

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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It depends on me

LAST month we wrote of God's purpose for His Church—that it is His will that 'now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God' (Eph. 3:10). It is comforting, in the midst of our daily work and struggles, surrounded by those who love not God and have no interest in spiritual and eternal things, to think upon the glories that God has in store for the Church for which His Son gave His life. But the thought that 'the best is yet to be' is not sufficient. We often hear the gibe that the hope of Christians is 'pie in the sky, by and by.'

We once heard a preacher remark that 'some people are so heavenly that they're of no earthly use.' He was not being irreverent or flippant but was speaking the plain truth. We all know the person who is for ever up in the clouds and cannot or will not face the circumstances and hard facts of everyday life. It is in this life, on earth, in our materialistic civilisation that we are called upon to 'show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.'

Down in the Valley

To speak of the earthly work of the Church after considering her heavenly glories is not a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous. We hear much about 'practical Christianity,' as though there were such a thing as theoretical Christianity. Christianity is a life, a way. Its Founder said: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.' It is centred round a person—Christ, not built upon a series of teachings and rules. A Christian is a Christ-ian, Christ's man, Christ's woman. The fact is that there is nothing so intensely practical as the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Some pride themselves on being hard-headed, with feet firmly planted upon the earth. Yet we find that the systems and 'isms' of these men are the most impractical and contradictory imaginable. By following these 'practical' methods we have a world in constant fear, full of injustice and tyranny, in which nations arm themselves to the verge of bankruptcy against some possible or imagined enemy. Truly 'the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men.'

Yes, the following of Christ is a daily life and witness. We often hear the meetings of the Church spoken of as 'services.' But surely service does not end there. We are simply giving God something of His due and at the same time receiving joy and pleasure to ourselves. Our service must be carried out in daily work, at home and whenever we mix with

the busy crowds. Many great lessons are taught us in the transfiguration of Christ. Not the least important is that the apostles Peter, James and John were carried away by the glory of what they experienced. Their feelings were what A. P. Stanley expressed in his hymn:—

‘O, Master, it is good to be
High on the mountain here with Thee.’

But their service lay not there. There was work to be done and teaching given in the valley below. They must go with their Master to minister to poor suffering humanity.

Our contemplation of the superlative glory of the Church of Christ must not mean an escape from reality or an excuse for inaction, but an incentive, an inspiration to spend and be spent in the service of Christ. An outstanding feature of the book of Acts—the book showing how men were won to Christ through the preaching of His Word—is that God ever used men, with all their failings and blunderings, to spread this message. The Holy Spirit and angels spoke to preachers to tell them where to go, what to do and what to speak. No doubt the Spirit and the heavenly messengers could themselves have preached salvation to those whom God had ‘ordained to eternal life.’ But the fact remains that they did not, for God in His wisdom chose to make the gospel known through men. In every case of conversion in Acts, even those where miraculous happenings took place, human agency was used. And we venture to say that this has been God’s method since, and still is. We see, therefore, the privilege we are given and the vital importance of our being busy in the work whereunto God has called us. ‘This treasure we have in earthen vessels.’ It may be that God, in spite of our failure and lack of fervour, will save the lost by means not known to us. But these are among the secret things which belong unto Him. So far as has been revealed the responsibility is ours, and if we fail we must answer to God.

We dare not fail

In 1937 we heard Bro. John Scouller at a conference in Wigan recall an imaginary conversation in one of S. D. Gordon’s books. The Lord Jesus Christ is telling the archangel Gabriel of His plan to save men through men’s preaching. ‘And what if men should fail you?’ asks Gabriel. The Lord answers, ‘I have made no other plans. I am depending upon them.’ Imaginary? Yes, but it has its lesson for us.

During the American War of Independence an American naval captain, John Paul Jones, was a constant threat and terror to the British ships. Ship after ship he captured or sank, sometimes against great odds. When it was asked what was the secret of Captain Jones’s success the answer was, ‘He fights as though the whole American cause depended upon him.’ How many of us live and teach and preach as though the whole cause of Christ depends upon us?

A few weeks ago we were impressed on hearing a brother in Christ mention that the first lesson for a commercial traveller to learn is that he must give the very best impression possible to those to whom he sells or hopes to sell his goods. He represents his firm; what he is his firm is judged to be. He is the only direct contact his firm has with the public. The application is obvious, for

‘Christ has no hands than our hands to do His work to-day;
He has no feet but our feet to lead men in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongue to tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help to bring them to His side.’

It depends on us; the responsibility is ours. And yet the government shall be upon His shoulder who is the 'Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' We fight not in our own might. Christ's ever-present strength in His Holy Spirit is ours for the receiving. Because the cause is Christ's, because 'the battle is the Lord's,' nothing in the end can oppose it. All must yield to Him. 'Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' The victory is sure. May it be ours to play a part in it and to see that glorious day when 'the kingdom of the world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.' EDITOR.

Points for Preachers

3—'Rightly Dividing'

('. . . rightly dividing the word of truth', 2 Tim. 2:15)

I WANT in this article to present the more advanced forms of preaching, namely Sermons, Addresses and Lectures.

A Sermon is a religious discourse; but I want to pass on to you what was given to me—that a sermon is 'seed-sowing', sowing the precious seed, the word of God, in the hearts of our hearers. A true sermon is liberally sprinkled with Scripture.

For an illustration let us take the subject of 'Temptation.' Now take two major temptations from Scripture: the temptation of Adam (Gen. 3) and the temptation of Jesus (Matt. 4). From these note two things: (1) Satan's method, (2) Christ's reply. In the first case Satan casts doubt on God's word, then denies it, and afterwards substitutes a deliberate lie: 'Ye shall not surely die: ye shall be as gods.' Adam falls, and brings disaster. Christ, by an intelligent use of God's word, resists the temptation and overcomes.

It might at this stage be profitable to touch on Methods of Bible Study. They are briefly: (a) Analytical Study, in which texts are analysed; (b) Comparative, in which texts are taken and set in comparison; (c) Scripture Subjects, such as Salvation, God's Love, The Gospel Message. We might also bear in mind in our studies what we know as 'The four D's and the three W's.'—Dates, Doings, Doctrines and Duties, and Who wrote to Whom and Why. It is vitally important to note the date of a book, whether in the Old or New Covenant Scriptures; to note the doings of the characters in the book or epistle; the doctrines taught and the duties imposed or implied. As for Who wrote to Whom and Why, these are things we note in regard to our own correspondence.

