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come even to His seat!" (Job xxiii. 3).

I.

THIS is a human cry, with a conscious need of the Divine. Who does not know its pathos and power? Deep down in our hearts we want God; strongly set in our souls is our need of Him; immovably established in our abiding nature is our desire for Him. We are sick for want of Him, our hearts are restless until they rest in Him; we have no peace until we have the peace of God. There is an aching void in us all the world can never fill. I do not say that people are always feeling this, but I do not hesitate to say that all people do feel it some time or other; they are bound to do so. They will feel it in the presence of pain, at the sight of sorrow, under the burden of bereavement, in the dread of death. In view of brief life being here our portion and our unutterable longing for continuance in life, and in view of love of our own which even death which separates us from them does not destroy, how can we do other than long to see and know and love as we feel and know we are seen and known and loved by that Infinite Love of God which will not let us go? One can say that surely of men and women everywhere. But that may be human nature on its best side and in its best mood. Is it not true of human nature on its worst side and in its worst mood? The spoils of sin, the follies of fashion, the ravages of unrighteousness, the awfulness of human ambition unallied with Christ and conscience, the sting and regret of mere self-will, the vanities of the worldly world, the disappointments of the flesh, the delusions and degradations of the devil, the failing of desire, the fleetingness of all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—these things cannot leave us in any other condition than that of being unfilled, hungering, and thirsting still.

II.

We long for God: it is our nature to do this. God made us so. God Himself is the dwelling place of the soul. How can the soul be other than homesick away from Him, ignoring Him, forgetting Him, at enmity with Him? So this "Oh that I knew where I might find Him" is more than a cry. It is a craving and a need of human nature. The fact is that there is no craving of human nature so prevalent as this, none so universal and so individual, so mighty and so impotent, so constant and so inconstant, so persistent and so ignored, paradoxical as it may all sound, as this craving of the soul for God. What is human nature but a bundle of paradoxes! This craving is the one thing that, fortunately for the race, never gets quite destroyed. It is not the goodness of human desire, nor the faithfulness of the human heart, nor the uprightness of human conduct, of which I speak. These may be part of its expression, but it is human nature itself I refer to. It is to human nature itself that the craving belongs. It must be so. It is no mere result of traditional teaching, no mere conventional expression of a blind faith, no mere outcome of ecclesiastical activity or theological teaching, no mere child of superstition; not in this way is this craving for God, for the living God, explained. It is not only Hebrew, Anglo-Saxon, and European peoples who believe in an All-Father, but

everyman everywhere; and everyman everywhere has called for God. The rude Barbarian, the civilised Chinaman, the Indian, the Negro, the black man, the brown man, the red man, the yellow man, the white man, where'er the foot of man hath trod, there has been the existence and the exhibition of this yearning for God. How often have missionaries told us that in some heathen cities there are almost as many temples as houses, and more gods than people to worship? The sun, the moon and stars, the mountain and the river, the bird and the beast, have been worshipped as gods likely to help frail, weak human creatures.

Nor in heathen lands alone can such testimony be found. Our own history contains similar evidence. The very names of the days of the week give proof of it. What is our name for the Lord's Day—Sunday—but the memorial of the fact that our savage ancestors dedicated the day to the worship of the sun! Or Monday but the memorial of the worship of the moon! Or Tuesday but the bringing to our remembrance the fact that our Anglo-Saxon forbears had a god of war! What is Wednesday, but the day of Woden, the chief god of northern mythology! What is Thursday but the indication that centuries ago Thor was the old Scandinavian god of Thunder! There is no need to stop at Friday, though that reminds us of a Teutonic goddess, Frigga or Freya, to whom Friday was sacred. Is that the reason why Friday is an unlucky day, that the name came from the Germans? It may be more agreeable to some to pass to the origin of Saturday, for that brings in our Allies of Italy. Saturnus was an ancient Italian deity, which gave the Italians their agriculture, their daily bread, and raised them from barbarism to civilisation.

These names all bear testimony to the truth that men, apart from the Gospel of Jesus Christ, have had a craving for God, and they help to give clear and unmistakable witness to the fact that the thirst for God is one of the primitive, universal, and abiding intuitions of man, that it is, as I have said, a part of human nature itself.

III.

It is no infant or parrot cry of a worn-out creed, but the natural call of a child for its father. In itself it is a proof of the existence of God. There is no child without a father. Where there is smoke there is fire. You can see into a large field through a very small chink. We hunger, there is food; we thirst, there is water; we have eyes, there is light; we have lungs, there is air. Shall we deny that there is no satisfaction for the hunger of the soul?

O friend, no proof beyond this yearning,
This outstretch of our hands we need;
God will not mock this hope He giveth,
No love He prompts shall vainly plead.

Man can be false to his own nature, can stifle the cry of his immortal soul, and suppress the yearning of his heart for God. Make no mistake in the matter. The Kingdom of God is within you. It is not the church or chapel, it is not any building, it is not a word, written or spoken, it is not even the Bible, if I may say so with reverence, which is God's supreme dwelling place. When a great Roman general captured Jerusalem he entered the temple, and, going into the Holy of Holies, exclaimed that he saw nothing there. Of course not! It is in the heart where the altar is raised. We long for more light, more knowledge, more certainty; we stretch out after Him if haply we might find Him.

IV.

We should like to see Him face to face. Of course we should. We should like to come to His very seat; but we are human, subject to the ignorant limitations which belong to human, finite, mortal creatures. We cannot add one cubit to our stature. We cannot make one hair black or white. We cannot tell what a day nor an hour will bring forth. We cannot rend the veil which hides to-morrow. We are tremendously ignorant. Our friends with whom we breakfasted this morning are as invisible to us as if they were at New York. We are as ignorant of what is happening in Leeds or Bradford or even Attercliffe, as we are of what is happening in Egypt, India, or Australia. The people in the room next to ours to-night, separated from us by a 9 inch, or a 4½ inch, or a lath and plaster wall, may be speaking about us in a way that would give us great joy or sorrow if we only heard, but we shall not hear a word. We shall go to sleep, simply go to sleep, and be as unconscious of the world about us and as helpless as if we were dead. Why worry about our limitations?

Where the apple reddens never pry,
Lest we lost our Eden, Eva and I.

We know God is on our left hand, for He is working there; we know He is on our right hand, though He

THEY MAKE THEIR OWN APPEAL



"SORRY TO BE SO MUCH TROUBLE," say they, "but it is not our fault. We did not ask to be born."

"Besides, how can we help getting hungry and growing out of our clothes?"

"Some day we hope to keep ourselves—then we shan't bother you any more; but now we have to learn spelling, and sums, and things, and SOMEBODY must keep us, you know."

"If we had any money in our money-boxes, and you asked us, we should not say No. Mother used to say it was horrid to be mean."

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* Notes of a Devotional Address given at the Sheffield Conference on Wednesday morning, July 11th, 1917.



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hides Himself there; we know clouds and darkness are round about Him, but we know that He is, we know that to Him there is no darkness at all; it is only to us here there is darkness. We cannot see God, but He sees us; we cannot know all about Him, but He knows all about us. We know He is; the day says so, the night says so. We know He is, as we listen to the voice of our own hearts, as we pause for a brief half hour to pray to Him and meditate about Him. The universal voice is not wrong, the hope of the human heart is not a delusion, a will-o'-the-wisp; the cry of the flesh is not vain; the need of the immortal soul is met; and may be supplied in Jesus Christ. We know He is, for Jesus has come to reveal Him, and declares, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." We need a Father to forgive us, erring, wayward children, and He waits to forgive us. "Our Father, forgive us our trespasses!" We need a Father, infinite in knowledge and power as in love, to keep us and ours, for we cannot keep ourselves, and Jesus tells us, "No man is able to pluck you out of my Father's hand." Friends, let not your heart be troubled. I know the original rendering of the first verse of the fourteenth chapter of John when I say you believe in God, believe also in Jesus Christ. Speaking for myself, I take the fact of Christ to my heart and to my mind. I bind it to my soul with hoops of grateful devotion and adoring love, and say out of a full heart, My Lord and my God!

The Wesleyan Conference

THE PASTORAL SESSION.

BY REV. WM. WAKINSHAW.

Our Pastoral Session began on Tuesday morning and ended on Friday evening. I have heard sundry ministers affirm that they enjoy this more than they do the Representative Session. That is a matter of taste. But from the standpoint of the distracted journalist there is not so much nutritious copy available. I am afraid I am not an expert in the art of window dressing, but I will try to display to the best advantage such items in our proceedings as may be of interest to those outside our borders.

Two Honoured Brethren.

Early in our proceedings we promoted Samuel Chadwick and Maldwyn Hughes. The first was designated for the Presidency next year, and the second was inserted in the only vacancy that was available by nomination to the ranks of the Legal Hundred. Both of them are sound democrats. They are prophets and not priests, and so long as we are led by men of their type the destiny of Methodism is assured. Each of them is a mighty preacher, and in their respective departments of thought and activity they have few rivals. Their election is a victory for advanced or progressive Methodism.

Our Memorial Services.

I omitted to refer to the most impressive Memorial Service that we held in the previous week for our soldiers and sailors who had fallen during the year in the war. It was a solemn and heart-breaking hour. But the service for our ministers who have been gathered to their fathers since last Conference may be described in similar terms. It was a heavy list that was laid before us. In round figures it numbered sixty, and it included Dr. John Shaw Banks, Dr. James Hope Moulton, Dr. Henry Haigh, and Silvester Whitehead. Moreover, for the first time in our history we had to include six probationers, or students, who had died in action, and a chaplain who had fallen in the discharge of his duties. Dr. Findlay was the first to lay his wreath on the tombs of the departed. To him our losses were a sore personal bereavement, and few could restrain their emotion as, with a sob in his voice, he touched on some of the names that I have indicated. So many wished to offer their tribute to an old comrade that in the gentlest possible manner the President had to apply the closure to what to all of us was a service of extraordinary power.

The Deep Things of God.

Our full and frank discussion on the state of the work of God among us will rank as one of the most notable on record. It had many unparalleled features. One was the unusual number of young ministers who joined in the discussion. Fifty, or even twenty, years ago their incursion would have been unthinkable. They acquitted themselves splendidly. Their demand for sympathy, leadership, and fellowship won from all parts of the house a generous hearing. The address of Dr. Watkinson was a marvel. His bow abides in strength. It was a rare blend of wisdom, humour, illustrative power, and spiritual force.

The Unity of Methodism.

I heard nothing directly bearing on Methodist union in the Pastoral Session. But what transpired in the previous week, and what I heard in conversations with ministers, has more than ever convinced me that we are steadily moving towards our appointed goal. There is not the nip in the atmosphere which was so perceptible a few years ago. The most somnolent are beginning to awake, and, like the tribe of Judah, are pitching their tents towards the sunrise. Events are mighty educators. The clerical tendency among us has been scotched, if not killed, and the trend towards freer and broader conceptions of the Kingdom of God has been perceptibly quickened. This was clearly shown in the last hour of the Conference when by an overwhelming majority a proposal that seemed to favour an alliance with the State Church was rejected.

Happenings.

—Threlfall's Brewery declared a dividend of 15 per cent on Ordinary shares, against 9 per cent last year. £80,000 was placed to reserve.

—It was disclosed at the prize-giving of King Edward VI. School, Stratford-on-Avon, last week, that Captain Bruce Bairnsfather was an old boy.

—Judge Bray, at the Bloomsbury County Court, has decided that a sewing-machine given as a birthday present during an engagement is not a returnable gift.

—Prince Louis of Battenberg, introduced by the Marquess of Lansdowne and the Marquess of Crewe, took his seat in the House of Lords last week as Marquess of Milford Haven.

—Holborn Council has declined to support Stepney Council's resolution in favour of reprisals for air raids, on the ground that the matter is one for military consideration altogether.

—In the Commons Mr. Bonar Law said he was considering the question of issuing an order that all men of German extraction in any branch of the public services who objected to share in the defence of their adopted country should no longer receive State employment.

—The main features of Lord Rhondda's food policy, which he expounded in the House of Lords last week, are—Fixing prices of articles of prime necessity at all stages, on the principle of allowing pre-war profits. Elimination of the speculator and the unnecessary middleman. Price of meat to be reduced by 6d. a pound, and the maximum price of the 4 lb. loaf to be 9d. In regard to sugar, hotels, restaurants and manufacturers would be rationed, while every householder would be invited to apply for a sugar card, and to register with a retailer.

—Cuba Congress has passed a Conscription Bill, which applies to men between 21 and 30.

—A serious extension of the area affected by the potato disease is reported.

—Forty large tanks of cod-liver and other oils were destroyed in a fire at Aberdeen, the damage being estimated at £20,000.

—Millers and bakers have risen to the occasion, says Mr. Clynes, of the Food Department, and the reports of bad, or even unpalatable bread, are growing much less frequent.

—"During an air raid persons may take shelter in this building at their own risk," is the red-lettered notice which the City Corporation is sending to the owners of all suitable buildings in the City, who are asked to exhibit it.

—In order to loosen the stopper of a bottle of eau de Cologne, Florence Elizabeth Miller, a domestic servant, of Highgate, placed it in the oven. It exploded when she opened the door, set fire to her clothing, and she was burnt to death.

—Hearty congratulations on his public-spirited and courageous action in bringing to the notice of the authorities the defects in the medical provision for the Mesopotamia Expedition, were expressed to Col. Carter in a resolution passed by the British Medical Association.

—Staff-Nurse Mary B. Marshall, a Clapham lady, was killed at the post of duty when the 87th General Hospital at Salonika was bombed on March 12th last, refusing to take shelter and sacrificing her life for the good of others.

—Two out of every nine doctors in the United States will be called on for war service.

—A German aviator who escaped from Belgium has been captured in New York.

—Shareholders of Lever Brothers, Ltd., on Monday confirmed without discussion resolutions increasing the capital from £80,000,000 to £40,000,000.

—William Christianson, a leader of America's Boy Scouts, and well known in the Sunday School world, has been interned for the duration of the war.

—"The old regular Army was probably the finest force that has ever taken the field since Caesar's legions," says Lieut.-General Sir Francis Lloyd.

—In a letter to Mr. Hogge, M.P., Mr. Barnes, Pensions Minister, says he knows of no authority entitling the Ministry to interfere with a pension during its currency.

—Vegetables grown in the London County Council parks are to be used for feeding necessitous school children or presented to hospitals and other institutions.

—Southend is suffering from a plague of butterflies, and the Food Production Society is offering prizes to boys and girls who catch the greatest number for the Society's show in September.

Things that are being Said.

The Real Event in Germany.

The real event is that the struggle in the soul of Germany has begun; and it is a struggle to the light.—"A Wayfarer" in the "Nation."

Not Worth While Being a Tramp.

With the tramp threatened on one side with having to go to work, and on the other with having to go to war, it will soon get so that it won't be really worth while being a tramp.—The "Commoner."

Soldiers and Immortality.

The man who tried to persuade a body of men at the Front that death is the end of all things, and that there is no future existence, would find his audience—to say the least of it—unsympathetic.—A Padre in the "Church Times."

Empire and Colour-bar.

An Empire with a rigid colour-bar is not yet a free Empire, call it what we will. But freedom is in the line of our character and genius. And they are obscured and defeated so long as the great problem of Indian self-government remains either untouched or weakly and half-heartedly attacked.—The "Nation."

