

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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'HOLD FAST TILL I COME'

THIS is part of the Lord's message to the Church at Thyatira (Rev. 2 : 18-29). That city is notable as being the home of Lydia, Paul's first convert in Europe (Acts 16 : 13-15).

In answer to the appeal, 'Come over into Macedonia, and help us,' Paul and his colleagues went to Philippi, and at a women's prayer meeting he commenced his Gospel campaign; resulting in the conversion of Lydia and her household. A small beginning, a 'day of small things,' but who can estimate the mighty results that have followed?

That appeal from Macedonia was Europe's cry for the Gospel of Christ. How much the nations need it today!

*'Sick, they ask for healing, blind, they grope for day,
Pour upon the nations wisdom's loving ray.'*

Probably the Church at Thyatira was started by Lydia and her fellow-believers. Many Churches have been formed by isolated members spreading the Lord's table in their homes. It is questionable whether building meeting houses has helped or hindered the cause of Christ. 'The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.'

The first Christians met in homes to break bread; and when they wanted to reach the masses outside they obeyed the Lord's command, 'Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature'; and 'they went everywhere preaching the word.'

The chief charge against the Church at Thyatira was toleration of error and evil. They are commended for their love, service, faith, and patience, but said 'the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire' . . . 'I have a few things against thee.' He speaks of Himself as the one who 'searcheth the reins and hearts,' our inmost thoughts. We may well wonder and ask, 'What has He against us?'

That Church was tolerating false teaching resulting in evil living. In such matters, intolerance is real love. John, the Apostle of love, wrote: 'If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed. For he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds' (2 John 10-11).

No wonder Churches of Christ are dead when there has been so much fraternising with and welcoming of sectarian preachers to their platforms. If the position and plea of Churches of Christ is according to New Testament teaching and practice, then sectarians who teach and practise other things

must be wrong. If all who are associated with Churches of Christ had remained loyal to their original impregnable position they would have made a far greater impression on the world than they have done, and are doing today. The cries of tolerance and charity generally come from those who are the most intolerant and uncharitable of all.

'What some call charity, if the truth be told,
Is backing up the errors others hold.
'Tis love, 'tis duty, shrilly to alarm
And signal give, when error threatens harm.
Lest unarrested it runs madly on
Till fear of God and love for truth be gone.
Omnipotent, do thou each thought subdue,
And help us hate the false, and love the true.'

The centre of the trouble at Thyatira was a woman. That is often true in Church troubles. The Church is blamed for allowing 'that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.'

The fact of a woman teaching in the Church was contrary to inspired commands. 'Let your women keep silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.' 'I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence' (1 Cor. 14-34; 1 Tim. 2-12).

It is quite easy to say this teaching is 'out of date,' 'times have altered,' 'circumstances are different'; but by the same arguments the Lord's ordinances, and most of New Testament teaching and practices could be dismissed.

You would, however, expect that if women do teach they would put forth what is true and pure; but the reverse has generally resulted. Ellicott's comment in 1 Tim. 2 is (we quote from memory) 'The catastrophe of Eden is the beacon warning for all generations when the sexes exchange their distinctive positions and functions.'

Women have been founders and heads of strange religious cults:—Mrs. White, Seventh Day Adventism; Mrs. Woodhull, president of U.S.A. Spiritualist Societies, and a noted advocate of free love; Mrs. Besant, Theosophist; and Mrs. Eddy, Christian Scientist. So at Thyatira, a woman was leading the members from the truth and into sin. The Revised Version margin reads, 'Thy wife Jezebel.' Was she an elder's wife? It has been well said that a church appoints a man an elder, but there is often an elders at home who tells him what he must do and say.

The Lord had given those evil-doers at Thyatira 'space for repentance,' and now declares war on them: 'I will kill her children with death.' The doom of false teachers, and those led by them is spiritual and eternal death.

But even there, a loyal remnant had refused to hear and heed these false teachers. 'But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak, I will put upon you no other burden; but that which ye have already, hold fast till I come.'

There is an ignorance that is blessed. If you do not swallow all modern theories you are regarded as a back number, and are written off the list of enlightened people. But those who refuse to go beyond what is written in the inspired Scriptures are in a strong and absolutely safe position. To such the Lord's command is—'**hold fast till I come.**'

That implies that something has been committed which must be guarded with unceasing vigilance. When Ezra was about to lead a band of exiles over a perilous road to their home land, he committed the precious vessels

of gold and silver, that for generations had been used in the Tabernacle and Temple services, to a company of priests, with this injunction: 'Watch ye, and keep them.' To us has been committed something far more precious than silver and golden vessels: 'the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.' Not manufactured by the saints, nor to be added to or altered by scholars and theologians, but to be kept; faithfully guarded.

That the faith was completely revealed in New Testament times is seen from exhortations given to 'stand fast in the faith,' to 'earnestly contend for the faith': mention of some who concerning the faith had erred, gone away from; and warnings 'that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith.' These would have no meaning unless it was known what the faith really was. That which is imperfect and incomplete could never be a standard of appeal.

Paul wrote, 'O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith.' 'The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also' (1 Tim. 6: 20-21; 2 Tim. 2: 2). An elder must hold 'fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers' (Titus 1: 9). How much stronger would the Churches have been if this teaching had been heeded and acted upon!

'Hold fast till I come!' It is said that Churches of Christ have neglected teaching on the second coming of the Lord. But every Lord's Day, as we gather at the Lord's Table, we are reminded of this grand event: 'For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death, till he come.'

Yes, in the stress and strain of the battle for the faith, often feeling how few and feeble we are, and how weak are our best efforts, the watchword that cheers and enables us to hold on and hold fast is 'Our Lord cometh'; and as He commands, 'Hold fast till I come,' our hearts answer, 'By Thy grace we will.'

