Pleading for a complete return to Christianity as it was in the beginning.

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What can we do?

FIVE years ago we read what must be two of the most pathetic and tragic books ever published. They were *The Ashes of Hiroshima* and *We of Nagasaki*. The first tells of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6th, 1945, and its results. The second book recounts the effects of the A-bomb on Nagasaki three days later. No attempt is made in either book to play upon the emotions, but by their very plainness the books draw out one's pity, horror and shame that we of the so-called Christian countries thus showed our superior civilisation to a coloured nation. Fear and uncertainty have ever since that time gripped the victorious, as well as the vanquished nations in that war. A dreadful feeling of Nemesis has seized men's hearts; to put it in clearer and truer language we are proving that 'all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.'

'Men's Hearts failing them for fear'

This fear has been a cause of driving men to manufacture weapons even more horrible than the A-bomb. Indeed, that which caused such suffering, havoc and death in Hirochima and Nagasaki is now obsolete. Do we realise that, whilst the A-bombs dropped on Japan were of the explosive power of 20,000 to 30,000 tons of T.N.T. each, and caused 100,000 deaths and more than that number injured, one H-bomb is 1,000 to 5,000 times as powerful? The A-bomb had 1,000 times the power of the heaviest dropped on Germany. The H-bomb is already one to five million times more powerful and is still being developed and 'perfected.' One H-bomb of 20 megatons (equal to 20 million tons of T.N.T.) has fifteen times the destructive power of the total high explosives thrown upon Germany and 100 times that released upon England in the last war.

A French author, Jules Moch, in his book *Human Folly: Disarm or Perish?* (1955), has shown that one such bomb would completely destroy Paris or the heart of London, or lay waste much of New York, with hundreds of thousands, possibly one million of casualties. Strategically placed, ten would cause unnumbered deaths in every English county. These are short-term effects. Other consequences, sometimes emerging years later through radiation (fall-out), are haemorrhages, damage to the brain and breakdown of various organs of the body. The blood would be affected and leukaemia would produce monstrous or abnormal growths. Yet nations will prepare deliberately to inflict such ghastly suffering upon other nations, knowing their inevitable results.

Such are the known results of the H-bomb, now spoken of simply as The Bomb. We cannot of course speculate on the unknown outcome of its use. It is sufficient to mention that the test of the bomb at Bikini in the Pacific on March 1st, 1954 brought about effects upon Japanese fisher-

men and the fish they caught which had not been taken into account, and seriously contaminated 7,000 square miles of territory. Only last week a group of professors in nuclear science announced that the same explosion would result in 15,000 cases of cancer in the next few years. It is appalling to hear statesmen belittle such possible effects, as though man knows all that can possibly be known about this weapon he has forged.

The responsibility of Britain

Why are we writing in this vein? Not to spread alarm, nor to play upon fears, nor to exaggerate the blackness of what may lie ahead. The statements and figures given above are based upon a book published in 1955, The Bomb: Question and Answer, remarkable for its clear, level-headed and unemotional presentation of the facts of a subject on which feelings can become so passionate. We write so because the government of this country is insisting on staging a test-explosion of a hydrogen bomb for the first time. This is in face of the protests of the Japanese Government; of rising opposition in Parliament, so that the Labour Party has urged the postponement of the test pending the attempt to reach international agreement to suspend all such tests; and of the protests of numerous religious and humanitarian bodies.

Why must this country go on with the test? Simply to show that we have a bomb, for purposes of prestige, and to insist on still being regarded as a 'Great Power.' The test is to take place and manufacture to continue although the government admitted only last week that there is no adequate defence against nuclear weapons. It is said we must be ready to defend ourselves, when we know perfectly well that a concentrated attack on this country would leave nothing to defend. All agree that the aggressor in a future war would have all the advantages and be able to deliver a death-blow before retaliation was possible. Even the most warlike in this country would not advocate our using the bomb first; what, therefore, is its use?

It is regrettable that Prime Minister Churchill and President Eisenhower refused in 1954 to consider any attempt to suspend tests or to confer internationally with the view to ceasing to manufacture the weapon. These governments have, therefore, chosen their own path. But even governments can act only with the consent and support of the people. It is not unknown for governments to be compelled to change their decisions on the insistence of the people. Such happened in 1935 when Sir Samuel Hoare had to resign because of the suggested partitioning of Abyssinia by the British and French Foreign Secretaries. Within the past few months the present British Government had to retrace its steps in its action towards Egypt and the Suez Canal because of angry public opinion in this country and elsewhere. And it is possible that a similar retraction will take place if the uneasy feelings regarding the H-bomb test can be given coherent expression. And by whom should such expression be made if not by Christians?

A matter for Christians

We are not writing from any political standpoint, although of necessity political matters have entered into this article. Nor do we hope for the scientists, who devote such time and skill to their researches into nuclear energy, to show us how to use their gifts for the benefit and blessing of mankind rather than their blasting and destruction. We have a right to expect that, as they know the facts, possibilities and perils of what they discover and invent, they should be able to direct in the best use of these things. But too many agree with Prof. Bronowski that 'the responsibility of the scientist is the responsibility of knowledge, not of power, and that it must act not to impose the will of the specialist upon the community, but to help the community to form and to know its own.' In any case the

scientist is no better a man outside his particular study than the rest of people. The scientist apart from his speciality may be as poor a judge of character, as bad a husband or as negligent a father, and as morally unstable as the rank and file of men. We cannot, therefore look to him any more than to the politician for salvation from the H-bomb and its results.

What we can do

We must approach this matter on a higher level than the political or scientific plane. We must treat it as a moral and spiritual issue. We must not remain silent when such issues are at stake. It is to their shame that so many religious leaders fail to give a lead in this problem when one is so much looked for. Only to-day a letter appears in the newspaper deploring the silence of the Archbishop of Canterbury on the H-bomb, although strongly affirming that the yearly death-toll on our roads is criminal. Surely as regards the H-bomb we Christians must 'cry aloud and spare not.' We need something of the burning indignation of the prophets against evil, injustice, hypocrisy and oppression. We must not simply deplore the immoral forwarding of this weapon, but should make our objections known where they will be best understood—in Parliament. Our local M.P. should be written to this effect. If we are among those who believe that Christians should not in any way be connected with politics there is still much that we can do. We can spend time in prayer, for 'prayer changes things.' Yet how seldom do we hear such subjects mentioned in the prayers of the church, and how rarely do we individually spread these things before the Lord.

