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The Bible's Philosophy of History

By Principal McNicol

PART III. THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH IN HISTORY

How the Church Began

The Christian Church made its appearance on the stage of human history at Pentecost. It was brought into being by the supernatural event which took place that day. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus brought them into vital union with His exalted Person, and thus His Church was created. It was a new community, composed of people who recognized Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord and were bound together in a common fellowship around Him.

The primitive Church had no outward organization to begin with. The first Christians were Jews, and they continued to take part in the Temple services and attend the synagogue like other devout Jews. They had no idea of abandoning their Jewish form of worship or changing their religion. Their break with Judaism did not occur until some time afterwards, when persecution arose and drove them out. The distinctive thing about them was the nature of their companionship. They met together in private houses, breaking bread in memory of their risen and ascended Lord, attending upon the teaching of the Apostles, joining in acts of prayer and worship, and manifesting a spirit of unity and love that was radiant with joy. The early Church was a simple fellowship, with a new principle at its heart and a Divine element in its midst.

The elaborate ecclesiastical system of order and worship which marked the Church of later times grew out of this fellowship, but it was not the significant thing in the Church. The significant thing was the new vital force which had entered the world at Pentecost and was operating in and through the Church. Even church buildings were unknown until the third century. In the meantime the Christian faith had spread throughout the whole Roman Empire under the surface of its society. In the middle of the second century Justin Martyr could write: "There is not one single race of men, whether barbarians or Greeks, or whatever they may be called, nomads or vagrants, or herdsmen living in tents, among whom prayers and giving of thanks are not offered through the name of the crucified Jesus." This growth had taken place without any systematic effort on the part of the Church, and in spite of the Empire's repeated attempts to destroy it. It was manifest evidence of the Divine nature of the Church, and of the sheer vitality of the new movement in the world which it represented.

The essential feature in the Christian Church, as it first appears in history, was the presence of the Holy Spirit in its corporate life. It was a heavenly organism in an earthly framework. Its function was to bear witness to the Kingdom of Heaven which was no longer merely "at hand", but was now ready and open for men to enter. The Church was not identical with the Kingdom, but it was the earthly side of it. It grew in numbers as the Gospel of the Kingdom was proclaimed and as witness was borne to the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the Church entered world-history as the representative of the new spiritual order which Christ had created by His redemptive work on earth and which has its seat and centre in Heaven.

The Continuation of the Incarnation

In the Epistles of Paul we find the Church regarded as the Body of Christ. The Apostle presents this idea most fully in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which has been described as "one of the divinest compositions of man." Its tone is the most exalted of all the Epistles and its outlook the most sublime. At the end of the first chapter, in a transcendent passage, Paul tells of the power which God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to the highest place in Heaven; and then he declares that God put Him there that He might be "the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all". In the fourth chapter he gives a list of the spiritual gifts with which Christ endowed His Church and the various offices through which they were to function; and he describes these as all having one purpose—"the building up of the body of Christ." This figure of the body means that, in its essential nature, the Church belongs to the same world where Christ is, the spiritual or heavenly world, and that it derives its life and unity from Him.

When Jesus first announced the formation of His Church, He declared that He would found it upon His own Person. This is the meaning of His statement: "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). The title "rock" is used again and again of the Lord God in the Old Testament, but never of a man. The main theme of the whole conversation in which Jesus made this statement, and which was introduced by Himself, was the nature of His own Person; and it would break the course of His argument to refer "this rock" to Peter, or even to the doctrine of His own deity which Peter had just confessed. The Church is not founded upon a doctrinal creed, — although it necessarily involves a creed, — nor upon the person and work of any man. It has no other foundation than Jesus Christ Himself. It is the one means He has of expressing Himself in the world. As the soul of a man is revealed through his body, so the soul of the Church is Jesus Christ Himself.

The process of building up the Church goes on as the Gospel is preached and believers are united with Christ. This is the special work of the Holy Spirit, the continuation of the work which He began at Pentecost. "As the body is one," wrote Paul to the Corinthians, "and hath many members . . . so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:12-13). The Apostle is referring here, not to the rite of water baptism, but to the special operation of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Baptism by the Spirit is the transcendent and supernatural operation that goes on at the heart of the new creation as the Gospel spreads throughout the world. It has been going on ever since the Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost. It means that Christ Himself is born again in every new believer. It is thus that believers are being added to the Lord and the Body of Christ is being built up. It is not untrue, therefore, to say that, in one sense, the Church is the extension in the world of the Incarnation.

The Church Invisible

In this sense, however, the Church has no visible manifestation in the world. It does not appear as such on the open stage of history. It lies behind organized Christianity and belongs to the unseen world. It has real existence, however, for it comprises all who are truly united with Christ and have been received into His Kingdom. It is only in this sense that we can speak of the Catholic or Universal Church. "Wherever Jesus Christ is," said Ignatius early in the second century, "there is the Catholic Church". A statement issued in the course of the present ecumenical movement of the churches defines it as follows: "As there is but one Christ, and one life in Him, and one Holy Spirit who guides into all truth, so there is and can be but one Church, holy Catholic, and Apostolic." This alone can be the true Church in the original New Testament sense.