We now turn to Addresses. Generally speaking, most public utterances are addresses, but in a gospel sense an address is a Proclamation, a telling forth of a message. We should prepare our addresses with the thought in mind, 'I must have a message for these people.' We think out our message and present it in the form of a proclamation, a sounding forth of a message of good news and with Royal assent.

Keep to Your Subject

Addresses should have a subject, say 'Sin'; a basic text, say John 3:16; and a specific lesson from Scripture: in this case the account of the prodigal son in Luke 15 would make a good lesson. In an address it is vital to stick to the subject matter and not to wander off on side issues. This confuses the mind of your hearers and causes loss of interest. If your

subject matter is Sin, make it Sin, not its opposite, Righteousness; deal with its origin, its cause and effects; bring in thoughts on the price of sin and its penalties; finally God's remedy for sin. So decide on your subject, choose a text and a lesson, sort out your facts, illustrations and connecting thoughts, and get down to it. Make it if you like a personal issue between yourself and your hearers. And in all cases by prayer and meditation seek God's approval.

Our last method of preaching is by Lectures. To lecture is not a job for a novice, but for a well-trained and capable mind, naturally endowed with teaching ability. Generally speaking, Sermons are for Church meetings, Addresses for gospel meetings, and Lectures for class, school or specially arranged public meetings.

Study of the Scriptures

The title at the head of this article is 'Rightly Dividing' and I have sought first to rightly divide the methods of preaching before coming to the Scriptures themselves. If you follow the lines suggested the Scriptures almost divide themselves, but I would like to introduce the thought of Defining and Discerning. We need to define, as well as to discern, the meaning of Scripture, so a good dictionary and a good Bible concordance are an essential part of a preacher's equipment.

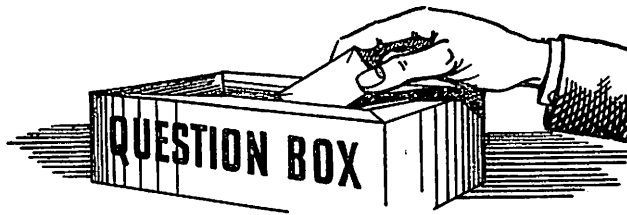
The Bible was written originally in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. As very few of us are acquainted with these languages I recommend Young's *Analytical Concordance*, which gives the Hebrew and Greek originals as well as the literal meaning of the words in the Bible, together with every possible shade of meaning. Thus provided, the preacher can speak with some authority on the meaning of Scripture in the original language, for we must always bear in mind that the English Bible is a translation of God's Word, and as words change their meanings with the passage of years it is vital to know the original meaning of those words. There are of course other concordances available, such a Cruden's, which is ideal for text-finding. A concordance, an English dictionary, a dictionary of Bible names and a history of Bible times are necessary in the literary equipment of the young preacher.

Many preachers find it advantageous to have one or more modern translations of the Bible. These help to bring Bible language up-to-date. It is good also to read books about the Bible, but do not make the mistake of knowing more about books about the Bible than of the Bible itself. These, along with *Aids to Study* and *Lesson Helps* are, as their names imply, aids and helps to study, but are no substitute for the Bible itself.

The Bible is spoken of by the apostle Paul as 'the sword of the Spirit' (Eph. 6:17). You don't learn the art of good swordsmanship by just reading about it, but by handling the weapon and by constant practice, often under the eye of an expert. So don't expect to handle 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God' by any other means than constant usage. It is the Christian's only weapon of offence or attack; all his other armour is defensive (Eph. 6:11-18).

One final thought on this subject from 2 Timothy 3:16: 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect [fully matured], completely furnished unto every good work.'

HAROLD BAINES.



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QUESTIONS concerning the controversial subject of the 'laying on of hands' have been sent in by three different persons. We regret that owing to lack of space these could not be answered before.

Question 1. (a) Are there any New Testament passages referring to the ordination of elders by the 'laying on of hands'? (b) Should this practice be continued to-day? (c) Who is authorised to do so?

2. Is there any scripture for the 'laying on of hands' by an evangelist or elders, and is it right to do to-day? What powers has an evangelist to do so?

3. Did the 'laying on of hands' always impart spiritual gifts in New Testament times? If not, why was it practised apart from such impartation?

Answer: Purpose of the laying on of hands. Throughout the Scriptures we find that the laying on of hands was practised in connection with various matters. For the sake of clarity we have endeavoured to classify them:

(1) In the imparting of a blessing. An instance of this is found in Genesis 48:14, Israel blessing the sons of Joseph. In this case it had prophetic significance. A New Testament and contrasting instance is found in Matthew 19:13, 15, Jesus blessing the children brought to Him. This had no more significance than that in the eyes of the people it was the blessing of a prophet or teacher.

(2) In healing the sick. Many examples of this are found, such as of Christ (Mark 8:23) and of the apostles (Mark 16:18; Acts 28:8).

(3) In connection with sin or judgment. An example of this is found Leviticus 16:21. Aaron's hands on the head of the goat denoted the transference of the sins of the people to the scapegoat (see also Num. 8:12). Another example in different circumstances is found in Leviticus 24:14, where the hands of the witnesses are laid upon the blasphemer as a mark of identification and condemnation.

(4) In imparting the Holy Spirit. A number of examples are found, as Acts 8:17-18; 19:6.

