

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT

Carlton Melling

VII: CONTROVERSY AND DIVISION (I)

"THERE is no institution so pure and excellent which the folly and corruption of man will not in time alter for the worse." It is a tragedy that this has occurred in the history of the movement we are now considering. Nevertheless, to obtain a right conception of its history, this marring of the work of God by man must be recorded.

From the time of the preaching of Walter Scott and the union with Barton Stone's "Christians" the growth of the "Disciples" was phenomenal. No longer were they, like the early Christians, "a sect everywhere spoken against," but they grew beyond the size and strength of their former enemies. The "Disciples" had come to be a people acknowledged and respected, but the early pioneering, adventuring and debating spirit had gradually died. With the ageing and death of the pioneers, the form of the movement changed for the worse. This second era was the perilous period, and the churches did not come through it unscathed and pure.

Perhaps the American genius for "getting things done" played some part in the declension. The restless energy of the leading personalities was directed to organisation and the perfection of worship. The inevitable outcome was an attempt to improve on the Scriptural order, with the result that, as the denominations did, so did they. Under the plea of "expediency" practices were advocated which had no warrant in the scriptures.

Expediency

Paul's teaching in 1 Cor. 6:12 and v. 23 shows expediency to cover not the things which may be *included*, but those which must be *excluded*: "All things are lawful [there is no law, no 'thus saith the Lord,' it is not forbidden in so many words] but all things are not expedient"—not all things are right. Archbishop Whately in this connection said: "Nothing but the right can ever be expedient."

Let us glance more particularly at these innovations which caused controversy and division in a previously happy and united body. They can be listed under three heads: (1) Colleges; (2) Societies; (3) Instrumental music in the church.

(1) COLLEGES

Alexander Campbell had individual ideas on the nature and scope of education, and put these ideas into practice when he founded Bethany College in 1840. It was not

strictly a theological college, but Campbell sought to make the Bible the basis in all the studies. It was not easy to see how this could be done in the general education given. Campbell had, of course, a perfect right to establish his college, but he went beyond his rights when he toured widely to solicit funds for its support. One cannot help but think that if the same time and energy had been devoted, as in earlier days, to his powerful proclamation of the gospel, his work would have borne richer fruits than have resulted from Bethany College and its progeny. This begging of money from the churches was one of the causes of opposition to these colleges. The brethren should not have been asked to support an institution which they had not brought into being. The opposition was not to education, but to the using of funds for that purpose which should have been used in the propagation of the gospel. For by no means all the students in the college found their vocation in the evangelistic field. In his old age, Daniel Sommer said, "In 1830, when the Mahoning Association dissolved itself and left the Disciples without any religious organisation except the local congregation, we were on the plainness and simplicity of the order found in the New Testament. But in ten years the purpose was considered by Alexander Campbell to establish a college — to educate men for the ministry. And that humanism [human institution] was the beginning of divisions among the Disciples in the 19th century. It was intended for good. But what were the results? I became a student there in 1869. But of all the young men I met there who intended to preach, only one went into the field as an evangelist and stayed there, and that one stands before you to-day [Daniel Sommer himself]. All others sought pastorates, or a professorship, or some other position rather than evangelist. The young man 'pastorate' was begun among Disciples and was borrowed from denominations for it cannot be found in the Bible." Bethany College was the progenitor of numerous similar colleges.

A much more serious objection than that of misuse of church funds without adequate return, was that based on the teaching, which tended more and more to liberalism and modernism. The results are apparent in the churches of the "Disciples" in America to-day, with their acceptance of the "modern approach" to the Bible; "the assured results of modern Biblical criticism," and the open admission that the "Disciples" are a denomination among denominations, as indeed they have become. The beloved and scholarly J. W. McGarvey, author of the much-used commentary on Acts, who was from 1865 to 1895 professor in Lexington Bible College, and President of the College until his death in 1911, feared this trend, and stated that rather than see his College yield to infidelity, he would prefer to see it sunk in the depths of the sea. Foy E. Wallace Jun. has said, "It was the colleges, and not the societies, which led us into the digression."

