

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

More Efficient, Less Successful.



In giving impressions on reading Churches of Christ *Year Book*, the Editor of *The Christian Advocate* says: 'We become more and more efficient and less and less successful.' He names literature published in recent years which has 'put us on a level with Churches much larger than our own.' and then asks: 'But what is the good of all this if we are a diminishing community?' (*Christian Advocate* Sept. 24th, 1941.) This is a striking comment on the co-operative activities of the past twenty years, during which, it is claimed, we have a larger number of highly trained preachers, with academic and other degrees, and that we have become better known and recognised by other religious bodies. When will so-called leaders learn the lessons of Scripture and history? Whenever God's ancient people, Israel, depended on human rather than Divine power, and became like and stood well with the nations round them, their glory, distinctive witness, and power to influence others, departed.

You cannot win others by becoming like them. It has often been said that the men who have moved the world, have been men the world could not move; and the men who have moved the sectarian world have been men whom sectarians could not move either by opposition, persecution, favours or bribes.

But to speak of becoming more efficient and less successful is really a contradiction in terms, for if the Churches were efficient they would be successful, because to be efficient means to be 'capable of producing the desired result.' Judged by that standard the so-called efficiency of the past twenty years has been a costly and tragic failure. We are 'less and less successful,' and 'are a diminishing community.'

The chairman of the recent Annual Conference of Churches of Christ said, 'What have we done in recent years to win the sinner, and to enthuse the indifferent amongst us? Judging from our statistics we have accomplished very little. The chairman of the Leicester Annual Conference drew attention to the static condition of our Churches during the previous twenty-two years, and stated that our fate would be surely sealed if we did not put more loyalty and devotion into our work. Unfortunately, since then all the figures point not only to stagnation but to retrogression.' (*Year*

Book 1941 p.22.) A study of the figures given in 1941 *Year Book*, pp. 16-17, should cause serious thought. We give year and membership for periods of twenty years: 1842, 1300; 1862, 2782; 1882, 6632; 1902, 12,537; 1922, 16,306; 1941, 14,303.

In our last issue we said; 'If anything like discipline was exercised in the Churches, and actual membership given, the figures would be infinitely worse.'

Before us as we write are the returns for a certain division. Deducting the isolated, the membership is 733; the average attendance at the Breaking of Bread is 274, less than one third. It was decided at the last Annual Conference; 'that a column be added to the statistics in the *Year Book* giving the average attendance at the Lord's Table, to take place after the war.' (*Year Book* p. 157.) If returns from divisions given above can be taken as indicating the general state of Churches, we shall find that effective membership of Churches of Christ in Britain is less than 5,000. 'Less and less successful.' Yes, it is high time, as the Editor of the *Christian Advocate* says, 'to take serious stock of our condition, and set about to alter it.'

But what is real efficiency? Human societies can be successfully run by human power, learning and methods; but the Divine Society, the Church of the living God, can only be successfully run by Divine power, and on Divine lines. 'Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it.' There is nothing in the Scriptures to encourage us to depend on human wisdom, power or means; quite the reverse. 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are;

that no flesh should glory in his presence.' 'The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men.'

'The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own.'

In the same issue of the *Christian Advocate* as named above, the editor says, 'We have rightly moved out into the wider Christian world, and taken a more irenic attitude towards other Christian Churches. But it is wrong to suppose that this should carry with it a lessened conviction about the things for which we stand in contradistinction to others.' The adoption of this *irenic* (pacific) attitude towards sectarian bodies is another reason for lack of success. When Charles S. Parnell became leader of the Irish party he said, 'No more fraternising with the enemy,' and he made his party a real fighting force which could move any government. Our fathers in the faith were fearlessly aggressive, they would neither compromise with nor affiliate with sectarians, and they succeeded gloriously, as witness the figures given above. This *irenic* attitude might more fittingly be described as anæmic, bloodless, lifeless. The only hope for Churches of Christ is in a return to the well-tried and successful methods of the early and best days. So long as Churches depend upon human scholarship, wealth and organisation, they will become 'less and less successful.' But when they scrap all means and methods not in harmony with the New Testament Scriptures, and, loyal to the glorious restoration plea, consecrate themselves fully to the Lord's service, depending upon the power He alone can supply, then shall the Churches go forth 'terrible as an army with banners' to the conquest of the land for the King of kings. May that day soon come.

EDITOR.

'Preach the Word.'

GOD'S children should not only preach and practise the Word of God, but they should preach and practise it simply as the Word of God, and they should vigorously insist on calling Bible things by Bible names.

Writing to a young evangelist, the inspired apostle gave the following solemn and specific charge: 'I charge thee, in the sight of God and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word.' (2 Tim. iv. 1-2).

Let us think of the meaning of this charge. It says not a word about preaching what he thought, or what any other man or set of men thought, on any subject in connection with religion; not a word about his view or interpretation of the Word, nor the view or interpretation which any other man or set of men might have of the Word; but, with the directness and precision characteristic of a military commander, the short, sharp command rings out clear and strong: 'Preach the word!'