(5) As a mark of appointment, or setting apart. An example of this is found in Numbers 27:18-19, together with Deuteronomy 34:9. Note that this was for appointment (see Num. 27:16, R.V.) and not to impart the Holy Spirit. It is plainly stated that Joshua was already filled with the Spirit (the word 'spirit,' as rendered in the A.V. and R.V., should be 'Spirit,' denoting the Holy Spirit: see A.R.V.). A similar example is seen in the appointment of the seven to serve tables, in Acts 6:5-6. This again was not for the imparting of the Holy Spirit (unless in the miraculous sense: see Acts 6:8), for one of the qualifications was that they should be men already filled with the Spirit. The example in Acts 13:3 is even clearer. Both Paul and Barnabas had already received the Holy Spirit

(see Acts 9:17; 11:23-24). They had also been chosen by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2). Prophets and teachers had no power to impart miraculous gifts of the Spirit by the laying on of hands. This was the prerogative of the Apostles alone (see Acts 8:14-16). The laying on of hands by these representatives of the Church at Antioch, was therefore solely as a mark of appointment, or setting apart for the particular work to which Paul and Barnabas had been called.

Two references in Paul's writings to Timothy also confirm this. The first, in connection with the appointment of Timothy (1 Tim. 4:14) cannot mean that he was given the gift of prophecy by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, for elders did not have the power to impart such a gift. Timothy did receive at least one miraculous gift, but by the hands of the apostle Paul (see 1 Tim. 1:18). The former passage evidently means that at the time of his appointment by the laying on of their hands a divine revelation was given through the elders concerning the gifts that Timothy was afterwards to receive. The A.S.R.V. supports this in rendering the passage, 'Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands on you.'

Another passage that must be considered is 1 Tim. 5:22. This is virtually unintelligible unless looked at in the light of appointment by the laying on of hands. The claim that Paul is here exhorting Timothy to avoid violence has no support from the context. Verses 21 and 22 of this passage must go together, and the whole passage from vv. 17 to 22 is dealing with Timothy's relationship to the elders. Weymouth renders them: 'I solemnly call upon you, in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to carry out these instructions of mine without prejudice, and to do nothing from partiality. Do not ordain [better 'appoint', L.C.] anyone hastily; and do not be a partaker in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.' Weymouth also adds a note by Alford which says, 'If Timothy admitted unworthy candidates to the ministry from bias or negligence, his own character would have suffered.' An explanation of how this could be is found in 2 John 10:11, which shows that one assisting others in wrongdoing becomes guilty himself. Timothy had this moral responsibility in the appointment of elders.

Conclusions. From the study of these scriptures the following conclusions may be drawn:—

(1) The practice of the laying on of hands throughout the Scriptures signifies an appointment, a setting aside, involving an imparting of something from one person or persons to another. As we have seen, this can be the impartation of a blessing, miraculous healing, guilt or judgment, the Holy Spirit, or authority, in the sense of an appointment to an office or a commission.

(2) We can therefore see why in the New Testament the laying on of hands is in some cases connected with the giving of the Holy Spirit. However, to assume that it was exclusively used for this purpose is an error, and is taking into consideration only one aspect of the subject.

(3) To assume that in the laying on of hands, one person elevates himself above another or assumes authority over another is not necessarily true. This conception has mainly arisen through abuse of the practice by clericalism. In the Scriptures instance can be found in which those inferior in office, because they represented a body of people, have appointed those superior to them, by the laying on of hands. For instance, in the appointment of the Levites neither Moses nor Aaron laid their hands on them, but this privilege was exercised by the common people (see Num. 8:10). The same truth is seen in Acts 13:3, where the prophets and

teachers laid their hands on the apostle Paul, who was their superior in office.

The word 'ordain' has similarly been abused by clericalism, and is therefore misunderstood by many. It simply means 'to appoint', and every one of the Greek words in the New Testament translated by the word 'ordain' carries this meaning. The word is best avoided altogether.

(4) To assume also that the practice of the laying on of hands is merely a Jewish custom is without warrant. We have seen that it was practised in patriarchal times (Gen. 48:14); under the Law (Num. 8:10); in the days of Christ (Mark 8:23); on Grecian Jews (Acts 6:5-6); in a mixed Jewish-Gentile Church (Acts 13:3); and probably on Gentiles (Acts 19:6). The practice is therefore of divine appointment.

(5) It is then an equally divine method of appointment to offices in the Church (see Acts 6:5-6; 1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22). To substitute the shaking of hands, or any other human device, is to be in danger of setting aside scriptural example. The practice of shaking hands is found in both Old and New Testaments, but never in connection with the making of appointments (see last month's Question Box, on the 'Right Hand of Fellowship').

Who is Authorised to Lay Hands on Another To-day? The elders (1 Tim. 4:14). Where there are no elders, an evangelist (1 Tim. 5:17-22; 2 Tim. 4:3-5; Titus 1:5). Some infer from Acts 13:3 that, where there are neither elders nor evangelist, selected members of the congregation should carry out the appointment, but this is open to a number of objections.

New Attack on Darwin Theory

THE DARWIN THEORY of human evolution through natural selection has come under new attack by one of the world's leading anthropologists, on the basis of recent scientific developments.

Dr. Doren Eiseley, director of the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Anthropology, writing in *Harper's Magazine*, said that the Darwinian principle of natural selection could not explain the chief physical characteristic which differentiates men from all other creatures—his great brain.

In support of his view, Dr. Eiseley pointed out that nineteenth-century beliefs that natives of backward areas possessed inferior intelligence—beliefs underlying Darwin's theory—were now known to be false.

Dr. Eiseley berated his fellow scientists for their 'great complacency' in accepting Darwin's position.—Reuter (in *Blackpool Evening Gazette*).

'Ye are the Light of the World'

(Matt. 5:14)

GOD'S LAMPS are we to shine where He shall say;
And lamps are not for sunny rooms, nor for the hours of day,
But for dark places of the earth, where crime and sin and want
have birth,

Or where the lamp of faith burns dim, and hungry hearts grope
after Him.

And as sometimes we see a lamp far shining in the night,
So dark we cannot see the lamp but only see the light,
So may we shine, His love the flame, that we may glorify His name.

From a Christian's Diary

By BEREAN

This series of extracts is commencing with a view to interesting readers in some of the typical and topical events of the religious world viewed in the light of the teaching of Scripture. We cannot close our eyes to happenings among the sects of 'Christendom' but we must consider them critically as well as sympathetically. It has always been the aim of this journal to advocate the purity and simplicity of 'the faith once for all delivered to the saints' and it is hoped that such an admirable cause may be furthered by the discussion of some of the various issues which arise from the comparison of the doctrines of men with the Word of God.