The invisible Church is the Church as seen from Heaven, and it includes the saints of all the ages. The writer of Hebrews calls it, "the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven" (12:23, R.V.). It has been described in a recent book, "A Preface to Christian Theology," by an outstanding evangelical scholar, in these terms: "The great group of people, dead as well as living, belonging to every class and race and nationality, residing in every land and clime, members of all existing empirical churches and of none, who have believed in God through Jesus Christ and are members of the Body of Christ." The various organized systems of Christianity are but partial and earthly aspects of this true Church. As the same writer goes on to say: "Such churchly reality as any Christian group may possess is due to the measure of its participation in this one Holy Catholic Church."

This means that the spiritual influence which any organized Christian group exerts upon the world at any one time depends upon the degree in which its corporate life is united with Christ and shares in the life of His spiritual Body. This is something, however, for which there are no human tests, and we have no means of determining it. The one Holy Catholic Church exerts its influence upon the world through the various organized churches, and it is with these that we have to deal in considering the place of the Church in history.

The invisible Church, considered in itself as the Body of Christ, transcends history and looks out beyond it. Paul presents us with a sublime conception of God's ultimate purpose with the Church. It is His good pleasure, says the Apostle, in a dispensation of the fulness of time, to "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (Eph. 1:10). The message of reconciliation, that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself", which He has committed to the Church (2 Cor. 5:19), has in view the ultimate reconciling of the whole universe to God (Col. 1:20). The whole creation is to be brought into "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21), and the Church is to be presented to Christ "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5:27). But all this takes us into "the ages to come" beyond history altogether (Eph. 2:7).

The Church Visible

As it is seen in the world today, the Church means organized Christianity. It denotes the sum total of all Christian groups in every part of the globe who profess a common loyalty to Jesus Christ. In this sense it has to be distinguished from the actual spiritual body of Christ, and hence comes the term "the visible Church". This does not mean that there are two Churches, but that the Church occupies the border-land between the visible and the invisible world. It performs functions in both worlds. As the invisible Church is the Church considered on its

Godward side, so the visible Church is the Church considered on its earthly side.

As such it comprises a vast variety of organized Christian systems, bearing different names, and known as different denominations. These denominations form separate divisions of the Church, not because of some spiritual differences in their inner life, but because of some material differences in their outer framework. Neither episcopal ordination, nor presbyterian polity, nor congregational independence, nor adult baptism or baptism by immersion, has anything whatever to do with the one significant thing that makes the Church the Divine thing which it is—the presence of the Holy Spirit in its corporate life. And yet it is only through these various divisions that the one true Church of Christ can bear witness to Him. He has no other agency to use for proclaiming His Gospel throughout the world, and for preparing for the consummation of His Kingdom. The one visible Church has broken up into these manifold divisions through the long course of history. None of them can be said to represent the original New Testament Church.

The Church's Course in History

After the New Testament age a great change began to come over the Church. As it spread through the world its inward spiritual function was slowly weakened and its outward earthly framework was steadily magnified. The presence of the Holy Spirit as the secret of its corporate life and fellowship began to be ignored, and the position of the pastor who presided over the congregation was made more and more prominent. As a result the Church began to regard itself, in each individual congregation, as organized around a man, and to regard this man as its visible head and centre. This process began even in the Apostolic age. "I have somewhat against thee," said the Lord in His letter to the church in Ephesus, "because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4). And Paul declared in one of his earliest letters that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2 Thess. 2:7).

The Apostle is not referring here to iniquity in the world, for there is no mystery about that, but to "lawlessness" (the R.V. rendering) within the Church. The passage describes something that was at work in the Church "already" — even in those early days — and is not concerned with the wickedness of the world outside the Church either then or at some future date. The mystery of lawlessness was the secret incipient tendency which was leading the Church to ignore the presence of the Spirit in its midst as the law of its being, and was causing it to drift away from its original spiritual basis. It was the same kind of tendency as that which led Israel in the days of the Judges to forget that the Lord God was their invisible King and to ask for a king "like all the nations". It was the beginning of the movement which led the Church to identify itself more and more with the systems of the present world, and consequently to neglect its primary relation with the spiritual world to which, in principle and in accordance with its origin, it really belonged.

Early in the second century the bishop, or the pastor of the congregation, had come to be regarded as the necessary centre of the life and fellowship of each local church and as the bond of its unity. About the year 110, Ignatius of Antioch, the same Church Father who defined the Catholic Church as being "where Jesus Christ is", wrote to a local church as follows: "Do nothing without the bishop: love unity: avoid divisions." He went even farther than that: he regarded obedience to the bishop as the means of maintaining not only the unity of the church, but also its union with God. "Let us be careful," he urged, "not to set ourselves in opposition to the bishop, in order that we may be subject to God." Before another century had passed, this conception of church life and work had become almost universal. The bishop was everywhere recognized as the centre of church fellowship. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church as the secret of its corporate life was well

nigh forgotten. Fellowship with the bishop of the local church was the test of membership in the Catholic Church; and the fellowship of the bishops of the various local churches was regarded as the bond of union which marked the Catholic Church.

