SCRIPIURE STANDARD

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

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AGNOSTICISM VERSUS ASSURANCE

AGNOSTICISM is defined as the 'name given by Huxley in 1869 to that mental attitude which regards as unknowable whatever is not capable of scientific demonstration.'

'Agnostic, one who holds that we know nothing of things beyond material phenonema—that a First Cause, and an unseen world are things unknown, and apparently unknowable.' (Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary.)

This article is prompted by reading in a paper brought to us, an interview with Dr. W. R. Inge, for many years Dean of St. Paul's. Now, at the age of 93, he says, 'All my life I have struggled to find the purpose of living. I have tried to answer three problems which always seemed to me to be fundamental: the problem of eternity; the problem of human personality; and the problem of evil. I have failed. I have solved none of them, and I know no more now than when I started. And I believe no one ever will solve them I know as much about the after-life as you. Nothing. I don't seem even to know there is one—in the sense in which the Church believes it. I have no vision of heaven or of a welcoming God. I do not know what I shall find. I must wait and see.'

(Daily Express, July 13th, 1953)

DR. INGE is regarded as one of the Church of England's greatest scholars and thinkers; and now he has reached agnosticism. Countless times he will have led congregations in repeating their creed: 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Catholic Church; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.'

Now it seems he does not believe all this, and has not believed it for many years. He may well now be called, 'the gloomy Dean.' Agnosticism is the position to which critical theories about the Bible have brought countless numbers of once earnest believers. Fifty-two years ago a leader in 'Churches of Christ' loaned us one of Bishop Gore's books, expecting

it to have a revolutionary effect. We read it with care, and we are grateful to God that our faith in the Grand Old Book was not shaken. Too many, and especially preachers, are just reproductions of the latest book they have read. We firmly believe that books written by that higher-critical, Anglo-Catholic Bishop Gore have undermined the faith of many, and have landed the Co-operation of Churches of Christ on to the rocks; and those mainly responsible for spreading his teaching and practices have left the sinking ship and found safe shelter elsewhere. Those who cannot see this must be wilfully blind. A good old brother used to say that some leaders in the Churches of Christ had been 'badly gored by that Bishop of Oxford.'

To us it is painful to write thus. For many years some of us had to defend the Bible from attacks by Atheists and Infidels; now these attacks come from inside the churches. Casting doubts on the Bible never saved a soul, or helped anyone to live a better life. Why do not those who hold these destinctive views be honest and go over to the Infidel camp? If we could accept what some teach that 'it does not matter what you believe,' or which church you join, we would not struggle to build up churches according to the New Testament pattern.

We sometimes wonder whether some so-called scholars have any faith at all. When they demand scientific demonstration of everything it seems they do not know what faith is. 'Faith is a conviction of the reality of things which we do not see.' (Heb. 11; 1. Weymouth.) Faith in the unseen is one of the most common principles of action in everyday life. For what we know, be it little or much, we owe more to faith than we do to sight. If we demanded scientific demonstration of everything we would not do much or travel far.

In his book, The Miracles of Unbelief, Mr. F. Ballard shows that these are far greater than those of faith; that unbelievers 'strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.' To believe that the world had no maker surely makes a greater demand on faith, or credulity, than the account of creation in the book of Genesis. To believe that everything and every creature evolved from a speck of jelly is to accept a greater miracle than any recorded in the Bible. It is amazing that any rational being, with eyes and brains, ever accepted the evolution theory. The Divine order 'bring forth after his kind' has never been violated. Like has always produced like, and always will do. That has surely been abundantly scientifically demonstrated.

To one who was advancing sceptical views of the Bible, President Abraham Lincoln said, 'Accept all you can on reason, and the rest on faith, and you'll be a better man than you are.'

Contrast Dr. Inge's Agnosticism at 93, with the glorious assurance of the Apostle John, who, writing at about the same age, tells of his confidence in the Lord and His Word; and of his bright hope for the future. When the crowd, offended at the teaching of Jesus, 'went back and walked no more with Him,' John was one of those to whom the Lord put the question, 'Will ye also go away?' Peter, speaking for his colleagues in the Apostolic band, said: 'Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.' (John 6; 66-69.)

In his old age, John's faith and hope were stronger and brighter. There is a ring of inspired dogmatism in all his writings. We know that word 'dogmatism' is despised and sneered at by many. But to be dogmatic means to be sure of our position; and if we are not, the sooner we change the better. The scripture writers were all dogmatists.

Note these statements in the epistles written by John: 'We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us.

Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.' 'We know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin.' 'We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.' 'We know that the Son of God has come, and hath given us our understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.' (1 John, 5; 20.)

How much easier and safer it is to accept the simple statements of God's Word, than to believe all the so-called scholarly and scientific jargon that comes from Colleges and Universities. The peasant woman, of whom Cowper wrote, was in a safer and happier state than Dr. Inge, or any of the same school.

'She just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true, A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew; And in that charter, reads with sparkling eyes, Her title to a treasure in the skies.'

How much better than Agnosticism is the grand assurance of salvation, here and hereafter, which comes from believing and obeying the Divine Son of God.

'Just to take Him at His word, Just to rest upon His promise, Just to know "Thus saith the Lord."

EDITOR.

'NO NATION DARE TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT ITS FORCES'

'WAR which has been the chronic disease of human societies is now acute, mortal and world-wide in its impact,' said Dr. Donald Soper in his Presidential address to the Methodist Conference on July 10th.

- 'Historically,' he continued, 'the Christian Church has failed to cure this disease.
- 'Confronted with this disease today the Christian doctors, as such, are indistinguishable from the non-Christian. We are all impotent to agree with any remedy, yet a remedy must be found or society will perish.
- 'Whether responsible Statemen are prepared to say this or not, let me as a temporarily responsible Churchman say it. The armament programmes of the modern world must lead to two results—the progressive crippling of the world's resources and the unavoidable use of those armaments in a third world war.
- 'With the population of our world growing by twenty millions a year, the slogan "guns or butter" is out of date—it is the grimmer alternative "guns or bread," and we may well add a third result of this arms race—the poisoning of international understanding by the lies that armed communities must tell.
- 'No nation dare tell the truth about its armies and navies and air forces.
- 'What then will break this vicious circle of fear and violence and lies? The Christians have hitherto failed but the champions of reason and science and humanism have also failed. I affirm that Christianity hasn't failed—it hasn't been tried since before Constantine.