Sweetness and Truth. There are those who consider that we should be 'men of one book' and so we should, so long as that book is the Bible and so long as we are allowed to discuss the misconceptions of it held by our sectarian friends. In these times when church unions, federations and councils are seeking to unite the professed followers of the Saviour we must be on our guard lest principles are sacrificed in the flood of good will and tolerance now evident. The defence of the faith must involve reading outside the Sacred Book but it must also bring us back to the source of divine truth for the only defensive power—the Sword of the Spirit.

In Kraemer's 'Religion and the Christian Faith' are these words: 'What is needed in the present time of world-encounter of religions is not to be as sweet as possible with each other, but to learn the art of being as true as possible with each other.' That is to be the intention of these jottings. Sweetness there may also be, or should I put it more Scripturally in the worlds, 'speaking the truth in love'? Such wholesome thoughts can have no copyright!

* * *

A Prayer for Unity. Writing in the *Manchester Guardian* of the first of January a Canon of the Anglican communion comments on the popularity of Christian unity as a topic for readers' letters to religious journalists.

'Any-one,' he says, 'who writes a regular religious article in a newspaper comes to know that there are two subjects, and only two, which are quite certain to provoke a flood of correspondence from readers. One of them is housing estates and the other is reunion.'

He goes on to describe the attitude of present-day sects to each other as being one of kindness and charity as compared with thirty years ago. Now the World Council of Churches is, he thinks, a strong unifying force and even 'the one Church which excludes itself from the World Council' (he refers not to 'the one church' of the New Testament but to Rome) is showing, he thinks, a more reasonable attitude to Protestants.

Yet he is realistic enough to contrast this growth of charity with the fact that the religious world is caught in a net, ensnared by its own creeds. His only

solution appears to be to 'leave it to God . . . times come when we can do no other.' So he commends the custom of an annual 'week of prayer for the unity of Christendom' to which he adds his own suggestion that it should be coupled with the constant reading of the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel.

Such prayer is useless if we are not ready to work to that end. If we are ensnared in a net of our own making can it be so difficult for us to destroy the snare? Or are we not rather too fond of our own handiwork? Whatever the cause of the difficulty we shall not improve matters by weaving all our nets together in a World Council of Nets. That can only lead to greater shame and despair, possibly even back to Rome.

The words of the Lord still remind us of the only practical way to unity. 'Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?' and 'If ye love me ye will keep my commandments.' If all who support human creeds would cease to believe and to practise anything for which the New Testament affords no precedent the unity which the Canon desires would be achieved.

* * *

A Prayer Answered. It is often assumed that the Lord's prayer (John 17) is still unanswered on account of the divided state of 'Christendom,' but is this necessarily so? It is interesting to note that the commentator Matthew Henry takes the unorthodox line and has the following comment on John 17:20-21: 'It is the prayer of Christ for all that are his, and we may be sure it is an answered prayer.'

Yes, of course, Ephesians 4:1-6 is evidence that all who are truly obedient to the one Lord are united to the one body and have the one faith. Can a divided body live? Perhaps, after all, there is a deeper significance in John 17:20-21 than we had realised or than the Ecumenical Movement suggests. Perhaps there is some truth in the lines

'We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.'

At all events the people who are best qualified to sing those words are Christians who accept 'no creed but Christ and no book but the Bible.'

SCRIPTURE READINGS

MARCH, 1957

- March 3—Exodus 12:1-20. Luke 22:1-23.
 „ 10—Exodus 12:21-51.
 1 Corinthians 10:1-22.
 „ 17—Exodus 14. Revelation 12.
 „ 24—Exodus 15:22 to 18:9.
 John 6:1-21.
 „ 31—Exodus 16:10-36.
 John 6:22-59.

THE PASSOVER

We turn to Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16 for brief accounts of the three feasts of the Jewish nation as appointed by God through Moses, and therefore remaining in operation until the Mosaic economy was done away in Christ. They were finally defunct when Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews removed therefrom in about 70 AD. It has been impossible since then to celebrate them, for both Sanctuary and Priesthood ceased. The feasts required the presence in that place where God had fixed His sanctuary of all male adult Jews. The three festivals were: (1) The feast of Unleavened Bread (the Passover), (2) The feast of Weeks (Pentecost, first fruits of harvest), and (3) the feast of Tabernacles (thanksgiving for harvest gathered in).

In our readings we have the origin and appointment of the first of these feasts, and how obviously fundamental it is. Through the PASSING OVER the nation came into real existence. The angel of death passed over Egypt and where the innocent victim had been sacrificed and its blood sprinkled his hand did not strike. We might say—

- (1) The angel of death passed over the Israelites.
- (2) The slavery of Egypt passed away—was left behind.
- (3) The nation of Israel passed over into new national life.
- (4) The Red Sea was passed over into desert wanderings under divine leadership.
- (5) The sea passed over and destroyed the Egyptians.

Subsequent observances of the Passover festival continuing through Israel's history were reminders to God's people of their debt to Him. The life of the lamb (or kid) of the first year without

blemish through the sprinkling of its blood upon the doors of every house was the price of their release from bondage. Their obedience to the instructions of Jehovah saved them from the destruction which also guaranteed their release. His power had already been manifested by the signs given by Moses, and the nine plagues.

We can hardly imagine the greatness of this Exodus. Can we picture 600,000 men passing out of the land, with all their folk? Every household had to look after itself, and bear away the load of household chattels, if any, together with what the Egyptians in their terror and grief gave for the asking (not 'borrowing'). The flocks and herds went too, and the kneading troughs were carried with the unleavened dough for baking at the first halt (at Succoth, 12:37). It is reckoned that two million souls must have been uprooted from their dwellings in a fertile land. It was an earthquake experience in each life, and thus called for the faith of Abraham, 'who went out not knowing whither.'