Wanting Less Possessions.

Someone has offered me a very remarkable and beautiful and valuable gift—and I don't know what to do. A few years ago I should have accepted it with rapture. To-day—not a little, perhaps, because the uncertainty of life was never so evident—I hesitate, because the older I grow the less do I want to accumulate possessions.—E. V. LUCAS in the "Sphere."

Methodist Union First.

We desire to live in fellowship with the Church of England; we desire to see her strong in all good things, and that she should be delivered from every hindering doctrine, or any impediment of administration. But our duty of returning and rest lies just now in another field of the organised forces of the Christian religion. One thing at once. Methodist Union first.—The "Methodist Recorder."

The Many Men He Is.

No man knows how many men he is. Which means that no man knows how many lives he lives, and how many worlds he inhabits here and now. The many in the one! We take that as meaning many atoms of dust combined into one world. But why not many lives in one life, many selves in one self, many worlds in one world? But that is an abyss on the edge of which it becomes me to pause.—PRINCIPAL L. P. JACKS in the "Hibbert Journal."

Not Said by a Nonconformist.

The general public gathers from the rare hints of the newspapers that Convocation is an assembly of eccentrics or of foolish nonentities, who devote some hours two or three times a year to foolish obstructiveness, to religious trivialities, or to demagogic fireworks. In justice to their grave and learned members, we beg the sacred synods to limit the possibilities of such misrepresentation.—The "Church Times."

Jane Austen's Style.

Those who admire only the magnificent in language will deny the greatness of Miss Austen's style. But it is great. It is flexible; it does perfectly everything she wants it to; there is never a loose sentence or a wrong word; and if her outlook and her methods precluded elaborate periods, there is, nevertheless, a peculiar soft music in it, which is remarkably diffused even through the conversational passages, for all their fidelity to life.—Mr. J. C. SQUIRE in the "Observer."

Jane Austen and Meredith.

Jane Austen was the first English novelist before Meredith to portray charming women with free personality. Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse have an independence rare in English fiction of the accident of being fallen in love with. Elizabeth is a delightful prose counterpart of Beatrice. Miss Austen has another point of resemblance to Meredith. She loves to portray men puffed up with self-approval. She, too, is a satirist of the male egoist. Her books are the most finished social satires in English fiction.—ROBERT LYND in the "New Statesman."

Drink and Wastage.

The successful prosecution of the war is still being hampered by excessive consumption of intoxicating liquors. This excessive consumption is of serious consequence to the efficiency of our fighting forces, especially in regard to material. It involves wastage of the nation's food supplies, and prevents economy in the use of the nation's resources in the matter of sea and land transport. The Board are therefore of opinion that the time has come when comprehensive measures beyond their present powers are necessary.—The Liquor Control Committee.

—Applying for compensation money, a soldier's widow told the West London County Court judge that she wanted to go to Whitstable, and when warned of the possibility of bombs she replied that she was not afraid of them.

—In view of difficulties experienced by consumers last winter, Paddington Town Clerk has been instructed to store a quantity of coal not exceeding a thousand tons, to be retailed to small consumers next winter at a price to be fixed by the Coal Controller.

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United Methodist Table Talk.

The Editor's address is 188 Rye Lane, Peckham, S.E.15.

U.M. ROLL OF HONOUR.

PRIVATE F. A. PILKINGTON.

The Sheepridge Church, Huddersfield, has suffered its first loss in the great European war in the death of Private Frank Arthur Pilkington, in hospital somewhere in France, through wounds from shrapnel. He was a bright and promising lad of nineteen, a teacher in the Sunday School, and a member of the church. The church sympathises much with the parents, who have given years of active service to our church and Sunday School.

PRIVATE SIDNEY BANNISTER.

The parents of Private Sidney Bannister, of Prudhoe, have just received official word that their son is numbered among the fallen. He served in a labour battalion and followed his trade as a bootmaker. His death came through a heavy bombardment of the camp, in which he was so severely wounded, that he died ten minutes after reaching hospital. He was a good Christian young man, assistant secretary of the Sunday School, a member of the choir and of our church at Prudhoe-on-Tyne. His loss is very keenly felt among the friends of the church.

UNITED METHODIST HONOURS.

Sergeant Fred Meachen, of our Nantwich Church, has been awarded the D.C.M. for conspicuous courage.

PERSONAL.

Dorothy Jose Nicholas, third daughter of Rev. T. Nicholas (Sunderland) has passed the London matriculation examination. She holds a Durham County scholarship at Ryhope Secondary School, and is only sixteen years of age.

Clifford S. Shaw, son of the Rev. J. Herbert Shaw, has been awarded the "Eric Duckworth Memorial Scholarship" at Ashville College, Harrogate, this year.

In the recently published lists of results of Birmingham University the names of three teachers in our Washwood Heath Sunday School appear. Mr. Eric Pascal has secured a major scholarship (£150), Miss Emily Madge Pascal has matriculated first class, and Miss Minnie Merchant second class.

Gladys W. Osborne, daughter of Rev. R. H. Osborne, of Gorleston-on-Sea, has, at the early age of thirteen years, successfully passed the Senior Division examination of the Royal Academy and London College of Music.

Mr. Walter Cooper, who is 18 years of age and organist at our Main Street Church at Bulwell, has just gained the Associate degree of the Victoria College of Music, London.

[Congratulations to all of our clever young friends.—Ed. U.M.]

The Rev. E. H. Johnson has left Huddersfield for service with the Y.M.C.A. in France. His address is: Y.M.C.A., A.P.O., S. 76, B.E.F., France.

Second-Lieutenant A. W. Pewtress has been promoted to a full lieutenant. He is son of the Church Secretary at Haslingden Road, Rawtenstall, and was one of the teachers in the Junior Department prior to the war.

Private Harry Smith has received his commission and expects shortly to go to Salonika. Sergt. (acting Sergt-Major) Allen Nuttall has been mentioned in despatches. Both belong to our Rawtenstall Church.

Correction.—In the announcement about Private Dalley, p. 347, instead of Manchester Road, Stockport, read Manchester Road, Southport.

REV. GEORGE HOOPER.

On leaving Leeds for Barrow-in-Furness the admirers and friends of Rev. George Hooper connected with the Leeds and County Liberal Club presented him with a handsome wallet, suitably inscribed, containing Treasury notes. The subscribers numbered fifty-five. Mr. B. Dickinson, J.P., presided at the presentation, and among the apologies for absence was one from Sir Charles Wakefield, ex-Lord Mayor of London. Sir William Middlebrook, M.P., made the presentation and tributes to Mr. Hooper's work in Leeds were paid by him and the chairman and Mr. William Armistead. All expressed sorrow that Mr. Hooper was leaving Leeds. Mr. Hooper said he valued the gift and the good feeling and kindness he knew there were behind it. The reason he was going to Barrow was that he saw there a splendid opportunity for one who understood workmen, as he thought he did, and had a message which he believed was for their general uplift. He thought they would welcome straightforward talk about things that concerned their deeper life.

DISTRICT ELECTION OF COMMITTEES.

Rev. W. Downing writes: "Now that the democratic principle of election of members of Connexional Committees by the Districts that they represent has become embodied in the law of the Connexion, I should like to pay a tribute to the memory of one who, with the writer and others, fought for this principle for many years in the old U.M.F.C. annual assemblies. I refer to Rev. W. C. Rank, for twenty-seven years minister of Great Harwood Church, who 'fell asleep' in 1906. District nomination was all that the old Foundation Deed permitted, but district election was the principle fought for. 'One soweth and another reapeth.'"

The Passing of the Brethren.

To the Editor of the UNITED METHODIST.

Dear Sir,

Initially allow me to express sincerest thanks for the excellent and complete manner in which you have conveyed to your readers the doings of the Sheffield Conference. Your own notes on the proceedings, the uplifting message of the President, the various contributions of selected correspondents, the epitome of the business transacted, and other features of the Conference issues have served to familiarise all who desired with the important decisions arrived at. To the invaluable services you have rendered as Editor for a decade (and in the chorus of gratitude for which I add my voice) you have added fresh laurels in your special numbers. Permit this genuine expression of appreciation of your past work and of hearty good will and confidence in the labours which (D.V.) still await you.

My chief purpose hereby is to direct attention to and emphasise a point made by Rev. H. J. Watts. He expresses a feeling one has often had, in regard both to ministers passing into retirement and those who have passed "Home," when he remarks: "The Conference would like to lay at least a sentence of appreciation and of gratitude at the feet of each one of the men it has learned to trust and to love." Mr. Watts's attendant query: "Would it not be well if, in some way, information could be supplied to the speakers on these occasions?" is well worth being remembered and acted upon. Such a course would be helpful to the speakers, a comfort to those laying down their armour in the Holy War, and a condolence to those whose dear ones have gone hence. One is confident that those charged with these affecting arrangements are as anxious as anyone to adopt the most appropriate procedure, and there is not a breath of criticism in what is here written. It is simply a matter of attaining the most suitable ends in a delicate and impressive part of every Conference, and my sole purpose is to save from oblivion, if possible, a very wise suggestion becomingly and sympathetically dealt with by one of your special correspondents. May God's goodness abound towards us in the ensuing connexional year!

Yours,

GEO. MELLIEU.

Our Chaplains.

Rev. G. F. Walters, M.C., C.F., writes:

We are living in tents, and are very happy. Hostile aeroplanes come out nearly every night and drop bombs all about us, otherwise we should be quite happy. The change is good, and I myself am as "fit" as ever I was. Yet the work is getting a bit harder. After a time we were allowed horses, and with these enabled to get about amongst the men. Now, when my work lies all over the scattered divisional area, they are withdrawn. I have been able to borrow one until last Saturday, and now that is my privilege no longer. To do my work now as it should be done without a horse I regard as beyond my powers. I cannot ride miles and miles on a bicycle and take seven or eight services on Sundays. I am doing the best I can.

Rev. J. Gibbon, C.F., says:

This is a great place for seeing the old faces again. After a huge voluntary service last Sunday night I met with lads from my own home, and chatted wistfully with certain others about those intimate week-night services in our little church hut on Salisbury Plain, where Professor Moulton and I used to meet a handful of devoted Christian boys. The services here are very inspiring. The men of the Scottish Churches, the Wesleyan, and the United Board all worship together, so you may imagine what an immense throng assembles in the Y.M.C.A. marquee. Did I say in the marquee? Then that is quite misleading, for there are usually far more crowded around the raised flies of the tent than under its canvas, though the seating capacity runs into several hundreds.

Our Magazines for August.

The first article in the "United Methodist Magazine" to which the majority of readers will turn is that on the Sheffield Conference by Rev. R. Pyke. They will find it very interesting, with just that touch of the personal which adds piquancy. The editor writes on "The Fatal Schism" which comes with the attempt to divorce religion from life. Rev. G. W. Stacey's Sunday Evening Meditation is fresh and helpful. Very interesting and seasonable is Rev. Fred Sparrow's up-to-date article on "A Pen Picture of Russian Peasantry." Rev. J. T. Newton continues his informing studies of "The Characteristics of the Four Gospels." The chapter in "The House of Transformations" is one of the most powerful yet written in this serial. Denis Crane gives much food for thought in "Tangible Fruits of Partial State Control." "Nooks and Corners of Old London" continues its interesting course. "Under the Home Lamp" and "Our Children's Portion" complete an excellent issue.

"Ten Momentous Years," by Rev. J. W. Heywood, is given first place in the "Missionary Echo." It tells the entrancing story of the ending of the opium traffic in China. Very striking is the map which compares the United Methodist Church in West China with a part of England. "Through the Secretary's Field Glass" is as interesting as ever. Rev. W. H. Hudspeth's article on "The West China Union University" should not be missed. His suggestion for the founding of a University at Yunnan Fu deserves very careful consideration indeed, and seems to come within the bounds of "practical politics." Glowing tributes are paid to the memory of John Mgomba by Revs. B. J. Ratcliffe and Henry T. Chapman. The chief item in the Women's Missionary Auxiliary page is an interesting letter from Mrs. Robson, of Yung Ping Fu. An admirable number.

A Sunday at Duke Street, Southport.

DELECTABLE Southport! If we must have towns let us have them made on the lines of this. Here man has called in the artistry of nature to beautify his dwelling place. We see what can be done when man co-operates with God. Avenues of trees, fine and stately streets, flowery promenades, a pier, marine drives, and though not quite at the seaside—the inevitable disadvantage must come in somewhere—this has been turned to good account by the creation of a large marine lake, playing safely upon which were various manner of pleasure craft.

Our church at Duke Street is quite worthy of such a town. Beautifully placed, pleasingly decorated, and, withal, acoustic properties that are fine. Here on the Sabbath I assembled not merely to supply the pulpit but to worship, and everything lent itself to that lofty end. Although I was a stranger strangeness banished quickly. There was a welcome genial and kindly. I found a means of grace in the atmosphere of the vestry, the key for the day was struck in that outer court, and when I was led into the choir vestry, where every member simply and reverently arose while Dr. Snape commended preacher and choir to God, asking His blessing on the services of the day, my heart was assured that Duke Street was indeed the House of God.

The day was warm and sunny, but that did not keep the people away to "worship God in nature," as some folk often say, for at each service goodly congregations gathered.

Services are usually described by occupants in the pew, but I certainly follow an excellent leader, Dr A. C. Benson, Master of Magdalene, Cambridge, when I venture to convey the impressions received by the preacher in the pulpit. As was to be expected, the reverent order of the vestry was reflected in the services of the church. The choir was consecrated to its work, and the congregation readily followed its lead, and entered worshipfully into the songs of praise. No wonder the services throughout were reverent and impressive. There were few if any latecomers, no shuffling about, no distractions, and at the close no undue haste to leave; indeed, the lingering groups at the door, exchanging subdued but genial greetings, reflected the harmony, goodwill, and fellowship of the people.

The children had their portion of the morning service, and expected it, for their pastor, Rev. T. Nightingale, is their big brother and chum, and I believe would omit his sermon rather than his children's portion. The children's hymn is selected from the Sunday School Hymnal, copies of which, also special sheet of war hymns, are found in all the pews. Mr. Dixon, who is well known by visitors to Southport, called upon me on Saturday evening to fix up the hymns for the services. It is not surprising that things work smoothly at Duke Street.

The preacher found a joy and blessing in his deliverance; his reward came in the services through the splendid attention given by the congregations. I learn that Duke Street maintains its finances well. The announcements included the offertory of the previous Sunday for church funds £7 15s. 6d., and retiring collection at the morning service for the boys' camp at Manchester and Salford Refuge £6 7s. 4d. Also on the Wednesday previous Mr. Nightingale was in his vestry to receive contributions for the Women's Missionary Auxiliary Fund in lieu of the usual garden party, and £40 11s. 1½d. was contributed.

There is an excellent graded Sunday School, the primary especially being a department ably conducted by a very capable band of young ladies.

Duke Street is very loyal to its minister, and is accustomed to long pastorates. Rev. Silas Hocking was there eighteen years, Dr. Brook twelve years, and Mr. Nightingale will shortly commence his fifth year, and has already promised several years forward.

The hospitality I received in the home of Dr. Mrs., and Miss Snape was as kind and gracious as the services at Duke Street were helpful and inspiring. The name of Snape is greatly revered among the late United Free Methodists.