Christ 'came not to destroy men's lives but to save them.' When, therefore, we pray that we in this country should not be guilty of using this almost blasphemous weapon, or indeed any means to take men's lives, we are praying that the will of God be done.

Time is very short. We must pray and act now. In another few days we may be too late to exercise any influence. Then the remorse, the feeling of 'what might have been,' the realisation that we remained silent when the lives of men, women and children were in the balance. Let us throw our whole moral and spiritual power, in word and act, upon the side of the things that are 'true, honourable, just, pure, lovely, of good report.' Let us make it our aim to be commended by Christ, as He commended the woman, that 'we have done what we could.'

[May I, with the Editor's consent, add a word to the above? As he points out, while largely a political issue, the testing of H-bombs, with their consequent evil effects on animal and vegetable life over wide areas, is a matter which must greatly concern every person of understanding age in Great Britain. Political action depends largely on public opinion and unless men and women of thought and feeling make known their opposition to what is proposed to be done, this great sin against humanity will be committed in our name. Brethren make widely known to your Members of Parliament and to the Prime Minister your intense objection to this dreadful proposal.—W. BARKER.]

THIS house is mine, but more than mine 'tis God's. Come in, therefore, and take of happiness—rest or amusement, books or other friends. Share all there is—He would not offer less. And do not thank me for the warmth or food, or anything to please you in this place. Thank Him who gave it to be given again. Give Him your gratitude, give Him your grace.

—KATHLEEN PARTRIDGE.

[How often have these words been proved true by many of us in the homes of the brethren.]

The Cup of the Lord

IT is a sad reflection on present-day ways of thinking that the question of using individual cups for the Lord's Supper should ever arise to disturb and divide the church which the Lord bought with His own blood. This erroneous and unscriptural practice is bringing confusion and contention where none formerly existed, and it is time for us to take a firm stand against it before it has the opportunity to spread further.

References to 'the cup' are found in the New Testament as follows:

The Gospels: Matt. 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:17-20.

The Epistles: 1 Cor. 10:16-21; 11:25-27.

There is absolutely no evidence of the use of individual cups in any of these passages. Anyone arriving at the conclusion that these may be used is dwelling in the realms of pure imagination, or derives his information from authorities other than the New Testament. Beware, brethren, of all such authorities!

Those who advocate the use of individual cups tell us that 'the cup' is the contents. Let us look carefully at the descriptions of the original feast. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul all agree that he took the cup. This statement (which has all the essentials of a complete sentence) defies anything but a literal interpretation. It tells us plainly that Jesus lifted a drinking vessel in his hand. If the statement had appeared by itself we should not have known what was in the cup, if anything. We know that there was wine in the cup by inference from the context. To put the matter beyond dispute, however, I might point out that the Lord could not have taken one cup and more than one cup at the same time. We must make up our minds as to whether he took one or more. These passages all insist that he took 'the cup.' The use of the definite article and the singular 'cup' leaves only one possibility. I am not disputing that the Lord could have taken wine without the cup had he wished, but he could hardly command us to do so without conferring supernatural powers upon us. The cup was not merely incidental to the act of drinking, but was and still is essential to it. We understand then, surely, that: (1) Jesus lifted a cup in his hand; (2) There was wine in the cup which they were about to drink; (3) Only one drinking vessel is mentioned in the incident.

Now what follows (quoting only that which is relevant)?

Matthew: 'And he gave to them saying: Drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the new testament.'

Mark: 'He gave to them, and they all drank of it.' 'This is my blood of the new testament.' 'I will drink no more the fruit of the vine.'

Luke: 'Take this and divide it among yourselves.' 'I will not drink of the fruit of the vine . . . 'This cup is the new testament in my blood.'

The apostles have said that 'he took the cup,' and in doing so they gave a literal description of his action in the matter. We are now dealing with what the Lord says after lifting the cup. These statements of the Lord with regard to his command to drink the wine in the cup and the reasons why they should do so cannot be called literal by any means. It is in this field of metaphor and figure that advocates of individual cups seek to establish their doubts. This way of reasoning is more worthy of the so-called 'Jehovah's Witnesses' than of brethren of the church of Christ. The Lord's command to 'Drink ye all of it,' 'Divide it among yourselves,' and the statements, 'They all drank of it,' 'This is my blood of the new testament,' 'This cup is the new testament in my blood,' all have reference to the drinking of the wine which was in the cup which the Lord held in his hand when he took the cup. It is clearly understood that he is commanding them to drink the wine which was in the cup.

Because of the language used here, it is suggested that 'the cup' is the wine only—but this may equally refer to both cup and contents, since they must be presented together at the Lord's supper. It is clearly understood that to 'drink the cup' is to drink the wine which is in the cup—to drink it indeed from the cup.

Suppose, however, for the sake of argument, that we were to accept that the cup is the wine only. Then we find that the wine in the drinking vessel has been given the name of the vessel in which it is contained—and there is an insistence on its singularity in every passage dealing with the institution of the feast and how it is to be kept. 'This cup,' 'the cup.' If 'the cup' ever refers to the wine alone in such passages, it is referring to the wine contained in a *single* cup.

'But this was the feast of the passover' we are told, 'and each would have his own cup.' This point is not, and never has been in dispute. What those using this argument have to prove is that such cups were used to drink the wine. We know that this was in one cup, but it cannot be shown that it was ever in any more than one cup.

Can the use of individual cups be justified as an expedient? A legitimate expedient is some measure which itself is unscriptural, but is essential to the carrying out of the Lord's command where no scriptural method has been given. Since the use of one cup is scriptural, individual cups cannot be justified on these grounds.