A yearly reminder of this totally miraculous beginning would be necessary. From time to time in his books Moses urges upon his people the danger of forgetting the work of God. He foresees that when they become comfortable in the land of Canaan there will be a temptation to forget the past, and so to forget Jehovah their God. How true it proved to be history shows. While the desert wanderings kept them near to God, by His pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, they were too constantly in touch with divine sustenance to forget. The testing came when they reached more permanent surroundings and became 'self-supporting'—dependent more upon their own labours. The change brought a greater liability for the rot of unbelief to set in. This has surely been the case so often with the redeemed of God. Laodicean lukewarmness develops unless we keep in close touch with Him Who wrought out our salvation with His own blood, or, to use another figure, we lose our first love.

Let us notice some of the several acts of obedience required in that original observance of the Passover. The whole animal was to be roasted with fire, only enough to be eaten was to be prepared, all in the house were to partake, not one was to go out of the blood-sprinkled door, any remains of the animal were to be

burnt up. Besides these we read that no man was to partake who was not qualified by acceptance into the nation by the appointed sign of circumcision. Every person was to eat standing, ready prepared for travel, and bitter herbs were to be eaten with the meat. This was a meal in preparation for a journey, not for pleasure in eating.

These provisions were naturally modified for subsequent observance, for the appointments of the law were introductory in the wilderness to their observance when the promised land was reached and inhabited. The passover was observed once (Numbers 9) in the wanderings, then in Canaan (Joshua 5:10). Mention is made later in the time of Solomon (2 Chron. 8:13), Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:15), Josiah (2 Kings 23:21), Ezra (6:19), and of course its observance had been thoroughly re-established, no doubt with further amendments due to change of conditions, by the time of our Lord.

The main change would be the bringing of the lambs to the Tabernacle or Temple to be slain there and their blood sprinkled on the altar of burnt offering instead of on the doors. There remained the seven days of unleavened bread, reminding again of the hasty departure from Egypt, and perhaps the removal from the house of anything leavened or fermented. Holy convocations were appointed for the first and seventh days of the feast, certain sacrifices were to be made during the week, the first and seventh days were sabbaths. An indication of this is found in John 19:31—a day which was both an ordinary and a feast sabbath. The ripe sheaf from the field was to be offered also early in the festival (Lev. 23:11), 'on the morrow after the sabbath.'

Naturally for Christians the great interest of this festival is in the fact that the passover lamb typifies Christ. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7). The whole story of the bondage in Egypt vividly pictures our bondage to sin, and the release from that bondage through no work of our own but the mighty working of God through His manifestation in the person of His Son, is there in simple figure. There is of course the lesson to be well learned that, unless exact obedience is given to the requirements and instructions of God, no assurance of shelter beneath the blood is

given. Some have had the hardihood to say and teach that salvation through blood is repugnant to right-thinking people. We can only say that that has been the appointment of God and rejection of it puts us outside the mercy and forgiveness of our Father. A striking and emphatic condemnation of such an attitude is in Hebrews 10:29—'counted the blood of the covenant . . . an unholy thing.' We cannot think it an enjoyable thing to slay an innocent lamb kept for four days in the home, but sin is so terrible and abhorrent to God that we cannot regard it too seriously. Such is far from the world's way of regarding it. The wages of sin is death, and to be redeemed from that we need the sacrifice of the perfect Son of God.

The terms 'Passover' and 'Feast of Unleavened Bread' came to be applied in a general sense to the whole period of the festival, or in a specific sense to any part of it. There remains some doubt as to whether the Saviour Himself was actually taking part in the Passover meal itself at the Last Supper, or a meal on the evening before the festival began. Whether that be so or not, He did at that meal appoint a feast for us of the same memorial character as the original passover.

He said 'Do this in remembrance of Me,' and from that day to this in one way or another His followers have been meeting for the purpose of obeying His will by partaking of bread and wine just in the way He appointed on that occasion. Like the Israelites we must be continuously reminded of the means of our redemption—the giving of the body and blood of the Lord. To the extent that we follow the instruction sincerely we shall keep Him in sight Who is both sacrifice, priest and Lord. We cannot afford to relax our vigilance for a moment, let alone a week. Paul may not have had the observance in mind when he wrote 'Let us keep the feast' (1 Cor. 5:8) but he connects it very closely with his knowledge of the subject of our present study. Again the writer to the Hebrews may not have had that one gathering of the church in view when he said 'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together' (Heb. 10:25), but it remains the meeting to which we are called by Christ Himself.

We conclude with a thought equally applicable to the feast of old and the Lord's Supper, the Breaking of Bread.

The Jews meticulously observed some of the instructions relating to their festival. See for example the destroyers of the Lord Jesus (John 18:28). Had they REMEMBERED what the Passover was intended to bring to mind, how great a change there might have been—with eternal consequences. There is a grave danger when we emphasise an outward observance that it ceases to have the divinely intended effect on 'the inward man' (2 Cor. 4:16). The Passover would be celebrated roughly 1,500 times before the Saviour came and is still being celebrated now by unbelieving Jews (we use the word without ill-feeling). We have no doubt that throughout that long period the earnest and God-fearing have obtained help thereby, although we find it difficult to see how it can be done without misgiving since Jerusalem was destroyed.

Now we indeed have something so precious, more precious to us each time we come together—as the day approaches (Heb. 10:25)—and sacrifices to make continuously (Heb. 13: 10, 15, 16) so that we are always 'keeping festival'—the alternative translation to 'keep the feast' (1 Cor. 5:8).

R. B. SCOTT

An African Letter

P.O. Box 600
Lusaka,
Northern Rhodesia.

Dear Brethren,—We would like once more to give you some news of the Lord's work in this country.

Bro. and Sister Pierce and their family left for U.S.A., early in December. They were very much in need of this rest, and we pray that they will be in every way restored. Before leaving they had completed the meeting room in Chilanga, a community thirteen or fourteen miles from Lusaka. For some years they have really endured hardship so that the work may be established. Just before they left, Bro. and Sister Lyons, and their two young daughters, arrived to help in the work. There are good schools for the children and we believe that they will settle down happily in their work. Bro. and Sister Lyons have done evangelistic work in the States, and will find plenty of opportunity for this in Northern Rhodesia.

The work in Lusaka gives cause for en-

couragement. One Lord's day we had the pleasure of seeing every seat occupied, even though quite a number of Christians were detained with their normal duties. The remedy has been of course to make more seats. There was real joy in the fellowship, and everybody seemed to be pleased at the difficulty of finding a space.

