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

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The Royal Standards

The Necessity of Standards

CERTAIN things are so much a part of our everyday life that we take them for granted and do not notice their presence. Among these things are the standards of weight, measure and time. We rarely think of their existence, yet without them industrial and commercial life would be impossible. Everyday life would be chaotic.

We know when we go into a shop that we shall get the pound of goods or the yard of material that we pay for. Yet why should this be? Why shouldn't the shopkeeper weigh or measure to us just what he thinks our money is worth? Why should any attempt be made to keep our clocks and watches showing the same time?

The answer is that a shopkeeper simply cannot please himself what he weighs or measures to you, and the clockmaker would soon be out of business who used his own ideas of time. They are under authority and must submit to a standard.

What are these Standards?

Whitaker's Almanack says: 'The Weights and Measures Act of 1878... enacts the legal measures for Great Britain, basing them upon the Standard Yard and the Standard Pound in... the Standards Department of the Board of Trade.' The same publication says of standard time: 'In... 1880 it was enacted by statute that the word "time" in any legal document relating to Great Britain was to be interpreted... as the Mean Time of the Greenwich Meridian.'

Concerning these Imperial Standards, the 13th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in its article 'Weights and Measures,' states: 'The legal theory of . . . British weights and measures is (a) the standard yard with all lineal measurements . . . based upon that: (b) standard pound with all weights based upon that; (c) the standard gallon.'

Standards in the Realm of Religion

Yet, although all admit the necessity of these standards for regulating everyday life, we find a different situation in religious matters. Here the criterion seems to be what a man thinks, or what his opinions are; every man wishes to be a law unto himself, doing what is right in his own eyes. Men express their own views on such matters as what needs to be believed

in the Bible and what is not essential; how one is saved; how one becomes a member of the church; how churches should be governed; and who will go to heaven. One church has one system of doctrine, another has a quite different Confession of Faith

There is, therefore, little wonder at the confusion in the religious world. There would be the same chaos in our workaday world did we not accept standards as being necessary and to be strictly conformed to.

Yet another strange phenomenon appears here. Though various religious bodies follow largely their own wisdom and guidance in the teaching and practices of their churches, they grasp eagerly at any passages of scripture which seem to support them. Finding authority in the Bible they all regard as the absolute standard, without need of further sanction. This applies even to the Roman Catholic Church, which seeks support for her teachings on extreme unction, confession and purgatory in misapplied or perverted texts of scripture.

What is a Standard?

We need look no further than to the dictionary for the answer. Webster's says: 'That which is established by authority as a rule for measuring; or by general consent as a model or example; accepted or established rule or model.'

In religion which standard satisfies these definitions? What is the 'rule for measuring,' accepted by 'general consent as a model or established rule'? The question supplies its own answer. One standard alone is agreed by all as having authority in the church and spiritual matters: not a rule imposed by the Pope; not an article of faith, confession of faith, creed or rule of doctrine of any religious body; but the Bible, the Scriptures, the word of God.

The Scripture Standard

There are those who tell us it is the Christ standard we need to adopt; that we must get back beyond the Scriptures to the Christ; beyond an infallible book to an infallible Person. They quote to us the hymn—

'Beyond the sacred page
I seek Thee, Lord:
My spirit pants for Thee,
O living Word.'

No attempt is ever made to tell us how we are to do this. For to get to the infallible Christ without the infallible Book is simply impossible. For where, except in the Bible, do we find any worthwhile reference to the Christ? We search in vain through pagan, secular or other contemporary writers. So we are inevitably brought back to this Book.

The Scriptures and Christ cannot be separated. They witness to Christ and Christ to them. 'These are they which testify of me.' 'To him bear all the prophets witness.' 'And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.'

The founders of this magazine chose a fitting title in naming it the Scripture Standard, not because it claims to be the standard for the followers of Christ, but because it exists to call attention to and plead for the scripture standard to be adopted not only in theory but in deed and truth. For even though there is general agreement that the word of God is binding upon the church, too often men proceed to act as though no such standard exists. It will not do to pay lip-service to the authority of scripture and then to plead that the standard can be set aside to suit changing conditions.

A shopkeeper acting thus with our humanly made standards would be heavily punished. How much more any man who dare treat as unessential or ignore or belittle that which God Himself has commanded. In dealing with the Scriptures we are dealing not with the things of men but of God.

'To the law and to the testimony,' says Isaiah (8:20-21), 'if they speak not according to this word . . .'

The Scriptures are the 'royal law': 'If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture...' They are the Standard of the King, the Royal Standard.

(God willing, we propose in a future issue to show how this standard is to be applied to all religious activities, to test whether they be of God or of men.)

EDITOR.

'Ye are ... A Royal Priesthood'

[Continuing our reports on the lectures given at Hindley Bible School this year, this month we include notes on the second lecture, delivered by Bro. Albert Winstanley.]

1 PET. 2:9 is in a train of thought that begins in chapter 1. There (vv. 22-23) the new birth is described. The new birth should produce new life, and this in turn must be manifested by new desires and appetites (2:1-3). Future salvation will depend upon present spiritual growth.

To obedient believers Jesus is 'a living stone'; to the disobedient He is 'a stumbling stone and rock of offence.' He who men now reject will one day reject them. The present position of the Lord's people is contrasted with their former condition. They were not a people, they now are a people. They had not obtained mercy, they now have obtained mercy (2:4-8).

The High Priest

- (a) His Identity. Our high priest is the Son of God, Heb. 3:1:4:14. As Apostle He represents God to us; as High Priest He represents us to God. No man can occupy this position.
- (b) His Nature and Character. He has a human nature and a divine nature, Matt. 22:41-46, Rev. 22:16. He is the 'root of David'—a divine person upon whom all human life is dependent. He is the 'offspring of David' in that He took a human nature as David's descendant (compare Jn. 14:9; 1:18; Col. 2:9). The humanity of Jesus enables Him to be truly sympathetic (Heb. 4:15-16).
- (c) His Desire. He seeks to save us 'to the uttermost,' i.e., completely (Heb. 7:24-25). He is working to bring us to heaven. He is 'our fore-runner': if faithful we shall follow Him there, Heb. 6:19-20.
- (d) His Ministry. He is our mediator (1 Tim. 2:5). He pleads for us on the basis of the sacrifice He made for us (Rev. 7:14; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24).
- (e) His Offering. The sacrifice He offered was sufficient for all men and for all time, Heb. 7:25-27; 9:12, 26; 10:12, 14, 18.