By the middle of the third century, what had begun in the days of the Apostles as the Church of the Spirit had become the Church of the Bishops. On this basis there was built up the ecclesiastical system of the subsequent centuries—the government of the Church by ascending orders or grades of bishops. The Church had become one of the institutions of the world, and its organization was modelled on the political organization of the Roman Empire. The bishop of a metropolitan city, under whose supervision there would be a number of Christian congregations, had naturally larger power than the bishop of a single congregation. Among these metropolitan bishops, the bishop of Rome had special prestige, because of his unique position as the chief pastor of the church in the capital of the Empire. He claimed, and was granted by other bishops, a certain measure of authority, and in the course of time he proceeded to exercise this authority more and more. Thus, through the early centuries of Christianity, there slowly arose in the heart of the Christian Church the system of the Roman Papacy—the strangest institution that has ever appeared in all world history.

Paul's Historic Forecast

This development in the Church was foretold by the Apostle Paul. As Moses warned Israel, at the very beginning of the nation's history, of their subsequent failure to follow the Lord, and gave them a forecast of the tragic consequences (Deut. 28:15-68), so the Apostle who planted the Church in the Gentile world gave it a similar warning at the very beginning of its history in a remarkable prophecy. This forecast is contained in 2 Thess. 2:1-12.

The Protestant Reformers interpreted this passage as a prophecy of the Roman Papacy, and they spoke of the Pope as the Antichrist. The Westminster Confession of Faith contains the following passage: "There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof: but is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ and all that is called God." As long as this view prevailed the power of Romanism in Protestant lands was kept in check. But about a hundred years ago this interpretation began to be suppressed and the theory of a future Antichrist was introduced in its place. Since then the new view has been popularized and widely circulated. It has been imposed upon this passage in 2 Thessalonians, thus removing its warning of the Papal peril. This has played into the hands of Rome, for during the last few decades her power has spread into Protestant countries to an alarming extent.

Paul's prediction is full of difficulties, and he himself probably did not understand the full significance of what he was inspired to write. But when the passage is read in the light of other Scripture and set in the broad field of Christian history, it will be seen that the Reformers understood it aright. Consider some of its phrases:

(1) "The falling away" (R.V.). The use of the definite article indicates that no local or temporary apostasy from the faith is meant, but something that affects the whole Church and stands out in its history. It is not said to be a falling away from faith in Jesus Christ. Apostasies of that nature have been temporary, and have never affected the Church as a whole. What is meant is the falling away from the original spiritual constitution of the Church and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

(2) "Sitteth in the temple of God". This cannot be the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. That could no longer be called "the temple of God" when its meaning was fulfilled in Christ. Nor can it be any material temple, for whenever Paul speaks elsewhere of the temple he always means the Christian Church. Only once does he refer to the temple in Jerusalem, and then he uses a different word in the original (1 Cor. 9:13).

(3) "Showing himself that he is God". Not every Pope has deliberately done this; but, in the Roman Church, the Pope is given the place which belongs to the Holy Spirit. Besides that, here are some claims actually made in Papal decrees: "What can you make of me but God?" (Boniface VIII, 1300). "The Pope and God are the same" (Pius V, 1570). "We hold upon this earth the place of Almighty God" (Leo XIII, 1900).

(4) "That which restraineth"; and, "there is one that restraineth" (R.V.). Paul was evidently writing with deliberate reserve in using these phrases. He could not name the restraining power directly, for he was referring to the imperial authority and the reigning Emperor. It was when the Roman Empire began to decline and the presence of the Emperor was removed from the city of Rome that the Roman Papacy began to take shape.

(5). "Whose coming is after the working of Satan". This description of the rise and appearance of the Papacy corresponds exactly with historic fact. The phrase, "after the working of Satan", accounts for the subtle intrigue and bold deceit by which the system was developed through the Middle Ages. The miracles it claimed for its credentials were "lying wonders".

(6) "Because they received not the love of the truth". These words convey the impression that what the Apostle is predicting was to be a judicial dispensation on God's part because of the general refusal of the Gospel on man's part. The best commentary on this is the story of Rome's persistent antagonism to evangelical truth throughout the ages, and the substitutes which Romanism puts in the place of the Gospel.

The End of the Church in History

Paul's prophecy declares that "the lawless one" (R.V.) shall be destroyed by the Lord Jesus "with the brightness of his coming". This seems to imply that the Papacy would continue throughout the history of the Church and that its final overthrow would not take place until the second coming of the Lord. The signs of the time give no hope of any other end.

The Church of Rome, in many respects, has had a noble history, and it has produced many Christian saints in the course of the ages. But the Papacy grew up in the midst of that Church, and has imposed its power upon it to such an extent that Roman Catholicism is now inseparably linked with the Papal System and is under its despotic rule. The Church which gave Christianity to the nations of Europe in the early centuries has become, in the present age, the greatest hindrance to world evangelism. It is not only an ecclesiastical system but also a political force. Wherever it can, it uses political power to prevent the preaching of the Gospel and the circulation of the Word of God. One of the most ominous features of the present world-outlook is the growing influence that the Roman hierarchy, which heads up in the Vatican, is able to exert behind the governments of Protestant lands.