Renounce all compromise with war.

'I believe that a Christian Church which was prepared to renounce all compromise with war and to take up its Cross would succeed.

'I know that it would immediately put into the lives of outsiders a hope and a confidence in our Gospel where now they have only more or less tolerant incredulity.

'Governments are hag-ridden by the fear that if they disarm they will expose themselves to attack and enslavement. I sympathise with them—before they can be expected to take such a risk someone has to demonstrate that in the last resort this is God's World and what is morally right will turn out to be politically sound—and I say with boldness nobody but the Christian, and no community but the Christian Church, can undertake this Cross-bearing adventure of Faith.

'For all the goodness and greatness in other world religions, for all the other peace options that are offered, it is, I submit, by the standards of Jesus that their goodness and greatness are measured, and the gentleness and non-violence which seems so admirable in them, while it con-

demns us, reminds us most of all of our Lord rather than theirs.

'The true light of Asia is the reflected light that streams from Calvary. The apparent options of which I have spoken disappear—it is still Christianity or chaos. (I believe the outsider knows this and is waiting for us to prove it.) The only religion that offers peace on earth and good will among men is Christianity."

(Peace News)

THE NEW HYMN BOOK

THE circular sent to the churches and printed in last month's S.S. has brought some requests for a clarification of various points. The information asked for can be grouped under four headings:—

What is the purpose of the guarantee fund? It is not merely to provide for the churches' immediate needs, but to ensure sufficient stock to meet these needs for many years ahead. Thus a considerably larger sum will be needed than would be raised by the immediate sale of the book.

Is the fund to be a loan or a gift? It will be a loan, in the sense that it will be returned not in money but in kind. Thus, if a church guarantees £20 and the book cost 10/-, that church will receive forty copies without further payment. If the church does not wish to receive the number it has guaranteed the surplus copies will go into a reserve stock upon which churches can draw for future needs.

What of the case where a church guarantees money and in addition orders copies? The number of copies ordered will be supplied, but if the amount contributed under the guarantee fund does not cover the number required, the church would be asked to remit the balance over and above the amount already contributed.

Would not the purpose of the circular be served by simply asking each church how many copies they would be willing to purchase? Hardly. No church can be expected to bind itself to purchase while the price is not known, and even after estimates are received there would be the need to approach the churches again to state their requirements. We think it wiser to have the guaratee that cost of printing and binding will be met. While the manuscript is being completed and tenders received the task of raising the money will be going forward.

Already several encouraging replies to the circular and promises of generous help have been received. It is hoped in time to acknowledge all these, but in the meantime we express warmest thanks for the interest taken and the help offered in this work.

C. MELLING.

F. C. DAY. A. L. FRITH,

PREDESTINATION

OH! I suppose it was his fate. It was to be.'

'Indeed! And who, or what, is fate? Is it some new god that has been discovered? And does he or it (whichever it may be) hold the destiny of all mankind in his hands?!'

'Well, you know, the Bible talks of predestination, and says in one place (I forget where it is) that, "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

'It is true that the Bible speaks of predestination, and it is also true that there is such a statement as you quote. It is in the thirteenth chapter of Acts, but Albert Barnes rightly says that instead of the word "ordained" it should be "disposed." That is, those who were so influenced by the preaching of Paul and Barnabas as to be disposed to comply with the requirements of the gospel, believed, put their trust in Jesus and determined to follow Him.'

The fatalistic ideas were at one time much more common with religious men than they are now. So an assembly of 'divines' once declared that 'God, from all eternity, did . . . freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.' And this idea was carried out so literally and logically that people held that not a leaf could fall from a tree, but just at the exact moment which was fixed for it to fall, before the foundation of the world.

A great many religious people are yet under the influence of these fatalistic notions; and bringing them to the Bible—reading it through these fatalistic spectacles—they imagine that the Bible teaches these ideas. A good deal of what, in the world of cant, is called 'sovereign grace,' is nothing else but the old fatalism, which is not merely unscriptural, but is opposed to the Scriptures.

'What about Judas Iscariot?' you say. Well, Judas, like all other wicked men coming under the power of Christ, might have been saved from his wickedness had he been willing. He was a devil, a thief. The love of money ruined him as it has ruined thousands since. Christ knew he was a devil. 'Have I not chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil.' But God had just as much right to use him as He had to use the holiest and purest of men, or as He had to use Pharoah. Men may say 'We will not serve God,' but they will serve God, for He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and He 'works all things after the counsel of his own will.

But it is not God's will that any should be lost. Hear Him! 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.' Surely we can believe God!

But what, then, does the Bible say of predestination? The Bible teaches that God predestines those already in Christ—already saved—(1) To sonship (Ephesians i.), to be children—sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty.

What honour is this! Not only to be saved from the consequence and dominion of sin, but to become partakers of the Divine nature!

A wealthy man, with a heart corresponding to the size of his purse, sees some poor outcast children. He determines to deliver them from their destitution and wretched surroundings. He does so. He cleanses, clothes, feeds, and educates them. But it does not follow that he will adopt them and treat them as he does his own sons and daughters.

People too often assume that God necessarily makes those whom He saves His children. No! But herein is seen the superabounding wealth of His grace! He imparts to us His own life. We are begotten again and

born into His family and kingdom-'born of water and of the Spirit.' This, God determined before to do, for those, who, in the present dispensation, come to Christ.

(2) To be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. viii). He is the type of the family. A family likeness generally runs through the children of the same parents. They are not all equally like the parents. Neither are all the children of God equally like their Father or their Elder Brother. But those who are truly God's children, are in some measure conformed to the image of Jesus.