I have returned home to the great spaces near where the Brontës, "in lonely and pensive mood," wrought better than they knew, where Halliwell Sutcliffe and Keighley Snowden have found both love and story, where the hillmen are so grandly independent and remain as true as steel, where Philip Snowden in our school faced his first audience to deliver a recitation, and his mother is with us still, and where Captain A. Smith, M.P., spent his boyhood, these two M.P.'s being born within a few doors of each other.

But I feel I want to thank our friends over there in Lancashire through the pages of your paper, and express the earnest hope that all U.M. visitors to Southport will take advantage of the spiritual uplift they can surely obtain in the quiet, stately, well-ordered, and reverent services at Duke Street.

C. E. PENROSE.

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Sunday Afternoon.

BY REV. ERNEST F. H. CAPEY.

MANY friends have asked me during the last twelve months the source of a quotation made at the Rochdale Conference, and until to-day I have been unable to say. Glancing this morning among a pile of old papers in search of something else I found this that I had often sought, and sought in vain. The lines had been copied out, in part, in one of my commonplace books, without indication of their authorship or source. And even now I cannot reveal the name of the writer, for the source of the quotation, the "British Weekly," Nov. 28th, 1912, does not give the name, but it enables me to give the poem in full.

My God Came Down the Stairs to Me.

Oh, long and dark the stairs I trod
With stumbling feet to find my God,

Gaining a foothold bit by bit,
Then slipping back and losing it;

Never progressing, striving still,
With weakening grasp and fainting will,

Bleeding to climb to God, while He
Serenely smiled, unnoting me.

Then came a certain time when I
Loosened my hold and fell thereby;

Down to the lowest step my fall,
As if I had not climbed at all.

And while I lay despairing there,
I heard a footfall on the stair,

In the same path where I, dismayed,
Faltered and fell and lay afraid.

And lo! when hope had ceased to be,
My God came down the stairs to me.

Smellie, in his "Men of the Covenant," tells how Archibald Porteus, the young chaplain of Lady Hundalee, tried to open her Ladyship's ears to the footfall on the stair in the day when she mourned "the fremmitness"—the distance and estrangement between herself and her Lord. "Nothing shall hinder your Lord," he said, "though your sins were as hard as a rock, and as high as mountains in the way, yet neither the height of the one nor the hardness of the other shall keep Him from you. For He would as fain be at you as ye at Him, and fainer too. Take courage! He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

The Bonnie White Man.

It is in this same golden book that we find the story of Samuel Rutherford's "Bonnie White Man." Though it was not until he reached manhood that he yielded his heart to God—"I suffered my sun," he writes regretfully, "to be high in the heaven, and near afternoon"—he was but a child when his Lord came down the stairs to him. "Playing once with the boys of Crailing, the child stumbled into a deep well and his frightened comrades ran to acquaint his father and mother. They hurried out, fearing that they would not see their Samuel alive. But they discovered him sitting on a hillock, a little from the well, all wet and cold, but unharmed and safe. How had he got there? they asked, and he answered, 'A bonnie white man drew me forth and set me down!'"

That "bonnie white man"—Theodorus, a youth of Julian the Apostate's day, saw Him when he was being tormented by the Emperor's command for the crime of singing psalms. When asked afterwards how he had endured sufferings so great with cheerfulness, he replied: "There stood by me a Young Man, that ever and anon with a fine linen wiped away the sweat and sprinkled my body with a most cold water." And Margaret Wilson saw Him, when she was sentenced along with widow Lachlison to be "ty'd to palisades fixed in the Solway sand, within the floodmark, and there to stand till the tide overflowed them and drowned them." The stake to which the widow was fastened was farther out than the one to which Margaret, a slip of a girl, was lashed, so that the younger woman might watch the fate of her companion and thus have time and space for repentance. But what did she actually see when the cruel waves leaped round widow Lachlison? This was the question her persecutors asked, and the reply that came angered and awed them: "What do I see," she said, "but Christ wrestling there?" Then, opening her New Testament, she read aloud the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans—the great chapter which tells how the condemnation of sin is cancelled by the Saviour; and how the spirit of adoption delivers from bondage and fear; and how nothing, neither death nor life, can separate from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The chapter finished, she sang her farewell psalm—the 25th Psalm, from the seventh verse:

My sins and faults of youth
Do Thou, O Lord, forget—"

Prayer (THOS. SHEPHERD).

Alas, my God, that we should be
Such strangers to each other!
O, that as friends we might agree
And walk and talk together!

Thou know'st my soul does dearly love
The place of Thine abode;
No music drops so sweet a sound
As these two words—my God.

When wilt Thou come unto me, Lord?
For till Thou dost appear,
I count each moment for a day,
Each minute for a year.

In the School of Christ.

BY REV. T. A. JEFFERIES, F.L.S.

LUKE II. 1-10.

(C.E. Topic for Aug. 12.)

Relations govern everything in this world. The leader must have his following, the general his army, and it has been held that if God is Love, there must be at least duality in the Godhead, since love without the Beloved is unthinkable. Similarly the Great Teacher, of whom we wrote last week, implies a circle of disciples, a number of those who learn of Him, a school. Note that the word has no necessary connection with a building, any more than the word church. Either may be used of the persons concerned or of the place where they gather. But the school of Christ rarely has the local sense: almost invariably it means those who seek to understand His message and follow in His steps. Our study to-day, therefore, is concerned with Christ's followers; we think of the scholar more than the teacher, or, rather, of the scholar in relation to the teacher.

The Curriculum.

And first let us consider what is taught in this school. Science? Art? Philosophy? Yes, each and all, and each in its all-important phase: the science of life, the art of happiness, the philosophy of truth. "Take my yoke upon you," said Jesus, "and learn of Me: for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." That "rest" implies the art of happiness; and the "yoke" implies action, and therefore the knowledge of how to act on the science of life, for we do not put on a yoke to go to bed. Here, then, are two of the great branches of thought, and we note that the science and the art, the action and the happiness, are linked together—already we have learned one lesson: happiness is not to be found in idleness, but in activity, in being yoked with Christ in some service. But what of philosophy? Many, perhaps, are not anxious to learn anything in a sphere which, to the onlooker, appears so unproductive. But the philosophic mind, with its broad outlook and wide grasp, will always exercise great weight, and it is therefore well for us to realise that the Great Teacher goes to the root of things. Listen: "If ye continue in My words, ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Philosophy, has it not been your aim all down the ages so to learn and master the truth of things as to attain to true mental and spiritual freedom? Here, then, is the school for you. And you, at least, will not be surprised to find unlearned and ignorant men gathering in the same class: for the true philosophy, like all great truths, will bear directly on human experience, will lay open the glory and tragedy of the human heart, will slip off the trappings and reveal the essential nature, will appeal to all men simply because they are men, and will be capable of expression in the language of everyday life. Philosopher and labourer, scientist, artist, and artisan—all meet in the school of Christ: for they all need life, and without Christ true life is impossible.

The Entrance Examination.

Now great teachers never make themselves cheap. Their books may be cheap, but that is not the same thing. You may buy "Sartor Resartus" for a shilling, but it takes a ten-guinea brain and a hundred horsepower will to read it till you get hold of its message. No low-priced issue of our classics will ever make Carlyle cheap. Similarly you may buy a Testament for a penny, but it does not follow that a penny will carry you into the school of Jesus. Let us be plain, however; there is no money to pay. Entrance into the school of Christ is not by the payment of fees, but by passing an examination which the Master conducts personally. The examination is unique, as might be expected. The Great Teacher does not look for learning, but for the desire to learn; not for ability, but for the desire to be useful; not for goodness, but for a certain shame that we are not better than we are. As He went about He used to say to men, "Repent ye and believe the Gospel," and once He said to His disciples, "Except ye become as little children ye cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven." The entrance examination is not easy, especially for "people of position or ability," and yet, who can say the door is not wide open?

The Teacher and his Scholars.

One would like to go inside this school and watch the Great Teacher at work, and pages might be written describing what happens there. Only two things, however, can be mentioned here; the first is that the Master teaches mainly by example, and the more the men see of their Master the more they love Him and try to imitate Him. He even lets them hear Him pray, and it always makes prayer a new thing to them. Every schoolmaster will tell you that this is the best of all sorts of teaching. The other point I want to mention is that He somehow manages to know every scholar through and through, and creates a bond of personal love that makes the scholar ready to go to the ends of the earth for Him. Do you belong to this school?

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Our Lord's Person and Work.

BY REV. R. H. B. SHAPLAND.

THE CHRIST OF THE SAINTS.

(Young People's Topic, August 12th.)

I TAKE the liberty of transposing the topics for August 12th and 19th. The experience of the saints comes before the statements of the creeds, just as the perception of beauty and joy in it must precede any teaching on the principles of art. The creeds are attempts to formulate experience, that is, to give it precise expression, and therefore we should be taking things in a wrong order if we put them first.

The Continuity of Experience.

The New Testament is a record of experience. It tells us what Jesus Christ was to the first Christians, how they came to know Him, and the liberty and power and grace they found in trusting Him. To them the Kingdom of God was not meat and drink, not merely the observance of a memorial feast of bread and wine, still less was it the dry discussion of philosophic principles; it was a glad emancipation which gave to them a glorious hope, it was righteousness, peace, and joy in the living presence of a Saviour. Age has succeeded age in the history of the Church, forms and ceremonies have changed, and expressions of belief have been modified, but this same blessed experience has persisted. There are men and women to-day to whom Jesus is all He was to St. Paul and St. John. They know Him as Saviour and Lord; in their trial hours He stands by them as He did by the Apostle, saying, "Fear not!" and in their death they, like dying Stephen, will see Him standing at God's right hand to receive their spirits. The continuity of Christian experience may best be likened to that river which John saw flowing out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb into the midst of the street of the city. On either side were there the trees of life, i.e., the saints, bearing twelve manner of fruits, for there is variety in Christian virtue, and the leaves of each tree, "the little unremembered acts of kindness and of love," were for the healing of nations. That river still flows, and wherever it comes it produces the saint. You have not to go to old histories to find them. In your own Church there is at least one saint, one soul whose experience of Jesus is rich and full, and who can say with the New Testament writer: "We have passed from death unto life": "I know in whom I have believed": "I live, yet not I, but Christ, liveth in me": "He loved me and gave Himself up for me." But if your search should prove fruitless there is no need to despair. If you cannot find one experiencing Christian why not *be* one? If there is an obstacle in the way it does not rise from Christ's side, but from yours. Recent psychology has emphasised the supreme importance of attention for experience. "The world which, as we think surrounds us, the world of which we are conscious, is made up of the things we care about, the things which we choose to attend to. All the rest slips away from us unperceived." The call of Jesus, "Son, give me thy heart," means, first of all, "Son, give me thy attention." The heart is the seat of conscious spiritual activity, and therefore the will is central to it. Have you turned to Jesus? Do you wait for Him? Do you want Him? He is but a thought away, and you can think that thought which finds Him.

The Unanimity of the Saints.

You have heard a great deal about the differences of Christians, but not so much about the things in which they agree. The fact is that there is much which all the followers of Jesus accept, and the higher we go into Christian experience the less we find of debate and contradiction and the more of unity. "On all questions about religion there is most distressing divergency. But the saints do not contradict each other. They all tell the same story. And what do they say about Jesus? Briefly three things: First, He is God with us. In Him we find God's presence, so that to trust Him is to trust God, and to know Him is to know God. Secondly, He is one of us; bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh; truly man as He is truly God. "Men find in Him the perfect form of human personality in union with the Divine Spirit." Thirdly, He died to save us. His death has ransomed us from sin, His resurrection has opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us.

Mr. T. E. Phillips, Truro.

Truro St. George's has lost an old and highly esteemed member in the death, on July 3rd, of Mr. Thomas Edwin Phillips. Associated with the Church since its old Kenwyn Street days, a local preacher (and a most acceptable one) for 40 years, a class leader, and a Sunday School teacher for very many years, and a Trustee of the Church since its erection, Mr. Phillips was a veritable power for good, not only in the Church, but in the city, and many there are who owe more than they can express to his cultured, earnest ministry and kindly, helpful influence. Owing to failing health and an affliction which he bravely bore, Mr. Phillips was not able to labour with his wonted zeal for several years before his death, but his influence remained, and at the memorial service held at the church prior to the interment at Truro Cemetery there was a large and representative attendance, including the deceased's employers, who came from Redruth for the express purpose of paying a last tribute of respect to an old friend and faithful servant. Rev. J. Carnegie conducted the service, and spoke in warm terms of the sterling qualities and loyal service of the deceased. Much sympathy has been extended to the widow and children.

Our Local Preachers.

A SOLDIER'S BIBLE.

In the early pages of Sir Oliver Lodge's recent book, entitled "Raymond," there is the following note in small print:

"The religious side of Raymond was hardly known to the family: but among his possessions at the Front was found a small pocket Bible, called 'The Palestine Pictorial Bible' (Pearl, 24mo), Oxford University Press, in which a number of passages are marked; and on the fly-leaf pencilled in his writing, is an index to these passages which I copy here."

Then follow the passages which I have scanned one by one, and all the while two reflections thrust themselves upon me: the first, which I will only mention, that probably young Raymond Lodge is only one of ten thousand whose piety, though deep and strong, has never found expression to human eyes; and the second, what an amazingly beautiful book the Bible is, and how shabby and foolish it is of us to be so persistently neglecting it, and spending so much time in reading generally. Both these remarks are commonplace enough I am aware, and I have made no attempt to trick them out in language which gives them an air of originality.

If, as is very unlikely, these lines should ever meet the eye of Sir Oliver Lodge, he would not object, I think, to my commenting on a passage which must be very sacred to him. The number of passages in the Index referred to, is twenty-one. There are only two whole chapters in the list. If we had to say off-hand which two we should place on our list, what would they be? Probably John xiv. would find a place, and it is in Raymond Lodge's list. It is worth thinking about however, that a young, strong engineer and Army officer, with no emphatic religious witness, should have loved and chosen a chapter which is usually regarded as sacred to age, and frailty, and sorrow, and the sure approach of death. Perhaps the young and radiant more frequently walk by the shores of that dull river than we imagine. The second chapter is quite surprising: it is Ephesians ii. Now I have read it through again, and to boys aloud; still the wonder lingers. It is confessedly great, but who of us have ever made it a favourite? Perhaps it is the massive, and daring thought of it that captivated Mr. Lodge.

Let us recall some of the phrases: "Dead through your trespasses and sins"; "The course of this world"; "The sway of the Prince of the air"; "The sons of disobedience"; "The lusts of our flesh"; "but God being rich in mercy" "made us live together with Christ"; "by grace have ye been saved"; "raised up with Him," "made to sit with Him," "to sit with Him in heavenly places," and all this "in Christ Jesus." It is enough to take one's breath away; and those great quotations are all from the first six verses. I do not wonder at the impatience of a real lover of the Bible, when he beholds a clever man dismissing Paul as an intruder, representing him as a Jew who tinged the clear river of Christianity with the troubled and murky waters of Judaism.

