



HARRY LATHEY HEMMENS
1884-1952

SUCH HAS BEEN MY LIFE

H. L. HEMMENS

An Autobiography

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
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INTRODUCTION

My only serious criticism of this book is of its undue modesty. I wonder if those not on the inside of the story will realise what a very large part H. L. Hemmens has himself played in the events and movements he records. Yet to divest him of his self-effacing nature would be to produce another kind of misleading picture. We must accept him as he, happily, is. But if H.L.H. will not blow his own trumpet a friend may venture on a blast or two. It is a privileged occasion.

Here is a story of great personal achievement starting with few initial advantages or opportunities so far as money or status were concerned. It tells of considerable natural ability, triumphing over obstacles by hard work, and of gifts devoted always not to self advancement but to Christian service. The versatility of the man is amazing. He is a speaker and preacher of no mean quality. He is an expert editor and the writer of several most useful volumes. He can organise a monster rally in the Albert Hall or Spurgeon's Tabernacle, and then if the organist or the choir leader does not turn up he can worthily take his place. He can plan a creative policy and administer an organisation with great efficiency year after year. Yet no one knows the real Hemmens who has not seen him also in the centre of a group of young people or as the heart of a laymen's conference, exchanging good-humoured badinage, delivering a searching and inspiring address, or being the intimate friend and adviser of some individual. A host up and down the

land are profoundly grateful for Hemmens himself and not only for what he has done.

While he has many friends in other Churches and has worked with them in such enterprises as the United Council for Missionary Education, his life has been spent first and foremost in the service of the Baptist denomination. I venture the judgment that no man of his generation has done more for its welfare, though others have been more in the limelight. This autobiography is a contribution to Baptist history because of the many points at which he has touched its life and the close contact he has had with its leading figures in the last fifty years. A catalogue of the things he has done would take up too much space, but outstanding in my mind are his work for the young people of the denomination and his leadership in the Men's Movement. The fact that he crowned his long years of varied service for the Baptist Missionary Society as Acting General Home Secretary is sufficient evidence of what his colleagues there thought of the quality of his contribution.

You may read about it all here. Only remember as you read that the author's part in the story was more considerable than he tries to make out.

HUGH MARTIN.

P.S.—This was obviously written before our friend was taken from us. Yet as I see it now in proof I am reluctant to change it all into the past tense. The work he did is alive and lasting. And he himself lives on among "the saints above,

In solemn troops, and sweet societies
That sing."

He has surely heard the Master's greeting: Well done, good and faithful servant. I should like to leave my words in the present tense.

Yet here we shall see his face no more. It has been said that the only way we can pay our debt to the past is to put the future in debt to ourselves. Our gratitude to him and for him must be a call to more devoted service to the causes for which he gave himself.

H. M.

SUCH HAS BEEN MY LIFE

CHAPTER ONE

ORIGINS

THE Friends' Meeting House and School at Sidcot on the edge of the Somersetshire Mendips have justly earned a fame that has gone far beyond the bounds of Britain. It was almost within the shadow of these institutions that I was born in a cottage on October 8th, 1884, the fifth and youngest but one of a family of six children. I have no childhood recollections of country life, however, for in my fourth year my parents moved to London. So, while I can claim to be a Somersetshire man, it was the metropolis that moulded me. Thereafter, for the next thirty years, I lived on the north or south side of Clapham Common. Until my marriage in 1908, my home was on Lavender Hill, a part of a highway leading from Westminster into Surrey, whose name was suggestive of rural days then fast disappearing. I can remember the houses of well-to-do people, with their wide carriage sweeps and spacious grounds which lined part of the hill and which gave place, with the outward growth of London, to roads of villa residences between the hill and the common.

Older folk recalled a different neighbourhood. The father of one of my employers, who had long served as registrar of births, marriages and deaths for the district, and who wore a frock coat, a white bow tie and a broad felt hat, on weekdays and Sundays alike, always said

when setting out from Old Battersea to Nine Elms, two miles away, "I'm going across the fields this morning." Even then those "fields" were covered in part by the Shaftesbury Estate, an early venture in artisans' dwellings, and in part by the poorer massed dwellings of Old Battersea.

My parents were simple, God-fearing folk. I do not think that my father ever received more than two pounds a week in wages as a journeyman baker in the employ of his brother-in-law who, by sheer hard work and the fine quality of his goods, rapidly built up a prosperous business in the growing suburb. Hours were long for bakers' men in those days. My father was up by half-past five each morning and was at work by six. His daily round of customers covered a large area in the south-west district which he served with a horse and van. One of my earliest joys was to go with him, especially at what seemed to be an unearthly hour on Good Friday mornings, to deposit hundreds of bags of hot-cross buns on doorsteps while the householders and their families were still asleep. My father's supplemental duties included the packing of flour into bags in the bakehouse and the putting up of the shutters about half-past nine each night at the branch shop over which we lived. On Saturdays this hour was extended until eleven o'clock and, even then, sundry jobs kept him busy for another hour.

Yet, so strong was his habit of early rising, that Sunday morning found him up and about at the week-day hour, engaged in domestic jobs. His Sunday church programme was made up of morning service, a class of boys in the afternoon and evening service with a following prayer meeting or open-air service, according to the

season. This programme involved walking twelve miles each Sunday, for my father would never ride on the Sabbath and brought his children up to follow his example. My father's faith matched his make-up. Since the snowy Sunday evening when he tramped five miles across the moors from Winscombe, where he then lived, to Cheddar, the centre of the Cheddar circuit of village Baptist churches, to be baptized in an unheated baptistery, with another trudge home afterwards, he knew Whom he had believed, and no questionings or critical theories, speculations or findings, disturbed the serenity of his faith. His children afterwards were in the habit of declaring that the Baptist chapel in Grafton Square, Clapham, was his god. Certainly that somewhat grim and plain building was to him the house of God and the gate of heaven.

He was an ardent evangelist. For years, my last experience at night was a bedtime talk or story from him about the deeper things of life, which he told in simple language that a boy could understand. He was ever on the watch for occasions on which he might speak a word for his Lord. For years, he was a devoted deacon and sidesman of the church. He made it his aim to see that everyone entering or leaving his side of the building should receive a handshake before or after each service. One beautiful story was told of him at the joint memorial service for my parents who died within a few weeks of each other.

A man who had been brought up as a strict Roman Catholic chanced to read the story of George Müller and his Orphan Homes at Bristol. That outstanding venture of faith in God seemed to him so incredible that he could only regard it as fiction. But his mind was so

disturbed by it that at length he travelled from London to Bristol to find out whether such an institution as the Orphan Homes existed and whether its reliance on faith in God was true. There, at Ashley Down, he was shown everything and his many questions were answered. In deep spiritual agony his prayer from that time onwards was, "O God, guide me to someone who can bring me to the God of George Müller!"

Some weeks after this he was wandering one Sunday evening in the Old Town, Clapham. Without thinking, he turned into a narrow side road where he was attracted by a lighted building and the sound of congregational singing which came from it. He found that the building was a Baptist chapel. He decided to enter and reached the outer steps, but turned away because, as a Roman Catholic, he was forbidden to enter a Nonconformist building. But an inward urge made him return, and again he walked away. Once more he was impelled to stop, turn and ascend the steps. This time he got as far as the vestibule. "Here," he said afterwards in describing his experience, "there was a little man who welcomed me and asked whether I would like to come inside the building. I followed him and he very thoughtfully showed me into the back pew of the large church. The congregation was singing and he handed me a hymnbook after he had found the hymn for me. It was the first Protestant hymnbook I had ever handled. Then he passed me a Bible after he had likewise found the place of the lesson for me. This was the first Protestant Bible I had ever seen. During the service, the light came and in that back pew that evening I found the God of George Müller. It was the man who welcomed me into the building who helped me to find the way." Later this

convert was baptised and joined the church of which he became in due time an honoured officer. The man who welcomed him with such consideration and courtesy was my father. And that was just like my father.

My mother was the home-maker and business manager of the family. She, too, was country born, her childhood being spent at Henbury, then well outside Bristol whose growth has now swallowed it. After conventional association with the Church of England, she came under Quaker influence in the house of Mrs. Tanner of Sidcot, a sister of John Bright. The relationship between mistress and maid was shown in the fact that, after we had moved to London, some of the family, including myself, spent delightful summer holidays in Oakridge, Mrs. Tanner's big house, with its spacious grounds. There must have been something of catholicity in my mother for, while she was a devoted Baptist, she revelled in the gatherings of the Salvation Army and of the Pentecostal League under Reader Harris, Q.C., at Speke Hall, Battersea. Missions like those of Fullerton and Smith, the Weaver Brothers, Torrey and Alexander, William Olney and Spencer Johnson, and Gipsy Evans and his wife, the parents of Romany, were a joy to her. She also profited from the evangelical ministry of Martin Claris, vicar of the neighbouring St. Matthew's Church. Like many another mother in those days, she had to rise early and toil late, to make ends meet on a slender family income. To the duties of running the home there were added, for several years, tasks in connection with the catering side of the business. Yet she rarely complained, and we were never stinted of the necessities and a few of the luxuries of life. If a man's hours were long in those days, those of a woman were longer still and there was little respite

when life's evening came. For there were no pensions or other State reliefs in those days. Small wonder that hymns about heaven and its joys and reliefs were more popular with our parents than they are with their successors. When relaxations and holidays were few and far between, the rest that remaineth for the people of God had great attractions.

Such were my parents, and there were many like them in our Bethels at the close of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Among them were my wife's parents, members of the same church at Grafton Square, to whom I owe a greater debt than I can ever repay. My wife's father was a jobbing gardener whose day's work often began with a visit to Covent Garden market early in the morning, and ended late at night. His enthusiasm for missionary work was fanned at the beginning of his married life by the proposals to establish the Congo Mission. He determined to attend the farewell meeting in Cannon Street Hotel in 1879 to the first Congo party—T. J. Comber and his wife, W. Holman Bentley, H. E. Crudgington and John Hartland. But with a wife and two babies, he felt unable to afford the 'bus fare. So, notwithstanding a long day of manual toil, he walked the five miles from Clapham Common to the city, stood for three hours in a packed meeting and then tramped the return journey home. Such was the Christian quality of my wife's father, and his wife was of the same order. Little wonder that three of their sons offered themselves to the B.M.S., only to be turned back on medical grounds.

CHAPTER TWO

INFLUENCES

I WAS sent at the age of four to the nearby Board School in Basnett Grove, Battersea. This was in the days before elementary education was made compulsory and free. The fees were twopence or threepence a week. The babies' class in which I was placed was poles removed from the present day nursery school or class. The woman teacher had to try to control between forty and fifty four-year-old boys and girls. We sat in long rows on a gallery which sloped from the floor in the front to close to the ceiling at the back. School hours were from nine till twelve o'clock in the mornings, and from two to four o'clock in the afternoons. Lesson periods were longer than now and, while the teaching included various forms of handwork, there was little in the way of physical exercises and relief.

During the three years spent in the infants' department, I had a period in six classes. Among other subjects, we were taught knitting and needlework, and for this I have since been grateful. My mother long treasured an egg cosy which I knitted during this period, and an old lady who kept a sweet shop in what was once a toll-house at Sidcot, was proud to accept my effort at hemming a tea-cloth.

In the boys' department to which I was promoted each class moved up annually with its teacher. So, for five or six years I was in the charge of H. J. Wood, to whose teaching and influence I owe a great debt. A few of my classmates were the sons of tradesmen, but the fathers of

most were labouring men. Poverty was apparent in some, for wages were low and work was uncertain. During the winters of the early 'nineties, soup kitchens were opened for the destitute and hungry. One of these was connected with my shop-home. Long queues of adults and children lined up outside each day, carrying many kinds of household utensils. These were filled with appetising soup, and loaves of bread were also given away. Some of my school companions took their places in the queues. I can still recall the fragrant smell and the satisfying qualities of that soup which I was allowed to share.

H. J. Wood was an ardent Liberal in politics, and a fervent supporter of John Burns who was then coming into the limelight. Wood gave devoted service to parochial affairs and contested several elections to the local council, sometimes with and sometimes without success. His scholars helped him in addressing envelopes and in delivering election addresses at these times. To my chagrin, he forbade me to share in this as my uncle, Isaac Stanley, was a leading light on the other side. Later, I cheerfully did this sort of service for my employer, even though he was a Municipal Reform (Conservative) candidate.

Through these years and, in fact, ever since, John Burns has been among my heroes. He was making history in my early boyhood. His home was nearly opposite mine. He was a familiar figure in the streets and he could often be found in conversation with the bookseller, a staunch Tory, who lived next door to my home. I mingled with the hostile crowd outside Burns' house during the khaki election of 1900, when John stood on guard at his front door with a cricket bat, ready

for the first assault on his family and possessions. Happily, the assault never came. Six years later, I was there again. This time, the crowd was far greater and it cheered its idol who, that day, had been elevated to cabinet rank in the Liberal Government which had just taken office—the first working man to reach that position. Both by character and achievements, John was worthy of hero-worship, and the nation has been the poorer, since in 1914, he disappeared in silence into the background, rather than sacrifice his principles. His biography, by William Kent, bears the apt title, *Labour's Lost Leader*.

To return to school. In my last year at Basnett Grove the curriculum was extended to include a weekly visit to the Battersea Baths where we were taught the rudiments of swimming, and a weekly period of manual training (we were warned not to call it "carpentry") at the neighbouring Gideon Road School. Between us and the Gideon Road boys a state of hostility existed, for no known reason except the instinctive combative element inherent in boys, and raids by one school on the other were frequent. That same element found expression during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, when most boys took sides and playground free fights were a common occurrence. The partisan spirit found another outlet at the time of the Varsity Boat-race when, again, most boys sported their light or dark blue favours, until, one year, after a succession of Cambridge victories, every boy wore dark blue colours out of sympathy for Oxford!

At the age of eleven, I was placed in the scholarship set and, after extra classes conducted by H. J. Wood and Arthur H. Baker, a new headmaster, I sat for two scholarships. The first, a Junior London County Council scholarship, I secured with apparent ease, being placed

65th out of about 3,000 candidates. The second, a Blue-coat School scholarship to Christ's Hospital, I missed by a few marks. The former meant two years at a secondary school and an annual grant of £20. Successful candidates were allowed, perhaps unwisely, to select their own school. My choice was the United Westminster Schools (now Westminster City Schools) near to Victoria Station and backing on to Westminster Chapel, chiefly because two of my Sunday School friends were already there.

The headmaster at that time seemed to a lad of twelve to be very old. His roots were obviously in the past. No doubt he had contact with the forty masters, but few of the 900 boys ever saw him and he never entered a classroom during the two-and-a-half years I was at the school. About ten other scholarship boys entered the school with me. Because of our relatively high standard of elementary education—a great tribute to the Board School—we were placed in the upper fourth form among boys older than ourselves. We had much ground to make up in other respects, including classical and modern languages, Euclid and a few other subjects. But in all else, we were well ahead of the majority. Perhaps on account of this ascendancy, a few masters made us aware that we were free scholars, although the parents of every boy benefited from the fact that this ancient school was heavily endowed. Let any of us make a slip, or be detected in some misdemeanour, and one master in particular would remind us that we were scholarship boys from elementary schools. We were often the butt of his wit and sarcasm. Most of the masters, however, and our form-mates, treated us well and as their equals. I remember with gratitude Jimmy Melville, son of a Scotland Yard official, who became Solicitor-General in the

first Labour Government and whose early death was deplored by many friends; and Walter Layton, a chorister of the Temple Church, whose distinguished public career was honoured with a peerage.

The school had no playing fields, but only an asphalt playground, far too small for the comfort of 900 boys, most of whom remained to mid-day dinner. Apart from the fives-courts, we played cricket in summer, with chalked shed-posts for wickets, and tennis balls. As many as a dozen form matches would be played at a time with the various fielding sides hopelessly mixed. Football, with tennis balls, in the winter was equally difficult, but we had good sport, nevertheless. So we did on those mornings when an ancient retired army sergeant came to drill us. I passed through five forms in about a year, to arrive at the middle-sixth where, like many other boys, I remained for the five remaining terms of my school life. Middle and upper sixth forms were a kind of terminus for many boys and, with the arrival of a few smaller boys from below each term to fill the vacancies made by exits from the top end, we were mixed in many ways, including size. We who were older and bigger took advantage of this during drill times. Sometimes when marching, we would take long strides to the disadvantage of the smaller fry in the middle ranks and then without warning, would drop almost to marking time to the discomfiture of everybody, including our choleric drill sergeant.

This school was nearly four miles from my home. Travelling was cheap in those days. The knife-board horse tram from Lavender Hill to Chelsea Bridge connected with a horse-omnibus to Victoria and the fare was three-halfpence each way. But the daily threepence

which our parents gave us for this, and any other pence to supplement our packet lunch, was saved for sweets or fruit with which to regale ourselves as we walked. Sometimes we hitch-hiked, long before that term was coined. Friendly tram conductors often gave us a lift on their platforms while we kept sharp watch for "jumping" inspectors.

My thoughts were fixed upon another scholarship while at this Westminster School. But, unlike the keenness of the masters at the elementary school, there was no apparent urge on the part of their opposite numbers in the secondary school to give extra coaching to young aspirants. It seemed to me that they were indifferent to scholarships and other academic successes. So, unguided, I just failed to gain an Intermediate County Council Scholarship. Success in the Junior Cambridge Local Examination, however, gave me another six months' schooling.

I owe much to my eleven years at school, especially to that greater part of them that I spent at the elementary school, even though much of the type and method of its teaching has long been superseded by more modern and advanced standards. But I owe far more to my church associations. My parents' connection with Grafton Square Baptist Church began in a somewhat curious way. The nearest Baptist Church to our new London home was Victoria, Wandsworth Road. But, almost accidentally, my father learnt that the minister at Grafton Square was the Rev. Thomas Hanger, who had been minister of the Cheddar Circuit in Somersetshire, of which our chapel at Winscombe formed a part. His was the obvious church to join and my parents did so amid the warm welcome of minister and members.

INFLUENCES

I never remember Sundays that were spent in any other way than in association with the church and its many activities. We went to afternoon school as soon as we were old enough. The infant class was held in a large ground-floor room and, sometimes, in the adjoining kitchen. Either room was crowded to suffocation with two very young women teachers in charge. The most refractory children were stood in the empty copper to cool down! I frequently cooled down! As time passed, our Sunday commitments increased, until they equalled father's, with morning school besides. This began at ten o'clock, after which we attended morning service which never ended before half-past twelve and often went on to a quarter to one. Sunday was mostly spent in walking to and from the church buildings and in attending the various engagements. This was expected as a matter of course from us by our parents. Yet I never found Sunday irksome. On the contrary, it was a day to be looked forward to, and I know that most of my friends regarded it in the same light.

Of Thomas Hanger, who was my minister until two years before my marriage, it can be said justly that he was a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. Untrained in the schools, he learnt of his Lord and knew his Book. Looking austere and venerable to a boy, he was regarded as a friend. Natural deliberateness and slowness in speech developed to a painful degree as the years passed. He never claimed to be a children's man and yet, one boy at least looked forward with eager expectation to his monthly missionary talk at the close of afternoon Sunday School and to his Scripture Examination Preparation Classes. A man who could sustain for twenty-two years a pastorate in a suburban London church and be loved

throughout that period and honoured far beyond it, must be regarded as being ordained of God to the ministry of the Word. I am one of multitudes who have thanked God for Thomas Hanger, whose was the final word which committed me to Christ and who baptized and admitted me to church membership in 1896 in my twelfth year. Then I was so small that I had to stand on the lowest step of the baptistery and several tucks had to be made in the baptismal gown. I am a debtor to my Sunday School superintendent, Walter H. Surman, who taught me much more than he ever suspected. He never failed to be at school, morning and afternoon, well ahead of time. We used to declare that we could set our watches, if we had them, by the precision with which he turned the corner of the Square leading to the church. He rarely varied more than a minute from his set times. I am under obligation to my Sunday School teachers—my father, Walter Surman, Junior, who aroused my interest in foreign stamps; C. J. Page, ardent Christian Endeavourer and member of our boys' cricket club; immaculate and patient Herbert Percy Smith; and honest T. H. North.

Some of my best friendships were formed in and through the Sunday School. Daringly, when most of us were in our early teens, we founded a cricket club. We had little experience of the game and no money with which to buy our equipment. But we got going and kept alive for at least ten years until other concerns and interests separated us. For some years we had no prepared pitches on Clapham Common. Sometimes we played our matches on a gravel wicket. Other teams, like us, pitched where they pleased. The fielding sides overlapped each other and the wonder is that some of

us were not either killed or seriously injured by balls which flew in all directions. Then, through a progressive County Council, good grass pitches, well spaced, were made available and cricket became safer and more enjoyable. Sometimes we played at a distance, especially at Raynes Park. But Clapham Common was the scene of most of our matches. I acquired a reputation as a slow bowler, and one Saturday afternoon I achieved distinction by taking all ten wickets. Our opponents must have been a weak team, and they must have suspected something sinister in my innocent bowling which disconcerted them. The greatest thrill of many games was a Saturday afternoon when, disappointed through the failure of our opponents to appear, three of us were asked to act as substitutes in a men's match. I went in eighth wicket down when our team needed twenty-four runs to win. A demon bowler was on at the other end and served up some of his fastest expresses. I kept still and felt the first ball jar my hat. The jolt twisted it and turned the ball which flashed to the boundary for four runs. Another similar ball, and the same thing happened again. Evidently angered by this treatment at the hands of a mere boy, the bowler's third delivery was even faster. That also, without effort or design on my part, went to the boundary. My partner scored five and I stayed long enough to score the winning hit and to carry my bat amid the applause of a crowd which had gathered—applause which I hardly deserved, for my runs were made more by accident than anything else. But it was a crowded hour of glorious life, only equalled by an incident at a Summer School at Seascale when I shattered Dr. Townley Lord's wicket with a first ball, the like of which I have never bowled before or since. The star

player of our club was Frank Herring—"kipper" of course—a born cricketer whose polished style was a joy to watch and who was a success in any part of the game. He afterwards played for crack clubs and might have come into the front rank of cricketers had circumstances permitted.

But of all church activities, I owe most to the Christian Endeavour Society. In the mid-nineties the C.E. Movement was in the first flush of its youth. Begun in a modest way by an American Congregational minister for the young people of his church, it had swept through the States, crossed the Atlantic and had already become firmly established in this country. Leaders of the Free Churches gave it their blessing and active support. It was something that appealed to the best in Christian youth at a period which was sterile. Our Society at Grafton Square was among the earliest to be formed and it captured our young men and women. Before long, the names of ninety active members were on its register, and this in a church of less than 200 members. I joined as a matter of course. As the years passed, I made my first essays in Christian service as a member. The Society gave opportunities for papers, addresses and discussions, and there I learnt to write and to speak in public. Its insistence on committee work provided occasions for debate, for chairmanship and the conduct of business, and for the broadening of outlook. The Society needed an organist and so I gained experience in leading congregational singing. Its interdenominational character introduced me to a wider circle which meant a still further enlargement of outlook. In it I came to know the young woman who afterwards became my wife and who has been a loved comrade through all the years.

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Other young men found their wives in the C.E. too. And where better could they find them?

Though my membership of a C.E. Society ceased many years ago, my gratitude to this virile organisation has never ceased, and I have welcomed numerous opportunities of serving the Movement from time to time in various ways, chief of which was the preparation of and conductorship of the Praise Service in the Royal Albert Hall during the National Convention of 1946. I hope to welcome more in the days to come.

My parents were given to hospitality. Our living quarters had their inconveniences, but we were fortunate in having a large drawing room on the first floor over a double-fronted shop. Here, between Sunday afternoon school and evening service, we brought our friends to tea, often as many as twelve or more. Tea was invariably followed by hymn and anthem singing round the American organ and by lively conversation. Happy hours like these are unfortunately rare in this age of mechanised music.

CHAPTER THREE

APPRENTICESHIP

My short business life of seven years was both varied and valuable. It included three situations in the first two years and one which lasted for five years. On the recommendation of the headmaster of my school, I obtained a post as junior clerk in the Army and Navy Stores. The hours were long, from nine till six. The work was hard and the pay was small. I was given nine shillings a week and, like many others, I took my first week's wages with a thrill because it was money which I had earned. Out of this sum, I had to pay fares and buy simple and scanty lunches and give something to my mother towards the cost of my board and clothes. During the winter, the entire staff, which ran into hundreds, worked overtime. The extra hours were put in at the beginning of the day and I left home before six o'clock in the darkness to make my way towards Westminster. For the additional daily two hours I received sevenpence, which was spent on breakfast in a nearby eating-house. This consisted of a cup of tea, two thick slices of bread and butter and a tasty kipper. The head of my office was something of a martinet, but he was obviously concerned that his somewhat unruly and unwilling juniors should make good.

After about six months, a slightly better situation, from a financial standpoint, and a much better one in other respects, was secured for me in the office of a surveyor and auctioneer in Battersea. This employer would engage no man on his staff who lived much beyond walking distance. This must have been because he could offer lower wages in consequence. The business was old

and well-established and it was still growing steadily. My employer was a Conservative in politics and in everything else. Any suggestions that typewriters or telephones or other modern innovations would add to the efficiency of the office were scorned by him, as also were proposals that women clerks should be engaged. He was most particular over small details. Professional men had to be addressed as "Esquire", and business and working men as plain "Mister". Punctuality to him was a major virtue. Postage stamps must be stuck strictly square with the right-hand corners of the envelopes and at a fixed distance from the edges. He was angrier over failures and errors in what his staff considered to be trifles than over slips in copying the draft of an agreement for the sale of property which involved hundreds or thousands of pounds. His theory was that exactitude and precision in details were likely to lead to care in larger matters, and I have been grateful to him for his training in this and many other things. I gained a useful insight into questions of property and its management, the law of the landlord and tenant and kindred subjects. This employer was a strict Churchman and acted as Vicar's Warden at the old parish church of St. Mary's by the river. I never saw anything in his business life that was contrary to his Christian profession. Two of my maternal great-uncles were named Lathey and I was named after them. They had carried out extensive building operations in old and new Battersea and beyond, including many public buildings; and I remember the pride when, one day, I overheard my employer and his managing clerk discussing in the next office a certain house which was on the market, and the former saying, "It is a well-built house. It is a Lathey house."

One other incident I have often recalled. The younger clerks found or made time to discuss the affairs of the day. 1900 was the year of the Boxer Rising in China. On the day when the massacre of the missionaries in Shansi was reported in the newspapers, one of my colleagues, knowing that I was connected with a Baptist church and interested in the Baptist Missionary Society, said sneeringly, "What fools these missionaries are!" They were, but not in the sense in which he meant it.

The lure of a still higher wage took me to my next position in the office of a firm of wholesale milk distributors on Albert Embankment. Both the heads of this firm were deacons of Baptist churches. The secretary was a firm Wesleyan Methodist and the chief cashier was a Congregationalist. The remaining members of the office staff were far otherwise. Of the chief cashier, it was said one day by a wild junior, "Evans doesn't preach; he practices." I was put in charge of the books of a newly-formed department which was intended to capture the wholesale butter and egg market in London. My work was to keep the accounts and to prepare a weekly balance sheet. One week the chief cashier told me that the heads wanted the balance sheet the first thing every Monday morning. I replied, "I will try and get it ready," and was told, "It *must* be ready!" And, of course, it was. Thus early, I learnt the force of the observation, "We can generally find time to do the things we really want to do." The London butter and egg market refused to capitulate to a newcomer to the trade. So my department was closed down and, after nine months with this firm, I had to seek occupation elsewhere.