Among the visions of the Book of Revelation is that of a woman sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast, arrayed in purple and scarlet, and named "the mother of harlots" (17: 3-5). It is the symbol of a Church that has been faithless to her Lord and become allied with the world, and uses the political power of the world to magnify herself. There is nothing in all history to correspond with this symbol

except the Church of Rome, and the symbolism is as true of Rome's place in the world today as at any former time.

The Papacy dominated most of Christendom for a thousand years, and then, in the sixteenth century, the Protestant Reformation curtailed its power and limited its scope by taking part of the Church from under its rule. But the Reformation did not finish its work, for Protestantism itself broke into sections, and failed to restore the original significance of the Church as a spiritual fellowship with the Holy Spirit at its heart. The present ecumenical movement among the Protestant churches is a hopeful sign, for it means that under all its various divisions the one universal Church is becoming aware of itself. But something yet more is needed to impress the world with the fact that the life of the Church is "given" from above. Rome maintains the sense of the supernatural among her people by her doctrine and practice of the Mass. Over against this perversion of the truth, Protestantism should set the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life and worship of the Church, and seek to make that a reality. This is the real problem of the ecumenical movement, for unless that is done the Church will not be able to convince the world that it is a Divine institution. There is little evidence anywhere that the world gets this impression of the Church today.

What then is to be the end of the Church in history? There is a remarkable parallel between the history of Israel and the history of the Church. Both "fell away" from their original spiritual function. Israel fell away from witnessing to the unseen Kingship of Jehovah in the corporate life of the nation. The Church fell away from the leadership of the Holy Spirit in her corporate life. Notwithstanding this failure in their primary functions, both Israel and the Church were continued by God for the carrying out of His redemptive purpose in the world. Through Israel He prepared for the first coming of Christ and the founding and establishment of His Kingdom. Through the Church He is preparing for the second coming of Christ and the consummation of His Kingdom in power and glory. The Church's business is to go on with its witness to the Lord Jesus Christ while history lasts. This witness appears in its highest form when Christians of all groups gather together at the Lord's Table. The Communion Service is the truest symbol of the Church. In it there is a manifestation of the one Body of Christ and a demonstration of the way its life is derived from Him. In the Lord's Supper, as Paul told the Corinthians, the Church proclaims to the world the significance of His death, and this witness is to be continued by His Church "till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).



MARY JAMIESON
Orllia

Graduation Testimonies, April, 1945

"He that hath the Son hath life." "He came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly." How simple and clear that sounds! Yet the fact is that the truth of those words was not always clear to me.

Like others in the Graduating Class, I have the blessing of Christian parents and a Christian home, and there I was taught respect for the things of God—His name, His Word, His church and His attributes. At Sunday School I learned the Bible stories, the claims of God on my life, and the kind of life He wants girls to lead.

But interest in many things in everyday life clouded the issue of the relationship between God and myself. The time came when He showed me that His Son, Jesus Christ, had died for me, that I myself had to make some response to His claim on my life. I had to settle my relationship to God myself. How wonderful it was, after giving my heart and life to Him, to realize that I had life, eternal life, because I had Jesus Christ.

"He came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly." During school days, and teaching school, life was so much richer because of what God gives in Christ. But it is at Toronto Bible College that I have experienced abundant life in a very great measure. Here are some of the reasons:

In the morning Bible lectures and such studies as Redemption in the Old Testament and Systematic Theology, we have seen man's need of a Saviour, and God's plan of saving man from the foundation of the world. In all His wisdom, tender love and kindness, God intended that Christ's sacrifice should be the price of my redemption.

The study of Church History has given me a new view of God's method of working through men—of all ages, races, and capabilities. We cannot learn of the Church and the mission fields of the world without praying that God will use us, too, somehow.

But it is the knowledge that I am walking with Christ through every day that makes each day full of certainty, joy and contentment. He in the world I cannot see, is nearer to me than breathing, closer than hands or feet.

Now God has opened up the way for me to witness for Him in the C.W.A.C.*—a wonderful place to prove that God's abiding presence knows no limitations. There are grand girls in Canada's Army, and I long that they shall know Him and the happy life He gives.

"He that hath the Son hath life."

"He came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly."

* As an ancillary assistant in the Chaplaincy service.

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When the Lord led me to Toronto Bible College, I felt that a pleasant and profitable stretch of life's way lay before me, but the blessing He has given has been exceeding abundantly above all that I could ask or think. As I leave, I praise Him indeed for all that He has wrought, and I shall thank Him upon every remembrance of it all, and of those with whom I have had the privilege of associating—our beloved Principal and the other members of the Faculty, at whose feet we have learned so many wonderful things, and whose Christ-like qualities of deep humility and quiet strength have endeared them to all our hearts; and my fellow-comrades, whom I have come to love in the Lord, and in whom so frequently His beauty is manifest.