To return: it is rather a surprise to find that of the twenty-one favourite passages, no less than thirteen are from the Old Testament. And yet only two of these are from the Psalms; they are cxxiv. 8, and xliii. 2. Five of the Old Testament passages are from Isaiah; and if any reader will open his Bible, and read slowly, meditatively, and aloud, those five passages, it ought to set his heart on fire, and make him ashamed at having so neglected his Bible. Here they are, and I give them in the order recorded: Isaiah li. 12, lii. 12, xi. 2, i. 18, xl. 31. Instead of selecting one verse as a text I suggest the grouping of these five verses, and the following points naturally arise: (1) Comfort, (2) Courage, (3) Cheerfulness, (4) Communion and Cleansing, (5) The supreme triumph. It is pleasing to think of a happy-hearted young soldier taking out his Bible in secret and letting such words speak to him. It may be some are doing it at this very moment. I wonder if our teaching and preaching make people love the Bible? Not unless we ourselves love it. Do we ever show its greatness and grandeur? Not unless we ourselves have seen it.

There are two passages from Deuteronomy, and do my local preacher brethren know that a great authority has recently spoken of Deuteronomy as "one of the most beautiful books of the Bible"? Raymond Lodge's selections are xxxiii. 27 and xxxii. 43. The other passages (for I am sure some of my readers would like the complete list) are the following: Exod. xxxiii. 14, Neh. i. 6, 11, John xvi. 33, Rom. viii. 35, Matt. xi. 28, Jude 24, Ezra ix. 9, Rev. vii. 14, xxi. 4, Gen. xxxi. 49. The last three passages are inexpressibly beautiful. Sir Oliver Lodge has many strange and wonderful things to say in his book, but for many, either in life or death, "Mispah" is the word: "The Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from another."

R. PYKE.

Shebbear College.

"Testing the Testudo" is the tinted presentation plate issued with the "Boy's Own Paper" for August. This number has three complete stories, and there are also good sections of the serials—"Out for Gold," by Edward C. Adams; "The Shaping of Jephson's," by Kent Carr; and "The Great Auk's Egg," by Thomas Downey. "Some Notable Railway Engines," "Knots, and How They Are Used: A Practical Article for Scouts and Boat-Sailors," "Bird's-Nesting," "Otters as Pets," "The Record Carp," "The Mouse Fancy," "Pupa Digging," and "The Dartford Warbler," are among the other contents of this best of boy's magazines.

Work Among the Young.

IN "Some Thoughts on our Continued Decreases" of Church members and Sunday School scholars the Editor of this paper spoke of the spiritual condition as not being all that was desirable. I have not space to reproduce all I should like of this article but it appeared in the issue of June 14th and is worthy of attention. I do not think it will be very earnestly disputed that several things which generally made for an effective spiritual condition have in recent years been too easily given up, or put in a subordinate place. The call to "Exercise thyself unto Godliness" may be usefully obeyed by engagement in Christian labour, and the people who have given up Sunday School work in order to devote time and energy in less definitely religious ways may not thereby be made more useful or spiritual. Sunday School work calls for the expenditure of much time and thought, but it often also develops very valuable qualities and helps in the development of Christian character.

I have before me a letter from a minister in which reference is made to the fact that "everywhere we hear the lament that there is a lack of knowledge of the Bible, and only a loose apprehension of Christian duty." This "lack" existed before the War, as did this "loose apprehension," and these also have to do with the production of the unsatisfactory "spiritual condition" spoken of by the Editor. It would be well if we could have a larger knowledge of the Bible and a more regular habit of reading it, for this would do much to tighten "the apprehension of Christian duty." I fancy the secretaries of local branches of the I.B.R.A. might help in this work by inducing adults, as well as young people, to become members of the association. I have again and again suggested the holding of I.B.R.A. anniversaries, and shall be glad if Church authorities will look favourably upon the suggestion. I am glad to find that here and there such anniversaries have been held. The letter of a London secretary, a young lady, is just to hand, and speaking of the preacher, she says: "He talked to us of the I.B.R.A.: explained the motives of the association, and also the advantages of being a member. Twelve (members) were enrolled as a result of that service. . . . it is quite probable I shall receive other applications." I hope this example will be copied. I may add that I shall be glad to supply information, cards, etc., to those who will undertake to form branches.

Probably readers of this column were interested in the articles and letters which have recently appeared in this journal concerning the writings of Mr. H. G. Wells, and his views regarding Divine and human relationship. These articles and letters caused me to turn to a new book by Mr. W. S. Palmer on "Providence and Faith" (Macmillan, 2s. 6d. net) which I understood was likely to be helpful in view of some present-day discussions—those introduced by Mr. Wells in particular, and the book is of this character. Mr. Palmer is a layman, but is acquainted with theological thought and says many valuable things, in a forceful way, which may profitably be considered by those who are perplexed by present-day happenings. Those who are thus perplexed are many, and their trouble is, as I know, in some cases leading them to thought and action which cannot be helpful. Comfort is needed by large numbers of people, probably much comfort would come through right views of God and man and human life. Mr. Palmer speaks of action which "our teachers" might profitably take, and the need for all to "work out the corollaries of our central truths." He is sure that "Christianity is the one religion rooted and abiding in the fullness of the nature of things—the nature of man and the nature of God," and so he says, "for me the hope of the world centres in Christ Jesus, the one hope of every man and of every nation and state."

I suppose that the Sunday School secretaries have by this time received the papers relating to the Young People's Examination, and I hope they will at once inform the teachers and scholars to enter. A circular has been sent to each minister asking for assistance in this matter which I hope will be heartily given. The scripture subject for the juniors is an interesting one, and will be read in the classes, before the date of the examination, in Schools using the International Lessons. The subject for the senior divisions is "Our Church," and the text book, bearing that title, has been written by the Rev. A. E. Urwin, B.A., B.D., and gives valuable and much-needed information. A book of this kind has long been desired, and now that it has been provided it is hoped it will be widely read. It should enable our young people to get an intelligent view of our doctrine and polity and help to make them devoted Church members and workers. People who are no longer young might profitably make themselves acquainted with this booklet. I can send a copy post free for 1½d.

S. C. CHALLENGER.

Mr. Silas Hocking's Latest Book.

IN "The Beautiful Alien" (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., 3s. 6d. net) Mr. Silas Hocking gives us a fine story of this war time. The Beautiful Alien is a lady, a German spy, who marries Sir Harry Bransome, private secretary of a Government official who has access to the inner secrets of the English plans of warfare. Some of these secrets Lady Bransome skilfully worms out of Sir Harry in the confidences of early married life, with disastrous results, not least upon Sir Harry's career. The view given of the clever machinations of the enemy is illuminating and exciting and the reader is borne on in breathless haste through one of Mr. Hocking's most ingenious and thrilling books. It will make a capital holiday book.

A Chaplain's Work in Mesopotamia.

BY REV. T. E. CLARKE, C.F.

THE UNITED METHODIST was awaiting me here upon arrival, having come by the shorter route, and since then it has been almost the only paper I have got regularly. The issue dated Jan. 22 came this morning. It seems a long way back to bazaars and quarterly meetings and Sunday School problems and notes for teachers. It is good to hear of the continued activities of the church I love and owe much to. You don't know how good it is to sit in this tent on the banks of the Euphrates and keep touch with loyal friends and old comrades in Circuit work. It makes one determined to do his best to strengthen the faith and loyalty of these men who will one day return home when one reads of the older brethren who are passing one by one to their "lang home." Particularly do I think of those from Louth who are gone from us after lives of ungrudging service.

I'm settling down here (as far as one ever does settle on active service) by the banks of this old river, with the date palms shading the camp and the Arab city and bazaar close by us.

The Wesleyan Chaplain had been the only Free Churchman on the station till I came. We joined forces at once. Would that some of the leaders of the Mother Methodists at home had more of his spirit! We started on a campaign. One tent (it would hold fifty men) was our church. We asked for another to contain a hundred—and got it. One voluntary Sunday service had been held. Last Sunday there were five—Stationary Hospital, Isolation Camp, the new tent, Y.M.C.A., and the —th Brigade. We have decided on another for next Sunday and four week-night services. And the men come to them.

Last Sunday I took the outlying service during the daylight and then walked in to the central service, swinging my lantern, and shouting a quick response to the sentries. By and by I heard a well-known tune. The organist was playing on the little portable organ we have. A minute later I came round the corner and saw the light streaming out of the doorway of the tent. It lies close up to the high embankment built against the time when the river is in flood.

It was more than pleasant to come down from the river bank and the darkness and enter the circle of the lamplight last Sunday evening. The congregation was already there, expectant, certain. We always bow our heads for a few moments and lift our hearts in silent prayer. The quiet deepens. It seems almost unprofitable to announce the hymn. We don't want that liturgy. Fact is we are a bit afraid of it. It isn't a success in the Army somehow. It excuses us too much. If we haven't vitality enough to rise to the occasion of Free Church worship we fear that we should soon rob the most beautiful liturgy of all its power. We meet each other during the week. We know the needs and the temptations of each other and we pray about them on Sunday, and we have fellowship one with another.

About sixty stayed to the Communion Service. I never felt before as I felt on Sunday evening what a shame it was to overlay that tender and simple rite with an elaboration of ritual and interpose an earthly priest. I've become a Methodist since joining the Army.

You should see the Nasiriyeh Free Library, Branch No. 21 Branch No. 1 was already existent in the Wesleyan Padre's quarters. He shared his books, I added others to about 150 volumes—a curious assortment of literary oddment—from Spurgeon's sermons and Wesley's Journal to "Islam" and "The Origin of Species," from the lightest of modern fiction to Thackeray and Hazlitt. I don't know how much of it dribbled in here. People grinned good-naturedly at the board outside my tent which announced "Free Library," but they borrow the books and remain for a chat. "Jock," who has been wounded three times and now is unfit for field service, has produced timber from various places and made a table and a couple of benches. The men come in and write letters now. A chaplain's tent is no longer his castle.

There is much more to do, and it is worth doing.

3d. The United 3d. Methodist Magazine

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ORDER THROUGH YOUR MINISTER.

The Old Pear Tree.

IN all the rugged dignity of vigorous old age this ancient survivor of long past garden and orchard glories stands, its massive trunk and sturdy limbs revealing in the flaming sunshine of this June day the richly-etched chequered diapering of its deep brown bark. Its dark thick foliage gives deeply contrasting shadows upon the golden leafage of a young maple that is neighbour to it. The two companion trees seem almost to personify the qualities of feminine youthfulness and venerable masculinity as I see them standing together by an old rough stone wall.

A hot hush, if I may be granted the expression, seems to enfold everything this afternoon. There is thunder in the air, and the clouds that slowly pass across the wonderful clear blue of the sky are at one time like piled-up hills of deep snow, and, again, like dark threatening masses of heavy curling smoke. The song birds are less melodious, for the high noon of summer is upon us, and their musical artistry is the uprising of love now at its satiety. Even that strident and wholly selfish fowl, the cuckoo, is less vocal; and were it not for the harsh crowing of some sufficiently near cockerel, or the soft deep contented humming of one or other of the many different humble bees blundering fussily round in his gorgeous velvet livery, all would be as silent as in mid-winter.

Beneath the old pear tree, as if to emphasize its deep shadows, are a score or so of Mexican poppies in full bloom. They have strayed there as seedlings from some I planted in another part of the garden. Their vivid scarlet petals have an almost martial call. One can be satisfied with a very little of their aggressive colour in a garden that is made for repose. They, as it seems to me, would, despite their beautiful foliage and fine sweeping curved stems, find their more fitting position in the forecourt of some pretentious suburban villa, whose occupant is on the Stock Exchange, and who haughtily consents to proceed each morning to the city by the 9.12 train, in company with the "Daily Mail," and a big cigar. But as I am talking of this poppy, have I not somewhere read that a man born blind was once asked to describe scarlet? "Like the sound of a trumpet," he replied. The story ought to be true; but I am wondering what expression he would have used to describe the soft rich crimson of the old peonies which I see with regret are now nearly past their full glory. If, however, we wish to gain the best knowledge of this splendid perennial, I suppose we must go to the Chinese. Their artists have ever been as passionate lovers of the peony as the old Greeks were of the honeysuckle.

I often wish I knew who and what manner of man he was who planted the old pear tree. Is his name to be found upon one of the older mouldering gravestones in the village churchyard? Probably not, for I fancy they are of an even later date than is my ancient and, withal, flourishing friend. Outwardly, too, I fancy that the bygone garden lover bore no resemblance to those dwelling in the old-world village to-day. Some of them may bear the same name for aught that they or I know, but whether collaterally or by direct descent they are of his stock, I can find in none a knowledge of anything concerning him to whose memory I would fain pay my meed of grateful thanks. In the reaches of the long tides of time there are great silences. No one can claim a longer pedigree than any other. All he has to show, who would flatter himself with the knowledge of his descent, is the industry of admiring recorders; an unerring eye notes and ever sets down doubtless those more important items that connote the individual's ascent. But I love to muse upon my dead and gone benefactor. A quaint figure, I fancy. Doubtless much of his clothing was literally home spun. His coarse stockings were, I suspect, the work of the gentler fingers of his housemates in the long winter evenings—evenings lighted by tallow candles—another home industry only recently passed from among my simply living neighbours. No electric light in the village in those days, certainly, nor probably any petroleum either. Geordie Stephenson had not given the world "Puffing Billy," nor any other fire-eating machine then, and barrels of petroleum would have sat but ill on the saddles of the packhorses that threaded their way from one part of the country to another over the rough, uneven Cotswolds.

He was a lover of pears and apples was my old predecessor in ownership, but he knew nothing of Tasmania or other apple and pear paradises under the Southern Cross. So he had to lengthen out his supplies by what the West Country folk still call the hoarding varieties. Pears then, as now, could not remain uneaten so long as some apples, yet I find that from this old tree he could usually rely upon having fine mellow though smallish pears, if he picked them late and carefully kept them until round about Christmas. There are other old pear and apple trees still remaining to me here, but I am inclined to think them somewhat younger. From these the old fellow would prepare some of his "white wines" in the perry-and-cider-making seasons, and to these I surmise would be added by the aforesaid gentler housemates many a bottle concocted from long cherished recipes, of elderberry, cowslip, currant, rhubarb, and other wines. Mead or methleglin from honey was also a favourite tipple, and is still made hereabouts, though probably not so commonly as in the olden days. Then there would be the viewing of the "Brown October," an important and well-nigh sacred duty in those days. I rather think I should be set down by many who have dwelt in the old gabled house since it was erected, in or about the second half of the sixteenth century, as a poor creature, by reason of my indifference to all these alcoholic fluids as valuable for internal application. Heartlessly, and I fear without a due sense of shame, I cast out the old brewing coppers and replaced them with hot-water appliances. The cool, damp ale-cellar made an entrance to a bath room, for, unlike him, I opined the need for the latter was to me greater than the former.