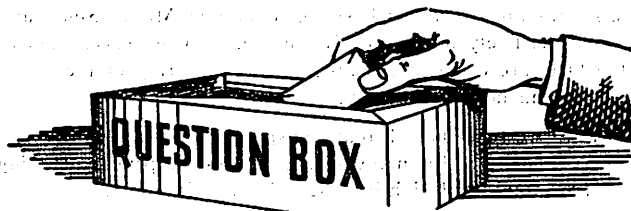
(2) SOCIETIES

The American Christian Missionary Society was founded at Cincinnati in 1849, and had a mixed reception from the churches. Some, like Jacob Creath Jun. opposed it from the commencement, on the ground that the church as the church was the only divinely appointed institution for spreading Christ's gospel, and that in the New Testament the *churches* sent forth their missionaries, and not any society within or without the church. Others, like Benjamin Franklin, turned from at first supporting the Society to opposition. Alexander Campbell was made its President and continued so to his death in 1866; but he was not present at the inaugural meeting, nor did he preside over a single meeting of the Society. How much he was interested is shown by the fact that, though he died the richest man in West Virginia, not a cent did he leave to the A.C.M.S. Campbell had written strongly against such Societies in the *Christian Baptist*, saying that "The Societies called churches neither transformed themselves into any other kind of association, nor did they fracture and sever themselves into divers Societies. They viewed the church of Christ as the scheme of heaven. They dare not transfer to a Missionary Society a cent or a prayer lest in so doing they should rob the Church of its glory and exalt the inventions of men above the wisdom of God." Stern words, but true: for if the glory which has been given to Missionary and other Societies within and outside the church had gone to the church, she would be seen as indeed the "habitation of God through the Spirit" and not as the scorned and apologetic beggar

soliciting the favours of the world. "To the intent that *now* unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known *through the church* the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10).

Many other Societies among the "Disciples" followed in the wake of the A.C.M.S. using up the energy, time, and money which should have been consecrated to the church.

(To be continued)



Conducted by
James Gardiner

"In the Old Testament we read that on several occasions men saw God, sometimes face to face (see Ex. 33; Gen. 22:30 etc.), and yet Jesus says in John 1:18 that no man hath seen God at any time. How can we reconcile these statements?"

It is not an easy matter to reconcile all the passages to everyone's satisfaction, or indeed to *anyone's* satisfaction, and I can but pass on my thoughts in this matter. The O.T. not only talks about men *seeing* God but also of men *hearing* the voice of God; and yet Jesus says in John 5:37 "Ye have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His shape." So we not only have the problem of explaining God's appearing but the hearing of His voice as well.

In the garden of Eden, Adam said, referring to God, "I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid" (Gen. 3:9, 10); Jacob (in Gen. 32:30) called the name of the place Peniel, "for," said he, "I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved." Apparently he was surprised he should see God and still live.

Isaiah says (in Isa. 6:1) that "In the year king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."

In Ex. 24:9, 11 we read, "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel . . ."

In Ex. 33 we read that God spoke to Moses face to face (v. 11) and also (v. 20) that because Moses could not look upon God's face and live he would see only God's back parts.

In John 1:18 Jesus says, "No man hath seen God at any time" (a very broad and categorical statement). Again in John 5:37, "Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape." Paul writes in 1 Tim. 6:16, with reference to God, "whom no man hath seen; nor can see." John says in his first epistle chap. 4:12, "No man hath seen God at any time."

Seeing Yet Not Seeing

At the outset I think we can take it that no man has actually seen God at any time—Jesus has confirmed this as a fact. Paul informs us that not only has man not seen God but that it is not possible for man to see God (1 Tim. 6:16) God being spirit. Man has seen a *form* or a *representation* of God, and in some cases has seen an angel of God. In Gen. 32:30, when Jacob said, "I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved" he was referring to the fact that he had been "wrestling with God" (or rather with an angel of God). In Hosea 12:4 we read of the incident concerning Jacob's wrestling match; and Hosea, with reference to Jacob says, "Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed . . ." We might wonder why the angel of God should be referred

to as God or "the Lord." Perhaps the answer is to be found in Ex. 23:20, 21: "Behold I send an Angel before thee . . . beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him." From this quotation we learn that the angel bears God's name. Hence "the Lord" who went before Israel, and was seen by Moses in the bush and with whom Moses talked "face to face" on Mount Sinai, was the angel sent forth from the presence of Jehovah. This is confirmed by Acts 7:35, 38, which says, "This Moses, whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of *the angel* which appeared to him in the bush," and v. 38: "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with *the angel* which spake to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us." The *appearances* of "the Lord" therefore in the O.T. are often, if not always, the appearing of the angel, or angels, who appeared visibly and talked with men.