And why not? What else is needed? God Himself has prepared the message He wants delivered. 'For ever, O Jehovah, thy word is settled in heaven.' (Psalm cxix. 89, A.R.V.) It was divinely settled in heaven before it reached the brain of man on earth. It needs no addition, no subtraction, no modification; any re-vamping at the hands of man will mar the Divine message. God has settled it and issued the solemn injunction: 'Preach the word.' Anything more than this or anything less than this will not fill the Divine measure.

Now, everybody will admit that this was the thing for the Apostles and all other early Christians to do; that it was their duty to preach the Word, with no reference whatever to human leadership, and equally with no reference to what men might think on the subject; and yet, strange to say, it seems difficult to get the average man of our time to see that

precisely the same duty lies at the door of God's children to-day. It is still the duty of men to preach the Word; to preach it on all subjects on which it treats; and to preach it at all times and under all circumstances whenever and wherever they preach at all. Such a course would completely annihilate denominationalism and restore the ancient order of things. It is the only safe course.

SELECTED.

The Prayer Meeting.

THERE were only two or three of us,
who came to the place of prayer;
Came in the teeth of a driving storm,
but for that we did not care,
Since after our hymns of praise had
risen, and our earnest prayers were said,
The Master Himself was present
there, and gave us the living bread.

We knew His look on our leader's
face, so rapt and glad and free;
We felt His touch when our heads
were bowed, we heard His 'Come to Me.'
Nobody saw Him lift the latch, and
none unbarred the door,
But 'peace' was His token to every
heart, and how could we ask for more?

Each of us felt the load of sin from
the weary shoulder fall;
Each of us dropped the load of care,
and the grief that was like a pall,
And over our spirits a blessed calm
swept in from the jasper sea,
And strength was ours for toil and
strife in the days that were thence to be.

It was only a handful gathered in to
the little place of prayer,
Outside were struggling, and pain,
and sin, but the Lord Himself was there.
He came to redeem the pledge He gave—
wherever His loved ones be,
To stand Himself in the midst of them
though they count but two or three.

And forth we fared in the bitter rain, but
our hearts had grown so warm;
It seemed like the pelting of summer flowers,
and not the crush of the storm.
'Twas a time of the dearest privilege, of the
Lord's right hand,' we said,
As we thought of how Jesus Himself had
come to feed us with living bread.'

British Weekly.

The School, the Church, and Modern Methods.

THIRTY years ago, in a Conference paper on the above, we ventured to criticise, and to predict the failure of, the methods then being introduced into the Sunday Schools. Judged by results our prediction has been fulfilled. Thirty years ago, in 1911, 169 schools reported 18,313 scholars, with 387 added to the Church during that year. This year, 1941, 135 schools report 7860 scholars, with 95 added to the church. Of course we shall be told this serious drop is due to war conditions. Well, take the report given in 1939, before the war began, and the figures are: Schools 138, Scholars 10,760; added to the Church 214; which amply prove that the old methods were better than the new. The following article shows that the same modern methods as have been tried and failed in Britain have failed in America too, and they are returning to the more excellent way.

EDITOR. S.S.

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IN a recent conference of brethren, one of the so-called 'non-progressives' described the course of events by which those who protested against the introduction of the Sunday school amongst us, ultimately came to the place where they have the school themselves.

There are those who will dismiss the matter with a guffaw and an uncharitable thought; but there is more here than at first meets the eye.

According to the story, the introduction of this, as of other new devices, involved a certain amount of contest between older and younger workers, and the older ones were usually found opposing the new methods. As a result, the Sunday school was frequently introduced in opposition to the will of the elders, or, at least, not with their consent. Due

regard was not given to the Scriptural principle that the elders should be the teachers of the flock, and the schools were organised apart from them. Officers and teachers were chosen without consent of the elders, and the school developed into a thing of itself, and was severely criticised upon that ground even to the point of division within congregations. Conscientious souls, carried along by zeal for the Sunday school movement and welcoming this new way of getting children and youth taught, evidently regarded that criticism as mere quibbling in the light of what could be accomplished by these methods.

In many cases congregations divided and, in most of the cases, those who were in opposition went off and did nothing about this matter of schools for the young folks.

Meantime, the Sunday school movement in general registered great advances, and among the leaders in this phenomenal development were our own people. Graded classes, graded lessons, attendance devices, teacher training, organised adult and young peoples' classes and many other refinements of the original idea found our people in the forefront of the battle.