The number of young men able to help in the work increases, and a good number help to preach and serve at the table. Our aim has been to help them to be active in the Lord's work. There are about 5,000 houses in the Chilenge suburb and during the next few months we hope to visit all of these. To this end we have been printing tracts, and I hope to obtain a number from Bro. Winstanley. We shall never reach out so far as we would like. Matero is a much larger suburb than Chilenge. We therefore hope to train African brothers in door to door work. Bro. Timothy Zimba, who for some time did evangelistic work in the Eastern and Northern provinces of this country has now taken up secular work in Lusaka. He is living in Chilenge and will be able to help us here.

We do not contemplate ever employing a full time evangelist in the town. Brethren have given their time and labour freely in the gospel, and we feel that the work of the evangelist is to is ample opportunity for this, should establish the work in new spheres. There there be those called and able to do the work of an evangelist. I should also add, that we are conscious of the burden of responsibility which this places upon us, and hasten to say that this is a matter of local policy and not principle.

The brethren in Fort Jameson seem to have made considerable progress with their building. We would like to visit them but the distance is too great. They deserve every encouragement. At the Mission in Namwianga a few new workers arrive, and Bro. and Sister Reese have returned to U.S.A. We enjoy the fellowship in Lusaka of many who have had the benefit of their life and instruction.

It is intended in this Mission to go on to Cambridge Certificate standard. Both boys and girls attend the schools as boarders, and the extra years will mean much more direct Christian influence and example. This will mean an extra four years of work with the students. At Namwianga there is also a school for

European children up to Standard 5. They have to do their own building and both schools are for boarders, who all need a deal of care and attention. We receive more direct news of Namwianga because the older children of the missionaries come to Lusaka Schools, and attend the meetings in the suburb with us.

We have not seen anyone from Sinda for some months. We know that they have had some sickness, and they need the prayers of Christians. Kabonga is a Mission station which we have never been able to visit. Here Bro. and Sister Merritt have been joined during the year by Bro. and Sister Kenneth Elder. We pray that God will prosper their work.

Our tour of service ends in July, and we expect, D.V., to arrive home during August. Quite a number of Christians have given us help with the work in various ways, and we thank them for their fellowship. We express our gratitude to God for His continued blessings.

FRANK AND NANCY MURPHY.

Tobacco Fortunes

Sir Gilbert Alan Hamilton Wills, the first Lord Lulverton, of Batsford Park, Moreton-in-Marsh, president of the Imperial Tobacco Company, and head of the Wills family, who died in December, aged 76, left £4,268,270 (duty £3,155,493).

Other members of tobacco families who left more than a million pounds in recent years were: William J. Yapp, £4,501,437 (duty £2,827,703); John Player, £2,501,621; Mrs. Kathleen Rees-Mogg, £1,787,399; Sir William Churchman, £1,102,719; Lord Woodbridge, £1,361,076; Mr. Lawrence Hignett, £1,883,500; and Walter Melville Wills, £4,317,360 (duty £2,815,283).—*Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 8th, 1957.

How Long?

How long will magnates be permitted to make such colossal fortunes in the manufacture and sale of commodities which cause such misery, neglect of homes and children, disease and death as do tobacco and alcohol? How long in a so-called 'Christian' country is big business to be allowed to make profit on poisons, when to disseminate poisons by any other means is a criminal offence?

And how long are Christians to be held in slavery to or to indulge at all in that which is anti-God, anti-good and anti-social?

'Rise up, O men of God:
Have done with lesser things.'

CORRESPONDENCE

A CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

Dear Editor,—I understand that a challenge has been issued to the brethren in the Church of Christ to prove in open debate that individual cups were not used to celebrate the Lord's supper in New Testament times.

While I do not consider myself to be among the more honourable of the Lord's people, I am willing to accept this challenge, provided that:

(1) My opponent will affirm that, 'According to the New Testament, individual cups were used to celebrate the Lord's supper.'

(2) I shall deny that there is any such evidence.

JOHN M. WOOD.

19 Venturefair Avenue,
Dunfermline.

[The letter below was sent to the *Christian Advocate* some months ago by a brother who is a member of a Co-operation church. It has been ignored for obvious reasons. We feel it expresses the view of many who still remain identified with the denomination now calling itself The Association of Churches of Christ. Opposition to the worldly and honour-seeking course of the Council and Committees which dictate the policy of the Association is stifled to give an appearance of unity. We find space for the letter in hope that those disturbed in mind will come out from this body which has long ceased to be Churches of Christ except in name.—Ed.]

'GUEST COMMUNION'

Dear Editor,—I could hardly believe my eyes when I read the report by the Union Committee bearing on this vitally important question.

I want to be quite frank about this, which is a bad business for the brotherhood of the Churches of Christ. They have wilfully and persistently gone against the Holy Spirit; they have proved to me to be weak-kneed and spineless, being led by feeling instead of being guided by God's Holy Spirit.

'What readest thou' in the New Testament Scriptures concerning these matters? I am sorry to state we have been led by sectarianism instead of the written law of God's only beloved Son. If this business is not checked in the bud

you may as well blot out the commission, which commands the New Birth. It breaks my heart to know that the lordship and authority of the Christ have been trampled on. He has been wounded in His own house by His own brethren.

Yours in Christ,

WILLIAM ADAMSON.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury.—We rejoice to report three more additions to our number, one by baptism and two having placed membership. Two of the new members are of especial interest, for they are Hungarian refugees. Their story appears below.

The third addition to our number is Bro. Bill Rawlings, who was baptised at Summer Lane, Birmingham, in May last year. He has taken up residence in the town. He is zealous for the Lord, and is proving an asset to the work here in making a number of new contacts. We feel confident that our mutual fellowship will be greatly blessed. L. CHANNING.

First Hungarians to obey the Gospel. A few weeks ago Bro. Grigg wrote from France, informing us that a Hungarian brother whom he had baptised about two years ago had recently come to England with his wife and daughters, as a refugee from Hungary. He was living in a village about twenty miles from here. Our brother was visited, and although he speaks very little English, and his wife only Hungarian, we understood one another very well. They spent a week-end with us, during which our brother's wife expressed a desire to obey the gospel. She had been taught the way of salvation by her husband. She was baptised on Lord's Day, January 20th, our brother acting as interpreter. Both have placed membership with this congregation.