In the case of Isaiah (Isa. 6) we read that all that transpired took place in a *vision* and so doesn't really call for explanation, for many strange things happened including the placing of a live coal on the mouth of Isaiah by a seraph with six wings.

The Angel of the Lord

Notwithstanding Acts 7:3 (quoted above), which states that it was *an angel* "which spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai," it may be felt by some that the language of the closing verses of Ex. 33 denotes something other than an angel, where "the Lord" says to Moses (v. 22, 23) "And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." Some will perhaps be further puzzled by the fact that, in spite of Moses' desire for "the Lord" not to show his face, it is recorded in v. 11 that "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face." On this latter point it should be remembered that the conversation took place within the cloudy pillar and the darkness therein must have been such as to preclude the viewing of the Lord's face. Two people could converse in a darkened room face to face and not see one another's face.

On the former point of an angel being particular of not being seen (when as a rule angels have not been concerned about this; as witness the angel who wrestled with Jacob) and that he would only show to Moses his back parts, it is presumed that an angel is not mentioned in Ex. 33:21, but it is the very God himself (notwithstanding Acts 7:38). Even if this view could be sustained God is equally capable of presenting himself to people in a form of God's own choosing and suitable to the requirements of man. Indeed, there is an interesting statement in Numbers 12 which lends strength to this point of view. God is angry with Miriam and Aaron for criticising Moses behind his back. God calls Moses, Aaron and Miriam together and points out just how highly he esteems Moses. To other prophets God reveals things by means of a vision, but Moses was different: "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, *even apparently*, and not in dark speeches; and *the similitude of the Lord* shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" Moses was to see "*the similitude of God*." It would seem to me that this would include the appearing of God as an angel or in any other manner or form chosen by Jehovah.

A similitude means "a form" or "a likeness," and although the word appears a few times in the Bible the "similitude" of Numbers 12:8 (which comes from the Hebrew: *temunah*, and means "form or likeness") occurs only four times—once in Num. 12:8 and the other three times in Deut. 4. In these instances in Deut. 4 Moses gives us a grand definition of the word and helps this study considerably for he explains why the people saw no "similitude of God" on Horeb and also tells us precisely what is meant by a similitude (v. 12): "And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire [on the mount]: ye heard the voice of the words but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice." Verse 15: "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude

of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth” They saw no similitude of God, lest they should copy it.

Space has gone, but to sum up briefly we might say that whereas man has not seen God at any time, nor can see Him, he has seen God’s representative angel and has seen the similitude of God and has heard the similitude of God’s voice. The Holy Spirit in much the same way once manifested Himself in the form or similitude of a dove (Luke 3:22).

We can see God in a *form*; indeed Jesus said, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

THIS is the one name that honours New Testament teaching. All other names then must be spurious. We shall consider the nature, foundation, task, security and the future of the church.

By THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH we mean that it is not the work of man: it is life-like, has a natural order, is within reason, of orderly constitution, conforms to truth. To sum up, it is Divine.

Anyone looking for a pattern of the church must consult the New Testament. If this is done without bias and with a reasonable mind it will be found that many sects and assemblies are far from the standard set by Christ and his Apostles.

Since the early centuries of Christianity, especially since the fourth century, we read of interference with the Divine order and principles. Today we are asked to sink our differences and join together in one visible church. This would cause more confusion because those who make the plea are divided on church rule and conduct, and would not adhere to New Testament teaching.

It is also said that by joining together we would make a greater impact on the world. But any kind of unity not complying with God’s plans is doomed to failure from the beginning.