There remains one further point on which to comment: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16. See also 10:21; 11:26-27). These passages are abstract references to 'the feast' by the apostle Paul. There may be 10,000 feasts in 10,000 assemblies throughout the earth on one Lord's day. There may have been a million times this number of feasts held since the Lord first instituted 'the feast.' We may attend some 2,000 or more such feasts in our lifetime. Yet each feast we come to is to us 'the feast' of the Lord. Similarly, there may have been the same number of cups used throughout the same periods of time, and ever as we come to 'the feast' we drink 'the cup,' and eat 'the bread.' The fact that one cup is specified signifies to each individual in each assembly, the unity and communion of 'the cup of blessing.'

After giving due consideration to this matter, I am sure that brethren will come to ask themselves the inevitable question, 'Does it really matter whether we use one cup or more?' After the same consideration, I would beg you to examine the following points:

- (1) If individual cups are used in an assembly, their acceptance becomes a condition of fellowship in that church.
- (2) The practice of using individual cups is sectarian in origin. I have before me as I write, the 1956 catalogue of 'church supplies' of the 'World Vision,' Nashville, U.S.A. On page 20, the 'Thomas Ideal Collecting Trays' (for individual cups) are advertised with their containers, and on page 21, an aluminium cover for these trays is displayed 'Furnished with Maltese Cross, Greek Cross, or plain knob.' (Quoted directly from advertisement).
- (3) Luke 22:17: 'And he took the cup.' 22:19: 'This do in remembrance of me.'

This is the command of our Lord!

^{&#}x27;Hold thou thy Cross before my closing eyes.'

'A Square Look at War'

(This article was written soon after the end of the 1914-18 war, but its truths are even more applicable to-day after the second world-wide conflict.—Ed.)

Waste

Waste of Muscle, waste of Brain, Waste of Patience, waste of Pain, Waste of Manhood, waste of Health, Waste of Beauty, waste of Wealth, Waste of Blood, and waste of Tears, Waste of Youth's most precious years, Waste of ways the saints have trod, Waste of glory, waste of God—

WAR! —G. A. Studdert Kennedy.

Introduction

IT is an ugly picture that is presented to us to-day so soon after the signing of the armistice; so soon after the close of 'a war to end war.' We have witnessed the growth of lawlessness and graft. We have witnessed the breakdown in our moral, economic and social fibre which has resulted in many evils, human misery and sufferings. We have witnessed the growing unrest among the nations and the ghastly monster of international war ever threatening the peoples of the earth. We cannot casually read current literature without apprehending the growing unrest among nations. War is in the air. Our very civilisation is threatened by this mastodon enemy. Leaven is at work everywhere to discredit every institution we hold dear.

Statements of Great Men.

The statements of men, both pacifists and apologists, regarding war should have tremendous weight in convincing everyone of the futility of war. Men who have stood at the helm of our nation and of other nations, statesmen, historians, scientists, ministers, men of literature, and a host of others array their force of personality in statements of opposition to war. We would do well to incline our listening ears to their weighty testimony which has been prompted by thought and study and enforced by the multiplied experiences of the human race.

Herodotus, the first historian, tells us that Croesus said to Cyrus, 'No one is so foolish as to prefer war to peace . . . war in which, instead of sons burying their fathers, fathers bury their sons.'

When the clouds of war were darkening more and more each day over the south, and defeat was more than apparent to governmental and military officials, General Sherman said: 'I confess without shame that I am tired and sick of the war. Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have neither heard a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is hell'

Other great generals of the world have voiced their opposition to this curse of the human race. Hear them in their denunciations:

Wellington said: 'War is a most detestable thing. If you had seen but one day of war, you would pray God that you might never see another.

General Grant summed it up this way: 'Though educated a soldier, and though I have gone through two wars, I have always been a man of peace, preferring to see questions of difference settled by arbitration. It has been

my misfortune to be engaged in more battles than any other American general, but there never was a time during my command that I would not have chosen some settlement by reason rather than by the sword.'

George Washington wrote to a friend in 1785: 'My first wish is to see this plague of mankind banished from off the earth, and the sons and daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusement than, in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind.' He wrote on another occasion to Lafayette: 'It is a strange thing that there should not be enough room in this world for men to live without cutting each other's throats.'

Sir William Butler said: 'War is the sum of all wrong-doing; and it holds every possible injustice in it.'

Erasmus said: 'Peace is of all things the happiest and best. War, on the contrary, is the blackest villainy of which human nature is capable.'

John Bright averred: 'War is the grave of all good, whether administration or legislation, and it throws power into the hands of the most worthless of the class of statesmen.'

General Smuts, Premier of South Africa, asserted: 'Never has there been so much hatred in the world; never have people everywhere hated each other so much; never has hatred been so great; and so deep.' This statement was made at the close of the last great conflict. We are living to see the reign of suspicion and terror as it fills the world with human misery and suffering.

Lord Avebury said: 'If the so-called Christian nations were nations of Christians, there would be no wars.' (Peace and Happiness, by Lord Avebury).

Sydney Smith said: 'God is forgotten in war; every principle of Christianity is trampled upon.'

A Case against War.

It is the purpose of this thesis to make a clear case against war with all its evils. There are some impregnable positions upon which we can build our case and it is upon these that we rest it.

1. War is opposed to the beatitudes: With the Hebrews, seven is a perfect number. In the seventh of the Beatitudes Jesus said: 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God' (Matt. 5:9). This is either perfect wisdom or perfect folly. It cannot be both and be consistent. War is the antithesis of all that Jesus stands for, the negation of the whole of the Sermon on the Mount. There is no more unpopular message in wartime than this Sermon. Supporters of war would like to cut the Sermon on the Mount from the Word of God and consign it to the rubbish heap. This is not to be. To destroy every Bible would not destroy the pungency of this deep-rooted truth. It is here now, will be to-morrow and until time is no more. 'Jesus preached love; war breeds hate. He preached universal brotherhood; war means the wholesale massacre of men. He preached truth; war cannot thrive except on deception and lies. He preached individual responsibility; war makes men into machines. He came to give men life; war comes to give men death. He taught that man's supreme duty was to God; war teaches that no squeamish conscience must hinder unquestioning loyalty to the military command, whether that command be to poison, murder, maim or burn.' (Doremus Hayes, The Heights of Christian Blessedness, p. 206.)