Our brother told us something of his terrible experiences during his escape from Hungary. Shortly after the war he left his country to try to find work, and accommodation for his wife and family. But during his absence the Communists gained power in Hungary, and he was not allowed to return, nor his family to come to him. For a number of years they were separated, his wife having to work in a factory in order to support herself

and the children. During the uprising last year in Hungary our brother was able to rejoin his wife. However, when once again the Communists gained power they decided to try to leave the country.

They left early one morning, not daring to speak to anyone, nor to take anything with them, not even food, for fear their intentions might be revealed. They had a considerable distance to travel, and although they did most of this by train, they had to walk the last eighteen miles. That night, they hid in a wood, hearing around them every so often the firing of machine-guns, as groups of people were caught trying to cross the border. Before them lay a canal, which our brother managed to cross by wading waist deep in the water, carrying first his wife, and then each child in turn. He also assisted others in this way, necessitating several such trips across the canal. The night was so cold that by the time he had reached the Austrian border, still some miles away, his clothes were frozen to him.

Our brother is already witnessing for the Lord here in England. He got in touch with a camp not far from here, containing some 300 male refugees. Many of them are Roman Catholics, but there has been opportunity to preach the gospel to them. A few have become interested. Our brother, who speaks French and German fluently, is also working on a Hungarian translation of a French tract which we are hoping to have printed for distribution amongst Hungarian refugees.

Our brother and sister are probably the first Hungarian refugees to become members of the Lord's church. We pray that their witness may be the means of leading many more of their countrymen to the Lord.

Their names have been withheld from publication at their own request. They have relatives who are still in Hungary, and there might be danger to them if information which could identify our brother and sister came into the wrong hands. L. CHANNING.

Cape Town, Woodstock.—In a report dated 17th January Bro. T. W. Hartle says: 'On 13th January we witnessed a lady 89 years old confess the Lord Jesus and obey Him in baptism, due to the labours of the assembly at Simons-town . . .'

Haddington, East Lothian.—"There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth . . ." Some time ago, Brother Jas. Gardiner left the Police Force to work in the offices of the Edinburgh City Assessor. A young man of 24, James Maltman, a devout Roman Catholic, also worked there.

Bro. James was able to preach the gospel to him in the course of conversation and by the example of our brother's life this young man saw that here was something different. For he was a seeker after truth and had examined many of the religious bodies and had found them wanting.

Eventually our brother Clyde P. Findlay taught him the way of the Lord by correspondence until it was felt that no more could be done through this medium. After this, brother James invited him to his home where further discussions were held. On Friday, January 11th, 1957, after spending the night searching the Scriptures he made known his decision to be obedient to the gospel. He and Bro. James caught the 11 p.m. bus to Tranent and there in the meeting place of the church, and in the presence of some of these brethren, he was baptised into his Lord 'the same hour of the night.'

To God be all the glory and praise. Our new-found brother should be remembered in your prayers for he has much persecution to suffer.

JACK NISBET.

Ilkeston.—We rejoice in being able to report the baptism of another elder scholar in the school—Sandra Allsebrook, on January 23rd.

May she be found faithful as she enters the new life full of promise, in grateful and joyful service to her Lord.

S. JEPSON.

Loughborough.—We rejoice in the addition of another to our number. On Lord's Day, January 20th, we witnessed Geoffrey Sykes, a young married man who has come to know the way of the Lord more perfectly, being buried with his Lord in baptism. May God richly bless him in all he undertakes for his Master. E. HILL.

Slamannan.—With much regret we announce the death of our esteemed Sister Binnie, who passed to her rest on Friday, February 8th, at the age of 82. Almost sixty years ago she was immersed into Christ in Slamannan and remained faithful and loyal throughout those years.

She was a woman of sterling uprightness, of strict integrity and conspicuous for her aptitude in upholding our plea against any denomination or individual who chanced to cross her path.

It is almost three years since she was able to attend at the Lord's table but prior to that she was ever present even in adverse circumstances. Sister Binnie will ever be remembered by the members here for her fidelity, generosity and exemplary character. May we who are left try to follow her example.

She was laid to rest in the Slamannan cemetery on Monday, February 11th. Bro. David Dougall officiated and many of the brothers and sisters attended to pay their last tribute and respects to our well-beloved sister.

M. S. NEILSON.

Wallacestone.—It is with joy that we put on record three additions to the church. On January 18th we met to immerse Mrs. Wilson and after her confession we had the joy of hearing Mrs. Campbell make her decision to follow the Lord. Bro. D. Dougall preached the Gospel and carried out the immersions.

On Lord's Day January 27th we witnessed the immersion of George McNeill by Bro. John Baird. He had attended our meetings for some time. Bro. A. Brown preached the Gospel.

We thank God for this season of refreshing and trust our new brethren will press on so that they might receive the crown of life.

JAMES GRANT.

OBITUARY

Wigan, Scholes.—We regret to record the death of Sister Jemima Brooks at the age of 69. Sister Brooks, with her husband, was baptised in December, 1951, and has since been a fairly regular attender.

She was a faithful and devoted wife, and our prayers are for our Bro. Robert Brooks, that in this separation he shall be drawn nearer to his Lord and Master Jesus Christ. May the peace 'which passeth all understanding' fill his heart and mind and keep him faithful.

R. RATCLIFFE.

Cape Town, Woodstock.

'Bro. H. W. Machan, founder of the church in Capetown, died on 20th December, 1956, at the age of 89. It was the passing of one who stood firmly to New Testament pattern, well known in Capetown for his open-air Gospel meetings opposing the gainsayers. He has left behind a monument to the glory of God.

T. W. HARTLE.

Woodstock, Capetown.—We were privileged on Lord's Day morning, November 18th, 1956, to have with us in fellowship Bro. Vernon Lawyer, wife and family, passing through on their way to Umvuma, Southern Rhodesia, to continue the new work there begun a while ago. They were returning from a brief vacation in the States.