Let us see what Jesus has to say about it, “I will build my church”; let us note first that *Jesus* is going to build the church, and secondly that it will be *his* church. No Christian assembly can be built on men’s opinions. It must seek the authority of the Head. The church is not St. Peter’s, Rome; or London St. Paul’s; Congregational or Baptist. The church is composed of the company of people whom God has called, of any colour, country or language, providing they comply with the teaching of the Head. Those who have repented of their sins, been baptised, born again, regenerated by the precious blood of Christ; people who were once dead in trespasses and sins, and have been redeemed are the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. They are now “a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, the body and bride of Christ.”

If there were no church buildings there would still be a church. Perhaps we have been too busy erecting buildings instead of building churches. The members of Christ’s church believe in the inspiration of the scriptures, not adding to or taking away, they believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus, in his atoning death and resurrection, his exaltation and his coming again for his church.

The building of Christ’s church is his special work. To build this church he needs living stones, all kinds, doctors, statesmen, intellectuals; yet more often he uses ordinary people because “the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. God has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the mighty.”

The skill of the builder is such that he can take the roughest stone and shape it to fit into his purposes, as he takes a hardened sinner and transforms him for his glory.

Only God can do this: if this kind of reconstruction had been left to man the church would be extinct.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH: "Upon this rock"—not on Simon Peter. The apostle Paul said, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." We sing "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her lord" and

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' death and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame;
But wholly lean on Jesus' name;
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

It becomes quite clear that we cannot build on our Christian background, or good works: while these are good, they are secondary to building on Christ. A good basis is fundamental to a good structure. The plan is clear: let us keep to it.

THE TASK OF THE CHURCH. Jesus said to his apostles, "Go into all the world" and "Ye shall be my witnesses." While we agree that these were said to the apostles, it is beyond doubt that the early Christians applied this to themselves. The supreme task of the church is to evangelise: "Go, make disciples of all nations."

THE SECURITY OF THE CHURCH. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Every effort was made to destroy the church: it was persecuted from the beginning, Christians were put to death, they were beaten, burned, imprisoned, stoned and hunted. Men have always done their best to destroy the church, but have failed. Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" tells the story. Empires have risen and fallen; Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, but the church lives on. The security of the church lies in the fact that it is built on Christ.

THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH. Jesus has said that he will come for his church. He has only gone to prepare a place for us; we have no continuing city here; we look for a city whose builder and maker is God: This is the hope of every true Christian; let us keep this hope. Paul says that "we are saved by hope."

J. E. BREAKELL

SCRIPTURE READINGS

AUGUST 1970

2—2 Kings 4:18-27	John 11:28-44
9—1 Kings 18:1-18	John 11:45-57
16—Zechariah 9	John 12:1-19
23—Psalm 110	John 12:20-36
30—Isaiah 53	John 12:37-50

THE GREATEST OF THE "SIGNS"

PERHAPS it is not quite correct to say of the raising of Lazarus that it is the greatest of the miracles, for who will say that stilling the tempest or quelling the uncontrollable demoniac is not as great? — all are unexplainable apart from divine power. However our view is that this later sign faced with a final challenge the authorities who were endeavouring to

discredit Jesus. They had just got to do something about it.

Several points not applicable to other miracles demanded action on their part. We read of two in verses 18 and 19 of chapter 11: first that Bethany was only a short distance from Jerusalem, and secondly that Jews in Jerusalem knew Lazarus and his sisters. John's use of the word "Jews" almost always indicates the unbelieving and hostile people. In the very centre, then, the miracle must become known well and widely. The family had connections probably among the better-to-do and the religious in the city.

The healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda and the cure of the man born blind could perhaps be hushed up. These certainly had brought some to believe in Jesus, and we cannot think the blind man did not spread his testimony in spite of his excommunication: that in fact may have made it more public. Obviously the

influence of the Saviour was being felt increasingly in the capital.

Features of the raising of Lazarus were quite unique. Jesus was a friend, a dear friend of the family. He had been advised of the sickness, and had delayed His coming. The implied rebuke of the sisters, however humbly presented, found an echo in other minds — “Could not this man Who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that this man should not have died?” (verse 37). They were friends of the mourning family, had come to comfort and share the sorrow. They felt a contradiction between the grief of the Saviour (verses 33 and 36) and His delay. His arrival four days after burial must have seemed merely a visit to offer sympathy and join in the mourning. Martha in spite of her affirmation of faith — “Even now I know that whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give Thee” (verse 22) — seems not to have had any expectation whatever of a miracle, for she wanted to prevent the opening of the tomb wherein her brother’s remains lay. It was too late for anything to be done, (we know that in hot countries decomposition is rapid).