Then came a drop. Attendance lagged. The old enthusiasm was lacking. Teacher training ceased to be the attraction it was. Contests were less numerous. Grading ceased to command enthusiasm. But what most troubled the leaders was a recognition that, whereas formerly the leaders in the Sunday school were leaders in the Church, there now was not only a very manifest exodus from the Church house immediately after dismissal of the school, but also a very manifest indifference, if not antagonism, upon the part of much Sunday school leadership towards the

Church. Teachers and class officers would have no part in the Church. Some of them scoffed at it. Many of them regarded their school or class work as the equivalent of Church attendance. In too many cases the school was set over against the Church, a competitor of the Church. Not unnaturally—though we think shortsightedly—many a preacher acquired an antagonism towards the Sunday school.

To say the very least, the Sunday school had failed somewhere in building the people into the Church and in training leadership for the Church. It had developed itself into another organisation, and too often even great skill was unavailing to prevent its choice of leaders who were not even members of the Church or in favour of its doctrine.

It has become altogether too clear that the so-called progressive Churches have failed in developing a Sunday school that builds leadership for the Church and develops loyalty to the Church.

Meantime, a development has been going on among the non-progressive Churches in this field of Christian education. After a period in which the older brethren nursed their wounded feelings and did little about education, they began to recognise its importance and the obligation—even from Scripture—to provide it in better fashion than it had been provided. They took it up. But in harmony with their previous objections, they subjected it to the elder-ship. They made sure that it should not be an organisation outside the Church and supplementary to it. It was the Church acting in education.

Steadily this movement grew until the day came when, in some parts of the country, it could be properly said, 'In Sunday school work the non-progressives are more progressive than the progressives.'

But, if our information is correct, those Churches are training their youth in loyalty to the Church itself and are creating leaders for the

Church. They know and can present the doctrine.

Well, here we are. It is quite clear and all are agreed—we must have a school. The training of the people—converted and unconverted—is essential; good judgment and Scriptural orders combine to impress that upon us. Our fathers were right in insisting that we should do something more definite and progressive in the way of this education; history has proved that to all of us. But history has also proved that it must be a school within the Church, a school of the Church—or should we say of the Church, by the Church and for the Church? It must train its pupils, must be led to give primary loyalty to the Church, and its success must be proved by the ability to make the Church great in the Church's leadership, in the Church's attendance, in the Church's giving, in the Church's high ethical and spiritual conduct.

Christian Standard.

Hear Ye Him.

WE resolutely need to hear Jesus when the rationalistic voices of the time would beguile us. The Apostle was possessed of a God-given prescience when he wrote (1 Peter ii. 1.); 'There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.' For five decades our theology has been made or marred in Germany—the theology which denies the supernatural, makes jokes of miracles, presumes to correct Jesus when He charges Peter with denying Him, frowns on regeneration and declares humanism is enough. This is the chief explanation of our nearly empty Churches; this explains the passionless, purposeless and perfunctory

preaching which makes good Christians shake their heads; this makes plain how some who were once flames of living fire have become as cold as icebergs; this is the secret of the dearth of conversions. . . . Back to Christ—back at once—or we are lost. Yes, ‘*Hear Him!*’ when He supplies a portrait of the God of Love! When He proclaims the purpose of His coming! When He arraigns sin and paints its exceeding sinfulness! When He demands of respectable moralists nothing short of a new birth! When He claims man’s whole personality and offers to make it God-like, and when He would commandeer us to share His world-blessing crusade. Ruskin used to dwell upon the preacher’s golden opportunity, ‘*thirty minutes in which to raise the dead*’—but no Lazarus will be summoned to leave his tomb if we succumb to the negational teaching Germany offers us, and if we ‘refuse him that speaketh.’ *Joyful News.*

The Wedding Garment.

WE are familiar with the teaching that we are saved by the blood of Jesus; that is, by His death. We need to realise also that we are saved by His life. In Rom. v. 8-10, Paul develops this basic doctrine of Christianity and shows that we were reconciled to God by the death of Jesus (that is, God showed and ‘commended’ His love to us by the cross and so reconciled us to Him). Now that we are reconciled we are saved by Jesus’ life.

Whatever else this may involve, it certainly includes the fact that we are not able to live well enough to be accepted in heaven upon our own merits. What happens, therefore, is that we accept Jesus sincerely and fully as the Son of God and Son of Man; we accept Him as the revelation of what God is and what we ought to

be (Rom. x. 4). That act of faith and dedication is taken, then, in lieu of our perfection; faith has at least accepted the perfect Standard.

We are then baptised into Christ and we receive the privilege of remission of sins from that time forth, conditioned only upon our confessing our sins (1 John i. 9) since He is ‘faithful’ to the contract made at our baptism (Acts ii. 38). Therefore, there is no condemnation to those in Christ (Rom. vi. 1).

We are, therefore, living not in our own righteousness, but in His (Gal. ii. 19-20, Phil. iii. 9), and are saved by His life (Rom. v. 10).

Is not this clearly the thing symbolised by the wedding garment in Jesus’ parable of the wedding supper? (Matt. xxii. 1-14). It is what Paul calls ‘the righteousness which is of faith’ (Rom. iii. 22, ix 30, x. 6, Phil. iii. 9). Real faith entails works, and we are now slaves of righteousness (Rom. vi. 17-18), slaves of God. But we have also a hope of righteousness and of a crown of righteousness, all based upon faith in the righteousness which is Christ Himself.