The poor in spirit do not depend upon armies, navies, and air forces for peace or help. Mourners do not find any comfort in causing others to mourn. The meek inherit, but they do not ravage and devastate the earth in so doing. Those hungering and thirsting after righteousness do not hunger and thirst after their brothers' blood. The merciful do not delight in wholesale murder and aggressions of war. The pure in heart do not need the treatment rendered them by officers among the rank and file. All in all, war is contrary to the very Beatitudes themselves. Jesus said, 'love your enemies,' not 'fight them.' War does not propagate virtues, but vices. It is not the triumph of love, but of hate; it makes devils, not angels. It is the very symbol of hell on earth, and as far from heaven as the east is from the west. For one person made virtuous in war scores and hundreds are made vicious. Someone has well said, 'There is more valour than virtue in war and there is more vice than either or both.'

Does Science Bolster Christianity?

NO! When we see a woman and her five-year-old son crossing the street hand in hand; or, if her son be grown to six feet, and he and his mother arm in arm; we may easily know which is bolstering the other. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the greater.

So Christianity, properly understood, may establish and confirm science in the present truth. Science is still too young and faltering to add much to the strength of Christianity. If Christianity is from heaven men cannot prevail against it. And Christianity has withstood all the assaults of science, falsely so called, from New Testament time. And will stand!

From time to time, as science rids itself of hypothesis, it will gradually come into line with Truth. That will not bolster Truth, but will make science more accurate.

Life and Victory through Christ.

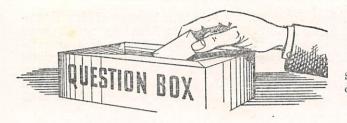
TWO THINGS are demonstrated by modern medical science: (1) the possibility of imparting life from the living to the dying, by blood transfusion, joining the blood flow of abundant life to one whose life is ebbing ('the life of the flesh is in the blood,' Lev. 17:11); and (2) imparting the victory of the conqueror of a disease to one liable to be attacked, or who has been attacked by that disease, by imparting blood serum from one who has overcome the disease to another in danger of dying.

These things also are possible and necessary spiritually. Those dying in sins derive life from Jesus Christ by being spiritually joined to Him; as the branch from the vine, as the limb from the body, so do these draw life from Him. His power, which overcame the world, is available to them (John 16:33). He is the Christian's strength and victory.

This spiritual union is as actual and real as that of physical bodies. It imparts life and victory.

Church Discipline

FELLOWSHIP is discipline. Many mar fellowship by their sins, wilfulness, and disobedience: to these mercy is to be shown. They must be taught and led to deeper experiences in Christian living, learn self-denial, and that the judgment of their fellow-members is a criterion by which their lives are measured. No man lives unto himself. He is part of the whole. Mercy and compassion are necessary towards those who come short of their obligations. There is to be no summary, harsh judgment; offenders are to be treated as members of the family, as erring, but still in the fellowship.



CONDUCTED BY L. CHANNING

Send your questions direct to L. Channing, 9 Ripon Street, Aylesbury, Bucks.

Q I have been trying to find out when and where the 'Ghurches of Christ' started in Great Britain. The question has arisen through someone saying that the Church of Christ has existed from Bible times. I'm of the impression that it has been revived!

A. Attempts have been made to prove that the church of the Lord has had an unbroken existence since its establishment on the day of Pentecost. It is claimed that even in the darkest days of apostacy there must still have been those who were faithful to God's word. It is true that there are traces in history of religious bodies who seemingly have come very near the New Testament pattern, but to try and prove from this that there were true Christians in every age since the close of the New Testament age, is an impossible task. Nor could we reasonably expect such records to exist, for even since the Reformation true Christians have been relatively few in number. How much less so in the days of almost total apostacy! Unfortunately, the main channel of history rarely concerns itself with small minorities.

But even if there have been true Christians in every age, the authority of the church of God does not rest on the flimsy basis of questionable historical succession, but upon the power of God's word. Sowing the word of God in its purity brought forth the church in the first place, (see Acts 2). The New Testament plainly teaches that the sowing of the same seed will produce the same plant, in any place and at any time, (see 1 Cor. 4:15; Eph. 1:13-14; 2:13-22; 1 Thes. 1:5-10; 2:8-16). Like seed will always produce a like plant! Since sectarianism flourishes so widely to-day it is a sure sign that seed other than the pure gospel has been planted. These plants God will root up, (Matt. 15:13). But since the word of God is indestructible, (1 Pet. 1:23) the possibility of planting the true church at any time in any place always remains.

As far as the planting of the pure seed of truth in Britain is concerned, one of the earliest historical records we have of such an attempt goes back to the reign of Charles II. A. C. Watters in his book *History of the British Churches of Christ* says that a church now in the Baptist Union, at Tottlebank in the Furness district of Lancashire, possesses a minute book which goes back to the year 1669. In it is recorded the fact that the church once belonged to a group of four churches. They bore the name Church of Christ, practised believers' immersion, celebrated the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day, for immersed believers only, and were each governed by their own elders and deacons.

Many others also sought to restore primitive Christianity. Several New Testament churches were established at the beginning of the nineteenth century, independently of one another. One such church was established at Dungannon, Ireland, in 1804. Another was formed in Fife, Scotland, about 1807. A church at Allington, Denbighshire, had a preacher only 16 years of age, John Davies by name.

A similar movement took place in America, where, independently of one another, many came out of sectarianism, seeking to restore the New Testament church. James O. Kelly, of North Carolina, withdrew from Methodism in 1794. Abner Jones left the Free Will Baptists of New Hampshire. Barton W. Stone left the Presbyterians in Kentucky and founded a church after the New Testament order in 1804. Chester Ballard withdrew from the Methodists in Virginia. Thomas and Alexander Campbell withdrew from the Presbyterians in 1808-9. John Wright withdrew from the Baptists and Herman Dasher from the Lutherans, and so on. As in Britain, those seeking the truth did not know of each others' efforts until much later on.

Perhaps the greatest impetus to the spread of the truth in this country came from the circulation of the writings of Alexander Campbell. Campbell, then in America, came into touch with a bookseller, Wm. Jones, of Finsbury, London, a member of the Scotch Baptists. Jones began publishing The Millenial Harbinger and Voluntary Church Advocate for the purpose of circulating Campbell's writings. This continued for sixteen months and had profound effect in Scotch Baptist circles. As a result, James Wallis, a Nottingham businessman, broke away from this body, and with fourteen others began worshipping after the New Testament pattern, on December 25th, 1836. He established a paper, The Christian Messenger and Reformer, to carry on the work of Jones and continued for twenty-five years as its editor. As a result churches after the New Testament pattern sprang up all over Britain. In twelve years more than eighty churches were established.