We have at the tomb Jesus, His disciples, Martha, Mary and a company of Jews locally and from Jerusalem. They all knew Jesus, Lazarus and the family. They knew the relationships, the powers of Jesus, His teaching, the hatred of the Rulers, and their murderous designs. Now they heard the prayer of Jesus to His Father, God, and the voice of Jesus calling the man from the tomb whom they had known so well, and had known to be dead four days: and he came forth!

Jesus once quoted Abraham as saying to the Rich Man, “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rose from the dead” (Luke 18:31). This miracle of life from the dead must have had a profound effect on all the witnesses. Not one there who was willing to learn the truth could fail to believe in Jesus from that hour. Judas surely was there. I do not think we (or anyone else for that matter) can realise the shock to all the senses that a corpse coming out of a tomb, bound in the grave clothes, actually gave. It is true, of course, that all wonders of such a nature, like the

raising of the widow’s son at Nain and the restoration to her parents of Jairus’s daughter, must have profoundly affected those who knew them, and also the innumerable cures wrought by Jesus and His apostles by word or touch among the crowds in the towns and villages of the country. They were done without the slightest effort at that showmanship which is often a feature of the “cures” and “healers” of today. No claims or publicity were necessary, and we must suppose that the memories of the visits passed off only too easily. We suggest the words of Jesus, “Greater works than these shall ye do” (14:12) refer to the preaching and spiritual effects of the gospel, rather than to the extension into all the world of the miraculous works wrought by the apostles.

However we are thinking of the miracle at Bethany as a culmination of the whole ministry of healing and preaching. Jesus and His disciples retired to Ephraim (verses 54 and 55) but not for long. His return to Bethany was noised abroad because crowds followed with Him, as we learn from Mark 10:32-34 and Luke 19; and pilgrims going to Jerusalem to prepare themselves for the Passover went early and gave the news. There was already a keen expectation about the “prophet from Nazareth.” The opposition of the authorities and the popularity of Jesus combined to excite the common people (12:9). The welcome on the road from Bethany and the procession of rejoicing disciples coming out to meet Him from the city made the Sanhedrin despair of getting their nefarious plans executed. They had already advanced too far with the devil for any hope of their repentance, and even plotted to destroy Lazarus, the witness to divine power. Their hearts were fixed. Envy drove them on, and the defection of the unhappy Judas provided the opportunity they sought.

In the household at Bethany love, adoration and worship abounded, and in our hearts today there must be the same.

R. B. SCOTT

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To escape criticism—do nothing, say nothing, be nothing.

WOMEN'S PAGE

Conducted by Harold Baines

Text for the month (Acts 16:13): "And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down and spake unto the women that resorted thither."

THIS text appealed to us at this time of the year when, for so many, holidays are in the offing, when thoughts of the sea, river and countryside, according to our taste and circumstances, are in our mind.

It is upon the sequel to this text that I want us to dwell this month, and make for our

LESSER LIGHT

No. 7: Lydia

For the first time in this series we turn to the New Testament for our subject. We have found that the more we explore these pages, both of the Old and New Covenants, the more "Lesser Lights" seem to shine, all of them intriguing. We only hope we can transmit some of the interest on to these pages.

Lydia has the distinction of being the first recorded convert in Europe. Her birthplace, Thyatira, was a city in what is now Turkey, and at the time fairly prosperous — as indicated by the fact that Lydia was a "seller of purple" — an expensive fabric able to be purchased only by the very well-to-do. She has been called the "female Cornelius" (see Acts 10) for she worshipped God. "Whose heart the Lord opened": she "attended to the things which were spoken by Paul" and was baptised, and her household. What a splendid sequel to that meeting by the riverside where "prayer was wont to be made"! What appeals to us most, however, was her first reaction to her conversion (verse 15): "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there; and she constrained us."