Our studies at College have provided me not merely with a great accumulation of knowledge, valuable as that might be, but, touched by His divine light, they have become living Truth. Were I to choose one revelation that has impressed me more than another, it would be that of the reality of the unseen heavenly world, where Christ our Saviour reigns supreme, and to which, by His grace, He introduces those who receive Him into their hearts by faith. Perhaps that sounds rather visionary and impracticable, but actually it is the one stabilizing force amid chaos and uncertainty. We stand to-day in a world that is fast degenerating. On every hand we see decline. Even the most optimistic are realizing man's utter inability to produce a lasting order of goodness and peace, and everywhere "Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Nor is this strange, when we realize that those who are without Christ and are living for this world alone are building on that which is fleeting, "for the things that are seen are temporal (and pass away) but the things that are not seen are eternal" (and endure forever). The Book of Ecclesiastes tells us that God hath set eternity in our hearts. That is why we are restless till we find our rest in Him, and only the Lord Jesus Christ can satisfy our deepest longings and give us true peace. This I know, for He has done it for me. He came to this earth, and gave His life upon the Cross, and rose triumphantly the third day, that He might save His people from their sins—and more than that, that He might impart to all who receive Him and are identified with Him in His death and resurrection His own Risen Life, making it gloriously possible for them to enter here and now (and not merely at some future time) this unseen world of eternal realities, and live on earth a life governed by Heaven—a joyous life of victory over circumstances and all the powers of darkness—a life, in which Self has no place and Satan has no power, because indwelt by Christ Himself.

This is the Life that the Lord has made pre-eminently real to me while here at College—His life in us. I have seen Him work it out in my own experience, and in the experience of others, (for it is His work, and not something to which we can attain in ourselves); and I have come to know in a deeper and fuller way than before that when Christ dwells in us, and our lives are hid with Him in God in the Heavenly Places, we can walk this earth, slowly disintegrating beneath our feet, with confidence and joy and abiding peace, knowing that we are found in Him, Who is King of kings and Lord of lords, and Whose Throne is for ever and ever.



DORIS FLAVELL
King's, Norton,
England



MURIEL LOTTO, E.C.
Toronto

Every year when the trees and bushes have regained their lovely coats of green, Toronto Bible College assembles for her annual business meeting and listens once again to the students bringing their testimonies of praise and thanksgiving to God for all the way He has directed and poured out His blessing on the activities of the past year. For the members of the first and second year classes, I suppose this is just one more night of T.B.C. fellowship to enjoy. However, for the graduating class, this evening is of far more importance because it marks the close of our life here as a student and so ends one of life's most enjoyable and profitable chapters.

Ten years from now, I think it would be a lot easier to talk of our experience here, for then with the true perspective that distance gives, we would be able to tell with fuller and deeper knowledge the influence T.B.C. has had on our lives. But tonight I would like to try to describe to you some different aspects of college life that have meant a great deal to us.

Three years ago with mixed feeling, not knowing quite what to expect, we entered the portals of this place of learning for the first time. It was very soon made apparent that there was a place for each one in the warm fellowship of the College. Here, it was easy to realize that we were united together in Christian love by Christ Jesus. And how easy it was to make friends, for had we not all one Lord, one faith, and one purpose in life? Truly we shall thank God upon every remembrance of our fellowship in the gospel, in this place, from the first day until now.

It is the purpose of Toronto Bible College at all times, to impart to the students a working knowledge of the Scriptures which are able to make the man of God complete, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. How we do praise God for the more intimate knowledge we have gained of the Lord Jesus Christ, as week by week, our teachers have opened up before us the depths of God's Holy Word. For a real concentrated study of the Bible, the question of time for the business worker becomes a difficult problem. The devil will do all in his power to prevent God's people from having time and opportunity to study the Bible. I think I can speak for most Evening Class Students when I say it has involved a real fight to make time for our studies. And so the two evenings a week which we have spent here have been a wonderful answer to prayer, as we have gathered round His Word with the one object of getting to know better our Lord and Saviour. It is impossible during the short Evening Class course to cover the Bible from beginning to end, but we have developed a certain amount of ability and a greater desire to draw for ourselves the truths of God's Word.

And here we have learned that the secret of a strong and joyous Christian life is the amount of prayer behind it. Possibly the most vivid lesson learned is that we need to spend time in communion with God. Each Tuesday and Thursday it was a joy to meet together, shutting out the whole of the rest of the world and rejoicing undisturbed in the actual presence of our Master.

Then who can possibly estimate the tremendous influence upon us of the friends we have made here, not only with the students, but with our teachers. We cannot sufficiently express our gratitude for their interest and encouragement and for their messages. They have given us a training that has undoubtedly made our lives richer.

And now as we leave the College we shall strive in the years to come to uphold "Christ Our Life" in every way, by our words and by our actions.

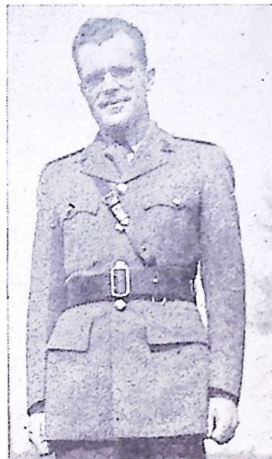
Memorial Service for Capt. McCreery

The following account of the memorial service of H/Capt. Albert McCreery, (T.B.C. '38), has reached us, as published in "The Canadian Baptist," July 1st.