I hope the dear old Englishman, if in ghostly walks he visits the old place, will try to excuse my, to him, inexplicable aberrations and preferences. I promise to try and explain it all when we come across one another. Do you think I shall succeed in overcoming his incredulity, or, say you, he will have ere this learned all that is true on this and cognate matters, and much more by me as yet undreamed of? Doubtless! Else why live, and, still more, what were the gains of what we call death? But if I have to account to him, what of those whom he succeeded? We have occasionally dug up old coins in the garden going right back to even Roman times. For these wonderful people had a great camp and other dwellings in my neighbourhood. They laid down some splendid roads, straight as arrows, scoring in the directness of their goings hill and dale alike. One hard by runs from Exeter to York, and is still in daily use for almost the whole of its original length. Mighty people, verily—or ought we to say peoples? for a Gallic legion was represented amongst our local forbears. Even to-day, after a shower, if you've any eye for such dainties, you may come across descendants of their edible snails. Nor, now I bethink me, were the Romans the first dwellers in this place, which they knew in the time of Aulus Plautius as Salmonsbury. There were the Dobrini, a tough elusive breed, that gave the southern invaders much trouble. They, too, we may not forget, were but as yesterday to the Pre-Celtic people who preceded them by no man knows how long a time. Beneath the old Roman camp, in the "sixties," were unearthed a large deposit of their currency bars. The rusty iron blades with sheaths that had held the long since perished wooden handles, were all that were left. They varied in length and weight and probably had differing values, though totalling to considerable wealth for those times. No bank would credit your account with a deposit of them to-day, such is modern commercial prejudice, and yet the British Museum authorities gladly accepted some and have given them a position of honour in the great Bloomsbury treasure-house. Alas, how slight and ephemeral is man's hold even upon the things he in his short day sets most store by. And as if to point the moral, I hear the bells in the old village church tower jangling out the melancholy tune we have set to the words,

"Days and moments quickly flying," etc.

Up in the old pear tree a starling is chattering his comments on the inordinate length of all these gossipings—so I accept the avian hint and, for the sake of my readers, if I have any such patient ones—I forbear.

MELIORIST.

June 16th, 1917.

Departed Friends.

The late Thomas Henry Fleming.

Rev. J. Ernest Langley, S.C.F., writes: It was my great privilege as a probationary minister in the Leeds, Lady Lane, Circuit eleven years ago to be brought into close personal touch with that great friend of ministers, T. H. Fleming. He was then in fairly robust health, and was absorbed in the many and various activities of Circuit and Free Church life in that city and beyond. He was present and spoke at my reception service, and never shall I forget the deep impression he made upon me when, with unusual passion and clearness, he emphasised the duty of intense devotion to the high function of preaching on my part, and of patient and attentive hearing on the part of the congregation. That was his great passion. Whatever other excellences he had, and truly he had many, his was essentially a preacher's mind, and many are the debts young men owe to him for counsel and guidance given, and encouraging hints dropped. To the young minister he was ever a friend, and older ministers always found him a loyal encourager. His great aversions were slackness and obscurity in preaching; for these he had nothing but scorn. But for serious effort and patient toil he had a wealth of sympathy rarely met. The mention of Cross Stamford Street is enough to suggest to those who knew that church just what type of man he was.

What an eclipse it was for one so vigorous when dreadful sickness and the loss of his devoted wife compelled his withdrawal from active service! Since then he has lived in the land of deep shadows, only relieved by the occasional glow of memory.

Of his hospitality one could say much. No minister was ever unwelcome. Mrs. Fleming's graciousness made the home a place of quiet and rest, while Mr. Fleming's social gifts in conversation and discussion upon the many subjects of public or private interest made his fireside a pleasant place indeed, and amid it all one was conscious of that singular warmth and richness of family life in which the son and daughters took their place with a grace and homeliness so wisely learnt from one of the sweetest of mothers. My admiration and sympathy go out to the Misses Fleming; only those intimate with the home during the past six years can appreciate the wealth of patience and sacrificial service they have shown. Truly "they have played a noble and loyal part."

Mrs. R. Johnson, Stockport.

Our Mount Tabor Church, Stockport, has just suffered another great loss in the death of Sarah Johnson, one of its oldest members, who passed into the everlasting light on Wednesday, July 18th, at the age of 76 years. She was the wife of the esteemed Circuit Steward, Mr. R. Johnson, J.P., and was a woman of choice and charming spirit, who by her many personal qualities endeared herself to a large circle of attached friends. For many years she was a faithful worker in the Mount Tabor Church, and its many interests and enterprises had in her a warm friend and supporter. Her life was full of kindly ministries and good works. For

a considerable time she had been in frail and feeble health, but she bore her affliction with wonderful patience, sustained by the grace of God, and exhibiting the virtues of a fine Christian character. She gradually faded away, and in the presence of her devoted family she quietly passed into the higher life on the morning of July 18th.

The funeral took place at the Borough Cemetery, Stockport, and the service was conducted by Rev. A. Chadwick, who expressed the condolence of the church and community with the husband and two daughters in their bereavement. A memorial service was held at Mount Tabor Church on Sunday morning, July 29th, the preacher being the Rev. A. Chadwick.

Corporal A. J. Noble, Brighton.

The Bristol Road Church, Brighton, has again sustained a great loss in the death of one of the most gifted and beloved of its younger workers, Corporal A. J. Noble, son of Mr. H. Noble, the local preacher. Soon after the war broke out he responded to the call of his country, and was drafted to India about a year ago. There on two occasions he saw active service on the Northern frontier, and recently contracted fever which resulted in his death on Monday, July 16, at one of the military hospitals. The news has been heard with general sorrow that a singularly promising career had been thus early brought to a close.

Corporal Noble was converted in an Endeavour meeting at Bristol Road, and became at once a most zealous and constant worker in various departments of the church. He was of a truly Christ-like disposition, a fine character, with an alert and capable mind. Had he been spared to the church he would have made his mark in our community and been a great help to us. He has laid down his life for his country, leaving to all who knew him a fragrant memory and a gracious influence and example which cannot fail to inspire our young people.

On Sunday, July 29, a memorial service was held at Bristol Road. A large congregation was present, and the pastor, Rev. L. H. Court, spoke of the character of deceased, and gave a touching appreciation of his life and work.

Mrs. David Shaw, Huddersfield.

MRS. DAVID SHAW (the wife of our esteemed Huddersfield High Street circuit secretary, and president of Huddersfield Free Church Council) entered into rest on Tuesday, July 10th. She was a great sufferer for several years, and a few weeks before her death she had a seizure from which she never rallied. She died as she had lived—trustful, resigned, serene and ready. The interment took place at Edgerton Cemetery. The service was conducted by Revs. Chas. A. Ashelford and H. Lee, and the presence of leaders, trustees, Sunday School teachers and friends bore testimony to the esteem and affection in which the deceased was held. A memorial service was held in High Street Church on Sunday evening, July 15th, at which the Rev. Chas. A. Ashelford paid a tribute to her memory. He said that Mrs. Shaw was a choice and beautiful spirit—one of God's gentlewomen. Her adorning was the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. She was of a deeply religious nature. From her earliest years she had been associated with the High Street Church, first as a scholar, then as a capable and devoted Sunday School teacher, and as a consistent member of the Church. She was a life-long reader and leader and had excellent instincts and aptitudes. Throughout her life she had been deeply interested in missions, and had been a continuous collector for at least thirty-seven years, during which period she must have collected about £200. She had had a long and honourable association with the Ladies' Sewing Meeting, and for a number of years was one of the managers of the meeting. She was a veritable "Dorcas" in Israel. He had known her chiefly as a great sufferer. She possessed the secret of extracting sweetness and strength from her suffering. He recalled her magnificent courage, cheerfulness, serenity, patience—her unfaltering faith and her sunny spirit. God gave her songs in her night of suffering. Persons visiting her might feel to pity her because she was such an invalid. The simple truth was that she greatly enjoyed life amid pain and weakness, and found joy and peace in reading and thinking, in loving and cheering others. Her life was beautifully unselfish, and was a silent rebuke to all restless discontent and an unfailing inspiration by the influence of her brave patient hopeful spirit. She was deeply interested in her husband's work (especially as local preacher) and helped him greatly by her ready sympathy and thoughtful fellowship. For her they sorrowed not, but offered prayerful sympathy to the bereaved husband and family.

Our Deaconesses.

Sister Monica.

SISTER MONICA has recently left Neepsend, in the Sheffield, Hanover Circuit, after two years' service. That service has been largely made possible through the help of the Hanover Circuit Juvenile Missionary Committee. At a meeting of the Committee, held on June 8th, a resolution was passed placing on record the Committee's very high appreciation of the services rendered to the Hanover Circuit on behalf of the Neepsend Mission by Sister Monica. She had spared neither effort nor management in her zeal for the welfare of the people and yet had found time to assist the circuit generally and her efforts had been highly appreciated and profitably received by many of the small churches in the circuit. She would be missed by many, and the prayer of the Committee was that she might be happy, comfortable and successful in her new sphere of labour. Neepsend had greatly benefited by her services and she left the church in a far healthier condition than she found it in, both school and church being much better for her ministry.

The United Methodist.

THE WEEKLY JOURNAL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Recent Movements towards Church Union.

I.

THERE is a distinct movement among us towards the union of the Churches. It has a new urgency in it to-day. But it is not in itself new: For twenty years past it has been markedly in evidence. In 1896 it led to the formation of the National Free Church Council, whose facilitating and educative force in the direction of Christian unity among Nonconformists has been greater than most of us dream. In 1900 the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church came together in a union which no one regrets to-day except perhaps the "Wee Frees," who though greatly enriched by it in a monetary sense have been side-tracked from the main line of the religious life of Scotland. During recent years initial overtures have taken place for a closer association between the United Free Church and the Established Church of Scotland—overtures which would probably have ripened into union by now but for the War. In 1907 came our own union in the United Methodist Church—a union which there is probably not even a band of "Wee Frees" left to regret. In the history of the union movement the Lambeth Conference of 1908 will surely have a place, as will also most certainly the promising attempt at Free Church Federation which is now being made under the skilled moderatorship of the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare. And we must not forget that little companies of Anglicans and Free Churchmen are to-day holding gatherings with a view to finding, if possible, a *via media* between their Churches. Nor is the union movement confined to these islands. In Canada, where there is already only one Methodist Church, all the signs point towards a union between it and the Presbyterian Church of Canada after the War, with a probability that the Congregationalists will make a third in the happy consummation. In the United States a strong tide of sentiment and conviction has set in towards one Methodism for that wonderful country. On a wider scale still a great movement is in process there for the holding of a World Conference for the consideration of Questions touching Faith and Order. In Australia steps have already been taken towards closer union between the Methodists, the Presbyterians and the Anglicans, though probably the War will retard immediate action. And was there not held in 1910 that marvellous World's Missionary Conference at Edinburgh—a Conference that did more to awaken dreams of world-wide Church reunion and to show lines upon which they could be realized than perhaps any other Christian gatherings since the Reformation? The War has apparently put its rude arresting hand upon the promising developments of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference. But only apparently. The flow towards unity is under the surface deep and strong.

II.

Clearly then there is a movement towards the union of the Churches among us. It is not new, I said, but there can be no doubt that it is growing in urgency, in strength and in extent. And there is as little doubt that the War which seems to have arrested certain of its outward developments is feeding its hidden springs. For it is causing men to think more freely and directly and piercingly about most things and not least about the need for increased unity among the Churches. During the War men have seen a great process of unification of effort going on in the national life—among politicians, among the "classes," among employers and employees, among rich and poor—with manifest advantage to the nation at large and to the great and decisive issues which the War holds. It is felt that what is needed cannot be done by a divided, but only by a united people. Again, our day is one in which the unity expressed by the word "nation" has a growingly imperious and irresistible power. Is not one reason why the war is waged this—that the rights of nations, small or great, may be defended and saved? Yea, the War is bringing us face to face with the thought of a larger unity still than that of the nation—a world-wide international unity, a League of Nations, for the preservation of peace when once more, in the mercy of God, it shall come like His own nestling dove to brood over the world. A League for the preservation of peace will mean a league for much besides, for we are coming to see that the roots of peace go down to the foundations of a right world-order in all things.

So it is no wonder that amid this growing, and enlarging and fructifying unity in what we call the secular sphere there should arise with a new insistency the cry for increased unity among the Churches. The Rev. Owen Spencer Watkin, who holds so fine a record as

a Chaplain, told the Wesleyan Conference that the men at the front were very impatient of denominationalism and absolutely contemptuous of the divisions of Methodism. The Rev. W. A. Prunell, one of his colleagues in France, told the same Conference, on the other hand, that criticism of denominationalism came from those who were indifferent to religion. "The man who is keen on religion generally says, 'I have been so many months in France, and have not seen a minister of my own Church.' But it would be a mistake, I think, to speak as if impatience with denominationalism were confined to those who are indifferent to religion. Many denominationalists in the Army are seeing the need and helpfulness of a larger Church unity than they have ever known. Methodists are finding that the Gospel which Congregationalists and Baptists preach is not different even in accent and phrase from that which their own ministers preach; and Anglicans, deprived of their own forms of service and compelled to associate with "dissenters," have made the transforming and joyous discovery that "the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all who call upon Him." And all alike are finding that there is an essential saving kernel in truth as truth is in Jesus; that Christianity means attachment to a Person and not to a creed or to a particular form of ecclesiastical organization; that "neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision" but that a new creature in Christ Jesus is everything and the beginning of everything, and that there is heavenliest wisdom in the words which Richard Baxter seems to have quoted from an earlier writer: "In things essential unity; in things doubtful liberty; in all things charity." So it is increasingly true that there is a distinct tendency towards Christian unity in the thoughts of men at the Front who are interested in religion.

III.

The same may be affirmed concerning a large number of Christians in this country. Some of us have not forgotten Mr. Shakespeare's emphatic statement in his address as president of the National Free Church Council about the Free Churches "standing at the Cross Roads." The name of the one is Disunion, the name of the other is Union. To tread the former spells Destruction; to tread the latter is like climbing the hill Difficulty, but the way to Life lies there—life diviner, richer, more fruitful. Sir Charles Wakefield, recently Lord Mayor of London, and himself a loyal Wesleyan, affirms,

"I am haunted by the conviction that unless the Christian Church becomes united now when the call for unity is so great . . . she will lose her greatest chance to become a living power in the land. . . I am certain that the hour is fast approaching when the Church will have to decide between unity and decadence. God grant that she be so inspired as to choose unity."

A growing number of both Anglicans and Free Churchmen hold this conviction. Let the reader put alongside the above these sayings of Prebendary Gane, the Hulsean Lecturer of 1918:

"Some striking reduction of the barriers between separated Churches, founded on a revaluation of relative values appears to be the one specific for the weak and weakening hold of every form of systematic Christianity upon the world."

He holds that "unless in the hour of trial a new and genuinely Christian spirit is found in possession of every class in the community" the testing period which will come with the crisis of reconstruction after the War will bring us disaster. And institutional religion, he says, can render no efficacious help in this crisis "without some radical change in the whole attitude and relation of Christian Churches towards each other." The Bishop of Down (Dr. D'Arcy) is quite as emphatic on this point and affirms that if "the old conventions, the old complications, the old divisions and antagonisms pass on unchecked into the new age, nothing can save the Church from a most pitiful failure." And not less decisive was the utterance of Bishop Brent in his sermon in St. Paul's on "America's Day":

"It becomes increasingly clear that the question of world peace and of Christian reunion go together. The watchword of the Churches must be 'unity.' Either Churches must justify their claim to be the favoured or exclusive residence of God by exhibiting in their works a holiness or a superiority nowhere else apparent, or else must admit the favour of God towards other Churches of lesser pretensions. . . . But I see a vision, I see a great movement, not of man but of God, coming sweeping through this world of ours and gathering into its embrace all true-hearted men.