This likeness is, of course, of a moral or spiritual character, and when the Lord returns from heaven. His brethren will be conformed to His image in another and very important respect. Paul tells us of this by saying, 'For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body.'

No, my dear reader, no man was ever yet saved because He had been predestined to salvation, and no man was ever yet lost, who might not have been saved. God 'will have all men to be saved and come unto a knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. ii. 4). 'The Lord . . . is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'

Disabuse your mind, my friend, of fatalism and foolish ideas of predestination. If you trust in Christ and follow Him wherever He leads, then, indeed, you are predestined to share with Him the glory, and wealth, and dominion of the ages to come.

A friend of mine was once talking to a man who declared himself to be a fatalist. 'Everything had been arranged beforehand and he had no freedom of choice,' he said. The fatalist's son was sitting beside him, so my friend said, 'Could you not have had a pair of trousers like these your son has, if you had wished?!' The father reluctantly admitted that he could. 'Then,' said my friend, 'if you could exercise choice in this, why not in other things?' The man had no reply to that.

John Smith, one of the heroic pioneers of Primitive Christianity in America, went to see and stay with a Calvinistic Baptist once. This gentleman received him, but said, 'Now, Brother Smith, I will not allow you to talk about religion in my house.' 'Why not?!' said John. 'Because you might disturb the minds of my family.' 'But,' said John, 'if they belong to the elect there is nothing that I can say that will do them any harm, and if they don't, there is nothing that you can say that will do them any good!'

That was putting the matter in a very simple and practical fashion, looking at it, of course, from the mistaken standpoint of Calvinism. There is something better than Calvinism, and that is Christism-to hear His voice, and follow Him, will bring you eternal life. And so long as you hear that voice and follow in His footsteps, so long will you be absolutely safe, for 'They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand,' says Jesus.

> 'Glory be to Jesus, who in bitter pains, Poured for me the life-blood from His sacred veins.'

> > J. GRINSTEAD.

PROVIDENCE

' . . . the Lord thinketh upon me . . -Psalm 40:17.

That heavenly host, those angels pure and bright,

To God's great heart must be a true delight,

As through the ages, with untiring zeal,

They hymn His praise, and do His holy

But poor and needy in a world of sin, I'm quite unworthy e'en to think of Him; And yet, like David, I assured may be, He loves me, and 'He thinks on me.'

P. G. OGDEN. (Written spontaneously after hearing an exposition of Psalm 40).

MESSAGES TO YOUNG FOLK

FAMILY CIRCLE HAROLD BAINES

Young Men and Women.

EARLY man and womanhood has been called 'Life's morning.' The dawn of childhood has passed and the full glory of life is making itself manifest, stretching before you into the great and glorious unknown and calls youth to adventure and endeavour.

The coming of adult life, however, brings its responsibilities and one gathers by now that most of you will realise the truth of that old adage, 'All is not gold that glitters.' Life is not always what it seems and already you will have experienced some of its hard knocks and disappointments.

There are certain tendencies among present-day men and women that I want my readers to take note of, and then to avoid.

Young men! What are the main topics of conversation, yes, and outlook on life amongst the young men of today? Will you agree with me when I say they can be summed up in three words, namely: 'Puffs, Pints and Pools.' Puffs at cigarettes, pints of beer at the local, or a 'dollar on the football pools.'

What is inevitably the first question asked by a newcomer in a modern factory? 'Where do I go for a smoke and when?' And what is the average conversation in the places where men do congregate for a smoke during working hours? Isn't it their drinking prowess or the quality of the beer at the local inn, or the prospects of 'coming up' on the pools and winning £75,000, or the prospect of the 'favourite on the 2.30 horse race'?

As a variation, you have what can be summed up in the words 'wine, women and song,' with the attendant lewd jokes and obscene jests at the expense of the opposite sex.

Young women! What are the main topic of conversation and outlook on life by your contemporaries of today? Will you agree with me when I say that these, too, can be summed up in three word: 'Men, Money and Marriage'?

My work takes me among scores of young women and, believe me, if they aren't talking of some man, it is his money, or the prospects of marrying him. No sooner does an eligible male show himself in a department than he becomes the centre of attention, attraction and conquest. And so one could go on. Young women have collected many male bad habits. Smoking, drinking, gambling, and hard swearing are the order of the day and, should a 'swearing match' develop between sexes, the female of the species wins every time.

Yet life has many paradozes, and one of the strangest is that among the type of people I have named you find unexpected streaks of goodness. Many of them are kind-hearted and generous. Often they are genuinely honest according to their lights, and among the older generations at any rate, you find many good points in their character that can be traced to the influence of some Sunday School of their youth, the work of some obscure but hard-working Sunday School teacher not quite lost.

All this goes to prove the truth of a hymn we sometimes sing:

'Deep in the human heart, crushed by the Tempter, Feelings lie buried that grace can restore.'

and one of the jobs we Christians have to do is to restore those feelings, those instincts to goodness and, by the grace of God, bring some sinner to Christ.

Finally, my young brothers and sisters, this is the time of your life when you begin to look around for a life partner. Let me firmly impress upon you both, successful marriage is founded upon love, spelt LOVE, not LUST. Fleshly lust burns itself out and any marriage founded upon that is foredoomed to failure.

Marriage is a Divine Institution, designed by the Father of us all, is honourable above all things, not to be entered into lightly, but soberly and with modesty. Each should love the other. Tolerance should be exercised at all times, for in marriage, not only two lives, but two souls are seeking to live together, as our Lord put it, 'as one flesh,' meaning 'one body.'

My closing thought is, seek to be of the same mind and faith, and let that faith be in Jesus. My next series will be addressed to the children, not forgetting the 'tiny tots.'

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN CHURCH WORSHIP

AS long as the Church retains a high spiritual tone, the desire for them (musical instruments) will not be felt. I have never yet known a church fixedly spiritual in character begin gradually to have a tendency to sentimentalism and sensualism in forms that was not diminishing at the same time in spiritual-mindedness.

