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IRISH BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

Volume Eleven

1978-1979

IRISH BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

VOLUME ELEVEN . . . 1978/79

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Price £1.50 to non-members

Membership of the Society is open to persons interested in the history of Baptist Churches in Ireland. The membership subscription is £1.50 (in the British Isles) and entitles to the Society's Journal. For overseas members the annual subscription is $4.00 inclusive.

Published at the office of the Baptist Union of Ireland, 3 Fitzwilliam Street, Belfast, BT9 6AW, Northern Ireland.

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EDITORIAL

In December, 1978, Dr. H.D. Gribbon formally resigned from the position of Honorary Secretary of the Irish Baptist Historical Society. He has taken up residence in North Wales but continues to show a keen interest in the work of the Society. Dr. Gribbon was a founder member of the Society, and since its inception in 1967 he has contributed an inestimable amount of work to it. The Historical Society owes him a great deal, and as his successor I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to him.

It is with some trepidation that I attempt to follow in Dr. Gribbon's footsteps. My hope is that as a Society we shall all contribute to further study of Irish Baptist history and that much useful work will be done in the future, as has been done in the past. I would like to encourage all members to consider carefully what contribution they might make towards research into the history of our denomination, and to be willing to prepare papers for the Society's meetings. I would also encourage members to publicise the work of the Society as much as possible.

The papers in this journal were read at three of the Society's meetings in 1978. The fourth paper, a history of Mountpottinger Baptist Tabernacle by Mr. Graham Hibbert, has been published as a separate booklet, price 75 pence.

We look forward to members supporting the forthcoming meetings of the Society and we would eagerly welcome some new members.

M. DOWLING

The Weatherup family and the Carrickfergus Baptist Church

For many generations the Weatherup family were quite well known in the town of Carrickfergus. Three generations of the family have had a connection with the Baptist Church there, and that connection spans about one hundred years. It began when the church was founded and continued until fairly recently when the surviving members of the family died. Others had moved away from the town over the years and there were some who took no lasting interest in the work.

The church was formed in 1862 and in August of that year six people met to "consider the propriety of forming a Baptist Church in Carrickfergus ... It was resolved that the persons present unite together as a Baptist Church and that they shall meet D.V. for public worship on Lord's Day morning 17th August at half past 11 o'clock in Mr. Larmour's school room at the Union Hall which was kindly granted by him for that purpose. - Signed D. Pasley."

This is the first record in the Carrick Church Book, David Pasley, who signed the entry, was employed by the Northern Bank in Carrickfergus and later became manager of that branch. He was a man in a position of responsibility and well-known in the town.

Another of the founder members was James Weatherup. He was a tailor and had his business in West Street. He had attended North Street Presbyterian Church and was well-known and respected in Carrick. James Weatherup believed he should be baptised and he, David Pasley and Samuel McCombe, another of the founder members, were baptised in the sea! It must have been a costly stand for men in their positions to submit to the ordinance of baptism, as baptism by immersion carried a stigma in the eyes of many people. In the case of James Weatherup it would have been considered more respect-

able to remain a Presbyterian. The point is brought out in the April 1889 issue of the Irish Baptist:-

> "His steadfast devotion to what he considered truth is worthy of being followed by all our brethren. After his baptism he was, like our Lord, tempted by the adversary, who suggested that his action would ruin his worldly prosperity. But he replied, 'Get thee behind me Satan; for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.' It is only right to add that he never did suffer for his faithfulness nor lose the respect of his fellow-townsmen of all denominations."

The church building on Albert Road was opened in 1864 only two years after the church was formed. There were only a few members and to have a church building after such a short time represents a great advance. I was told, but found no written evidence to confirm it, that James Weatherrup was to a great extent responsible for the church building and it was his influence and Presbyterian background that caused the similarity between the Baptist church on Albert Road and North Street Presbyterian church.

In 1870 James Weatherup became governor of the Shiels Institution in Carrickfergus. This was a residential position, and whether or not his tailoring business was taken over by one of his sons is not clear. The Shiels Institution was set up by Charles Shiels, born in 1782, a native of Killough, Co. Down. He became a successful Liverpool merchant and left the sum of £90,000 for the purpose of building 24 comfortable houses for respectable persons in reduced circumstances. The houses were rent-free, and each person received £10 a year on condition of raising a further £10 a year towards his or her own support. There were similar institutions in Killough, Dungannon, Armagh and Dublin. The one in Carrick is still operating and the conditions are little different now to what they were then, and I gather that the others are still going too.

The move to the Shiels Institution resulted in James Weatherup being much further from the church in Carrick, but he remained a regular attender of all the services. Unfortunately the records of the Shiels Institution at Carrick were allowed to get into a poor state through dampness and they were finally destroyed several years ago.

There is one particularly interesting event from James Weatherup's time as governor. About five years after he went there, on the 20th January, 1875, there was a violent storm which swept over the town of Carrick and district and as a result the gable at the Governor's house at the Shiels Institution was blown in. There were no reports of serious injury but there was damage to many houses over a wide area.

In 1887 James Weatherup was forced by ill health to resign as governor, and two years later, on 27th March 1889, he died at the age of 77. His wife Elizabeth died a few years later in 1894.

His support for the church in Carrick and his devotion to his Lord was steadfast to the end of his life. The Carrick Church Book records that he was "Firm and steadfast to the end" and the Belfast News Letter records, in connection with his worth at the Shiels Institution, that "the important duties connected with the office were discharged by him to the entire satisfaction of the governors. His kindness of heart and impartiality made him a general favourite with the inmates by whom his resignation about two years ago, in consequence of failing health, was much regretted."

For the first two years of the church's existence David Pasley presided at the church meetings and James Weatherup acted as a deacon. In 1864 the first pastor was called. He was Mr. William Hamilton from Belfast and in the first four years of his ministry there was a great increase in the membership of the church. It is good to see entry after entry in the Church Book starting, "Today I baptised ..." followed by a list of names. It is interesting to note that candidates for baptism were interviewed for church membership before they were baptised, so that they could be received into the church as soon as they had been baptised.

William Hamilton was pastor of the church for twenty-five years and died in 1888, the year before James Weatherup. By the time of James Weatherup's death the church had increased greatly in numbers and had had a period of twenty-five years settled and faithful ministry. James Weatherup's ill health, which forced him to retire from the Shiels Institution, also compelled him to give up his position of deacon in the church, as he could no longer carry out the duties of his office.

James Weatherup had quite a large family - both boys and girls. His eldest son was John Weatherup who was one of the "fathers" of our denomination. Two more of his sons also served the Carrick church. In the 1890's and early 1900's there were quite a number of Weatherups connected with the Carrick church and quite often the exact relationship between them is not clear. However, it is very clear that the Weatherups were active in their support of the church. There were some who had no connection with the Baptist church. It is possible that some of James' family remained Presbyterian.