I returned to surveying and estate agency, this time in an office in Richmond, Surrey. Here, the two partners,

brothers, were Strict Baptists, somewhat Dickensian in manner and appearance and mid-Victorian in dress. Both were good men and easy-going. Their business was a small one and my impression is that they remained in it because it gave them something to do. Much of the property they managed belonged to them, and it was scattered over a wide area. I was provided with a season ticket which covered the Thames Valley railway line and was allowed to use it for pleasure as well as for business. The office was close to the Old Deer Park and the Green; and not far away were Kew Gardens, Richmond Hill and Park and the river. Lunch in these places was enjoyable in summer time. In the winter, most of my lunch hours were spent in reading in the Public Library reference room. The business practically ran itself, and I had leisure to read for examinations, for, by this time, I was fired with a determination to qualify professionally. Almost on impulse and without any serious preparation, I sat for the preliminary examination of the Auctioneers' Institute. Either the examination was an easy one, or the other candidates were a poor lot, for I took first place in the kingdom with an average of 98 per cent. marks for the whole examination, and was rewarded with the bronze medal of the Institute and the appearance of my photograph in *The Estates' Gazette*, the weekly journal of the profession. During the ensuing year, I read hard for the Intermediate Examination which included such subjects as The Valuation of Property, the Measurement and Valuation of Dilapidations, and Land Surveying. Again I succeeded, taking third place this time. While I was preparing for the third and Final Fellowship Examination, something happened which changed my outlook and radically affected my future.

Just before I went to Richmond for business, the church organist at Grafton Square resigned, an event which caused consternation among the young people. He had held this post for twenty-five years, a long time in our view, and was never absent. We thought his favourite piece of music might have been, *Fixed in his everlasting seat!* Though I was scarcely seventeen, I was offered the vacant position. I had never played an organ with pedals, but, with the assurance of youth, I accepted it. Fortunately, the organ was a small one, with one manual, twelve stops and a single octave of pedals, and everyone was kind. More fortunately, the organist at the neighbouring Congregational Church was a musician in the front rank and I became one of his pupils. John Post Attwater, Mus.Bac., F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M., is another man to whom I owe much. He knew my father, for he often saw him driving his baker's van through the streets of Clapham, and he adjusted his fees to meet our financial position. He worked hard with me and fired me with the resolve to qualify for a musical degree. He took a personal interest in our church and it was through his good offices that our old organ gave place during my time to an up-to-date instrument. This had been built for a private house, but was voiced for a large building. It had two manuals, with full pedal range and twenty-six stops and, with its pneumatic action and richness of tone, it was both a joy to play and to hear. I had been grounded in the Tonic Sol-fa system at the Board School before I began with the Old Notation and, with a good ear for sound, I seemed to make good progress. Even now, I read Old Notation in Tonic Sol-fa terms. It has helped me to transpose and to memorise. One week-end, I was in the midst of eye

treatment and was unable to see small objects or to read print. But I took the organ as usual, aided by memory. During one of the many missions held at Grafton Square, the soloist was Madame Ada Rose, who had a deep contralto voice. Everything she sang had to be transposed several keys at sight and without preparation. I was able to do this without difficulty, I suppose, by reason of a tonic sol-fa mind.

I was blessed with an acute ear for receiving sound and a good brain for recording it, and for a long period was able to play without prior notice almost any tune in the *Baptist Church Hymnal* without music as the result of constant practice, a great advantage to any organist.

I never obtained musical degrees or distinctions for reasons which appear later. I always set myself to become a good and efficient church organist rather than a musical showman, in the conviction that an organist's chief task is to lead a congregation in worshipful and reverent praise, rather than to give exhibitions of his skill.

CHAPTER FOUR

INDICATIONS

SOME of the greatest and most far-reaching changes in life are the results of seemingly casual and trifling incidents. This has been so on several occasions with me.

Spurgeon's Orphan Homes Choir and Handbell Ringers were frequent visitors to Grafton Square Church and, through them, I formed an acquaintance with their gifted conductor and accompanist—T. W. Partridge. One of these visits was paid in 1906 and, during the Sunday evening service, I assisted by accompanying the choir on the organ. In conversation outside the church afterwards, Mr. Partridge said, "Have you ever thought of making a change as church organist?" I replied that I had not, as I was quite happy where I was. He asked me to think about the matter, as he had been requested to recommend an organist for a new Baptist Church at Herne Hill. I promised that I would do so. I talked the matter over with several friends, including my fiancée's parents. Her mother urged me to let my name go forward, as she believed in young people getting into fresh surroundings for the sake of their development. So I consented to my name being submitted.

Soon afterwards, I heard from the Herne Hill church secretary, who invited me, on behalf of the minister and deacons, to supply at their organ for a Sunday. He told me that sixteen other applications for the post had been received and that it had been decided that each man should supply for a Sunday! I was to be the first they

would hear. I went, knowing scarcely anyone in the congregation, and was welcomed with a courtesy which proved to be a foreshadowing of what was to follow. The sixteen weeks during which the other candidates took their turns passed by. Then I received another letter saying that the applicants had been reduced to three of whom I was one, and that the church would be glad to hear me again. This time the ordeal was more severe. I was to play at the choir practice and on the ensuing Sunday when, in addition to the hymns, and other voluntaries which I might choose, Costa's *March of the Israelites* was to be played as a voluntary, while the congregation listened, and Turner's *Sun of my soul* was to be the test anthem. Not a very formidable trial, though it seemed to me to be so in the circumstances. The other two remaining competitors were put to the same test.

Then came another period of waiting, until the day arrived when the postman brought the news that I had secured the position. The letter was couched in the most cordial terms, but it did not tell me what I learnt afterwards. The three candidates were reduced to two at the church meeting and, when the names were put to the vote, I had a majority of one. When this was announced, the supporters of the other man, some of whom, as his personal friends, had been canvassing in his favour, immediately said that they would do all they could to support me if I should accept the invitation. And they did. I never discovered who they were, for everyone in the church was my friend and my year as organist at Herne Hill was among the happiest in my life.

That year was a testing experience and an enriching one also. I was a youngster of twenty-one, who had only known the church in which I had grown up. Now

I was thrown among strangers. The music at Grafton Square did not make heavy demands. I was to find that at Herne Hill it was exacting for a Free Church. There were accomplished musicians in the congregation and choir, whose members included two professional singers. Each service included one or two anthems. The organ was a three-manual, tracker-action instrument which had given long service in a public hall before being installed in the church. It was a heavy instrument to play and, in those early days in the new church, it was frequently ciphering. I lived three miles from the church and, having been reared to regard Sunday travelling as one of those things which were "not done", I walked. Twelve miles tramping and heavy musical services brought bodily weariness by the end of the day. I was at the church four evenings each week, for the mid-week service, the choir practice, my own practice and the Christian Endeavour meeting.

The church had only been opened a few weeks before my appointment and an augmented choir had rendered Gaul's oratorio, *The Holy City*, as its contribution to the celebrations. It was desired to repeat this and I had three months' hard toil mastering this work. It was a discipline that was both enjoyable and profitable. Two other festivals were arranged during that winter. We were a happy and jolly company under the conductorship of R. C. Tresidder, for many years secretary of the Royal Surgical Aid Society.

Herne Hill Church, in those early days, was wealthy. Its neighbourhood was made up of roads of commodious detached or semi-detached houses, which were occupied by prosperous professional and business men and their families who had come from the inner suburbs. The

large church and church hall had been built within a few years after the formation of the church with no outside financial help and they were practically paid for by the opening date. The church was built with provision for galleries which, however, have never been needed. The result is that the building is somewhat barn-like in appearance. But it is roomy and comfortable. The aisles were beautifully carpeted. Hot-water pipes were installed in every other pew. A small tower and bell were provided through the generosity of an American member, a rare feature for a Baptist church. The congregations rarely exceeded 150 people. Yet the collections averaged £14 a Sunday and always included one or more gold coins. One feature of the winter was the annual church supper at which the feast provided and the floral decorations were on a lavish scale. The company might be about fifty persons, but invariably sums above £500 would be raised for church funds. Some of the best men and women I ever met were numbered among its members, and its minister, A. G. Short, was, in some ways, like a father to me.

My term as organist here only lasted a year, for reasons which now appear. But I retained my membership of the church for years afterwards. My successor was my chief rival for the post and we became firm friends and I acted on occasion as his deputy.

Some years prior to my leaving Grafton Square I was appointed as my father's successor as church missionary secretary. This brought me into touch with outside organisations and movements. One of these was the Young People's Missionary Association of the Baptist Missionary Society. This organisation was formed in 1848 as the Young Men's Missionary Association and,

nearly fifty years later, it was broadened to include women. It held monthly meetings of delegates from affiliated Sunday Schools and Young People's Societies in the Library of the Baptist Mission House. Thus was forged a link which has continued to this day. A few months after my first appearance at the Y.P.M.A., I was appointed its organist and played for the first time on the American organ in the Library. I continued to play on this instrument and on a grand piano presented to the B.M.S. by Mr. Arnold S. Clark on numerous occasions until both were destroyed in an air raid in September, 1940.

Another body with which I became associated was the Young Christians' Missionary Union (later, the Young People's Missionary Movement) which originated in Spurgeon's Tabernacle in the nineties during the ministry of Dr. A. T. Pierson for the support of missionaries who had gone from the Tabernacle into many parts of the world. This Union spread into other churches of several Free Church denominations and maintained an aggressive and vigorous life. Its inspirer and honorary secretary was an assistant bank manager, Ernest James Wigney, of whom more must be said later. One afternoon, on a visit to the city, I called as usual, at the office of the Union, in Fleet Street, to discuss some missionary business with the clerk there. Then I went into the bank to pass a few moments with Wigney. We entered his private room away from the crowd which thronged the counter and, suddenly, without warning, he said, "Have you ever thought of changing your occupation and giving yourself to missionary advocacy?" I asked him why he put this question and he replied: "A new General Secretary has just been appointed to the Baptist Mission-

ary Society. He is young and energetic and is anxious to develop interest and support among the young people and Sunday Schools. He is looking for a young man to assist him in this. Would you think of the position?" Would I not! Then Wigney talked about the kind of life that was involved—long and irregular hours, hard thinking and organising, frequent travelling, and so on, with meagre financial prospects. But I felt that my opportunity had come, and I left the bank to find that Fleet Street was a different place from what it had been an hour before.

The result was that my name was sent forward and, in due course, I was asked to interview a committee of three which included the Rev. F. G. Benskin, M.A., and Mr. W. W. Parkinson. They recommended my appointment to the B.M.S. General Committee and this was confirmed a few weeks later. So, on May 20th, 1907, I entered the forbidding portals of the Baptist Mission House in London for the first time as a member of the staff. I have been there ever since, notwithstanding calls to go elsewhere from time to time.

One of the hardest conditions of my appointment was that, because my Sundays were to be at the disposal of the B.M.S., I should give up my post as organist at Herne Hill. This was a wrench, but it had to be. Another condition was, that when I was engaged on Sundays, my Saturdays should be kept free. This was, of necessity, more honoured in the breach than in the observance, for Saturday was mostly occupied in the office, in afternoon and evening meetings, or in travelling to provincial engagements. Other men did the same and no secretary took Monday off. The general practice was, according to an unwritten rule, "Get back to your office as early as

possible on Monday, even if it means travelling home on or through Sunday night.”

So, the two biggest changes in my life came through seemingly casual conversations—one in the road after a Sunday evening service, and the other in a London bank. There have been others which will be dealt with later. A man never knows how and when some call will come to him. The important thing is ever to be on the watch for it and to be sensitive to its implications when it comes.

CHAPTER FIVE

BACKGROUND

WHAT was life like in the closing years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth century? I have already given a few indications of what home, church and life generally meant to me. Here are some more.

While then, as now, more people were outside the churches than inside them, and religion apparently counted for little so far as most people were concerned, church going was more customary than it is now, and for the more fervid members and for earnest young people their church was the centre around which their lives revolved. Many churches had crowded congregations, especially at the evening services. At the same time, many were sparsely attended. Until, during the World War I, I attended Ramsden Road Church, Balham, then at flood tide under the ministry of the Rev. A. Douglas Brown, I had rarely seen more than 150 people at a service in a building seating 1,000. At Ramsden Road, my family and I had to wait several months before sittings could be allotted to us and then room could only be found in the gallery.

Grafton Square, Clapham, the church of my boyhood and youth, had a history dating back to 1787. Its succession of ministers included John Eustace Giles, writer of the well-known baptismal hymn, *Hast Thou said, exalted Jesus?* For many years the chapel occupied a prominent site overlooking Clapham Common on the main road leading from London to Surrey. Here, in an

ecclesiastical looking building, under the ministry of the Rev. Richard Webb, congregations and membership grew to such an extent that an assistant minister was appointed in the person of Thomas Hanger, Mr. Webb's son-in-law, about whom I have written in an earlier chapter. This was made possible because the church was among the beneficiaries of the Atkins Trust. Abraham Atkins was a wealthy member of the Baptist Church in Southwark, from which the Clapham Common Church sprang. He had a house in Clapham and another in Berkshire. In 1786 he devoted part of his wealth to benefiting fourteen churches and, on his death he bequeathed his fortune as a trust in the interests of thirteen churches, including the one on Clapham Common. A century later this bequest yielded the Clapham Common Church an annual income of £300 for the minister—a large sum in those days.

A crowded building and a rapidly increasing district led the church in the eighties to resolve to seek another site on which a larger building could be erected, and this notwithstanding the fact that property adjoining the existing chapel could have been purchased. A site in a quiet square, remote from any leading thoroughfare, was given by a well-to-do Christian doctor, who stipulated, however, that a relative, a young architect, should be given a commission to design and supervise the erection of the new building. The result was a chapel to seat a congregation of 1,000 with unsuitable and inadequate Sunday School accommodation. It was a strategic blunder. The new building was partly hidden by a high wall and it was difficult to find. Its look of austerity was forbidding. It stood almost under the shadow of the neighbouring Congregational Church of which Dr. J. Guinness Rogers,

a giant of the pulpit and a national figure, was minister. The line of carriages drawn up outside this church on Sunday mornings, with their attendant coachmen and footmen, what time their masters and mistresses worshipped inside, were the envy of my friends and myself. Soon the ominous words, "Smaller congregations", began to appear in the Baptist church records. Then, in the nineties, the endowment fund almost vanished through the deterioration and unsuitability of the Georgian property facing Clapham Common from which it was derived. This, however, proved the salvation of the church. Hitherto one collection a Sunday provided the thirty shillings a week that were needed to supplement the endowment fund. Now the two collections that were instituted secured £6 a week and the contributions to the B.M.S. began to mount. A new sense of responsibility and stewardship was created to the advantage of the spiritual life of the church.

There were more twicers in those days. Families were larger and children attended with their parents. I recall the Hangers, Coopers, Kings, Sanders, Smiths, Surmans, Taylors and our own, with both parents and an average of five or six children filling their respective pews. The religious outlook was narrow and sombre. I grew up feeling sure that Baptists and other Nonconformists would get to heaven, that Anglicans would probably do so, but that there was no hope for Roman Catholics. We used *Psalms and Hymns* at morning service and *Sankey's Collection* in the evening. Long and wordy church meetings were devoted to discussions about using the former at both services until, as so often, a compromise was reached—*Psalms and Hymns* at both services with one *Sankey's* hymn in the evening.

Theatre going was generally regarded as a sin and all actors and actresses were suspected of living questionable lives. Card playing, except perhaps simple games like Snap, was tabooed. Any suggestion of the dramatic on church premises was frowned on. Sunday games on the Common were unheard of and Sunday walks across or around the grass were the most that was tolerated. Total abstinence was the normal thing for church members and their families, though some ministers' vestries still retained their wine-cupboards. There were few competitive outside attractions, and no uniformed organisations for young people and children, except the Boys' Brigade, which was opposed in some quarters because of its supposed military element.

Our weekly church programme began with a Prayer Meeting on Monday night at which a succession of prayers, mostly long, which usually followed the same pattern in the same language, was offered. Tuesday was normally a blank evening. Wednesday was Band of Hope night, a joyous time for unruly children in the hands of a devoted but incompetent leader. How we revelled in singing at the top of our voices, *Up, for your leader's bugle is sounding; There's a serpent in the glass, dash it down!*—and *Temperance boys and girls are we*, to rollicking tunes. The Band of Hope was followed by the Christian Endeavour Society meeting of which I have written elsewhere. Thursday was allotted to the Mutual Improvement Society and the Total Abstinence meeting. Friday was Choir Practice evening and on Saturday there was another prayer meeting. And that was all. Far removed from the church life of today, this sort of church activity produced, with the aid of the homes from which we came, a fine breed of men and women nurtured in the

Christian faith, developed in character with convictions that have made their mark on national life.

We were, at the same time, made aware that we belonged to a wider fellowship of believers. The Christian Endeavour Movement, with its national and international basis, its local and national conventions, stimulated this consciousness. So did the London Baptist Association and the denominational Assemblies. I owe much to my eldest brother, Ernest, for the part he played in taking me, while still a schoolboy, along with others, to these events, chief of which was an annual visit to the B.M.S. Public Meeting then held in Exeter Hall in the Strand.

Dr. Shakespeare, then recently appointed Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, was beginning to gather the loose and tangled strands of denominational life into a co-ordinated pattern. Already he had startled the churches by organising and raising the Twentieth Century Fund of £250,000, part of which was to be spent on the erection of a worthy denominational headquarters and part on the building of new churches in strategic centres where there was no Baptist witness. Ably supported by ministerial and lay leaders in all parts of the country, this effort was crowned with success. Children as well as adults were appealed to and I was among hundreds who raised their five shillings for the Fund. The Baptist Church House was erected on a fine corner site in Southampton Row and the Baptist Union offices, which hitherto had been housed in a few rooms in the Furnival Street Mission House, were moved there. Henceforward the Church House became increasingly the centre of administration and the focus of denominational life. Other objectives were taking shape

in Dr. Shakespeare's fertile and vivid mind, and before the twentieth century had gone far on its course plans for the Sustentation Fund and the appointment of General Superintendents were emerging and were soon to become realities. It was a period in which the almost universal independency of our churches was beginning to give place to organised inter-church fellowship and mutual service, a process which has continued ever since.

The B.M.S. had been housed in Furnival Street, a narrow thoroughfare of Holborn with Dickensian associations, since 1870. Here, at the time of which I write, the long and distinguished leadership of another benevolent autocrat, Alfred Henry Baynes, was drawing to its close. Baynes was once described as "the prince of secretaries". He was a skilful administrator and a powerful platform advocate. His courageous purpose brought the Congo Mission into being and his stout heart sustained it through the dark and costly days of the eighties when the relatively heavy loss of missionary lives induced many to urge its abandonment.

Many stories about Baynes were told me by members of the staff when I joined them in 1907. His generosity was expressed in many ways and to many people, including the married men around him, to each of whom he presented a turkey every Christmas. He was responsible for the *Missionary Herald* and, according to what I was told, he put letters from missionaries which he considered to be interesting and effective in a drawer of his desk. When magazine time came round each month, he would send these letters to the printers with the bidding, "Do what you can with these," and everything from type-setting to make-up, printing and production, was left to them. This was vastly different from present-day

practice, and yet one young reader at least, who later in life was to edit many *Missionary Herald*s, absorbed these productions with avidity and appreciation, for as they consisted of unedited letters which began "Dear Mr. Baynes" and ended with the missionary's greeting and name, he felt he was being admitted into the intimacies of the writers' experiences and thoughts. He was equally thrilled when as a youthful church missionary secretary he received from Mr. Baynes letters in acknowledgement of contributions on double sheets of stout notepaper which addressed him as "My dear Mr. Hemmens" and concluded with the bold signature, "Alfred Henry Baynes".

Few women were on the Mission House staff in those days. Typewriters were a recent innovation and many letters were copied into books of flimsy paper by means of a damp brush and a press. The telephone was another new facility and inter-office communication was by means of speaking tubes to which attention was called by means of unhygienic whistles.

The Baptist genius for forming Societies for specific purposes was shown by the fact that the Mission House also accommodated the offices of the Bible Translation Society, formed in 1840; the Baptist Zenana Mission established in 1867 to promote missionary work among the women of India and, later, those of China, and in whose interests the four Angus sisters rendered such devoted honorary service; and the Medical Missionary Auxiliary founded in 1901, in which Dr. R. Fletcher Moorshead was beginning his life work. With the march of time and the pressure of events closer relationships between these bodies and the B.M.S. were soon to develop to result in complete unification in 1925.

The Nonconformist conscience was active and vigorous and was an element to be reckoned with. It found expression in the nineties in such parliamentary measures as Local Option, Welsh Disestablishment and Home Rule for Ireland. It flamed in opposition to the Boer War and to the Conservative Government's Acts on Education and Licensing at the turn of the century. Most Free Churchmen supported the Liberal Party and rallied to the lead given by the National Free Church Council at a time when the Government was clinging to office in a dying condition. Lloyd George, then coming to the fore, and Dr. John Clifford and Silvester Horne were among the heroes of Free Churchmen, young and old. Anger at the Education Act which placed Church Schools on the rates found expression in the Passive Resistance Movement which resulted in hundreds of ministers and lay folk suffering the spoiling of their goods and in many enduring terms of prison.

In the parliamentary election of 1906 Free Churchmen were ranged on the side of the Liberal Party and there was great rejoicing when the Government was ignominiously defeated and the Liberals were swept into power with the largest majority ever known to that time. Elections in those days were spread over several weeks, and I recall standing night after night outside the tube station at Clapham Common watching as the results were flashed upon a screen to the delight of a delirious crowd. The new Government soon found itself checked in its efforts to carry out its election promises and Free Church enthusiasm for it began to wane. The National Free Church Council experienced a blow from its association with the Liberal Party from which it never entirely recovered, and the political convictions of the

churches became blurred and varied. At the same time measures like the Old Age Pensions and National Health Insurance Acts brought welcome relief to needy and deserving people and ushered in an era of progressive social legislation which has continued to this day.

On the whole the outlook appeared to be set fair. Discerning minds, however, began to detect clouds, sometimes no bigger than a man's hand, on the religious and international horizon. Sir George Macalpine, President of the Baptist Union in 1910, devoted his two Presidential Addresses (for an Autumn as well as a Spring Assembly was held in those days) to an examination and exposition of the theme *The Arrested Progress of the Churches*. Provocative actions by Germany and the disproportionate growth of its military and naval strength caused concern and alarm in many directions. Most people, however, pooh-poohed the likelihood of civilised powers ever again appealing to force of arms to settle their differences or to satisfy their ambitions. Belief in the inevitability of progress was widespread and the conviction was cherished that the development of education and the arts would save mankind and bring it to a sure and sheltered haven. Alas, that the succeeding decades shattered these and other beliefs and brought civilisation to the brink of destruction.

Such were some of the elements in the world in which my boyhood and youth were spent.

CHAPTER SIX

FOUNDATIONS

THE B.M.S. Young People's Department in 1907 existed mainly on paper, and there was not much of that. Its newly appointed secretary, Leonard Tucker, was absent in Jamaica. He had first gone to India twenty-five years earlier and, after being invalided home, had accepted service in the West Indies. After a few years there, he had again been compelled to return to England where he engaged in deputation work and in the leadership of the Young People's Missionary Association. His heart was in the mission field however, and, in 1906, he eagerly responded to an appeal that he should return once more to Jamaica. From that time until his death in 1934, he was backward and forward across the Atlantic. Tucker was a man of many parts—a scholar, humble-minded and sincere, a winning deputation, but with little regard for conventions and with no sense of time. He had a disarming subtlety. Once he was given fifteen minutes in which to address a great young people's meeting in Spurgeon's Tabernacle. He spoke for fifteen minutes and paused to exclaim, to the delight of the audience: "There goes my first five minutes!" and then proceeded to take an equal time for each of the two remaining parts of his speech. His hearers would have rejoiced to listen to still more.

Though the Y.P.D. had only recently been formed and its organisation existed mainly in outline, much had been done, through many years, to develop interest and support among young people and children. Early in the Society's history, someone had conceived the bright and

fruitful idea of harnessing the Sunday Schools to the service of the Society, with the result that at least a fifth of its annual income was contributed by them. Young People's Societies were also a sphere of propaganda and organisation. The Society had long had its children's magazine, the *Juvenile Missionary Herald*. The formation of the Y.P.D. was a recognition that the young people must be accorded their due place in the Society's affairs and that their interest and support must be cultivated for their own sakes and that of the work overseas.

Mr. (afterwards Dr.) C. E. Wilson, as the Society's General Secretary, was my first chief of staff. He told me that three lines of activity had been laid down for the Young People's Department. These were :—

1. The formation of study circles ;
2. The support of the s.s. *Endeavour* ; and
3. The development of the Prayer and Working Band.

The first was a matter after my own heart. The study circle movement came, like many other good enterprises, from America at the beginning of the present century. Wigney had heard about it through correspondence and had been gripped by it. Then, in 1905, at a united missionary summer school held at Littlehampton, at which I was present, through Wigney's initiative, S. Earl Taylor, one of the leaders of the movement in the States, swept everyone present into its ranks by the forceful eloquence of his description of its genius and methods. Study circles thus became the order of the day for Wigney and his satellites. The genius of this movement was the formation of small groups which met weekly for eight

or nine weeks to discuss questions arising out of a chapter of a missionary textbook prepared for this purpose. Its object was to train an informed leadership for the churches and to produce a new and more definite commitment to the missionary enterprise. We had no trained leaders for these circles; the technique of training and leadership was to come later. Some of us, without experience, did the leading ourselves. I travelled to Woolwich for nine successive Saturday afternoons in 1906 to conduct my first study circle at the Tabernacle. This was my introduction to the movement.

Other people in Baptist Churches had, through Wigney's influence, started circles and so the ground was prepared in some places; and contacts with others were made through summer schools. So the way was set in the autumn of 1907 for an advance.

The United Council for Missionary Education, about which more will be heard later, had been formed by a group of youth leaders in the various missionary societies' headquarters and those of the Student Christian Movement, to provide textbooks and leaders' helps. The first textbook, *The Uplift of China*, was ready and, greatly daring, I persuaded our Publication Department to order 500 copies. To their surprise, this number was sold within two months and a further equal supply was soon disposed of.

I began to tour the country to advocate study circles and to assist in their formation. My first centre was Leicester, and the week-end engagements included services in the churches. I remember being exalted above measure then because the first provincial church in which I was to speak for the B.M.S. was William Carey's chapel in Harvey Lane—now no more—and that I was to stand

in his pulpit on the Sunday evening. My ardour and pride were damped at tea time by the frankness of the small son of my host who said, "I am not coming to Harvey Lane to listen to you. I am going to Robert Hall where a real live missionary will be speaking."

The study circle movement grew like a rolling snow-ball. In a few years the numbers had so increased that in one winter a thousand circles were formed. Each was carefully registered and contact was maintained with a view to turning new found knowledge and interest into practical channels. The movement spread to children. First, interdenominational textbooks were used. Then, in 1911, some biographical sketches of B.M.S. missionaries which I had written for our children's magazine were published in book form with the title *Our Standard Bearers*, and these became the first B.M.S. children's textbook. This also had a large sale and use.

The support of the s.s. *Endeavour* made a big appeal to Christian Endeavour Societies. The boat had been built in 1906 for service in connection with the Congo Mission and its cost had largely been met by contributions from C.E. Societies. Hence its name. It made three journeys up and down the Congo as a connecting link between the mission stations each year, and Societies were invited to meet the running costs, in return for which they were presented with a picture of the boat in colours. Hundreds of Societies responded and received the picture in recognition of their support. Some of these pictures may still be seen on church premises. Leaflets which gave accounts of the steamer's doings were prepared and issued three times a year. This support continued until 1913 when, through the growth of river traffic, the need for mission steamers no longer existed,

and the boat was sold. The support from C.E. Societies was by no means confined to the *Endeavour*. Native children at school on mission stations, native evangelists, and cots and beds in hospitals, made a wide appeal and many Societies undertook responsibility for one or more of them. They were also recruiting grounds for missionary volunteers and, to this day, a large proportion of candidates record that membership of a C.E. Society has been a factor in the formation of their missionary purpose.