I see a united Church—a Church worthy of the residence of Jesus Christ among men, a Church which will bring holiness and power to all the people of God. That is the end of the vision, and that is the supreme thing to which we must commit ourselves to-day as Christian men."

IV.

Some of us who are slower of foot and of faith will not easily follow Dr. Brent on his delightful but seemingly remote and far journey. But surely all of us must be arrested by the grave and serious words which have been quoted above. Surely, too, we must be conscious that the same Spirit of God which heretofore has worked in and through our diversities is now seeking to work in and through our possible unities. With this end in view He is using our dissatisfactions, our consciousness of failure here and there, our perception of the new and crucial opportunities of our day, our longings for a closer fellowship in things essential with our fellow Christians and our new dawning sense of the possibility and blessedness of closer co-operation with those from whom we have been hitherto separated. We must be conscious that the Divine Spirit is using all this in order to bring about His larger purpose concerning the Church which is Christ's body. Doubtless, there is a long way to go before we reach the goal He has set before His Church; there are many and immense difficulties to be overcome, and overcoming them will mean sacrifices that will cut some of us to the quick; but let us take heed that we refuse not Him who is certainly speaking to us about closer Christian unity in these days. Hitherto, in the providence of God, the realm of truth and the Kingdom of God have grown by our divisions: as if God used in His higher realm a process of multiplication by fission; it may be that now it is the will of God that truth and the Kingdom shall grow by the higher and diviner process of aggregation, by fuller co-operation and union among the scattered hosts of God. At least my own faith and vision run in that way. Whatever happens, we must set first God's will, the salvation of our fellow men and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. If we do that, guidance as to new Christian unities and all else we need will most surely be added unto us.

Next week I hope to say something about recent happenings in Wesleyan Methodism concerning union with the Anglican Church and the reunion of Methodism in this country.

HENRY SMITH.

Jottings.

Speaking at a large gathering of young people at Manchester, the Rev. J. Glass, vicar of St. Paul's, Leamington, said the two chief things in a boy's life should be "to say his prayers and wash the back of his neck; the one would remind him that he had a soul to save, and the other of the reality of the unseen." The Rev. Mr. Glass is a wise man, and, unlike many wise men, can put his wisdom into memorable phrase.

A London morning paper reports Sir Edward Carson as saying in Belfast: "We will never agree to peace so long as the head of Prussianism holds its head above water and tramples underfoot those liberties which a long series of ages has won and handed down to us." Here is a head which has hands, for it holds a head above water. It has feet, too, for it tramples liberties underfoot. A wonderful head! I suspect the reporter has been caught napping for once. If not, Sir Edward has given us one of the best Irish bulls of recent days.

Dr. Carl S. Patton succeeded Dr. Washington Gadden as pastor of the First Congregational Church at Columbus, U.S.A. After some weeks a woman member of the congregation came to him after a morning service and said: "Oh, Dr. Patton, I do so enjoy your sermons. I never had sense enough to listen to Dr. Gadden." It is one of those things that might be otherwise expressed, as "Punch" used to say; but Dr. Patton enjoyed it, for he tells it against himself.

The Master of Balliol has just been telling one of those rare stories which carry their own "moral" writ large on their surface. On one occasion he was walking in the West End of London with a young French officer who could only speak English slowly. Turning to the Master, he remarked: "I—am—going—to—speak—English. This—makes—me—sick! Is—that—good—English?" "It could not be better," replied the Master.

Here is an exact reproduction of a conversation which took place in a Yorkshire surgery recently:

Doctor: "How is Mrs. Jones—better? Is the medicine doing her good?"

Mary: "She says the medicine doesn't feel to do her a bit of good, and she isn't no better."

Doctor: "Does she follow the instructions and touch nothing but soda and milk?"

Mary: "Well, she'd bacon and egg for breakfast this morning." (Unsuppressed merriment amongst the audience of patients.)

Doctor: "Tell her she must carry out the instructions and not stir in the morning until she has drunk a pint of hot water."

Mary: "How can she do that when she's all alone in the house?"

I who know that Yorkshire town can testify that Mary's talk is indeed racy of the soil.

Mr. D. Maclean, M.P., who has had very wide experience indeed in tribunal work, complains that certain

civilians, on getting into khaki, completely lose their heads. A writer in the "Office Window" column of the "Daily Chronicle" gives the following case known to him in corroboration:

"A friend went to attest; stripped, and was marched with greasers and oilers and coal-heavers, all better men, physically, than himself, into the chamber of decision. A cub in khaki and a monocle prepared to record their religious views. Few of the men had a preference. 'Church of England?' was the suggestion, and 'Yuss' the careless answer. But the man who did know answered, 'No, Nonconformist.' The monocle fell from the eye of the amateur sabreur. 'What, Nonconformist! But, er—you—believe in the Bible, don't you?' he gasped."

This is the sort of crass stupid ignorance against which Nonconformity is continually fighting for its rights in the Army.

It reminds me of a letter from one of our chaplains which I saw the other day. The chaplain entered into conversation about religious matters with the major of a division to which he belongs. The major was soon inquiring what United Methodism stood for. He was surprised alike to hear what its teaching was and what its polity meant. Indeed, in regard to Nonconformity as a whole he was as a man entering a new realm of knowledge. The chaplain tells me that that is by no means an unusual experience of officers in the Army when they talk to Free Church Padres at mess. However, this particular major was so much interested that he asked for further information, and my friend who received the letter was sending to the chaplain for the major's use copies of Mr. Urwin's and Mr. Stedford's booklets, together with a copy of our Rules. After reading these there will be no possibility of that major ever assuming the attitude of the monocle in khaki.

So Miss Maude Royden is to become assistant minister to Dr. Fort Newton and to take service alternately with him morning and evening at the City Temple. It is a significant announcement. It has its bearings upon that ideal which the Christian Church has not even yet fully achieved of making gifts and calling triumphant in determining what offices shall be held, without the intrusion of the sex bar. It opens one of the most famous pulpits in the country to a woman's ministry. As Dr. Fort Newton has said, "We want the woman point of view, the woman insight, the woman counsel." He adds that to have one so skilful, so wise, so spiritually minded, and of so lovely a character will mean a great deal. Indeed, it must.

Miss Royden's appointment to the City Temple is immensely significant in another direction. She is a member and lover of the Anglican Church and a leader in a number of its movements. She was a speaker at the recent meeting in the Queen's Hall at which the "Life and Liberty" organisation voiced its determination to secure for the Church of England the freedom which is the inalienable right and the breath of life to a Christian Church. And she becomes assistant minister at the City Temple! It is indeed a sign of the times. It shows that retrogression of sectarianism and that emergence of true Catholicity which are tokens of the Divine at work in our day. That process will be greatly hastened by what is occurring among our soldiers at the front. We are told that they are bewildered by our divisions; they regard them as signs that we are quarrelsome people; they think of them as proofs that we are poor specimens of Christians; they identify them with "religion," which they speak of somewhat contemptuously; they refuse to think that these things are "Christianity" which they think of with admiration and reverence. Miss Royden's going to the City Temple will come with illuminating power to them, however it affects us of the Churches. In any case it is a step in the right direction.

"Why didn't they break through?" Most of my readers will remember this question in one of the most thrilling paragraphs of our President's address to Conference. He was dealing with the story of the first battle of Ypres, and told how only a thin khaki line, swaying, bending, but not breaking, lay between the Germans and their goal, the Channel ports. The Germans had the forces with which to get through; on all human grounds they ought to have got through. Why didn't they? Our President saw Another Hand at work checkmating, thwarting, ordering after another fashion and to other ends. It was to him an illustration of God in history.

I thought of the President's paragraph in reading some words in a recent article by Mr. Hilaire Belloc in "Land and Water" regarding the first gas attack by the Germans. It was made at a point of juncture where our line was not strongly defended. A complete rupture was produced by the attack, "and, so far as we can judge, if the enemy had taken full advantage of his success," says Mr. Belloc, "he might, even at so late a date, have modified the course of the war by that single act." Why didn't he take advantage of his success? How did he come to leave undone the single act that would have modified the course of the war in his favour? One need not adopt the spirit of the Pharisee and Mr. Chadband and assume that it was because we British were so righteous, etc., etc. Nor need we repeat the loathsome attitude of the Kaiser and monopolise the Divine Being as if He were in a unique and exclusive sense the God of England. But surely the heart, sensitive to the incursion of the spiritual and to the signs in history of the working of Another on the stage of time, will hesitate before it casts Mr. Belloc's fact away as a mere coincidence, as a happy accident, or as anything else we put into those phrases by which we still try to delude ourselves by thinking of God as absent from His world and its affairs. The old Hebrews saw more directly and more truly.

I always read the "Newspaper Readers' Journal" in the "Methodist Recorder" with interest. Its writer has often stories to tell which I envy him the opportunity of telling, and he has a racy and sometimes pawky method of comment which makes his column saline reading. I think a good deal of him as a fellow journalist; he knows his craft, and is an expert at it. Judge, therefore, with what pleasure I read the following paragraph in his column for July 12:

"I see the UNITED METHODIST has published its five hundredth number. The Methodists have the secret of the family paper. There is no finer than the UNITED METHODIST. The editing does great credit to Mr. Henry Smith, who has really made the paper and made all Methodists his debtor also. There is lightness of touch, buoyancy of spirit, fine catholicity, and a first-rate eye for the look of a paragraph. Mr. Smith knows how to dress a shop window as well as what goods to stock."

Yes, I know, Mr. Editor, what you will say; we have had enough about that 500th number; the UNITED METHODIST does not exist for the Editor but the Editor for the UNITED METHODIST; this sort of thing is trying for a modest man, etc., etc. As cautious people observe on occasions that are rather perplexing, there is a great deal in what you say. But as you love me, please leave the above paragraph free of the blue pencil, for I know many of our people will like to hear this frank voluntary opinion of an outsider. Some of them are only just beginning to discover our weekly. The number who take it "just because it is the denominational paper, you know," are getting fewer, and the number who take it because it says something to them that they want to hear, are getting more. Let us help to multiply the number, Mr. Editor, by showing our readers what other folk think about our paper.

PROVINCIAL.

"Provincial" is very plausible and very astute; for he knows that the Editor loves him, if not wisely all too well. It is a human bit of weakness to allow the paragraph to remain, but it must be the last of its kind, "Provincial."

Women's Missionary Auxiliary.

Items for this column should be sent to Mrs. Vivian, 49 Windsor Road, Doncaster, and not to the Editor.

Stockport Branch.

THE annual meeting of this branch was held in Mount Tabor Church. The Mayoress of Stockport (Miss Rowbotham, M.A.), presided. She is a lady who is deeply interested in missions, and any effort connected with this work always has her sympathy and help. All present at the meeting listened to her inspiring little speech with close attention and many were the expressions of thanks for her helpful words. Mrs. Hogg (President of the Manchester District) gave the address. She made touching reference to the women of foreign lands; and their noble gift of their husbands and sons to fight in this great war now waging was a tribute of love to England. It was for the women of England to make some return for these gifts by sending out the Gospel to them.

Miss Smith delighted the meeting by her sweet singing. The Secretary and Treasurer each gave a report of the year's work. Nine new members have been enrolled. After making good the loss of eight members through removals, etc., there is a net gain of one. The total membership is now 136. Mrs. Johnson (vice-President) was the hostess for the afternoon, she very kindly providing tea at the close of the meeting. A small sale of gifts and the collection amounted to £9 10s. It is hoped this amount may yet be increased.

Louth.

The annual W.M.A. garden party was held in the grounds of Southfield House, by kind permission of Mrs. Barber, in ideal weather and surroundings. After a simple tea, Mrs. Wilby, President of the Branch, took the chair of what proved to be a very inspiring meeting. Miss M. Hall (Secretary) gave a brief but graphic account of the Conference missionary meetings, which she had been privileged to attend earlier in the week, and then Rev. D. Kemp, of Louth, formerly Wesleyan missionary on the Gold Coast of Africa, gave a most interesting account of his work there. Miss F. Skinner sang a solo, and a dialogue in costume, entitled "A Missionary Supper Party," was given by twelve young people of the Sunday School, which was much enjoyed.

The Branch has been joining with the C.E. Society in the series of six studies of medical missions contained in the C.E. programme for the year.

In the August number of the "Woman's Magazine," edited by Flora Klickmann, "Goldfish and Caraway Seeds," by "A Woman of the World," is a very suggestive paper about non-essentials. "The Beautiful Joke," by Annie Hamilton Donnell, and "The Bachelor who Lived by Himself," by Temple Bailey, are the complete stories in this number. "Leading the Fashion at Last," is the interesting story of a woman who positively insisted on gardening. Another gardening paper is that by Mildred de M. Rudolf, who supplies hints as to weeding, and work with the vegetables. "What Happens to the Eggs You Eat," by Professor Phillip B. Hawk, gives valuable information gathered direct from experiments. Another domestic article shows "How to Use Potatoes Instead of Flour." Many other useful papers are included in this number of a magazine that is always up-to-date, and helpful to mothers and daughters.

Charles Wesley's Imperfect Theology.

"What is Wrong with Modern Methodism?" That is the question which the Rev. Sheldon Knapp, the Wesleyan minister at Sherborne, has set himself to answer in No. 1 of the Sherborne Booklets (C. H. Kelly, 3d. net). Briefly, according to Mr. Knapp, what is wrong is that Modern Methodism "has used too freely Charles Wesley's very imperfect hymns on Pardon, and those of other writers also, and has concentrated too exclusively on the early stages of the spiritual life." The latter point is well made and is all too true. Modern Methodism would start on a new era of service and power for God and man if it would present in to-day's phrases, and with what Dr. Dale called its ethical implications, John Wesley's great doctrine of Perfect Love. But this point about Charles Wesley's "very imperfect hymns on Pardon" will surprise some Methodists of to-day. Did not early Methodism use the same hymns or most of them? If so, "what is wrong" with Modern Methodism was wrong with earlier Methodism. Mr. Knapp makes it clear that John Wesley had no such imperfect doctrine of pardon as he complains of. Charles Wesley is the culprit! The proof adduced consists of quotations from some of his hymns which represent Jesus as "an everlasting Aaron." A familiar example is found in the lines:

There for me the Saviour stands;
Shows His wounds and spreads His hands:

as if Jesus were continually re-presenting his sacrifice to God. Mr. Knapp quite conclusively shows that this is an unscriptural view. Heb. x. 12 proves this: Wesley emphasises it in his "Notes." Westcott says that it has no foundation in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Our author goes on to show how, if this is so, all forms of the Mass are pagan and not Christian, since the Mass professes to be a presentation on earth of the sacrifice which is said to be continually being presented in heaven. Mr. Knapp makes this point clearly, effectively, and, we think, unanswerably. But he leaves us unconvinced that this answer covers the question raised by his booklet. Would the correction of this erroneous teaching of Charles Wesley make everything right with Modern Methodism? If so, Mr. Knapp's booklet should accomplish a great work and in an easy way. But, really, Mr. Knapp's plaister is smaller than the sore he lovingly seeks to heal.

H. S.

Weddings.

BURKITT-POWELL.