In 1880 James, the founder member, and his son John were deacons at the same time. In March 1903 T.D. Weatherup - another son of James - became treasurer after the death of David Pasley who lived to the good old age of 87. It was decided in 1893 that the church should obtain a manse. The estimated cost was £300, and a committee was set up to look for a suitable house and to find ways of raising the necessary money. On that committee were three Weatherup brothers: James jun., who appears to have left Carrick some years later, John, and Thomas D. Weatherup. Thomas D. had a shoe shop and seems to have had some connection with a coal yard as well. This shows that, for a small church, quite a lot of the active members were Weatherups. In connection with the manse it was decided to hold a sale of work and a ladies' committee was set up to help with that and two or three of the Weatherup ladies were on that committee.

It appears that something strange happened in 1896. A significant number of the members of the church resigned including just about all of the Weatherup members. Nearly all of those who resigned were re-admitted later and a new roll was drawn up in 1898. There is no

indication in the Church Book of what happened either to cause the resignations or to allow those who resigned to be re-admitted.

For some time from about the turn of the century the church seems to have had a difficult time. For a number of years the church recorded a debit balance at the end of the year and fund raising became a major discussion point at each church meeting. At one of these meetings a lady suggested that instead of the present pastor a young man from Belfast should be asked to preach on Sundays for £1 each week. This would have been a saving on the Pastors' salary. However, one of the Weatherups pointed out that since the pastor had not resigned it was hardly proper to discuss a replacement. Pastor Flook, who was pastor at the time, remained until 1905 and there then followed a long period with no settled ministry.

It was during this period with no pastor that John Weatherup's service to the church was perhaps most useful. He was possibly the most outstanding member of the family at that time. He was also one of the outstanding citizens of the town of Carrickfergus and it is worth looking at his life in particular.

I have already mentioned that John was the eldest son of James Weatherup who was a founder member of the Carrick church. John was born on 3rd November 1846. He trusted Christ early in life and joined the church in 1874, and served it and the denomination for some 51 years until his death in 1935, at the age of 89. He was a very active man and seems to have applied himself fully to everything he took up, whether it was for the church, in his business life, for the good of the community or for recreation. His strongly held Christian principles were evident in all aspects of his life and he had a reputation for fairness and good judgment.

He worked in the firm of James Taylor and Sons Ltd. He started with them in 1864 when he was 17 or 18 years old. The firm James Taylor and Sons (Born Spinning Mills) was established in 1852 and soon gained a reputation for the quality of the yarn it produced. It was claimed by many to be the best flax spinning mill in Co. Antrim. The company remained in the forefront of development in the

industry for many years - usually from choice but sometimes because change was forced upon it. They were among the first spinners in Ireland to adopt cotton rope driving instead of gearing, and in 1870 a two storey extension was added and new office accommodation built. In 1881 the firm lost its water supply for driving purposes due to the activities of the Belfast Water Commissioners and so was forced to introduce steam power. The company employed about 700 people and had a school room and various social and recreational facilities for its workers.

So it was with a large company that John Weatherup worked. He started off as book-keeper. After several years in its service he became secretary and later his services and abilities were recognised and he was made a director. He served the company for 63 years until he retired in 1927.

Although John was not in direct everyday contact with the shop floor workers he took a keen interest in their welfare, and he was well liked and respected by them. He had a reputation for attention to detail and he had very striking handwriting. It was very clear and neat but had many flourishes. He took an active interest in the recreational facilities connected with the company.

Bryghte Holme, where John Weatherup lived on the sea-front and where his daughter Jane still lives, was built for him by the company. It is about a mile from the mill and is a typical house for a senior member of staff in a prosperous and expanding firm. It has three floors, about six bedrooms, and a beautiful view of Belfast Lough. It still has the bell pushes by the fire-places and has only recently had electric light installed. It was bought by one of John's daughters when James Taylor was taken over by Amblers. The company had a difficult time when the linen industry contracted and at the time of take-over a lot of the holdings were sold off.

John Weatherup had nine children, all of whom had successful careers and most of whom had, at some time, a connection with the

Carrickfergus church. He was married twice. There is little mention of his first wife but he remarried in about 1888. His second wife was Agnes Marion Weatherup and she was quite a few years younger than John. She supported her husband in his work for the church and played an active part herself. For a good many years she was treasurer of the church and was on many occasions congratulated on the clarity of her financial reports. In fact for some years husband and wife held the posts of secretary and treasurer in the church.

Their home was often used by visiting preachers and very often used for office-bearers' meetings. The use of Bryght Holme for deacons' meetings increased in John Weatherup's later years, when his health was not good and he would have found difficulty in going to the church. As well as acting as church secretary and deacon for many years, he was very interested in the Sunday School. Whether or not he was involved in starting the Carrick Sunday School is not clear but in the March 1934 Irish Baptist there is is a description of the Carrick Sunday School social:-

> "We were glad to have the father of the Sunday School with us in the person of Mr. John Weatherup, J.P., and we trust he may be long spared to attend the children's social which he so much enjoys".

The fact that he is referred to as "father of the Sunday School" implies that he worked in the Sunday School in its early years if not actually at its beginning.

John Weatherup held all his beliefs strongly and seems to have had a forceful personality. One point that he felt very strongly about was restricting the Lord's Table to baptised believers. It was not a restriction to church members, just that those at the Communion Service should be baptised. The story is told that when Faith Mission Pilgrims were having a mission in the town they went to the Carrick church. John Weatherup called them aside and insisted that only those who had been baptised could observe the Communion Service.

The restriction remained until eight years after his death and was removed in March 1943.

His Christian service was not restricted to his own church. He served the denomination as a whole by acting on several of its committees. He was a member of the Home Mission committee from its formation in 1888 and also served on the executive committee and on the finance committee. This quotation is from the February 1936 Irish Baptist:-

> "Another of the 'fathers' of our denomination has passed over to the other side. Mr. John Weatherup, of Carrickfergus, who had been a member of the Home Mission Committee from the date of its formation, died on the Saturday after Christmas Day in his 90th year. One by one the stalwarts who contributed so much to the building up of our work since the grant of denominational Home Rule over 40 years ago, are going on. We can never estimate what we owe to them. And amongst them all there was no more faithful worker for the cause than the brother whose recent loss we now deplore."

It was not only Baptist work that John Weatherup supported. The Y.M.C.A. in Carrickfergus was established in 1873 and in 1888 had about 130 members. It had a reading room, library and cafe. John was treasurer for many years and later became a Vice-President and trustee. I have found no mention of a connection with the Temperance Movement, but it is recorded in the Carrick church Book that 'Mr. Weatherup' raised the matter of starting a Band of Hope. Unfortunately there is no indication of which Mr. Weatherup and the matter was referred to the Sunday School teachers.

His interests were not restricted to church life or even to distinctly religious affairs. It is difficult to imagine where he found time for all his activities. He was made a J.P. on 30th September 1916. At that occasion he was photographed and looked tall and quite well built, rather different to a much later photograph taken when he was an old man and a bit round-shouldered. In

his earlier years he was quite a striking figure.

As well as being a J.P. he was on the Carrickfergus Urban District Council for about 13 years, from 1912 to 1925. He served on several of the sub-committees of the council and was chairman of the Finance, Law and Property Committee for several years. He became Vice-Chairman of the Council in 1918 and held that position until 1923. His fellow councillors wanted to make him chairman but he refused. At that time party political loyalties played little part in local council elections. Men were elected to the council as individuals because they were respected in the community. It is likely that being well-known and liked by the workers at James Taylor and council minutes for the time that he was on the council minutes for the time that he was on the council revealed nothing of a political nature. Most of the business related to such matters as steamrolling the roads, street lighting and the band stand. However, John Weatherup was a strong Liberal and a supporter of Home Rule for Ireland under the Crown, and he made no secret of his views. This may be surprising for someone who lived in Carrick which has such strong Unionist associations.