Then He will reward those who have held fast His word. But what of those who have played the part of the unjust steward, and for the sake of position and popularity have compromised, and given away New Testament teaching and practice? We would not stand in their shoes for the whole world's wealth.

We pray and long for the union of all our forces; but how can it be attained? M. M. Davis, in *The Restoration Movement of the Nineteenth Century*, uses this illustration: A commander sets his army on the field of battle. During the hard and long conflict nine-tenths are driven back. At the centre, the key to the position, a remnant is holding the original line. The shattered columns must be re-formed. How shall it be done? The simplest way would be to bring the small band back to the main body who have lost position. But this would mean ruin; and so the commander orders all to re-form on the original line.

That is the message for Churches of Christ, and all other churches, today. 'Reform on the original line.' On the New Testament line we are willing and anxious to unite with all who will come back to it; and to work with them for the salvation of all.

EDITOR.

EDITOR'S THANKS

'THE days of our years are threescore years and ten, or even by reason of strength, fourscore years' (Psalm 90 ; 10. R.V.).

First, I am deeply grateful to our Heavenly Father who has given me strength to reach fourscore years. Paul wrote, 'I am thankful to him who made me strong, even Christ Jesus our Lord—because he has judged me to be faithful, and has put me into his service' (1 Tim. 1 : 12). The writer of that described himself as 'less than the least of all saints'; and we all feel how much greater he was than any of us can ever hope to be.

Readers, please pardon the use of the personal pronoun in this message of thanks. I was born in Ulverston on October 30th, 1873; was immersed into Christ on March 1st, 1891, and was welcomed into the Church of Christ at Ulverston the same day. I gave my first address in June of the same year, and have been speaking ever since. Up to date, I have delivered over 14,200 addresses. 'By the grace of God I am what I am,' and by His grace I have been enabled to continue unto this day. To Him be all the glory and praise ! 'Ebenezer ! hitherto hath the Lord helped me.'

I have seen the position and plea of the Churches of Christ attacked from every conceivable standpoint, and I am more sure than ever that the position and plea as proclaimed and defended by our fathers in the faith is absolutely impregnable; and the only hope for the survival of the Churches is in a complete return to that safe and sound ground.

And now having passed another milestone on my pilgrimage to the 'city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God,' I say with Newman:

'So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.'

Second, my heart-felt thanks are tendered to my brethren and sisters in Christ for greetings, good wishes, and evidences of their love and esteem; and I feel so unworthy of it all. When Paul was on that perilous journey to Rome, brethren travelled forty miles to meet him, 'Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.'

The many manifestations of love and esteem I have received in connection with the 80th anniversary of my birthday have given me abundant cause for gratitude to God; and have cheered and encouraged me for the days that may remain for me. It is impossible for me personally to acknowledge all the messages I have received, so please, dear brethren and sisters, accept this expression of heartiest thanks to you all.

Third, as we are nearing the close of another year I want to very warmly thank all who have helped to keep the *Scripture Standard* going. The heartiest thanks of us all are due to Brother Frith for all the hard work he has put in behind the scenes. Perhaps no one knows better than the editor how hard he has worked, often in difficult circumstances, and battling with ill health. I sincerely regret that he feels compelled to resign. It will be difficult to find anyone who will do the work so well.

To Brother R. B. Scott, who writes the 'Notes on Scripture Readings,' and to all who have written articles, and supported the magazine financially and in other ways we tender our grateful thanks.

May the Lord abundantly bless and reward all our helpers. The editor well knows he has not pleased all; the man who can do that has not yet been born. Jesus displeased some folks; and Paul said: 'If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.' If I can, by the grace of God, hear the Master say, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant,' I shall be abundantly satisfied.

WALTER CROSTHWAITE.

ULVERSTON'S CHEERFUL OCTOGENARIAN

MR. W. CROSTHWAITE, of Hart Street, Ulverston, is a cheery man, well known in the area, especially for his evangelical work; and he quite frequently takes a walk up Hoad Hill—the steep way. He celebrated his 80th birthday yesterday, though he does not look a day older than 70. A party to mark the event was held by Mrs. L. J. Wood, of Kilner Park, yesterday, and because of the large number of the Church of Christ in which Mr. Crosthwaite is keenly interested, Mrs. Wood is holding a party today as well.

Having served his time and worked as a painter and decorator in Ulverston where he was born, he left for Yorkshire in 1901 to take up evangelical work, and until eight years ago when he returned and settled in the house at Hart Street, he went all over the country, giving as many as six addresses a week.

Mr. Crosthwaite attributed his youthfulness to the fact that he neither smokes nor drinks, but other people tell him that it is his good humour which keeps him young.

He still preaches at the Church of Christ, and continues to be editor, after nineteen years, of the *Scripture Standard*, a journal which has a circulation in many parts of the world where the Church of Christ has followers.

Ulverston News, Oct. 31st, 1953.

WALTER CROSTHWAITE



Photo by courtesy of
Barrow News and Mail Ltd.

WHEN YOU ARE EIGHTY.

If the years before have been lived all
right,
Your feet will be nimble, your mind will
be right,
And you will be loved, though your hair
be white,
When you are eighty.

But if it should be that you're faded and
worn,
With the battles you've fought and the
burdens you've borne,
By a smile you'll win, more than by
looking forlorn,
Even if you're eighty.

If you've scattered kindness along the
years,
Or brought smiles to the face that was
wet with tears,
Or the spirit of peace to help banish
fears,
You won't mind being eighty.

If you choose with care the seed that you
sow,
You will reap with pleasure the crops
that will grow,
And the things that I tell you are the
things that you know:
Because you are eighty.

—Anon

IN THE CARE OF CHRIST

By BRYAN GREEN ('Rector' of Birmingham)

TO continue this subject of the baptism of babies. What can we do to remedy the present casual and careless state of affairs, which all faithful Christians, and indeed non-Christians, must deplore.