Christian Standard.

Subscriptions for the Evangelist Fund.

September 30th, 1941.

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383	...	2	0	0	398	...	15	0	0
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The Second Coming of the Lord.--V.

THE most prominent city in the Bible is Jerusalem. From the time of its capture by David from the Jebusites (2 Sam. v. 7-9), it is regarded more and more as the capital of Israel. David being a crowned king, built his house there. The temple, afterwards, was built at Jerusalem by Solomon, and the government of Israel being a theocracy, the nation was ruled from Jerusalem.

Under the reign of David, the worship of God was greatly revived, and the people, as a whole, practised a higher degree of holiness, but under the reign of Solomon and subsequent kings, the worship of idols increased, and the nation was punished, first by splitting into two divisions—Israel and Judah—and then, later by the seventy years' captivity.

The language used by the Prophets whom God raised up from time to time is worthy of notice. As befits a simple, agricultural people, the metaphor of married life, indicating the closest intimacy, is used by them to describe the relationship between God and His people. In Isaiah xlix. 16-18 and lxii. 4-5, Zion is regarded as the Bride of God, and in Isa. liv. 5, Jer. iii. 14, Hos. ii. 19-20, God is regarded as being the Husband of Israel.

Just as in happier periods of the religious life of the Jews, God is regarded as bridegroom and husband, the nation being personified as Zion or Jerusalem, so in the idolatrous periods, the nation (Zion or Jerusalem) was regarded as a harlot who was unfaithful to her husband. This unfaithfulness reached its climax up to, and was punished by, the seventy years' captivity. The punishment was so effective that never again, with all their faults, do we read of any further idolatry on the part of the Jewish people.

They returned from the seventy years' captivity, purified and zealous for the religion of their forefathers.

This great event is described in the prophecies of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc. The sin, its punishment, and the return from captivity, as well as the re-establishment, under Nehemiah and others, of the theocracy of Israel, and all the prophecies in the Old Testament foretelling the return of the Jews to their own land refer to this great event, which followed the decree of King Cyrus.

Another evil, however, gradually developed. In the absence of inspired prophets, the religion of the Jews, in teaching and practice, became traditional: conditioned by a highly traditional interpretation of the laws of Moses, all the various rulings of the Chief Rabbis being duly reported by Scribes and having the force of law.

The revolt of the Maccabees, while finally leading to the deliverance of the nation from the bondage of Syria, had a powerful influence in shaping the traditional conception of the coming Messiah. He must be another Judas Maccabeus, only on a greater scale, if possible, to deliver Israel from Roman bondage.

Fulfilling the prophecies, the Messiah came. His wonderful gospel, marvellous sympathy for the poor, His power of working miracles, made an immense impression on the common people everywhere He went, many thousands following Him. In Galilee, He was sure of a very large following, in Jerusalem only—the very place that mattered most, from a practical point of view—did He meet with opposition. They did not want to believe His gospel, with its beautiful simplicity of worship, and His teaching of a new Covenant would mean the end, to them, of their privileges and powers.

Jesus knew of this opposition. Many of His parables are directed against the Scribes and Pharisees, some so plainly that hearers detected it: The influential classes in Jeru-

salem, by rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, rejected God, putting the seal on their rejection when they cried out, 'We have no king but Cæsar.' They were thus unfaithful to their God, to their Messiah, and to the message which He came to deliver.

The book of Revelation was written in perilous times. While designed to encourage the people of God, it is couched in such marvellous language that it takes more than one reading to pick up the clue; and, of course, it would be completely mystifying to a Roman or Greek if they should happen to get a copy. So Jerusalem is described as 'Sodom,' 'Egypt,' 'Babylon,' 'the Mother of Harlots,' but a sentence is dropped occasionally which clearly indicates what is meant. Thus Jerusalem is described not only as 'Sodom' and 'Egypt,' but 'where also our Lord was crucified,' and 'in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that have been slain on the earth.' If, as our Lord said, 'It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem' (Luke xiii. 33) and 'that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth' (Matt. xxiii. 35), then this quotation (Rev. xviii. 24), must mean Jerusalem. The contrast between the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and the harlot, is continued as between the 'new Jerusalem' coming out of heaven from God, and 'Babylon.' But why the *new* Jerusalem unless the *old* Jerusalem is being destroyed. Then again, in the sealing of the elect, the twelve tribes of Israel are mentioned.

It may be that the spiritual name of 'Babylon,' as applied to Jerusalem, was well-known to the Apostles and that when the Apostle Peter writes, 'The Church that is at Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you,' he may mean the Church at Jerusalem, because John Mark was with him. In the book of Acts we read of John Mark leaving Paul and returning to Jerusalem. (Act. xiii. 13.)