PRINCIPAL PIRIE.

We should like to see all the pipes of the organs in our Nonconformist places of worship either ripped open or compactly filled with concrete. The human voice is so transcendently superior to all that wind or strings can accomplish that it is a shame to degrade its harmonies by association with blowing and scraping. It is not better music which we get from organs and viols, but inferior sounds, which unsophisticated ears judge to be harsh and meaningless when compared with a melodious human voice. That the great Lord cares to be praised by bellows we very gravely question; we cannot see any connection between the glory of God and sounds produced by machinery. One broken note from a grateful heart must have more real acceptable praise in it than all the wind which sweeps through whistling pipes. Instrumental music with its flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of noise-makers, was no doubt well-suited to the worship of the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar, the king, had set up, and harps and trumpets served well the infant estate of the Church under the law, but in the gospel's spiritual domain these may well be let go with all the other beggarly elements. C. H. SPURGEON.

The effort should be to get the people to sing universally and neartily and no paltry economy should be allowed to stand in the way of such a desirable consummation. There may be some reason to complain in many quarters of the numbers who are dumb when God's praise is being sung. The remedy is not to be found in the introduction of instruments—that will only have the effect of multiplying the number of mute listeners—but in having the people instructed in the end of singing. It is right and proper and much to be desired, not only all should sing, but that they should do it skillfully; although there is sugger to be guarded against of being so absorbed in the outward and excistic effort, the merely bodily service, as to fail in rendering real worship in spirit and in truth. God judges not as man judges. He looks upon the heart.

Those of us who protest against this revolution (the introduction of musical instruments into the worship of God) in Presbyterian worship are by some pitied, by others ridiculed, and by others still denounced as fanatics. If we are, we share the company of an innumerable host of fanatics extending from the day of Pentecost to the middle of the nineteenth century. We refuse not to be classed, although consciously unworthy of the honour, with apostles, martyrs and reformers. But neither were they mad, nor are we. We 'speak the words of truth and soberness.'

JOHN L. GIRARDEAU.

We reject all forms of will-worship, especially the introduction of uninspired compositions in the worship of God, and the use of instruments in this service, as hindrances to that blessed fellowship with God of which the soul is capable, and urge the employment only of those pure spiritual forms which God has appointed in His word.

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD.

WHY I LEFT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

I HAD been a Catholic all my life, which was forty-two years, but on February 2nd, 1951, I became a member of the body of Christ.

Even though I had married a Baptist, I would not leave the Catholic Church. My priest told me that I could not receive communion; but still I would not give up Catholicism. Even when my priest told me I was not truly married, but was living in adultery with my husband, I still would not leave the Catholic Church.

Three years ago I came from California to Texas. I noticed that members from many different churches came and invited me to their services. But I closed my door in their face. None came from the Church of Christ.

My near neighbour became very friendly with me, and invited me often into her home for a cup of coffee and a pleasant chat. I told her one day how I was annoyed by all these different church people calling on me and trying to get me to go to their churches. I was especially tired of the persistence of the Baptist people. I also told my neighbour, 'No matter what church you belong to, please don't ever invite me to go with you. I am a Catholic, and we don't attend other churches.'

Several weeks went by, and one day my neighbour called her children (who were playing in my yard) to come get ready for church. I asked one of them, who was about ten years old, 'Are you a Protestant?' She replied, 'No, I am not a Protestant.' I was surprised at that, and said, 'Are you a Catholic then?' To which she replied, 'No, I am not a Catholic either; I'm just a Christian.'

That sounded odd to me, as I thought all 'Christians' were either Catholics or Protestants. And of course I had the usual Catholic idea that the Protestant 'Christians' were apostates from the true church and could not go to heaven unless they returned to the Catholic Church. So the first time I had a chance I asked the little girl's mother if she were Protestant. She said, 'No.' Then I asked, 'Are you Catholic?' Again the answer was 'No.'

The very next Sunday I decided to go with this woman to her church which was 'neither Catholic nor Protestant.' I had been taught that it was a sin to go to a Protestant Church; but since this was not a Protestant Church, I felt like I might go without sinning. What I heard at church the day I went was something entirely new to me. It aroused my interest; and I told my friend I'd like to know more about her church.

It is sufficient to say that within three months time, by a close and careful study of the Bible, and by comparing what the Bible (even the Catholic Bible) teaches with what my priest said, I was able to learn the truth. And Brother Brownlow baptized me. He also baptized my husband out of the Baptist Church.

It is indeed difficult for a Catholic to leave his church. To me it seemed almost like giving up my own mother. But I realized that the Catholic Church was not a true mother at all—only a false mother, and I had not known the difference. A Catholic usually has a mystical feeling of the presence of God; and it is very, very hard to get him to realize that this is his own subjective emotions and not the true presence of God Himself. He has simply been mistaught.

Once a Catholic has been baptized into Christ, he realizes how ignorant and superstitious are many of the leaders and priests whom he has honoured and followed in the past. They have no real knowledge of God's Word; but are themselves victims of an evil system of error.

A Catholic usually believes that the very name 'Catholic' is enough to save his soul. If he attends services, he feels that that is all God requires. But when such a person obeys the Gospel of Christ, he realizes there is much, much more to Christianity than wearing a name and going to church. There is a life to live; there is a Cross to bear. And in the living of that life there is joy far deeper than anything that can ever be known by one who is in ignorance and darkness.

There are many good books available on the subject of Catholicism, but usually the Catholic person is so ignorant of even his own church that most of the books are unintelligible to him. The very excellent little booklet, 'The Origin and Claims of Roman Catholicism' by Roy E. Cogdill is one of the simplest and the best. It sets forth the truth in such a way that any person of average intelligence and information cannot fail to see it. But, even so, there is needed the help of some wise and informed teacher usually to explain the facts of history to the soul who is coming out of darkness. Had it not been for the help Brother Brownlow gave me, I might have been still in the shackles of Catholic superstition.