Some clergymen have suggested that for a period of twenty years or so there should be no more infant baptisms at all. The children must wait until they reach years of discretion, say, middle adolescence, and then come forward for baptism. I would like to know what mothers think about this.

Another suggestion is that only the babies of practising Christian parents should be baptised. This, I am sure, would prove unworkable, because clergy would have the invidious task of allowing or refusing baptism. Judging the personal religion of someone else is always difficult, and I for one would not care to undertake the responsibility.

There are, of course, some denominations within the Christian Church, for instance the Baptists, who have no problem in this connection because they do not believe in the christening of babies at all. They hold that the right and proper practice is that of adult baptism.

But what can those of us do who practise infant baptism? None of the above alternatives seem satisfactory. I believe that the best plan is to make a beginning by insisting that adults must come to an instruction class before the baptism of a baby.

It may be a private talk with the vicar, or a group instruction. There are practical difficulties, I know, of parents with small children finding the time to come together, but I think these can be overcome.

This instruction would help the parents to realise what baptism means, and the real responsibility that they have for the training of their children.

I agree, alas, that many parents would not respond, or bother seriously once the ceremony was over; but at least the Church would have fulfilled her responsibility by trying to persuade them to understand.

This is certainly not an ideal solution, and there will still be much that is casual and superstitious in many cases. It would, however, be a genuine attempt to help to establish infant baptism as a real sacrament of the Christian Church, when children at the very beginning of their individual lives are handed over to Christ within the care of His Church.

BRYAN S. W. GREEN.

Bryan Green's suggested Bible reading: Matthew, Chapter 28, Verses 16 to 20.

Woman's Illustrated

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It is good to know that many Church of England clergymen are troubled about baptism. Their troubles are due to the fact that they do not carry out the teaching of the Scriptures or that of their own Prayer Book. The Bible reading suggested by the Rector of Birmingham gives the plan of Him who claims all authority in heaven and earth. There is no higher authority than the Lord Jesus Christ. He said: 'Go ye therefore, and teach (Revised Version, "make disciples") of all nations,' then baptise them 'into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you,' etc. They are to be persuaded to become disciples before they are baptised. So we

read that Paul and his colleagues, 'preached the Gospel—and made many disciples' (Acts 14: 21. R.V.).

There is a Divine order that is never violated in the New Testament. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved' (Mark 16: 15-16). 'Many . . . hearing believed, and were baptised' (Acts 18: 8). Men have tampered with this Divine order, and act as if it read, 'He that is baptised is saved, and you can teach him to believe afterwards.'

WHAT SAITH THE PRAYER BOOK? Catechism.

'Question: What is required of persons to be baptised?

'Answer: Repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament.'

'Question: Why then are infants baptised, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?

'Answer: Because they promise them both by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.'

Believing and Repenting are personal acts, which cannot be done by proxy. It surprises us that intelligent people have not seen through this long ago.

Baptism, as practically all admit, in New Testament times, was immersion in water; and that was the general practice for thirteen hundred years. Penitent believers were buried with their Lord in baptism, having fellowship with Him in death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6: 3-4; Col. 2: 12).

WHAT SAITH THE PRAYER BOOK? Catechism.

'Question: What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism?

'Answer: Water; wherein the person is baptised,' etc.

In Prayer Book service for baptism the priest is instructed to dip the candidates 'in the water discreetly and warily.' If it is certified that candidates are weak 'it shall suffice to pour water on them.' But instead of dipping or pouring they only sprinkle, so that neither the Scriptures or the prayer book are regarded in this matter. When all that profess to follow the Lord Jesus are guided by the Scriptures in this matter, a big step will have been taken towards that unity for which our Lord prayed.

Editor S.S.

CHATS TO
CHILDREN.

FAMILY CIRCLE

BY
HAROLD BAINES

Cowboys and Indians

THIS is an imaginary story based on fact. Many, many years ago in the country of Canada there lived a little boy whom we shall call 'Bobbie.' He was about eight years old at the time of our story and he had gone out to Canada with his parents whilst very small.

Like most small boys, he loved to read about Cowboys and Indians and was quite thrilled when his parents said they were moving up into Indian country. His parents, however, were not quite so thrilled, for there was a war on at the time between the Indians and the white settlers, and had been for many years.

There was a party of about fifty with Bobbie's parents and a few other boys and girls. All of them were Christians and had ideas of their own on settling this war between the white people and the Red Indians. Their leader was a white-haired 'Elder,' whom we shall call Mr. Jones.

On their arrival there had just been a terrible battle between some Cowboys and Indians and the Cowboys had got the worst of it, for the Indians had used poisoned arrows.

Mr. Jones went to the Sheriff of the District and asked his consent to his plans for ending the war. Mr. Jones's plans were quite unusual. He intended going right into the Indian country and setting up a village and a chapel, right between the two warring peoples and worshipping God there. The Sheriff wasn't at all impressed. 'Say, Pard,' he said to Mr. Jones, 'I've known those Redskins thirty years or more and the only language they understand is the language of the six-shooter.' 'Well, now,' said Mr. Jones, 'they are going to learn another language, the language of the Bible.'

When Bobbie got to know they were on their way he could scarcely contain his excitement. 'Shall we see some real Indians, Mummy?' he cried. But Mum said, 'We sincerely hope not, dear. At least, not yet.' Bobbie was quite disappointed. Fancy his Mum not wanting to see a real Indian!

In course of time they got their village built, and their chapel, under the watchful eye of the Sheriff and his Cowboys on one side, and, although they never saw them, Mr. Jones feared they were also under the watchful eyes of the Indian Chiefs hidden in the forest.