J. A. WHITE.

Baptism Pictures Gospel.

'KNOW ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' (Rom. vi. 3-4.) This passage shows clearly that we are baptised into Christ. It also shows that our baptism is a picture of the burial and resurrection of Christ. Are we buried in the likeness of His burial unless we are put under the water? We are also raised in the likeness of His resurrection. 'If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' 'Even so we also should walk in newness of life.' When do we walk in newness of life? Is it not after baptism? 'But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.'

E. M. BORDEN.

Conference.

IMPORTANT.

A CONFERENCE of those who desire to remain loyal to the original position and plea of the Churches of Christ, will (D.V.) be held in the Meeting House, Argyle Street, Hindley, on Saturday, November 8th, to commence at 2.30 p.m. Tea will be served at 4.30 p.m. Evening meeting at 5.30.

Will those who desire hospitality please communicate at once with Bro. L. Morgan, 'Glen Iris,' Lord Street, Hindley, Wigan.

Editor's Address.

Until November 14th:

c/o 11 Gilbert Street, Hindley, Wigan.

From November 15th to 30th:

c/o Bro. W. A. Carson,
'Eskdale,' Trent Road, Nelson,
Lancashire.



Young Folk's Corner.

CONDUCTED BY UNCLE BERT.

Month's Motto:

'Children, obey your parents.'

A True Portrait.

The following story is told of Oliver Cromwell, 'the Protector.' He was about to have his portrait painted by Peter Lely, the distinguished artist. Lely had arranged Cromwell in the right position, and was about to begin painting when the Protector said:

'Paint me as I am. Use all your skill to make my picture truly like me, and do not flatter me at all. Show all the roughness, warts, and everything, as you see me, or I will not pay one farthing for it.'

Lely did paint the Protector as he was, so that we have to-day a true likeness of the great soldier and statesman. The painter did not flatter, nor overlook the bad bits, he painted just what he saw—a true portrait. In this respect the painter was like the Great Artist—God. In His picture gallery—the Bible—God paints our true portrait, revealing us to ourselves. The likeness shown is accurate and true—for God is altogether honest in His reproduction—and the result is not flattering to us. Like a mirror, the Bible unerringly reveals our true nature. But, thank God, it does not stop there, it tells how we may have a new portrait.

A man began to read through the Bible. After a time he said to his wife: 'If this is right, we're wrong.' Later, he said: 'If this is right, we're condemned.' But he went on reading until he could say: 'If this is right, we can be saved.' The Bible does not flatter us. It reveals our sins, weaknesses, failures and mis-

takes, but it goes further. It tells of a new portrait which can be created—the one God creates when we fully surrender ourselves to Him. Accept Jesus as your own Saviour, then your old portrait will be blotted out, and you will be given a new one—the image and likeness of Jesus. *Isn't that a portrait worth having?*

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S QUESTIONS.

1. Obadiah. 2. Bethany. 3. Eli.
4. Dorcas. 5. Idol. 6. Eunuch.
7. Nathan. 8. Timothy.

OBEDIENT.

A Prayer to Begin the Day With.

DEAR Father God, make me this day
Still more obedient in Thy way;
Let willing tasks and lessons be
The outward sign of loving Thee;
Keep me from anger and from lies,
From wicked thoughts and rude replies,
In games may I be straight and true
With honour guiding all I do;
For things that help me to be good
Like health and home and clothes and food,
For strength to laugh and run and sing,
To Thee my happy thanks I bring.

Who Said?

1. 'Overcome evil with good.'?
2. 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.'?
3. 'Will a man rob God'?
4. 'We put bits in the horses' mouths that they may obey us'?
5. 'For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous.'?
6. 'Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.'?

GOD entrusts to all
Talents few or many;
None so young and small,
That they have not any.

The Loss of God.

THAT disbelief in God which has plunged humanity in the bloodbath once more, is mainly due to the triumphs of knowledge. The scientists having discovered a satisfactory explanation of how the world was created, concluded that a creator was superfluous. It was a strange obsession; as if having discovered how their typewriters worked, they concluded that the inventor, who made the first of them, was unnecessary. I have never heard anyone, however high-brow, put forward the thesis that the cunning mechanism of his typewriter came together by accident, but any of the enlightened will maintain that this world of marvel and mystery and beauty is the mere product of blind forces, clashing atoms and molecules together, until this rare panorama of heaven and earth and life came by blind accident. What no sane person would predicate of a sewing machine they predicated of the illimitable universe. And this humourless imbecility devitalised the world.

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Is the universe possessed of value and meaning? Writes Aldous Huxley, 'I took it for granted that there was no meaning. I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning. Most ignorance is invincible ignorance, we don't know because we don't want to know. Those who detect no meaning in the world, generally do so because it suits their book that the world should be meaningless. The manifestly poisonous nature of the fruits forced me to reconsider the philosophical tree on which they are grown.' Aldous Huxley has found his way out of the region of the Dead Sea. He is now a veritable Saul among the prophets. The apples of Sodom are bitter to his taste. But it will be some time before the new evangel will percolate down to the man in the factory.