The Royal Priesthood

- (a) Its Extent. Modern religious systems make the priesthood smaller than the church. In the Lord's church every member is a priest (1 Pet. 2:7).
- (b) Its Nature. It is called 'royal'—it belongs to King Jesus (see Heb. 8:1). It is a kingdom of priests (Rev. 1:5-6). As High Priest He represents us to God; as king He rules us for God.

It is also 'spiritual' (compare 2:5 and Heb. 10:21). Admission is by a spiritual re-birth (Jn. 3:3-5).

(c) Its Means of Access. We come to God through Jesus, by a way opened by His sacrifice (Heb. 10:19-22).

The Sacrificial System

The old covenant sacrifices were temporary, until a 'time of reformation' (Heb. 9:9). Jesus offered a final sacrifice and has an abiding priesthood (Heb. 9:24-26). We must offer *spiritual sacrifices* (1 Pet. 2:5). They are:—

- (a) Sacrifice of Praise (Heb. 13:15). 'Fruit of lips' here covers prayer (Rev. 8:3-4) and singing (Eph. 5:19-20). But we are to offer a continual sacrifice with our lips. Thus everything that issues from them should be for the glory of God.
- (b) Sacrifice of Service (Phil. 2:17; 4:18). All true service to God and our brethren is acceptable sacrifice (Heb. 13:16).
- (c) Sacrifice in Living (Rom. 12:1). 'Bodies' here involves all that we do in the body—our whole life. All we are and do should be of such a quality that God is pleased with it.

The basis for all our spiritual sacrifice is to be love, not a mere sense of duty (Eph. 5:2).

'Questions Answered'

From the beginning of the school nine years ago, the 'Questions Answered' session has always been one of the most interesting. Questions have been sent in by friends in religious denominations, by brethren puzzled as to the meaning or interpretation of scripture passages, by those seeking help and guidance in the Christian's daily life, on church government, and a host of other subjects of like nature.

A selection from this year's questions will give some idea of the subjects dealt with:—

What proof is there in the scriptures that the Church of Christ is the true church?

Should a Christian work on the Lord's Day?

What reliable authority have we for accepting the canon of scripture?

Is it right to use individual cups at the Lord's Supper?

What scriptural authority is there ... for ... spending the Lord's money to build or procure buildings in which to preach the Gospel?

Can you produce scripture . . . that we are commanded to keep Sunday a sacred day?

Is there consciousness of the soul between death and the judgment?

What did Jesus mean in Matt. 10:34: 'Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword'? Also Luke 22:36: 'He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one'?

It will be seen that to answer such questions on the spur of the moment entails a wide knowledge of the Bible. As with everything else at the school it must be remembered that it is a *Bible* School. Consequently, so far as possible, answers are given from the Bible. This again goes to prove that almost all things are covered in God's Word, and that by either teaching, example or inference 'the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works.'

C. MELLING.

The Gospel Meetings

The distribution of 5,000 copies of *Truth in Love* and 4,000 handbills, plus 250 personal letters of invitation sent by post, heralded the coming of Brother Frank Worgan, from Holland, to preach in the Public Hall, Hindley.

We hired this hall because of the smallness of our own meeting place. As we climbed the stairs on Lord's Day evening, we did not realise the heights of joy we were to reach before the night was over.

Two hundred and fifteen adults and many young people met together to hear Bro. Worgan speak on 'The Way Back to God' (Isaiah 35:8). He spoke of God's way of salvation being (1) a simple way; (2) a safe way; (3) a sure way; (4) a select way; and (5) a satisfying way. The power of God's message was made known by six young people responding—two boys and four girls—all from the Lord's Day school. At the close of the meeting the two boys were baptised into Christ.

On Monday Bro. Worgan spoke on John 18:34, choosing some ideas of the day, such as: (1) 'I can please myself how I worship God'; (2) 'One church is just as good as another'; (3) 'It doesn't matter, anyway, we are all going to the same place'; (4) 'I can be saved without being baptised.' To each of these, Brother Worgan put the question: 'Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee?'

Once again we received assurance of the power in the Gospel, for a young man stepped out boldly to confess Jesus. Later, in the meeting house in Argyle Street, the four girls and this young man were baptised. Another young man also came forward to make the 'good confession.'

On Tuesday evening, Bro. Worgan's discourse, 'What Jesus means to me,' dealt with three stories from the Bible—Barabbas, Onesimus and Mephibosheth. Jesus took the place allotted by justice to Barabbas, and liberty was thus afforded a murderer. Jesus means more to the believer than this, for He willingly took the sinner's place, died in His stead and through faith in Him granted liberty from sin and death.

He continued with the story of the runaway slave, Onesimus: how Paul found him, gained him as a believer, and sent him back to his master, Philemon, with the plea, 'Receive him as myself.' Jesus, in a greater sense, finds the one who is a slave to sin, liberates him from his bonds and brings him to God with the plea, 'Receive him as myself.'

The third story was of Mephibosheth, a crippled child of Jonathan, restored to his former happiness and bliss by King David, 'for Jonathan's sake.' So does Jesus seek out those crippled by Satan and restores to them the happiness and fellowship which were theirs before sin came. 'For Jonathan's sake' becomes for 'Jesus' sake.'

On Wednesday evening, 187 turned in to hear Bro. Worgan discuss 'The work of the Holy Spirit in salvation' (John 16:8). He dealt with three facts—conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment to come—stressing the reality of sin, the awful consequences at the judgment, and the need for the protection of Christ's righteousness.

We met on the last night of the mission in prayerful anticipation that those who had been holding out would yield. Those present (182) heard a stirring message, 'Everybody's Saviour.' Bro. Worgan spoke on Mark 5, dealing with the power of Jesus over a man possessed with demons; a woman stricken with disease; and a child in the sleep of death. Jesus was everybody's Saviour—the man's, the woman's, the child's.