There is an apology for absence recorded for John Weatherup for the council meeting of 5th January 1925, when he was ill with a cold. Then, on 13th January 1925, his resignation due to ill health is recorded. It seems likely that his cold developed into something worse, or at least took a lot out of a man who was by then nearing 80 years of age. The minutes record:-

> "Resolved that it be placed on record our appreciation of the valuable services rendered to this community by councillor John Weatherup J.P. during his long term of office as an Urban District Council Councillor and our deep regret that his retirement from said office is occasioned by ill health. We desire to tender him our sincere sympathy in his severe illness and express our hope for his early recovery to health."

The other main interest that he had was sport. He believed firmly in physical fitness. His main sporting interests were sailing and rowing but he also took part in football and golf. He was commodore of the Rowing and Sailoring Club, and when he became too old to compete he often acted as an official at various regattas throughout Northern Ireland. Just about a year before his death he went with crews from Carrick to Coleraine when they were competing in the Bann Regatta.

He was also a Vice-President of Carrickfergus Musical Festival Association, and those who knew him say he was a good singer with a strong voice, well able to give a lead to the singing in the church.

Several of John Weatherup's children joined the church. He was very strict in the home; family prayers were observed every morning and every evening and the children were brought to church regularly. There were four sons and five daughters. The eldest son, Anthony, became a member of the church in 1896, but not long after he emigrated to America and settled there. Marriot Weatherup went to Australia and settled there. The other two sons, William and John, remained in Northern Ireland. William was a graduate of Queen's University, Belfast and was connected with Musgrave's Engineering Works. John jun. became manager of James Taylor and Sons, the mill where his father was a director. He seems to have moved out of Carrick and for a while travelled to the church but decided that the journey was too far. The daughter with the longest association with the church was Bessie. She joined in 1890 and was church organist for a while, served as Sunday School treasurer and was a member of the church for 55 years, until she died in 1945. She lived in Bryghte Holme and never married. Mary and Sarah were both graduates of Trinity College, Dublin. They were sent to boarding school in Londonderry mainly, it seems, because their father met the headmaster while on holiday in England and was very impressed. Mary obtained a B.A. degree and Sarah an M.A. Both were members of the church before they moved to England. While in England Mary married Mr. Herbert Jeans, described as 'a London man of letters.' She was the only daughter to marry. Agnes was a teacher and taught

art. She was very good at pottery and had a few exhibitions of her work in England. Jane Weatherup, who is the only daughter who never had a connection with the church, is still alive and lives in Bryghte Holme.

Since all John Weatherup's sons moved away from Carrick and the only daughter to marry lived in England that line of the family has disappeared from the church.

There was, however, another Weatherup connected with the Carrick church. He was Mr. Thomas Weatherup who was possibly a nephew of John Weatherup. Thomas Weatherup joined the church in 1928 and was a member for over thirty years. He was an elder for a great many years and preached in the open-air and in cottage meetings. There seems to have been quite a number of homes in the Carrick area where meetings were held on a regular basis and Thomas Weatherup had one such meeting in his own home. He died in 1959 and was a sad loss to the church.

The connection between the Carrick Church and the Weatherups cover about one hundred years and spans three generations. They made a mark in the history of the Carrick church and the denomination as a whole and, in the case of John Weatherup, a considerable impact on the town of Carrickfergus.

SOURCES

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Carrickfergus Urban District Council Minutes, 1912-1925

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The South Derry Baptist Evangelistic Association

The South Derry Baptist Evangelistic Association came into being as a direct result of the good work done by Pastor George McKillen, of the Carson Memorial Church in Tobermore, during the days of spiritual quickening in the 1920's. Due largely to his efforts churches had been established in the neighbouring towns of Magherafelt and Coagh. The church at Carndaisy near Moneymore was re-established, contacts were made in Cookstown, and regular services were being held in Upperlands, Knockloughrin and other centres adjacent to Tobermore. Mr. McKillen was quick to see that the best hope for the future of the Baptist witness in the whole area was to encourage the young churches in the district to engage in united evangelistic outreach in co-operation with the long established church in Tobermore. This led to a closer fellowship among the churches, in the belief that through the preaching of the gospel in this area the Lord would add to the churches the fruit of united labours.

Such an association was duly formed in 1928. Its committee consisted of representatives of the four churches for which Mr. McKillen had personal responsibility - Tobermore, Magherafelt, Carndaisy and Coagh. Fellowship was also extended to include the church at Kilrea, recently come into being through the work of Rev. J.W. Freeman of Coleraine.

The following constituted the first committee of the Association, and were appointed by the four churches above as their representatives - A.H. Hutchinson J.P., W.J. McKinney, W.J. Hughes, Sam Nelson, Ian Hanna, Fred Henderson, Geo. McKillen (Tobermore); Geo. Olley, Sam Lawrence, Robt. Orr (Magherafelt); Jas. Mitchell and Geo. Crooks (Carndaisy); and Wm. Miller (Coagh).

This transcript of the minutes of their first meeting makes interesting reading and gives some understanding of the Association's future activities:-

"The first meeting of the newly formed Association met at Tobermore on Saturday, November 17th, 1928 at 4 o'clock.

There were present Messrs. S. Nelson, A.H. Hutchinson, W.J. McKinney, W.J. Hughes, S. Hanna, F. Henderson, R. Orr, S. Lawrence, Geo. Crooks and Pastor McKillen.

Mr. McKillen was unanimously elected chairman after which two brethren led in prayer seeking the guidance of the Lord in the new venture of faith.

Mr. W.J. Hughes and Mr. S. Hanna were then appointed Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The chairman then explained the aims of the Association as being a united effort to evangelise South Derry as the way may open up making use of the portable hall and caravan, the property of the Tobermore church, as far as possible.

Funds - It was unanimously agreed:

(1) That each family connected with the churches in the Association be asked to contribute at least one penny per week and that the representatives of the various churches be responsible for the distribution and collection of boxes as may be arranged.

(2) That a box be placed at the door on week-nights of each place where missions are being held, and on Sunday nights an offering to be taken up.

(3) That any money received by the Evangelist be regarded as the property of the Association.

Remuneration of Evangelist:

It was unanimously agreed that the Evangelist should live in the caravan, unless offered hospitality, and that the Association pay all legitimate expenses incurred as regards food and heating of caravan and that the Association pay the Evangelist at least fifteen shillings per week.

Evangelist:

It was unanimously agreed that Mr. S. Jardine be elected as our first

Evangelist, his engagement to date from 1st January 1929.

It was also agreed that Mr. McKillen should see about getting boxes, at least 200, and that an effort be made to provide work for Mr. Jardine in the meantime.

Next Meeting:

To be held in Kilrea on Boxing Day between Conference meetings.

The chairman then closed the meeting in prayer."

