

The **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

VOL. 22. No. 9

SEPTEMBER, 1956

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

CONFERENCE and RALLY

The AUTUMN CONFERENCE will be held (D.V.) under the auspices of the ZOAR STREET, MORLEY, YORKSHIRE, CHURCH OF CHRIST, on the occasion of their customary Autumn Rally.

DATE. OCTOBER 6th, 1956.

MEETING PLACE. THE BAPTIST TABERNACLE, ALBION STREET, MORLEY (By kind permission).

DIRECTIONS. The Tabernacle is in the Town Centre, close to Zoar Street, and immediately to the rear of the Co-operative Central Emporium.

SESSIONS. There will be two Sessions.

AFTERNOON CONFERENCE, 2 p.m.

BUSINESS:

THE RESOLUTION: 'That as we are unable to find any justification in the New Testament for the existence of an Evangelistic Committee such as we have to-day, we recomend that this Committee disband.

AN AMENDMENT after the following fashion will be tabled: 'That since inter-church methods of Evangelism are not enumerated in the New Testament, we decide to continue with an Evangelistic Committee such as we have to-day.'

EVENING SESSION AT 6.15 p.m., will take the form of the customary Rally. The speakers invited by the Morley Church are Brethren A. E. Winstanley and R. B. Scott.

The Baptist School Hall will be open from 9 a.m. for reception of visiting Brethren. Light refreshments will be available up to the time of Conference. Tea will be served from 4.30 to 5.30 p.m.

HOSPITALITY. Please address hospitality enquiries to Bro. J. H. Hardy, 70 Cross Peel Street, Morley, Yorkshire.

OTHER ENQUIRIES to Bro. F. Sugden, 40 Wakefield Road, Gildersome, Leeds, Yorks. In order that adequate provision may be made: will brethren and churches please notify Bro. Sugden of their intention to be present.

Building the Spiritual House

A Trial of Strength

ELIJAH the prophet lived in the darkest days of Israel's history. He sounded forth God's message almost 900 years before the coming of Christ. The Israelite nation had risen to its greatest glory under its king Solomon. But Solomon had lapsed into idolatry and had permitted his wives to introduce their false worship into his kingdom. He was spared from witnessing the fearful outcome, but after his death the kingdom was divided into two parts—the southern, Judah, composed of two tribes, ruled over by Rehoboam, Solomon's son; and the northern, the remaining ten tribes, called Israel, with the usurper Jeroboam as its king.

The process of decay brought about by idolatry rapidly accelerated, until under Ahab the kingdom of Israel became almost entirely heathen. Jezebel, Ahab's queen, has become a by-word for all manner of evil. In effect it was she who ruled. She determined to make the immoral and revolting religion of her native Phoenicia the religion of Israel also. Hundreds of the prophets and priests of Baal flooded the country, and on every mountain and hill and in every garden and house were to be found altars or groves or images where the disgusting worship of the imaginary god took place.

At last the time had come for Israel to decide whom they would worship and serve. Elijah sets before Ahab, Jezebel, the prophets and priests of Baal, and the people a challenge and a test which could not be evaded. We all know the outcome of that test on Mount Carmel—how the living and only God proved His reality and power.

Elijah a Restorer of True Religion

There is one almost insignificant incident in that trial of strength which has its striking message of encouragement for us. It is recorded in 1 Kings 18:30—'Elijah . . . repaired the altar of the Lord that was thrown down.' Elijah was no introducer of a new religion. He was not setting up some rival to the Baal system. He was not appealing to popular sentiment, nor desirous of drawing people after himself. He was no demagogue or 'setter-forth of strange gods.' He did not add to the many and weird doctrines believed in Israel. No. He simply rebuilt 'the altar of the Lord that was thrown down.' He set up again that which was old and tried and proved. He was a restorer. 'Elijah indeed cometh and restoreth all things,' said Jesus of him.

Baal was the sun-god, the god of fertility, who caused life to spring from the earth. But in the years of drought and famine that led to the trial on Carmel no answer had come from the brazen skies to the prayers and sacrifices offered by his devotees, nor had any answer come in response to the wild dances and cries of his prophets on Carmel. This god had failed in the time of his people's greatest need. The new and the popular, backed by all the power of the state, the rulers, the religious and military authorities had proved utterly helpless in the sight of all the people. Elijah showed the nation that their only hope lay in return to the living God, who had proved Himself in deliverances, signs and wonders He had wrought for His people, and in His revelation of love, salvation and power.