The Praying and Working Band had its origin in the mind of Edith Pask, a woman connected with St. Andrew's Street Church, Cambridge. She formed her Sunday School class into a society whose members were to pray and work for the B.M.S. She gave it its somewhat pious sounding title. She told her experiences to Mr. Wilson, who adopted both society and title for the B.M.S. This also caught on and its progress was accelerated when, as the outcome of an address at a summer school at Weston-super-Mare in 1911, the organisation was re-named the League of Ropeholders. Before many years had passed, 150 branches were registered. Some of these have continued an unbroken existence through the many changes and upheavals of the years. Successive generations of children have passed through them. Some now hold positions of leadership in our home churches. Others are to be found in the ranks of missionaries in every field.

In 1909, J. R. M. Stephens, formerly of the Congo mission, succeeded Leonard Tucker as Young People's Secretary. His few years in this office were checked by indifferent health and by absences on special missions abroad. But his enthusiastic and alert mind, his organis-

ing ability, his persuasive oratory and, above all, his undeniable consecration, made a vast and lasting difference to the response of the young people and children of the churches. He was able to see the denomination as a whole and planned to reach every organisation and every member of it.

He introduced a registration scheme for Sunday Schools through which, in return for the payment of a small annual fee, graded according to the size of the school, a regular supply of missionary information was made available for officers, teachers and scholars. His persistence, supported by the devotion of the office staff, soon resulted in 1,500 schools being affiliated. This regular sowing of missionary seed bore rich fruit. Increasing calls came for missionary lesson material, missionary charts and pictures, missionary books and games. The missionary offerings of the Sunday Schools were organised with beneficial results. Conferences for Sunday School teachers increased and youth organisations sprang into vigorous life.

The *Juvenile Missionary Herald* changed its name about this time and, through the happy inspiration of Dr. Fullerton, it appeared in future as *Wonderlands*. Its editor for thirty years, W. E. Cule, can justly be described as brilliant. He soon became my friend and mentor. He encouraged me to write and invariably gave to my manuscripts those touches which made them something other than the very ordinary things they were. I wrote the first serial story for *Wonderlands*—a tale based on the experiences of three youngsters who travelled from Somersetshire to London for a holiday during which they visited the Baptist Mission House. The appearance of a serial story in *Wonderlands* sent the circulation soar-

ing. Almost any serial would have had this result. My tale was published in book form with the title, *The Big House in London*, and it sold for years. Alas, that German bombers should have rendered the contents of this book obsolete.

Other ventures of these early years will be described later, but one which grew to huge proportions must find a place now. Reference has already been made to summer schools. The earliest ones, organised by Wigney, were interdenominational in make-up. Soon, the various societies began to organise their own. The B.M.S. was the last to do so, largely out of loyalty to Wigney who was a Baptist and to whom the Society owed so much. But, in 1910, the first B.M.S. School was held at Folkestone. Its seventy members were scattered in boarding houses and its meetings were held in the Baptist Church. Its programme differed widely from the developments of later years, but its effects were lasting. Even now, one meets people who speak gratefully of it. Its leaders included F. B. Meyer, J. C. Carlile and Henry Oakley. Its success was sufficient to justify the permanent inclusion of summer schools in the programme of the Department.

In the next two years, summer schools were held at Weston-super-Mare, Whitley Bay and Kent's Bank. The last two were organised by Baptist Associations while the B.M.S. provided most of the speakers. At Whitley Bay most of the men lived under canvas. The week was wet and wild and the food was neither good nor plentiful. Yet all had a high experience, not forgetting the minister who declared that the text for his sermon on the following Sunday morning should be *The Camp was great!*

The peak of summer schools prior to the World War I was held at Scarborough in August, 1913. We secured

the use of a well-furnished boys' school, including its dignified butler, on the cliffs overlooking both sea and town, with ample playing fields. This was the first occasion on which the training of study circle leaders was included in the programme. The programme was strenuous. Each morning began with a Bible lecture, and this was followed by study circles which lasted for the greater part of two hours. Two addresses by missionaries and others were given in the evenings and, in addition, there was the daily study of a textbook chapter in readiness for the next morning session. We were about 70 in number and, by reason of our accommodation and our programme, we became bound in a rare fellowship. It was at this school that John MacBeath, then an almost unknown young minister at St. Andrews, made his first speaking visit to England. His series of addresses are still remembered with gratitude by some. Several of those who attended this school are still missionary leaders in their localities.

Stephens had a gift for giving new life to existing plans and methods as well as for introducing new ones. The Annual Collection for the support of Native Preachers was a hoary B.M.S. institution, it having been inaugurated in 1855. Collecting cards were sent to a few Sunday Schools each year and less than a thousand pounds resulted. Stephens began the issue of cards to all Sunday Schools, whether they asked for them or not. The result was that the offering immediately exceeded the thousand pound mark and went steadily forward year by year, until £5,000 was passed. A system of recognition certificates for successful collectors was introduced with good effect. Stephens overhauled and increased the Society's stock of lantern lectures, demonstrations and plays. He

supervised the exhibitions' department. There appeared to be no limit to his activity. His official connection with the Department ceased in 1914, when he became the Society's special lecturer and I slipped into his shoes and carried on for the next eighteen years. The Department published a quarterly bulletin—*Our Marching Orders*. In one of Stephens' absences, I wrote this paragraph. "Our readers will regret to learn of the illness of the Rev. J. R. M. Stephens. During his absence the work will be carried on by Mr. Hemmens and the staff. Our readers will pray for Mr. Stephens' speedy recovery", a well-intentioned sentence which caused much mirth to my colleagues.

Those days of youth were crowded with action, when progress was apparent on every hand.



AT THE UNVEILING OF THE GRENFELL MEMORIAL PLAQUE AT
SANGREED IN 1949



WITH OVERSEAS GUESTS AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE
MEN'S MOVEMENT AT SWANWICK IN 1948

CHAPTER SEVEN

COMRADES

My picture gallery of friends is extensive and varied and my life has been greatly enriched by them. I take down a few of the portraits that I may share them with others.

First is the figure of Ernest James Wigney, the slender, fragile, pallid, black-whiskered assistant bank manager of Fleet Street. He was the founder and inspirer of much that has already been described. He was in the true succession of Carey, whose declared business it was to serve God and cobble to pay expenses. Wigney rose high in his profession and could have risen much higher, but his heart was in the missionary enterprise and, for years, he refused promotion so that he might remain in Fleet Street. He lived in a large house in Stockwell where his wife and he kept only a few of the rooms for themselves, and let off the greater number so that more money might be available for his passion. He was leader of a numerous group of young people at Spurgeon's Tabernacle who, in the mid-nineties, formed the Young Christians' Missionary Union which, by the development of missionary circles whose members contributed small weekly sums, raised hundreds of pounds a year for the support of their fellow members on the mission field.

The influence and range of this movement soon widened until it had branches in churches throughout London and beyond. These were organised into district councils which did much to quicken the missionary zeal of young people at a time when the officers of the denominational missionary societies were inactive and unresponsive to their claims.

As the work grew, Wigney rented, at his own expense, rooms over his bank in Fleet Street and engaged a clerk to run the office. Every morning before bank hours and every evening until a late hour, either in the office or at his home, he toiled at his missionary task. His lunch hours and tea intervals were devoted to interviews with all and sundry who wished to discuss missionary affairs with him and his home life circled around the same theme and was ordered accordingly.

He had a rare genius for setting other people to work and was remarkably successful in enlisting the support of prominent Free Church ministers and laymen. His quiet, unassuming manner veiled a dogged resolution that never relaxed. If Wigney coveted a man or woman for any job, it was better for them to consent at once, for he would persist until he had secured his end. He was ultra-conservative in theology but was alert to any improved and fresh methods for furthering missionary enterprise, and he was willing to work with any who were one with him in purpose though they might differ from him in expression. He possessed a dry sense of humour. At a summer school at Mundesley in 1907, a group of study circle leaders was discussing procedure for the next session with Dr. T. H. P. Sailer, an American educationist. In a question to him, Wigney perpetrated this delicious bull, "Well, Dr. Sailer, suppose we bite off more than we can chew and come out thin, how shall we cover up our retreat?"

Wigney was my teacher in missionary matters in the early days and, as has been told, was the means of my joining the B.M.S. headquarters' staff. His movement expanded so widely that eventually it became necessary to appoint a whole-time secretary. When the United

Council for Missionary Education was formed, Wigney became its first honorary secretary. For nearly twelve years I was in almost daily touch with him, and from him I learnt what a man wholly given to God and His work can become and do.

I was introduced to W. E. Cule on my first day in Furnival Street and our friendship until his death in 1944 remained unbroken. W. E. C., as he was known to his intimates, came to the B.M.S. from South Wales by way of the National Sunday School Union headquarters. He was a gifted writer for boys and girls, as the long list of books from his pen testifies. He wrote many serial stories for *Wonderlands* under various *noms-de-plume*. His finest book, *Sir Knight of the Splendid Way*, was ranked to be worthy of a place alongside *The Pilgrim's Progress*. This book brought comfort to at least one father's heart in an hour of staggering bereavement.

Had Cule possessed a tithe of the flair for self-advertisement shown by some authors, he would easily have become a public figure. He was, however, among the shyest and most retiring of men. Although he attended regularly the meetings of the B.M.S. General Committee, it is doubtful whether more than a few of the members knew him. One typical picture of him is set in the lounge at The Hayes, Swanwick, during the annual conference of the Baptist Laymen's Missionary Movement, when a company of men sat in easy chairs around a blazing fire, exchanging experiences and telling stories. Cule sat with them, saying but little, but listening hard, summing up his companions and drawing his conclusions. Occasionally he interjected a remark and occasionally his face was lightened by a smile. You knew his imaginative mind was taking in everything through-

out the conference for, afterwards, a request for an article from his pen about the gathering produced an effort which was a gem.

Cule's editorship of the Society's magazines was no easy task. He had to satisfy four or five departmental secretaries, the missionary staff and a big and varied constituency of readers. *Wonderlands* was rightly his pride, and it attained front rank fame and circulation among religious magazines for children. Equally notable was the founding and publishing of *The Quest*, a magazine for Baptist youth, unique in its way, the influence of which has gone far beyond Baptist circles. The regard in which B.M.S. magazines is held may be judged from the remark of one distinguished chairman of the Society: "I read the *Missionary Herald* because I must, and I read it with profit; but I read *Wonderlands* because I want to."

As head of the Carey Press, Cule was responsible for the development of book production on a big scale. His standard here, as everywhere else, was high and exacting. This applied to manuscripts which were submitted to him. He often re-wrote articles and chapters of books so that they might reach his scale of values, though it must be said that some short-sighted authors did not always agree with his action. The same care was bestowed upon the choice of printing, paper and binding. The result was that Carey Press publications reached a standard of excellence that few could excel.

There were few days, unless I was travelling, when I failed to spend an hour or so with Cule discussing missionary affairs, church matters, or more general subjects. He was a ready and sympathetic listener and a great helper. He taught me much about writing and

editing. It was always a privilege to spend a week-end in his home around a preaching engagement or to have him and his wife in our home as gracious and grateful visitors.

My third portrait is of C. E. Wilson. I first came to know him as a hard-working B.M.S. secretary. His was a strenuous road. He had followed that magnetic personality, Alfred Henry Baynes, in itself no easy task. As General Secretary, he was responsible for the direction of the work overseas as well as its administration at home. He had brought much needed departments of home propaganda into being. Added to this, the great Arthington bequest of £466,000 had just become available and its administration meant vast additional burdens for him. The movement for missionary co-operation was gathering momentum and Wilson was in its van. It is not surprising, therefore, that he was heavily pressed by thronging duties, that access to his room was hard to gain, and that he was regarded by some as unapproachable. His grasp of affairs was intimate and extensive. Three years after he had taken office, a missionary on furlough from Congo told me of an interview he had just had with him. His comment was, "You would think that man had visited my station; he knows it and its work so thoroughly."

I came to know other sides of Wilson. He was an ardent supporter of summer schools which he attended for many years with his family. Here he shed the cares of office and entered with zest into all phases of the daily round. He delighted in the companies of young men and women who gathered and was their fellow in games and amusements as well as in the more sober pursuits. He was limerick master at the meal table and soloist and elocutionist at the concerts.

He was a great lover of children. My two boys and girl loved him from early childhood, and he watched their progress with eager interest. My wife and I were equally concerned about his four daughters. We shared in many enterprises and experiences and, most of all, when we were called upon in turn to pass through the dark valley of bereavement. Wilson was always an evangelist. He showed this at summer schools, on the rare occasions when he could conduct missions and in Sunday School work. It can be said without reserve that he has loved his Lord and that the heavenly places have been familiar to him. The other Wilson — John, of Woolwich—once said to me about him, “How that man prays!”

Dr. Fullerton came to Furnival Street in 1912. He followed John Brown Myers, a Christian gentleman who had given thirty-three years of selfless service to the home administration of the B.M.S. Fullerton was a man of surprises. He had been a successful evangelist prior to his great ministry in Leicester. In my youthful ignorance, I thought that he must be a man of many words and undisciplined to office routine. I soon learnt otherwise. No man was more concise in writing and speech. He taught me that most letters worth writing need no more than one side of a sheet of notepaper. At the same time, there was a courtesy and adequacy about his letters which made them welcomed and treasured. As for orderliness of life and habit, he was invariably at his desk before the official opening office hour and no man could get through more work than he. He lived above his task and was never submerged by it. He had the gift of delegating work to others and so had leisure for people. It was that courtesy which enabled him to treat all alike and to

receive in his room the most junior clerks with an air that made them feel that, of all the people in the world, they were the ones he most desired to see. He was appreciative of service rendered to him and of work well done. In September, 1914, the first autumn public meeting of the Society in London was held and I carried through its organisation. The meeting was remarkably successful. The next morning I found on my desk a gracious letter of thanks and congratulation from him. This was characteristic. Yet he could be stern when occasion required. But his sternness was tempered with justice and mercy. He believed in allowing his subordinates latitude. Hardly a day passed for twenty years but what I spent half-an-hour chatting with him in his room. Often I went with some new plan or idea. He might not approve, but his response was generally, "If you think it is worth while, go ahead. I'll support you and God bless you!"

He gave juniors their opportunity. I spoke with him in 1920 at a meeting in the interests of the Baptist United Fund. He was far below his usual form that night and I could only assume that he resolved to let his younger colleague have the limelight and whatever credit might come from that occasion.

His memory was remarkable. When Alec Tyler, the honorary secretary of the Baptist Laymen's Missionary Movement, died in 1930, Dr. Fullerton, as an intimate friend, was asked to give the address at the funeral service. I wanted to print that address in *The Layman* and, two days before the service, I asked him to let me have the manuscript afterwards. "You may have it now!" he replied, and handed it to me. It was in his handwriting and I knew there were no other copies. Out

of curiosity, I took the manuscript to the service two days later and followed it while Dr. Fullerton spoke. He was word perfect. He rarely used a note, but trusted to his thorough preparation and his accurate memory. I also spoke with him at the united gatherings of the four Baptist Associations in the West of England in 1932 when he halted in the course of his address, obviously lost for the want of a word. It was probably unnoticed except by those who knew him best. But it was a sign that something was wrong with him. His sudden death took place a few days later.

Dr. Fullerton will be remembered for his hymn, *The Saviour of the World*. I recall a Monday morning when he returned to the Baptist Mission House after a week-end preaching engagement in Peterborough. He laid the manuscript of a hymn on my desk and asked me what I thought of it. When I replied, he told me how it came to be written. The previous night, after supper, the daughter of his hostess was playing the piano in the drawing-room. One of her pieces arrested his attention and he learnt that it was the now famous Londonderry Air. Ulsterman though he was, this was the first time he had heard it. He asked for it to be repeated. The haunting melody gripped him and remained with him after he went to his bedroom. Gradually the words came to him and, before he retired for the night, the hymn was finished.

It had been our custom for many years to introduce some new hymn or tune at our B.M.S. public gatherings and, in this way, many fine compositions made their way into Baptist circles. *The Saviour of the World* formed part of the praise at the next Annual Public Meeting in Queen's Hall and leapt into instant popularity. It was

passed on to other missionary societies and was sung at their gatherings in the Royal Albert Hall, St. Paul's Cathedral, and other places. The demand for it became widespread. Requests poured in from all parts of the country, from America and the Dominions, and it was translated into several languages. Free Church folk, Anglicans and even Roman Catholics ordered copies and used it in all kinds of places. It found its way into the hymnbooks of several churches. Perhaps the popularity of the hymn owes something to the tune. Certainly the thought and expression of the words fit the music. Purists have questioned its worth as poetry, and they may have some measure of right in doing so. But the value of a hymn is to be judged by the appeal which it makes to men and women and to its effect upon them. And there can be no question that *The Saviour of the World* has brought inspiration and hope to hundreds of thousands.

Dr. Fullerton was built in every way on massive lines, and I am ever grateful that twenty years of my life were spent in close association with him. And our relationships approximated to those of father and son.

Carey Bonner and I came into contact with each other in connection with the B.M.S. Children's Rallies which are described elsewhere. That contact grew more intimate as time passed. He acted as conductor of united choirs at many festivals, including those of the National Christian Endeavour Movement, the World's Evangelical Alliance and the Spurgeon Centenary Celebrations. These were held in centres like the Crystal Palace, Queen's Hall, and the Royal Albert Hall. On these occasions I joined with him in organising the choir. We became close friends and our partnership in these varied events was of the happiest kind. We met on other occa-

sions. Once, returning by the night train to London from the north, we stopped at Preston where I caught sight of an episcopal looking figure complete with silk hat on the platform. I knew it could only be Carey Bonner. He had just carried through a heavy programme of engagements in Lancashire. He joined me in my compartment and we travelled to London together. I usually slept in carriages on night journeys, but this night I was awake, for we talked throughout the long journey. On arriving at Euston, we walked nearly two miles to Lyons' Corner House by Charing Cross, each carrying a heavy bag, for an early breakfast. We separated afterwards. I met him again in a day or two and asked him what he had done after we had parted. "Oh!" he said, "I had a Turkish bath and then put in a full day at the office". Not bad for a man of seventy-two! Carey Bonner, as President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, in 1931, welcomed me on my election as a member of the Council. He bequeathed to me his silver mounted conductor's baton which had been presented to him at the National Christian Endeavour Convention at Belfast in 1899. It now bears marks of the bombing of the Mission House. I have used it, scars and all, on many occasions. Its donor was among my most gracious and generous friends.

My first introduction to T. R. Glover was made in 1917 when he preached the missionary sermon during the Annual Assembly. In accordance with custom, Dr. Fullerton wrote to him about his choice of hymns. His reply, written on a postcard, began, "I don't want any of Hemmens' new-fangled stuff"—a reference to our practice in those days of introducing new hymns and tunes at missionary gatherings. Most of these, by the

way, are included in the *Revised Baptist Church Hymnal*. He continued, "My choice is, *Jesus, the very thought of Thee; I'm not ashamed to own my Lord; How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds; When I survey the wondrous Cross.*"

Our next contact came the first time Glover spoke at the Laymen's Annual Conference at Swanwick. He had written to say, "If it is a cold day, arrange for a car to take me from Derby to Swanwick." My standards of temperature in those days differed from his, so I arranged no car, thinking he would be comfortable in a bus. He travelled on a Saturday afternoon, sharing the tedious journey of twelve miles with crowds of women and children returning from Derby with their shopping bags and parcels. Late in the afternoon C. E. Wilson, another outstanding figure at our Laymen's Conference, came to me and said, "You had better make yourself scarce for an hour or two. Glover has arrived and is seeking your blood!" During that time he cooled down mentally and warmed up physically, and when we met a friendship began which grew with the years until his death in 1943.

Glover won the admiration and respect of the domestic staff at The Hayes, both men and women, who year after year saw that the windows of his bedroom were fast shut day and night, that a great fire was maintained, that his bed was piled high with blankets and further heated by hot water bottles, and that a large thermos flask of coffee was taken to him last thing at night.

He entered into the life of the Conferences whose programmes were largely built round him, particularly in 1936, the year of his presidency, when nothing would satisfy but that I must spend a day at his home in Cambridge discussing the details. He was the perfect host

and I remember vividly that at meal-times we stood for grace which he said in Latin. He once told me that the only two gatherings in the year which he enjoyed attending were our Laymen's Conference at Swanwick and another arranged by the B.M.S. for members of the teaching profession.

Stories about him are almost endless. Here is one. H. Ernest Wood and he were close friends and they therefore could poke fun at each other without reserve or mercy after lunch on the Saturday of the Conference, a time set apart for this by honoured custom. One year, Glover, classical scholar, stood, as usual, on his chair and said, "Ernest always likes to come to Swanwick, but this year he is here for a purpose. He is preparing his Baptist Union Presidential Address and he has been told that it will be incomplete if he does not include some Latin. Ernest doesn't know any Latin and has come to me for some. I have told him all the Latin I know, and he has written it down—*Vice versa, et cetera* and *ipso facto*!" Glover's interjections could be devastating. At one session at which he was to speak, Alex Reid, Scot and saint, announced the opening hymn, *These things shall be, a loftier race*, when Glover blurted out, "Let's have a Christian hymn", to Reid's complete discomfiture.

At Swanwick we saw a Glover whom those who only knew him in council or committee never saw. His scholarship was there but it never obtruded itself. Any pretence at oratory was absent. He was like a guide sauntering along a country lane, stopping to admire every flower, every feature in the landscape, every cottage, to look over every gate and to venture along every turning. But he always arrived with his listeners at the goal he had fixed beforehand. He was always the

preacher at the Sunday morning service in Swanwick Baptist Church, when people travelled long distances to hear him. His children's addresses were gems and proved a boon to the many lay preachers in his congregation.

He was "hail fellow well met" with all and sundry. He could often be seen in the grounds at *The Hayes* arm in arm and in deep conversation with perhaps a man from the pits, or one of the younger members or, in fact, with anyone. Most of all he enjoyed chatting with one or other of his intimates late at night — a rewarding experience for them, for invariably they came away with outlines for several sermons. We shall not see his like again.

I first met B. Grey Griffith at a B.M.S. Summer School at Weston-super-Mare in 1919, when his successful and far-ranging ministry at Tredegarville Church, Cardiff, was at flood-tide. By his scholarship, versatility, capacity for winning confidence and making friends, he had already come to occupy a foremost place in the life of the Baptist and other churches throughout South Wales and beyond. Before long he was elected to membership of the Baptist Union Council and the B.M.S. General Committee, where it soon became clear that he possessed gifts that marked him out for denominational leadership. The only questions were "What?" and "Where?" The answer came in 1927 when he was appointed to succeed Dr. Fullerton as B.M.S. Home Secretary. It was decided, however, that Dr. Fullerton should remain in office as Consultant Secretary. Such an arrangement might have led to tension between the two men, and I could not help watching them with interest and wonder, for my room in the Mission House was placed between their respective rooms. I noticed

how frequently the younger man made his way to the older one to talk over problems and proposals, how consistently he deferred to him and how readily he accepted his judgment. This association in service continued until Dr. Fullerton's death in 1932.

The fifteen years in which Grey Griffith was Home Secretary were among the most anxious and difficult in B.M.S. history. The economic blizzard of the 1930's swept across all sections of the community, including our churches. Money became scarcer and tighter and the missionary income began to decline. Deficits became an annual feature, and their removal proved an unusually slow progress. The proud affirmation that the Society never carried a deficit from one year to another had to be dropped, for deficits began to accumulate. The international situation, which was growingly menacing, created other problems which will be dealt with later. It needed a stout heart, a clear head and a firm hand to pilot the B.M.S. ship through these stormy waters and to bring it to port. The fact that this was done is a tribute to the man who stood on the bridge.

The rule governing retirement at 65 resulted in Grey Griffith relinquishing office on the eve of the B.M.S. Ter-Jubilee Celebrations, for which he had made the preliminary preparations, but it by no means checked his activities, for his sight was not dim nor had his natural strength abated. A strenuous year of leadership as President of the Baptist Union followed amid the hazards and restrictions of war-time conditions. Then came ten years of devoted labour in the interests of ministers and their families, which had been a prime concern since the early days of his ministerial career—the improvement in the stipends of his needy brethren through the Home

Work Fund. Throughout this decade the Church House was his centre and its passages and rooms rang with the tones of his voice and his more or less tuneful singing, while he shared and advocated his plans. His brethren will ever have cause to hold him in affectionate and grateful honour.

I write of him particularly as a friend. He was always approachable, in fact, he welcomed companionship. Between sessions of B.M.S. Committees, his room at Furnival Street was thronged with men who used the minutes for argument and story-telling, what time the air was thick with tobacco smoke (and Griffith is a non-smoker). He welcomed opportunities of exercising the pastoral office and his colleagues proved him to be a sympathetic listener and a wise counsellor whenever they submitted their problems or told their sorrows and joys to him. Ernest Payne, Walter Bottoms and I invariably took afternoon tea with him when we were in the office and would present some known or fancied textual or theological difficulty to him, knowing that he was good for anything up to an hour in an attempt to straighten our minds. He is probably the denomination's greatest story-teller, ever ready to pour out yarns old and new, and, above all, to give vivid impersonations of the giants of the Welsh pulpit. He has an active and penetrating mind. I learnt this early in my association with him. He would sit at the head table in the Furnival Street large Committee Room during a long discussion, slumped in his chair, his heavy lidded eyes closed, apparently asleep. Then suddenly his voice would be raised to make an incisive interjection which showed he had been following closely all that had been said and which put his finger on the vital point. His knowledge and versa-

tility are extraordinary. There can be few subjects upon which he is unable to speak with at least a degree of authority, and strangers and chance acquaintances in trains and buses, all of whom he can approach with ease, are amazed at his familiarity with their particular interests in life. Like all men, he has his foibles and faults, but these only serve to set his gifts and graces in clearer relief. He still keeps the forward look. When, recently, I joined with others of the Mission House staff in congratulating him on his 75th birthday, his happy acknowledgement included the sentence, "Life really begins at 75!"

When in 1941 an *ad hoc* B.M.S. Committee was considering the appointment of a successor to Grey Griffith as Home Secretary, I was honoured by H. L. Taylor, then the Society's treasurer, who showed me a list of names and asked, "If you had to nominate a B.M.S. Home Secretary, who of these men would you choose?" I had little difficulty in replying, "J. B. Middlebrook". I cannot claim that my choice had any influence on his election, but I was unfeignedly glad when the Committee unanimously recommended him for the position and the General Committee endorsed the recommendation. The experiences of the ensuing years have abundantly justified that decision.

Mr. Middlebrook says that he first met me forty-two years ago when I spoke in 1910 at a meeting of the Bradford Young Men's Missionary Auxiliary of which he was afterwards the honorary secretary. I have no recollection of this. But I knew later of his work in the inner councils of the Student Christian Movement, his long single successful pastorate at New North Road Church, Huddersfield, his leadership in the Christian

educational campaign among the youth of the Yorkshire churches, his contribution to civic life and his service on the Yorkshire Baptist Association and the Baptist Union Council. I knew, too, of his deep concern for the B.M.S. and his refusal to accept nomination for election to its General Committee as thereby he would displace an older man. I had met him several times at the Men's Conference at Swanwick and in Huddersfield.

He came to office at a time of unprecedented difficulty. World War II was at one of its most gloomy and threatening stages. Part of the B.M.S. headquarters' staff was housed amid the ruins of Furnival Street and part in Kettering. This division involved for him the double journey from Kettering to London three or four days every week. The Society's current income had to be increased and the preparations for the Ter-Jubilee Celebrations and the raising of a special fund of 150,000 guineas had to be developed and completed. All these responsibilities and others Mr. Middlebrook shouldered with characteristic Yorkshire tenacity and doggedness, and he carried them through to a successful issue. The end of the war brought new problems and tasks which were tackled with buoyant spirit and grim determination. The intense and prolonged strain of the war years, with their upheaval of cherished ideals and convictions bore heavily upon our churches and great efforts were needed to stir tired bodies, minds and spirits to make the response necessary to maintain and extend the work of the B.M.S. The annual rise in income during the next decade shows that these efforts were made and that they met with success.