Ordinary meetings of committee were conveniently arranged for Boxing Day, Easter Monday and 12th July, the dates of the Annual Conferences held in Kilrea, Tobermore, and Carndaisy. A considerable number of special meetings of committee were also called from time to time as need arose.

The area covered by the actual work of the Association ranged from their first mission at Aghadowey in January 1929 to a mission in Cookstown some years later. The final mission was that conducted by Mr. Alfred Olley at Killytoney, near Tobermore, during August-September 1938.

During the course of the Association's some ten years of life it employed a succession of evangelists. Mr. Saml. Jardine laboured under the auspices of the Association for a little over a year. He resigned early in 1930 when he accepted a call from the Kilrea church to become their pastor. Upon Mr. Jardine's resignation an invitation to become the Association's evangelist was extended to Mr. Alfred Olley, brother of Pastor Geo. Olley of the Magherafelt church. His first mission was held in the tent at Ballymaguiggan, near Magherafelt, during May 1930. In the interim between Mr. Jardine's resignation and the appointment of Mr. A. Olley, Pastor G. Olley had conducted a mission using the portable hall at Drapersfield, a townland between Magherafelt and the shore of Lough Leagh.

Mr. Olley's resignation came during the spring of 1931. Mr. Hugh Orr, later so well-known in Irish Baptist Circles and member of the young church in Magherafelt, was approached about a proposed mission at Ballindrum, a townland near Moneymore. Mr. Hugh Orr continued with the Association until the summer of 1933. At the committee meeting held at Carndaisy on July 12th of that year it was recorded that "Mr. Orr stated plainly his reasons for leaving,"

though they are not mentioned in the minutes. The committee adopted a motion proposed by Pastor S. Jardine regretting Mr. Orr's departure and thanking God for how he had been used during his two years as Association evangelist.

It was during Mr. Orr's term with the Association that the loved pastor of the Tobermore church was suddenly called into the presence of the Lord at the early age of 40 years. Mr. McKillen's death robbed the Association of its founder and the South Derry churches of an energetic and highly respected leader. Mr. Orr's departure was another sad blow, but the Association held together and carried on its good work throughout the ministry of Pastor Wm. Weir. Despite his untiring efforts the Association began to suffer from divisive issues within the Baptist Union (particularly ministerial recognition). It became evident that there no longer existed the spirit of unity amongst the South Derry churches that had earlier prevailed.

Mr. Orr was followed as Association Evangelist by Mr. Clarke of Belfast, whose services ended in the Autumn of 1934. Openings for missions were by this time becoming hard to find. The "good times of the twenties" had come to an end. There were fewer signs of the working of God's Spirit in the land, and it was evident that the usefulness of the Association was coming to an end.

Following the termination of Mr. Clarke's appointment it seems as though the days of having an evangelist on a permanent basis were over. An approach was made to Mr. T.J. McNabb and he served for some months, drawing a salary of thirty shillings per week. Pastor Bailey of the Magherafelt church helped out during one summer season, and Mr. Chas. Mayne, the scottish evangelist, conducted one mission in the tent in Tobermore in June 1937. Pastor Hugh Orr had the loan of the tent for a mission in Kilrea in 1938. During the closing two years of the Associations existence the local churches were inclined to sponsor missions under their own individual auspices. The last approaches by the Association being made to Mr. J.J. Baxter, to engage in work during 1938, and Mr. A. Olley the same year. The final missions were held at Crewe, Maghera and Killytoney, Tobermore, in that year.

A word should be said about the equipment used during the Association's life-time. There was the portable hall, a fairly substantial structure of some 20' by 30', which was exceedingly difficult to dismantle, transport and re-erect. This hall really belonged to the church at Tobermore. It passed to two prominent members of the Tobermore church, Mr. W.J. McKinney and Mr. Joseph Phillips, who had it erected upon a permanent site in the village of Tobermore, to house an afternoon Sunday School begun by Mr. McKinney and run on an interdenominational basis with a staff of teachers drawn from the three churches in the village. This work still goes on to this day. These two brethren deputed their interest in the hall to Mr. Andrew Connor and Mr. W.A. McKinney as trustees. Since those early days the running of the Sunday School and its affairs has been conducted largely by a committee of its teaching staff. Some years after the deaths of Mr. J. Phillips and Mr. W.J. McKinney through the herculean efforts of Mr. Andrew Connor a fine new permanent building, seating three to four hundred people, with ancillary rooms, was erected to the memory of Mr. W.J. McKinney. This hall not only houses the Sunday School but is available for the uniformed youth organisations and other interests representing the three Tobermore churches.

The old wooden hall was sold to a local trader and can still be seen standing after all these years.

The first tent used by the Association appears to have been a second hand one and was replaced by a new one costing £15 in 1931. The caravan for the accommodation of the evangelist belonged to the Tobermore church. It was of the 'gypsy' type and was horse-drawn. Around 1933 "the wheels axle and springs were to be sold by Public Auction". There is no record of any replacements being obtained but presumably a more modern arrangement was substituted. For personal transport the evangelist used a bicycle and was at one time allowed £3 per year from the committee for its upkeep.

Financial problems beset the Association from time to time and it is most interesting to look over the committee minutes and the accounts of those days so far off from our rapidly changing world.

The Association's first evangelist was taken on at a salary of 15/- (75p.) per week. This was later increased to £1 and later a bonus of £5 was authorised for 9 months' service. One minute records a report from a member church that it was unable to contribute to the Association's funds.

Keeping the Association supplied with an evangelist sometimes presented problems not based upon financial considerations. When one evangelist resigned, the committee sent a letter to the church (a member of the Association) which had called him to serve it as pastor. It was proposed and seconded, and apparently passed, "to send a letter to the secretary of the - church in regard to the lines they went upon to give Mr. - a call as their pastor." On the other hand, two evangelists had their engagements terminated because their preaching was judged not acceptable, there being no immediate openings for missions. In this connection it is interesting to read of the commendation given to Mr. Hugh Orr upon his resignation, the following motion being accepted:

> "The committee feel and know that during his two years under the Association he has been much used of God in bringing souls into the Kingdom, and also in building up those who were of the household of faith, and it is their earnest prayer that God may continue to use him mightily to His great Name, and they also trust and pray that he may be kept in the place where it is only possible for God to bless him and use him."

How fully this prayer was answered in the future years of the ministry of Pastor H.H. Orr all Irish Baptists know very well.

It may be fairly said that the folding up of the old South Derry Association was due in part to the waning of the spiritual drive which characterised the 1920's, and to the 'growing pains' in the churches then formed which gave rise to a self-righteous and extreme form of independence, resulting in a lack of confidence in the policies of the Baptist Union of Ireland. That phase of development has long since ceased to exist in the South Derry churches which for many years have

enjoyed warm fellowship with each other and readily co-operate for the furtherance of God's work in the whole area.

In the old South Derry Baptist Evangelistic Association we have the seeds of the present groupings of church on the regional basis under the auspices of the Northern Baptist Association:

Moody, Spurgeon and The Irish Baptists

Spurgeon and Moody were the two most outstanding Christian workers of the 19th century. They drew greater crowds and were blessed with greater success than any of their contemporaries. Spurgeon was born 3 years before Moody and died 7 years before him, so that for a good part of the century they were exercising their ministries simultaneously. Before going on to speak of the contacts and relations of these two great men with Irish Baptists, it might be interesting to touch on their contacts and relations with each other.