It came to the Sunday morning when they were having their first service. The aged Elder, Mr. Jones, was presiding at the Lord's Table and Bobbie, rather disinterestedly, was looking out of the window. He was also very disappointed, for although they had been in Indian country for over a month he hadn't seen one Red Indian.

Suddenly, however, Bobbie's eyes shone with excitement for sneaking out of the forest one by one were scores of real Indians. 'Mummy, mummy, look!' he whispered, 'look, some real Indians!' Mummy's face went pale. Then Bobbie got a shock, for not a yard away, peeping in at Bobbie's window was another Indian with huge feathers and hideous war paint. Bobbie's face paled and he clung to his Mummy. Somehow, he didn't like Red Indians so close and he wished they would go away.

Suddenly the chapel door was flung open and in stalked four huge Indian Chiefs, with bows and arrows drawn ready for shooting.

'Where are your guns?' they said in Indian language. 'We have no guns, replied Mr. Jones. 'Then why are you here?' the Indians demanded. 'We are here to worship the white man's God. You are welcome to stay and watch our worship if you wish. We are your friends,' replied Mr. Jones.

The Indians were amazed and sat down and the service proceeded. At the close, Mr. Jones went up to the four Indian Chiefs and shook them warmly by the hand and invited them to his house, to which four rather amazed Indian Chiefs went. Outside, other members of the little settlement followed suit and soon every house in the village had an amazed Indian being entertained to tea.

When all was over, before they departed the Indian Chief took a feather out of his headgear and nailed it over Mr. Jones's house door as a sign of friendship. All the other Indians did likewise, and soon every house in the village had an Indian feather over the door.

It was about this time that the District Sheriff had a report that the Indians were in the village and he rode post haste with about a hundred Cowboys armed with pistols to rescue these 'foolish Christians,' as he called them. But it was his turn to get a shock when he found the village not only unharmed but the Indian Sign of Friendship over the doors. He sought out Mr. Jones and said, 'Say, Pard, you sure done a mighty fine thing since you came out west. Maybe I was wrong about that six-shooter.' 'You sure were,' said Mr. Jones. 'How about you learning the language of the Bible?' 'Yea!' said the Sheriff, 'I reckon I had better start right now.' And as he turned away he uttered an exclamation of surprise, 'Waal,' he said, 'what do you think of that?' And he pointed to where our little friend Bobbie was teaching a little Indian boy how to play marbles.

For our Tiny Tots :

If I were a beautiful twinkling star,
I'd shine on the darkest night,
I'd seek where the dreariest pathways are,
And light them with all my might.
Tho' sun and moon I cannot be
To make the whole world bright,
I'd find some cheerless little spot
And shine with all my might.

And now an Evening Prayer :

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless Thy little lamb tonight,
Through the darkness be Thou near
me,
Keep me safe till morning light.

All this day Thy hand has led me,
And I thank Thee for Thy care,
Thou hast clothed me, warmed and
fed me,
Listen to my evening prayer.

TWO APPEALS

Address until Nov. 23rd:—

c/o Harpley,
33 Harley Road,
Newtown,
Great Yarmouth.

Home Address:—

Seaview Cottage,
Wallacestone,
Brightons,
Stirlingshire,
Scotland.

Dear Brethren,

The Church in Peterhead is in urgent need of financial assistance in order to meet an unexpected demand for the repayment of a loan on their meeting place.

They were anxious not to burden the brethren, but have been seeking to find a loan from the bank. This has not been possible without certain securities.

These fine brethren are worthy of all our support, and it is with confidence in your love that I thus independently bring to your notice their need.

The sum of loan outstanding is over four hundred pounds.

Two ways of help are opened up; these are:

1. You could send them a gift as a token of fellowship; or
2. You could offer a loan free from the burden of interest, to be repaid within five years from date.

Whatever you decide to do, please send along the amount to me at the above address, indicating whether it is a gift or a loan, and I will suitably acknowledge receipt of same.

Please show these beloved brethren in Peterhead, and in the sight of the churches the proof of your love, and the reasonableness of our boasting on your behalf, and I am confident that our Father is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

Your Partner in the Service of Righteousness,
DAVID DOUGALL.

We hope there will be immediate and generous response to this appeal to help a church which has recently withdrawn from the apostate Co-operation.—Editor S.S.

Dear Brethren,—We desire to acquaint you with the latest developments relative to the erection of a meeting house on the new housing estate in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire. A considerable delay has been experienced in obtaining a contractor to undertake the preparation of the foundations upon which to erect the prefabricated superstructure. As the result of much negotiation, a decision was made to consider the erection of a permanent structure equipped with a central heating system. The increase in the total cost is £500, which the Church and trustees felt to be worth while, considering the relative value of a permanent building over a temporary one.

The maximum loan we have been able to arrange is £1,000. This, with the money received from the former appeal, leaves us £500 short of the total cost of the building and furnishings. Therefore at a recent meeting of the trustees, it was decided to present to you these facts and to appeal to you again for support in the way of loans, that we may go forward with this work. From our contact with the people, we feel it to be a matter of urgency that the building should be in use as soon as possible. We cannot hold Bible School classes in our present circumstances and in this direction lies a great opportunity. We have knowledge of your interest in this work so we ask for your prayers and help.

On behalf of the Church and Trustees,

CHARLES LIMB.
RALPH LIMB.

'Highfields,' 36 Percy Street, Eastwood, Notts.

STILL A CLOSED BOOK TO MANY

A NATIONAL campaign is being launched to make people read a book. Once this book was read in every home; but now it is unknown to many people.

The book of which the Archbishop of York (Dr. Cyril Garbett) spoke in those terms recently is the Bible. The campaign will mark the 150th birthday of the Bible Society.

Knowledge of the Bible helped to form all that is best in the character of the English people, the Archbishop told the Convocation in York.

'There are many devout Christians who are regular Bible readers.