The discharge of his commitments by a denominational executive officer is a seven-days-a-week undertaking. He

must allow time for office duties which reach out into many channels, expected and unexpected. He must give time to consultations with his colleagues and must attend and guide almost innumerable committees. He must share in shaping policy and in directing its operation. He must serve the interests of interdenominational bodies. He must visit the churches and missionary auxiliaries. He must think and pray and plan continually. In short, like the bank manager and his bank, he must take his work to bed with him.

I have served with four B.M.S. Home Secretaries and in what I have written about three of them I have tried to indicate something of what they have meant to me. Each has made his distinctive contribution to the denomination and to the B.M.S. in particular. Mr. Middlebrook is worthy of his place among them. He has brought a new outlook, an invigorating air, a consistent determination, and an utter consecration to the task entrusted to him. He has little time for small talk, though his interests are wide. He enjoys healthy sport, and his skill at tennis amazes those who play with him or watch him. When the B.M.S. settled in Gloucester Place in 1944, one of us said to the other, "I expect we shall sometimes find it possible to discuss B.M.S. matters at Lord's"—about ten minutes walk away. I still hope we may.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NUMBER NINETEEN

I STILL retain a vivid memory of the morning of May 20th, 1907, when I, a young man of twenty-two, entered the Furnival Street Mission House for the first time as a member of the staff. I had not gone more than a step or so up the main staircase before my progress was halted by a voice behind me which asked, "Here, where are you going?" I turned to find old John, who occupied the porter's box in the entrance hall, standing there, his head crowned with a smoking cap, eyeing me, a stranger, with suspicion. John was a character. As far as I can remember, he had served as coachman to a good family and, on becoming too old for that work, he had been given, through the kindness of Alfred Henry Baynes, the job of acting as a sort of watchdog in the Mission House. He filled out his time by packing parcels and doing odds and ends. He was the terror of messenger boys and the slave of Mr. Baynes whom he styled "The Guvnor". His term in Furnival Street ran to about thirty years, and even when he lost his left hand through an accident while crossing nearby Holborn, he continued his attendance and service. More than once I heard him express the hope that he might die in his box. We made our peace that May morning and became firm friends.

I proceeded up the staircase, passing the door leading to the gallery of the Library with its many treasures of rare volumes and first translations, to the first landing, with its two Committee rooms. In these the Congo Mission came to birth in 1878 through Robert Arthing-

ton's challenging letter and generous initial gift of £1,000, and the long succession of recruits which included Thomas Comber and his two brothers, Percy and Sidney, Grenfell, Hartland, Holman Bentley, Thomas Lewis and many others, had been interviewed and accepted by the Committee and commissioned to their service. Here also, decisions had been taken which led to the extension of the China Mission from its somewhat precarious foothold on the coast of Shantung into the interior of that province and into distant Shansi and Shensi. Here further, deliberations were even then proceeding for the spending of new work, within the limit of twenty-five years of Robert Arthington's legacy of £466,000, part of the largest single bequest ever made to missions.

The room which I was to occupy for a few years was on the second floor where other rooms were allotted to the Baptist Zenana Mission, the Bible Translation Society, the Medical Mission Auxiliary and the typists of the Foreign Department. The apartments of the caretaker and his wife and domestic staff were higher still. On one of Leonard Tucker's returns from the West Indies he joined me and, in spite of the fact that I revelled in those days in the coldest weather and that he was only comfortable in summer heat, we got on well together. I can see him now in winter, with his jacket tightly buttoned about him, a huge scarf around his neck and chest and tied in a big knot at his back, as he wrote standing up at a sloping table, or paced about muttering to himself.

The ground floor on the left of the entrance hall was occupied by John Brown Myers who, after a pastorate at Fuller Church, Kettering, was appointed B.M.S. Association Secretary in 1879, and Home Secretary in 1905

when C. E. Wilson became General Secretary. He was among the most self-effacing of men. At the Exeter Hall Annual Public Meetings which I attended as a youth, the appearance of "the platform" never failed to fill me with interest and awe. That procession of dignified and often venerable men and women always included one figure with an imperial beard who always sat in the same position but never spoke or took any distinctive part in the meetings. It was only after joining the headquarters staff that I discovered that this man was John Brown Myers. The Society owes a lasting debt to him for the meticulous way in which he built up the complicated and extensive system of missionary deputation work in the churches which even to-day is largely shaped according to his pattern. He was absent-minded. I have met him after he had toiled up the staircase to the second floor, or halfway along Furnival Street, only to hear him exclaim, "Now, what did I come here for?" and then hurriedly to retrace his steps. His devotion was illustrated by his presence in his office on Sundays when the pressure of work was heavy. Here is one story about him. A sudden breakdown in a missionary's health rendered him unfit to fulfil an approaching deputation engagement and a substitute had to be found at once. It happened that road repairs in Chancery Lane nearby had turned buses and other traffic into the narrow side streets—Cursitor Street and Furnival Street—with inevitable hold-ups. Chancing to look through the window of his room at the traffic jam, Myers saw a hapless missionary on a stationary bus. Without delay he rushed into the street, hailed a missionary and, almost before the man was aware of it, he was on the first stages of his journey northwards as a substitute deputation.

The right hand ground floor front rooms were devoted to the Publication Department, shortly to become known as the Carey Press, in charge of W. E. Cule, with the able assistance of A. J. Wheeler and then of J. R. Evans. In another room the Home Department clerical staff worked. Its members included A. J. Simms, Mr. Myer's general factotum, whose knowledge of the ministers and churches was remarkable for its range and accuracy, and who served with untiring and unquestioning loyalty for forty-eight years until his retirement in 1939. On this floor also the Accountant's Department was situated. Its chief was C. H. Chapman who, though he was round about fifty when I first became associated with him, appeared to me to be elderly. Mr. Chapman was introduced to the Mission House staff in 1873 by his father, the Rev. C. B. Chapman, who combined B.M.S. accountancy with successive pastorates at Alperton and Barnes Baptist churches. The son spent his entire working life of fifty years in the Mission House, first as assistant in the Finance Department and latterly as Accountant. He was another of those retiring figures who stand behind those who are called into prominence and who contribute in no small measure to the effectiveness of the leaders. His manner of life had been shaped during the leisured years of the Victorian era, and he found it difficult to adjust himself to the sweeping changes in administration which surged around him in the early part of this century. His years of service were crowned by a visit to India with his daughter, and by his election in 1922 as an Honorary Member of the General Committee. He died on February 29th, 1948, in his ninetieth year. His placid exterior hid a ready wit which revealed itself in unexpected ways. I remember a District Rally of the

London Baptist Association in Barnes Church of which he was for many years an honoured officer. In welcoming the visitors, he said that Baptists were like the birds of the field, "they gathered not into Barnes".

D. Scott Wells, A.C.A., who succeeded Mr. Chapman, is another son of the manse. His purpose to enter a theological college to fit him for missionary service was frustrated by the demands of World War I. Instead he qualified as a chartered accountant and was appointed to the B.M.S. office in Calcutta. He then served in Number Nineteen for three years until the urge to return to India became imperative. There he worked for six years among the primitive peoples of the Kond Hills and then, at the bidding of his colleagues throughout India and by the confirmation of the General Committee, he was chosen in 1930 to succeed the Rev. Herbert Anderson as India Secretary in Calcutta, a post which he still holds. His place in Number Nineteen was taken in 1924 by J. H. Ewing, A.C.A., yet another son of the manse whose father, the Rev. J. W. Ewing, M.A., D.D., was in turn minister of large churches at East Hill, Wandsworth, and Rye Lane, Peckham, and was the Secretary of the London Baptist Association and the first General Superintendent of the Metropolitan area, a position which he held from 1915 to 1934. He had the distinction, in 1912, of being elected President of the Baptist Union, the youngest man ever to hold this high office. He was a member of the B.M.S. General Committee for fifty-six years, and its Chairman in 1936-37. His son, John, is another equipped servant of the B.M.S. Modest almost to a fault, his friendship is among the enriching experiences of life.

Besides the two Committee rooms, the first floor con-

tained the offices of the General Secretary and his three male assistants. Of the latter, C. E. Smith was the senior, for he had been a member of the staff since 1878. He, too, retained the manners and methods of the steadier and more sedate Victorian age. Until late in life when the rapid growth of fast-moving motor traffic made the practice dangerous, he cycled daily to and from his home in Clapton, a north-eastern suburb of London. His passion for music, in which he was highly gifted, formed an immediate link between us. He was successively organist at the Downs Chapel, Clapton, and Regent's Park Chapel when both were in their heyday. He was a composer with a delicate touch. The *Baptist Church Hymnal* includes three of his hymn tunes and that exquisite anthem, *Within the hallowed stillness of this place*. He acted as organist and conductor at B.M.S. meetings in Exeter Hall, Queen's Hall and Bloomsbury Central Church until he passed this responsibility into my younger hands, and led the singing at the Mission House weekly staff prayer meeting with the aid of a tuning fork. He also edited the *Chinese Pentatonic Tune Book*. He lived for twelve years after his retirement in 1920, and was a valued helper as preacher and organist in village churches in and around his home at Much Hadham in Essex.

Benjamin R. Wheeler, the second assistant, joined the staff in 1898. His proficiency as a shorthand-writer, and his remarkable accuracy and reliability, soon gained for him a position of trust as a recorder of committee minutes and as a writer of letters to missionaries on behalf of his chief. His also was the responsibility of negotiating ocean passages for missionaries, a task which brought him into intimate personal relationships with them. His knowledge

of the Society's working on the foreign side was unequalled, and many of its personal confidential problems were entrusted to his safe keeping. His standard of conduct was of a high order and the sincerity of his thought and purpose was obvious to all. He was never hurried or ruffled, with the result that his work was done with thoroughness and care. Outside the Mission House he served our churches at Barnes and Eltham Park, of which he was a member, with ability and devotion. His spiritual gifts found frequent and moving expression in the choicely phrased prayers which he offered in the staff meetings. His cultured mind received congenial refreshment in the City Temple Literary Society whose meetings he rarely failed to attend. He was held in high esteem by all his colleagues and particularly by a small coterie with whom he lunched daily. His fine service was justly recognised when in 1930 he was appointed Assistant Foreign Secretary, and an Honorary Member of the General Committee when he retired in 1946. Trained under Alfred Henry Baynes, his powers ripened to maturity during his long association with C. E. Wilson, and proved invaluable to H. R. Williamson when he assumed office in 1939. To those who had shared the intimacies of collegueship with him, life became poorer when B. R. Wheeler died suddenly on February 10th, 1951.

Two rooms on the second floor housed the office of the Baptist Zenana Mission which was formed in 1867 by a group of women to send unmarried women missionaries to reach Hindu and Muslim women in India. Wives of missionaries had, of course, undertaken this ministry from the days of Hannah Marshman at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but they had been

among the first to urge that consecrated women with no other ties and with a sense of vocation were required to meet this vast and urgent need. Long before 1907 the Zenana Mission had greatly extended the range of its operations in India and had included China as a sphere of work. It had been thought inadvisable to send unmarried women to Congo. That was to come later under the auspices of the parent society. Many notable women had devoted themselves to the advocacy and administration of the Zenana Mission, including two of the famous Angus sisters who acted as Honorary Secretaries, and Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Alfred Pearce Gould, who served as Treasurer. White-haired Mrs. M. C. Kerry, who had worked for many years in India with her husband and in his retirement until his death in 1906, was the able Home Secretary. Her powers of speech and organisation, combined with all her charming personality, had rallied thousands of women in the churches throughout the country, and particularly in Wales, to the support of the Mission.

Next door was the nerve centre of the young and vigorous Medical Mission Auxiliary, formed in 1901 as an adjunct to the B.M.S. and B.Z.M. to develop the healing arm of the enterprise, with its dynamic and devoted Secretary, R. Fletcher Moorshead. Denied, through family claims, the privilege of serving as a medical missionary, Moorshead found a wider ministry as director of this ministry. It was obvious to all who knew him that this was his life. His passionate and convincing advocacy by lip and by pen won widespread return in support. His fertility of mind resulted in the adoption of a succession of new machinery and methods. His persuasive powers rallied many to his side, including

such professional colleagues as Thomas Horton and Arnold C. Ingle, who gave the years of their retirement from practice to the affairs of the Auxiliary. His fervent appeals for doctors and nurses brought an increasing response in recruits and his cogent appeals for equipment resulted in the provision of funds for the erection of hospital after hospital. It was my privilege to be associated with him for twenty-seven years until his death on December 4th, 1934. He was of the order of Henry Martyn of India who exclaimed, "Now let me burn out for God!" The title of his biography, written by H. V. Larcombe, was: *First the Kingdom*; and no title could have been more apt or appropriate.

The Foreign Department shorthand-typists' room numbered among its occupants J. Madeline Barnard, then a girl of seventeen, who joined the staff in January, 1907, and who continued her efficient, oft-times exacting and sometimes confidential work until her retirement in April, 1952. Younger than I in years, she often reminded me that she was my senior in length of service, even if by only four months.

Number Nineteen possessed a spacious basement whose superficial area equalled that of the building. Here missionaries' baggage was received, despatched or stored and magazines were parcelled and sent out to the churches and Sunday Schools each month under the supervision of H. W. Day who, in some forty years of work must have supervised the circulation of at least 4,000,000 periodicals.

Up to 1907 the building contained no Young People's or Exhibitions Departments. Its equipment in the way of visual aids was limited to six lantern lectures and a meagre stock of demonstrations (in those days the word

play was forbidden) and of costumes and exhibits. The coming to office of a new General Secretary in 1905 soon altered all that, and the necessary additions to the staff resulted in severe congestion which found relief in extensions to the premises. The Society owned the adjoining property to the corner of Furnival Street. Its tenants, with the exception of the Psalms and Hymns Trust, were given notice to quit, passage ways were made between the main building and its neighbours, and several departments, including the Bible Translation Society, were transferred to the extension. Between the two World Wars the buildings were reconditioned and modernised, and a lift and central heating were installed.

Suggestions regarding the sale of the property arose from time to time. These, however, came to nothing, and it appeared that Number Nineteen might remain the Society's headquarters for an indefinable time. As noted elsewhere, however, the bombing and blasting of the premises settled the question, though hopes were cherished by senior members of the staff that a return there might be possible. The matter was finally settled when on November 3rd, 1948, the General Committee decided by a unanimous vote to accept an offer for the sale of the property. And so Number Nineteen passed out of the hands of the B.M.S.

CHAPTER NINE

U. C. M. E.

ABOUT a week after joining the B.M.S. headquarters staff in 1907, I received an invitation to attend a meeting at the headquarters of the Church Missionary Society in Salisbury Square, which had been called to consider plans for the promotion of missionary education among young people. That meeting was significant, for it marked the organised beginning of a movement of inter-church co-operation which has had world-wide consequences.

It happened that the larger missionary societies had each and all, more or less independently, become concerned about the promotion of interest and support among the young people and Sunday Schools of the churches and denominations with which they were connected. Some had appointed secretaries for this purpose, and had created departments through which this could be organised. The Student Volunteer Missionary Union had, for some years, been successful in producing textbooks and in promoting group study among men and women in the colleges, and had also organised and conducted missionary campaigns in the churches. News of the American mission study movement had reached British missionary society headquarters. Wigney's organisation was moving in the same direction. What could be better than that this new enterprise should be attempted in co-operation rather than in denominational, or even Anglican and Free Church, isolation?

This meeting in Salisbury Square was attended by G. T. Manley, ex-Cambridge senior wrangler and ex-

India missionary, and T. R. W. Lunt, of the Church Missionary Society; J. H. Oldham, ex-worker in India and S.V.M.U. secretary, and then mission study secretary of the United Free Church of Scotland missionary organisation; Tissington Tatlow of the Student Christian Movement; Malcolm Spencer, Congregationalist with close links with the London Missionary Society; Stanley Sowton, of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society; Wigney and myself, Baptists; among others. That day, the United Conference for Missionary Study, afterwards to become the United Council for Missionary Education, was born, and that day also saw my introduction to these men who helped to mould my future. All were older than I in years and experience. Most were university graduates. Some had had theological training and some had served on the mission field. My modest background has already been made clear. They made me one of themselves and helped me far more than I could ever hope to help them. Other men and women joined the ranks of the U.C.M.E. as time brought changes in the headquarters' personnel of the missionary societies, and as the scope of the Council's activities was widened. Some of these, including Basil Mathews, Edward Shillito, Hugh Martin, Kenneth MacLennan, William Paton, Mary Entwistle and Constance Padwick have earned fame in other spheres.

The Council was chiefly concerned with book production of a specialised kind. This was carried through, from first to last, upon a co-operative basis. It was unhurried and deliberate in its actions. Its members spent hours together considering, against the background of their denominational needs and experiences, what textbooks were needed. When agreement had been reached

here, the selection of authors followed. Sometimes a notable figure in the religious world would be chosen. More often the invitation to write would be given to some obscure missionary or layman or woman who, it was believed, possessed the necessary gifts and capacities for authorship. Every author worked in close association with an editorial committee. He or she would first prepare an outline of the projected book. This would be discussed by author and editorial committee in collaboration and, at the end, it would usually appear in modified form and, sometimes, entirely re-shaped. The same process was followed as chapter after chapter came in manuscript from the author's pen, until the last word was written and the draft finally approved. It may be thought that this method was calculated to hamper and limit the author's style and to repress individuality. In practice, it rarely worked this way. The committee was invariably as keen on the book as the author was. All were animated by a common purpose which aimed at securing the best possible book on the particular aspect of missionary enterprise with which it dealt and that would prove its suitability for group study and discussion. Few books can have had more careful, lengthy, or prayerful effort given to their production.

Besides its regular business meetings, the Council held an annual residential conference to which on occasion a prospective author was invited so that he or she might have prolonged consultation with the Council members. An incident at the first of these conferences, which was held in a hotel at Baslow in Derbyshire, in 1908, when our guest was W. H. T. Gairdner, afterwards Canon Gairdner, who had been commissioned to write the text book, *The Reproach of Islam*, made a profound impres-

sion on my mind. Our party shared the hotel with a theatrical party whose members clearly showed that they resented our being there and particularly the fact that we had been granted the use of a room with a polished floor and a piano. Besides being a mystic, a scholar, an author and a gentleman, Gairdner was a brilliant musician. His playing on the Sunday evening drew some of the theatrical party to the open door. With charming tact, Gairdner invited them to join us, adding, "I don't expect you know who we are. We are all missionaries, and I am a missionary from Egypt and very much interested in Coptic music." He then, as recorded by Constance Padwick in her *Temple Gairdner of Cairo*, began a demonstration of those curious haunting tunes that he had collected in the East. He begged the now interested party to sing. They were doubtful; their accompanist was absent, and their music was very difficult. Gairdner was resolved to retain possession of the piano stool and at length they let him play for them. Music sounded for the rest of the evening, and at the end Gairdner expressed the thanks of the Conference and said, quite simply, "We generally have prayer before we part. May we say 'Our Father' together?" And we did. It was an exhibition of grace and winsomeness which was a revelation and an example to me.

At first the Council confined itself to books for study by young people. Indeed, its initial venture was the taking over of an American book on China and missionary enterprise there. This was "anglicised" and swiftly produced to meet an emergency. The Council had no capital funds on which to draw, and two of its members guaranteed the cost of this first venture. On the other hand, the sales of its books were underwritten by pre-

publication orders from the participating missionary societies. By this means, it was possible to publish more cheaply than would otherwise have been the case, and missionary societies' publication departments, which might have hesitated to assume sole financial responsibility for book production were able to bear the smaller burden involved in this joint venture.

With broadening vision and increasing demands, the range of the Council's publications steadily expanded. Its members who came from the mission houses were supplemented by the arrival of educational experts whose contribution in bringing the Council's books and other productions into line with approved educational principles and practices was of great benefit. First, junior text-books for the use of leaders of groups of children were published at the rate of one a year. Then followed picture books for the nursery, yarns for leaders among working boys and girls at the one end and standard treatises for scholars at the other. Some of these became classics. At the zenith of its activities, as many as twelve different books, all of which had passed through the mill of editorial committees, were issued each year for various grades and types. There was justice in the Council's half-humorous boast that it catered for everyone from the cradle to the pulpit!

The Council was ever experimenting and adventuring. This was partly because it was sensitive to changing conditions and trends, and partly because younger men and women, appointed to educational and literary posts in the constituent missionary societies, appeared among the older members, to bring fresh vitality to their counsels and decisions. One of the most original projects was the issue of a series of what were aptly termed "twopenny

wonderfuls" to counteract the influence of "penny dreadfuls." The sale of these ran into hundreds of thousands. Another was the Torchbearer series of brief but full-blooded biographies, which leapt into instant success.

The Council early gained the confidence of the missionary societies. Its books were accepted by them and incorporated into their programmes, with the result that, no matter what the society's outlook and emphasis might be, it used and recommended them with heartiness. Thus, an enquirer might go to the headquarters of say, the high, broad or evangelical Church of England missionary societies, or he might turn to those of the Free Churches in England, Wales, Scotland or Ireland, to ask for the best and latest missionary educational publications, and he would receive in every place the same answer which directed him to those which had their origin in the brains of the United Council. The Council's reach extended far beyond Britain, for many of its books have been translated into languages of European countries, as well as those of Africa and Asia.

This body came into being before the World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh, 1910, which is rightly regarded as a landmark in the development of inter-missionary and inter-church co-operation and fellowship. In a real measure, it was a preparation for all that has followed in this direction. It can claim, with equal justice, to have done much to pioneer and train an informed missionary leadership in the home churches, and to have been an instrument by which many of the best of present-day missionaries were fashioned for their task.

Above all, it has proved an outstanding experiment

in Christian fellowship. It was my privilege to remain a member of the Council for forty-five years, a far longer period than anyone else. Happily, for my peace of mind, I was largely in the background. I have seen successive generations of younger men and women join its company as older members passed on to positions of greater responsibility elsewhere. These have brought trained minds, strong convictions and consecrated personalities to the common task of the Council. But no member has ever been expected to leave his or her convictions outside the door of the Council chamber. Unity has never stood for uniformity. A staunch Baptist has become even stauncher through his association with the Council. But, at the same time, he has learnt to look with a more tolerant and understanding eye upon his comrade who has found his spiritual home in the company of Anglo-Catholics. Each has learnt much from the other, both in regard to his own spiritual development and that of the Church of the Living God. He has seen more clearly and has prayed more earnestly for the establishment of the Holy Church throughout all the world. And he has seen, with steady eyes, a vision of the time when all nations and churches will bring their glory and honour and lay them at the feet of their one Saviour and Lord.

CHAPTER TEN

RALLIES

It is significant that, throughout its long history from 1792 until well into the present century, there is no record of the Baptist Missionary Society arranging united gatherings for children in large centres. Monster assemblies for adults had been organised on special occasions, and mass meetings for them and for young people had formed a regular feature of denominational annual assemblies in London and the provinces. But the children had to wait until 1910 before any particular attention was turned in their direction.

The change came about when, one day, on a journey to town, Carey Bonner suggested to C. E. Wilson the organisation of a yearly Children's Rally in London and offered to provide a cantata for performance on the first occasion, which he would conduct, if the B.M.S. would arrange the gathering and secure the choir. Such an offer from a Baptist master of assemblies and of music for children was too good and generous to be disregarded. It was eagerly accepted and the matter was passed on to the Young People's Department.

J. R. M. Stephens' flair for organisation came into full play, and I had the experience of supporting him. I learnt something more of the power of thoroughness and efficiency. We resolved that no effort should be wanting to attain a hundred per cent. effectiveness. We had to gather our experience as we proceeded. We first had to organise a united choir of 300 voices. No one Sunday

School could supply this number. So we selected about twelve of the largest and most vigorous schools and approached them on the subject. In every case we met with a ready response. Our choice included Spurgeon's Orphan Homes whose choir had long been famous. From them we secured the services of a hundred trained and disciplined youngsters. The association of the Orphan Homes with our Rallies continued almost without a break for thirty years. The conductor of the united choir, with this body of orphanage children as its centre, felt assured that all would go well; and these youngsters certainly enjoyed their annual trip to the Rally. The other choir groups also entered with enthusiasm into the preparations for the gatherings.

Our practice was to arrange for a preliminary conference with the local conductors. This was followed at some distance by a separate rehearsal with each section of the choir and with each group of reciters after all had had weeks of coaching by their own leaders. Next came district rehearsals and, finally, a united gathering of the entire choir for a last rehearsal on the evening before the Rally. Nothing was left to chance. Carey Bonner entered into these somewhat complicated preparations with zest and spared no pains to ensure that everything should be in order.

Equal energy was put into securing an audience. The 220 Sunday Schools in the far-spread Metropolitan area were listed and efforts were made to obtain the appointment of a special representative in each. By means of persistent application, this was done. Attractive publicity was prepared, systematic communication was maintained with the schools, and the importance of the Rally was emphasised. The result was that applications for tickets

were received in a volume which left no doubt that a large audience would assemble.

Spurgeon's Tabernacle—now alas, burnt out for the second time in its history—had been booked for the Rally. It was the largest Baptist church building in London. In relation to London as a whole, it was the most accessible, being well served by train, tram, bus and tube. Acoustically, it was among the most perfect of auditoriums. Its seating capacity for an adult congregation was stated to be nearly 3,000, but we packed far more than that number of children into it. An hour before the advertised time of commencement, the hundred voluntary stewards who had been enrolled were in their places under the direction of their marshals. The doors were opened at 2.15 and, immediately, the audience of scholars and teachers who had been gathering on the steps outside, poured into every part of the building like a tidal wave. Before 2.30 the building was crowded in every part—area, first gallery and upper gallery. This extraordinary influx was, for years, one of the sights of the Rally. That day the attendance approached 4,000.

There was no organ in the Tabernacle in those days. So we used a grand piano and a harmonium which were supplemented by a brass quartette. The musical director of Spurgeon's Orphan Homes, T. Walter Partridge, was responsible, with C. E. Smith, organist of Regent's Park Chapel and member of the Mission House staff, for the musical leadership. The latter was succeeded later by Dr. J. E. Green, headmaster of the Orphan Homes and organist of the Tabernacle, and by my brother-in-law, F. W. Taylor. Carey Bonner wielded the conductor's baton.

The cantata which Carey Bonner had composed for the occasion was *The King's Missionary Ship*, the first of a long series which he prepared for many years and presented to the Baptist Missionary Society. These were also performed in other large and small centres, and did much to awaken enthusiasm for the B.M.S. Carey Bonner possessed a happy knack of putting his audiences on good terms with themselves and him, with the result that everyone quickly settled down for a happy afternoon. The memory of that vast audience and choir, introducing the first Rally by uniting in the opening hymn :

*God is with us, God is with us,
So our brave forefathers sang,*

to the tune *Austria*, is unforgettable. Thereafter, for nearly two hours, the story of the Baptist Missionary Society and its heroes and achievements, was told in song and speech to an audience which may fairly be described as being enthralled by what it heard and saw. Much of the music was from Carey Bonner's own pen, and was characteristic for its simplicity and verve. All the members of the choir were garbed in native costumes, and this added to the charm of the occasion. The voices of the children taking part in the recitations and dialogue rang through the building and were heard perfectly even by those in the remotest parts of the upper gallery. The climax was reached when part of the choir marched in procession round the area of the building, singing as they went.

There was no doubt about the success of this Rally. Something new and important had come into the pro-

gramme of the B.M.S. An effective way had been found for transmitting the missionary message and appeal.

The Rallies continued without a break, through the years of World War I, until the outbreak of World War II in 1939, when evacuation of children from the Metropolis and the dangers from air-raids for those who remained, made it impossible to organise central gatherings.

For many years, the audience grew in numbers. On several occasions, not only was every pew packed almost beyond capacity, but children were ranged in the aisles and seated in the window seats, thus adding to the cares of the organisers and stewards, who heaved sighs of relief at the close that the event had been carried through without hitch or mishap.