There was great joy, when during the closing of the meeting two decided to accept the Saviour, strikingly enough, a woman and a child

aged ten years. They were buried with their Lord in baptism the same hour of the night.

Those thus added were: John Morgan, Rodney Brown, Doreen Catterall, Brenda Beesley, Margaret and Lilian Balmer and Mrs. Ellen Sutton (Hindley), Albert Edward Budden (Tunbridge Wells), Geoffrey Ellis (East Kirkby), June Ashurst (Scholes).

We rejoice that our Brother Worgan has been used of God to extend the Saviour's Kingdom, and we pray our Father's blessing upon him as he shortly returns to Holland. May many find the way back to God through his service.

T. KEMP.

Approaching the Word of God

(The first of a series of articles on Bible study based on a discourse given by Bro. R. A. Hill at Hindley Bible School, May 29th, 1955.)

IT MAY be helpful to Bible students to consider various ways of approaching the divine revelation and of studying the Bible so that some common errors may be avoided. It is not unreasonable to suppose that this precious book is subject to principles of study just as any other book and that good common-sense is probably the first requisite in Bible study. D. R. Dungan wrote: 'Someone has said that if a man lack knowledge he can get it of his fellow-man; that if he lack religion he can it by going to God and asking for it; but if he lack common-sense he has nowhere to go. But this remark has in it more of wit than truth. We are not all equally endowed, but almost every one has a talent, and if that be not hid in a napkin and buried in the earth, but properly employed, it will increase . . . Common-sense has its root idea in the ability to discover harmony in the things which agree; and, conversely, to perceive unlikeness in opposites.'

No originality is claimed for the suggestions to be made in this article and subsequent studies, and readers may recognise thoughts adapted from essays by various leaders in the movement to restore the Apostolic faith. Since the essays of Dungan, Carroll Kendrick, Robert Milligan and T. and A. Campbell are not always accessible to Christians of this century, no apology is needed for outlining their observations here. Truth is never outdated, but it is not always fully appreciated. It is for us to acknowledge and utilise whatever assistance is available from those lovers of the truth who have helped to 'blaze the trail'—'back to Jerusalem.'

We begin with the basic assumption that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, not merely that it contains the Word of God (or part of that Word) as detractors have suggested. Just as the Apostles claimed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in their choice of words to express the revealed 'wisdom of God' (1 Cor. 2, particularly vv. 7, 10 and 13), so we dare not assume less than that for any part of the sacred Scriptures, for 'holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.' The inspiration of the Bible, however, is not a subject within our present consideration. We are here concerned with the attitude of mind in the Bible student and with the proper method of approach to the Scriptures. We therefore pass over the study of evidences as to the truth of either the Bible or of Christianity and accept them as proved. If the Bible is not the Word of God our preaching is vain and we are yet in our sins.

As in most subjects, so here it is necessary to warn against the wrong methods before outlining the proper way of approaching God's Word. If we can eliminate those methods which foster unreasonable, imaginative and sectarian notions, we shall better understand the right attitude of mind and the proper way of handling the Scriptures.

Wrong Approaches to be Avoided

- (a) The Casual Approach. This is the way that some folk have of reading without intending or expecting to understand the Bible. It can be divided mainly into the following three aspects:—
- (1) Reading only from a sense of duty. This becomes a habit simply because it is 'the done thing' in certain circles. But what is the value of having read the Bible through any number of times if it is not understood? It has been said that this exercise is 'something better than a pilgrimage to Mecca' (or Rome), 'but as a means of becoming acquainted with the Scriptures it is very poor.' Certainly we would not read any other book in this way.
- (2) Reading irregularly and without any system. This is a spasmodic and patchy approach, reading here a verse and there a chapter, now in the Old Testament and then in the New. Like the previous habit, it may teach us details of truth which stick in the mind of their own accord, but it tends to encourage that mistaken notion that whatever scrap of scripture attracts our attention is necessarily the message of God to us at a given time.
- (3) Reading only favourite passages. This is another casual approach which certainly would not be used in the pursuit of any other form of knowledge. It encourages the * one-track' attitude of those who love to ride a 'hobby horse,' but cannot serve to teach anyone the whole counsel of God.

There may be other aspects of this section. Anything that hinders a thorough and regular study should be avoided. There is nothing casual about the Apostle's word to Timothy, 'Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word

(To be continued)

Notes on my Life

BY WALTER CROSTHWAITE

[The former editor has been prevailed upon to write these notes on his long life because we feel that they will satisfy the desire of many brethren, and at the same time will give interesting glimpses of the history of the Churches of Christ, in which Bro. Crosthwaite has had such a wide and varied experience.—EDITOR.]

My Father

I WAS BORN in Ulverston, North Lancashire, on October 30th, 1873. My father was one of the pioneers, and for many years an elder, of the Church Of how he came to that position the following, of Christ in that town. written by himself, will tell: 'In January, 1876, I joined the Church of Christ meeting at Lindal, having previously belonged to the Baptists at Ulverston. Up to the year 1864, I was sceptical about religion, but at that time I gave up the use of intoxicating drink, after which good resolutions were aroused within. But. baby-sprinkling and other false doctrines caused me to stumble. For a time I was groping about in the dark. I felt my need In a short time, I beheld Jesus, the Chief amongst ten of a Saviour. thousand, and the altogether lovely. I saw baptism as a command from Him. Had I seen it as clear as I did afterwards, I would have attended to it sooner, I think. However, on June 10th, 1871, I was baptised, and joined the Baptists; and remained with them up to the time of joining the Church as stated above.