Moody made 4 visits to Great Britain in the course of his career, in 1867, in 1873-5, in 1882, and in 1891-92. Spurgeon never visited America so it was only rarely they had an opportunity to meet. The available evidence goes to show that each held the other in high esteem, though Spurgeon had his reservations at some of Moody's methods. Both of course were stoutly evangelical and enthusiastically evangelistic, but it would be fair to say that they differed in their theological emphasis. Spurgeon was a Calvinist, though not a 'hyper'. His delight was to preach a free Gospel to age and sundry, and to do his best to 'compel them to come in'. Moody was criticized and shunned by some Calvinists who considered his preaching Arminian and Pelagian, but he too stressed the priority and supremacy of Divine grace in all Christian experience. Both recognised that there are two sides to every conversion but they put the emphasis differently.

In the index to J.C. Pollock's biography of Moody there are 8 references to Spurgeon. Seeking out some of the more interesting we are told for instance that Moody, speaking of his first visit to the Metropolitan Tabernacle and his first sight of Spurgeon said:-

> "As Spurgeon walked down to the platform my eyes just feasted upon him, and my heart's desire for years was accomplished."

During his first visit to Gt. Britain Moody conducted several missions and Spurgeon publicly commended and supported him, and on later visits the Evangelist preached in the Tabernacle more than once. Fullerton tells us, in his biography of Spurgeon, that when he was first invited to do so his reply was

> "In regard to coming to the Tabernacle I consider it a great honour to be invited, and in fact I would consider it a great honour to black your boots, but to preach to your people would be out of the question. If they will not turn to God under your preaching neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

MOODY IN IRELAND:

Moody conducted missions in Ireland during each of his British visits, not only in Belfast and Dublin but also in some provincial towns. Two experiences which had a great influence on Moody's ministry occurred in Dublin. On his first visit in 1867 Harry Moorhouse, a converted pickpocket, known then as 'The Boy Preacher', introduced himself to the older man and offered to preach for him. Moody wasn't impressed but suggested that Moorhouse get in touch with him when he reached America, and then quickly forgot the incident. Some time after he got back to the States he received two letters from Moorhouse, then in New York, renewing his offer to preach for him, and mentioning in the second letter the date on which he expected to be in Chicago, Moody's city. As it happened Moody had an

engagement elsewhere on that date so Moorhouse was given an opportunity to take a small meeting. The deacons were so impressed that he was retained for another meeting. Moody returned in time for this, and he was so impressed by his visitor that he engaged him there and then for a week's meetings. Moorhouse preached a new sermon every night on John 3:16, Moody's prejudices were completely overcome. In all humility he was ready to learn from Moorhouse and Moorhouse taught him two invaluable lessons, the first, the fulness and universality of the love of God, and the second, how to read and study the Bible.

On his second visit to Dublin in 1873 Moody attended a Believer's Meeting convened by a wealthy Plymouth brother. An all night prayer meeting was held, and the following morning Henry Varley, another popular and successful evangelist in those days, let slip an unpremeditated remark:-

> "Moody", he said "the world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to Him."

The words challenged Moody. For days and weeks he could not get away from them till he had resolved that by the Holy Spirit within him he would be that man.

The missions that Moody conducted in Ireland were, like all his missions, undenominational. His own membership was with a congregational church but he steered clear of theological controversy and his work was supported by evangelicals of all denominations. I have not been able to find any evidence of our Irish churches having been involved in any of the missions he conducted in Ireland, but in the Irish Baptist for January, 1884 there is quite a lengthy account of his work in the South of Ireland in 1883. It begins

> "The closing months of the year 1883 will ever be remembered in the South of Ireland as a season of inestimable blessing. Never since the time when Romanism threw its withering shadow over the land has the power of the Gospel been so fully manifested in saving efficacy. Never have

the people shewn such eagerness to hear and to accept the truth as it is in Jesus. On the 9th of October Messrs. Moody and Sankey, accompanied by Major Whittle and Mr. and Mrs. McGranaham landed at Queenstown, and the same evening commenced a series of meetings in Limerick. The theatre, which was arranged to accommodate nearly 2000 hearers, was crowded, and for 6 days vast audiences continued to seek admission at the afternoon and evening meetings. Over 500 progressed to find peace by trusting in Jesus. A large proportion of the converts were young men who have organized a daily morning meeting for prayer and praise which continues to be well attended. On October 16 Messrs. Moody and Sankey proceeded to Cork where they held a 10 days mission. Here too the work was very greatly owned of God. The whole city was moved. Multitudes heard the gospel gladly, many accepted it, and thousands in Cork and the surrounding districts have had cause to bless God for those times of refreshing."

account goes on to tell of similar blessing during a 4 days mission
aterford where the skating rink, which accommodated 1600, was filled
e a day, and Moody himself said:-

"the very hush of Heaven seemed to be upon the people."

ral hundreds made profession here. From Waterford Moody went to
on to prepare for a 6 months mission there, but he left Major
tle behind to carry on the good work in Southern Ireland. He
ucted missions in Clonmel and in Tralee.
erning the work in Tralee the report says:-

> "Here, perhaps more than in any other place, copious showers of blessing descended. The whole district was awakened, and for more than a fortnight night after night the people continued to crowd the building prepared for the meetings. Many souls were brought to God."

From Tralee the evangelist moved to Mallow where the report says "the blessing exceeded the most sanguine expectations, and from there he went to Wexford, the only town in which he encountered opposition. An organised mob of Roman Catholics attacked the people who were going to the meetings. Many serious outrages were perpetrated, and a large force of police and military had to be drafted into the town before order was restored."

Moody's last trip to Ireland was in September 1892, and in the biography by his son, published in 1930, we are given an impressive picture of the pressure under which he worked. Here is his programme for one week:-

> "Concluding a short mission in Southampton on Sunday night Moody started for Dublin on a train leaving after midnight which carried a sleeping car. Arriving in London before day-break he caught the train for Holyhead and had a 4 hours passage across the Irish sea which completely prostrated him with sea sickness. Dublin was reached by 6.00 p.m. where, after a hasty repast, Moody addressed a large meeting. It was near midnight before he was able to retire. He was entertained some distance outside the city and had to take leave of his host early, drive to Dublin and get the 7 o'clock train for Belfast on Tuesday morning. It had been arranged that he should conduct a two weeks mission in the large convention hall in Belfast a week

> and on his arrival a committee of ministers and laymen met him for conference. That evening in Londonderry, he had time only for a hurried meal before going to a crowded meeting, and it was late that night before he had any opportunity to rest. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday he visited 6 other towns speaking in crowded halls and in the open air. Saturday brought a much needed rest, and on the following day he began his Belfast Mission by addressing 10,000 people in the crowded convention hall."

The convention hall, by the way, was a temporary structure which had been erected for a political demonstration.