In verse 40 of this 16th chapter we read of her again taking into her house Paul and Silas after their release from prison consequent upon the conversion of the Philippian jailor. When we remember the fierce opposition to these early Christians, it speaks much for her faith

and character that, noted business lady that she was, she counted loyalty to her people and new-found faith to be of greater importance than any loss of business.

We also like to think of her as being the first of a long line of Christian women who down the centuries have opened their homes to the men of God, often at great risk to their own lives.

Here we would like again to pay tribute to the many saintly women to whom we have been indebted over the years. These good folk are among that happy band who almost as a matter of course open their homes to us preachers and thus make possible service to the church that just could not be given without their kindness and hospitality. In so doing, they are following the example of this early Christian, Lydia, whose first thought on her conversion was hospitality to those in need. May the Lord richly bless all you good sisters who, by your faithful service of hospitality, "adorn the gospel of Christ." And, who knows, you may be a Lesser Light yourself.

* * * *

THE HOUSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
In the peace of their self-content;
There are souls like stars that dwell apart
In a fellowless firmament;
There are pioneer stars that blaze their paths
Where highways never ran.
But let me live by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by —
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban;
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man:

I see from my house by the side of the
road,
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who press with the ardour of
hope,
The men who are faint with the strife;
But I live not away from their smiles
nor their tears,
Both part of an infinite plan.
Let me live in my house by the side of
the road,
And be a friend to man.

I know there are brook-gladdened meadows
ahead,
And mountains of wearisome height;
That the road passes on through the long
afternoon,
And stretches away to the night.
But still I rejoice when the travellers
rejoice,
And weep with the strangers that
mourn —
Not live in my house at the side of the
road
Like a man that dwells alone.

Let me live in my house at the side of the
road
When the race of men go by —
They are good, they are bad, they are
wise and foolish — so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban?
Let me live in my house by the side of the
road,
And be a friend to man.

S. W. Foss

(Sent by Sister Payne, Reading)

He who falls for soft soap is soon
washed up.

"Closed for Repairs" should be posted
on a lot of open minds.

THE CHURCH IN DONCASTER

I HAVE been asked to write some brief notes on the history of the Doncaster church, which met for the last time on May 31st, 1970. In this respect I am very grateful to Bros. Carlton Melling and Harold Baines for information given to me, and especially our late Bro. John

Garnett, secretary, without whose notes and accurate minute books it would have been almost impossible to compile even this brief history.

Doncaster church at the time of its closing was the second oldest church of Christ in Yorkshire. Wortley (Leeds) has the distinction of being the oldest, founded some 140 years ago. Doncaster church spread the Lord's table for the first time on 8th June, 1879, in the home of a Bro. Riddings. Thus the church had been in existence for almost 90 years. The house where the church first broke bread together was in the area of St. Sepulchre Gate, now a main thoroughfare in Doncaster. Seven members gathered for that first meeting. The meetings continued there for several weeks and then moved to Bro. Alexander's home until, on 15th June, 1880, a room was procured in Cleveland Street.

Space forbids any account of opposition, hardships and difficulties encountered in those early days by the band of Christians. But one incident is well worth mention. On Lord's Day, August 28th, 1881, the members came together to find the meeting-room occupied by an auctioneer, whose items for auction filled the room to capacity! An altercation ensued, in which the landlord of the building "used language unbecoming to members of Christian beliefs" (to quote the record). The room was cleared of the auctioneer's items and the meeting proceeded; but on returning in the evening to hold the gospel meeting the place was found securely locked up. Consequently the meeting was held in the open air. This gave the Christians the inspiration to hold further open-air meetings, which were followed by great success.

In 1882 the first baptism — in the Public Baths — took place. Baptisms had previously taken place, but no records are available. The first Sunday School was formed on 14th November, 1883, and the following Wednesday the first Bible Class was formed with ten members. The following year, August 6th, 1884, saw the addition to the church of a brother whose name was to become a household name in the church — and in the churches generally: Bro. Longhorn. On 2nd November the name of his wife was added. So began a connection of the Long-

horns with the church still remembered in Doncaster, for three of their daughters — Lilian, Olive and Jessie — remain members to this day.

In these days it may be interesting to record that in those days the church's caretaker was paid the princely sum of five shillings a quarter!