I would like to encourage Christians everywhere to try with patience to win their Catholic friends. Give them some simple literature to read; and then go through it with them, answering their questions, pointing them to the Bible teaching, and persuading and encouraging them to give up their error. I truly believe there are many thousands who are in the same condition I was in, and who can be taught the truth.

(Gospel Digest, U.S.A.)

FRANK & NANCY MURPHY.

Close to two years ago Brother Murphy and his wife came from England to Northern Rhodesia and settled in Lusaka where they are both teaching. But the great thing about this move is that it brought a real worker to Lusaka. Bro. Murphy is holding meetings, and teaching the Bible in every way possible.

There are two different assemblies now, with many of the scattered Christians

meeting with them. Quite a number have been baptised, and the work seems to be getting on a footing, and growing abundantly. Again we rejoice; again we thank God. This work at Lusaka is an answer to our prayer, but it is an answer in an unexpected way. The Lord's ways are not our ways nor his thoughts our thoughts, and his ways are past tracing out. Again we praise the Lord.

Rays of Light, N. Rhodesia, South Africa.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sept. 6. Jer. 2:1-19. Rev. 1:18 to 2:11.

" 13. 1 Kings 16:21-34. " 2:12-29.

.. 20. Jer. 1. " 3.

.. 27. Isa. 6. , 4

Message from the Lord to His Churches. Following upon the vision of the Glorious One standing in the midst of His Churches to keep them bright and shining, the writer is bidden to write the messages. They are prepared in heaven where is the watchful One—all-seeing and all-knowing. Every word is for every Church.

1 The Church at Ephesus.—The plan of the message is the same in every case. The differences are to fit the different condition of the individual Church, and its circumstances. First we have intro-Sender—descriptions duction of the drawn from the vision already revealed. Then comes assurance of the Watcher who knows heart and motive, with both commendation and condemnation-reward and punishment. Lastly there is the 'chorus'—'He that hath . . .'—with its promise to the individual Christian who stands fast. In the case of Ephesus, which we will for example's sake treat in detail, the following are the main points:

(1) The reference to the vision indicates the care over all the Churches—seven messengers (stars) in close possession of Christ; seven golden (very precious) lampstands (carrying brightness of light and having constant careful attention to keep maximum brilliance).

(2) Assurance of the divine consciousness of efforts made, works accomplished, faithfulness to truth. It is not easy to detect and defeat evil men's designs upon the Church, nor to refuse the wily and forceful efforts of 'pretenders.' They are pretentious, deceiving by claims for which at least some justification is generally produced, such as learning, and spiritual depths, and kindly and loving attitudes. There are some things we ought to tolerate and some we ought not.

(3) There has been failure. It is not excused but exposed. Repentance is necessary. In this Church as in many, it is 'leaving' its first love, falling from the early enthusiasm—perhaps keeping to the letter and leaving the spirit. It would be as wrong to keep the spirit and leave the letter—love without obedience, faith without works, resulting in a deterioration from love to mere sentiment, from belief (genuine heartfelt faith) to mere assent.

(4) Nicolaitans probably were followers of a Nicholas, but the exact and certain meaning of the terms seems to be lost. Chief among the wrong teachings in the early Church were 'Judaism' and 'gnosticism,' the one an insistence upon continuance of old covenant ceremonial, and the other a claim to extensive knowledge of things not revealed, such as grades of angelic authorities, good and bad— the deep things' (2:24). Both doctrines would be hateful to God because they would produce a lifeless formality, or an almost Christless heaven. It would appear that the Nicolaitans encouraged loose morals including sexual indulgence (2:15, R.v.).

(5) The punishment for failure to heed the message is removal of the Church's witness. Incidentally, I suppose the assembly might remain but its light no longer shines so far as God's cognisance is concerned. This might be so yet....

(6) Every individual member who listens and heeds has the promise of life. Paradise is equivalent to Eden and means spiritual life, of course.

2 The Church at Smyrna.—There are lessons by contrast in this message. Christ is first and last, dead and alive. The Church has tribulation and is poor, yet she is rich. The Jews are not Jews but an assembly of Satan. The members are to be faithful till death so as to receive the crown of life. This Church and that at Philadelphia are not found at fault. Both are to suffer, and have suffered already. The overcomers need have no fear of death.

3 The Church at Pergamum.—The sword of the Spirit begins the message and it is to be the means of punishment if the sins of the Church continue. It is fine to read of the courage and faithfulness of this Church, whose situation is so much against it. Satan's dwelling place must be a reference to extreme wickedness. No doubt faithful Antipas had angered the sinners by rebuking the sin. We can scarcely realise how subtle the temptation to sexual vice could be to Christians in that age and place. It was a fashionable sin, as in fact it seems to be becoming again in this age and place, while for most of us it is a disreputable thing-and how good that it should be so!

Even a recognition of the sinfulness of sin is better than shamelessness. Here, however, in this steadfast Church, is the teaching which leads Christians into wrong habits, and finally 'falling from grace.' Repentance is necessary if the Church is to maintain its real life. The rewards of the individual overcomers are divine sustenance, and the prize representing purity, and the honour of a name given by God Himself.

4 The Church at Thyatira.—This name recalls to us the faithful Lydia, the seller of purple at Philippi. She may well have been included in the Church. The commendation is specially high here—the list is works, love, faith, service, patience and, better still, continued improvement. Happy is the Church whose later works are an improvement on her first—contrast Ephesus. Yet here again Satan is busy, this time through a woman who is leading some into either figurative or actual vice. Toleration of such leadership cannot be right, and it will be followed by God's judgment upon Church and individuals. 'If Jezebel be understood to mean a sect rather than an individual . . . her lovers are the false teachers and her children, their disciples' (W. H. Simcox). However, eating things sacrificed to idols, and fornication would be common actual sins in those times and would be a real temptation, and bring the Gospel into disrepute if indulged in. The faithful are promised both victory and domination over the nations. 'If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him.