Changes became noticeable in the twenties, however. In the early years many large Sunday Schools were to be found in the neighbourhood of the Tabernacle. Some of these were connected with the Tabernacle mission halls, and from them a big proportion of the audiences was drawn. One superintendent brought regularly about a hundred children from his school. At the same time other contingents came from all parts of London and the adjoining counties. Some chartered motor omnibuses for the occasion. But the membership of these inner Sunday Schools declined for various reasons. World War I had a disturbing effect on ways and conditions of life. When the Rallies began there were few competing interests and occupations. After World War I, the cinema greatly developed and attracted many children who might otherwise have been at the Rally. Teachers, too, responded to other calls. While travel facilities increased, travelling became more expensive. It may be,

too, that the Rallies lost something of the freshness and power of their early days. Whatever the reasons, the audiences in later years, while remaining large and representative, never reached the size of those of the early ones.

The same degree of thoroughness and energy which marked the preparations for the first Rally, were devoted to each succeeding one. The organisers never counted upon previous success as a guarantee that the future would take care of itself. The principle adopted was to treat each Rally as if it were the first, and to build up its organisation in every detail from the beginning. The same applied to the equally effective gatherings for young people that were held in the same building. And, every time, the results justified the time and labour that were spent upon them.

Other changes came with the passing years. It seemed impossible to think, at one time, of a Rally without Carey Bonner at its head. But, when nearly twenty years had passed, he felt that the time had come for him to place his conductor's baton in other hands, and, eventually, it came to mine. Younger men and women made their personalities felt in the shaping of the programme. This was undoubtedly to its advantage, for there is a tendency to become stereotyped in all things. But the veterans among us may be pardoned if we still entertain a longing for those first days when that remarkable succession of cantatas from Carey Bonner's versatile mind filled the bill, and were rendered with obvious enjoyment by the choir and received with equally obvious relish by the audience.

The thirty years in which these Rallies were held saw other changes in audiences and choirs. Some who took

part in the early ones as children continued to attend the later ones, bringing with them their own children or their Sunday School classes. But, so far as I am aware, I am the only individual whose privilege it has been to be present at and to share in them all. In many London churches one meets men and women now in middle life who recall with pleasure and gratitude those memorable Saturday afternoons in Spurgeon's Tabernacle.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

YOUTH—I.*

MORE than one reference has been made in these pages to the London Baptist Monthly Missionary Conference. This remarkable and, in some respects, unique organisation, deserves fuller treatment.

No one can say with certainty when the young people and children of our homes, churches and Sunday Schools first became interested in the B.M.S. They were probably enlisted as enthusiasts and supporters from the early days of the Society. We can be certain that a lover of children like William Knibb of Jamaica would have an enthusiastic following among boys and girls and young men and women in the churches he visited. It is known that the *Juvenile Missionary Herald*, a pocket-size magazine with its sometimes pious and melancholy articles and homilies, illustrated by woodcuts and printed on poor paper, was first issued in 1819, to begin an existence, continued to this day as the ever popular *Wonderlands*. Juvenile Missionary Auxiliaries were formed in many Sunday Schools and children were among those whom missionary deputations were set to reach.

The Society was, however, fifty-six years old before the first recorded effort was made to harness children and young people to its service and then, as so often, the move came from outside headquarters. On August 16th,

*Based upon an article in the *Baptist Quarterly*, April, 1949.

in Kent, Surrey, Middlesex or Essex. There were no tramways or motor buses, underground railways or tubes. No railway bridges crossed the Thames. Holborn Viaduct had not been thought of. The Thames Embankment, except for the terrace of the then new Houses of Parliament, did not exist.

Such was the area in which the Young Men's Missionary Association began its existence. The differences between its London and ours are further emphasized by the names of the first churches and Sunday Schools which it visited. Most of these causes have ceased to exist. They included Devonshire Square Schoolroom, Keppel Street Chapel, Fox and Knot Schoolroom, Smithfield, Alfred Peace Chapel, Old Kent Road, Buttesland Street Chapel, Hoxton, Horsley Wood Schoolroom, Walworth, North London Schoolroom, Gray's Inn Road, Cotton Street Chapel, Poplar, and Islington Green Schoolroom.

Unfortunately, the records of the Association, which included several bound volumes of its magazines and leaflets, were destroyed in the bombing of the Furnival Street Mission House, and in consequence details of its activities are missing. But it is known that the Association discharged its purpose under the leadership of successive honorary or paid secretaries. Occasionally, it burst upon the public eye as when, for instance, it organised a day's meetings at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham during the B.M.S. Centenary Celebrations in 1892, when it is presumed that the huge crowds which were present filled in the intervals between monster meetings with enjoyment of the fun, frolic and mental stimulus of that famous rendezvous. For many years, too, the Association arranged a public meeting on the eve of the denominational annual Spring Assembly in

London. This was the forerunner of the notable series of Young People's Missionary Meetings in Spurgeon's Tabernacle on the Thursday evening of Assembly Week, and of the more recent Albert Hall rallies.

A significant development took place in 1896 when the growing place of women in church and missionary life received recognition in their admission to the Association, with the consequent change of its title to the Young People's Missionary Association. Links with the B.M.S. were increased and strengthened by the appointment of a succession of returned missionaries as part-time secretaries of the Association, the duties of their office being combined with deputation work in the country. The Rev. W. J. Price from India held this office from 1897 to 1900; the Rev. R. Wright Hay from Cameroons and India from 1900 to 1902; and the Rev. Leonard Tucker, M.A., from India and Jamaica, from 1902 to 1907.

Many men, afterwards honoured in the denomination, have occupied the chair of the Association. Among these were Mr. F. J. Marnham, J.P., and His Honour Judge Bompas, Q.C., whose father gained immortality as the character upon whom Dickens based his Sergeant Buzfuz in *Pickwick Papers*, and a cousin of whom, the Rev. E. Anstie Bompas, has rendered long and distinguished service to the B.M.S. Mr. H. Ernest Wood, J.P., found his first sphere of action outside his church at Denmark Place, Camberwell, as the Association Librarian. This was the initial step on the path that took him to the Chairmanship of the B.M.S., the Presidency of the London Baptist Association and of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and to many other avenues of devoted activity inside and outside the denomination.

For some years at the beginning of this century energetic and ardent leaders of the Association had been urging B.M.S. officers to form a Young People's Department which should do throughout the whole denomination what they had for so long been doing for London. The success which they ultimately met with has already been recorded. In achieving this they signed the death warrant of the Association or, rather, its merging in the new organisation. For the Young People's Department, with its whole time staff and its vigorous propaganda, which included an attractive affiliation scheme for Sunday Schools, turned the tide of interest and adhesion away from the Association to itself. The Association continued to function, mainly through its monthly meetings in the Furnival Street Mission House Library, but the number of its affiliated societies and Sunday Schools, registered delegates and personal members, steadily diminished until they touched the twenties. It became clear that something must be done if the Association's work was to be continued.

Negotiations were therefore opened between the Association's Committee and the Young People's Department Committee, with the happy result that in February, 1914, the Association was merged in the Department and a new body for the youth and children's organisations of the Metropolis was formed with the title, *The London Baptist Monthly Missionary Conference*, and I was appointed as its secretary. By the time World War I broke out in the following August the new organisation was firmly established.

Several years of growing membership and widespread activity followed. Most of the London Sunday Schools became affiliated with the Young People's Department,

and efforts to secure the appointment of delegates from them to the Conference were so successful that before long nearly 400 were registered. In addition, personal members were enrolled until the 300 mark was passed. The attendances at the monthly meeting showed a proportionate increase, until throughout the war and almost until the outbreak of World War II, the Mission House Library was crowded up to and beyond capacity at every gathering.

Facing such large audiences during World War I, in an overcrowded building with only one main exit, I often wondered what might happen should air raid warnings be sounded. They never were, though we heard them on several occasions on the journey home.

Speakers of note from many denominations and missionary societies, including, of course, our own, occupied the platform. On other occasions Parliaments, Lantern Lectures, and Plays were used with great effect, and the gatherings were notable also for the sale of missionary and other religious literature and for the exchange of books from the ever-growing lending library. Other ventures included the organisation of many series of training classes for leaders of study circles; an annual garden party, at one of which, at Spurgeon's Orphan Homes at Clapham, over 1,000 visitors sat down to tea. Speakers' Training Classes, conducted by such outstanding men as Dr. F. B. Meyer and the Rev. F. C. Spurr, attracted average attendances of 150.

The leadership of the Conference was wisely entrusted to youth. Dr. Hugh Martin, M.A. and the Rev. Thomas Powell, B.A., B.D., each occupied the chair for three years, forty years ago. Other chairmen included Miss Faith Goodwyn, Mr. H. Carey Oakley, M.A., Mr.

Arnold S. Clark, J.P., Mr. Ronald Bell, J.P., and Mr. H. E. Bonsall, A.C.A. Dr. Ernest Payne succeeded me as secretary in 1932, and he was followed in turn by the Rev. W. W. Bottoms, M.A., the Rev. A. A. Wilson, M.A., the Rev. Godfrey Robinson, B.A., B.D., and the Rev. T. F. Valentine, M.A.

World War II made its mark upon the Conference as it did upon all youth and other church activities. The Mission House was considered unsafe, and for a time the monthly meetings were suspended. Then they were bravely resumed, though not in the familiar Furnival Street premises, whose Library had been reduced to a gaping shell. The Alliance Hall, Westminster, was secured as a meeting place, and thither, month by month, a company of young people made their way, throughout the discomforts of the blackout and the menace of air-raids and flying-bombs, for fellowship and inspiration, and for the consideration of the affairs of the Eternal Kingdom, at a time when temporal kingdoms were being blasted into ruins.

The Conference has continued since World War II, and has steadily gathered strength. It suffers through having to meet on neutral ground away from B.M.S. headquarters. Only those who have experienced it can measure the magnetic power of the Furnival Street Mission House upon previous generations of the young people of our churches. It has been seriously affected by the widespread dislocation of Church life caused by the war and the subsequent unsettlement and stress which have profoundly affected youth. But it faces the future with determination and faith.

It is impossible to estimate the value of this notable piece of service by the youth of the Metropolis or the

YOUTH I.

effect it has had upon them. Many past members of the Conference have entered the home ministry or one or other of our mission fields. More serve as church officers and workers, or as missionary secretaries and leaders. Men and women now well into middle life are to be met with in large numbers of our churches who acknowledge its deep and abiding influence upon them, for in the fellowship of those meetings they received their call to service and saw a vision of the Kingdom of God. Here London's Baptist youth led the way in a movement through which their fellows throughout the land have been enrolled for the task of world evangelism.

CHAPTER TWELVE

YOUTH II.

THE drab streets around Woolwich Arsenal Station form an unpromising setting for a flash of inspiration or for the birth of an idea. One of them is inaptly named Mount Pleasant, for it is too steep either to climb or to descend with comfort. Yet it was here on an April morning in 1925 that something happened while I was on my way to the station to catch my usual train to Cannon Street.

The B.M.S. was then labouring under the recent declaration of a deficit of £27,724, the largest up to that date in the history of the Society, and a burden of serious concern to all the Society's leaders and friends. I, too, was troubled and, while turning the matter over in my mind, the thought suddenly came, "Why not appeal for 20,000 young men and women in our churches to pledge themselves to give a pound a year each to increase the income and so avoid further deficits?" The idea took root as the train, crowded with business people, travelled towards London. With some diffidence I mentioned the matter to Dr. Fullerton that morning. His face lit up as he made an immediate response and said, "Go ahead and I will support you in every way".

The matter had to be considered by the Young People's Committee whose members showed that they were divided as to its wisdom and as to the possibility of young people making such a response. There were those, however, who were determined to see the matter through in view of the Society's need, and in the conviction that youth would respond to a searching and costly challenge; and these won the day. The new movement was intro-

duced at the great Young People's Missionary Meeting in Spurgeon's Tabernacle during the Assembly in the following week, and was received in a way which augured well for its success.

The *Missionary Herald* for June, 1925 included this paragraph :

"The Missionary Society is going to make a great appeal to the young men and women of our churches. We want to enrol *Twenty Thousand* of them as a B.M.S. phalanx. Twenty thousand, say, between fifteen and twenty-five years of age or between sixteen and twenty-four who will drop out when they reach the limit, leaving their places to be filled by those who follow. Our old friends are with us and will remain faithful. At the memorable Committee there were many grey heads, but also there were many young men and women. But the young must now go to the front, while the old cohort will support them in the advance."

The idea made an instant appeal to some of our ministers, particularly the Rev. C. W. Vick, then at Woodborough Road Church, Nottingham. He discussed it one "perspiring hot evening in July with some fifteen young folk, keen and eager enough for the Kingdom to come together even when the tennis courts allured them". They urged that members of the new enterprise should pledge themselves: (1) To pray daily for the coming of the Kingdom and especially for the B.M.S. (2) To give, or obtain, in some way involving effort and sacrifice, not less than £1 per annum for the B.M.S. funds.

When these recommendations reached the Mission

House they were eagerly seized upon by Dr. Fullerton, whose evangelical and catholic outlook and purpose re-shaped them in these apt and terse phrases :—

1. To be myself a missionary at home.
2. To pray daily for the B.M.S.
3. To give £1 a year to its Treasury.
4. To spread the fire where I am.
5. To stand loyal to my own church.

This Nottingham group also suggested that the new Movement should have its badge and card of membership, which suggestions were adopted. It was Dr. Fullerton, however, who found the name—*The Twenty Thousand*—by which the venture became known. He also proposed that the name, address, church and registered number of every member should be inscribed in a huge loose-leaf volume which should be kept in the Mission House, and I have good reason for believing that he bore the cost of this.

Enrolments began to pour in. A Sunday School teacher wrote—"Here is a list of my class eager to be among the first to enrol". Batches of ten, twenty and thirty forms arrived as the days passed. Among the early applicants were many who had recently left school to join the ranks of wage earners. One of these said, "I earn fifteen shillings a week. I cannot give a pound all at once, but I will put by a penny a day" To facilitate the giving of many in similar circumstances, a special missionary box was provided and was soon in big demand. The encouragement of older friends proved a great stimulus. A member of the General Committee affirmed that T.T.T. was the finest call the B.M.S. had ever given. Dr. Hugh Martin welcomed it because "it

must cause young people to examine their expenditure as a whole and lead to the more general practice of stewardship ”.

This new venture was far more than an effort to raise money, important as that was. It set out to throw into clear relief the obligations of Christian discipleship and to provide channels along which it could find ample expression. We were averse from adding another organisation to the many already existing in our churches. This was to be a Movement with a flexibility and a freedom from rules and regulations. But inevitably the group spirit inherent in youth led like-minded members of *The Twenty Thousand* to come together. They formed study circles, discussion groups and prayer meetings in the churches to which they belonged. District rallies sprang from these and for the next few years my programme of engagements included such gatherings throughout the country. It was an exhilaration to meet these young people, for there was a quality about them that was lacking in other groups. During these years members of *The Twenty Thousand* filled our Summer Schools at Bexhill-on-Sea and Seascale, and it can be asserted without reserve that while Summer Schools generally have reached a high level, those held in the years when *The Twenty Thousand* was at its height have never been excelled.

We never reached our target as far as membership was concerned. But we enrolled over 12,000 members which was generally regarded as a fine achievement. They were enlisted at a formative period of life. They were set and accepted a high standard of living. They were given a clear conception of Christian attainment and conduct. Many heard a call to enter the ranks of

ministers at home and of missionaries abroad. More were led into consistent and abiding service for Christ in the churches and in daily life. The *Twenty Thousand* generation could say with fitness that the Movement "caught our youth and wakened us from sleeping". It has long ceased to exist. Its impressive membership book which had proved to be among the most interesting of the Mission House records was destroyed in an air raid in 1940. The Movement was an outstanding effort among a particular generation. Would that some similar call could be made to the youth of today!

I had long thought that members of the teaching profession connected with our churches might be enlisted for service to the B.M.S., related to their calling. A large proportion of Summer School members were teachers. The small church at Plumstead, about which I have written in the first chapter, included twenty members of the profession. I felt sure there must be hundreds in our churches, and a proposal that a residential conference should be organised for them was accepted by the B.M.S. secretaries. The first step was to compile a register. A letter with this in view was sent to ministers with a pre-paid postcard for names and addresses. These postcards poured into the Mission House until a total of over 6,000 teachers was reached. Some churches, especially in South Wales, recorded as many as thirty or forty each. Here was another vast potential, almost untapped.

The next stage was to organise a conference which should be of a distinct order. It was decided that it should be held in a university centre with its cultural and historic surroundings. So Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, was booked for the period of the Easter Festival, 1924. The programme which was drawn up by a

committee of teachers was of a character that would appeal to and benefit those it was designed to reach. So T. R. Glover, most eminent of teachers, was booked, as was a group of missionaries engaged in educational work. Care was taken that the publicity should be of a quality and style that would impress those for whom it was intended and result in a response from them. This first conference, at which eighty teachers were present, proved so successful that the holding of other gatherings was decided upon, and in the following years they met again at Lady Margaret Hall; Westminster and Southlands Training Colleges, London; Bristol: Caerleon Training College; and other centres. Before long these conferences found expression in the formation of a Continuation Committee to develop missionary interest in the profession, to form links between members and missionaries engaged in educational work and to undertake particular forms of service. In the next few years a regular supply of educational periodicals was sent to many missionaries. His Master's Voice French language records were provided for the use of missionaries and intending candidates for Belgian Congo, five volumes on woodwork were presented to Yakusu, funds were raised for specific pieces of work, tutors were enlisted for the Home Preparation Union, trips were organised to the B.M.S. mission in Brittany at Easter, 1929, and 1930, and the Baptist Teachers' Association was formed with Mr. H. Carey Oakley, M.A., as chairman and Dr. E. H. Selwood as honorary secretary. The Association continued its good work up to and during World War II. As an amateur so far as the teaching profession was concerned, I was honoured by being invited to continue my intimate association with it.

Co-operation with the Young People's Department of the Baptist Union continued throughout the period from 1908 to 1927, when the Rev. E. E. Hayward, M.A. was its honorary secretary. Examination schemes on Biblical, social and missionary subjects were carried through each year. A joint organiser in the person of Mr. J. Owen Clover served for a number of years and, most profitable of all, a number of week-end conferences for young men were held at Eltham College and Shornells on the outskirts of south-east London, and at Yeovil and High Ashurst, Surrey.

As an outcome of these conferences and the recommendations of a group of young men at the Annual Conference of the Baptist Laymen's Missionary Movement at Swanwick in 1927, the formation of the Baptist Young Men's Movement as an auxiliary and feeder of the older body was decided upon. When the matter was submitted to a Garden Party of 130 young men from about 80 London churches, its reception was such that no doubt of its success was left in the minds of its promoters. Each member signed the following statement—"In joining this Movement I desire to express my belief in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour and in His having a purpose and plan for each one of us. Therefore my purpose is to fulfil that plan in my own life by using every opportunity to help those in my own church and those outside the Church of Christ, both in this land and abroad, so that Christ may work out His purposes in their lives." Membership was limited to those between the ages of seventeen and thirty with the understanding that, on reaching the latter age, members would apply for enrolment in the senior body.

This Movement was avowedly evangelistic, and this

found expression in efforts in the interest of the B.M.S. and in week-end missions in the churches, when members engaged in business and other activities during the week, devoted the time, sometimes under canvas, to conducting evangelistic services and meetings indoors and out of doors, mostly in rural areas. It organised week-end residential conferences mostly in the London area, while at the same time it spread in the provinces.

The Movement, whose members styled themselves BYMMERS, was a true brotherhood which promoted a high degree of fellowship among all who entered its ranks and which has continued with many throughout the years. As in other Movements already described, some of its members heard the call to enter the home ministry, and others became missionaries. Some have long served as lay pastors and more have held office in their churches. World War II, however, gave the Movement its death blow, for its members were mostly called upon for National Service. The wish that it might be revived has often been expressed by men now in middle life to whom it meant so much in the time of their youth.

Another commendable and rewarding effort of the nineteen-twenties was the organisation of terminal rallies for Baptist students in the Mission House Library. We had great fun in searching for the names of colleges scattered throughout the London area. The Student Christian Movement helped in this and the pages of Kelly's London Directory and the Telephone Directory were studied. Contact had to be made with some willing individual in each college through whom the names of Baptist students might be secured. Then, in the name of a generous host and hostess, invitations were issued and the results awaited. Students responded in large

numbers and the Library was generally crowded. Regent's Park College (then in London) and Spurgeon's College were represented in strength, as also were other colleges. In some cases students came in twos and threes. The calling of the roll always quickened interest and usually aroused enthusiasm among the theological students, especially when students from the School of Domestic Economy stood to respond to the welcome. A speaker of repute was generally secured, but the chief value of these gatherings lay in the fact that they brought students together at B.M.S. Headquarters and introduced them to its leaders three times a year.

One other matter touching youth may be mentioned. The League of Ropeholders had long had its hymnbook. The growth of Summer Schools and *The Twenty Thousand* suggested the desirability of a hymn book for young people. A committee representing the B.M.S. and the Psalms and Hymns Trust was appointed, I became editor, and *Hymns for Today* was the result. The book was well received and quickly became popular. More than 8,800 copies of the music edition and 67,000 copies of the words edition have been sold, and the book is still in demand. Here again, many of its hymns and tunes have been included in the *Revised Baptist Church Hymnal*.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

CALLS

I HAD been less than a year in Furnival Street, when a proposal was made to me that I should join the Congo Mission as its assistant secretary. This suggestion came from Alfred Henry Baynes, who was once more on the bridge in the Mission House during the temporary absence of C. E. Wilson in China, and from Lawson Forfeitt, lately the Congo Field Secretary. The offer attracted me, for I had been interested in the Congo Mission since early boyhood and hoped I might one day be permitted to serve there. For various reasons, which seemed good and conclusive then, I refused the offer. Thirty years were to pass before I saw Congo. About the same time it was suggested that I should enter a theological college to train for the ministry. That, too, I declined.

One day, in 1916, I was asked by J. H. Weeks, formerly of the Congo Mission, if I would take his place at a Sunday School Anniversary on the following Sunday. This was at Tanner's End Mission, Edmonton. I went there on many subsequent occasions and, whatever help I may have been to the vigorous congregation, the experience was certainly a liberal education for me. I made another firm friend at Tanner's End in the person of David Hatfield, the devoted and versatile honorary leader of the Mission, who gave more than fifty years to the work. Invitations to preach in London and the provinces increased, until, with B.M.S. engagements, a

free Sunday was a rare experience. Then, in 1919, there came another of those apparently chance conversations which marked a definite turn in the road of life.

It was the evening of the London Baptist Monthly Missionary Conference meeting in the Mission House. Before it began, I met Hugh Broughton, B.Sc., headmaster of one of the first open-air schools in the country. Over tea in the Food Reform Restaurant in Fournival Street, we discussed many things and, among them, the Church at Conduit Road, Plumstead, from whose Sunday School he was a delegate to the Conference. The pastorate was vacant and the deacons were filling the pulpit week by week with supplies and were looking for a new pastor. "Would I preach for them one Sunday?" was the question which he put to me. I agreed on the understanding that I was not a candidate for the vacancy.

I fulfilled this engagement in the course of a few weeks and was then invited to supply again. The next move was an invitation from the deacons to accept the oversight of the church for a period of three months. I took this invitation to Dr. Fullerton, in view of the fact that the B.M.S. had the right to my services seven days a week. He discussed it sympathetically and then said: "I think you should accept this invitation. I am not sure that you will do the church any good, but I am sure the church will do you a lot of good!" So I agreed to go. For the first few weeks I journeyed each Sunday from Clapham to Plumstead. Then, when the housing shortage was acute just after World War I, one of the deacons bought a house in the neighbourhood so that I might live there with my family. At the end of the three months, I consented to continue without time limit.

Thus began one of the happiest periods in my life.

Conduit Road Church was a small building seating about 200 people. It had passed through many vicissitudes. A settled pastorate would be followed by a long interregnum in which the church recovered financially. It was served by a band of loyal workers and its small membership was mostly devoted to the cause. The hearty initial welcome which I received was maintained throughout my pastorate and for long afterwards. I found a morning congregation of about forty adults and children, and an evening one of less than sixty. Numbers increased from the first Sunday. There was no immediate sudden spurt and then a falling back. The expansion was steady and continuous until, within a year, both morning and evening congregations had doubled and, on occasion, the small gallery had to be used.

The congregation, in relation to its size, was notable for its quality. It included several professional people, with about twenty members of the teaching profession, of whom three were head teachers. One of the deacons who was among my best friends and most loyal supporters was F. J. Exley, a former minister and at that time, secretary of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews. On the Sundays when he was free to attend the services, no minister could have had a more appreciative listener, and no man could have rejoiced more whole-heartedly in the spiritual prosperity of the church. The Sunday School was efficiently staffed. The primary department had to meet in two sections—one in the morning and the other in the afternoon—because of insufficient accommodation. The leader of the one, although not a trained teacher, was born to the position. The afternoon leader was a member of the teaching profession. The superintendent of the inter-

mediate school was a headmaster and the leader of the young men's class was a first division civil servant.

Applications for church membership began to be made from the first month. Most of these came from young people and were for baptism. Others were in the form of transfers from other churches. Throughout the whole of my stay, no month passed without there being some additions to the membership roll. Finance presented few problems. I learnt at close quarters something of the disparities in regard to financial obligations in different churches. My nearest neighbour and good friend was John Wilson of Woolwich Tabernacle. He told me once that £25 a week was needed to maintain his church and its numerous activities. At that time his membership was returned at 1,100. Thus, an average contribution of less than sixpence a week was sufficient for them. By contrast, we needed at Conduit Road, £8 a week from less than one hundred members, or more than one shilling and sixpence a head, and this was cheerfully given.

One of the most devoted workers among the children was Helen Palmer, who led the League of Ropeholders, the B.M.S. children's organisation. This met on Sunday mornings before the service. The branch was among the most efficient in the denomination. One Sunday evening Helen Palmer told me of her desire to become a missionary, largely as the result of a sermon. She was encouraged to apply to the B.M.S., was eventually accepted and sent for training to Carey Hall, Birmingham. She was then appointed to India. At one of the Bexhill Summer Schools she met Edgar Morrish, then home on furlough from Congo. An attachment followed which later developed into an engagement. Facilities were given by the B.M.S. for another special furlough

for both, during which they were married. Since then, they have worked in happy and purposeful partnership in Congo.

F. J. Exley told me once that a congregation will accept almost anything from its minister if he has won the love and confidence of its members. I found this to be the case. In order to create a more worshipful atmosphere, I introduced, unannounced and almost imperceptibly, several changes in the order of service which were designed to give the congregation a larger audible part in it. Whatever the feelings and attitude of some might have been towards these innovations, they never showed them, but accepted them all, with the result that my successor, F. J. Saunders, B.A., B.D., was asked to continue them.

Throughout this period, my work for the B.M.S. remained unbroken and, so far as I could see, it did not suffer. It was a crowded life. I was told that I did more visitation of members of the church and congregation than some of my predecessors, whose whole time was devoted to the church, had done. These visits were mostly paid in the early morning and in the evening. Most of my reading had to be done while travelling in crowded rush hour trains to and from London. I tried to bear some share in serving other local churches in return for the help which their ministers gave to mine. In the end, the dual strain told, until it became a choice of giving up either the church or my position in the B.M.S. The church wanted me to stay with it and heroically offered to double the stipend which it was giving me in order that I might do so. I knew something of the sacrifice this would mean for its members and was greatly moved by the confidence and trust that

they showed. At the same time, my friends in the B.M.S. were equally urgent that my place was with them and, in the end, their advice prevailed. I had to say good-bye to Conduit Road as minister with genuine regret on both sides. I have visited the church many times since, always to receive the kindest of welcomes.