1 attended the discussion on Baptism between the "Rev." L. O. Lewis, Vicar of Lindal-in-Furness, and Mr. David King, of Birmingham, held on the 8th, 9th, 14th and 15th of December, 1875. That, and conversations I had with John Coward, William McDougall and several other brethren forced the truth upon me, causing me to see clearly that I was not on New Testament ground in many things, therefore I was forced to move. On the 12th day of March, 1876, I had a conversation with two friends of mine who had been formerly connected with the Baptists. They said they would like to meet according to the teaching of the New Testament. I invited them to go with me to Lindal, and they would see our form; and also hear Bro. Evans give his finishing discourse on "The Tabernacle." They did so and were delighted. Bro. Evans advised us to meet at once, he believing us to be men of stability. Therefore we met for the first time in Ulverston to 'break bread' in, the house of Sister Sarah Woods on the 19th day of March, 1876. There were present four brethren and three sisters. Two of the brethren never met with us again to break bread. We were all opposed by those who should have helped us rnost. One of the brethren said that his heart is with us, but because of his wife's persecutions he remains away from us. I cannot understand such men. The Saviour says they that love anything more than Him are unworthy of Him. The Church continued to exist amidst many trials from false and unfaithful brethren up to March 20th, 1881, when it was decided that, after March 27th, we meet with the brethren at Lindal, about three miles off. We continued there up to April 1st, 1883, upon which day we met again in Ulverston, and hope we will never have to give up till the Master comes to call His people to Himself. -Joseph Crosthwaite.'

The Churches of Christ

As most of my life has been spent in the service of the Churches with which my father was associated, a brief statement of their position and plea will not be out of place here. Churches of Christ in Britain were really the outcome of the labours of Robert and James Haldane. These heroic souls laboured hard and spent much in an endeavour to establish churches of New Testament faith and order. They regarded their efforts as unsuccessful, and modestly thought they were unworthy workers for such a great task. But they sowed seed which in Britain, America and other lands has produced a wonderful harvest.

Churches of Christ reject all human creeds and confessions of faith, and stand for the Bible only as their standard and guide. They plead for rightly dividing the word of truth,' holding that the Old Testament Scriptures reveal a national religion for the Jews, and the New reveals a religion for all peoples and nations. What God required from His ancient people is found in the Old Testament; what He requires now is in the New Testament, The Church is built upon 'the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Faith in Jesus as such, and obedience to Him, is the bond of union and fellowship. All believers must, in accordance with New Testament teaching and practice, be immersed into the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and should meet to remember Him in the 'Breaking of Bread' every Lord's Day. They plead for the union of all believers by a return to the ground on which the Church stood at the beginning. Divisions have been caused by departure from New Testament teaching and practice; unity can be attained by a return thereto.

The Horrors of Hell

INTRODUCTION: Jehovah's Witnesses, the chief exponents of no hell theory. Always talking about 'Hades' and 'Sheol.' But 'Tartarus' and Gehenna' are words for Hell. 'Tartarus' in 2 Peter 2:4. 'Gehenna' in Matthew 5:22, 29, 30, 10:28, 18:9, 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:4; ames 3:6.

Many live as if no hell. If realised truth would hasten to repent.

Two great forces which move men—love and fear of punishment. God has always used both. (Gen. 3:16, 17; Mk. 16:15, 16.)

- 1. Bible description of hell. Word not always used. Alluded to under various figures.
 - (1) Place of punishment (2 Thess. 1:9; Matt. 25:46).
 - (2) Everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 2:10; 21:8).
 - (3) Everlasting punishment in fire (Matt. 24:41; 5:22).
 - (4) Fire . . . worms (Mark 9:42-48).
 - (5) Destruction of both soul and body (Matt. 10:28).
 - (6) Place of shame and contempt (Dan. 12:2).
 - (7) Separation (2 Thess. 1:6-9; Matt. 25:41).
 - (8) Outer darkness (Matt. 25:30).
- 2. Hell not made for man.
 - (1) For devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).
 - (2) Why men go there: Love evil, serve Satan.
- 3. God sends none to hell.
 - (1) Men go in spite of all God can do.
 - (2) Efforts God has made to save men from hell: prophets, Christ, Apostles, Christians.
- 4. Some questions asked concerning.
 - (1) Is not hell here? If so many of best men are in it. Eternal punishment begins at judgment (2 Pet. 2:9; 3:5-7).
 - (2) Is not hell the suffering of man's conscience? Wicked often have no conscience (1 Tim. 2:2).
 - (3) Sin committed in finite state deserves infinite punishment? Length of time in committing crime has nothing to do with duration of punishment.
- 5 Who is going to hell?
 - (1) Unbelievers (John 8:24); Mark 16:16; Rev. 21:18).
 - (2) Impenitent (Luke 13:3).
 - (3) Those who obey not the gospel (2 Thes. 1:6-8).
 - (4) Those who love the world (1 John 2:15-17).
 - (4) Those who follow the works of the flesh (1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8).
 - (6) The unprepared (Matt. 25:1-13).
 - (7) The inactive (Matt. 25:14-30).
 - (8) The selfish (Matt. 25:31-46).
 - (9) The negligent (Heb. 2:1, 2).
- 6. How escape?
 - (1) All are sinners (Rom. 3:23).
 - (2) Wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).
 - (3) Jesus the Saviour (Matt. 1:21; Luke 19:10; Heb. 9:22).
 - (4) Saves obedient (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8, 9).

'Prophetic Passion' in Preaching

IN HIS presidential address to the Methodist Local Preachers' Mutual Aid Association in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Mr. A. E. Shaw pleaded for a return of preaching with 'prophetic passion and conviction.' He said they had to make a superficially and relatively contented people discontented, to stir people out of that lethargy symbolised in the commonly used phrase, 'I couldn't care less.'

There was no hope in preaching that refused to face reality, that turned the church into a cheerful social club, or that merely pleaded for a little more kindliness.

'There must be a preparedness on the part of the preacher to hurt at times rather than to comfort, to arouse bitterness and antagonism, anger and mockery and yet to do it in that Christian spirit which commands the respect even of one's enemies.'—Manchester Guardian.

CORRESPONDENCE

Special Appeal.

Dear Brethren,—For some years the Church in Slamannan has experienced great difficulty with its heating system. We have been in contact with heating engineers, who have given us an estimate for installation of a new system which will be built above the level of the river, as our present one is flooded out whenever the river rises. With all the work to be done and cost of new heating apparatus we require to raise the sum of £400.