5 The Church at Sardis.—Here is a sad picture indeed—a Church supposed to be alive but really dead (or at least dying). The all-seeing and watchful Master sees through the disguise. It would seem there is a faint hope of survival through the few that have not defiled their garments-five righteous men might have saved Sodom. This Church had apparently not followed its efforts through. 'The work with little fervour wrought, the battles lost or scarcely won' had brought this Church close to the gates of death. The condemnation of the Church will not rob a single faithful person of his reward. The less faithful the Church, the greater is the test for the endurance of the overcomer.

6 The Church at Philadelphia,—This Church has a great opportunity, and it has been a faithful Churcn. Those who have been its enemies will have assurance that God loves it. A time of severe trial is promised but power from God will be available—He will 'keep.' Again the reward for the individual is given—a great honour in the new Jerusalem and a name conferred by God Himself.

7 The Church at Laodicea.—Here is an even sadder message than that to Sardis because here the Church is self-satisfied—the Church that considers it is doing well is in a fatal condition. The human estimate (see also Sardis) and the divine are strikingly out of harmony. Language could hardly make a greater contrast than is made here. Well might the prophet write: 'My thoughts are not your thoughts.' Gold (of obedience), white clothing (of purity) and eyesalve (for spiritual sight) are the necessary medicines for the dreadful disease of lukewarmitis brought on by self-satisfaction. Many regard these times as the Laodi-

cean period of Church history—perhaps with some justification but, after all, the same condition existed in the first century for this message to be given. "The love of the many shall wax cold." What a beautiful picture we have of the closeness of the Saviour's presence to those who love Him and are faithful! 'I will come in and sup with him.' Besides this there is the promise of victory.

The vision of heaven.—This is the second glimpse of heaven which this Revelation grants up. 'We know not in what hallowed part of the wide heavens Thy throne may be,' but when God's servants are 'in the spirit' in the sense of this, and other passages, they are given what they need—or we need—of His truth. It is as though the spiritual realm breaks through into the physical creation. Others of God's servants have been similarly blessed, more particularly Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, and the three disciples on the holy mount saw the glory of Christ. The translucent glory of precious stones and the beauty of the rainbow are used to paint a picture we could not bear to see in its real glory, and the sea of crystal, lamps of fire and living creatures in continuous motion, and worship, complete the picture, and the representatives of redeemed mankind enthroned before the divine majesty allow us to recognise a relationship between man, the fallen creature, and God the immortal and invisible One. suggested that the twenty-four elders represent the chosen race under old and new covenants. The two songs of worship represent two features of the everlasting God—His holiness and His creating power. R. B. SCOTT.

NONAGENARIANS.

On September 21st, Bro. J. T. Taylor, of 99 Keyham Lane, Humberstone, Leicester, will reach the 90th anniversary of his birthday. Eighty-five years ago, he entered the Lord's Day School at Crafton Street, Leicester, and eleven years later he became a member of the Church of Christ there. He remembers the old veterans of the Restoration Movement, and says: "What a decline has taken place in the teaching since that time."

Yes. If those old veterans could come back, they would be ashamed of the ground on which the co-operation of Churches of Christ now stands.

We pray for Bro. and Sis. Taylor that "the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich and addeth no sorrow" may be theirs in abundant measure.

On September 20th, Sister Preston, of the Church meeting in the Oddfellows' Hall, Ulverston, will reach the same age (ninety years). She is a loyal member of the Church, and a regular attender at all the meetings. For her age, she is very active, and is an example and inspiration to many. We offer to these our heartiest congratulations, and pray that the Lord will continue to sustain and bless them. The Lord's promise is surely fulfilled: "Even to your old age I am He, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you. I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Isaiah 46:4).

-EDITOR.

CORRESPONDENCE

BROTHER CHARLES BAILEY.

It was with feelings of sincere sorrow, and a sense of real loss, that we heard of the passing of Bro. Bailey. It must be about fifty-five years since we first met him, but we had heard of him even earlier than that. He was doing evangelistic work in Cumberland, and we remember a newspaper discussion in which he was then engaged. In later years, we came into closer touch, and especially when it became necessary to make a definite stand for the position and plea of the Churches of Christ.

For many years he was on the staff of the General Evangelistic Committee; but about twenty-four years ago he resigned from that position, giving as his chief reason, 'the widespread favour given by leading members of the Brotherhood to

distinct modernist teaching.'

It is significant that at about the same time Brethren J. W. and R. W. Black, who had been mainly responsible for founding 'Overdale College,' resigned from the College Committee for the same reason. At the Glasgow Annual Conference of 1927 we heard Bro. R. W. Black say that 'the teaching given at Overdale is of such a character that I would not send a son of mine there; and I cannot conscientiously ask other people to send their sons.' Bro. J. W. Black said he endorsed all that his brother had said.

Bro. Bailey took a leading part in what came to be spoken of as the Old Paths Movement, being for a considerable time conference secretary. He wrote many interesting and helpful articles for the Scripture Standard. He was ever loyal to the Lord and His Word; and by voice and pen he did what he could to advance the plea for a return to New Testament

Christianity.

Now he has fallen asleep in Jesus, and rests from his labours. 'Blest be his memory, and blest his bright example be.' EDITOR.

Sister Bailey wishes her grateful and warmest thanks to be conveyed (through the S.S.) to all who have sent her messages of sympathy and loving thoughts.

I feel I should add my tribute to our late Bro. Charles Bailey. Others of older years and closer experience can better speak of his service as evangelist and temperance worker in the Churches. Until the past few years, I hardly knew him except through testimonies paid to his preaching and teaching, his burning opposition to the liquor traffic and its evils, and his faithful visiting in homes of brethren and those who might be interested in the Gospel.