'There are secularists who value it for its literary qualities. There are some, too, who find it useful as a source of quotation or of occasional help in a crossword puzzle.

'But the Bible is neglected by many who look upon it as an old-fashioned book which gives no help to practical men and women of the twentieth century.

'It is now one of a multitude of books. It has to compete not only with other books, but with the popular Press, the wireless, the cinema and television. Many find no time for reading it.'

News Chronicle.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Dec. 6th: Isaiah 63:1-14; Revelation 14.

Dec. 13th: Deuteronomy 31:30 to 32:14; Revelation 15.

Dec. 20th: Psalm 91; Revelation 16.

Dec. 27th: Isaiah 1:10-27; Revelation 17.

Vision of the Victors (14:1-5).—The previous chapter pictures two great powers, one arising from the sea and the other from the land (13:1 and 11). Both these are part of the Dragon's war (12:17). These seemed to have the dominion, but the real triumph is with the saints and the Lamb; hence the heavenly vision corrects the impression of wrong triumphant. The warriors are those who were sealed out of the children of Israel (7:3-8). They have been absolutely faithful—note they were redeemed, not self-sufficient. The war of the devil on earth looks successful, but this is a delusion.

Three heavenly heralds (14:6-13).—These precede the seven angels having the seven last plagues. The first heralds the preaching of the gospel all over the world and gives warning of final judgment. His creation is as universal as the messages. The second announces the fall of an evil power, whose teachings have been accepted by all the world although false fornication is a figure for unfaithfulness to God. The third angel gives explicit warnings that those who follow evil will suffer in the coming judgment—and the picture of the torment is almost too terrible to contemplate or realize. The victory of the saints is in their faith and obedience, and to them death is 'blessed' and is 'rest from labours.'

Harvests of earth (14:14-20).—Jesus said He will come in the clouds. This vision so pictures Him, and with a sickle He reaps. He gathers His elect 'from the four winds.' This would appear to be the reaping of the 'righteous' though this is not definitely stated. Then an angel also in answer to a call from the heavenly temple, reaps the 'vine,' which represent the worldly unbelievers, who are crushed under the wrath of God. This is a terrible picture but is anything too bad to describe final judgment?

The last plagues (15).—Here is the introduction. God from heaven is sending His final judgments upon unrepentant mankind. Their successive infliction might well cause men to repent, even if only from fear. The consequences of sin surround us on every hand. In heaven

God's absolute justice is appreciated and praised, where deliverance from bondage is also realized. The messengers (angels) of God's wrath come forth pure and spotless from His dwelling place, to receive the 'vials' or 'bowls' containing the plagues. The cloud fills the temple closing it until the work is completed. God in figure becomes unapproachable—doom is certain.

The first four plagues (16:1-9).—There is a similarity between the four first vials as in the case of the seals also, and the trumpets. The judgments are depicted as affecting successively earth, sea, rivers and lastly the heavenly bodies—punishment through the physical creation. Under these figures are doubtless historical allusions relating rather to spiritual things than merely physical. The Sore (verse 2) related to an attitude of worship, and certainly the plague on the rivers to persecution of Christians—retribution of similar suffering. The fire of God's wrath did not produce repentance but blasphemy.

The fifth vial (16:14, 10 and 11).—The throne of the beast (13:1-10) would be the centre of authority, and this plague indicates disaster to the world power so pictured, so great as to put terror and pain into the followers or rulers, and perplexity—but not repentance.

The sixth vial (16:12-16).—The result of the loosing of the four angels at the river Euphrates (9:14) was an invasion by terrible hosts. Here we suppose is the removal of obstacles to some other plague of the same kind. The unclean spirits are to gather the kings of earth to spiritual or physical Armageddon—their final defeat. God is working through His messengers to forward His will through the exercise of theirs. Special peril for God's people is indicated by this sudden warning to keep clean (verse 15).

The seventh vial (16:17-21).—Here begins the final portion of the revelation. The destruction of spiritual Babylon forecast in 14:8 is to be prophesied in detail and the final judgment of God upon the whole earth is to be described. The brief picture in these verses seems to be a summary of the whole period. A greater catastrophe than has been pictured under seals and trumpets is predicted. Something like a world war indeed, and what is the significance of the vial being poured out upon the air, from which wireless, radar and lethal weapons of all kinds are now coming? Again the rage of men against God is excited by the terrors and pains of the times. 'Why does God allow war—He ought not to.'

The mystery of Babylon (17).—We should be guided by the explanation and instruction in this chapter to understand

and to be warned against unfaithfulness. Babylon is the place to which the Israelites were led captive. It was a mighty city of a world-wide empire, and was full of idol-worship and sinful practices of the worst kind. Yet it was very great and the glory of the emperors who sat there had the admiration of the world. Remains have enabled modern man to get some idea of the magnificence of its capital. We may expect to find a counterfeit of spiritual greatness in spiritual Babylon accordingly—and we do in the colossal and wonderfully successful Roman Catholic organisation. We must not stumble at the figure of sexual uncleanness and unfaithfulness so often used in Scripture to denote its spiritual counterpart, which when we understand it properly is even a worse thing. There is a close connection of course between the two for when we fall spiritually, we fall otherwise too—a fact clearly stated in Romans 1:18-32. It is not possible in the space available to detail other points. Our readers will do so. The matter is partially stated on page 148, S.S., October.

R. B. SCOTT.

Occasionally he would give an interesting talk at the Young People's Meeting, where he was a great favourite, the little ones loving him. His wife, son, daughter and son-in-law subsequently joined him in membership and fellowship.

Since our residence at Goole, he and his sister-wife have often visited us, thus renewing friendship and fellowship through the years.

With many others whom we have loved, he now awaits the resurrection morn, when the glorious hope of reunion will be realised, and when we shall look upon His face who gave His life to redeem us. Our deep sympathy goes out to his dear ones, and to the Church he loved.