DR. NORMAN MACLEAN.

Acrostic of a Church Member.

A CERTAIN preacher of a Western Christian Church asked his members what was their interpretation of active membership in the Church. One member answered thus. An active member should—

GO regularly.
IVE as the Lord has prospered one.
GUARD the unruly member.

THINK seriously.
ALK unto edification.
EACH according to ability.

PRAY without ceasing.
REACH the Word.
AY promptly.

SING joyfully.
SEEK earnestly.
SPEAK pleasantly.

WATCH
AIT
ORK
ORSHIP

FAITHFULLY.
FREELY.
FURIOUSLY.
FONDLY.

READ the Bible.
RELIEVE suffering.
RESIST evil.

GO to rest, but don't stay there.
GO to work and stick to it.
GO to Church as every good person ought to do.

How would that do printed on cards, and a card given to every member?
Christian Standard.

From the Treasurer.

ANOTHER year is drawing to a close. Will you please send along your subscriptions and orders at once, if possible. **DO THIS, PLEASE, DURING NOVEMBER**, if you can. If you cannot, do not send during the **LAST TWO WEEKS** of the year, wait until the turn of the year.

Agents, please accept warmest thanks for your work and labour of love during 1941. Send me your orders for 1942 (D.V.) as soon as possible. If you have not all the cash in, send order on a post card, and send cash first week in the new year.

Thank you so much. A. L. FRITH.

To Late to Sneer at Jesus.

SOME years ago, when Clarence Darrow was defending the outlaws who murdered the Governor of Idaho, U.S.A., an incident occurred which belongs to the annals of history. Mr. W. E. Borah was the prosecuting attorney. He was then a young man, but already he had been marked for leadership; already the world had discovered him as a man of brains and conviction.

Darrow had occupied an afternoon in a tirade against religion, orderly government, the home, against everything we regard as lovely and of good report, concluding with a string of abuse of Jesus Christ and the Bible.

Mr. Borah sat like a statue through the hours of vulgarity which the Chicago man imposed upon the court. Mr. Borah refused to allow his colleagues to object to Darrow's capers. Evidently he intended to let Darrow have his fling unmolested.

And then the great lawyer-statesman-Christian stood up and walked directly in front of the jurors. He looked at Darrow. He looked at the judge. He looked at the waiting crowd in the court-room. He looked into the faces of the jurors. He said, 'Gentleman, when I heard the attorney from Chicago uttering his sneers at your religion and my religion, there came back to me, as there must have come back to you, my friends, the recollection of the time when, as a little boy, I stood at my mother's knee and heard her read from our Bible.'

Then, with a swift, sweeping gesture of his mighty arm at Darrow, his voice rang out through the court-room, 'Too late, too late, after two thousand years, to cry 'fraud' to the God-man of Calvary! Too late, too late, in the dawn of the twentieth century, to write 'impostor' on the brow of the Figure on the Cross.'

Christian Index.

The Church at Nelson.

IN the report of the Annual Conference, we read: 'After the Chairman's announcement that during the year there had been a decrease of seven Churches, and a net loss of 517 members, it was with great pleasure that the Conference heard of the progress of the Nelson Church.'

Christian Advocate.

Aug. 20th. p.496.

The Editor of the *Christian Advocate* stressing the importance of carrying on in war-time said, 'Witness the Church at Nelson, where they not only opened a new building in the second year of the war, but had fourteen baptisms.'

Christian Advocate
Sept. 24th. p. 574.

We are glad that the courageous and earnest work of the Church at Nelson is thus recognised. May we hope for pardon in pointing out that the ingathering at Nelson was mainly the result of Old Paths preaching. Most of the number named above being brought to decision during a mission conducted by Bro. Leonard Morgan, Secretary of the Old Paths Committee.

It has been arranged for us to labour with the Church at Nelson, from November 15th to 30th. 'Brethren pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified.'

EDITOR.

Seed-time and Harvest.

WE must not expect to see an immediate reward for all the good we do; nor must we always confine our efforts to places and persons which seem likely to yield us a recompense for our labours. The Egyptian casts his seed upon the waters of the Nile, where it might seem a sheer waste of corn; but in due time the flood subsides, the rice or other grain sinks into

the fertile mud, and rapidly a harvest is produced. Let us to-day do good to the unthankful and the evil. Let us teach the careless and the obstinate. Unlikely waters may cover hopeful soil. Nowhere shall our labour be in vain in the Lord.

It is ours to cast our bread upon the waters; it remains with God to fulfil the promise: 'Thou shalt find it.' He will not let His promise fail. His good Word which we have spoken shall live, shall be found, shall be found by us. Perhaps not just yet, but some day we shall reap what we have sown. We must exercise our patience, for perhaps the Lord may exercise it. 'After many days,' says the Scriptures, and in many instances those days run into months and years, and yet the Word stands true. God's promise will keep; let us mind that we keep the precept, and keep it this day.