But three years ago, when my work took me into Yorkshire, I found in Bro. and Sis. Bailey what love to the brethren' means. Loneliness has to be experienced to be understood. We take the company of relatives, friends and brethren so much for granted that we fail to When all these realise their value. blessings were far away, I found in the home of the Baileys, at Doncaster, love and hospitality. At my first visit they gladly agreed to receive me in, and for the next seven months I enjoyed fellowship with "those of like precious faith." Bro. Bailey was even then frail in body, and his wife ministered to his needs with pure and unselfish devotion. Often Bro. Bailey and I talked on the deep things of the Spirit, sometimes, I fear, until his strength was quite gone. I remember particularly one night when he spoke with me, heart to heart, on the Church and the future before her. His eyes glowed with new life and his words were almost prophetic as he expressed his hopes and fears for the Church to which he had devoted his strength and his life.

Bro. Bailey was a Christian in head as in heart. The Bible satisfied his intellectual as well as his emotional needs. To glance through his large library showed his wide yet discriminating reading. His teaching and preaching appealed to the whole man.

Even though so feeble, Bro. Bailey's greatest desires in his last years were again to meet with his brethren and his Lord at His table and to preach the Gospel. These privileges were not again enjoyed by him. Yet his zeal and faithfulness 'through good report and ill' must be an inspiration to all who were privileged to know and love him. 'Whose faith follow.'

"THE OLD-TIME PARSON."

A Curate, in the days when the Darwinian theories were startling men's minds, once said to Bishop Wilberforce: "I don't see that it would have made any difference to me if my great-great-grand-father had been an ape."

"No," replied the Bishop, "perhaps not: But it would have made some difference to your great-great-grandmother."

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Devonport .- It is with great joy that we report another precious soul has accepted the Lord Jesus Christ. On August 12th, Mrs. Adelaide Allan, who has been attending the meetings recently, acknowledged the Lord Jesus Christ and was united with Him in baptism. We pray that our sister may be richly blessed in the path that lies before her, and hold fast the profession of her faith without wavering, and thus reap the reward of that crown of righteousness which is laid up in heaven, for all who love the appearing of our dear Lord. W. LAKEMAN.

Ince.—During the month of June, the Church at Ince had the services of Bro. Leonard Morgan in a Gospel campaign.

Our brother exhorted the Church each Lord's Day morning and preached the Gospel in the evening, and though we cannot report any visible result from his efforts it must be said that no blame attaches to him, for he did his work faithfully and well. It is with regret that we have to admit that Bro. Morgan found himself in the position in which preachers often find themselves-that of having no unconverted people to preach to. For although handbills were distributed to advertise the meetings, personal invitations were extended, there were occasions when all present were members of the Church.

However, even on these occasions our brother's messages contained things helpful to Christians, so that we should not for a moment think of writing off the effort as a waste of time. From the viewpoint of numbers, the Gospel meetings were impressive. This was due largely to the grand support given by

the district churches.

This is, in fact, an opportunity for us to express our sincere appreciation to the brethren at Hindley, Albert Street and Scholes, for the sterling support they have given to us, not alone at this effort, but ever since we commenced to hold Gospel meetings at Ince. We pray that they will be blessed for the encouragement they have given us.

This has been the first special effort of its kind made by the Church at Ince (a mission within a mission, we might call it), and we have learned some lessons which we trust we shall not forget when we come to make a similar venture. Brethren, pray for us, FRANK WORGAN.

Newtongrange.—We are happy to report that yet another has been added to the Church here. On Lord's Day, 9th August, our sister Sarah Wilson was immersed into the name of Jesus, the fruit, we believe of teaching in Sunday school and Bible class. We pray that the Lord will keep her, and make her useful in His service.

A. J. HALDANE.

Newtongrange.—We rejoice that yet another young woman has become obedient to the Gospel. Marion Holgate, a former Sunday School and Bible Class scholar, and the daughter of Christian parents, was on Lord's Day, 16th August, baptised into the name of Jesus. We pray that she may be kept faithful and prove useful in the Lord's service.

A. I. HALDANE.

Peterhead.—On Wednesday, 5th August, we had the great joy of seeing Helen (Ella) Troup passing through the waters of baptism. Our young sister made her confession before a large gathering of brethren and friends, and was baptised by Bro. Andrew Gardiner, who travelled from Thornton especially for that purpose, During the service, Bro. Samuel Hunter, Portknockie, gave a short and fitting address. He was followed by Bro. Andrew Gardiner, who gave us an inspiring message.

Visitors from Cullen and Portknockie were with us, and we were all refreshed anew by the witness of our young Sister

to our Lord.

Reflecting, we find that since Bro. Andrew Gardiner's first visit to Peterhead, twenty-four have been baptised into Christ, and five restored. A wonderful record.

W. STRACHAN.

Tunbridge Wells (Mount Ephraim Road.—On Lord's Day, July 19th, Bro. R. A. Hill (Swindon) served with us. He exhorted the Church on 1 John 1:4, pointing many fine truths associated with 'Joy.' At the gospel meeting, he gave a decisive answer to the question, 'What must I do to be saved?' He spoke again at our gospel meeting on the following Thursday, giving a very helpful talk on 'Worship.' His presentation of the truth was much appreciated by the whole Church.

On Saturday and Sunday, July 25th and 26th, we had fellowship with Bro. L. Channing, of Aylesbury. On the Saturday evening, he spoke on 'Personal Evangelism.' After the address, time was spent on questions and discussion, and all present felt impressed with the urgency of leading men to Christ. On the Sunday morning, Bro. Channing dealt with 'The Christian and Recreation,' and at the gospel meeting spoke about 'The Engrafted Word.' We were glad to hear the Word faithfully and capably proclaimed.

On Lor d's Days, August 2nd and 9th, we were well served by Bro. James Nisbet, of Tranent. His exhortations on 'Putting on Christ' and 'Holding fast the faith' were most helpful. His gospel addresses, on Revelations 3:20 and

2 Peter 3:9 were appreciated by good audiences.

We are glad to say that attendances at the gospel services was good at all the services mentioned. It is good to see a number of non-members present to hear the truth. We are confident that faithful proclamation will bring a good harvest in due course.