I thought any active connection with the ministry was finished so far as I was concerned, but it was not to be. Early in 1926, David Hatfield of Edmonton telephoned to ask me if I would preach at Eltham Park Church, then without a minister. I said I would welcome it, as I knew something of the church and its people and would be glad to be among them for a while. Eltham was then a new area on the south-eastern outskirts of London. Its Baptist church was already well established in this growing neighbourhood, and the prospects of still further expansion and of a forward work were distinctly encouraging. I fulfilled this Sunday engagement and, shortly afterwards, received an invitation to preach there again. I knew what this implied. A request of this sort in Baptist circles usually means that the preacher occupies the pulpit "with a view" to the pastorate. I could see no reason why I should not respond to this invitation, but my reply made it clear that I had no thought of taking a church again. So I went for this second Sunday and, after the evening service, the church secretary raised the question of the pastorate with me and spoke of a growing desire on the part of some that I should consider it. But I was quite definite in my refusal. Because of this I felt no hesitation in preaching a third time at Eltham Park.

Nothing happened until, two or three weeks later, I received a visit in my office from the church secretary and treasurer, during which they conveyed to me the

unanimous and hearty desire of the deacons that I would let my name go forward to the next church meeting for election to the pastorate. This was a matter that could not be treated lightly. The deacons knew a great deal about me. They were aware of my lack of theological training, my almost total lack of experience in pastoral work, my commitments to the B.M.S., and much besides. Nevertheless, they persisted and, eventually, I consented to their request, though I could hold out no hope that I would consider the matter favourably, even should the church confirm their decision. They told me that about sixteen ministers had been recommended to them for the vacant pastorate. Each had preached with a view and, with some, they had gone so far as to bring their names before the church meeting. But in no case had anything like a unanimous vote been given, and they had decided that they would proceed no further with any man unless there was complete unanimity.

The church meeting was held in due course in accordance with the Church Trust Deed. I was told that, after my name had been introduced with the unanimous approval of the deacons, speeches in support came from all parts of the hall and there was no dissentient voice. The fact that some of the young people, whose applications for baptism and church membership had lately been received, attributed their decision to my influence, strengthened the current of support. The voting was by ballot and the result was a unanimous invitation with three blank voting papers, that I should become minister of the church for five years with the possibility of extension at the end of that period.

Such an invitation could neither be ignored nor treated lightly. There was much in it to attract. Its obvious

heartiness made its appeal and I knew the people would be responsive. The neighbourhood was still expanding and was of a character that would allow scope for experiments and ventures. Boys from the Missionary School at Eltham College attended the morning service and offered opportunities for service to them and to their parents. The church music was in capable hands and this would help in the conduct of worship. Above all, the call had come unsought in an unexpected way. And when a man has passed forty, he begins to think seriously about the future course of his life. On the other hand, my roots in the B.M.S. and the Laymen's Movement were deep and it was difficult to get free from them. There was no sign of staleness and no suggestion that my usefulness there was outlived. On the contrary, there was much that pointed in the other direction. It is true that there was much unsettlement and uncertainty in the Mission House at that time. Friends on both sides gave earnest counsel, some pulling one way and some another. But, in the final resort, a man has to come to his own decision by weighing up the circumstances and conditions in the light that God gives him. And so, after long and careful deliberation, I declined the invitation with deep regret on my part and also, I can add, on the part of the church. My relations with Eltham Park church remained cordial. I have preached there many times and have been able to rejoice in the progress the church has made under the ministry of the men who have since been its ministers.

Other overtures have since been made by other churches. One move in connection with the secretaryship of a national religious organisation may be mentioned because of the help which T. S. Penny of Taunton gave me. He knew the B.M.S. intimately,

having been on its General Committee for about forty years at that time, served as its chairman and in the inner circle of its advisers. He had also been president of the organisation in question. I wrote to seek his advice on the matter, and received in reply a long letter written in his clear and regular handwriting, in which he set out, like a judge summing up a case, the pros and cons for each side. It was a letter worth preserving, and was characteristic of everything Mr. Penny did.

The Eltham Park decision had more than a momentary effect. It settled my line of life. I remained with the B.M.S., and there I stayed for the rest of my working days.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SCHOOLS

SUMMER Schools provide one of the best and most attractive means of missionary propaganda. The beginnings of B.M.S. activity of this sort have been referred to already. Schools were held up to and during the first two years of World War I, and then, owing to increasing restrictions and the calling up of young people for national service, it became out of the question to continue them.

With the end of the War, plans were made without delay to gather together the threads that had been broken. In 1919, a School was arranged at Mundesley-on-Sea on the Norfolk coast. Its numbers were not large and the members were scattered in several boarding houses. This was not an ideal arrangement, but nevertheless the School reached a measure of success which justified the venture and gave promise of better things to come.

One principle which has guided B.M.S. Summer Schools is that they should combine recreation for body with refreshment for soul and mind, because those who attend them do so as a part or the whole of their annual holiday. For this reason, seaside resorts have mostly been selected as centres and the programmes and meetings have been shaped on lines less strenuous than those of other Societies, whose Schools have been of shorter duration.

From 1910 to 1926, we moved from place to place, and held Schools at Weston-super-Mare, Bangor, Rhyl, Ryde, Seaford and Littlehampton. Gradually, owing to the difficulty of securing suitable premises for a shorter



A HAPPY MOMENT DURING A SUMMER SCHOOL HOLIDAY
AT BEXHILL IN 1937



WITH THE SUMMER SCHOOL STAFF AT SEASCALE IN 1944

period, we rented school buildings for a month or longer. This suited us, as the popularity of our Schools was growing and members were able to spend the whole of their annual vacations with us, which would not have been the case had the Schools lasted only one week. Further, while the organisation, staffing and conduct of such Schools threw greater and heavier responsibility upon the headquarters staff, their smaller numbers helped to promote that spirit of fellowship and comradeship which is a vital element in any successful School.

Our plan was to rent boarding school premises lock, stock and barrel for a month or more. Where possible, we engaged the school domestic staff. In cases where this proved to be out of the question, we found our own. We did our own housekeeping and catering, and fixed our charges to members at the lowest possible figures. We aimed, through these charges, to pay every legitimate outgoing, so that the Schools should not be a liability on the funds of the B.M.S. In spite of the fact that there were occasionally bad patches, this aim was fulfilled. A small Summer School reserve fund was built up and donations were made to the Society.

The places which were secured in the centres mentioned served their purpose, although in several cases they were far from ideal. Experience taught us that girls' schools were usually better furnished and finished than boys' schools. Adequate provision of playing fields and other facilities for recreation were a necessity, and proximity to the sea was a further asset. The environment of the premises was another consideration. A popular seaside resort was not the best place for a Summer School of our sort. It offered too many counter-attractions. We needed a place in which, while freedom

from irksome restraint was possible, the School indoors and outdoors could be maintained as a unity.

After long enquiry and searching we found at last a School which approximated to our ideals. It was placed on the outskirts of Bexhill-on-Sea, well away from the front and with wide views over the sea and the Sussex Downs. It contained accommodation for 130 guests and was provided with extensive playing fields which included twelve hard or grass tennis courts. There were also several common rooms and a large gymnasium for indoor recreation and meetings. Our offer to rent the School met with a cordial response from the Principal, with the result that we became its tenants for the month of August, 1926. Henceforth, Ancaster House, Bexhill-on-Sea, became our most favoured and popular Summer School centre. We rented it every year, sometimes for six weeks, without a break until the outbreak of World War II in 1939. The confidence that was established at the outset between the Principal and ourselves was strengthened as the years passed by. We were held to be ideal tenants and were assured many times that, so long as we wished to engage Ancaster House, it would be placed at our disposal. On our part we were glad to return there and grew more attached to it as our experience of it lengthened.

We had long wanted to find suitable premises in the north. We had enjoyed ourselves for three years at Bangor in North Wales and had run schools for one year at Southport. Neither place was what we were seeking, however. Then particulars of a School at Seascale on the Cumberland coast and within easy reach of the Lake District were received. I was commissioned to interview the Principal. This was usually my lot. The rail journey

from London to Seascale takes about eight hours. I first made it on a dark November day and night had fallen when I reached my destination. I was received as cordially as I had been at Bexhill, was taken everywhere and shown everything. I left Seascale next morning before daylight in order to keep engagements on the Saturday afternoon in Yorkshire. So I did not see Seascale. But I had inspected the school buildings and discussed the terms. These proved satisfactory and the School was rented for a month during the following August. It rivalled Bexhill in popularity, especially in the early years. We went there in periods of two or three years with a break of a year in between until World War II. Seascale is a hamlet by the sea. It possesses little or nothing in the way of artificial attraction, except a famous golf-course, which does not appeal to many Summer School members. But it is favoured with wide stretching sands, good bathing and scope for excursions in many directions. Our relations with the authorities proved as happy as those at Bexhill, and we were always welcome.

Our Schools continued to increase in popularity until a third centre became desirable. So we looked about for further accommodation and found it at Abbotsford, Broadstairs, in the Isle of Thanet for two years; Cobbold's Point, Felixstowe, Suffolk, for two years; and St. Audries, North Somerset, for one year. These drew large numbers and each School included many who declared that their particular centre was the best the B.M.S. had ever provided.

Some idea of the numbers attending these schools can be gained from the statement that, year after year, more than a thousand weekly places were booked. Most

members were limited to a stay of a fortnight, though many were only able to register for a week. Some came for several years in succession, though our continuance in the same centres resulted in a large proportion of newcomers each year. In this way, the reach of the influence of the Schools was ever-widening. The membership was mainly made up of young people, while older folk, sometimes with their families, were not barred.

While plans varied as the result of experience and changing conditions, they remained the same in broad outline; Saturdays and Wednesdays were usually kept free of meetings, except for a welcome meeting on the former evening, and a concert on the latter. On Sundays we worshipped at local Baptist churches and, at Seascale, in the Methodist church. Everywhere we were welcomed with heartiness, and members of the staffs generally supplied the pulpits, with members of the Schools helping to increase the congregations and the collections. Parties of young men and women conducted services in neighbouring chapels and mission halls and visited Sunday Schools.

Sunday afternoons were spent in groups around the missionaries who were guest-speakers, and Sunday evenings always included eagerly anticipated and greatly enjoyed spells of community singing after supper.

For the remainder of the week, the days began with prayers before breakfast led by members of the School. Half past nine found the members gathered around the President or some other minister for a Bible lecture. Our aim was to secure as President a minister still on the young side of life and possessing, among other qualifications, a degree of scholarship which gave him standing as a Biblical expositor and an experience of pastoral work

SCHOOLS

which enabled him to make personal contacts and to deal with the questions and problems of youth. The President usually held office for a fortnight. During the first week he gave his Bible lectures which were based upon some book of the Old or New Testament, or upon some Bible theme or doctrine. In the second week, another minister would take a similar course.

The second morning period was devoted to group discussions. Here again, the programme was planned in fortnightly cycles. In the first week, three groups were arranged as a rule. Two were for young men and women who wished to obtain a fuller knowledge of some mission field, aspect of service, method of work, and so on; and to learn how to conduct groups on similar lines in their own churches. The third was for leaders of children's groups and dealt with child psychology, method, material, and so forth. These groups frequently split into smaller groups for a closer consideration of some aspect of the subject.

The remainder of the days was kept rigidly free of all meetings until the late evening, when a missionary on furlough took the floor and spoke about his or her work, and then submitted to a fusilage of questions. Our aim was to limit these meetings to an hour, but this was often defeated by the eagerness of the audience to hear and learn more. Frequently, groups would question and discuss long after the meetings had been officially closed. In each fortnight each of our main mission fields was represented and sometimes the smaller ones as well.

It will be seen that much of each day was left free for recreation, and full advantage was taken of this. At Bexhill, where the tennis courts were on the doorstep, the ping of balls on racquets was often heard before morning

prayers and within five minutes of the close of the morning sessions, as well as through the long afternoons. No week was complete without its tennis tournament, or its cricket match. Organised bathing parties were arranged each day and generally several times a day. Excursions to places of interest and to beauty spots were planned for those who desired them, although nothing was compulsory. At Seascale, especially, the nearness of the Lake District proved a great attraction as did the ascent of the neighbouring Scawfell. One outstanding feature of each week was the Wednesday night concert into which the entire School entered with zest and enjoyment. This was placed, as were other activities of the School, in the hands of a Committee, whose members had only a day or two in which to shape the programme. These programmes were frequently amazing and, on occasion, brilliant. The set programme of the School would often be parodied and the speakers would be pilloried. Anything and everything that lent itself to mirth and merriment would be impressed into service. It was a great occasion for the School leaders to see themselves as others saw them. The whole evening was an occasion for mirth and merriment, and for promoting good fellowship. It also revealed unsuspected hidden talent, and showed leaders, lecturers and missionaries in a new light. "I never thought ministers could be such jolly people," was the suggestive remark made more than once after a particularly good and hilarious concert.

Looking back over the years of Summer Schools, it can be claimed without fear of contradiction that they have fully justified themselves. The peculiar type of School organised by the B.M.S., that is, the small School multiplied and spread over many weeks, has made heavy

demands on the time and strength of members of the headquarters' staff. But none has begrudged it. For all have seen things happen.

Young people have come reluctantly, perturbed by the thought that a Summer School meant all work and no play. They have been quickly righted and have entered with zest into all its engagements. There have been fathers brought by their young people who have determined that they would attend no meetings. One such came to the welcome meeting for appearances' sake. He next thought he would attend the first Monday lecture to see what it was like. He ended by going to every session and, at the close of the week, said that he had found more recreation out-of-doors than on a normal holiday because everything was so well planned. Thousands of young people have returned to home, school, college and business with new visions and resolves, and have taken positions of leadership and responsibility. Others have heard the call to the dedication of their lives to the ministry of the Word in the homeland and to the service of the B.M.S. overseas. No School has passed without some heeding the summons to discipleship. Each week has reached its climax in a Communion Service, where in the unconventional surroundings of a gymnasium or a common room, with none of the accessories to which we are accustomed in our churches, our fellowship with our Lord has been renewed. Almost every week, without exception, some members have joined in this service for the first time, as evidence of their new-found allegiance. When one's own children have been among them and, later, have offered themselves, one for the home ministry and the other for the mission field, who can question the worth of Summer Schools?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CHILDREN

WHILE staying on one occasion in a home in the Midlands, my host said, "Every morning since I started going to business, I have caught the same 'bus to take me to the office, and every evening I have caught the same 'bus to bring me home again. I expect to do this until I retire". I asked him how he managed during those times when there was an extra pressure of work, and received the reply, "I leave whatever is not finished until the next day". My friend was a civil servant! Not all civil servants are in this happy position, however.

I could not help contrasting my life with his. If there was a feeling of envy because of the orderliness of his daily round, this was only momentary, for although mine has been a strenuous life, with a wide variety of duties, it has had its ample compensations. Anyone engaged in the administration and advocacy of a missionary society must always have it on his mind. During the busy months of the year, from September to May, it was a rare experience to have a Sunday or an evening at home. The day began with leaving home soon after eight o'clock for the office and, if one's evening engagement was in London or within fifty miles or so of it, home might not be reached again until the neighbourhood of midnight. Visits to more distant provincial centres involved longer absences, during which office business would be sent on for attention. Most week-ends were spent in keeping engagements in London or the provinces. I did not go with my family to any church of which I was a member more than half-a-dozen times in a year. Fortunately, I

found it easy to concentrate in a railway train and most of my reading and writing was done while travelling. For several years, my average journeying was 20,000 miles.

This sort of life has brought rich compensations. One of these is a knowledge of our churches in all parts of the country and in all sorts of conditions and circumstances. Another is the friendship of many laymen. A third is the enjoyment of the generous hospitality of numerous homes. A fourth is contact with successive generations of young men and women, many of whom now occupy positions of leadership in our churches and beyond them.

But for me, as for others, home has been and is still the best place. And that home life has been enriched by the presence of three of the best children that any man could have. They have brought a rich reward for any sacrifice that their rearing and education involved. Fred, the eldest, entered the Baptist ministry by way of Bristol College in 1935, and after pastorates at Totnes and Melksham, is now minister of the West End Church, Hammersmith. Winifred, the youngest, who has twice been President of the Girls' Auxiliary, is now headmistress of an infants' school at Croxley Green, Hertfordshire. They would gladly agree, however, in giving pride of place to Walter, who came in the middle.

For the first six months of his life, Walter led a troubled existence. We could find no food that would suit his delicate constitution. His nights, and ours, were as disturbed as his days. Only the devoted persistence of his mother pulled him through them. Even our good doctor gave up all hope and, when after trying almost every food on the market, his mother suggested another, the doctor replied, "Try anything. I can do no more for him". That food was tried and, to our relief, it agreed

with him. From then, he turned the corner and soon developed into a chubby youngster. He was the sunshine of our home. His happy disposition, merry face and twinkling eyes, endeared him to everyone.

In the movements of his body and the response of his brain, he was like quicksilver. On one occasion during World War I, his mother was discussing the question of clothes with the two boys. Fred, aged five, said, "Mamma, I wish you would make me a velvet tunic like the one you have made for Walter". His mother replied, "Where do you think I am going to get the money to buy the material with, now that there is a war on?" Like a flash, Walter, aged three, exclaimed, "Oh! you tan tate it out of the tolllection netst Sunday morning!"

He was sent, with his brother, to a kindergarten school when he was five. He amused the teachers on his first morning. When asked to say the alphabet, he did so and then added, "Now I can say it backwards if you like". He had an innate courtesy and code of manners. It was the custom that the children occasionally attended the local parish church on special days. They were warned to be on their best behaviour, but the principal said to Walter, "I know there is no need to tell you this, for you are always a gentleman!"

His readiness to help others was proverbial. When he was quite small, his mother's health was anything but good. One day, when she was out, and the daily "help" failed to appear, his brother and he set to work dusting and polishing inside the house and scrubbing and washing the front steps outside. On many occasions, he took the lead in preparing tea as a surprise for his mother. Later, he would run the house during a week-end, for

he was an excellent cook. Our home at Plumstead was on a steep hill. No woman friend of the family, or other woman, for that matter, was ever allowed to toil up it carrying a load if Walter was near, for he would take it from her so that she might continue unburdened.

At the age of ten, he was admitted with his brother to the City of London School on the Thames Embankment. This involved a daily train journey in the rush hour from Woolwich Arsenal station to Cannon Street. His diminutive size must have appealed to the adults who crowded the compartments, for he was often lifted up to the luggage rack to be out of harm's way. He soon made his mark at school and was looked upon as one of the most promising boys of his time.

Sport and games appealed to him, and especially football. At that time the City of London School had not changed from Soccer to Rugger and, in spite of the fact that its 900 or so boys were drawn from all parts of London and beyond and that its playing fields were at Grove Park on the south-eastern extremity of the Metropolis, organised house football and cricket matches as well as matches with other schools, were carried through each season. Boys who wished to play games were asked to hand in their names at the beginning of the Christmas term. Walter was among the first to do so and, in a few weeks, he was rewarded by seeing his name included in a team of "under elevens" of his House to play against a similar eleven of another House on the following Saturday. He was tremendously excited at this.

Saturday morning came at last and he set out from Plumstead for Grove Park, four miles away, arrayed in football jersey and knickers with his boots slung by the laces over his shoulder. It was his first introduction to

real football and, from that morning, he was closely watched by those on the look-out for talent. The games master noted his eagerness, his ability to pick up the points of the game, his swiftness on the field, his gift of leadership. He was never left out of a match after that and soon passed from House matches to those against other schools. When his own game was over, he would watch the older teams at play. He possessed a natural ambition to excel. One evening at home, he picked up the day's copy of *The Times*. Unexpectedly, his eye fell on a brief report of a game between his School first eleven and that of another Public School. His eyes glistened as he read the report out loud. As he came to the names of the teams, he, a fourth form junior, said of them who were in the sixth, "I know so-and-so, and so-and-so. This one has gained a scholarship to Oxford, and so has this man. Some of the others are also leaving at the end of term. That means we shall have to get a fresh first eleven next year. Oh—and in a few years, *I* shall be in the sixth and *I* may be in the first eleven! And there will be reports of our games in *The Times*!" This was something startlingly new, for it held the possibility of rising to heights hitherto undreamed of. Football, already fascinating, took on a firmer attraction and he threw himself into it with greater ardour than ever, for the sake of his school and for his own sake.

Each of our children was taken to church service on Sunday mornings from infancy as a matter of course. So they never remembered a time when they did not attend church. And they never resented this discipline. Indeed, to them it was anything but a discipline and they looked forward to it. As the years passed, they were enrolled as Sunday School scholars. For some years, while they

were still small, we attended Ramsden Road Baptist Church, Balham. Here there existed a flourishing branch of the League of Ropeholders. Its meetings were held on alternate Saturday afternoons and evenings. Both boys, who were then at school on Saturday mornings, cheerfully gave these precious afternoons to the Ropeholders whose gatherings, with a varied programme, lasted for four hours. When we moved to Plumstead, we found another vigorous branch attached to Conduit Road Sunday School which met on Sunday mornings before service. Both Fred and Walter and, later, Winifred, were active members. They were cradled and grounded in missionary ideals and history, and in the part which they might one day play in the extension of the Kingdom. Walter was only eight when he first seriously began to cherish the hope that he might become a missionary, and this never left him. He had even fixed his field and station! Congo attracted him and, through his contact with Hedley Ennals of Yakusu, that station in the heart of Africa appealed to him above all others.

So he grew in spirit, mind and body—the last not so fully as the two former—until the opening days of 1925. Then we began to notice a change in him. He was eating heartily but seemed to be wasting. He complained of being tired. He went to his Saturday morning football and returned saying that he had not enjoyed it a bit. There were other signs that all was not well. But we did not think that there was anything seriously amiss until we found him exceptionally reluctant to get up in the morning. Then his brother told us that he went up the stairs at school holding on to the bannisters, and he came home in the evening listless and spent. So the doctor was called, gave him a thorough examination and said,

"I will let you have my report on Saturday," that was, three days hence. When the report came, it was to the effect that Walter was suffering from diabetes and that it was in an advanced state and that immediate treatment in hospital was necessary. This was a staggering blow. My wife and I knew enough about this mysterious complaint to realise that, to a boy of Walter's years, it was then practically a sentence of death. That Saturday afternoon was the blackest I remember. In the bitterness of the first shock of this news, I questioned the goodness of God. "Why should this thing come upon my boy of all boys, with his rich promise of service to God and his fellows? Why this one of my three children?" Other parents have passed through a similar dark valley of doubt and rebellion. Then my wife and I resolved that we would carry on as normally as we could and that we would help each other and the boy through what lay before him. The next day, I conducted Sunday School Anniversary services in a Surrey church, trying to enter into the gladness of the occasion while fresh young voices sang their hymns, but all the time with an inward ache as I remembered that sunny-hearted boy at home who was already experiencing some of the deprivations imposed by diabetes.

In the next few days, Walter grew rapidly worse. A specialist was summoned who could only confirm what our doctor had diagnosed. It was clear that drastic treatment in hospital was essential. Through the kindness of our friend, Dr. Thomas Horton, a bed was held in readiness in University College Hospital. A week passed until one evening, as I was engaged at the meeting of the London Baptist Monthly Missionary Conference in the Mission House, I received a telephone message that

under doctor's orders, Walter was being conveyed by ambulance to hospital, as it was feared he would not live through the night. I met the ambulance at the hospital and saw him comfortably put to bed, under the care of a capable doctor and nurse. My wife and I left him just before midnight, hardly expecting to see him alive again.

I called at the hospital the next morning, to be welcomed with a smile that was pitiful, and just a few words of greeting. Thereafter, as often as he was in hospital and I was in London, I called twice each day to see him. Immediately on his arrival in hospital, he was put on a starvation diet. For ten days he was given nothing but unsweetened coffee, so that the excess of sugar might be drained from his system. By the end of that time I could believe that the pictures of starving children in Europe were genuine, for he was little more than a skeleton. It was then that he greeted me one morning with a bright smile. I asked him the reason and he replied, "I am to have some food!". It was to be two ounces of cabbage, but a Lord Mayor's banquet could hardly have been to him a greater feast. Thereafter, thanks to the unremitting attention of a young hospital doctor, a diet was built up which would at least enable him to exist and to return home. It was a rigid diet. No food that contained sugar or starch was allowed him. This meant that he was deprived, among other things, of all puddings, cakes, sweets and fruit, except lemons and grape-fruit, and of many vegetables. All food had to be specially prepared and strictly weighed and taken at stated times. Games were forbidden and sea-bathing was also prohibited.

But he continued on this sort of diet for four months and then the sugar appeared again. This resulted in another starvation period in hospital and as the complaint did not yield to treatment, he was put on insulin, then a

new discovery. This meant injections of strict quantities at fixed times before meals, for any variations were dangerous. Walter learnt to give his own injections and so saved his mother doing that from which she shrank. But even insulin could not stay the advance of the complaint. Once again the sugar got the upper hand and another hurried hospital period became essential. This was the last.

Those who loved Walter learnt unforgettable lessons from him during this period. In spite of the limitations of his diet, he was never once heard to complain. To us his food was monotonous and limited to an extreme, but he said frequently that he enjoyed every mouthful of it. Perhaps hunger, for he must always have been hungry, acted as a sauce that flavoured the monotony of his diet. His humour rarely forsook him. On one occasion, he was looking at his legs which were little more than sticks and exclaimed, "To think that those legs once played football!" He generally took his meals with the rest of the family. He insisted on this and never appeared to mind that we had our normal fare while he had to be content with his restricted table.

His thoughtfulness for others continued. On returning home from hospital after his second stay there, he remembered that Christmas was drawing near. One of his first questions was to ask his mother if she had made her Christmas puddings. Her reply was that, because we knew he might have no pudding, we were going to do without them. Then he said, "You will hurt me terribly if you don't make them. And if you won't do so, I'll make them myself." Which he could do well. So they compromised by joining together in the task. He was constantly making little gifts with his hands and with his

pocket-money. One of his last acts was to choose, in a confectioner's shop, an Easter egg for his sister. We could trust him anywhere with food, knowing that in spite of his hunger for it, he would never touch it. The hospital nurses told many stories of his helpfulness. During his convalescent periods, he was able to walk about the wards. He would chat cheerily to the other patients and help in taking round the meals. On one occasion when the day nurses overslept and were late for duty, Walter went to the kitchen and prepared the breakfasts for most of the patients. It is not too much to say that doctors and nurses alike loved him.

He never lost the hope that he would recover and fulfil his desire for missionary service. In the early days of his illness he said one day to his mother, "It does not look much like Yakusu now!" And that wise mother, with an ache at her heart, answered, "You may be sure that if it is God's will, you will go there one day." He began to breed Angora rabbits with a view to earning, from the sale of their fur, money towards his theological college education.

So the early months of 1926 passed by, with the complaint getting a firmer hold on him. The end came swiftly. I was attending the Annual Conference of the Baptist Laymen's Missionary Movement at Swanwick. On the Saturday, I received one of the longest and cheeriest letters he ever wrote to me. On the Sunday morning, he went to church service in the teeth of a biting wind. He may have caught a chill then. The next day, as usual, he was awake early and made his mother her customary morning cup of tea. Then he returned to bed and got up again after breakfast. He occupied himself with painting for a while and then

complained of headache and acute bodily pain. He went to bed once more and grew steadily worse until the evening.

I usually returned from Swanwick on the Tuesday after the Conference, but on this occasion, I managed to get away on the Monday and reached home to find Walter lapsing into a coma, and unable to recognise me. Our doctor had already called and had decided on Walter's removal to hospital the next day. That evening his pain became so intense that we called the doctor again shortly after midnight. He advised an injection of morphia to deaden the pain, but warned us that the boy might never recover consciousness. I could only advise him to give the injection. The next afternoon I took the boy, now quite unconscious, to University College Hospital, fifteen miles away. On the way, he opened his eyes once, as the car jolted over a bit of rough road, and gave one of his radiant smiles of recognition as I spoke to him.