J. HOLMES.

INDIAN FAMINE RELIEF.

Last year, in December issue of the S.S., an appeal was made to help some of our brethren in India who were suffering from famine. I have recently received a report of the way in which the money was used to alleviate the distress, and I give some details from this report.

'When immediate dire need had been met, it was deemed both inadvisable and unwise to distribute rice on a "dole" system, and as far as possible rice has been used as payment for work-service in return for relief. Building and road-making have been done by those to whom relief has been given in the form of food-grain.

'The Fund is also being used to carry out long-term projects which endeavour to assure future harvests, and so prevent future famine. The folk who possess land have been persuaded to use new and improved methods of rice cultivation. The success of this experiment depended solely on the early rains, and we are happy to be able to report that those essential rains came, and there is every prospect both of harvest and the creation of confidence in the improved methods.

'Again, our sincere thanks to all who in any way helped in this grand effort to help our brethren in Christ Jesus.'

ERIC McDONALD.

CORRESPONDENCE

AN APPRECIATION OF BROTHER H. WARREN.

Another pen will report the death of Bro. Henry Warren, of East Ardsley. With the Editor's permission, however, the present writer would like to pay a personal, affectionate tribute to the memory of a beloved brother and friend.

It was in 1914 when, coming from a week-night meeting of the United Methodists, at ten o'clock, after giving the last of four talks on 'The Bible,' that the writer was approached by a young man who said: 'Can I have a talk with you?' A very interesting and earnest conversation took place, which was the first of many such, afterwards held in our own home at East Ardsley.

As a consequence, Harry, as I came to call him, came out from the bondage of sectarianism into the liberty of the New Testament Church. He resigned his office as secretary of the above meetings and also relinquished his position as a home guard during the first world war. Immersed at Birstall, he became one of 'the Seven' forming the Church of Christ at East Ardsley in 1915.

From then he was a consistent member, regular in attendance, until ill-health overtook him. For many years he was often hindered by sickness. Not a public man, although taking part in the prayers of the Church, and serving as help, he rejoiced in his new freedom.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEW HYMN BOOK.

Arising from Bro. Frith's note in last month's S.S. on contributions to the new hymn book, it is necessary to make the position clear.

It is true that no treasurer for the publication fund has yet been appointed, for the work is not yet at the stage where expenditure is necessary. The circular sent to the Churches and to a few individuals in July asked that replies to it be sent to me. However, some few replies have taken the form of monetary gifts. Pending the appointment of a

treasurer, I have opened an account with the Midland Bank for the Churches of Christ Hymn Book Fund, and such contributions have been paid into that account and have been acknowledged with official receipts.

In the meantime, if any desire to send gifts or loans of money these will be dealt with in the same way. As well as contributions, every promise of support has been acknowledged by me.

C. MELLING.

'THE FAMILY CIRCLE.'

Dear Bro. Crosthwaite, — May I, through the medium of your columns, express my thanks and appreciation to all those brethren and sisters who, by letter and personal word have been kind enough to express appreciation regarding the feature, 'Family Circle.'

My heart has been gladdened by the many kind thoughts expressed and the suggestions for its improvement that have been offered, and my readers may like to know that an improved and much enlarged edition of the 'Family Circle' is being prepared and will (DV) appear in the New Year. In it I have endeavoured to embody many of the suggestions I have received.

Many have offered their help in its compiling. To them also I tender my thanks, and may my readers find as much pleasure in it as I have in its preparation. To God be the glory!

HAROLD BAINES.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Birmingham, Summer Lane.— We celebrated our eighty-eighth anniversary on 7th and 8th November. On Saturday we had the usual tea and social meeting and were encouraged by very large attendances, our chapel and annexe being filled to capacity. Visitors came from East Kirkby, Eastwood, Ilkeston, Leicester and the local Churches to share in our rejoicing. We were very pleased that our Sister Mrs. Johnson, who has been a member of the Church just over eighty years, was able to be with us. Under the chairmanship of our Brother Paul Jones, this very fine gathering was addressed by Brethren A. E. Winstanley and Ralph Limb, who gave helpful and inspiring messages. Brother Winstanley remained over with us and served the Church and school on Lord's Day morning, afternoon and evening and also the women's meeting on Monday afternoon. We are grate-

ful to all who helped to make this such a memorable occasion and praise God for the inspiration and encouragement we all received.

FRED C. DAY.

Crossroads (Leven). — Upon returning from Yarmouth, an effort was made along with the Church here to extend the Lord's Kingdom in this part of Scotland. The meetings are held in the Marshall Hall, a publicly-owned community hall. Meetings were held on the Lord's Days and special attention was given to visiting and personal work in the area. A number of old friends were re-visited and a number of new friends made. A special feature was a number of children present at each service who have no connection with families in the Church. Some of these have been regular attenders over a considerable period of time. Meetings were well supported by the brethren and some non-members have heard the plea for New Testament Christianity for the first time. We pray earnestly that the seed sown will yet bring forth fruit unto the salvation of precious souls and the glory of God and the Lamb.

ANDREW GARDINER.

Great Yarmouth.—The Annual Rally of the North of Scotland fishermen was held in the Baptist Tabernacle Hall on Saturday, 31st October, at 7 p.m. Despite fewer brethren from the North of Scotland, and visiting brethren from the Midlands of England than last year, fifty-eight people were present, thirty-two of whom were non-members.

Bro. George Hudson, Summer Lane, Birmingham, occupied the chair and in reminiscent mood, spoke of the rich fellowship previously experienced with the Scotch fishermen, and trusted that the Rally and the meetings over the weekend would be a time of joy, and real spiritual uplift.