It is heartening to note that the same seed of truth is producing the same result to-day. Sometime back our brethren in Abilene, Texas, received a communication from a group in India. Apparently about seven hundred people had left various denominations, determined to follow the word of God alone and to be Christians only. They had met together for about fifteen years. Upon investigation our brethren found that again the same seed had produced the same church, and the group differed from us only on very minor points which were soon adjusted. Brethren on the Continent have come across similar examples.

Q. Is it scriptural for the elders to visit members who have been away from the church for a few Sundays, or do they become worldly and therefore the elders, being forbidden to mix with the world, must leave them alone? (See the example at Corinth).

A. By all means the elders *must* visit such persons, and to fail to do so is to neglect their duty. Elders must give heed to *all* the flock, (Acts 20:28), encouraging the fainthearted, (1 Thes. 5:14 R.V.), as watching on behalf of their souls, (Heb. 13:17). This is part of their stewardship before God. (Tit. 1:7; Heb. 13:17).

Apostacy, or falling away, is not a single act but a state of mind and heart. The danger of absenting oneself from the Lord's Table not only lies in the fact that it shows little love for the Lord, but that it can so easily lead to habitual neglect of this and other Christian duties. This in turn can lead to a hardness of heart that even the Lord cannot penetrate. In this state it is impossible to '.. renew them again unto repentance' (Heb. 6:6), seeing they reject the only means God has of reaching them: they are crucifying the Lord afresh, treading under foot the Lord's blood, and doing despite to the Holy Spirit, (see Heb. 6:4-8; 10:19-31).

It is the duty of the elders to do all in their power to prevent any member of their flock from lapsing into this state. Only then, after every thing has been done and every opportunity given, should the offender be cut off from fellowship, not as a punishment, but as a final means of trying to bring him to his right mind. Only then should he become to the brethren '... as an heathen man and a publican' (Matt. 18:17), yet still in love. Note the following passages in relation to church discipline, and

having fellowship with those under such discipline: Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17; Cor. 5 with 2 Cor. 6:1-8; 2 Thes. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; Tit. 3:9-11; 2 John 8-11; Rev. 2:2.

The questioner alludes to the example at Corinth, and this is a case in point. Paul writes as he does, not because the elders were still visiting an offender who had been cut off, but because no action at all had been taken, and the man, though unrepentant, was still worshipping with the church. When discipline was exercised, it resulted in the man's repentance and restoration to the fold, (see 1 Cor. 5 with 2 Cor. 6:1-8). The lesson to be learned from this is that if scriptural church government were more widely exercised to-day, with elders visiting, admonishing and disciplining backsliders, the churches would be generally in a far more healthy condition. There would be less sinful tolerance of worldliness and slackness, less 'paper membership,' and less 'dead wood' around hampering the growth of the church.

The New Hymn Book

The Church of Christ Hymn Book, containing 435 hymns, is now almost ready for distribution. Possibly by the time this notice appears the first copies of the books will have been used at the Blackburn conference, and we have been assured that churches can look for receiving their orders within the next few weeks.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in procuring a satisfactory leather-bound edition, but this has now been approved. Bound in black, brown or green Persian morocco, gilt-edged leaves, gold-lettered, yapp edges, rounded corners and with ribbon marker, we can wholeheartedly recommend this book for private and platform use, gifts and prizes. The superior quality has necessitated an increase in price over those previously announced. Prices (post paid):

Black (with owner's initials in gold) 16/6; (without initials) 13/6.

Brown or green (with owner's initials) 17/6; (without initials) 14/6.

In sending orders please state clearly owner's initials and colour of binding required.

The price of the ordinary edition in black or navy blue cloth remains at 6/6 a copy, post paid.

Fifty sets of the printed sheets are being obtained for a precentors' edition. These sheets can be cut into page size, interleaved for insertion of tunes and bound by local binders. The price of each set is 4/-, including postage.

All orders should be sent (cash with order, please) to Fred A. Hardy, Windyridge, Baghill Green, West Ardsley, Nr. Wakefield.

As some guidance in the use of the book we hope to publish a brief series of articles in the S.S.

Give Heed to Reading

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

(W. Carl Ketcherside: Mission Mes-

senger, 1956. 194pp.).

The author of this book is beloved by many brethren in this country and is well remembered for his two visits here in 1947 and 1951. The theme of the book can be summed up in the opening words of the Preface—'Every child of God is a priest!' and the subject is adhered to throughout.

The first 118 pp. are an examination of Scripture teaching on priesthood. Sin necessitates religion and priesthood. First man is his own priest, then the priest of his family, and in the Jewish dispensation the priest acts for the nation. The purposes and work of the priest are outlined, and these are revealed in their highest glory in the external priesthood of Jesus Christ. His likeness to Melchizedek is shown in an examination of the Epistle to Hebrews. Then we are given the New Testament teaching on the high privileges every Christian enjoys in being one of God's 'royal priesthood.' In this first portion of the book outstanding chapters are those on 'The Time of Reformation,' 'The Royal Priesthood' and 'Priesthood and Ministry.'

The second half consists in examination and refutation of the teaching of the Roman Catholic church on priesthood, as set out in a booklet, The Priesthood-A Divine Institution John O'Brien, of Notre Dame University, U.S.A. Bro. Ketcherside illustrates again the truth that the surest disproof of a false system is to use its own words, and from those words the author demolishes the arrogant and usurped claims of the church. Every word O'Brien's pamphlet is reprinted, so there can be no charge of quoting out of context. Examined by Scripture these claims are shown to be utterly without God's authority and even directly opposed to His will. Even in this section the author is not content with clearing away traditional rubbish, but shows how the church of God is built upon the one foundation, Jesus Christ, and that every redeemed soul has the privilege of offering to God spiritual sacrifices, above all the living sacrifice of himself, through the one High Priest for ever.