Restoring New Testament Christianity

A rebuilder of the old religion. Is not that exactly what we seek to be? Often when we try to make clear who and what we are we are looked at askance, or we are regarded as a further addition to the splinters and

factions of which the world has already too many. 'The Church of Christ: what religion is that?' Or 'Are you Dissenters, Nonconformists, Christian Scientists?' We are asked how old 'our religion' is, and who were its founders. Too often we make the mistake of explaining that churches of Christ were established in America about 150 years ago by Thomas and Alexander Campbell, and in this country by such men as William Jones and James Wallis. But such men sought simply to *restore* that which had been forgotten or neglected—the pure and simple worship and life of the church of the New Testament. Their work was a restoration. They were, like Elijah, rebuilders.

It is the proud boast of the Roman Catholic church that its history can be traced unbroken back to Christ and His apostles. The boast does not make the fact, and will not bear examination. Ancestry does not establish authority. It is not how old a church is that matters, but how true to the original that church is. In the darkest ages and the most remote corners of the earth God has ever preserved His faithful remnant as witnesses to the truth of His word, and who, amid surrounding error, have preached His pure gospel, worshipped in spirit and truth and lived as the saints of Christ. But what if not? It cannot affect the truth of God's revelation. Even if for hundreds of years there had been no witness, God remains true: 'Let God be found true, but every man a liar.'

'New Theologies,' 'isms,' sects and parties arise and have their day, then are carried away when the novelty is gone. Even the Ecumenical Movement is a sign of the futility of the numerous denominations, and that men are tired of many churches speaking with uncertain voices, and are longing for an authoritative 'Thus saith the Lord.' It is noticeable, too, that in theological circles there is a return to Biblical doctrine. These tendencies can be summed up in the slogan 'Back to the Bible!' We heartily endorse this ideal, with the addition 'Back to Jerusalem!', the first and original church as she came from the Christ Himself.

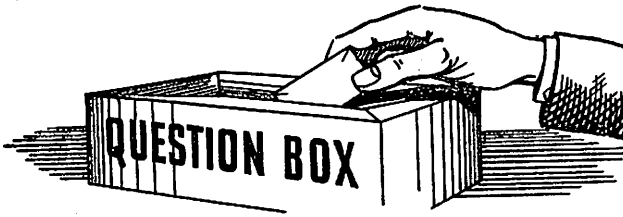
Apart from what has or has not happened in the 1900 years intervening between the forming of the church and now, the church of Christ exists to restore the primitive gospel.

Breaking Down and Building Up

But are we rebuilding, restoring, as earnestly as we should? We find it comparatively easy to refute false and unscriptural teaching and practice. Yet to destroy and break down is always easier than to build up. The building that took years of skilled work to erect can be destroyed by navies in a few days. True '... the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strong holds: casting down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God ...' (2 Cor. 10:4-5). Jeremiah was 'to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow,' but he was also 'to build and to plant.' Solomon tells us (Eccl. 3:3) that 'there is a time to break down and a time to build up.' And Nehemiah, in charge of the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem, exhorted his men to 'rise up and build.'

We are not making as good a job of building up as of casting down. Our witness must be not only negative, the destroying of the insecure building raised upon shallow foundations, but must fill up the vacuum remaining with the fulness of the gospel of Christ. This gospel is fitted to do what education, scholarship, politics, science and all man's wisdom cannot do—make new creations in Christ Jesus. It is still God's power unto salvation. We shall prove it only by carrying it out, in preaching, teaching and living as did the church of the New Testament. God's work, done in God's way, never lacks God's blessing and reward.

EDITOR,



CONDUCTED BY
L. CHANNING

Send your questions
direct to L. Channing,
9 Ripon Street,
Aylesbury, Bucks.

Q. Since the church gave the world the canon of Scripture, may she not have a say in its interpretation ?

A. The question falls into two parts, firstly, that which concerns the Canon of Scripture ; and secondly, that which concerns its interpretation.