SELECTED.

Maxims to Guide the Young.

THE following have been taken from an old book, but are none the less effective for that.

Keep good company or none.

If your hands cannot be usefully employed, attend to the cultivation of your mind.

Always speak the truth. If it will hurt a friend, remain silent.

If anyone speaks evil of you, let your life be so virtuous that none will believe him.

Never speak lightly of religion.

Abhor all kinds of deceit if you would be happy.

The greater the mind the greater the humility.

Nothing begets confidence sooner than punctuality.

Wit loses respect when it keeps company with malice.

The more one learns of other people and other things, the less he is taken up with ideas about himself.

To find God in everything is one important means of learning to find everything in God.

Nyasaland.

I HAVE a splendid story to repeat this month, a story which is so finely beautiful, that I am sure the hearts and feelings of the readers of the *Scripture Standard* will be deeply moved and stirred. I will state it as nearly as possible in Bro. Ronald's own words.

He wrote on July 20th, but the letter was not received until September 11th.

'I wish to report about the illness of Brothers Jackson and Benson in the Northern Province. It will be remembered I told of two preachers being transferred to the Northern Province to preach the Gospel and to care for the Nyasaland people there. These two brethren arrived at Lilongwe safely and joined with two brothers, Jackson and Samuel, making four in number. They went to Chimvumvulu Church, Deoza District, where they baptised six candidates, as I reported last April. When they returned to Lilongwe they thought to go farther and visit the Churches. They left Lilongwe for Kamvunguti Church, the home of Bro. Samuel. Here Bro. Jackson began to be ill. They waited there four days, and when he recovered they left for Dirilo Church, Dowa District. On nearing the village, Bro. Jackson began to be ill again, so they went to another village, where Bro. Samuel's wife's mother lived. They stayed there for two days, and on the Sunday morning they left for Dirilo, taking the patient with them, travelling slowly, to the meeting with the brethren. Before they reached the village, Bro. Benson was taken ill. As Bro. Wellem was all right, he conducted the services that day while his friends were suffering. Two days were spent at Dirilo, the illness of Brothers Jackson and Benson being very serious. Bro. Wellem left Dirilo and went to Dowa, about forty miles, to send me a telegram on April 30th, whence he returned to Dirilo the same day.

'When I received the telegram I arranged to send Brothers Pitches and Edwin to go to the help of Bro. Wellem to treat the patients. After the first telegram, Bro. Wellem saw that the sickness of Bro. Benson did not change, so he asked the brethren to carry the patient to Dowa hospital, though he had not hoped to reach Dowa in peace. He tried courageously to carry the patient by night, and next morning arrived at the hospital about nine o'clock.

'On May 6th, he sent a second telegram. After sending this, the two brethren from Zomba reached him at the hospital.

'Meanwhile, the sisters of Kamvunguti had heard that the preachers who had left them lately to visit other Churches had fallen into such troubles, and six sisters prepared their flour without delay and left Kamvunguti, and made the journey of sixty-nine miles to Dowa hospital to entertain and care for the poor preachers of the Gospel who were in strange country. These sisters stayed one week with them, and were round the beds of the sick brothers each day. So I do commend them heartily for their zeal and good acts of love which they showed them. The sisters returned to their homes, and on May 24th, Bren. Pitches and Edwin came back with a wonderful report, which made me cheerful in God's mercy, saying, 'We left him a little better, eating all right, and the doctor had told him to exercise and walk outside.' I do commend these two brothers for their zeal and sympathetic attention, and for sharing the troubles, which they did, and in walking so many miles from Namiwawa to Dowa.

'On June 10th, Bro. Wellem and Bro. Benson approached Zomba on a lorry, before the conference, for it was impossible for them to come on a pedal cycle as indeed he was sick. I remembered what the Apostle Paul wrote of Epaphroditus, "Indeed he was sick unto death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow."

'When Bro. Wellem was in Dowa hospital he never failed to visit the Churches round him. He went twice on Sundays to visit the brethren at Kunyande Church, about ten miles from Dowa. One journey he and Bro. Jackson made to Malimba Church, about thirty miles from Dowa. Once Bro. Lamuel visited the Church at Kota-Kota, on the shore of the Lake Nyasa. In the hospital they wounded with the truth an

elder of the Dutch Reformed Church, who was undergoing treatment in the hospital. Bro. Wellem took the address of the elder, who invited him to visit him at his home.'

And now, brethren, what think you of this chapter of experiences? Is it not splendid? Especially of the six sisters who left their homes to minister to the sick preachers. Everybody has done well, and we feel proud of our black fellow Christians. God bless them all.

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of £1 from 'Anonymus,' bearing post-office stamp of Heckmondwike. Many thanks.