At the closing meeting in Belfast when an appeal was made that those who had received blessing during the meetings of '74 and'82 should rise to their feet, crowds rose in the body of the hall and all parts of the galleries and not a few police, together with members of the choir and Christian workers and many well-known ministers." Recording this, the October number of the Irish Baptist Magazine expresses the hope that the scenes witnessed in Belfast would be repeated in Dublin where Mr. Moody was shortly to hold a series of meetings, and the December number of the magazine testifies that this hope was fully realised. Mr. Moody, it seems, had refused to come to the Christian Union Buildings to hold his mission, and had insisted that the Dublin committee build a special wooden hall in the Rotunda Gardens to seat 6000 people. Gigantic as the meeting place was it was crowded nightly with many having to be refused admission. Many hundreds professed conversion and one local minister later testified that 50 new members had been added to his church as a result of the mission.

TWO IRISH BAPTISTS IN THE MOODY ENCOURAGE

We pass on now from this hasty survey of Moody's evangelistic campaigns in Ireland, North and South, to recall the fact that in the course of his career Moody recruited two Irish Baptists as helpers in his work.

(A) When I was a student in the Baptist College in Dublin from 1910 to 1912 the Principal was Ambose U.G. Bury. (I have never been able to discover what the central initials U.G. stood for). Ambrose had a brother, Fenton, who pastored at least one of our Northern Churches - the church in Lurgan. Ambrose was born in 1869, and he was a schoolboy in Dublin in 1883 when Moody conducted one of his missions there. He heard the evangelist preach a much used sermon on 'EXCUSES', and was greatly exercised by it but did not at that time accept the Saviour. Shortly after he left school an opportunity came for him to visit America which he eagerly embraced. On arriving in the States he enrolled as a student at Mr. Moody's Institute in Mount Hermon, Northfield. It was there that he was converted. On a summer morning in the summer of 1885 when he was 16 years of age he heard Moody repeat the sermon on Excuses which he had heard some years before in Dublin, and this time he surrendered. He returned to Dublin the following year and entered Trinity College, graduating B.A. in 1890. Immediately after this he left the old country again to fill an important engagement which had been offered him by Mr. Moody, that of theological tutor at Northfield. He entered on this work with great earnestness and enthusiasm. He re-organised the whole theological course at Mt. Hermon, but after little more than a year he resigned his post in order to enter Yale University and pursue further theological studies there. Before completing more studies, however, he came back to Ireland on holiday "little dreaming", we are told, "that he was bidding farewell to his loved Yale for good." So it turned out to be, however. When he arrived in Dublin Pastor H.D. Brown offered him the position

of Principal of the newly formed Baptist College, and he accepted the offer. He commenced work there in September 1892, combining the pastorate of the little church at Brannockstown with his tutorial work at the College. He also acted for some time as assistant to Hugh D. in Harcourt Street. He was still Principal of the College when I was a student there in 1910-12, James Willoughby being tutor under him. The only classes of Mr. Bury's that I attended were the class in theology and the Homiletics class. Homiletics was a subject he was master of. He was a first class preacher, of a very different type from Mr. Brown. A friend of his who wrote an appreciation of him for the Irish Baptist in 1897 accurately described his preaching in this way:

> "He is pre-eminently an expository preacher. His sermons are prepared with the greatest thought, lit up with apt quotations and illustrations that are illustrations of the subject under consideration and not a string of stories to fill up time: Those who like the razzle-dazzle style of the glib Gospeller will not appreciate Mr. Bury any more than Mr. Bury appreciates the slip-shod, almost irreverent, way that some have of preaching the gospel, which is merely a moving both of religious expressions, a rumble and jumble of words, but in which no clear, intelligent, thought is to be found."

A few of Mr. Bury's sermons have been preserved in old numbers of the Irish Baptist, as was also his address from the chair when he was elected President of the Union.

During these years in Dublin he read law and was called to the Bar. He never practised in Ireland, but about 1911 or 12 he emigrated to Canada and we lost touch with him. We do not know, however, that he devoted himself there to his new

profession. He entered politics, became a member of one of the State legislatures, and ultimately was appointed a Judge. He paid a short visit to Dublin in the late 20's but did not remain long. Physically he had failed very considerably, and, rightly or wrongly, I got the impression that he had lost his old interest in our Baptist work in Ireland.

(B) The second Irish Baptist recruited by Moody was Arthur Percy Fitt of Limerick. When, as a student, I used to go occasionally to Limerick to take the services there, an older brother of his was one of the officebearers who always joined me for prayer in the vestry before the service. Percy Fitt was Moody's personal secretary during the last seven years of the evangelist's life, and he published two books about Moody, a short biography not long after his death, and another study of the man and his work. Under the title "Moody still lives" which was published in 1937, just after the Moody Centenary Celebrations.

In this latter book he gives an interesting account of how he came to enter Moody's service. Moody had held meetings in Limerick during his visit to Gt. Britain in 1881-4. Frank Fitt, an older brother of Percy's was secretary of the meetings. Percy describes him as bright and full of proverbial Irish wit and rollicking stories. Moody and Sankey used to have him come to the hotel after the evening meetings and they would swap stories until they were ready for sleep. Again in 1892 Mr. Moody held meetings in Limerick and again Frank Fitt was secretary. Moody was at this time contemplating the great 6 months mission which he hoped to hold in Chicago during the gigantic World Fair which was to be held there, and he tried to persuade Frank to join him for that enterprise but he did not see his way to accepting the invitation. Moody then inquired if there were any younger brothers and Frank mentioned Percy who was at the time a student in Trinity, and when Moody later came to Dublin he invited Percy to meet him at his hotel. There he said to him:

> "I want you to come to America as my secretary during the World's Fair in Chicago for 6 months next summer. Great opportunity for a young man.

> The whole world will be coming to Chicago. Worth a year's travel. I will pay all your expenses and give you $100 a month."

Percy, however had other plans for his life. His prospects at the Irish Bar were good, and he voiced his hesitations. Finally, however, Moody said:

> "Well, come anyway, and you can return home at any time if you are not satisfied."

The upshot was that after graduating from Trinity Fitt sailed for America in January 1893 and was with Moody for the rest of Moody's life., continuing afterwards to share in the administration of the Bible Institute.

Curiously enough there is no reference to Percy Fitt in the definitive biography of Moody by his son, W.R., published in 1930. In Pollock's biography, however, there are quite a number of references. One of them quotes a description of him by a Northfield resident:

> "Arthur Percy Fitt was a good Irish man, blunt and forceful, always came straight to the point, very popular in town."

Moody's latest American biographer says:

> "It did not take long for Percy to find acceptance."

This is borne out by the fact that in 1894, the year after he linked up with Moody and went to America, he married Moody's daughter Emma. In this connection the biographers tell an amusing story. Before their marriage, when young Fitt was away somewhere, his fiancée sat down to write to him. She was called from the room for some reason, and while she was gone her father stole into the room and finished the letter for her in this way:

> "My dearly beloved Percy, I cannot tell you with pen how very much I love you. You will never know in this world how very much I love you. Your last letter lifted me up into the clouds

> but I expect the dentist will pull me
> down again."

Quite a number of books have been published with Moody's name as author but as a matter of fact he never actually wrote a book himself. Pollock tells us that his Gospel sermons, Bible Characters, devotional and doctrinal studies were all compiled by Fitt from his spoken words after he became his secretary. Fitt himself said:

> "I came to know his vocabulary and mannerisms
> of language so well that I could do him justice
> and reproduce his true flavour - Moody read
> every book and article before signing."