We rejoice that one more has been added to our number. On Sunday, August 2nd, Bro. A. Banfield, previously immersed, was welcomed to our fellowship. Despite physical disability, our brother is doing much to bring others to the Lord. We pray God's blessing for him, and hope he may be the means of leading many others to the Saviour. May God help us all to be faithful to His blessed Son.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

Tunbridge Wells, Silverdale Hall. — On July 29th we held our Bible School outing, when seventy children and parents journeyed by coach to Hastings.

Before starting we assembled at 8.30 in the Hall, for prayer (and choruses) for our heavenly Father's care and guidance through the day. We were blessed with a lovely day and a happy time.

We are encouraged by non-members attending the Gospel meetings. We trust, by getting in close touch with the parents in this way, we shall realise God's promise that as we plant and water He will give the increase.

Wallacestone.-We are pleased to report another addition to the Church here. On Sunday, July 27th, Tom Sharp, nineteen years of age, who has been attending all our meetings for some time, decided to follow his Lord in baptism. Bro. Dougall, who is on holiday, but who has often assisted the Church during the month of July, preached the Gospel on that day, revealing clearly and forcefully the way of salvation, according to New Testament teaching. A few hours later, our young brother called at the home of Bro. Dougall to make known his decision. He was immersed on Monday, 28th July, by Bro. Dougall. We pray God will abundantly bless him to His own honour and glory.

OBITUARY

Crossroads, Fife.—We regret to report the death of Sister Reid, widow of the late David Reid who was killed in a pit accident in Michael Colliery fifteen years ago. She had not been keeping well for a considerable time, and although unable to attend meetings was keenly interested in the activities of the Church, not present in body, but with us in spirit. She was constantly in our prayers, along with

others, for whom we made request to our Heavenly Father.

Our sister maintained her faith to the end, rejecting all modern trends, accepting the Bible as the authoritative and inspired Word of God. Daily she read her scriptures, rejoicing in the "exceeding great and precious promises" of our Lord and Saviour. "Truly with her, To be with Christ is far better."

We commend her loved ones to the God of all comfort, believing that we shall meet again "when the day dawns and the shadows flee away."

J. MCLAREN.

Dewsbury.—As briefly announced in the August issue of the "Standard," Bro. Charles Bailey passed away on July 17th. He was born at Doncaster on December 19th, 1869. He was a day school and Sunday school scholar at the Parish Church National School, and continued at that school as a teacher until he was twenty-four years of age.

He became a district Evangelist at the age of twenty-four, commencing his labours with the Church at Blackburn. From there, he went on to West Cumberland. After a few months there, he took up Temperance work—a work he was passionately interested in all his long life. He spent nine years in clerical work and lecturing for the Temperance cause in various parts of the country, returning to Evangelistic work in 1906. He was invited to join the G.E.C. in 1913. From then on he toured the country, for, in those days, short missions were the rule.

In 1930, he resigned from the G.E.C. on a matter of principle; to use his own words "Because not agreeing with the Co-operative's fraternising with U.S.A. Disciples, who were and are open communion. (Let it be said at this point that he adopted the same attitude to all the American sections). From then on, he did occasional evangelistic work.

It could be truthfully said that his two passions were Evangelistic work and Temperance work. His rigid attitude—he was a real Victorian—was not appreciated by many, but those who knew him best can testify to his strict adherance to principle.

His mortal remains were laid to rest in Torrisholme Cemetery, Morecambe,

on July 21st.

To his widow, we tend our deepest sympathy, and we know the Hand that sustained her, and gave her strength through the years of constant vigil will continue to uphold her.

R. MCDONALD.

AUTUMN RALLY SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 1953.

To be held at

Hope Chapel, Prince of Wales Road, Kentish Town, London, N.W.5.

Afternoon Session: 2 to 4 p.m.

Chairman, Bro. R. McDonald.

Three brief addresses on "Love," "Joy," "Peace." (Galatians 5:22-23)

Followed by questions and discussion.

Tea: 4.15 p.m.

Evening Public Meeting: 6 to 8 p.m.

Chairman, Bro. A. Hood.

Gospel addresses by Bren. W. Steele and A. E. Winstanley.

Refreshments for those travelling will be available prior to Afternoon Session.

Those wishing to stay for the weekend should write at once to: R. B. Scott, 96 Chetwynd Road, N.W.5. Tel. Gulliver 1176. They should make their own arrangements for accommodation if possible, but help will be given as far as possible.

Buses from London termini: 27, 134, 513, 613, 615.

Nearest Tube station, Kentish Town (Northern Line).

COMING EVENTS.

Dewsbury Anniversary Week-End, Sept. 26th-27th. Saturday: Tea 4.30 p.m. Evening meeting 6 p.m.

R. McDonald (Secretary).

Meeting of Sunday School Teachers, to be held in the meeting-place of the Church of Christ, Newtongrange, on Saturday, October 31st, at 4 p.m. This meeting will be presided over by Bro. Tom Nisbet (Tranent), and there will be three ten-minute addresses on 'Faith,' 'Repentance,' 'Confession," by Bren. Mark Plain (Tranent), James Gardiner (Tranent), Jim Morris (Newtongrange).

BOOKS OFFERED FREE

To brethren in Great Britain, upon request, we will send you a copy of my book, A Clean Church, or of the Wallace-Ketcherside Debate. These books are free to you, requiring only an acknowledgment that you received them. If you would like to have one or both of them, do not hesitate to write for them.

Address your requests to W. Carl Ketcherside, 7505 Trenton Avenue, St. Louis 14, Missouri, U.S.A.

BIRTH

BROWN.—On August 2nd, to Bro. and Sister David Brown (née Jean Mc-Donald) a daughter—Anne.

GOLDEN WEDDING.

FERGUSON—WHYTE.—At Motherwell, on 9th September, 1903, by Bro. James Anderson, Evangelist, William Ferguson to Christina Whyte. Present address: "Craig Dhu," Kilbirnie, Ayrshire.

[Many will join us in heartiest congratulations and best wishes.—Ed.]

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

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