W. M. KEMPSTER.

News.

Tranent.—We have enjoyed the services of Bro. W. Crosthwaite for the past three months. Gospel meetings being held on Lord's Day evenings, open-air on Tuesdays, and again in the meeting hall on Thursday nights. Our brother does not spare himself, ever anxious for the work in any way that the Church may desire. The meetings were fairly well attended. On September 21st, our hearts were made glad by a decision to serve the Lord; our sister being immersed into the ever blessed name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit on Thursday, and added to the Church on September 28th. May she be kept faithful until the coming of the Lord. We had also a sister restored to fellowship who has been apart from the Church for some time. We thank God for this ingathering, and take courage to spread abroad the old, old story, of Jesus and His love. A tea-meeting was held on Monday night, to take leave of our brother and sister, who are going to Hindley for six weeks and to Nelson for two weeks. We spent an enjoyable time together. We wish him God's speed in his new field of labour.

WALTER WILSON.

Bristol, Bedminster.—On Lord's Day, September 28th, we were privileged to immerse, into the ever prevailing name of Jesus, two souls. One a young scholar from the Lord's Day School, Iris Robinson, aged ten years, who, at her own request, wished to follow the Lord in his own appointed way. The other, a young man, Mr. Cottrell, has been attending the Gospel meetings for several weeks, and by following the Lord in the waters of baptism satisfied his soul's longing desire. E. M. WILLS.

Nelson, Lancs.—It is with great pleasure that we report the addition of Muriel Roberts to the Church. Muriel was immersed at Burnley on September 30th, and received into the fellowship of the Church on Lord's Day, October 5th. Further: it is also a great joy to record the visit of Bro. Philip Partington, of the Hindley Church. Bro. Philip has been conducting a four week-ends' mission. The fellowship has been truly wonderful. It is, no doubt, a disappointment to Philip, as it is to us, that no actual decisions were made. But I hasten to add that this should in no way discourage any of us to go forward with even greater vigour and courage. Philip has served the Nelson Church magnificently, and although he had not the personal joy of witnessing the fulfilment of his fine efforts, yet, we are fully certain that a rich harvest will be gathered in, and he will know that it is his powerful and inspiring preaching of the Gospel that has brought this about. We have had some really sound teaching and preaching, and this augurs well for the future of the Church. Philip is a young man who, we firmly believe, will perform great things for Christ.

The mission at Nelson was the first that our brother has conducted. It is a credit to him, and we earnestly pray that God will give to him the strength and courage so necessary in these times to continue in His service.

Our next notable event will be our twenty-third anniversary in November, when we hope to have the profound pleasure of a fortnight's visit from our Bro. Crosthwaite. We are eagerly looking forward.

The Nelson Church sends Christian greetings to all brethren everywhere.

F. SYKES.

The Work at Fleetwood.

Dear Bro. Crosthwaite,

I visited the Church at Fleetwood for the third anniversary of the Young Men's Bible Class, the last Lord's Day in September. I have been each year, and would like to give a few impressions. In these extraordinary days it may be helpful to know how the work is going on in our schools. The class is under the able leadership of Bro. Frith, and those who know him will agree that the class is not held together with fairy tales and funny stories.

There are thirteen on the roll, all of whom received a book for regular attendance. Two had full marks, and others nearly so. The class is a Bible Class in the true sense. This was proved by an oral examination conducted by Bro. Frith before the books were handed out. The ready answers spoke volumes for the teacher's training and the receptive minds of the scholars. I was impressed by this public examination. I question if some of the adults present could have answered the questions, and I was not alone in thinking so.

In his report, Bro. Frith said he had never in the three years had to appeal for order, week by week the scholars had looked for him, and he had been there consistently, refusing outside preaching work in the interests of the class. This is a vital factor in carrying on successfully.

I also noticed on the wall a fine series of Biblical maps, which are made good use of.

The reward books were handed over in a very gracious manner by Sister B. Winter, of the Blackpool Church, who spoke words of wisdom, and gave good advice to the young men present.

It was announced that, during the winter, the room would be available for the young men on a week night for recreation. May I add that to me it is no mean achievement to hold a class of healthy boys together, especially during the summer months, with the call of the sea, and many amusements near.

Bro. Frith, and those with him, look to this class for the future of the Church, the seed is being sown and there is reason to believe fruit will result. The writer addressed a special young people's service at night.

Bro. Frith is the most optimistic man I know. He and his sister wife spread the 'Table' in their own home first of all, and now seven break bread as a rule. The meeting-room is well adapted, being in the business premises of our brother and sister, and is so arranged and curtained that one is hardly aware that the room is part of business premises.

We had two excellent meetings, and a time of rich fellowship. Bro. and Sis. H. Wilson, of Blackburn Church, were present, whom we were pleased to meet once more.

I came away convinced that there is a future for the Church in Fleetwood.

GEORGE HASSELL.