A brief announcement of his death on service overseas was made in "The Recorder", June, 1945. We are glad to have these details of the impressive Memorial service held in his honour in the Old Country.

A large congregation gathered at the Aldershot Baptist Tabernacle on Sunday morning to pay tribute to the memory of the late Hon. Captain Albert Edmund McCreery, Canadian Chaplaincy Services, who was killed in action during the closing stages of the European war, on May 4th. The Mayor of Aldershot (Alderman J. W. White, J.P.), the Mayoress (Mrs. Middleton), the Deputy Mayor (Councillor A. H. J. Stroud, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.) and members and officials of the Aldershot Borough Council attended the service. The G.O.C., Aldershot, Major-General H. Q. Curtis, was represented by one of his Staff officers, Major Robinson.

The service was conducted by five Canadian chaplains—Hon. Captains Bennett, Milligan, Simpson, Timpany and Waltho—and the Pastor, the Rev. S. P. Goodge. Hon. Captain Milligan led the service. Prayers were offered by Hon. Captains Timpany and Simpson, the lesson was read by Hon. Captain Waltho, and Hon. Captain Bennett preached a stirring sermon from the text, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone."



H./CAPT. ALBERT MCCREERY

The Pastor gave a brief personal tribute to Hon. Captain McCreery, who, in order to become a chaplain, was ordained in the Aldershot Baptist Tabernacle in an historic service on March 30th, 1944, by the Home Counties Baptist Association, England, on behalf of (and in conjunction with representatives of) the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, Canada.

During the service a bugler sounded the Last Post, and after a minute's silence the Reveille.

Towards the close of the service the five Chaplains, who are all ministers of the same Convention, and all graduates of McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, the same as Hon. Captain McCreery, sang together "The McMaster Hymn"—"Jesus, Wondrous Saviour"—in a manner which deeply touched the congregation.

The service closed with the National Anthem.

In welcoming the Mayor, Mayoress and Council of Aldershot, and the representative of the General Officer Commanding, the Rev. S. P. Goodge said that their presence indicated the very real sympathy of the town of Aldershot, with its long military associations as the traditional home of the British soldier, and also the equally deep sympathy of the British military authorities of this district. The death of Captain McCreery was not only a personal loss to many, but we all saw in him a symbol of those many gallant men from the great Dominion of Canada who had in the past five years passed through Aldershot on their way to the theatres of war, where so many of them had, like him, made the great sacrifice.

Awarded Military Cross

Award of the Military Cross to Lieut. (now Captain) Alexander McCulloch Deans, commanding officer of No. 12 Platoon, "B" Company, Queen's Own Rifles of Canada has been announced by Army Headquarters.

Alex. Deans entered T.B.C. with the class of '42, but interrupted his course to enlist in the Medical Corps early in the war. He went overseas as an N.C.O. with the Medical Corps in 1941, but returned to Canada two years later to take his officer's training. After being commissioned he went overseas again in June, 1944, attached to the Queen's Own.

The action which led to the recommendation of the award occurred in North-west Europe, when Lieut. Deans was ordered to recapture "K" House, almost the last outpost position in the enemy lines, and therefore important to the enemy as a base for his patrols.

Lieut. Deans with his platoon advanced under heavy mortar fire and the young lieutenant and several of his men were wounded. The covering section on the right flank was not able to get into position due to heavy fire from machine guns and mortars directed on them. Lieut. Deans despite the lack of fire support and disregarding his wounds personally led the remainder of his two sections to the objective and captured it. He then superintended evacuation of the wounded and, although he knew there would be no further opportunity of getting any medical aid for another twenty-four hours, refused to leave his men and the position.

"Lieut. Deans' coolness, (read the citation), disregard for his personal safety, initiative and leadership were undoubtedly the controlling factors in the capturing of the objective by his depleted platoon. His unflinching disregard of enemy fire and his cheerful manner were an inspiration to his men who remained in this very hazardous position for twenty-four hours before being relieved".

Readers of "The Recorder" will join with us in congratulating Captain Alex. Deans most heartily on the award of the M.C. We extend felicitations also to Mrs. Deans (Clara Hicks '42) on the honour done her husband.

A T.B.C. Summer Reunion

T.B.C. graduates in the Owen Sound district held a reunion in Chesley, Saturday, June 23rd. Visitors included Mr. Robert Barr, Hazel McReynolds, '45, and Doris Leonard from Toronto, and the Ladies' Double Trio who were conducting evangelistic services in the community.

An afternoon of sports, games and fellowship was enjoyed by everyone, followed by a delicious supper in the Baptist Church basement served by Mrs. E. Ferns and Mrs. H. Chambers.

After a sing-song, words of greeting were brought by Rev. C. K. Dolby of Tiverton, Rev. E. Lucas of Walkerton, Rev. H. Chambers of Paisley, Rev. E. Ferns of Chesley and Alice Gleason, '46, of the Ladies' Double Trio.

Doris Leonard, '45, made a presentation of Sallman's portrait of the head of Christ to Elizabeth Webb, '41, in view of her departure for missionary service in Africa.