Percy Fitt was one of the small group of relatives at the bedside when Moody died. I have not been able to discover anything about his subsequent history other than that he continued his association and service with the Moody organisations.

Now it is time to take up the other part of my subject - Spurgeon and the Irish Baptists. Geographically and denominationally Spurgeon was nearer to the Irish Baptists than Moody was, and more than once he gave evidence of his interest in our affairs and his sympathy with our work. Undoubtedly this was fostered by his intimate friendship with Hugh D. Brown. Shortly after I went to Harcourt Street in 1925 an old and battered scrapbook came into my possession. It was compiled, very erratically and intermittently, by Hugh D., but it contained much that revealed how close the relationship between the two men was. Before we look at some of its contents, however, a few notes about Spurgeon's visits to Ireland may be of interest.

It was in 1858, when he was only 24 years of age, that Spurgeon first visited Ireland. He came to Belfast, where he gave his services freely in order that the whole of the proceeds could go to an organisation known as the Young Men's Intellectual Improvement Association. He preached 4 sermons on this occasion, and it was

estimated that there must have been at least 7000 people present at the last address in the Botanic Gardens. He paid his first visit to Dublin about 18 months later, in January 1860. It lasted 3 days. The meetings were held in the Metropolitan Hall in Abbey Street Lower. Admission to these meetings was by ticket, applications for which far exceeded the number available. Amongst those who occupied seats on the platform at the opening service were His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, the Dean of Ardagh, and the Hon. and Very Rev. the Dean of St. Patrick's.

Turning now to the friendship between Spurgeon and Hugh D. Brown, the depth and reality of this friendship is strikingly revealed in this letter:

Westwood,
Beulah Hill,
Up Norwood. March 23, 1888.

Dear Friend,

Your love makes me happy.

Please prepare a short paper on some spiritual subject and let me know the subject at once. Excuse haste but time is short.

Have you a lodging? If not will you stay with me? There will be some going too and fro but your society will cheer me. Mrs. Spurgeon bids me say There is room for you.

We shall have a grand conference. I fear you will not get here till Monday night - too late to come here, but you could get to conference by 11 on Tuesday and then be my guest.

I suppose you would hardly like to start Sunday night.

Yours heartily,
C.H. SPURGEON

There were many other similar letters. In one tribute to Mr. Spurgeon which Mr. Brown wrote, for the Irish Baptist at the time of Spurgeon's death he said:

"Many precious letters written by him in days of heaviness and overwhelming work lie on my desk - too precious to bear publicity, full of tenderness, sympathy and counsel concerning the cause in Ireland."

When Hugh D. Brown was launching one of his special efforts to secure new support from outside for the work in Ireland, Spurgeon was greatly interested and very helpful. Out of his wide experience he was ready with valuable hints and suggestions, and in addition to the wise advice so freely rendered he drew the weight of his public support on the side of the appeal. Here is one of the commendatory letters he wrote:-

Metropolitan Tabernacle,
Newington S.E.
July 12, 1890.

If I were to try to express my esteem for my brother Hugh D. Brown I should fail, even if I should seem to run into panegyric. He is a great God - send to Ireland, and if anybody can raise the weak Baptist interest he is the man through whom it can be done effectually. Already he was spent £7500 on the Baptist cause in Dublin, and he has placed himself and his all on the altar. He seeks some £15000 and I wish he may get it. If he did secure it. I believe there would be hope for the Baptists of the Green Isle and hope for the Isle itself.

Mr. Brown looks above for help, and because of his faith I anticipate great results from his journey to our brethren in the US. It is not for me to urge those to liberality who already abound therein, but I am glad to certify that this cause deserves special aid.

C.H. SPURGEON.

On another occasion when the Secretary to our Home Mission visited the Metropolitan Tabernacle in the interests of the Mission one of the deacons read a letter from the absent pastor in which he said:

> "My dear Bro. Hugh Brown is an Apostle for Ireland. He will ask your help. Give it him freely for no man better deserves sympathy of the Lord's people. He is after mine own heart, to the more you aid him the better I shall be pleased."

Spurgeon himself never preached in Harcourt Street. Before his long fatal illness he had promised that he would do so, but it was not to be. Both his sons, Thomas and Charles, did preach there from time to time, and of course in later years Thomas sent his son Harold to Dublin to study for his degree, because there he would have the benefit of Mr. Brown's influence and advice. I was a student in the College when Harold arrived and I remember clearly the excitement on the morning when the grandson of the great preacher was introduced to us all.

A couple of other links which Spurgeon had with Ireland may be briefly mentioned. When he opened his college in London for the training of young preachers and pastors his first student was one T.W. Medhurst. When he finished his course the pastorate in Coleraine was vacant, and in response to an appeal for help Spurgeon sent him there. Another ex-student of Spurgeon's who served for a time in Ireland was Dr. A. McCaig. He was one of the Pastors in Brannockstown.

I do not know if we would be entitled to regard Spurgeon's biographer W.Y. Fullerton as an Irish Baptist. He was certainly born in Belfast, just off Shaftesbury Square, but it was into a Presbyterian family. Converted as a boy in Sunday School he went to London as a young man, linked up with Spurgeon, and worked in close association with him for many years. Here there is an interesting parallel with what we have already recorded concerning Fitt and Moody. Fullerton tells us, in his autobiography "At the 60th milestone", that at one time he had the responsibility of preparing Spurgeon's weekly sermons for publication from the verbatim

reports provided by the reporters. Sometimes there would be too much material and then he would have to abridge, but sometimes there would be too little and then he would have to expand, copying Spurgeon's style as closely as he could.

Now, in closing, there is a problem I feel in the histories we have been recalling to which I would be glad to find a solution. Moody and Spurgeon - how are we to account for the wonderful results that followed their preaching? Some years ago I had occasion to interview the Professor of Education in Trinity College, and when our business had been transacted he asked me this question with respect to Billy Graham's successful missions. At the time all I could say was that it could only be attributed to the power of the Spirit of God working through him, but the Professor rejected that solution. His own conclusion was that mob psychology explained it all, that somehow or another these men had the power to stimulate mass emotion and hysteria. Now I have no doubt that the Professor was entirely wrong, but I am not satisfied that I was myself entirely right. The power is undoubtedly the power of the Spirit in conjunction with the power of the Word, but why is it only in a few exceptional individuals? I can find no answer to that, other than to attribute it to the sovereignty of God. Other servants of His, equally Spirit-filled, never see such success, but spend their lives labouring in relatively barren spheres. We can be sure, however, that their faithful perseverance in welldoing will not fail of its reward. In God's work there are some who are called to be sowers and some who are called to be reapers. Our business is to accept God's assignment and labour at it faithfully. If we do so the promise is that in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

An Historical Anniversary

by Willis Hubert Porter

Reflection upon the 125th anniversary of the American Baptist Historical Society calls to mind the experience of a teenage girl who suffered amnesia as a result of an injury to her head and, in her state of bewilderment, said, "I have lost my memory; I don't know who I am."