Although dealing with so profound a subject the style of writing is beautifully

simple.

The book is well printed and produced. The reviewer has found only two misprints: p.1, 3rd line from foot should read Acts 4:32, not 3:32; and on p. 70 line 2 should read prophecy, not prophesy. The book wrapper is fittingly in purple, the royal colour.

Every Christian should have a copy. For those interested we quote what appeared in the July 1956 issue of the

Standard:

'Brethren in America will undertake to see that those in country who desire a copy may receive one without other obligation than notifying the donor of receipt of the book. To secure a copy make reservation to *Mission Messenger*, 2360 Gardner Drive, Saint Louis 21, Missouri, U.S.A.

[Brethren in this country should feel free to avail themselves of this offer without a sense of getting 'something for nothing.' It is suggested that acknowledgment be made by means of informative letters, which our American brethren delight to receive.—Ed.]'

CORRESPONDENCE

A CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

Dear Editor,

If Bro. Findlay had stopped to consider the principles of Matt. 7:12, and 1 Pet. 5:3, and the consequences of forcing practices on brethren who are opposed to them on scriptural grounds, reports of a challenge to debate would certainly never have reached me.

Others more closely involved had raised the matter with him, and had been advised that they must either accept the position, or seek fellowship elsewhere. I could hardly expect better treatment if I had made a personal approach.

In the circumstances, Bro. Findlay's statement (first made before I had anything to do with the matter) that he was prepared to defend his practice privately or publicly, seems to me to carry certain implications, and to be something of the nature of a very definite 'dare.'

Bro. Findlay's practice is the use of individual cups. My proposition gives him an excellent and fair opportunity to defend this practice.

JOHN M. WOOD.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

May 5-Ex. 21:1-21.

, 12—Ex. 23:1-19.

26-Ex. 25:1-30.

. 19—Ex. 24.

Matt. 5:27-48.

1 Pet. 2:1-17.

Hebrews 9. Hebrews 8.

CORRECTION: S.S. for April, page 59 first column. Insert between lines 14 and 15—'Israelites in the heathen nations, we should better understand the.' It would already be noticed that as it stood the text did not make sense.

I-Various laws,

So terrible was the sight of God's manifestation upon the mountain top, and so great His voice, that the people asked that in future Moses should convey His message to them. It was necessary that they should deeply reverence Him. Every motive must be stimulated for their inclination to do God's will, that is, obey His laws.

Thus, immediately they are warned against idolatry, which had produced the dreadful state of degradation to which the heathen world had fallen. With the warning comes the assurance of blessing as the consequence of obedience. The simplicity of the altars for the sacrifice contrasts with the carvings on those of the heathen, whose very habits are to be avoided by God's people—a lesson for Christians who wish to keep, and ought to keep, close to God (Ex. 20:22-26).

Chapters 21 to 23 contain numerous commands, prohibitions and instructions, named in verse 1 'judgements.' We conclude they would be included in the 'book of the covenant' which Moses wrote (24:4), and which had been told to the people before they agreed to be It is no reflection on their obedient. inspiration to suppose that they reproduce in some measure regulations which may have been known already to some extent, possibly by being passed on from Abraham, and perhaps originating be-fore the Flood. Those who loved God in that ancient world had a code of good behaviour excelling, indeed contradict-ing, heathen ideas of conduct. They embody advances from the common standards of the heathen, where the value of human life was very low, might was right, women were mere chattels, and the bulk of humanity slaves. The nation that God brought out of Egypt was to be very far different from that. Not only had they to treat one another with kindness and consideration, but also the 'stranger that is within thy gates.'

We may divide these laws very roughly into three kinds:

(1) Laws affecting the person—21:1-32;
(2) Laws about property—21:33 to 22:15;
(3) Miscellaneous laws—22:16 to 23:19.

Throughout, these laws inculcate justice tempered with mercy. Justice of course is 'eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' Its administration would be by those appointed by Moses himself in accord with the advice of Jethro, only the serious and unsolved cases actually coming before him (Ex. 18), or public reading we have selected two portions from these laws as giving a general view, and stimulating to a study of them all, and we have had to do the same with the making of the tabernacle, and the appointment of the priesthood. Scrivener writes, 'It is impossible to study them without observing their great superiority to all known maxims and practices of the ancient world, and their suitableness to prepare the way for the still higher principles of Christianity.' We add that much further instruction along the same lines is given in Deuteronomy as entrance to the promised land draws near. Meanwhile here we have 'down-to-earth' positive, negative, structive, hortatory maxims such as would be easily learned and practised at this juncture in Israel's history. They could well so work in the minds of the people as to make their enforcement easy-'against such there is no law' necessary (Gal. 5:23).

II-Promises and conditions.

It is fitting that the regulations for civil life should be followed in 23:20 with with these. The Angel (or messenger) is mentioned before (14:19) and after (32:34), and appeared to Joshua at the beginning of his campaign (Josh 5:15). He is mentioned by Stephen also as being with Moses (Acts 7:38). We may truly say that Christ is identified here as the Angel-the Rock which followed them (1 Cor. 10:4). An interesting study in Genesis in this subject could be suggested by the passages 16:10 and 13; 21:11; 32:24, 28:30. He is the guardian and leader in whom they must trust, but they must also obey and reverence Him. The wonderful material blessings here set out remain conditional upon their own obedience. The possession of the vast area of land must have seemed an impossible dream at that time, but the God who delivered a nation from Egyptian bondage could be utterly trusted. The idolatry of the nations was to be feared and shunned, but not their military might. Have we come to recognise that sin is to be feared more than death? 'Abhor that which is evil' (Rom.

12:9); 'Abstain from all appearance of evil' (1 Thess. 5:22). While we plead for a Christianity free from sectarian impurities, let us produce the result of its power (His power) in our lives as well as the 'form,' lest we become another 'daughter of Rome' (2 Tim. 3:5). The snare of worldliness is always with us (23:33).

III—The Covenant made and ratified.