We make an urgent appeal to the brethren to help us in this effort. We are raising the first £100 ourselves, but feel it is beyond us to raise all the money required. Our numbers are few and many are elderly and have a very small income.

We desire to proceed with this work at once. Plans are now ready. Please help us in this cause. It is the work of the Lord. We pray for a generous response.

Donations will be gratefully received by Bro. John Wilson, Grays Land, North End, Slambannan.

In a note enclosed with this appeal, Bro. Wilson writes: 'As a Church, we are still contending earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. Meetings are fairly good, and our earnest prayer is that we may yet see many precious souls won for our dear Lord and Master here in this part of His vineyard.'

Ince-in-Makerfield (Wigan) .- It is more than a year since we made an appeal for gifts toward the construction of a temporary meeting-place and though the individuals generous gifts of Churches have been acknowledged we have been forced by circumstances to delay announcing our definite plans. Brethren everywhere made generous response to the appeal and the treasurer now has a total of £435, for which we again say a sincere 'Thank you.' addition to these gifts we have a balance of £165 in hand which is increasing weekly and will be allocated to the building in due course.

A temporary building, however, will not be approved by the Town Planning Authority. At their suggestion, we have directed our attention away from the original site to a larger plot of land on Belle Green Lane, at the entrance to the new housing estate. This is a prominent site and we are sure it could not In addition the be improved upon. Authority are needing a public building for the corner site, and have expressed a preference for 'a Church,' so we are virtually assured of approval for a per-manent building. We hope that our brethren who have so generously contributed will not query the turn of events, if we embark on the more ambitious plan for a brick-built structure, which may cost us between £2,000 and £3,000 altogether.

We had hoped to be able to announce official approval to build long ago, but the Council have twice postponed a decision, because the owner of the ground is resisting their request to purchase the whole area for a development scheme. He had, in fact, applied to build some shops on the site. So there is a complex triangle of negotiation and we still await his agreement on our suggested purchase price. We hope to give more news later.

Further tribute to Bro. Crosthwaite.

Dear Brother Editor,—I would like to join Brethren Frith and Jepson in their eulogy of our esteemed Brother W. Crosthwaite. I feel that I can best do so by quoting from the preface to his excellent work, Talks on the Tabernacle, hoping that this may reach a wider circle of readers:—

'No words of mine could adequately express the deep gratitude that many must feel that Walter Crosthwaite ... became known to them. For about fifty years the writer of this brief appreciation has enjoyed the warm friendship and fellowship of this servant of God, and of Churches of Christ. How many share with me in that valued association, it is impossible to tell. Neither is it possible to record the valued help and guidance so spontaneously and so graciously given through the years to so many. May God richly reward him!

'For more than half-a-century, with both voice and pen, Walter Crosthwaite has made loyalty to God and the Scripture of Truth, and faithfulness to the original plea of Churches of Christ for an unqualified return to the unadulterated Christianity of the New Testament, his constant aim. Turning neither to right nor left, he has kept steadily on his course, with a strength of will and purpose worthy of the Cause. . . .'

Many who will not be able to write a tribute to our brother will, I am sure, join in the hope and prayer that God's blessing may still be upon him and his dear wife as they travel together along the King's highway, until they are received, with the many who have been won to the Saviour through his manifold labours, unto the everlasting mansions.

J. HOLMES.

The Sermonette Evil

Someone has said that sermonettes are preached by preacherettes and produce Christianettes. If that be true there is real danger that the Church will be filled with Christianettes in the near future.

That this trend is contrary to the examples found in the New Testament no-one can successfully deny. At Troas 'Paul preached unto them . . . and continued his speech until midnight. . . . And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sank down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.' After Paul restored him to life he 'talked a long while, even till break of day' (Acts 20:7-11). This was certainly not a sermonette.

It might be said, however, that the sermon Peter preached on Pentecost was short. Certainly the time required to read this sermon as recorded in Acts 2 would

not be very great. But verse 40 says, 'And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.' We have no way of knowing just how long Peter actually preached. Certainly the above Scripture tells us plainly that his was not a modern fifteen-minute sermonette.

No-one would contend that a preacher should make his sermons long merely for the sake of length. A fifteen-minute sermon stretched to an hour and half certainly gets too thin. But if he has the spiritual food in his sermons that they should contain to make and develop strong Christians it will take some time to present each one to the audience. Certainly by careful preparation many sermons can be presented in much less time than is sometimes used. But to condense too much is to take away the beauty and personal touch until it is no longer appealing. Who wants to replace his delicious meals with concentrated vitamin tablets and dehydrated foods

David said: 'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord' (Ps. 122:1). If a person is thus interested in worshipping God he will not complain if the sermon is a little long. Those who complain at a sermon of reasonable length are not really interesting in worshipping God at all. They merely want to salve their consciences or they would not attend the services at all.

'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth' (Col. 3:1-2). The person who obeys this command will enjoy worshipping God. If you do not now enjoy it you should 'set your affections on things above.' This is as much a command as any other command God has given. The fact that God commands it shows clearly that it is possible for man to obey it. You can learn to enjoy worshipping God. Suppose you fail to learn this lesson while in this life. What would be your plight if you were to go to heaven but could not endure a long period of worship? In that celestial city there will be one continuous period of worship throughout eternity. Those who tire of worship quickly would be entirely out of place in that eternal city. The fact is they will never go there. 'Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation' (Heb. 9:28). Those who do not anxiously await His return will not be received up by Him. Those who anxiously await His return will be glad to spend time in studying His Word and worshipping Him.

-Gospel Digest.

Why a Christian should not Dance

- 1.—Dancing Christians are considered hypocrites by the world.
- 2.—Three-fourths of the fallen girls in America attribute the beginning of their ruin to dancing.
- 3.—If dancing does not hurt me, my influence might cause a weaker person to be ruined and lost.
 - 4.—Dancing church members are the weakest members.
- 5.—The dance is the only place where the vilest of men can embrace the purest of girls in the closest familiarity with the approval of society.
- 6.—Dancing is the only amusement in the world that depends for its existence upon the mingling of the sexes.
- 7.—Thousands of men have used the dance as the surest way of trapping a girl.
- 8.—The dance has a secret language by which a man can test a girl's purity without saying a word.
- 9.—If a man embraces his neighbour's wife without music anywhere except in a ballroom there would be serious trouble.
 - 10.—The best and most devout Christians do not dance.
 - 11.—It is the companion vice of drinking and other sins.
- 12.—Dancing will not be tolerated in a preacher of the gospel. There are not two standards for preachers and other Christians.



