

But let us be honest. Written prayers too can be badly offered, not worth offering, or both. Successive sentences can begin on a high pitch and subside slowly down the musical scale like a grounded hot-air balloon gently collapsing under its own weight. The precise subject of an individual collect, especially an intercession, can be cloaked in such oblique and archaic phraseology that its meaning is totally obscured from the worshippers. And, of course, the unspeakably distasteful can be committed to paper long before it is inflicted upon the people of God.

If dignity is not allied with simplicity, and if formality is not blended with homeliness, then the prayers have become as unhelpful as the wholesale and uninterpreted speaking in tongues which Paul was so anxious to discourage. A short, simple, perhaps a little prosaic, but nevertheless coherent, extemporary prayer is infinitely preferable to a tortuous magniloquence which may sound ever so impressive, but which, on close scrutiny, may be saying nothing of any significance at all. Let all our prayers, whether extemporary or prepared, be both well offered and worth offering!

SOCIETY NOTES

This third issue of RECORD is the final one for 1982. Three issues are, as promised, planned for 1983. With the exception of the Centenary Lecture, given in November by Dr. A. Raymond George, the text of which is now in the Editor's hands, there is no fresh material awaiting publication by the Society.

Contributions are urgently requested.

Warm thanks are due to Sir Ronald Johnson, one of our Edinburgh members and a contributor to Issue No. 1, who has kindly agreed to check the typescripts of RECORD prior to their submission to the printer. A number of errors in the Presidential Address, as printed in Issue No. 2 (for which due apology has been made to Dr. Todd), exposed the need for additional help in this area. The corrections to the Address are printed in a separate sheet, enclosed in this issue, and this sheet should be transferred to members' copies of Issue No. 2.

With Issue No. 4 there will come a request for the 1983 subscription from members - again at the rate of £5, but with the prospect, subject to formal approval at our A.G.M., of a reduced subscription for retired members. We apologise that the temporary loss of a page of notes led to a request for the 1982 subscription, with Issue No. 2, from some members who had already paid in full.