The late Bro. Charles Bailey, evangelist, of high esteem in the churches, was baptised in Doncaster on 14th April, 1890, and became church secretary in July of that year.

Bro. and Sis. James Gray, sen., and Bro. and Sis. Kershaw Gray became members of the Doncaster church at that time, being transferred from the Morley church.

In 1913 and 1914 a mission was conducted by Bro. Walter Crosthwaite, when James and Ernest Gray were added by baptism. Both of these brethren rose to responsible and prominent positions in the Association of Churches of Christ.

As far back as 1902 the members had been considering erecting a building of their own. The last meeting in the hired premises in Copley Road took place in 1905, and in that year the new meeting-place, in The Holmes, Doncaster, was opened on December 17th. In these premises the church met until the building was closed under a Redevelopment Scheme on May 31st, 1970.

The writer came to Doncaster from Hornsey, London, in 1946. The Bentley congregation, about three miles away, had disbanded a short time previously. Efforts were made to get members from Bentley to take up membership at Doncaster, with the result that some eight or ten did so, and remained as members until the closing down. The writer's brother, M. L. Bradley, of Ilkeston, was the speaker on that last occasion.

We recall the stalwarts who have graced this church in Doncaster, who have gone to their rest and reward: such names as Brothers and Sisters Whitehead, Greasby, Longhorn, our lately deceased Bro. John Garnett, and many others.

Such are the brief notes of the history of the church in Doncaster between the years 1879 and 1970.

WILLIAM S. BRADLEY

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Bedminster (Bristol).—We are glad to report the baptism on Sunday, June 14th, of Mrs. Jacqueline Ballinger: she is the mother of a small family, three daughters being members of the church. We pray that she may be kept faithful and be used to bring others into the service of the Master. L. Daniell

Dewsbury.—We are pleased to report the addition of one to our number, by baptism: Christine Brown. We earnestly pray that her young life may be consecrated to the Saviour. R. McDonald

Kirkcaldy (Hayfield Road).—The church here has been greatly encouraged by witnessing "the good confession" and the baptism of Susan H. Downie and her husband William S. Downie on Sunday, 28th June. Bro. and Sis Downie have been interested attenders at our services and we welcome them in our midst. We pray they will be long spared to be good and faithful servants.

These two additions, following the baptism on 25th April of Sis. Mary Hughes, are a source of great encouragement. Sis. Hughes unfortunately has been unable to meet with us much owing to illness and is at present in hospital, and we pray God will restore her to meet with us again. A. Roberts

Romans 8:28; Jude 1:3

"Contend earnestly for the FAITH"

Sinde Mission, P.O. Box 132,
Livingstone, Zambia, Africa.

May 8th, 1970

Dear faithful friends,

Many months have flown since the last news-letter! Six more souls have put on Christ and six others have been restored. The Vacation Bible School at Chabalanda had an average attendance of 76. We did enjoy travelling on the back of the truck, sometimes stopping for wild fruit on the way home, other times eating cooked peanuts and corn the Christians had prepared for us. During the evening of 9th April there was hard rain, so the following day

only Leonard, BaJothum and BaZephaniah went for the closing lessons and exercises. The following Monday the Girls' Bible School began with 30 girls and 7 leaders. Everyone enjoyed being together — some attending for the first time. Evelyn Knuckles, teacher at Namwianga Christian College, may be leaving next month to return to her home in Canada. How she will be missed, for she has taught so many classes and inspired all by her example and teaching, to be "busy for the Lord" every day we live. She has enjoyed seeing many of the beautiful places in Africa.

The last week of April found us out under the trees near Siachabakubi holding Vacation Bible School with an average of 55 attending. As they would like to study the Bible more often, Leonard, BaJothum and BaZephaniah hope to begin a class on Saturdays.

School began May 4th. God has given me the opportunity to teach 40 students in Grade 6 in three Bible classes per week. Please pray each student will be drawn to have a love for God's word, and live by it each day. Monday, the Women's Bible Meeting will begin with some coming down from Lusaka. These women attended the Women's Bible Meeting at Mukuni the 26th-28th April. Such a spiritual feast for all! Please pray that the bond of Christian love will grow stronger as more become acquainted with their sisters in Christ from other areas.