ON Tuesday, July 24th, an interesting war wedding took place at our Redland Grove Church, Bristol, the contracting parties being Sydney Marmaduke Burkitt, of the 2nd Artists' Rifles O.T.C., and Miss Edith Annie Taylor Powell, of Cheltenham. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Jas. Wright (President of Conference) and Rev. J. H. Burkitt, father of the bridegroom. The bride, who wore a dress of pale silver grey trimmed with silk and worked in grey and silver, carried a shower bouquet of cream roses. The bridesmaid, Miss Maude Dymmock, was attired in white and pale heliotrope, her shower bouquet consisting of heliotrope and pink sweet peas. Second-Lieut. W. G. Shipway, M.C., acted as best man, assisted by Mr. W. J. Cordy. As the bridal party entered the church the organist rendered the "Wedding March" from "Lohengrin," and as it left the "March" composed by Mendelssohn. After luncheon, at which the usual toasts were honoured, the happy couple left by motor for a short honeymoon at Clevedon, prior to the bridegroom's departure for France. Mr. and Mrs. Burkitt were the recipients of many beautiful and useful presents, including a Queen Anne silver tea service from the manager and staff of the National Provincial Bank, Bristol. The bridegroom's brother, Second Lieut. Eric H. B. Burkitt, of the Royal Flying Corps, was detained by his duties at the Front.

MUIRHEAD-SCHOFIELD.

An interesting naval wedding was celebrated in Hanover Chapel, Sheffield, on Wednesday, July 18, between Lieut. R. B. Muir Muirhead, R.N.R., younger son of Mr. and Mrs. B. Muirhead, of 41, Broomhall Place, and Ethel, younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Schofield, of 8, Kenbourne Road. The Rev. Robert Noble was the officiating minister, and the service was attended by a numerous company of friends. The bride and bridegroom, who are members of and have lifelong associations with Hanover Chapel and School, left in the afternoon for their home at Wallasey, Liverpool. They were the recipients of many choice and valuable presents.

Mrs. Annie Wilcock, Allet.

Death has robbed the Church at Allet of one of its brightest and most enthusiastic members. At the early age of 33 Mrs. Annie Wilcock, wife of Mr. John J. Wilcock, passed away on July 5, after an illness which developed with startling rapidity, but which was borne with beautiful Christian fortitude. Though her years were comparatively few, Mrs. Wilcock packed them with loyal, kindly service, and she will be very greatly missed, not only by the friends at Allet, but the local preachers, who always found in her a hospitable and genial hostess. The loss sustained by the husband and three children, one only a few months old, cannot be imagined or expressed, but they are assured of the loving sympathy of the members of the Allet and Truro Churches. The funeral was a remarkable demonstration of the esteem in which the deceased and her husband were held.

The Conference Missionary Effort to Raise £2,000.

(Concluded from page 361).

Conference Chairman's List.

	Promised. £ s. d.	Paid. £ s. d.
Mr. W. B. Hammersley, Long-ton	0 2 6	0 2 6
Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Hall, St. Austell	0 5 0	0 5 0
Mr. Thos. Alderson, Cleadon...	2 2 0	2 2 0
Bideford Church, per Rev. A. E. J. Cosson	2 0 0	2 0 0
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Rev. W. D. Gunstone	0 2 6	0 2 6
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Rev. Geo. Mellelieu	0 3 0	0 3 0
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Per Rev. T. Smith, Gateshead:		
Mr. J. J. Huntley, Low Fell	1 1 0	1 1 0
Rev. E. Ratcliffe	0 2 6	0 2 6
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Per Rev. G. G. Hornby, M.A., B.D.:		
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Mrs. Syson	0 10 0	0 10 0
Mr. W. Adcock	0 10 0	0 10 0
Mr. R. J. Bancroft	0 2 6	0 2 6
Mr. J. Brooks	0 2 0	0 2 0
Mr. J. E. Henderson, Halifax	12 2 0	12 2 0
Rev. J. W. Walls	0 5 0	0 5 0
Anon., Birmingham	0 10 0	0 10 0
Rev. G. D. Thompson	0 5 0	0 5 0
Mr. Arthur Booth, Rodley	10 0 0	10 0 0
Mr. Jonathan Pickard, J.P., Burrington	2 2 0	2 2 0
Stockport Circuit, per Rev. A. Chadwick	1 3 6	1 3 6
Ald. M. Mordey, J.P., Newport, Mon.	5 0 0	5 0 0
Mr. H. Crabtree, Todmorden	1 1 0	1 1 0
The Chairman: Coun. Robert Turner, J.P., Rochdale	—	200 0 0
Sir Samuel Turner, J.P., Rochdale	—	100 0 0
Mr. Chas. H. Turner, Rochdale	—	50 0 0
Mr. Samuel Turner, Rochdale	—	50 0 0
Lieut. Rupert Turner, Rochdale	—	50 0 0
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Mr. Alfred Sheppard	1 1 0	1 1 0

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Miss E. A. Green, Rotherham	0 2 0	0 2 0
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Mrs. Kirsop, Nottingham	0 10 0	0 10 0
Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Lewins, Manchester	3 3 0	3 3 0
The Peace Fellowship	0 10 0	0 10 0
Coun. Geo. Cooke, Barnsley...	5 0 0	5 0 0
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Mrs. J. Rose Bennett, Downham	5 0 0	5 0 0
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Messrs. Wm. and W. J. Mal-linson, London (£100 promise previously reported)	175 0 0	275 0 0
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Mr. H. B. Omerod, London	0 10 0	0 10 0
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Rev. C. H. Goodman	0 10 0	0 10 0
Rev. A. E. Greensmith	0 5 0	0 5 0
Mr. F. A. Wadsworth, Hud-dersfield	0 10 0	0 10 0
Rev. E. R. Squire	0 5 0	0 5 0
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Eastville Park Church C.E., per Miss Webb	0 10 6	0 10 6
Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Hingston, Pensilva	1 10 0	1 10 0
Well-wisher	0 5 0	0 5 0
Mr. J. J. Fortune, Wigan	0 2 6	0 2 6
M. B. W., London	0 2 6	0 2 6
Rev. D. V. Godfrey	1 0 0	1 0 0
Mr. and Mrs. M. Pickard, Manchester	24 0 0	24 0 0
Mr. John Whiteley, Golcar	5 0 0	5 0 0
Iford Church, per Rev. J. Boden	2 0 0	2 0 0
Mrs. Bailey, Bristol, per Rev. G. H. K.	0 5 0	0 5 0
Fenton Church, retiring col.	0 5 0	0 5 0
Mrs. Barker, Macclesfield, per Rev. B. J. R.	0 5 0	0 5 0
Mr. W. Dyson, Slaithwaite	0 5 0	0 5 0
Mr. E. Widdowson, London	0 10 0	0 10 0
"B"	20 0 0	20 0 0

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Mr. Frank Cooper, Huddersfield	2 2 0	2 2 0
Mrs. Truscott Wood, Launceston	0 2 6	0 2 6
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Mr. C. R. Spedding, Batley...	1 0 0	1 0 0
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Ald. J. H. Turner	5 0 0	5 0 0
Mr. Henry Healey	0 10 0	0 10 0
Mr. A. O. Stocks, J.P.	0 2 6	0 2 6
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Messrs. Pannett and Neden, London	25 0 0	—
Per Rev. W. Vivian, F.R.G.S. Sheffield List:	3 3 0	—
Mr. Jos. Ward (second promise)	100 0 0	200 0 0
Mrs. Jos. Ward	25 0 0	25 0 0
Mr. and Mrs. Richard W. Carr	100 0 0	—
Mr. M. Wardlow, J.P.	25 0 0	25 0 0
Per Mr. G. E. Walmsley:		
Mr. Chas. Woollins	0 10 6	0 10 6
Mr. John Banner	6 0 0	6 0 0
Mr. Henry Kirk	2 0 0	2 0 0
Mr. J. W. Redding	0 2 6	0 2 6
Mr. I. W. Schofield	1 1 0	1 1 0
Sister Edith	0 5 0	0 5 0
Per Rev. Geo. Jobling:		
Mr. S. Slater	1 0 0	1 0 0
Mr. L. Banner	1 0 0	1 0 0
Mr. P. H. Whittaker	1 0 0	1 0 0
Mr. A. Sutton	0 2 6	0 2 6
Mr. Sydney J. Walker	10 0 0	10 0 0
Mrs. H. W. Walker	5 0 0	5 0 0
Mr. Ronald Morrison	1 1 0	1 1 0
Misses Clark	0 5 0	0 5 0
Miss Bradshaw	0 10 0	0 10 0
Rev. R. R. Baker	0 2 6	0 2 6
Mr. Wm. Creasey	0 5 0	0 5 0
Friends of Birley Carr Ch., per Mr. J. Greaves	2 0 0	2 0 0
Mr. and Mrs. A. Crothers	1 1 0	1 1 0
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TO MINISTERS.—As a limited number of the Conference Minutes will be printed it is important Ministers should send in their orders not later than August 18th. In case no such definite order is received, the same number of copies will be sent as forwarded last year. But no returns can be allowed for if not received before December 31st.

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For Our Boys and Girls.

RIDING HOME FROM CHURCH.

I WANT to tell you a Bible story about a great African who in his day was a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Although I cannot tell you his name, I think you will find him a noble character and worth reading about. He was Treasurer to Queen Candace of Abyssinia.

One day he was sitting in his carriage reading. The carriage was going along an old, deserted country lane. He was a religious man and was now returning from Church. He had been up to the Feast at Jerusalem. No doubt he had been to the Feasts before. Possibly he was in Jerusalem when Jesus was crucified and when He rose from the grave. A great and busy man,—but he could find time to attend the House of God for worship. His work would not suffer for this, but would be all the better done; because he gave attention to the training of his best thoughts and feelings—to the keeping of his own heart reverent.

He was sitting in his carriage reading—reading aloud, for he wanted to remember well what he read. It was not a Jerusalem "newspaper" or "novel," but the Bible. His Bible was not like yours, bound as a book and printed. His was a long roll and written. Whether he had just bought it in Jerusalem, or whether he brought it with him up from Africa, we do not know, but if he had brought it with him he was reading it now with a new interest.

Yes, God loved that man. He was reading about Christ and did not know Him. He had some knowledge about salvation, and God wished this knowledge to be increased.

Now a man named Philip was sent for a holiday—into the country. Philip had been working very hard and successfully in a busy place. Many people had been converted to God, and there was great happiness. Reports were spread far and wide of the success of Philip's preaching in Samaria. He was at present on holiday, but his holiday was not idly spent.

He was in the country when the carriage came along. Somebody whom he could not see spoke to him, telling him to go near to the carriage. It was the Spirit of God. Philip ran until he caught up to the carriage and heard the gentleman reading. Then he spoke to the gentleman,—who invited him to take a seat by his side in the carriage. And he did so. Then he told the gentleman about Christ and His love. The result was the gentleman resolved to be a Christian.

Then they came to a pool by the lane side, and the gentleman spoke about being baptized. He had been baptized once before. At one time he had been a heathen. Now he was a member of the Jewish Church at Jerusalem. Before he was accepted as a member he was baptized. Now he desired to become a member of the Christian Church. He wished to make a clear testimony that he had decided to live for Christ. Whether Philip baptized those who were converted in Samaria we do not know, for there is nothing said about it. But the carriage stopped and the two men got out of it and went down into the pool. What words were said, what prayers were offered, we cannot tell. But when the two men came out of the water they parted, never to see each other again—till before the Throne in Heaven. One went North and the other South.

The African went on his way "with a joyful heart." He had been a seeker of Light and God gave Him Light. God manifested Himself unto him in a country lane where the ruts were deep and there was a good deal of jolting for his carriage. God loved him and wanted him for service.

What service did he do? It seems that he became Christ's first preacher in Africa. The report is, that he told Queen Candace of Christ, and that she and her subjects became Christians. Whether this were so, we do not know, but we do know from remains, or fragments of Christian writings found in the country in which this gentleman was a high official, that there was a church in very early Christian years. If it was not he who told the glad tidings of the Gospel we are not aware who it was that first published it in that land.

For Our Teachers.

By REV. E. C. URWIN, B.A., B.D.

HINTS ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON, AUGUST 12th, 1917.

JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN.— 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1-13.

THE present course of O.T. history has so far been dominated by the great prophetic figure of Isaiah. But from the reign of Josiah onwards to the fall of Jerusalem before the armed might of Nebuchadnezzar, there looms up the equally great and the even more tragic figure of the prophet Jeremiah. Teachers will find it of exceeding interest to present the history in the light of that prophet's career, and for the present lesson we suggest that portion of Jeremiah's ministry which coincides with the reign of Josiah. See 2 Kings xxii.-xxiii. 30, 2 Chron. xxxiv.-xxxv, and Jeremiah i.-vi.

Hints for Teachers' Study.

(1) The following dates will enable teachers to survey in a broad sweep the troubled movements of Judah's history for the half-century which followed the long reign of Manasseh. Manasseh's reign ended in 641 B.C., but the reign of his son and successor, Amon, was brought to a speedy end, after only two years, by his assassination. (2 Kings xxi. 23). There followed his son, Josiah, a mere boy of eight years of age, who reigned from 639-608 B.C., one of the noblest reigns in Hebrew history, marked by the great religious reformation of 621 B.C., and ending in tragic fashion by Josiah's death in battle against Egypt in 608 B.C.. The twenty-two years that followed were broken and disastrous for both Judah and Jerusalem. The uneasy reigns of Jehoahaz (3 months), Eliakim or Jehoiakim (11 years), Jehoiakim (3 months), and Zedekiah (11 years), culminated in the two sieges of Jerusalem in 598 and 586 B.C., and the dark days of the Babylonian exile. Teachers should read the whole of 2 Kings xxi. 19-xxv. 30.

(2) The reign of Josiah, 639-608 B.C., is marked chiefly by a great religious reformation, under the inspiration of the prophetic party. Despite the Chronicler, who in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1-13 suggests that Josiah embarked upon his reforming career early in his reign, we are probably right in following the historian of 2 Kings xxii.-xxiii., who dates the reformation from the discovery of the Law Book during a renovation of the Temple. As this did not take place until the 18th year of Josiah's reign (2 Kings xxii. 3), i.e., in 621 B.C., we are faced with the necessity of considering what those early years were like. Two prophets ministered in this period, Zephaniah and Jeremiah, and, judging from their writings, we may infer that in the first part of Josiah's reign the religious conditions of the time of Manasseh were still perpetuated. (But about 630-627 B.C. Western Asia (including Palestine) was disturbed by the ravages of Scythian raiders from beyond the northern shores of the Black Sea. The threatened invasion gave the repressed prophetic party their opportunity. In characteristic prophetic fashion both Zephaniah (i. 14-18) and Jeremiah (vi. 1) saw in the Scythians the instruments of God's judgement on sinful Judah. But though the invaders entered Palestine and came down the sea-coast to Egypt (see map), "contrary to all expectation they did not attack Judah." "In the relief at so great a deliverance, the reformers found themselves once more in favour," and from this escape we may trace the impulses which led to the renovation of the Temple and the reformation which followed.