As the day drew to its close we felt we had had a foretaste of heaven, where our T.B.C. family from every part of the world will gather never to part again.

A New Alumni Branch

On April 26th, 1945 the Ottawa Branch of the Toronto Bible College Alumni Association was formed. A group of T.B.C. graduates from the Ottawa district met at the home of Evelyn Cranker, '44, and elected the following officers: President, Rev. George Darby, '31; Vice-President, Helena Rac, '42; Sec.-Treas., Reta Rivers, '41. It was decided to hold quarterly meetings in January, April, June and October, in the various homes of the Alumni members. As this initial meeting was held on the same evening as the Graduation Exercises in Toronto, the group engaged in a season of prayer for God's blessing on the Graduation service then in progress.

The second meeting, in June, took the form of a social evening held at the home of Reta Rivers, '41. Keen interest in the development of this new branch was evident, and proposals were considered to do some practical work in Ottawa on behalf of the College.

News of the formation of an Ottawa Alumni Branch is very gratifying, and readers of "The Recorder" will look for news of future activities. In the name of the Alumni Association we extend to this new branch and all its members cordial greetings, assuring them of our interest and our prayers.

D.A.B.

A Foundation to Build on

In this issue of "The Recorder" we present another group of testimonies given by students who were graduated this year. In varied ways they tell us of the foundation for Christian life and service that the course at T.B.C. has provided. We also present an unsolicited testimony from a former graduate who tells of the way she has built upon this foundation, and under changing conditions has found it secure and strong.

"I was so tired when the school session finished that I wanted to do something as far removed from College and College work as lay in my power. (The reference is to a College in the States that the writer entered after leaving T.B.C.) I have crossed the continent, and the beauty of this country and the majestic ruggedness of the mountains has entranced me, but the environment has proved the most ungodly I have ever been in. It certainly has had its effect on me and I thank God often for my association with T.B.C. right at the beginning of my Christian walk.

There were a number of things that Dr. McNicol said during those hours of Bible study that I felt I couldn't reach then. Now, marvellously enough, they come to me just when I need them most. I am glad for every course taken there, barring none. The psychology that I made such poor grades in has gone deep however. It has helped me a good deal.

Everything connected with T.B.C. is becoming more of a foundation all the time, and I am learning to appreciate it more. For that reason I enclose this sum that some other young person may be enabled to sit in those sacred rooms. I believe this amount exceeds the pledge and I expect to send more later.

One thing I have surely learned at T.B.C. is that I dare not ask for good or ill, but only to be faithful in His will. His grace has proved all-sufficient. Once again I thank God for the many tables of bounty enjoyed at T.B.C.

Charlotte Reid, '43.

News of the T. B. C. Family

BIRTHS

To Rev. (E.C. '37) and Mrs. (Frances Woods E.C. '37) George McAlpine, a son, George Bruce, on January 14, in Africa.

On March 11 to Mr. '29, and Mrs. (Viola Cherry, '30) Ralph C. Rumball, a daughter, Carolyn Ruth.

On March 14, to Mr. (E.C. '42) and Mrs. (Doris Greenslade, E.C. '41) Edward Twining, a son, Bruce Edward.

To Mr. ('41) and Mrs. Leslie Cockram, on March 17, a daughter, Mabel Gwendoline.

On March 18, to Mr. and Mrs. (Lola Turnbull (E.C. '41-43) Melvin Donald, a daughter, Diane Ellen.

To Sgt. (E.C. '43) and Mrs. (Margaret Walton E.C. '41) Eric Godfrey a son, David Eric, on April 12.

In Bombay, India, on May 13, to Mr. ('38) and Mrs. (Esther Campbell, '35) Hector Goodall, a son, Thomas Campbell.

On May 24, to Rev. ('39) and Mrs. Herbert Cockburn, a daughter, Victoria May.

On May 28, to Rev. ('38) and Mrs. (Marjorie Sutton, '38) Russel Lamb, a daughter, Grace Doris.

To Mr. and Mrs. (Anna Patterson, '43) William Wunker, Jr., on June 16, a daughter, Barbara Anne.

To F/L ('34) and Mrs. (Grace Irwin, '31-'32) Alva Roblin, a daughter, Diane Elaine, on June 18.

To Dr. '36, and Mrs. (Eleanor Gonder, '37) Oscar B. Richardson, a son, Robert Gordon, on July 19.

On August 13, to Mr. '40, and Mrs. (Marion McLeod, '44) Roy Massecar, a daughter, Janet Barbara.

To Rev. ('41) and Mrs. (Edna Kent, '41) Blois Crawford, a daughter.

To Mr. ('38) and Mrs. (Madge Edgson, '38-'39) Jack Brotherton, a son.

DEATHS

Hon. Capt. Rev. Albert McCreery, ('38) killed in action overseas on May 4.

Rev. W. E. Atkinson ('10) in Toronto, on June 14. Mr. Atkinson had spent several years in Africa as a missionary. He was, at the time of his death, the pastor of Waverley Road Baptist Church, Toronto.

Gordon, son of Rev. ('37) and Mrs. (Nellie Davies, '37) Arthur Greer, killed accidentally at Norquay, Saskatchewan, late in July.