1. *The Canon.* The word 'canon,' comes from the Greek word *kanon*, literally meaning a 'cane' or 'rod of measurement,' 'a rule.' It is a term that has come to be applied to the list of inspired books, both in the Old and New Testaments, which make up the Bible. The word appears to have been first used in this connection by the early Christian writer Irenaeus, 130-200 A.D., a pupil of Polycarp, who in speaking of the New Testament writings, called them the *Rule or Canon of Truth*.

The questioner asserts that 'the church gave the world the canon of Scripture,' but this is not true. In the first place it is not true in regard to the Old Testament. The O.T. Canon, comprising the thirty-nine books as we have them to-day, was accepted unanimously by the Jews long before the Christian era. (See the answer given to a question concerning the Apocrypha in July issue). Most of all, we find the Lord setting His seal of approval upon it. Such passages as Luke 24 : 44-45 strongly suggest that the Old Testament was in the same form in Christ's day as we have it to-day. The question of the O.T. Canon, then, was settled with the Divine stamp of authority upon it before the church came into existence.

In the second place it is not true to say that the church gave the world the Canon of the New Testament. The Lord commanded His disciples to 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,' or 'teach all nations.' Faithful obedience to that command brought the church into being (Acts 2 : 47). The Word of God, therefore, 'gave the world,' the church, and not the church the Word of God. The same truth is seen in Eph. 2 : 20, where Paul states that the church is ' . . . built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.' Note that the order is not that the apostles and prophets (as inspired teachers) are built upon the church, but that the church is built upon the apostles and prophets.

Again, there are indications in the New Testament that under inspired guidance the Canon, as it was being formed, was coming to be recognised. The writers claim to be inspired (1 Cor. 2 : 7-13 ; 14 : 37 ; 1 Thes. 2 : 13 ; Rev. 1 : 2, etc.). Peter referred to Paul's epistles as being of equal authority with 'the other scriptures' (2 Pet. 3 : 15-16). Further, Peter wrote in order that his words should remain with the church after his departure (2 Pet. 1 : 15 ; 3 : 1-2). Paul in 1 Tim. 5 : 18 quotes as from scripture the phrase 'the labourer is worthy of his hire.' As this is not found in the Bible except in Mark 10 : 10 and Luke 10 : 7, it seems to indicate not only that these books were in existence, but that they were already recognised by the inspired apostles as 'scripture.' In addition, the many quotations made by the Early Fathers in their writings show that they were acquainted with, and used as authoritative, most of the New Testament books as we now have them.

In the writings of Tertullian of Carthage, 160-220 A.D., alone there are some 1,800 such quotations.

The fact that some of the early Christian writers expressed uncertainty about the authority of some of the New Testament books, notably, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, 2 and 3 John, and in some cases Revelation, did not mean that these books were uninspired, any more than Luther's rejection of the Epistle of James was proof that it was uninspired. All it proved was, that at the time when communication was not easy and when the church was undergoing almost continual persecution, these books were not so widely circulated. Proof of this is seen in connection with Eusebius the church historian, 270-340 A.D. He gives a list of 'disputed' books: James, 2 Peter, Jude, 2 and 3 John. But when the Emperor Constantine bade him supervise the preparation of fifty Bibles, he did not dare omit these books, but his New Testament contained the same twenty-seven books as we have to-day.

The Canon of the New Testament, therefore, does not depend on the opinions of the Early Fathers or the edict of the Council of Carthage meeting in 397 A.D., as is so often erroneously asserted. God did not leave the completion of the body of New Testament truth on such a flimsy basis, but He alone, who was responsible for giving us the New Testament, has seen to it that that body of truth is complete. The Holy Spirit therefore 'gave the world the canon of Scripture.' All the Council of Carthage did was to decide, on human authority alone, that the Canon needed formal and 'official' recognition.

These historical facts show the falsity of the Roman Catholic claim that they gave us the Bible. As has been seen, the Canon of both Old and New Testaments was completed and recognised centuries before the Roman Catholic church came into existence. Rather than giving us the Bible Rome has sought to weaken it, first by elevating the authority of tradition to the level of scripture; and secondly, by adding to the Old Testament some of the uninspired books of the Apocrypha.

2. *Interpretation.* Since the church has not given us the Bible, or the 'canon of scripture,' the Holy Spirit alone has the right to interpret scripture. This right is exercised through the Word: the New Testament interpreting the Old, and the New revealing itself; scripture is the key to scripture. The church has no arbitrary authority in the matter, but if she is faithful, will follow the teaching of the Holy Spirit, both in interpretation and revelation.