It is no less true that the loss of memory by a nation or a denomination results in the loss of identity. We cannot know who we are as a Baptist people unless we know from whence we came and by what course we arrived where we are. Nor can we chart wisely our future unless we understand the pilgrimage which was made by our ancestors.

To forget that "past is prolog" is to invite needless wanderings in arid wildernesses, for ignorance of history dooms any people to a weary quest for answers that have already been found and to a repetition of mistakes that have already proved to be tragic. It has been said that most of a people's mistakes would have been avoided if only they had read the minutes of the previous meetings.

Since all this is true, the mainentance of a personal, or national, or denominational memory is an enterprise of immense importance. And that's where the American Baptist Historical Society comes in, for it safeguards the memory bank of the denomination, and has done so for 125 years. During that century and a quarter the society has accumulated what many scholars concede to be the single greatest collection of Baptist historical material in the world. In fact, most of this treasure has been gathered since 1896 when the society's library was largely destroyed in a disastrous fire.

Following reconstruction, the society remained in the quarters

of the American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia until 1912 when it moved into the library building of Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, PA. There it remained until 1955 when it moved to the campus of Colgate Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, NY, and acquired control and custody of the Samuel Colgate Baptist Historical Collection. The libraries thus merged comprise an incomparable treasure of Baptist historical data.

In its stewardship of American Baptist history, the society accumulates, classifies, arranges and preserves the records of the past. Its treasury of materials now embraces 60,000 bound volumes pertaining to the Baptists including 18,000 bound volumes of Baptist magazines from all over the world, 250,000 convention annuals and association minutes, about 4,000 rolls of microfilm, and about half a million file cards to serve as aids for researchers.

After an extended period of research in this treasury of history, biography, missions, sermons and Christian education, Dr. Robert Gardner of Shorter College, exlaimed, "The Collection itself is awesome. The more I look at it the more amazed I am. How so much could be amassed in less than a century is beyond me." At the end of two months of research at the society's library last summer, James McSwain, a teacher at Memphis State University, expressed amazement that in the course of one lifetime anyone could have brought together such an immense collection of historical treasures as that which was gathered by the Rev. Edward C. Starr during his 41 years as director and curator. Then he said, "Finding this place is like discovering a British Museum that nobody knew was there". So it is not strange that researchers came last summer from many states and from as far away as India and Japan to delve into this rich mine of historical information.

Dr. Raymond P. Morris, librarian emeritus of Yale Divinity School, who is regarded by many as the dean of American theological librarians, surveyed our library in 1974 and wrote a rather glowing report.

Dr. Morris concluded that "Few, if any, other church archival collections exhibit as sound judgment in the selection of, and care in the organization of materials. No one with experience in deve-

loping libraries or archives can examine the historical library without being literally amazed at what has been accomplished on a very modest budget. The explanation is the dedication and genius of the present curator" (referring to the Rev. Edward C. Starr).

Though the library has 17,278 feet of shelving and 5,382 square feet of floor space, it is "bulging at the seams" and there is no room for the incoming flood of materials which the society desires, cherishes and must accept and care for. In spite of the crowded condition of the facilities, it is important for conventions, associations, local churches, and individuals to send their valuable historical materials to the society at 1106 S. Goodman St., Rochester, NY 14620 for safekeeping.

A major project of microfilming, made possible by a grant of $15,000 from the John Ben Snow Foundation, is being initiated in co-operation with the American Theological Library Association and will relieve some of our pressures for space in the immediate future. However, that relief will be temporary and will not eliminate the necessity for more space in the long term.

The task of the American Baptist Historical Society is not only to preserve an existing treasure of books, periodicals, minutes, manuscripts, sermons, private papers, portraits, photographs, tapes, microfilms, diaries and letters, but also to continue compiling the records that will document the Baptist story for future generations. Faithful and wise stewardship cannot be exaggerated, for no one knows what materials will be needed 100 or 500 years from now.

Interested American Baptists can help the society not only by sending those valuable materials that will be needed in the future, but also by becoming library associates at $25 or more per year. The financial needs are just as great as the need for more adequate physical facilities.

Unless more budget and better housing are provided, the American Baptist Historical Library, including the Samuel Colgate Baptist Historical Collection, cannot forever remain the largest and

most complete collection of Baptist material.

If the integrity and efficiency of this superb historical treasure is to be maintained, the American Baptist Historical Society can no longer be relegated to the status of a stepchild of the denomination.

The 125th Anniversary of the society is an appropriate time to think on these things and to recover an appropriate vision of a future which can be made worthy of an illustrious past.
Pleasant Baptist Church is self-supporting today, in large measure because the Anglo congregation left this Hispanic group with the building and a trust.

"Right now," observes Martinez, "we are in a new phase in relationships. The first five to seven years we provided a place for people to worship, but we did not have a full commitment to teach people that they are a part of the Baptist family." He calls attention to one of the goals of Hispanic ministry in New Jersey: to educate its membership regarding its responsibilities to state, national and world mission of American Baptists.

American Baptist Churches of New Jersey has recognized from the beginning the need to make Hispanic Baptists participants in the total life of the denomination.

Hispanic work is planned and evaluated by the ABCNJ Hispanic Ministries Committee which has Anglo/Hispanic co-chairpersons. Mr. Martinez believes that two things in particular have given Hispanic pastors a real sense of participation in ABCNJ: a recognition of their ordinations by the ABCNJ and a decision by the Professional Ministries Committee to place Hispanic pastors on the same minimum salary level as Anglo pastors.

A mutual attempt is being made to place Hispanics on committees of the ABCNJ part of the problem on the part of Hispanics, says Martinez, is a lack of awareness of the system and how it works. As a result, they often fail to see the importance of seeking and accepting leadership positions.

"We are trying to share leadership in a way that comes naturally",

comments Younger. "We have not put token Hispanics on committees to be power brokers. We are beginning bit by bit - it's happening as people see that it needs to be done."

The Rev. Jose Ortiz, who manages National Ministries' Hispanic ministries program, points to this co-operation as one of the most significant developments in Hispanic ministries in New Jersey. "We've sometimes been isolated," he says. "We need to create our own forms of ministry, but we also need to create positive relationships with everyone involved. And Hispanics need to identify with the American Baptist family."

Hopes for the future? George Younger laughs, "My hopes have always been more limited than theirs. I spend most of my time trying to keep up!'

Bernardino Martinez has lots of hopes. Besides the continuing emphasis on leadership development, there is a need for stewardship development. "Financially we are behind where we should be," he comments. "We can't grow if we don't have resources. I don't want the churches to develop a sense of always being a child. Our churches have to grow and serve the Hispanic family.

Martinez and the other Hispanic ministers are also feeling the need to respond to the diverse needs of Hispanics. Because many people have come to the state seeking employment at a time when businesses have moved elsewhere, there is a high level of unemployment and its attendant social problems.

Dealing with immigration matters is and will continue to be an important part of ministry to Hispanics. Not so much because church members are in the United States illegally, but because complex immigration laws often make it hard for a person to determine his immigration status from day to day.

"Our basic task," says Martinez, "will be to answer the question, 'Where are the Hispanics?' We have to find out if the places where we are serving are the places of greatest need."

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