7—2 Chron. 36:9-21. Luke 20: 1-26. 14—Exodus 3:1-15. " 20:27-47. 21—Daniel 9:16-27. " 21: 1-19. 28—2 Kings 24:18 to 25:13. " 21:20-38.

Christ's Authority (20:1-8).-The question and answer are given also by Matthew and Mark (21:23-32 and 11:27-33 respectively), and should be read there also. A parable is added by Matthew. The incidents and teaching we are now given took place during the last week of our Saviour's life, and we think He had already 'cleansed' the Temple judging by the order of the two other gospels—which involves regarding Luke 19:45 and 46 as retrospective in relation to the first day of the week (Sunday, of course). We observe the description of His work as twofold, 'teaching' and 'preaching.' He was instructing the people in divine things and good behaviour, and heralding the 'kingdom' (the church), which was about to be established, and in which His 'teaching' would have the supreme place and would control the citizens. The chief priests had the authority in the Temple. They were its guardians and officers. Jesus had already flouted that authority by doing what it ought to have done ('cleansed' its courts), and was teaching God's truth 'as One that had authority' (Matt. 7:29). Produce your credentials' was almost a natural question from them, but envy was the motive, and a wish to obstruct or discredit One so obviously superior to them in every way. These men would be Sadducees. The question asked by Jesus was devastating in its effects. It made them confess or pretend ignorance, and brought on to His side those they were most anxious to estrange from Him—'the people.'

The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (20:9-19).-We must read Isaiah 5:1-4, and know that those who had become enemies of Jesus knew their Scriptures. These words are addressed to 'the people,' but the others were within hear-The details of the parable needed no illustration, and were recognised at once as past history as to the servants. Stephen told the same story, but not in parable, before his martyrdom (Acts Apparently the hearers understood the doom pronounced to be upon themselves (verse 16), and the question with which Jesus followed up would bring this home, and point them to Himself as the last messenger. The 'Authorities,' the Builders, were now rejecting and determined to destroy that Messenger. Only fear held them back, but they plotted in secret. To those who are determined to sin, the opportunity comes, but how terrible is the expression of the We have a saying, Divine retribution. 'the mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small'-to dust literally and figuratively. 'The head of the corner' is the cornerstone which controls the set-up of the building, and binds the two walls together.

The Tribute Money (20:20-26).—The offensive to discredit and destroy continues. Hypocritical righteousness could not deceive or overcome plain Truth.

Neither could flattery disarm—it happened to be Truth also. Those who have to testify for Christ surely have a promise of 'a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist.' That is what the Saviour Himself certainly had—and this incident abundantly illustrates it. The hatred of the foreign yoke had not prevented the Jews from getting wealth by the use of its coinage—and here it was ready to hand for an answer. Let them decide whether it was lawful to use it—but a bigger obligation is always there too. How did they meet that?

The Resurrection (20:27-39).—To us it may be the Sadducees asked a very foolish question, and indeed they greatly erred, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. But it was a "point" in argument with their opponents the Pharisees. Again the answer is complete, and more. It is a revelation and an opening up of Scripture to us in an unexpected way. Some scribes of the Pharisee persuasion would perhaps be glad to have a "point." The Sadducees are now taking a more prominent part in the attempt to destroy the Saviour than they have before. They held the high offices in the Temple. All alike are hostile to Jesus now, and have come 'under fire' of His supreme wisdom.

A Question for the Scribes (20:41-47).—The questions have all been answered by Jesus but those He asked have reduced the wisdom of the wise of this world to confession of ignorance or else to silence. However the scribes might have said, 'David is to have a descendant who would be greater than himself,' but the title 'Lord' meant more than that to them—and they must learn the truth ultimately that the Messiah was to be born of the Holy Spirit, and therefore be God's Son—and He was now before them but they refused Him recognition. It is evident that Jesus knows His time coming, and the whole truth about the scribes is told to the people in their presence with a grave threat. Some doubtless did take this to heart, and were 'added to the Lord' later.

giving Divine Measure for (21:1-4).—Refer to 2 Kings 12:9 for the Treasury and background of this incident. From Mark we learn that some of the gifts were very considerable (12:41). The widow brought the smallest offering that could be made, but it was all she had for the day at least, so it was a sacrifice indeed. Where was tomorrow's food coming from? She would be looking to God for this, and surely our view should be the same. At the present day we do not live hand to mouth, but what property we may have should be for use and held as a stewardship. Do we only give out of our abundance, or sacrificially?

The fate of the Temple, and other prophecies (21:5-24). — In these verses there may be two future events in view -near and distant, but certainly the main thought is the preparation of the disciples for almost immediate happenings. First the passage arose from seeing the city of Jerusalem with its wonderful Temple, resplendent in gold and costly ornamentation. It would be well to read the parallel passages in Matthew 24:1-32 and Mark 13:1-37. A careful study will be rewarding but will need special attention. It is clear that Jesus somewhat decried admiration for the building. Enormous buildings do not glorify God but normally glorify apostasy—witness St. Peter's at Rome or St. Paul's in London. The place they are now admiring is to be utterly destroyed. Confining our attention to Jerusalem for the moment, we have warnings against false expectations (verses 8 and 9), instructions as to signs and behaviour (see also 19:41-44) and prophecy of the fate of the nation (verse 24). Christians would, however, be subject to much persecution in the meantime, and the most distressing betrayals and enmities would take place—all of which of course did come true. But help from God would be available to the faithful. The promise of complete salvation in verse 18 refers to something more than physical safety. It means that no harm will befall their souls while their patience holds. Christians in Jerusalem saw the armies of Titus surround the city and during a lull in the offensive he projected, they escaped out of the city-provided they took heed, of course, to the Saviour's word which had been conveyed to them. We need not dwell upon the terrors of that time except to say that the city had reached a condition of internal and external division and anarchy worse than civil war by the time its destruction came about. The Jews cried: 'His blood be on us and on our children.'