When we reached the hospital, I found that the doctor in charge in his ward was Dr. Lush, daughter of Dr. Percy J. F. Lush, Chairman of the B.M.S. Medical Mission Auxiliary. She assured me that everything would be done for Walter and that I could stay in the ward as long as I pleased. I did remain until late that evening and then returned home, knowing that I had seen him for the last time. The telephone rang at six o'clock the next morning to say that he had died four hours earlier.

The news of his passing was the occasion for moving expressions of sympathy on the part of hundreds of friends throughout the country. It was also a revelation of the influence of Walter's life. Masters at the City of London School united to say that he was one of the finest

boys they had ever taught and to voice the high hopes they had formed about him. Sunday School workers added their testimony. But among the most moving was the tribute of a hospital doctor who said, after watching him and hearing about his influence in the ward, exclaimed, "If that is being a Christian, then there must be something in it." Dr. Fullerton's message to his mother included the sentence, "You will always have your boy now." We have proved this to be true. The passing years have not dimmed his memory. We talk about him still as if he were with us. In our hearts we cherish the expectation of seeing him again some day. Of him it is emphatically true that "he being dead, yet speaketh".

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

LAYMEN

LAYMEN have taken an active part in modern missionary enterprise from its beginning and have rendered indispensable service throughout its existence. They have been among its foremost and most effective advocates in the churches. They have been generous in its support. They have rendered notable service in shaping its policy and guiding its course in its committees and councils. The responsible office of treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society has, with the exception of the first three years, been occupied by a layman. Laymen have financed and usually formed a part of the various deputations to the mission fields. The enterprise owes an immeasurable debt to a host of men.

Yet, for more than a century, no organised effort was made to weld the men of the churches into a force for the extension of the Kingdom of God at home and overseas. Perhaps their support was largely taken for granted. The women and young people, on the other hand, were definitely cared for and cultivated. Both had special departments and secretaries at the Church House and Mission House, with clear and definite organisation and activity throughout the churches. The approach to men appeared to tarry for some crisis and need. These came during the Great War of 1914-1918. America, the land of enterprise, supplied the spur.

A Laymen's Movement was formed there in the early years of the twentieth century. It was interdenominational in character and far-reaching in conception. It

swept over the men of the churches. But, like so much else in the United States, it was mushroom in its growth and existence. But it had this effect, among others. Glowing accounts of its influence and work were submitted to the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. These lit a spark in the minds of leading British laymen who were at that Conference and this resulted in the establishment of the National Laymen's Missionary Movement in Great Britain. Its founders were men of spacious ideas and broad visions. They set out with high hopes and fine plans. The Movement was getting into its stride, when the outbreak of World War I dealt it blows from which it never recovered. But it led to action which, probably, was not foreseen when it was formed.

It arranged a meeting in the Mansion House, London, under distinguished patronage, during the height of the War. Parker Gray, of Northampton, was present at this gathering and was gripped by the thought of a similar movement for Baptist men. He mentioned this to Dr. Fullerton, then B.M.S. Home Secretary, and to a few laymen who, like him, were members of the Society's General Committee. Some of these had only recently been elected to that Committee where they had been faced, for the first time, by the magnitude and complexity of the problems and tasks of missionary enterprise. Alec Tyler, of Leicester, was among their number. He was immersed in big business as director of some of the largest concerns in the country. His alert mind saw that the missionary enterprise also was "big business", but that the rank and file of the men of the churches had no conception of it. Indeed, many of their number regarded it as a hole and corner affair, a sort of pastime for those

who were attracted by it, but in no sense a vital concern of every Christian man. He determined that this state of things must be altered. It needed no persuasion on Dr. Fullerton's part to induce him to lead the new enterprise, but he said, "I shall need someone to do the routine work." And that is how I became connected, from the outset, with the Baptist Laymen's Missionary Movement.

Our first venture was a meeting of laymen in the London house of Sir Alfred Pearce Gould, then the B.M.S. Treasurer. Here the Movement was formed with Sir Alfred as its President, William Jones of Orpington as its Treasurer and Alec Tyler as its Honorary Secretary. A Committee was also appointed, and the first members were enrolled. It is not too much to say that, in the early years, Alec Tyler was largely the Laymen's Movement. He was used to doing things on a big and daring scale.

His own businesses had been built up to a great extent on press advertising. The Missionary Society should go the same road. So he planned and paid for a thorough-going press campaign in the religious press. Baptists are readers, not of one, but of several religious papers, according to their preferences and idiosyncracies. We chose six papers for this effort—*Baptist Times*, *British Weekly*, *Christian*, *Christian World*, *Life of Faith* and *Sunday School Chronicle*. A full column space was booked in each for six months. Alec Tyler's business publicity agent was impressed into service. We supplied him with the facts and he shaped them into publicity form. The raising of a War Emergency Fund for the B.M.S. was attached to this enterprise with gratifying results. Publicity on this scale was something new in religious circles, and it aroused great interest. Under each advertisement were the words, "This advertisement

is paid for by a group of laymen," but most knew that the "group" was Alec Tyler, and it is no secret that this venture cost him £1,500.

Another venture of that period was the formation of centres of the Movement throughout the country. Alec Tyler pictured the country covered by such centres, each well organised, with area committees and officers, heading into an appropriate national movement. With this in view, he toured the country and I usually accompanied him. This was at the time when the World War I was at its height, and his own businesses were making exceptional demands upon him. But he spared no effort, time or money to promote the success of this plan. His energy and enthusiasm were amazing. Journeys by day and night were imposed on the top of exacting business commitments, but all was done cheerfully and thoroughly; and again the results justified the cost. Being the man he was, Alec Tyler could command the response of leading laymen anywhere, and they gladly obeyed. Within a year, more than thirty centres were organised and hundreds of men were enrolled in the new movement.

I had seen in Summer Schools, the value of extensive personal contact away from normal surroundings, where young men and women were concerned. So, we embarked on the first national conference of the new Movement. This was held in the early summer of 1918 in the beautiful and spacious garden attached to Alec Tyler's house in Leicester and, like everything else to which he set his hands, it was marked by generous hospitality in spite of war-time conditions. This conference could only cover a Saturday afternoon and evening, but its influence and effect were sufficient to justify it and to whet the appetites of those who were present for more.

At the earliest moment after the War, the second conference was planned. This met at a Guest House in Hope, Derbyshire. It was residential and lasted from Friday evening to the following Monday morning. Seventy men from many parts of the country were present. That conference was both a revelation and a landmark to those who were there; its members still speak of it as being the peak of all our many conferences. In particular, they remember the session on Sunday morning when A. R. Daggart was in charge and told us the moving story of his consecrated life. After this he threw the session open for prayer. For an hour, one man after another was on his feet and none could doubt that God was with us. The luncheon gong rang three times, but still the meeting continued. One man, at least, acknowledges that this session marked a decisive turning point in his life.

We were overcrowded at Hope and so, next year, we went for the first time to The Hayes, Swanwick, that famous home of conferences in Derbyshire. On this occasion, our numbers went up to 120 and we invited all men missionaries on furlough as our guests, greatly to our profit and theirs. Thereafter, without a break, we gathered every year at Swanwick until 1939, from a Thursday evening to a Monday morning in March. The conferences grew in numbers, almost without check, until in the thirties, we reached 300 and taxed the accommodation to its limit. We not only increased numerically, but in the representativeness of our membership and in the strength of our leadership. At first, the conference was regarded in some quarters as being of little account. But, gradually, its fame and influence grew and we began to find that denominational leaders were in our fellowship

and were as eager as any to attend. Many men formed the habit of putting the conference in the forefront of their engagements and some booked their places from one gathering to another.

We were helped because the conferences formed the first break in the year between Christmas and Easter. But we were helped more by the conditions in which the conferences met and by the aims which we had in mind. We met under one roof away from normal occupations, responsibilities and distractions. All distinctions of class, calling and capacity were abandoned and we were a real band of brothers. The programme was a happy combination of grave and gay, and it was carried through with an ease that meant a minimum of restraint. At the same time, we were concerned to understand the world of men and women in which we were placed, to learn about the state of the work of God in that world and to measure the part we ought to play in it.

We took pains over the programme. Here, as elsewhere, past successes were never regarded as a guarantee of future ones. Every approaching conference was treated as if it were the first, and the same minute attention to detail was given to all. Men of authority and eminence in any part of the Christian Church were invited to our platform and generally, because they had heard of our gatherings, they accepted with alacrity. And they entered into our fellowship. Who can forget the contribution of a dignitary of the Church of England who had already made us his debtor in the conference hall, when he rose on his chair in the dining hall to acknowledge the uproarious thanks of the assembly? He said, "Your secretary, when he invited me to take part in this conference, expressed his hope that it might be to

my spiritual profit. When I arrived here he told me that I was to sleep in 'L' (the letter of his bedroom). Whether it was in the repartee of the dining hall, the freedom of the parliament and of the discussion groups, the stories round the fireside, the Sunday evening sing-song around the organ in the lounge, the long sessions in the hall, or the closing communion service in the chapel on the mound—all combined to make Swanwick unique, an occasion to be awaited with eagerness and to be remembered with gratitude to God. Dr. Fullerton said more than once, "If the Movement did nothing more than arrange this conference every year, it would justify its existence." Hundreds of men would endorse this judgment. To them, one of the major casualties of World War II was the fact that The Hayes was given over to unwilling occupants from other countries and so conferences there were out of the question for the time being.

Alec Tyler's influence was felt in other directions. He was convinced that definite projects would do much to weld the Movement together and add to its strength and standing. Shortly after World War I, the housing shortage was acute and missionaries on furlough found great difficulty in securing accommodation for themselves and their families. It happened that, about this time, in 1922, the Georgian house in Kettering in which the Baptist Missionary Society was formed on October 2nd, 1792, came on the market. Alec Tyler was seized with the happy idea of purchasing it for the Society and making it a furlough home for missionaries. He consulted the officers of the Laymen's Movement and secured their assent. He guaranteed the purchase price and the heavy cost of modernising and adapting the house to make it

suitable for its new purpose. As much was spent on alterations and improvements and furnishing as was paid for the house. This was the typical Alec Tyler way. Everything was ready for the dedication of the house to its new purpose and for handing the title deeds to the Treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society, Harry Pearce Gould, on October 2nd, 1922. A series of meetings was held around that date, some of them, in accordance with precedent, taking place in a marquee erected in the paddock on the opposite side of the road.

The house was much used by missionaries for several years, to their evident appreciation. Then, as the housing shortage became less acute and other conditions led missionaries to go elsewhere, the premises were turned into a guest house and were used for this purpose for several years.*

A second project came out of a Swanwick Conference. A missionary returned from India called attention to the handicaps under which Indian students in London suffered during their stay in this country. These included the colour bar, the difficulty of finding accommodation and the extortions of unscrupulous landladies. He urged the opening of a hostel under sympathetic direction and with a Christian atmosphere. This was a challenge to Alec Tyler which only needed to be heard. His answer was characteristically swift. A hostel must be purchased and equipped. Again he led the Movement in this venture. A house was secured in North London and modernised and equipped at a cost of over £7,000. A warden was installed and the venture began and continued for some years with marked success. But, once

* Later the premises became a boarding-house and are now a hostel for nurses in connection with the Kettering General Hospital.

again, conditions changed and eventually the hostel was closed. It had served a useful purpose and, gradually, its scope had been widened to receive guests of any nationality, so that its character became international and its fellowship world-wide. It played an effective, though somewhat limited part, in contributing to a Christian world order.

These two undertakings involved a total cost of about £16,000. This was a heavy liability for the Movement. There was no doubt that Alec Tyler would have discharged it fully, but his unexpected death in 1932 left the Movement with a large part still outstanding and this was assumed by the Baptist Missionary Society, whose property both the Mission House in Kettering and the Hostel in London, had become. Henceforth, the Movement, whose declared purpose was not to raise funds for enterprises of its own, found far-reaching outlets in other directions.

The Movement set great store on efficient publicity and propaganda from its beginning. During its first month, it published a four-page sheet which was the forerunner of a magazine. This developed into an eight-page monthly and finally into a fifty-six page quarterly. Both in appearance and material, this publication earned fame both in Baptist circles and beyond them, in this country and overseas. It served as a strong link between its members and provided a platform for broad and progressive views. No magazine is indispensable, but there need be no hesitation in asserting that *The Layman* occupied a foremost place in religious publications. The Movement was also responsible for the issue of pamphlets and books which played their part in the missionary education of the men of the churches.

Adaptability has been one of the outstanding features of the Movement. While it has been conservative in regard to methods that have proved their worth, it has been ready to discard those that have outlived their usefulness and to introduce others that would further its aims. At a Swanwick Conference held about twenty years ago, a minister was induced to speak of a successful experiment which he had made by which men both inside and outside his churches had been formed into a purposeful fellowship. This he had named the *Contact Club*. Its members met in an atmosphere of freedom from conventionality in social and religious relationships, they discussed subjects of interest to themselves after they had been introduced by qualified speakers, while the ultimate religious objective of the Club was steadily kept in the minds of the leaders. The results among men who were already church members, as well as those among men drawn from outside the church, were striking. Here, the Conference agreed, was something that offered a solution to the hoary problem of mobilising the man-power of the churches and of reaching the elusive and reluctant outsider.

So it was decided to further the formation of Contact Clubs and similar organisations with other names. It was not, at first sight, a task in harmony with the declared purpose of the Movement, but reflection showed clearly that it was definitely related to it. Besides, no other body existed that could undertake this work. From that time, the promotion of Contact Clubs, Men's Fellowships and the like, has been one of the major tasks of the Movement. Any men's organisation that could be discovered was enrolled and the services of the Movement were offered to it. Our success may be judged by the state-

ment that, on the outbreak of World War II in 1939, we had enrolled nearly 150 of these organisations and the Movement was gathering increasing momentum. A volume of testimony to their worth was accumulating and a body of experience was being gathered which should prove of service in the days when peace came again.

The Movement set out to "mobilise the man-power of the churches and to win its whole-hearted co-operation in the extension of the Kingdom of Christ at home and overseas." This aim is still far from being realised, but the Movement has for long been recognised as a factor in any matter which affects our denomination. We have been called upon, and have gladly responded, to place our resources in men, organisation and material at the service of our denominational leaders when the need has arisen. Thus, we took our share in the raising of the Baptist United Fund in 1920; the Superannuation Fund, eight years later; and the Forward Movement Fund in the nineteen-thirties. We shared, too, in the 1942 Celebrations of the Baptist Missionary Society.

My association with the Movement which began at its formation, continued without a break. Although the Movement had no organic connection with the Baptist Missionary Society, the officers of the latter body allowed me to give time to its work and provided office accommodation and clerical assistance. In 1925, when the Movement's growth and opportunities justified the step, I was appointed its secretary and an annual grant of £200 was made to the B.M.S. for secretarial service and for clerical help and office accommodation. The apportionment of my time between the Society and Movement was, happily, never fixed with exactitude.

Association with the Movement brought me a wealth of friendships. Besides those already mentioned, I came to know and honour men of the calibre of T. R. Glover, without whom no Swanwick was complete, A. R. Duggart of Darlington, Thomas Horton of Torquay and London, G. L. Macalpine of Accrington, Arthur Attenborough of Beckenham, Ernest Brown of London, A. R. Timson of Kettering, W. H. Mayne of Cardiff, H. L. Taylor of Bristol, H. Ernest Wood of many places, A. E. Richards of Bristol, G. W. Neal of Beckenham, H. C. Janes of Luton, and a host of others, prominent and less prominent, but all of them worthy. I gained from the Movement far more than I ever gave to it. Its members have shown me many kindnesses, the greatest of which was the trip to Congo in 1938, which they made possible through their generosity.

So we came to World War II.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

CONGO

LATE one evening in the winter of 1937-38 I stood with H. C. Janes on the platform of Luton station waiting for a train to London. He had acted as chairman of a men's meeting at which I had spoken and had then, with characteristic kindness, motored me to the station to see me safely away. As we sought shelter from an icy wind we talked of my twenty-one years with the Laymen's Movement and of the approaching Diamond Jubilee of Protestant missionary work in Congo and, in some way or other, the suggestion was made that the attainment of my majority should be marked by my being sent as the guest of the Movement to attend the Celebrations. Mr. Janes offered to sound the Movement's leaders and met with an immediate and generous response. The B.M.S. officers gave their ready consent to my being granted six months leave of absence, and the Rev. C. E. Pugh, then Congo Field Secretary, and other missionaries, offered a hearty welcome. So, on May 4th, 1938, I left Liverpool Street Station in company with the Rev. and Mrs. A. W. Hillard who were returning after furlough, and Miss Mary Jones (now Mrs. Leslie Moore), a nursing sister recruit.

For me the journey was at once an adventure and a fulfilment of a dream of years. Hitherto my foreign travel had been limited to organising and attending a summer school in Brittany in 1920, and to representing the Laymen's Movement at the Baptist World Alliance Congress in Stockholm in 1929. Now I was to go to the



RIDING IN GRENFELL'S "PUSH-PUSH" DURING THE CONGO TOUR



A MEAL WITH MISSIONARIES AT YAKUSU

heart of Africa. I had been intensely interested in missionary work, especially the Congo Mission, since boyhood. I had read, written and spoken about it. Now I was to see every part of it.

We reached the mouth of the Congo on May 25th. On the voyage I was chosen by the Belgian passengers, to my surprise and embarrassment, to take the part of Father Neptune, though it was never discovered that this was my first time across "the line". This involved making two speeches in Norman French. Our boat stopped for a few hours at Boma, forty miles up river. Here, in the bungalow of an American missionary and his wife, I enjoyed the best cup of tea I had tasted for three weeks. The following night was spent at Matadi in the hospitable bungalow of the Rev. J. Ohrneman, of the Swedish Mission, who is now Secretary of the Congo Protestant Council. We talked into the late hours about Congo missionary problems, particularly that of language. The night's sleep was broken by a tropical storm, with crashing thunder, while torrential rain poured on to the corrugated iron roof of the bungalow. The next morning we left by train for Kimpese, a station on the Congo railway which links Matadi and the outside world with Léopoldville, capital of Belgian Congo. This line, about 240 miles long, is a remarkable engineering feat, as it runs through some of the most mountainous country in Africa, and its construction proved to be costly in money and lives. Just before leaving Matadi it was found that my baggage was missing and no one knew what had happened to it, but on reaching Kimpese it was seen to be safely on the platform.

Kimpese was founded in 1908 by the American and British Baptist Missionary Societies as an institution for

the training of Congolese pastors and teachers for the Lower River area. They were joined a few years afterwards by the Swedish Mission. The whole staff, which included my friends, the Rev. and Mrs. W. D. Reynolds and the Rev. and Mrs. E. H. Morrish (Mrs. Morrish before her marriage was Helen Palmer of Plumstead), welcomed us and gave generous hospitality during our stay of four days. At that time Kimpese was a settlement of considerable size (it is much larger now). Most of the students were married and each family had its small brick-built house and plot of ground for growing vegetables. There were also a number of station workmen with their families. The women were receiving appropriate training alongside their husband, and their children were attending practice schools.

My visit here coincided with the end of term gatherings and services, and I was asked to preach the sermon, with the leaving students in view, at the Sunday morning service in the fine Holman Bentley Memorial Church. I was also asked to sing a solo. The only reason I could discover for this was that Dr. C. E. Wilson, member of a previous deputation, had done this seventeen years before, and therefore all deputations were expected to do so. Fortunately, the Ki-Kongo language is phonetic and I managed to get through the three verses of *Down in the valley with my Saviour I would go*, with the crowded congregation joining in the chorus. I remember much about Kimpese, including the oranges which grew in profusion, one tree standing outside my bedroom window from which the luscious fruit could be picked at will.

I spent the next three weeks in Léopoldville where I attended in succession the B.M.S. Field Committee Meetings which lasted a week, two days with the Kimpese

Board of Management, and eight days at the Diamond Jubilee Conference of the Protestant Missions. It would be impossible at this distance of time, to write at length about the gatherings of the first two bodies, except to note the thoroughness, frankness and freedom from haste that marked their proceedings.

The Diamond Jubilee Conference began with a colourful pageant in which the African's genius for the dramatic found ample scope. The presence of the Governor-General, whom I met on several occasions, and other State officials, gave honour and dignity to the occasion. I sat with the Conference delegates and several thousand native Christians on a slope overlooking the broad waters of Stanley Pool, with the distant thunder of the Congo as it enters the cataract region making an impressive background. Five episodes in Congo missionary history were presented in the natural amphitheatre formed by the hillside. We saw depicted before us H. M. Stanley's arrival at the Pool at the end of his famous journey down river in 1877; the coming of Bentley and Crudgington at the same spot four years later when they had won a way up-river from the west; the crushing of the Arab slave traffic by the administration; the conquest of witchcraft by medical missionary skill; and the value of missionary educational work. Between each episode a Congolese choir give a spirited and harmonious recital of music new and old under the conductorship of an American missionary.

The Diamond Jubilee Conference was an eloquent demonstration of the worth of the Congo Protestant Council, the oldest of its kind in the missionary world. Most of the evangelical missionary bodies are connected with it. It forms a channel between the State and the

entire missionary enterprise. It handles the relationships of individual missionary societies, and pools the experiences of each for the benefit of all. It undertakes united enterprises such as the mission hostel and the mission bookroom and press in Léopoldville, and the magazine, *The Congo Mission News*.

The Conference discussed matters old and new. Among the former were the hoary problems of marriage and divorce as these affect church members and those who wish to be. The latter included the adjustments necessary among a people on whom modern conditions and standards of life were exerting increasing pressure. It fell to me to preach the Conference sermon to a congregation made up of several nationalities of which two-thirds at least were missionaries with theological training. A Native Convention was held at the same time as the Conference and I attended several of its sessions when church leaders spoke with eloquence and fervour alongside missionaries. Denominational names mean little or nothing to Congo Christians, all of whom are held to belong to the inclusive Church of Christ in Congo. Trivial things stand out in sharp relief. One evening I dined with the Rev. and Mrs. C. E. Pugh. As I approached their bungalow the six o'clock News Bulletin was coming over the air and I rejoiced to hear the announcement, "Cricket, Close of Play Scores", and realised I was not out of the world. Incidentally, I heard religious service broadcasts from London while I was at stations in the bush, including one by my friend, Hugh Redwood, whose voice came through so clearly that he might have been in the next room. What a boon wireless is to the missionary, and especially the isolated missionary!

From these representative assemblies, held in an urban

setting, I went by rail and road into remote bush areas in Portuguese West Africa. We reached San Salvador, the oldest B.M.S. station in Congo, late at night and were given an uproarious welcome by adults and children. A fortnight was spent here and at Quibocolo and Bembe. San Salvador still contains the ruins of a Roman Catholic Cathedral and other buildings as a witness to a melancholy failure. Quibocolo's mission church is a monument to the enthusiasm of the people who gathered 40,000 stones, each of which meant a journey on foot of eight miles to collect it. My visit coincided with the annual Matondo, or thanksgiving gatherings, when village Christians from the wide district assembled for a long week-end. One memory is the showing of a series of films in the open air. Most were religious, though the hilarious reception of a Charlie Chaplin picture showed that black and white are one in their sense of humour. Impressive in another way was a baptismal service in which I shared, in which one of the candidates, an elderly woman, showed signs of leprosy.

Crossing the border into Belgian Congo again I spent nearly three weeks at Kibentele, Thysville and Wathen. The first includes a leper village supported by the State. At Thysville, an administrative centre, I was asked to lay the foundation stones of new school buildings on a high piece of land overlooking a broad plain. The programme at Wathen was made notable by a first-class gymnastic display by boys of the efficient station school in charge of Disengomoka, an outstanding Congo Christian leader, who because of his conspicuous ability came to Brussels for specialised training in 1952.

The next stage was a thousand miles journey by aeroplane from Léopoldville to Stanleyville, the eastern

extremity of B.M.S. work. This trip in a small Sabena 'plane took parts of two days, for landings and stoppages were frequent and there was no night flying. Apart from the novelty of this experience the flight was monotonous, for in the first part we passed over seemingly unbroken forest, and in the second we followed the course of the Congo with its succession of islands and sandbanks. Stanleyville is a provincial capital with a teeming population among which the B.M.S. is inadequately represented. Here I needed to buy a belt. Mr. Ennals took me to a store whose proprietor was a German. On the way I racked my brains to recall a bit of schoolboy German. It came—*Wie viel kostet es?*—*How much is this?* The storekeeper's face lit up to hear his mother tongue spoken in the heart of Africa, and he replied at length, greatly to my discomfiture.

My twelve crowded days at Yakusu included a 450 mile tour of part of the huge district by motor boat and car to scattered village outposts where, in spite of torrential rain, I received an uproarious welcome from chiefs and people, and was expected to make a reply through an interpreter in every village. Among memories which are still vivid I recall the discovery of a snake in the middle of my bed at Yalikina and the nonchalant remark of the missionary's wife, "We rather think there is a nest of them under the house!" At Ligasa, a sub-station in the forest, an inspection of my room took place each night to make certain it was free from these unpleasant and often dangerous reptiles.

I travelled down river by various means of transport so that I might stay at each of our stations. The journey from Ligasa to Yalembe took thirteen hours by canoe down a tributary and then by the main waterway. The

CONGO

stalwart Congo boatmen enlivened their paddling by chanting, in which familiar hymn tunes were interspersed with doggerel made up on the spot, some of which might be complimentary and some otherwise to the white visitor. I thought there might be something ominous in their choice of *Pull for the shore, sailor*, when darkness was falling swiftly and we were in mid-stream some distance from our goal with choppy waves rocking the boat. After a stay of four days at Yalamba I set out before daylight by canoe for a twenty mile run to Basoko, where I saw George Grenfell's well-kept grave in the State cemetery. We took three hours with the current in our favour to cover this stretch of river. From Basoko I flew 150 miles to Lisala in about an hour. So that morning I used what was probably the oldest and newest forms of transport known to man. Lisala is near to Upoto and the station staff awaited my arrival on the landing ground. B.M.S. work here, with its centres at Upoto and Pimu, covers an area equal to the six counties which border the English Channel. Pimu station was in the making when I was there and building operations were proceeding apace. Upoto stands on a hill overlooking the river, and its church and its name, picked out in white stones on the slope, remind travellers by boat and plane of the B.M.S. and its work. At Upoto I boarded a State steamer which took me to Coquilhatville, another provincial capital, so that I might travel inland to Ntondo, an isolated station of the American Baptist Mission, which it was suggested the B.M.S. might take over. I was also taken to Bolenge, a flourishing station of the Disciples of Christ Mission.

From the lake on which Ntondo stands, a B.M.S. motor launch carried me to Lukolela, the oldest B.M.S.

river station. Here I found a compact and effective work being carried on. My three outstanding impressions of Lukolela are the somewhat alarming proximity of a crocodile on the river trip, the unwelcome attentions of mosquitoes which were more persistent there than at any other place, and my efforts to teach hymns with the aid of a portable harmonium to a group of lads. Bolobo, 120 miles below Lukolela, revived memories of George Grenfell, for he was among the pioneers who founded the work here in 1888 and, between his exploratory voyages on the famous *Peace*, lived for several years in a house which is still standing. The last place of call was Tshumbiri, thirty miles down river from Bolobo, a one man station taken over from the American Baptist Mission, and so once more back to Léopoldville for a few days' quiet before setting my face homewards. My Congo journey was completed without mishap or set-back or the slightest trace of illness.

On the boat homewards I was the only English speaking passenger on the s.s. *Albertville*. Fortunately, I had travelled to Congo on this ship. The captain recognised me on going aboard at Matadi and assured me of his concern for my comfort. The dining room steward spoke excellent English as he had spent his boyhood and youth as a refugee in London after World War I.

I have written elsewhere about my contacts with missionary work in Congo and my judgments upon it. Here I have tried to deal with the experiences of a traveller, and to give a few glimpses of the enterprise. Yet another thrill awaited me during a Sunday afternoon wireless book talk a few weeks after my return home, when, towards the end, the speaker said, "There are two other books I would recommend. One is *Harry Wyatt*

of *Shansi* by E. A. Payne, and the other is *Congo Journey* by H. L. Hemmens. Both are published by the Carey Press." What more could a man wish for than a commendation like this and in such company as Ernest Payne?