It was necessary that the people should clearly understand their obligations, and that they should make choice of obedience to their Saviour God. Hence representatively by the elders a special revelation was granted—'they saw (24:11). While God's presence was manifested upon the mount, the choice was put to them by Moses, and they said, 'All the words which the Lord hath spoken will we do.' In order to impress and enforce the solemnity of the choice an altar was built, pillars erected and sacrifices made; many sacrifices to provide the blood for the sprinkling of altar, book and people. There is undoubtedly here the thought of atonement for sin originating and brought down from primeval days, and understood in a measure by heathen and true worshipper. We have of course the inspired comment in Hebrews 9:18-22. The blood being in Hebrews 9:18-22. sprinkled on altar, book and people, signified their common consecration to God.

As part of the procedure the elders with Moses, Aaron, his sons, and Joshua. are called out from among the people to come nearer to the manifested presence of God, and they are granted a vision of His glory. They ate and drank together, presumably partaking of the sacrifices. No priesthood had been appointed at this time, all Israel being regarded as consecrated, as is seen by the calling of the elders, and the use of selected young men (verse 5) without regard to tribe. But for Moses was reserved the greatest honour, as he who was faithful in all God's house. ascends into the very presence of God veiled in the cloud, taken into the confidence of Jehovah that he might be used in the training of His chosen people. Some have dared to make sacriligious fun of these events. We can only wonder at the ways of God, and honour the memory of His noble servant. The glory that was revealed to him there none can know apart from what he has written, and what has been revealed by the Holy Spirit Himself in the New Covenant writings. A greater than Moses is with us, and He was with Moses on Mount Sinai as also on the Mount of transfiguration. R. B. SCOTT.

From a Christian's Diary

By BEREAN

13,291 Converts.—This is the 1956 total of conversions to Roman Catholicism in England and Wales. This surprising claim is made in the 1957 Catholic Directory which indicates that the number is higher than that of 1955 by 1,371. In fact it breaks a 120-year-old record and brings the total number of Roman Catholics in Britain to 3,270,800.

Since Roman Catholics do not acknowledge the possibility of defection (once a Catholic always a Catholic) no allowance is made for any who have 'fallen away.' Apparently the number includes 'bad Catholics' as well as good ones, and probably includes those who have been lost to the Papacy by conversion to other denominations. It must also include those thoughtful ones who have responded to the call of the gospel and thus have become members of the body of Christ—the true Church.

so What?—But if this estimate is a generous one it must still give much food for thought to both Protestants and Christians. It is not for us to attempt an assessment of the political possibilities which arise here. Indeed, some readers may ask what it has to do with us anyway.

They may say that we have never been hindered by the R.C. Church in our gospel work and that, in any case, the Church of Rome has only ever persecuted those who renounced it and became heretics. We 'speak as we find' and if we know that some fine Roman Catholic personalities (and there are many) we tend to think that all is well with the movement to which they are devoted. This is far from the truth, however.

* * *

Coercion.-Bro. James D. Catholic Bales of Arkansas, U.S.A., over ten years ago wrote an exhaustive though concise survey of the R.C. attitude to protestantism and heresy in a 28-page booklet, Catholicism and Coercion, from which the following is quoted: 'Consider the attitude of the R.C. Church toward "non-catholic Christians." She regards such They are consipeople as schismatics. dered as belonging to the soul if not to the visible body of the Roman Catholic Church. In other words, she regards all such as her rightful subjects and that as such they really should come under her discipline. All statements in this booklet are supported by references to The Catholic Encyclopedia and other Catholic works, proving among other things that the use of physical force on heretics has never been renounced but have merely fallen into abeyance (temporary inactivity). Has this anything to do with us? Does the Vatican frown less severely on those schismatics who call themselves Christians only? Are those who claim to be neither Roman Catholics nor Protestants likely to be excused their "schism"? Surely Rome admits no competitor in its claim to be the one church—not even the church of the New Testament.

* * *

contamination. — According to a digressive journal the President of the Methodist Conference recently spoke about the two streams, Catholic and Evangelical, which are found in Christianity.' He thinks that there is promise of Christian Unity in the fact that both of these streams are increasingly influencing each other so that they may both 'converge without loss to either but enrichment of both.'

One cannot help wondering what sort of a river would be created by the converging of these two streams. In the first place, if neither stream lost anything the confluence would have to include every unscriptural practice of both streams. In the second place true Christianity is not a compromise between Catholicism and Evangelicism as the quotation would suggest.

If the pure stream of truth has been contaminated down the centuries by the unlawful innovations of apostacy can we hope to purify it by mixing in the milk and water discharge of Evangelicalism? We can only find the purity of the faith by going back to the fountain head and drinking of the crystal stream at its source.

* * *

Mural Mistakes.—A writer in a contemporary religious journal makes some pointed comments about quotations painted on chapel walls and I must admit that even a limited experience of rostrum texts can provide a wide variety of specimens. There may be some oddities even in church houses of the 'restoration,' but none so ludicrous as the 'apocryphal beatitude' (as he aptly calls it) '"Blessed are they who can spare time for God"-as if He were an optional extra!' The same writer concludes that no Scriptural text can improve on 'a plain cross placed at the focal point of the building.' He thus makes the common mistake of thinking that an unscriptural symbol can have more significance to a Christian than the express statements of the Word of the living God.

Setting apart the heathen origin of the cross as a symbol of life (physical

life, not spiritual) there is a sufficient argument against the use of such a symbol in the fact that it is not of universal application. Perhaps this is a new thought to those who assume that a cross is about the only thing that the sects of Christendom have in common. Think about this for a moment and you will see that it actually proves that a sign or symbol can mean quite different things to different people. Perhaps this explains the ease with which symbols are adopted in the religious world by such varied theologies as, say, Romanist and Salvationist, Anglican and Christian Scientist, or Modernist and Fundamentalist. It gives an impression of unity among those who are really far from it. The only basis for unity of thought, faith, organisation or worship is the teaching of the Word of God. A symbol never taught anything; it is only a convenience. I would have thought that the words 'Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness' (though decried by the writer mentioned) convey far more of the truth of God than a mere geometrical symbol, or that the words 'If ye love me ye will keep my commandments' would be a far finer reminder to all, both Christians and visiting friends, of the obligations of faith.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury.—We are happy to report another addition to our number, that of Sister Nora Tomey (née Downey) from the Church at Lawnbrook Avenue, Belfast. Our sister has already found opportunity for Christian service with the church here. We pray that the Lord may so continue to use her. L. CHANNING.