MARRIAGES

Elizabeth Eaton, ('18) to John Robinson at Calvary Baptist Church, Burlington, on April 14. Rev. John Roberts, ('17) officiated.

Margaret Vanderbent (E.C. '40) to Christopher Thompson (E.C. '40) on May 12, in College Street Baptist Church, Toronto.

On June 16, at Arlington, Mass., Naomie Alcott to John D. Craig ('40).

Loreen Wrightson ('45) to Edward Kelso ('48) on June 23.

PERSONALS

Maybeth Standen (entered 1895) is home on furlough from China.

Katharine Kreck, '20, has just returned from China for furlough.

Rev. '24, and Mrs. (Florence Walker, '24) Victor Veary are on furlough from French Equatorial Africa.

Mr. '26, and Mrs. Hubert Fisher are on furlough from China.

Mr. '29, and Mrs. (Marjorie Wilson, '36-'38) Bruce Brillinger have returned to Africa under the Sudan Interior Mission.

Margaret Halliday, '31, is home on furlough from Africa.

Rev. J. N. Hepburn, '31, formerly in the Air Force Chaplaincy, is now serving the Home Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church at Kirkland Lake.

Mr. '31, and Mrs. (Dorothy Richardson, '28) John Trewin have returned to Africa under the Sudan Interior Mission.

Bertha Belch, '32, is on furlough from the Belgian Congo.

Mr. '34, and Mrs. (Isabella Tilly, '36) John H. Wilson are on furlough from India.

Mr. '36, and Mrs. (Harriette Ollivier, '36-38) Clarence Bass are on furlough from India.

Rev. N. Frank Swackhammer, '37, received the degree of B.A. from Sir George Williams College, Montreal.

Rev. Arthur Greer, '37, has accepted a call to the Baptist Church at Weston, and will commence his duties on September 1st.

Mr. '38, and Mrs. (Esther Campbell, '35) Hector Goodall are home on furlough from China.

Joseph Richardson, '39, was ordained to the ministry in the First Baptist Church, Woodstock, on May 18, Rev. John Barley, '28-'29, and Rev. C. C. Boyter, '24, taking part in the ordination service.

Matthew Miller, '39, has accepted a call to Normanhurst Baptist Church, Hamilton.

Rev. '40, and Mrs. (Phyllis Currelly, '40) Cecil Fletcher are home on furlough from Brazil where they have been working with the E.U.S.A.

Ruth Young, '40, has arrived in India where she will be teaching China evacuees under the China Inland Mission.

Leslie Cockram, '41, has taken charge of the Spruce Grove Mission, Spruce Grove, Alberta.

Norman Holdaway, E.C. '42, has begun a new work at Unionville under the Independent Baptist Church.

Fred Wilson, '42, was ordained to the ministry in the Arkona Baptist Church on June 1.

Mr. '41, and Mrs. (Margaret Barney, '43) Roy Harrison and Olive Shell, '44, are serving on the staff of the Summer Institute of Linguistics at Briercrest, Saskatchewan, and from there they will return to their work in Mexico under the Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Natalia Gibbins, '43, completed her nursing training at Grace Hospital in May.

Joyce Grundy, '43, has been appointed Director of English work for the Province of Quebec for the Child Evangelism Fellowship.

At London, Ontario, on December 19, Benjamin Gearo, '45, was ordained into the ministry of the B.M.E. Church, Rev. E. A. Richardson, '22, taking part in the ordination service. Mr. Gearo has been appointed pastor at Owen Sound and Collingwood.

The following prizes and scholarships have been awarded by McMaster University:—

The Salmon and Esther Vining Memorial Scholarship to Edward J. Dreisinger, '37.

The Second Eugene Harris Prize in Theology to Joseph Richardson, '38.

The Dougald Brown Prize in Theology to Robert Cochran, '39.

The Gilmour Memorial Scholarship in Theology to John Mair, '42.

The Brien Scholarship in Philosophy and Psychology to Paul Beech, '43.

The Gilmour Memorial Prize in Biblical Literature to Robert Arnott, '44.

Alice Dodd, '45, James Hills, '47, and Florida Fitzpatrick, '48, have been assisting with the Toronto City Mission Camp at Bronte.

The following graduated from Missionary Medical Institute on May 25: Edna Pridham, '35-'37; Thelma Wild, '43; Iris Reeve, '44; and Charles Einwechter, '44.

Len Morris, '46, is working with the Church of the Nazarene in Nova Scotia for the summer.

THE 52nd SESSION OF THE COLLEGE

will open with a Devotional Service in the Assembly Hall

Tuesday morning, September 18th,

at 10 o'clock

Conducted by Principal McNicol

Friends of the College are cordially invited

Evening classes open, Thursday, 20th, at 7.45

THE ANNUAL ALUMNI CONFERENCE

Tuesday, September 18th

8 p.m.

THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY

Testimonies will be brought by graduates who have served with the Forces Overseas and on World Mission Fields

Alumni Business meeting at 4 p.m.

Supper in College Dining Hall at 5.30 p.m.

Evening meeting at 8 o'clock.