Bro. Lawyer gave a brief talk on 'Running the Race,' which was uplifting and encouraging to all present. As they leave us we pray God's abundant blessing upon them to the intent that much harvest might be reaped to the glory of God.

When visiting the new work at Simons-town on November 24th, I witnessed a woman united with the Lord in baptism. On December 8th our Young People's anniversary was convened. The programme consisted of hymns, anthems, recitations, talks and a tableau, 'The Prodigal Son,' all rendered by the young people. We had about 130 present.

On December 16th we witnessed another woman, due to the labours at Simonstown, and one young lady from Woodstock baptised into Christ.

Within three months three souls have turned to Christ in Simonstown. We pray that God might continue to bless Bro. Lotters and his family in their sacrificial and unceasing labours given for the extension of the Kingdom there.

As we have shared the many and various blessings of the Lord during 1956, may it be ours to enjoy these during 1957, 'Knowing that God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love.' Let us then, brethren, 'not be weary in well doing.'

T. W. HARTLE.

East Kirkby.—Again the Lord has blessed us, in that another young soul has been added to the church here. On Lord's Day February 3rd, Hazel Freestone made the good confession and was baptised into Christ by Bro. Fred Longden. Our sister has been attending the Lord's Day school for several years, and her decision for the Lord has gladdened our hearts. We pray that she may be kept strong in the faith and serve her Lord with a glad heart always. Bro. C. Melling, preaching the gospel that same evening spoke on the precious name of Jesus, and its power unto salvation. We rejoice in that his Name is still strong to save.

T. WOODHOUSE.

Great Yarmouth.—Owing to a misunderstanding this news of the mission in Great Yarmouth is late, but here is a short report.

On October 7th, 1956, we left home for East Anglia. The prospects were not bright, as news had come from the north-east of Scotland that many of the fishermen were going to work in home waters rather than take the risk of a poor season away from home. A survey was made on arrival, and we learned that nine brethren had come to work in the trade, and that Bro. and Sis. Bage, and Bro. and Sis. Innes from the church at Buckle were in Yarmouth on holiday. This was much better than we had anticipated so we made arrangements to keep house for the Lord, and to conduct a series of Bible Study and Gospel services.

We had the use of the Labour Rooms and the Baptist Hall as in past years. Despite the counter attractions of the denominations meetings were good, and a number of non-members came to hear the Gospel. The interest in our work is growing, and barriers which had been raised through a misconception of our position and plea are gradually being broken down. As we visited fishing vessels, curing yards and the lodgings of the workers we were well received. Many opportunities were given to teach concerning Christ and the Church, and often we had a full crew or a room full of shoreworkers as listeners. Questions were asked and answered, and although there was not complete agreement with the answers we believe much good was done.

Owing to the uncertainty of conditions it was impossible to arrange a Rally. We are hopeful if the Lord tarries to arrange one this year if we go south, as in former years it did much good.

The majority of the fleet of fishing vessels left for home after five weeks' fishing. We joined the brethren at Peterhead, and worked with the church until the end of November. While there one was immersed and one restored to fellowship.

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity given us to work with the brethren from the north-east, and our thanks are due to the Committee; the Slamannan District of Churches; to our visitors from Buckle; and to Bro. and Sis. W. Longden from East Kirkby; to all who contributed in any way to this work; but above all to God to whom be all the glory.

DAVID DOUGALL.

COMING EVENTS

Doncaster.—Tea and Meeting, God willing, Saturday, March 30th, 1957. Tea 4.30, meeting 6 o'clock. Chairman of the meeting: Bro. Lewis Murphy, Dewsbury. Speaker, Bro. Philip Partington, Hindley.

Preliminary Notice: Hindley Bible School to be held (D.V.) from Saturday, June 8th, to Thursday, June 13th, 1957. Mountain-top experiences, glorious fellowship. Book the dates. Write for hospitality to Mr. Tom Kemp, 52 Argyle Street, Hindley, Wigan, or for further particulars if required, to Mr. L. Morgan, 'Briarcroft,' 396 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan.

We are pleased to announce that Bro. Fred C. Day (Birmingham) has kindly accepted our invitation to preach the Gospel for five nights, Lord's Day to Thursday. We request your prayers.

The morning lectures this year are to deal with: Religion Delusions; Mormonism; Seventh-Day Adventism; Christian Science; Jehovah's Witnesses. Bring your notebooks.

We give a special invitation to our young brethren to make this the holiday of your life.

Ulverston, Burlington Street.—Anniversary meetings, March 23rd and 24th. Afternoon 3 o'clock. Speakers: Bren. W. Hurcombe and W. Steele. Tea at 4.30. Evening 8.0. Speakers: Bren. D. Dougall and L. Morgan. Will those intending to be present please let us know as early as possible so that arrangements for catering can be made? A hearty welcome to all. W. Crosthwaite, Ford Villa, Hart Street, Ulverston, Lancs.

Wigan, Albert Street, Newtown.—Gospel Campaign (D.V.), Saturday, April 27, to Lord's Day, May 12 inclusive. Preacher Bro. W. Richardson, American evangelist in Holland.

CHANGE OF SECRETARY

All Churches are asked to note that the secretary of the Church meeting at Wallacestone is now Mr. James Grant, 5 Lothian Street, Bo'ness, West Lothian, Scotland.

ENGAGEMENT

HILL-TENNANT.—The engagement is announced of Peter, son of Bro. and Sis. E. Hill, of Loughborough, and Brenda Margaret, only daughter of Bro. and Sis. F. Tennant, of Summer Lane, Birmingham.

JUST PLAYING CHURCH

A man came home and saw his and other children on the doorsteps. He asked what they were doing. They replied: 'We're playing church.' Puzzled, the father inquired further. He was told, 'We have already sung, and prayed, and preached, and now we are on the outside steps, smoking.' — From *La Loma Ave. Bulletin*, Modesto, California.

BIRTH

Peterhead. On December 30th, 1956, to Brother and Sister Alex Strachan (Jnr.), the gift of a baby daughter (Gall).

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

Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Nr. Wigan.

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

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