Edinburgh.—Mr. and Mrs. John Little were baptised for the remission of their sins on April 7th. The church at Tranent extended the use of their baptistery. Neighbourhood interest is good and we have hopes for the future of the church. We have an option on a fine building lot. Several thousand pounds have been received towards the cost of a building and we are hoping to begin by summer.

Slamannan District.—The half-yearly conference of Bible school teachers was held on April 6th in the meeting-place of the Church at Slamannan. 2 Tim. 2

was read by the chairman, Bro. H. Mc-Ginn. Chairman's remarks: One feels at times his inability to exhort, but finds comfort in 1 Cor. 1:27. No standard is set for qualifications before teaching others. We use what we have received. Let us be unafraid to speak God's word, for it is truth. Let no man put a stumbing block to fall in his brother's way (Rom. 14:11, 13).

The theme of Bro. Ed. Jess's message was that of winning souls. God has given His word to us through others. It is our individual responsibility to pass it on (2 Tim. 2). No limit is laid on preaching or teaching. We go forth to plough and sow prayerfully, in hope, and attempt to do great things for Christ (Prov. 11:30). 'He that winneth souls is wise.' Bro. Jess also gave a short interesting talk on the establishing, under great persecution, of the Church at Dalmellington. He said that the Bible school for the young, held in a neighbouring district, is at present weak through classes disintegrating after being shown that Christmas and Easter were not Christian festivals at all.

The usual discussion period followed.

B. DAVIDSON.

Ulverston.—The 81st anniversary of the Church formed in 1876 by the late Joseph Crosthwaite was celebrated on March 23rd and 24th. A good number of brethren and sisters from Blackburn, Hindley and Wigan greatly encouraged us by their presence and help, for which we are truly grateful. The afternoon meeting was addressed by Bro. W. Hurcombe and Bro. W. Steel.

An excellent tea, of which more than a hundred partook, was provided by the sisters of the Church, who worked hard and well. In the evening the speakers were Brethren D. Dougall and L. Mor-All the addresses gave us much food for though, and inspired and encouraged us to continue faithful to the Lord and His Word, Bro. W. Crosthwaite presided at both meetings. On the Lord's Day Bro. Dougall was kept busy addressing the school in the morning, the Church in the afternoon, and preached the gospel to a good company in the evening. We are very grateful to all who came such long journeys to serve us. We hope the words of the one who formed the Church will be realised: 'that we shall never have to give up until the Lord Jesus comes.' W. CROSTHWAITE.

Fort Jameson, N. Rhodesia.—In a letter dated March 19th, Bro. C. Nyanjagha, native evangelist, reports that two were added to the Church the previous week.

COMING EVENTS

Edinburgh.—Brother S. F. Timmerman, Junr., of Belgium, is to be our speaker in a series of lectures on Catholicism, beginning May 17th through 23rd, 8 p.m. daily at Protestant Institute Hall, 17 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh. Brethren are cordially invited to attend whenever possible.

Hindley Bible School, to be held (D.V.) from Saturday, June 8th, to Thursday, June 13th, 1957.

Write for hospitality to Mr. Tom Kemp, 52 Argyle Street, Hindley, Wigan, or for further particulars, if required, to Mr. L. Morgan, 'Briarcroft,' 396 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan.

Bro. F. C. Day, Birmingham, will preach the gospel for five nights, Lord's Day to Thursday.

Lectures on Mormonism, Christian Science, Seventh Day Adventism and Jehovah's Witnesses should prove to be very instructive and helpful.

Forums this year will deal with the subject of the Lord's Supper: (a) The institution; (b) the purpose; (c) The nature of the feast; (d) The observance.

Prayer meetings, open discussions, Questions Answered, Open Airs—a feast of good things.

Do you plan to come?

NYASALAND FELLOWSHIP

March 19th—A Sister in Christ £5 April 11th — A Sister in Christ £3

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Bro. and Sis. Percy and Hilda Street, 38a Waterloo Road, Bedford (phone Bedford 66048).

Bro. and Sis. Street would like to make contact with any brethren or friends living in the vicinity.

CHANGE OF SECRETARY

Bedminster, Bristol. — Arthur L. Daniell, 67 Ilchester Crescent, Bedminster Down, Bristol 3.

BIRTH

Wigan, Scholes. — On April 5th, to Bro. and Sis. James Melling, Jnr., a daughter, Susan Diane.

MARRIAGES

Aylesbury. — On March 20th, the marriage took place of Bro. John Tomey, to Sister Nora Downey. On March 23rd, Bro. William Rawlings, was married to Sister Elsie Rowlands. As the hall in which the Aylesbury church meets is not licensed for marriages, a Baptist hall was hired for both weddings, Bro. L. Channing officiating. These are the first marriages to take place in the church here.

IMPORTANT TRAINING IN THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL

BRO. DAVID DOUGALL would be glad to undertake training for preaching and teaching by correspondence, followed up by personal work with him in the field. Financial help could be given during any period of personal training.

Interested brethren are asked to write to: Hugh S. Davidson, 11 Rosslyn Avenue, East Kilbride, Glasgow.

PUBLICATIONS

Brethren in Great Britain may order publications produced by Mission Messenger, from A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Books at present available are: The Royal Priesthood (Ketcherside); Church History through the Ages (Brumback); Bible Commentary (Zerr). Prices and information will be furnished by Bro. Winstanley.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly. Prices: Home, one copy for one year, 8/-; two copies 14/-; three copies 20/-, post free. U.S.A., one dollar per copy. Canada, Africa, Australia, New Zealand: One copy 7/-; two 13/-; three 19/6. All orders and payments to the 'S.S.' Agent and Treasurer: PAUL JONES, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham 22B.

All matter for insertion must be sent before the 10th of the month (news items the 15th) to the Editor: C. MELLING, c/o James Melling, 2 Pyke Street, Wigan, Lancs.

EVANGELIST FUND: Contributions to R. McDONALD, Lumley House, 4 Clarke Street, Westboro, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Nr. Wigan. NYASALAND MISSION. Contributions to W. STEELE, Atholl Dene, Longniddry, East Lothian.

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