The speakers on this occasion were the writer and Bro. Will Steele, Tranent. The writer spoke on 'Pleasing God,' urging the need of faith to this end. Bro. Steele spoke on 'The Faith,' and showed salvation was only possible when we rigidly kept to it 'contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.'

The catering arrangements were in the capable hands of the sisters, who carried out their duties faithfully.

Together with some fine hymns of praise and a recitation, a very enjoyable and profitable evening was brought to a close by prayer, preceded by the hymn: 'Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?'

As the result of the faithful sowing of the seed at Peterhead and Great Yarmouth, on visiting the home of a sister on November 2nd, her husband, James Strachan, expressed his desire to follow the Lord. He was baptised on Saturday, 7th November, before many witnesses in

the baptistry of the Baptist Tabernacle, and received into fellowship in the Labour Rooms on Lord's Day, 8th November, by Bro. Fred Geddes, from the Church at Buckie.

We thank God that He has been pleased to bless our efforts, to whom be all the glory.

DAVID DOUGALL.

Kentish Town.—During the two weeks September 12th to 26th, and including the final Sunday, September 27th, we enjoyed the services of Bren. Gardiner and Winstanley in visitation, distribution and preaching. Bro. Gardiner was only able to serve the first few days. The preaching was plain and true, and meetings held Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays were better than usual in attendance. We regret we cannot report any visible results at present. One young person was interested but her mother forbade further attendance at 'unorthodox' religious meetings. We trust the seed will in due time bring forth fruit, and meanwhile thank our brethren for their faithful effort with us. We hope to repeat the experience but with much more time—and results.

R. B. SCOTT.

Slamannan District.—The Sunday School teachers' Conference was held in the meeting place of the Church of Christ, Newtongrange, on 31st October, at 4 p.m.

Bro. Tom Nisbet (Tranent) presided over this meeting, and in his remarks expressed the importance of teaching the young, and, just as Paul impressed on Timothy the need 'to guard what had been committed in his trust,' it was the duty of Sunday School teachers to guard and teach the truth to the young in the hope that one day they would be followers of Jesus Christ.

The Scripture Reading, Romans 10, was read by Bro. Jim Wardrop (Motherwell), after which three ten-minute addresses on 'Faith,' 'Repentance' and 'Confession' were given by Bren. Mark Plain (Tranent), James Gardiner (Tranent) and Jim Morris (Newtongrange).

The speakers were heartily thanked, and after a time of questions and discussion, it was agreed that everyone present had spent a most profitable time.

J. DOUGALL.

Tunbridge Wells.—The Church in Silverdale Hall celebrated their eighth anniversary on the 7th and 8th November. On Saturday, 7th, we commenced with tea at 4.30 and a social evening followed at 6.30 when a large number of non-members were present. We had the pleasure and company of Bro. Eric McDonald, who preached the gospel. His main theme was: 'The love of money is the root of all evil' in men striving to get on in this world. Followed up by that truth, Bro. Bishop spoke a few words on the one and only Church for the world. Bro. W. Hillman, of East Grinstead, ably

presided, with his cheerful disposition. Bro. Styles read the report of another year's progress, including additions by transfer from East Grinstead.

The addresses were interspersed by singing and recitations.

On Lord's Day there was a large attendance of non-members at the Gospel service. We thank God for these times of refreshing and fellowship with other brethren, and encouragement received to press on.

EDNA GILLET.

Tunbridge Wells (5 Mount Ephraim Rd.)

—On Lord's Day, 1st November, we rejoiced to welcome three new members to the congregation here. It had been our joy to baptise Sisters Boxhall and Platt on the previous Thursday, at Brighton. Bro. Boxhall (the husband of Sister Boxhall) was already baptised. We thank God for this evidence of the power of truth, and pray that each of these may be greatly used for his glory.

The baptismal meeting, at Oxford Street, Brighton, was well attended, and our brethren there encouraged us greatly by their support. We appreciate their brotherly love, in providing us necessary facilities for baptism.

Saturday, October 31st, began our month's gospel mission. We held a meeting at which Bro. P. G. Ogden presided, and Brethren Frank Worgan and Leonard Morgan spoke. The former spoke on 'The Purposes of Christianity' and the latter on 'The Living Christ.' Both messages were greatly appreciated. A good number of non-members were present, and we feel confident that some will be anxious to learn more of 'the faith once delivered.'

On Lord's Day, November 1st, Bro. Morgan exhorted the Church on Deuteronomy 33:27, and in the evening Bro. Worgan spoke on 'Why Jesus Came.' Both addresses were on a very high level and it was a joy again to see interested non-members at the gospel service.

We anticipate a time of great blessing during November, in which Bro. Worgan will labour with us, and ask for the prayers of all faithful brethren that the Word of God might win its way into many hearts.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

Zomba, Nyasaland, Africa.—Glad to report that, on September 29th, we baptised five penitent believers at Mulema. At Nankanda I shared the preaching with other brethren at a camp meeting, from October 1st to 4th. As a result we were glad to go to the stream and baptise ten souls. Bro. Mpandakwaya preached to the congregation, and six were restored to the Church. We of Zomba district, leaving Mianyl, went to Cholo, and we preached the Gospel. On October 6th, two were baptised.

We who are of the S.S. Church of Christ are depending on fellowship from England.

Those of the 'Old Paths Advocate,' U.S.A., care well for our preachers, and send Bibles and other books, also clothes and money. In the first days, 'All that believed were together, and had all things common.'