My Congo tour resulted in a heavy round of activities during the winter of 1938-39. Before I reached England a programme of speaking engagements which included most Sundays and an average of four evenings a week had been arranged for addresses or lantern lectures, and a similar programme was being shaped for the following winter when war broke out. *Congo Journey*, too, was in great demand, four printings being called for.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

KETTERING

THE outbreak of World War II brought severe dislocation in the B.M.S. The expectation of early heavy air raids and the absence of adequate protection in the Furnival Street Mission House, led to evacuation to quarters which had kindly been provided by the officers and deacons of Union Church, High Wycombe. The homes of members of that and other churches were thrown open to the staff. Within three months, however, the air raid shelter in the Mission House had been completed and the staff, with few exceptions, of which I was one, returned to London. I had let my London house and stayed on in High Wycombe, and made the daily journey to Furnival Street.

The Mission House was an early victim of the bombing period which began in the summer of 1940. On the night of September 9th a high explosive bomb fell on the rear of the building and wrecked the Library and several offices, including mine. The dignified main stone staircase was rendered unusable and office furniture and records with hundreds of names and addresses were blown to pieces or burnt. My two faithful and competent assistants, Miss Shorter and Miss Warr (the latter now Junior Secretary of the United Council for Missionary Education), set themselves to compile new records from memory and did this so well that they were able to set down 70 per cent. of the total. Within less than a fortnight incendiary bombs caused fires which gutted the temporary premises we were occupying in nearby

Cursitor Street. Once again the records were destroyed and once again they were compiled. The Mission House was cleared of debris and made available for about half the staff who continued there in spartan conditions until 1944 when blasts from rockets and flying bombs made the building untenable and unsafe. Accommodation was happily found at 93 and 95 Gloucester Place, near to Baker Street. The remainder of the staff moved in 1940 to Kettering, where Sunnylands, a large house standing in beautiful grounds, was secured for our use. So I went to Kettering and remained there until the end of the war.

In 1940, Mr. Payne, who had succeeded me in 1932 on his appointment as Young People's Secretary and who, four years later, had followed Mr. Cule as Editorial Secretary, resigned that post to become Senior Tutor in Regent's Park College, Oxford. So the editorship of the *Missionary Herald* and *The Quest* and, later on, *Wonderlands*, when Mr. Cule handed over responsibility for it, came into my hands. I also edited *World Outlook*, the quarterly organ of the Laymen's Movement, and most other printed matter issued by the B.M.S. By then the severe Government restrictions on the use of paper had begun to operate. *The Missionary Herald* was reduced from twenty-four pages to eight, *The Quest* from twenty-eight pages to eight, and *Wonderlands* from sixteen pages to eight. It says much for the loyalty of their respective constituencies that the circulation of these magazines was maintained throughout the war years and throughout the essential rises in their selling prices in the post-war period. I may be allowed to take pleasure in the fact that although two of these magazines were printed in Reading, the third in Fakenham and the

fourth in Rushden, and that they had to be despatched in war conditions by road and rail to Kettering for distribution, the only occasion when they failed to be circulated in the churches and Sunday Schools on time was during the upheaval of September, 1940.

Preparations for celebrating the B.M.S. Ter-Jubilee in 1942 had begun well before the war broke out. When that catastrophe came questions concerning the advisability of postponing the observance of this event arose in a few quarters. Other counsels prevailed, however, and plans for special gatherings throughout the churches, the provision of suitable material and the raising of a fund of 150,000 guineas took shape and were soon put into operation. The preliminary arrangements were made under the direction of the B.M.S. Home Secretary, B. Grey Griffith who, however, retired from office under the age limit in April, 1942, when his place was taken by J. B. Middlebrook. Such a change might have had a prejudicial effect but, on the contrary, the pace was accelerated.

The official launching of the Celebrations took place at the denominational Assembly in London in April, 1942, when the new President, Mr. Griffith, based his address on the words: *The Tradition of Great Things*. Other speakers dealt with other aspects of this theme. The scene then shifted to Kettering where, from May 23rd to 26th the days were filled with meetings and reunions and the many speakers were drawn from our own and other communions. Centres like Leicester, Nottingham and Northampton, which were closely associated with Carey's early life, organised special observances, and a memorial plaque was installed in the parish church at Paulerspury, Carey's birthplace. The Sunday nearest to October 2nd,

the anniversary of the formation of the B.M.S., was an occasion for appropriate services in churches throughout the denomination. The extent to which some churches marked the Celebrations can be judged from a remark made to me by a lady when I was taking services in a small town. She said, "I hope you will not mention Carey. We have had him every Sunday for months past!"

The considerable amount of literature produced in connection with the Celebrations in spite of paper restrictions and labour difficulties passed through my hands. It included *Achievement* by Dr. Townley Lord, in which he told the story of the Society's 150 years with characteristic skill and clarity; *The Bells of Moulton* for children, by W. E. Cule, lives of *William Carey* by Dr. Dakin, *Andrew Fuller* by Gilbert Laws, and *Robert Hall* by Graham W. Hughes; a pageant and a cantata; booklets on our respective mission fields and forms of work; two calendars of information for the use of ministers; a handbook for lay preachers; and, finally, a commemoration volume, *Ter-Jubilee Celebrations*. Most of these met with an encouraging reception. Second printings of several were called for and in one case a third, with the result that the Carey Press had some of its busiest and most successful years.

Auxiliaries and churches throughout the country set themselves to the dual task of raising the current income of the B.M.S. and of contributing their quota to the Ter-Jubilee Fund with a determination that promised well. A period of eighteen months was fixed for the special effort and before the close of December, 1943, it was clear that the goal was in sight. By the turn of the year a sum of £157,677 was in hand, with the promise of

more to follow. Unlike earlier funds of this sort, very few large individual donations were made. The total was made up of many thousands of gifts from members of churches large and small throughout the land. Young people and children shared in the realisation of the project. A target of 15,000 guineas was set for Wales. The initial response was such that this target was advanced to 25,000 guineas and in the end £28,324 was received. Scotland aimed at 10,000 guineas and realised £13,413. Much evidence was forthcoming to prove that the campaign was carried through in war conditions. The garrison of Tobruk sent £3 before that town fell to the enemy. A church in a severely bombed coastal town raised its quota of £150 long before the end of the period and then gathered another £50. Women in another seaside resort were holding a Widow Wallis Supper Party when the town had its worst air raid. The church buildings swayed with the blast from bombs and windows were shattered. Unperturbed, the women swept up the debris, continued their supper and raised £42. Such was the spirit that animated the effort. It is little wonder that the note of thanksgiving dominated the meetings of the General Committee on January 18th, 1944.

Missionary deputation work, that effective and complicated instrument of propaganda, was maintained throughout the war, though in many places the normal programme was necessarily curtailed. The inability of missionaries to take furlough threw heavier responsibilities upon the headquarters officers and secretarial staff, and I took my share with my colleagues in travelling about the country in war conditions to fulfil engagements. The fact that some churches instituted afternoon services in place of evening ones, while others adhered to normal

hours, provided more occasions for the deputation to speak. I recall a Sunday in the Rossendale Valley when, in arctic conditions, I conducted five services in as many churches. I remember trying to find my way on many occasions through the black-out to churches in unfamiliar towns. During one week-end in Broadstairs, which was almost deserted and where remnants of the three Free Church congregations met in the Baptist Church, thirteen air raids warnings were sounded in the thirty-eight hours I was there and the services were conducted while enemy planes soared over the town. On the Saturday night my host and I stood on the front watching the vivid flashes from a bombardment on the opposite coast. In Swansea, where again there were several warnings during my week-end visit, I stayed in the home of two elderly ladies who went to bed at their customary time and who told me that they never got up to seek shelter during raids. I like best the reply of the caretaker of a London church with gaping window spaces who, in answer to my question as to how he had fared during a heavy raid the previous night, said, with a laugh, "All right! I was only blown out of bed."

The Laymen's Movement held together amid the disruptions of the war years. The Annual Conference at Swanwick could not be held, but gatherings smaller in size, and in the same atmosphere and fellowship, met in 1942 and 1943 at the Old Jordan's Hostel in Buckinghamshire. Most Contact Clubs and Men's Fellowships were compelled to suspend their meetings and activities, though a few continued heroically. The regular issue of *World Outlook* served as a welcome and valuable link between members. The Movement's income was maintained in an amazing way and the National Council met

at intervals in London. With Ernest Brown, C.H., M.C., as President from 1945 to 1947, a series of united conferences for men was organised with stimulating effect. With the war approaching its climax in 1944, a conference to plan for the future took place in Regent's Park College, Oxford, from October 14th to 17th. Ernest Brown made time, in the midst of his onerous war-time ministerial duties and claims, to lead this gathering. Findings of far-reaching importance and significance were agreed upon. It was strongly felt that the challenge of the times demanded an extension of the range of the Movement's aims and activities and a consequent change in its title. So it became henceforth *The Baptist Men's Movement* with the declared object, "To intensify Christian effort at home and abroad." Its missionary purpose held firm, but from now onwards it took into its official programme something which had long existed within it unofficially—the banding of men inside and outside the churches into fellowships and the binding of these into a national organisation. It was further agreed to look for an assistant secretary and to raise a fund to meet the necessary increase in expenditure. As will be seen later, these and other steps have been amply justified. As an immediate result, the end of the war in 1945 found the Movement in good order and ready to take advantage of the new opportunities and to assume fresh responsibilities.

My five war years in Kettering brought me many pleasurable experiences. Among these was a greater measure of home life. After a few months in furnished rooms I was fortunate in being able to rent a house within five minutes' walk of Sunnylands. My furniture, which I had been wrongly told had been destroyed in

a London air raid, arrived safely in Kettering. I was able to have mid-day meals at home, a thing that had been out of the question, except on infrequent occasions, for more than forty years. The absence of evening engagements meant more time under the family roof with consequent opportunities for writing, proof reading and home pursuits. During the preceding twenty years I had preached several times in Fuller Church. On my first visit the deacons, most of whom had attended Laymen's Conferences at Swanwick, seemed concerned above all else that I should make the announcements during the services! My wife and I and several members of the B.M.S. staff became associated with Fuller during our war-time stay in the town. One day in 1941, to my great surprise, I received a letter from A. R. Timson, the church secretary and a warm friend of mine, inviting me, in the name of the minister, J. O. Barrett, M.A., and the deacons, to accept the position of church choirmaster. Acceptance of this invitation was not easy. I had never conducted a church choir. Fuller's then professional organist, Cyril Butlin, A.R.C.O., was also acting as choirmaster. I was frequently away from the town at week-ends on deputation or preaching engagements. However, I accepted the invitation and was graciously received by the choir members and by Mr. Butlin with whom, and with his successor, Haydn Sail, I worked in comradeship and harmony. The first task was to raise the standard of the singing at the Sunday services and then to rehearse choral works in order to hold the choir together and to provide musical occasions for the public to relieve the strain and monotony of the war years. We invited the choirs of the two other Baptist churches in the town to join us in rehearsing Gaul's *Holy City*. They accepted with

alacrity and the reception accorded this oratorio at the public rendering was so cordial that we were encouraged to prepare more ambitious works. The choir was still further enlarged by recruits from other Free Church and Anglican choirs and by members from surrounding villages until 120 were enrolled. The rendering of Handel's *Messiah* became an annual event when, attracted by the growing reputation of the choir and the fact that front-rank artistes were engaged, Fuller Church was invariably filled by sympathetic audiences. The crown of our achievements was a Saturday afternoon performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Roy Henderson taking his familiar and exacting rôle of the prophet, and singing from memory as usual, with dramatic power and effect. On this occasion it was necessary, to the subsequent perturbation of the deacons, to place chairs in the aisles of the church to accommodate the audience and, even so, many had to stand in the vestibule and passages outside the church. No charge was made for admission on these occasions, but programmes were sold at a uniform price of 2s. 6d. As a result substantial sums were sent to the B.M.S., the Kettering General Hospital and other worthy causes. I pay tribute here to the choir members who, for three winters journeyed through darkened streets and lanes, sometimes mid snow and ice and heavy rain, for their rehearsals, and to the enthusiasm and zest with which they carried through their task which brought gladness and uplift to hundreds of people in a period when the strain of war conditions and events was at its greatest. Shortly before I returned to London the choir formed itself into the Kettering Choral Society, and as such it continued for several years.

Kettering proved itself a friendly town. Perhaps

because I was conductor of the choir and also preached in all the Free Churches, I became known to hundreds of its people. Anyhow, it was impossible to walk far along its streets without meeting friendly greetings and engaging conversation. This gave me a sense of belonging which is sadly absent in larger centres and, above all, in London, where one can rub shoulders with or pass thousands of people every day without seeing a familiar face or being greeted by a familiar voice.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

POST WAR

WHEN a man enters upon his seventh decade he may expect that life for him will become less strenuous and eventful, and that he will have leisure to enjoy the good things that its days hold in store. This, however, has not been the case with me, for the post-war period has been full of major changes which have brought at the same time new responsibilities and joys. The unexpected has happened again and again. I remember when Dr. Fullerton was approaching his 63rd year, he told me that he was doing so with a measure of foreboding and trepidation because of the uncertainty of life. I was able to cheer him with this quotation: "At 63 a man stands on the threshold of the youth of old age." It is about my youth in age that I write now.

I returned to London from Kettering in August, 1945. I had sold my house at Lee at its pre-war figure a few months before the end of World War II. I found a small house at Alperton in the Borough of Wembley which I had to buy when prices were already rocketing. Alperton is within easy travelling distance from the Mission House in Gloucester Place. Its Baptist church, which my wife and I joined, will forever be associated with my eldest brother, Ernest. He had for many years served the churches of the metropolis and the surrounding counties as an acceptable lay preacher. In 1928 he undertook the pastorate of Bow Road Church, a cause where once some of its members drove to its services in their carriages, but which has long since been a problem church. During this period, in his 52nd year, he passed the Baptist Union

Examination, and was placed on the list of accredited ministers. In 1932 he was called to Alperton Church. Never were minister and church more happily matched. The district was growing rapidly and my brother was an indefatigable visitor. It was often said that he was on the doorsteps of newcomers with the milkman and the baker. By his brotherliness and personal work even more than by his preaching, he gathered people about him until congregations so increased that a larger building became imperative. This project was undertaken without delay and by 1937, the larger church built on the site of the old one was completed and opened. I remember being asked if I thought a new organ should be included in the scheme. Fortunately, my suggestion that it should was adopted. Otherwise, with the coming of World War II and the problems of the post-war period, the church might still be waiting for the instrument.

The new building, which is modern and severely plain in design, was soon used by large congregations, and the membership approached 400. The outbreak of war in 1939 put a brake on the varied activities of the church and the heavy raids of the following winter resulted in the evacuation of many members and imposed new strains and stresses on the minister. Day and night he was at the beck and call of those who suffered from the bombing, whether they belonged to his church or not and, in addition, he undertook the oversight of our Harlesden Church during the absence of its minister on war service. The tension told on him and a serious illness followed from which he appeared to recover. One Sunday morning in December, 1941, however, he opened the church as usual in the absence of a caretaker, and when others entered the building he was found in a seat

unconscious. He was hurried to hospital where he died on the following day. By his desire, I conducted his funeral. The streets leading from the manse to the church were lined with people. The building was thronged and the service was relayed through loud-speakers to the crowd outside. It was a fitting tribute to a selfless man who regarded himself as a servant of Christ, not only to his church, but to the entire neighbourhood, and to whom I owed a debt I could never repay.

It was not easy for members of the Mission House staff who had long been associated with the Furnival Street premises to settle down in Gloucester Place. At the beginning, and until communicating doors were made, the latter consisted of two separate houses, 93 and 95. The atmosphere of "togetherness" which existed in the former seemed at first to be lacking in the latter. This was happily overcome as time passed, though veterans among us longed and still long for a renewal of the associations of the other historic premises. For some years I had to make calls on printers and block makers in the Holborn District and found myself strolling along Furnival Street to take a glimpse at the old Mission House with its austere portal and, if possible, to enter it to look at its ruins and to recapture something of the former days. The war years had seen many changes in the staff and while the newcomers soon became colleagues and friends, one missed the old familiar faces and voices.

The B.M.S. Publication Committee, which had been reconstituted in 1942, continued to be busily occupied with the consideration of the many manuscripts which were submitted with a view to their acceptance. As result the Carey Press continued the rate of publication

which had characterised the war period. The work of an editor calls for the exercise of application and care. I read most manuscripts twice on submission. The first reading was a rapid one to glean a general idea of the work and the second a more careful one to form a judgment upon it. The manuscripts were then sent to readers who were invited to assess their worth. They were next brought before the Publication Committee which either accepted or rejected them. The editor's work now began in earnest. Accepted manuscripts were prepared for press and this sometimes proved to be a lengthy and exacting task, for facts and statements had to be verified, and grammar and punctuation and even spelling mistakes corrected. Galley and page proofs were read twice over in turn and even so, errors occasionally escaped notice.

Suggestions that the two denominational publishing houses should be amalgamated had been made from time to time, and in 1947 overtures to this end were made on behalf of the Kingsgate Press to the Carey Press to join in the formation of a Limited Liability Company. A special joint committee was appointed to enquire into the possibilities and to prepare a scheme for amalgamation. Its report was approved by the Baptist Union Council and the B.M.S. General Committee. The new body which was established in 1948 was named the Carey Kingsgate Press Ltd. C. H. Parsons, the Manager of the Kingsgate Press, was appointed its Secretary and General Manager, A. J. Clark, Manager of the Carey Press, its Assistant Manager, and I became Editor. Two-thirds of my time was to be given to the new body and one-third to the editorship of B.M.S. and other publications. Happily, like other divisions of my time, this has never

been rigid but has varied according to the needs of the respective bodies. I welcomed the prospect of close association with Mr. Parsons whom I had known throughout his many years of service in the Baptist Church House, and with Mr. Clark who first came to me when as a junior he entered the Mission House in 1914. Most of all I rejoiced in the fact that Dr. Hugh Martin was appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of the new body. Hugh Martin and I had known each other since my early days in Furnival Street when he was a student in Glasgow University, and we had corresponded about a boys' auxiliary he was running. I met him for the first time in an A.B.C. shop in Golders Green in 1914 just after his appointment to a secretarial post in the Student Christian Movement. I had served with him on the United Council for Missionary Education. We were intimately associated during his terms of offices as Chairman of the London Baptist Monthly Missionary Conference and of the B.M.S. Young People's Committee. With the passage of the years my feeling for him had grown into admiration and affection. With his ecumenical outlook and his concern for the unity of all Christians, there is no stauncher or more loyal Baptist than he and no abler advocate of our convictions and doctrines in the councils of the Churches. His modesty and self-effacement are obvious to all and they hide an incisive mind, a scholarship that is extensive and profound and a passion for his Lord and for the coming of His Kingdom. I am proud that he regards me as a friend. He is among those to whom I have never turned for help in vain, and I am only one among many who rejoice that he has been appointed to high office in the Free Church Federal Council.

The Men's Movement quickly went into action again following the end of the war. The renewal of its annual conferences took a foremost place in its programme. The Hayes, Swanwick, was still requisitioned by the Government, and we had to look elsewhere for accommodation. This was found in three residential hotels at Blackpool, one of which was owned and managed by Stanley Matthews, the Blackpool and England star soccer player, and, in consequence, became popular with conference members who were the fathers of small boys. Then in 1948, after an absence of nine years, we returned to our familiar haunt at Swanwick. Those who remembered the inter-war gatherings wondered what kind of a gathering this would be, for most of the outstanding figures and many of the rank and file had passed from our sight and an examination of the list of bookings showed that the conference would consist of new men. We soon proved that there was no cause for concern. Within a few hours of its commencement the conference became a fellowship, the familiar atmosphere surrounded us and the gap between the years might never have existed. Each year since, the numbers increased until in 1952 they approached our peak year. Each year also another conference organised by the London Federation met at High Leigh, Hoddesdon. Two Scots, J. T. Lockhart and Willie McAslan, attended the Blackpool Conference in 1946. They left it with the resolve to establish the Movement in Scotland, and invited me to help them. The upshot was a strong and vigorous organisation north of the Tweed with an annual residential conference as an outstanding feature.

Another successful venture began on April 2nd, 1946, when a United Men's Rally was held in Bloomsbury

Central Church. This was attended by 800 men from churches in London and the Home Counties. Its success was so marked that it has become an annual event.

The Movement lost no time in carrying out its decision to appoint an assistant secretary. Kenneth Bennett was chosen for this post and took up his duties in 1946. He was connected with Seven Kings Church, Ilford, and had done much work in that church and in lay preaching. During his war service in India he had come into contact with B.M.S. missionaries and had made openings for Christian service and witness. His genius for gathering younger men about him soon found expression and as time passed he commended himself to the senior leaders. So that when in 1948 I felt I should resign the secretaryship owing to increasing editorial duties, he was unanimously elected to succeed me. Since then the Movement has gone from strength to strength, and Kenneth is everywhere regarded as being the right man to lead it. My retirement was made an occasion for a luncheon and presentation which was followed by my appointment as a Vice-President in 1950-51 and my occupancy of the Presidential chair in 1951-52, a crowning honour for which I shall always be grateful.

The kind of life imposed upon me by the offices I held and the work they involved made activity in Association affairs and in the churches of which I was a member almost impossible. I was therefore surprised when early in 1948 I received a telephone call from Henry Cook, M.A., Secretary of the London Baptist Association, to say that I had been nominated for its Vice-Presidency, and more surprised when, in due time, I was elected. This implied succession to the Presidency the following year. My term in this office was mainly devoted to

district conferences with deacons and other men throughout the churches in the metropolitan area. In spite of a happening which is referred to in the next paragraph, I kept all but two engagements and met some 800 men in these conferences and visited many churches on Sundays.

One of the most moving experiences of my life came when in July, 1948 I received a letter from Charles Dyer, Secretary of the Devon and Cornwall Association, which asked whether I would consent to the Association nominating me for the Vice-Presidency of the Baptist Union. This was more unexpected than the action of the L.B.A. That I should even be thought of in connection with this high office stirred deep emotions. After much thought and consultation with denominational leaders and friends, I decided to allow my name to go forward. That year, however, all other nominees withdrew their names so that Dr. Aubrey might have a clear run for the office. The next year I was nominated by several Associations and others intimated that they were doing so, when a Harley Street specialist settled the matter for me and my name was again withdrawn. How glad I was when H. R. Williamson, my colleague in the B.M.S., was elected!

For forty years it had been my privilege to play the organ at B.M.S. gatherings during the Assembly and on other occasions. From 1942 I had done this at the B.U. sessions in Bloomsbury Central Church. I had also reported B.M.S. meetings for the *Baptist Times* and on Townley Lord's assumption of the editorship of that paper, I had taken his place in reporting the Assembly for *The Christian World*. I was advised that all these and other activities should cease and that I should concentrate on regular editorial duties.

I have been conscious of the guiding God many times

throughout my life and never more so than during recent years. But for the verdict of the specialist I might have been chosen to assume responsibilities that would have brought my official connection with the B.M.S. to a close in April, 1951. As it was, I continued in the Mission House. In the following month I received one morning a long distance telephone message from J. Clement Davies of Newcastle Emlyn that Mr. Middlebrook, who was spending a brief holiday at Cilgwyn, the B.M.S. Conference centre in south-west Wales, was on his way to London showing signs of serious illness, and that he should be met on arrival at Paddington and driven to his home at Highgate. That was for him the beginning of an absence of ten months until his recovery and restoration to health. The Society's Officers and General Committee appointed me to serve as Acting General Home Secretary. None was more conscious than I that I could only be a substitute, but, supported by the officers, D. Gordon Wylie, M.A., B.D., the Chairman; H. L. Taylor, the Vice-Chairman until his death on November 9th, 1951, and his successor, Mrs. C. T. LeQuesne; F. C. Bryan, M.A., the ex-Chairman; Rt. Hon. Ernest Brown, C.H., M.C., the Treasurer; V. E. W. Hayward, M.A., who assumed the duties of General Foreign Secretary in September, 1951; G. H. C. Angus, M.A., D.D., and Dr. Ellen M. Clow, the Associate Foreign Secretaries; and by Kathleen Hasler, Mary Causton, B.A., Alex A. Wilson, M.A., and Godfrey Robinson, B.A., B.D., devoted colleagues in the Home Department secretariat, a loyal staff, and widespread concern in the churches, the manifold work of the Home Department and the response of our people was maintained.

With Mr. Middlebrook's return to office, there began

for me a series of farewells. But first there came at the B.M.S. Annual Members' Meeting on April 29th, 1952, during the Assembly my election with three other friends—Mrs. W. J. Lush, Mrs. Hugh Martin and Mr. G. D. Hooper—as an Honorary Member of the General Committee in recognition of services rendered to the Society. On May 19th, the Directors of the Carey Kingsgate Press Ltd., expressed their appreciation in a choicely worded resolution and in a presentation. The United Council for Missionary Education chose me as its guest of honour at a gathering in the Kenilworth Hotel, London, on June 6th. Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Janes acted as generous and gracious hosts at a dinner in the Onslow Court Hotel, South Kensington, on June 26th when, surrounded by a representative company of friends and comrades of the way, speeches were made by D. Gordon Wylie, Ernest Brown, S. W. Hughes, J. B. Middlebrook and Ernest Payne. The following week in Cambridge, the B.M.S. General Committee at its session on July 1st received me with a standing welcome and, after speeches by H. C. Janes and J. B. Middlebrook, directed that a suitable resolution be included in the minutes of the meeting. Finally, at a gathering of the staff in the Mission House on July 4th, two of my colleagues, John H. Ewing, A.C.A., the Society's Accountant, and Alex Wilson, now holding my former office of Assistant Home Secretary, said many kind things, and a presentation was made by Ora Chase, my devoted colleague and companion for twenty-one years, on behalf of the members, and Dr. Ellen Clow offered prayer.

Other bodies which paid their official tributes included the Council of the London Baptist Association, the Harrow L.B.A. Group of churches and the Harrow

London Baptist Missionary Union Council. These and many letters received made me feel a very humble man.

So I retired from the field of play after forty-five happy and rewarding years, to take my place among those who watch the play from the members' pavilion and, now and again, to cheer by friendship and counsel those who carry on. If I could begin again, I could wish for no other life than mine has been freer, I trust, from errors of judgment and faults of commission and omission, but all with the purpose to glorify God and to further His Kingdom on earth.

EPILOGUE

H. L. Hemmens was not able to remain long in the members' pavilion to watch the play and "cheer by friendship and counsel those who carry on." When he retired he was a sick man. He had spent his strength in his earlier years in the service of the Baptist Missionary Society. It was not easy for one who had been so fully engaged in his work suddenly to adapt himself to conditions of retirement, especially when the state of his health limited the number of ways of recreation open to him.

On the morning of the 24th September he passed peacefully to his rest and reward in the Central Middlesex Hospital where he had been taken for treatment. The funeral service was held on the Saturday following at Alperton and was conducted by Dr. Ernest A. Payne, Rev. J. B. Middlebrook giving the address.

At the time of the meetings of the General Committee of the B.M.S. in November a memorial service was held at Bloomsbury Central Church; Rev. D. Gordon Wylie, Chairman of the Society, presided and delivered the closing address. Three who have been associated with him in his main activities paid tribute to his memory—Dr. Hugh Martin representing the Carey Kingsgate Press, Rev. B. Grey Griffith the B.M.S., Mr. Kenneth W. Bennett the Men's Movement.

Sad though it seemed to be that he could not enjoy a well-earned retirement, the fact that he died so soon was in keeping with the story of his life. Who, of those who really knew him, could picture him as retired? As the Rev. J. B. Middlebrook said of him in his address at the funeral service: "He died with the tributes of his friends and fellow-workers ringing in his ears. His work was finished; his life was rounded off; God's purpose for him in this world was complete."

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