Q. Why does the Church of Christ not permit women preachers?

A. It is not because of some arbitrary authority of the church, that women are not permitted publicly to preach or teach, but because the Word of God forbids it. The New Testament is emphatic on this point. 1 Cor. 14: 34-35 says, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.' The word 'silence,' used here, is the Greek word *sigao*, which literally means to 'hold one's peace' (see verse 30, where the same word is used). The same silence was required of the man in the congregation (see verses 28 and 30), where the reason is given. The silence imposed on women does not forbid them singing at the appropriate time, but, as Paul makes clear, is in relation to public teaching, or anything that would involve the taking of leadership in a mixed congregation.

The same prohibition is seen in 1 Tim. 2:9-15. After showing that the attitude of women should be one of modesty in all things, Paul says, 'Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.' Here the Greek word for 'silence,' is *hesuchia*, meaning 'quietness' (see R.V.). The command not to teach is qualified by the provision that women are not to teach when this involves usurping authority over men. In other cases, they are not only permitted to teach, but are under an obligation to do so (see Tit. 2:3-4).

Some attempt to set aside the force of this by claiming that these were but temporary commands, according to the custom of the times. But Paul has made it very clear in both passages, that the prohibition is abiding. In 1 Cor. 14:34 Paul gives the reason for the command: '. . . but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.' The law to which Paul refers is that which has governed the relationship of the sexes since the Fall: '. . . thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.' (Gen. 3:16). For the Christian, the order must be: Christ, man, woman (see 1 Cor. 11:3). In the home the same order must be preserved (see Eph. 5:22-24, 33).

The same ground of appeal is found in 1 Tim. 3:11-15. Paul gives two reasons why the woman is not to usurp authority over the man. The first is, 'For Adam was first formed then Eve': that is, that woman was created after man, from man, and for man' (see Gen. 2:20-23; 1 Cor. 11:8-9). The second is, 'And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.' As these reasons have to do with abiding historical facts that cannot be changed by custom, so too must the Divine law of the subjection of women be permanent and abiding. Therefore, that part of the law which requires that in the church women should continue to observe that position, and not usurp the authority of men by public teaching or leadership, must also be abiding, unaffected and unchanged by custom. Woman may sometimes be man's intellectual superior, and very often his moral superior, but in matters of authority and government, God has made her subordinate to man.

Two other incidental proofs of this point may be advanced. Firstly, God has made it impossible for women rightfully to exercise governmental authority in the church, by ensuring that the qualifications laid down for an elder or bishop cannot be fulfilled by women (see 1 Tim. 3:1-9; Tit. 1:6-9 and note the masculine gender used throughout). Note also 1 Tim. 3:2 and Tit. 1:6. Secondly, the Greek word for evangelist is always found in the New Testament in the masculine gender, the word, *euaggelisties*. Indeed, it is never found in the feminine form, *euaggelistria*, in the first three centuries of Christian literature.

Let not the woman be discouraged however, for she has much to do in her own sphere (see 1 Tim. 2:15; 5:14; Tit. 2:4-5). Indeed, she has the greatest responsibility of all, for God has entrusted her with the teaching of potential teachers while they are still in the formative age of character (see 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15). Let the sexes not compete with each other, but doing the work that God has appointed them, find, as He intended, completeness in each other.

A Christian

HERE goes a man with a purpose. 'A purpose for what?' you may cry.

'A purpose to live? A purpose to love? A purpose to kill? Or to die?' A purpose, I'll tell you, to live above all; a purpose to love good behaviour; A purpose to kill only devils within, and to die at the will of my Saviour.

Expediency in Worship and Service

[An article under this title by Alexander Brown, was reprinted in the S.S. of October, 1947. We have been asked to republish its concluding words, applying as they do to a topic of intense interest to the churches at the moment.—ED.]

THE consideration of an objection will bring this paper to a close . . . It has been charged against us as an inconsistency, that we profess to speak where the Scriptures speak, and to be silent where they are silent and that at the same time, we have Sunday Schools and other things which are not named in Scripture. And it has been urged that we should either give up Sunday Schools and everything not mentioned in Scripture, or give up our plea.