(3) The figure of Jeremiah is one of the most pathetic and yet picturesque in the O.T. His ministry began, according to his own statement in Jer. i. 1, in the 13th year of Josiah's reign, i.e., 627 B.C.—the period of the Scythian invasions—and while he was still a young man, cf. ch. i. 7. One characteristic feature of Jeremiah's prophetic career was the extreme reluctance with which he entered upon it, a reluctance that was maintained throughout. This was probably due to an extremely shy, nervous, and sensitive temperament, and Jeremiah's accounts of his own shrinking from the task imposed upon him indicate an acute agony, increased by the unpopularity which he experienced. (See ch. i. 4-9, iv. 19, vi. 11, viii. 18, ix. 1, and especially xv. 10, 15-18, and xx. 7-9). Only the conviction that he was Divinely sustained could have carried Jeremiah through such a ministry. (See i. 18-19). The scene of it was his native home, the Benjamite village of Anathoth, where he had inherited a small estate, and Jerusalem. Its most acute tragedy was his conviction, unlike that of Isaiah, that Jerusalem must fall before the people of Judah could be purged of their sins; and he lived to see his words fulfilled.

(4) In ch. i.-vi. we have a record of Jeremiah's ministry in the six years of Josiah's reign, 627-621 B.C., preceding the reformation. With two or three simple clues they are relatively easy for the ordinary reader to understand. The Prophet's call is given in i. 4-10. His first message, i. 11-19, under the figures of an almond tree and a fiery caldron with mouth from the north, is that God is awaking to bring judgement upon Judah. In ch. ii. Judah's history from the deliverance from Egypt under Moses is reviewed to show Judah's unfaithfulness and ingratitude, which theme is presented with reiterated force and extreme poignancy in ch. iii., under comparison of Judah to an adulterous and unfaithful wife. (Cf. Hosea's use of the same comparison in reference to Israel's idolatries). In these chapters we see the rise of the prophetic temper against the foul and heathenish worships which had intruded into the pure religion of Jehovah. In ch. iv.-vi. judgement is pronounced with characteristic prophetic heat, and grim

pictures of the Scythian menace are drawn. (See ch. iv. 10-18, v. 1-19, vi. 1-8).

Hints on Teaching.

(a) Junior Classes.

(1) Invite the children once more to take an imaginary visit to Jerusalem. (Teachers will by this have discovered that for the present the scene of every lesson is Jerusalem, and by insisting on this the impression made by the story of its fall and the transference of the scene of action to Babylon will be deepened.) The wicked King Manasseh has been dead fourteen years; his son who succeeded him had only reigned two years, and then had been assassinated, and now there reigns the young King, Josiah, a boy of eight when he ascended the throne, now a youth of twenty.

(2) But things in Jerusalem are still very much the same as in the days of Manasseh. In the valley of Hinnon human sacrifices are still offered up; the dark-browed, fierce-eyed wizards still walk the streets, and the people consult them in every difficulty, and though persecution of the prophets has ceased, there are still the heathen altars in the Temple.

(3) One thing, however, is different. Let us stop in the market-place and hear what people are talking about as they flit about buying and selling, or stand in huddled groups to discuss the news. "Will they come to Judah?" the question is asked. "They are past Damascus," says another. "News has come from the land of Philistines," says a third, "and they have taken Gaza, and the Egyptians are raising an army to meet them. If they should come to Jerusalem, what then—?" And a shudder of fear passes through the crowd.

(4) Of whom do they speak? No, it is not Assyria, nor any other of the foes whom Judah has had to face; but a new and unknown foe from the north from away far beyond the Black Sea, from those dreary plains between Europe and Asia, have streamed the fierce, wild Scythian bands, like the Turks and Arabs nearer our own time, right down through Armenia and Asia Minor (see map) into Syria and down the coast towards Egypt, ravaging, pillaging, burning, and slaying, and the news of them has spread to Jerusalem, causing every heart to quake and tremble.

(5) And now the men we have been listening to move on to where a crowd is gathered while someone talks to them. Who is this pace-faced, nervous youth who is speaking? and speaking bravely for all his fear? And the word passes round: "It is the son of Hilkiah, the priest of Anathoth—Jeremiah is his name. What is it he is saying? Ah, he must be another of that prophetic brood, like that dark-browed Zephaniah, who was speaking last month, and Isaiah, of whom our fathers tell, who was put to death in Manasseh's reign! He is saying that God is going to bring the Scythians upon us to punish us; that all our idols are false, that it is wrong for us to worship them; that the God who brought our fathers out of Egypt is angry with us unless we repent! What shall we do?"

(6) But the Scythians did not come to Jerusalem as people expected. Why, we do not know. But there were thankful hearts in Jerusalem when the news came that the robber bands had passed on their way and were not likely to return. Once again the voice of the prophets like Zephaniah and Jeremiah was heard, and up there in the King's palace, near the Temple on the hill, good men and women were preparing to turn their hearts and the hearts of the people to the true God of Israel. Next week we shall hear the story of how they succeeded.

(b) Senior Classes.

(1) With these an introduction to the life story of Jeremiah.

(2) Point out how the history of Judah is being dominated by the figures of the great prophets, except for the long blank occasioned by the reign of Manasseh. In the first period we have considered, the latter half of the 8th Century B.C., the supreme figure is that of Isaiah. In the latter half of the succeeding Century, 7th B.C., Jeremiah, accompanied by the lesser figure of Zephaniah, arises. It is given him to prophesy for half a century until the fall of Jerusalem.

(3) His ministry opens in the reign of Josiah. The abuses of Manasseh's reign still persisted in the earlier years of Josiah; and the sight of these awakened the prophetic conscience in Jeremiah's breast. Son of a priestly house, shrinking, nervous, and retiring, a force

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within him compels him to speak. Read the story of his call in Jeremiah ch. i., and passages like xv. 10, 15-18, and xx. 7-9.

(4) Within the reign of Josiah falls the first section of his book, ch. i.-vi. The occasion that called him forth, as also his contemporary, Zephaniah, was the advance of the Scythian bands. Show from ch. iv.-vi. how he represented this peril to the people as a threatening judgment from God, and how in thankfulness for their escape the spiritual conditions for reform were produced.

News of Our Churches.

All communications sent by the halfpenny post for this page should bear on the outside, distinctly written, the words "News for the Press," and should be directed to "The Editor, 'United Methodist,' 188 Rye Lane, Peckham, London, S.E.15." A number of communications have been surcharged through omitting to conform to these Post Office regulations. News should arrive not later than the FIRST delivery on Tuesday morning, and be written on one side of the paper or postcard only.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Changes.

Shaw, J. Herbert, has decided to leave the Camelford and Wadebridge Circuit at Conference, 1918, after four years' service.

Wilcock, A., leaves Middlesbrough, Conference, 1918, after two years' service.

General

Brixton (Merton).—The morning service at the Flower Services was taken by Mr. W. Smith. An address was given in the afternoon by Rev. W. Mills (Baptist minister). In the evening a fine sermon was preached by Rev. R. W. Gair, followed by an address at the open-air meeting in one of the streets opposite the chapel.

Bristol (Bishopston).—July 29th. At the quarterly service of the Young Worshipers' League an interesting feature during the day was the receipt of some 260 eggs from the congregation for our wounded soldiers. At the close of the morning service a resolution of sympathy was decided to be sent to the widow of the late Mr. A. P. Monks, a valued local preacher who died last week in the Kingswood Circuit. Rev. G. H. Kennedy occupied the pulpit morning and evening.

Catford (Torridon Road).—In continuation of the services in connection with the opening of the new organ a special musical service was held last Sunday evening, July 29, when a short and delightful oratorio, "The Bringing up of the Ark" (J. Allanson Benson) was sung by an augmented choir, the solos and choruses being most efficiently rendered. Perhaps the most effective were the tenor solo "Rise, O Lord, into Thy Rest" (Mr. Geo. Day), the soprano solo, "O How Amiable" (Miss Louie Hards), and the chorus, "Remember not, Lord, our offences." The organist was Mr H. E. Sitters, and the pastor, Rev. A. W. Utting, gave an appropriate address. The "Hallelujah Chorus" and the Doxology concluded a very helpful service.

Louth (North Somercotes).—A presentation of an individual communion service has been made by the family of Mr. and Mrs. E. Wray in commemoration of their golden wedding. Rev. W. Wilby, on behalf of the trustees and church members, has expressed appreciation of the gift, and accorded to Mr. and Mrs. E. Wray the hearty wishes of all who know them in the Circuit. Mr. Wray has been a most devoted church officer, and an ardent worker in the cause of temperance, and has been engaged in the Sunday School for many years.

Lincoln (Silver Street).—A special effort has been made for circuit and trust funds, the preacher on this occasion being Rev. S. C. Challenger (Nottingham). The collections taken amounted to £111 2s. 7d. Special singing by the choir. Old hymns and tunes were sung in a very hearty manner.

Plymouth (Embankment Road).—The annual treat took place at Pomphlett, where a field adjoining the United Methodist Church had been kindly lent by Mr. F. J. Moore, J.P. A most enjoyable afternoon was spent, ideal weather adding greatly to the pleasure, and both old and young (numbering about 1100) had a good time.

Sheepridge (Providence).—At the young men's flower service sermons were preached morning and evening by Rev. T. P. Skillings. In the afternoon Mr. S. L. Moseley gave an interesting talk on Nature, the choir being in attendance.

Southport (Manchester Road).—Flower services were conducted by Rev. W. Lacon Tonge morning and evening. At the evening service Miss Holden sang a solo and the choir rendered an anthem. Mr. J. Jackson presided at the organ. In the afternoon a young people's service was held. Mr. C. Haley presided, and Mrs. Whitton received the gifts of flowers presented by the children. The children sang (by request) their anniver-

sary hymns and solos under the leadership of Mr. W. Santus, with Mr. E. Buckley at the organ. The offertory was for "Our Boys" Fund, and amounted to £4 7s. 6d., making the total for the day nearly £7 5s.

Anniversaries.

Oxford (St. Michael's Street).—The chapel anniversary preacher was Rev. W. B. Selbie, M.A., D.D., Principal of Mansfield College. At the Monday meeting the chairman was Dr. John Massie, M.A., and the speaker Rev. J. Stay. Mr. J. Thornton, Trust Steward, presented his 19th report, in which he paid a special tribute to the organist for his voluntary services, stretching over a period of 20 and more years. After a trying financial year the Steward was able to report a balance in hand of over £5.

Penzance (Parade Street).—The Sunday School Anniversary preacher was Rev. W. Budd, B.A. (Wesleyan). Children's service in the afternoon, with recitations, solos, etc.; chairman, Mr. J. J. Gribble. Monday evening the cantata, "The Gentle Shepherd," given by "The Sunbeams," with Mr. J. Carne in the chair. Congregations excellent, services best and most inspiring for years.

West Hartlepool (Park Road).—The Sunday School anniversary services were taken on the first Sunday by Rev. T. Clarke, M.A. (of Low Row, Richmond, Yorks.), a Wesleyan minister. On the second Sunday the circuit minister, Rev. J. A. Bedward, took the service. Special hymns from the Sunday School Hymnal were sung by the children, who had been well trained by Mr. J. Longmore. On Monday evening the children admirably entertained a good company with solos, recitations, flag and salute drills and representations of Bible pictures, under the direction of Sister Lily, of Bowron House. It was a splendid success, so much so that several have asked for its repetition. The anniversary services were enjoyed immensely and were attended by good financial results.

Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P. (a member of the War Cabinet), Dr. David (the Head Master of Rugby), the Rev. Joseph Hocking, the Bishop of Lincoln, the Bishop of London, Miss Margaret Macmillan, Sir Frederick Milner, the Rev. J. Tolefree Parr, the Rev. F. C. Spurr, and Canon Talbot (of Bristol Cathedral) contribute to a symposium in the August number of the "Sunday at Home" on the topic, "After the War—What?" The illustrated articles include "On the Lawn: A Summer-Time Meditation"; "Summer Days Long Ago," and "Munition Workers' Canteens," a chat with Mrs. Winston Churchill.

Births, Marriages, Deaths.

NOTICES of Births, Marriages, Deaths, etc., are inserted at the uniform price of 2s., unless they exceed 30 words, in which case 6d. extra for every eight words or under is charged. Notices, together with Remittances should reach the office of the UNITED METHODIST, 12 Farringdon Avenue, London, E.C. 4, not later than Tuesday morning.

REPORTS of Marriages, Silver Weddings, etc., intended for insertion in the Editorial Columns must be accompanied by a pre-paid notice of the event at the rate above specified.

BIRTHS.

FLETCHER.—On Sunday, July 29th, to the Rev. and Mrs. Robert J. Fletcher, a son. 16 Nursery Mount, Hunslet Carr, Leeds.

MELLOR.—On July 25th, 1917, to Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Mellor (daughter of Rev. G. Dixon and Mrs. Thompson, of Rotherham), a daughter. "Strathmore," Park Road, Cowes.

MARRIAGE.

BURKITT-POWELL.—On July 24th, 1917 (by licence), at Redland Grove United Methodist Church, Bristol, by the Rev. Jas. Wright (President), and the Rev. J. H. Burkitt, father of the bridegroom, Sydney Marmaduke Burkitt (2nd Artists' Rifles, O.T.C.), to Edith Annie Taylor Powell, only daughter of the late H. T. Powell, Esq., and Mrs. Powell, of Cheltenham.

DEATH.

SHRUBSALL.—On July 25th, 1917, at Mr. and Mrs. Reay's, 25 Seymour Road, Wandsworth, Sarah Mary, widow of William R. Shrubbsall, of Brunswick, Newington, aged 76 years. Interred at Streatham Cemetery.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT.

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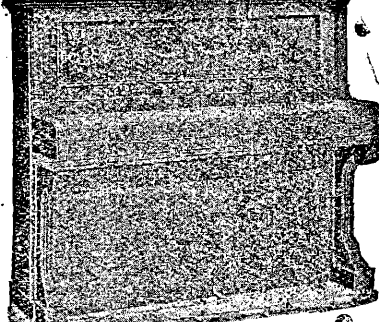
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	Morning	Evening.
LONDON.		
Brixton—Streatham (Riggindale Road). 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	Mr. E. L. Joselin	Mr. Littlewood
Clapham Junction— (Mallinson Road). 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	C. H. Buxton	C. H. Buxton
Stockwell— (Paradise Road). 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	R. W. Gair	R. W. Gair
Park Crescent— Clapham Park Rd. 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	J. H. Blackwell	E. Joselin
Fulham—Walham Grove. 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	E. W. Warner	E. P. Fothergill
Fulham—Munster Road. 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	Miss Thomas	B. W. Hird
West Kensington— Ebenezer (North End Rd.). 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	W. Kenyon	— Edmonds
Bethel (North End Rd.). 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	Supply	W. Kenyon
Westminster— Vauxhall B'ge Rd. 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	E. P. Fothergill	J. H. Palmer
Newington— Brunswick, Gt. Dover Street. 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	C. Bastin	G. G. Nicholson
PROVINCIAL.		
Bridlington— 10.45 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	W. Conrad Balmer	W. Conrad Balmer
Brighton— Bristol Road. 11 a.m., 7 p.m.	L. H. Court	L. H. Court
Stanford Avenue. 11 a.m., 7 p.m.	D. Watkins	D. Watkins
Old Shoreham Rd 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.	J. G. B. Corin	J. G. B. Corin
Bristol— Redcliffe Crescent 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	H. Marsden	R. T. Battle
Sheffield—Scotland Street Mission 10.30 a.m., 6.30 p.m.	G. Froggatt	G. Froggatt

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