Your prayers, love and fellowship mean so much to the work. May God add His blessings on all your labours, and richly reward you.

Love in Christ, Elaine Brittell

OBITUARY

Blackburn (Hamilton Street). — The church has suffered the loss by bereavement of Sis. Daisy Walsh, aged 78. Over the many years our sister proved herself a devoted mother and a loyal Christian. Whenever her health permitted she was present around the Lord's table on Lord's Day. We shall miss her, but look forward in hope to "that day" when we shall be re-united with those who have gone before. J.P.

Kirkcaldy (Hayfield Road).—With deep regret we report the loss we have sustained with the passing of Bro. Walter McDonald at the age of 83 at the home of his daughter, Sis. Barclay, on 25th June, 1970, and was cremated at Kirkcaldy Crematorium on Saturday, 27th June. Bro. J. Moyes conducted the funeral service.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Bro. McDonald's son and daughters and pray that "the everlasting arms" will be around them at this time. We, with them, will miss a true friend, but we can look back upon a lifetime spent in his Master's service, and upon a stalwart, well-known throughout Scotland and further afield, respected in the community in which he lived as a good Christian.

His encouragement, help, preaching and visiting will long be remembered and his sixty-odd years of Christian service make us feel he will receive the "Well done, good and faithful servant." He looked forward to that day and this faith was an inspiration to all. A. Roberts

Slamannan. — The assembly has been bereft of another very dear and affectionate brother: Dan Scobbie passed peacefully to his rest on Saturday, 27th June. He was brought up under the power of the gospel in his early manhood, and had been associated with the church of Christ for almost 40 years. The truth alone was his guide, and he had principles for which he stood steadfast, remaining true to his convictions and faithful to New Testament teaching. A feature of Bro. Scobbie's life which appealed to those who knew him best was his serene joy: he rejoiced in the Lord under all circumstances. He never failed to break the memorial loaf together with his dear wife on the morning of the first day.

"And now the labourer's task is done;
The battle fought, the victory won.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping."

He has left a wife and son to mourn his loss and the deepest sympathy is felt for them: we pray that the God of all comfort may comfort their hearts.

The funeral service at Polmont cemetery was conducted by Bro. D. Dougall, evangelist. M. Neilson

COMING EVENTS.

Buckie. — Social meeting, September 12th. First meeting, 3—4.30 p.m.; tea 4.30 p.m. Second meeting, 6—7.30 p.m. Speakers: Brothers Jack Nisbet and C. Eckman.

We give a cordial invitation to all who can be with us in a time which will be well spent, around God's word.

John Geddes

Kentish Town. — 99th Anniversary of opening of Hope Chapel, Saturday, October 10th. Afternoon 3 o'clock, evening 6.30; tea provided. A warm welcome is assured to all visitors. Speaker, Bro. G. Lodge. Join us if you can. Pray for us that we may be of much use to the Lord.

* * * *

"The vital need of our people is a period of meditation. It is through such periods that we can correct our judgments, deepen our knowledge, and formulate wise plans. By means of meditation we rise above 'babel of voices' and learn to appraise our ideas and opinions at their true value. Silence helps us to solve our most difficult problems. Silence gives us rest from inordinate ambition. In inward silence and stillness, we learn to know and to do the will of God."

Grenville Kleiser

SITUATION VACANT!

WANTED, a capable brother who can spend his full time in evangelising Cleveleys, Lancs., with the help of the present church, who number about a dozen. Applicant for position must already have support.

Impossible? How shall we know, unless we ask; for surely the scripture says "with God all things are possible."

Is there then, somewhere, a brother who is prepared to "come over and help us?" Do YOU know anyone who would be suitable for the position or have you any useful and practical ideas on how best to further the cause of the Lord here in Cleveleys?

If you have, then please get in touch with the secretary: Bro. Eric Winter, 77 Kelvin Road, Norbreck, Blackpool, FY5 3AF.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A. E. Strachan, Secretary, 6 Linksfield Road, Peterhead, Scotland.

* * * *

He who allows his day to pass by without practising generosity and enjoying life's pleasures is like a blacksmith's bellows—he breathes but does not live.

A Sanskrit Proverb

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