GARNETT LIMANI
MURLA MPANDAKWAYA
BAXSTON MIKUNWA
ERICSON LIMANI

A MARTYR FOR TRUTH

Alexander Duff, who had given his whole life for India, and as an old man stood in Edinburgh, and for two hours and a half held his listeners spell-bound, as he told the story of trials, hardships, and conquests. Then he fainted and was carried from the hall. When he came to himself he asked 'Where am I? What was I doing? Oh yes: take me back and let me finish my speech!' 'You will kill yourself if you do,' exclaimed his friends. 'I shall die if I do not.' And so they carried him back. The whole audience arose, men and women sobbing. He was unable to stand but sat down and said, 'Fathers of Scotland, have you any sons to send to India? I have spent my life there, and my life has gone, but if there are no young men, I will go back myself, and lay my bones there and let the people know that there is one man in Christian Britain who is ready to die for India.'

When I am dead—if men can say,
He helped the world along its way;
If they can say—if they but can—
He did his best, he played the man;
His way was straight, his soul was
clean,

His fallings not unkind, nor mean;
He loved his fellowmen, and tried
To help them—I'll be satisfied.

—J. G. Whittier.

OBITUARY

East Ardsley—It is with regret that we have to report the passing of beloved Brother, Harry Warren, on Nov. 13th, 1953. He was one of the seven members who commenced the Church at Ardsley, in October, 1905.

Although not looked upon as a public speaker, yet he was a great worker in his own capacity, visiting homes in search of children, when the Church commenced its Sunday School, and was instrumental in bringing many scholars to the School, where he was a great worker, and in Young People's Outings. He was ever present in the Church Assembly. His

influence for good was great both in his workaday life as well as his Church life.

He was stricken down with a serious illness, which was borne very patiently.

He leaves a widow and a son and daughter (both married), to mourn his loss. He will be greatly missed. The funeral took place on Monday, Nov. 16th. Bro. W. Wintersgill conducted the services both in the meeting room and at the Cemetery.
E. PICKERSGILL

Newport, Mon.—Bro. W. Lewis, an Elder of the Newport Church, fell asleep on October 9th at the age of eighty-eight. Our brother had been an active member for nearly fifty years, and had enjoyed good health until the spring of this year, when he began to find it difficult to travel the distance of three miles to meet the brothers and sisters.

Under great difficulties our brother attended the Breaking of Bread and Gospel meetings until July when he became very ill, and was confined to bed. His last address to the Church was from Colossians 3: 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.' The message was a great one, and stirred the hearts of all present.

He has left a family of daughters to mourn his passing. We pray that they will be comforted with the assurance that he trusted in the King of Kings, and all will be well with him.

'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.' Where there is shadow there must be light, and to the believer the shadow is harmless. If only all would realise that God is calling them into the light.
A. BLANDFORD.

Kirkcaldy, Rose Street.—It is with deep regret that we record the sudden death of our Bro. Bertie Wishart, on October 24th, at the age of 78 years. Bro. Wishart passed away at the home of his daughter (Sister W. Dick), at Broughty Ferry where he and Sister Wishart had gone to live in January last. Bro. Wishart was an active member of Rose Street for the long space of 50 years and in addition to being a deacon and then an elder, he was secretary and treasurer of the Church for over 40 years. Truly a wonderful record of service and faithfulness to the Church of our Lord and Saviour. Bro. Wishart was a staunch contender for the faith and a pillar of the Church in every sense of the word. Our deep sense of loss is tempered by the knowledge that he has gone to receive his reward and that we shall meet again in that land where partings are no more. Our loving sympathy and our prayers are for our Sister Wishart and family that they may be comforted and sustained in this time of sorrow.
D. MELLIS.

NEXT CONFERENCE.

Saturday, April 17th, 1954. Will any Church desirous of entertaining the Conference please communicate with the Conference Secretary, A. Hood.

COMING EVENT.

Slamannan District.—The annual New Year social gathering of the Churches of Christ in the Slamannan district will be held (DV) on Friday, 1st January, 1954, in the Blackridge Church meeting house at 12 noon.

Chairman. Bro. D. Dougall.

Speakers,

Bren. L. Morgan and A. Winstanley.

All Churches are cordially invited.

DONATION.

From a brother in Christ, £1 for the Nyasaland Mission.

CHANGE OF TIME OF MEETING.

Glasgow, 71 Hospital Street.—Lord's Day meeting now at 12 noon.

READING CARDS, 1954

Price One Penny each, post paid from the Treasurer. Cash with order and as early as possible please.

WANTED

Addresses of Christ of Christ members living in or near Reigate, Surrey, please write to W. H. Cummins, 29 Churston Avenue, London, E.13.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

J. McF. Black (of Kentish Town) removed to 53 Egerton Crescent, Kensington, London, S.W.3.

Bro. J. E. Breakell, 185 Trowell Road, Wollaton, Notts.

Bro. Geoffrey Lodge, 67 Track Road, Batley, Yorkshire.

PLEASE NOTE.

Will those sending reports, etc., for publication, please write on one side of paper only.

HOW LONG DOES YOUR MONEY LAST?

Use your money while you're living,
Do not hoard it to be proud;
You can never take it with you,
There's no pocket in a shroud.

Gold can help you go no farther
Than the graveyard where you lie;
And though you're rich while living,
You're a pauper when you die.

Use it then some lives to brighten
As through life they weary plod;
Place your bank account in heaven,
And grow rich toward your God.

NEARLY 5,000 IMMERSSED IN FIVE HOURS.

The eight-day convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York City broke Witness records for . . . mass baptism, with 4,640 new members immersed in five hours; . . . (Time). We quote this because it shows very vividly the foolishness of the much-heard objection to the baptism of the three thousand in Acts 2—'You can't baptise that many people in one day!' — *South Lincoln Avenue Newsletter*.

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All matter for insertion must be sent before the 10th of the month (News items the 15th) to the Editor: W. CROSTHWAITE, Ford Villa, Hart Street, Ulverston, Lancs.

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

Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 8 Torquay Avenue, Owton Manor West Hartlepool, Co. Durham.

NYASALAND MISSION. Contributions to W. STEELE, Atholl Dene, Longniddry East Lothian.

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