The end of the world (21:25-28).—It would seem that these verses do refer to the far future, which we yet expect. Probably verses 10 and 11 do so, too, and our next paragraph covers the point applying to all Christians in all ages. There need be no watching in the sense of watching political events, or the behaviour of nations. Wars such as some witnessed with their nameless horrors, and terrifying burdens upon the souls of men are portents of a coming consummation, but we may also expect The lesson resigns in the universe. mains the same.

Warning for Christians (21:29-36).— The parable of the fig-tree is very clear and has its first application to the siege of Jerusalem, but the later events are still to come and we now need to take heed. To each individual the Son of Man comes on the day of his departure from this life, and we know not when that may be. We may not get drunk, but we may easily become surfeited with this world's goods (the population of this island never has had so much, and never so far as we know thought less of God) just by buying more than we need, and the cares: we all have those, and make them when we have not, perhaps. Watching and praying may not be popular or easy—but they are absolutely necessary if the results are to be experienced.

R. B. SCOTT.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Albert Street, Wigan.—Once again we have cause to rejoice that the Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation. The husband of our Sis. Mannion, who has been very interested for some time in the Word of God, expressed a desire to be baptised, and was later given the right hand of fellowship into the Church. We trust that God will bless them both and that they may be steadfast to the end of time. To God we give the glory for all these blessings.

W. SMITH.

Aylesbury.—From June 11th to 26th the Church here had the privilege of a visit from Brother Weldon Bennett, of Hamburg, Germany, who came over to conduct a two weeks' mission.

The mission had been well advertised: ten thousand leaflets were distributed in the Aylesbury area and surrounding villages; posters were displayed on every available poster site; fifty advertisement cards were displayed in the shops throughout the town; two hundred postal invitations were sent out, and a mobile public address system was used on market days around the streets. Large-scale advertisements were displayed in the two local papers and, in response to special requests to the editors, reporters were present at three of our meetings to take pictures and give us fairly lengthy reports in their papers.

We were not able to obtain the use of our hall for every night, as we had intended, but meetings were held for five nights each week. In addition, a special rally was held on Saturday, June 18th, the afternoon session being devoted to a 'Questions Answered' period, which resulted in a most helpful and interesting discussion. Brethren from Lancashire, Brighton and London, came to support us during this week-end.

us during this week-end.
Under Brother Bennett's able and faithful preaching of the Gospel, attendance at the meetings gradually increased until each of the last three nights saw

the highest number we have ever had at any meeting. Many of our visitors had never entered our building before.

We rejoice to report that as a result of these efforts two were baptised and one was restored. One of those baptised was Michael Mannion, the husband of Sister Mannion of the Albert Street, Wigan, Church. He had come for the week-end with the brethren from Lancashire, and on returning was baptised at Albert Street. The other was Doreen Prangle, formerly a member of the Salvation Sister Pamela Watson was re-Army. stored to fellowship. In addition, we have made a number of new and valuable contacts. Some of them are very interested, and have begun attending our meetings and Bible studies regularly.

We are grateful to our Brother Bennett for his fine work amongst us, and to the brethren from other Churches who supported us, especially to those who came long distances. Above all, we give thanks to God for this further evidence of the power of the Gospel, and for the promise of still more results from this mission.

L. H. CHANNING.

Blackburn.—It is with joy that we record an addition to the Church of one of our young S.S. scholars; Nora Pritt, only eleven years old, but bright and intelligent. All her young life has been spent in Sunday School. We pray that she may be a great help and power in the Sunday School and Church in days to come. She was immersed on Lord's Day, June 12th.

H.W.

Brighton.—Allan Batchelor, the son of Bro. and Sis. Batchelor—faithful members here for some years—was immersed on June 26th, 1955. The Church has been encouraged, and pray that this young convert may be richly blessed.

Buckle.—On Lord's Day morning, June 12th, the brethren's hearts were gladdened by the restoration to the fellowship of Bro. and Sister Slater from Portknockie. The are the parents of Sister Worgan (Holland). They had always been faithful to the truth as laid down in the Scriptures, but withdrew from the Church at Portknockie a few years ago. When the brethren at Buckie withdrew from the Co-operation, Bro. and Sis. Slater desired to have fellowship with us. Bro. George Reid extended to them the right hand of fellowship.

We would also like to thank our visiting brethren, Frank Worgan, Philip Partington, David Dougall and Andrew Gardiner. Their exhortations and Gospel addresses have been very uplifting to us. Truly, we can say the Lord has been good to us. This brief period of service is much appreciated. We sincerely thank our brethren and pray that their Gospel messages may yet bear fruit, in the winning of souls for Jesus.

and building up those already won in the faith once delivered to the saints.

JOHN GEDDES.

Newtongrange. - Bro. Wm. Steele has spent three months with the Church, teaching, exhorting, and preaching the Gospel. Shortly before the conclusion of his labour with us we rejoiced to hear the good confession of faith from young Margaret Brown, who had been attending the meetings, and to witness her submission to the Lord's will in baptism. owe much to our brother, who has not spared himself that we might be strengthened and built up in our holy priesthood. He has done much by word and example that will remain in our hearts to encourage us to take the Lord at His word, seeking only to do His will without thinking of consequences to ourselves.

A. J. BROWN.

Peterhead.—With thankfulness to our Father in Heaven we record a further period of refreshing in His service. On May 26th Edith, wife of our brother, Jack Stewart, was baptised by brother Bill Mair of the Church in Buckie.

We rejoiced with our sisters Coull, when John, husband of sister Bella and father of Patricia and Barbara, obeyed the Gospel on June 26th. A young husband and wife, Mr. and Mr. and Mrs. James Bowie, were buried with Christ on July 2nd. Rita Tocher, a young lady who has shown interest in the Gospel during recent days, was baptised on July 10th.

Brother David Dougall is with us for the month of July. He spent Lord's Day, July 10th, with the Church in Buckie.

Buckie and Sister Leonard Morgan and brother John, their son, visited us on Friday until Wednesday July 1st-6th. Leonard preached on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Brother and Sister Steele and family were with us from Saturday, July 2nd, until Monday, July 11th. Brother Steele exhorted the Church on Lord's Day and preached the Gospel in the evening at St. Combs, a fishing hamlet fourteen miles north of Peterhead. He taught a Bible class each night at Peterhead during his stay, and was our preacher on Lord's Day, July 10th.

Brother Mark Plain from the Church in Tranent and brother James Grant and sister Isa Dougall from the Church in Wallacestone were with us during the week Island 2nd 6th

the week July 2nd-9th.

We have had a time of encouragement in fellowship with these brethren.

Reviewing the work during the period from July 1st, 1954 to July 10th, 1955, it is pleasing to note that the Lord has given us increase: twenty-one have been baptised, five have been restored, one has placed membership with us.

has placed membership with us.

The interest shown by our young people and many of our maturer brethren and sisters in the classes taught by

brother Steele makes us aware of our need for a teacher to be with us for a long period. We pray that the Lord will make it possible through the brethren who are available or could be made available, for us to have such a teacher.

ALEXANDER STRACHAN.

Tranent.—We have cause to rejoice and thank our Heavenly Father for another soul, Peter Strachan, added to our numbers. Our brother had been attending our meetings for some time, and decided to put on the Lord in His own appointed way, after hearing on the tape recorder an address given at the Bible School in Hindley by Bro. Albert Winstanley. He was baptised that same hour of the night on June 14th.

We thank God for this further proof of the power of the Gospel. D. SCOTT.

OBITUARY

Kilbirnie.—We very much regret the passing of our Sister Gibson, beloved wife of Brother Hugh Gibson, who died on July 2nd, after a long illness, borne with patience and fortitude. Six years ago she went through two serious operations, and for three or four years after was a faithful attender at the Lord's But the trouble returned with Table. renewed vigour and, after eighteen months of pain, she is now at rest. Bro. and Sis. Gibson joined the Church in Kilbirnie, twenty-five years ago and both have been very faithful during those years. Of all our sister's virtues humility and modesty were ever prominent. We shall miss her smiling face and her warm-hearted love and fellowship, and knowing that she is freed from her pain and trouble of the flesh she is rejoicing with those who stand before the throne of God, where 'they shall neither hunger nor thirst any more. For the Lamb shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of waters' and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

Our sincerest sympathy goes out to her family and all her loved ones, and they can rest assured of a certain resurrection and a renewed life in a better land beyond the present one.

WILLIAM FERGUSON.

Slamannan.—It is with deep regret that we record the death of our aged Bro. James Harley on May 26th, at the age of eighty. Bro. Harley had been in failing health for some time prior to his death but whenever possible he was with us at the Lord's Table. Those who are left will remember the many able exhortations delivered by him. He was interred in Slamannan cemetery in the presence of many brethren and friends, the service being conducted by Bro. David Dougall, district evangelist. M.N.

COMING EVENTS.

Eastwood.—Mission rally will be held on Saturday, August 20th (p.v.) in the Congregational Meeting Place, Nottingham Road, Eastwood. Tea 4 p.m., meeting 6 p.m. Speakers: Bro. A. E. Winstanley, Bro. F. C. Day

This rally will mark the commencement of a mission to be conducted by Bro. Winstanley. We look forward to your support and a rich time of fellowship together in service.

Hospitality will be given to those wishing to stay for the week-end. Will all those intending to visit please intimate to the secretary as soon as possible to facilitate catering and hospitality arrangements.—Chas. Limb, 32 Chewton Street, Brookhill Leys, Eastwood, Notts.

Brighton.—The Church at Brighton for one hundred years has been witnessing for Christ and primitive Christianity, and now, to speed us on the 'second mile,' we propose holding a series of meetings to be addressed by Bro. L. Channing, commencing Saturday, September 3rd and continuing until Lord's Day, the 11th. We beg the help of our brethren having a similar plea.

It is proposed (p.v.) to hold a public meeting at 3 p.m. on September 3rd, when addresses by two of our visitors will be followed by questions and discussion.

Tea will be provided at 5 p.m. and the evening meeting will follow at 6.30 p.m.

Arrangements for accommodation will be made by Miss Thelma Smith, 78 Southover Street, Brighton, to whom details of needs should be sent. E. THORPE.

Wigan (Albert Street).—Visit of Bro. Bill Richardson, from Holland, September 10th to 25th. Gospel meetings every night except Friday. We cordially invite members and friends to support us by their presence and prayers in this great cause of winning souls for the Master.

Loughborough.—The Church meeting in Oxford Street are holding anniversary services on Sept. 25th-26th. On Saturon September 25th and 26th. On Saturday, a rally will held at 6.15 p.m. when Bro. Fred. Day (Birmingham) and Bro. Ralph Limb (Eastwood) will be the speakers. Tea will be served at 4.30 p.m.

Lord's Day services will be addressed by Bro. Fred Day, at 11 a.m. and 6.15 p.m. We extend a warm welcome to all to attend these services.

GREAT YARMOUTH FISHING SEASON, 1955.

Preliminary Notice.

Our fisher brethren from the North of Scotland have arranged to have their rally in Great Yarmouth on Saturday. October 22nd, 1955. Bro. D. Dougall is being released by the Slamannan district so that he may give his services for this mission during the herring season.

Brethren are urged to try to fit in a week's holiday during the period of the mission. It is expected that it will be possible to secure accommodation at fairly reasonable terms for the week-end of the rally or longer.

Cleveleys, Co-operative Hall, Beach Road.—Contrary to our circular sent out a short time ago, will brethren please note that we are holding our Lord's Day evening meeting at 7 and not 6.30. The meeting for the Breaking of Bread is still at 10.30 a.m.

WANTED.

Two volumes Millennial Harbinger published by William Jones about 1835. Price, etc., to Bro. J. D. Phillips, 2901. East Second Street, Austin 2, Texas. U.S.A.

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Contribution to Nyasaland Mission. June 17th: A brother, £1 1s.

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

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