The charge has barely as much plausibility as makes it respectable. What then is meant by speaking where the Scriptures speak, and being silent where they are silent? Does it mean that because the Scriptures do not mention Sunday Schools, annual meetings, evangelist committees, balance sheets, *Ecclesiastical Observers*, baptisteries, etc., that we should never have any of these nor have them so much as named among us? . . . Where the Scriptures are silent we are silent does not mean, never was intended to mean, and, with any justice to language and common sense, never can be made to mean that we are not to use any word in religion until we find chapter and verse for it.

Such a narrow, cramped, and unnatural meaning of words, such a shrivelling of their value is enough to make us at least pray to be preserved from the 'narrow mindedness' which the objectors exemplify in themselves, while they groundlessly charge it against others . . . To speak where the Scriptures speak, and to be silent where they are silent may be explained thus: principles, doctrines, necessary parts of Christianity are in view, and not ways and means to the outcarrying of the principles, doctrines or constituent parts. God has given us great principles, important doctrines, parts that cannot be dispensed with without marring Christianity.

What Scripture discloses of these we fearlessly and adoringly utter. But about any thing and everything insisted upon by man as part and parcel of Christianity of which the Scriptures do not speak: we are resolutely silent, unless, indeed, we open our mouths to expose the lack of foundation. Scripture speech, giving commands and examples, involves the employment of means to carry out the commands, and to copy the examples. Since God has given us His soul-saving Gospel, and instructed us that it is our business to spread it everywhere, that Gospel and the general nature of the trust placed in our hands inspire us to use every possible expedient: Sunday schools, open-air meetings, and mission work of every conceivable kind; and yet, the sacredness of the Gospel deters us from adding a single thought to its unapproachable perfection. We open our mouths in boldness to declare the Gospel anywhere, among the young or the old, and we pledge ourselves to adopt any means, and to employ any words that will lodge the Gospel in its purity in the minds and hearts of our hearers. But we close our mouths with reverence as we view the perfection of the Gospel and we dare not add a syllable to its matchless completeness.

May we so know and feel the worthiness of Him whom we serve and adore, and may we so intelligently appreciate the calling to which we have been called, that every power of mind and body of every one of us may be laid on God's altar and consecrated to His service, and may we thereby discover and adopt such expedients as shall have our Father's and our Saviour's richest blessing, and result in pure and abundant success.

ALEXANDER BROWN.

Notes on my Life. XII.

By WALTER CROSTHWAITE

Training for Service

I DON'T know why brethren regarded me as being qualified for training young brethren for our Master's service. I had little training. As before stated, I got very little education at an ordinary day school. I had one correspondence course with Bro. Alexander Brown, and two or three with Bro. Lancelot Oliver. These were a great help to me in showing me how to study the Bible. The education a preacher needs is not such as is given in most Theological Colleges, but in knowledge of the Word of God. I tried to teach the young men who came for training how rightly to divide the Word of Truth, and how to proclaim it.

This work began in Scotland, Albert Winstanley, of Hindley, being the first student. He was with us for five months, beginning in October, 1938. Bro. Frank Worgan, also of Hindley, came to us in Scotland in April 1941, and remained three months. After our removal to Ulverston Tom Kemp, another member of the Church at Hindley, came in May 1946, and spent three months with us. Andrew Gardiner, a member of a well-known family in the Slamannan District, was with us during the same period as Bro. Kemp. In April 1946 David Dougall, of the Church at Wallacestone, Stirlingshire, came for a three months' period.

During 1948 G. Smith, of Derby, and E. Cole spent short periods with us. Will Hurcombe came in February 1949, and A. Allan, in April of the same year. Seven of these brethren have done full-time evangelistic work, and four of them are still so engaged. Most of them are well known for faithful services rendered to the Churches.

During their period of training they gave much acceptable and appreciated help to the Church in Ulverston, and have since laboured with many Churches and districts, and most of those not now engaged in full-time work are doing much to help the Churches where they are located. I taught them to test all things by the Scriptures, firmly believing that we have no other reliable standard, and that when we go beyond them we are left without chart or compass to drift, as so many have done, to spiritual and eternal ruin.

I also ran correspondence courses of study on 'The Fundamentals' as contained in Hebrews 1:1-3; 'The Work of the Holy Spirit,' and 'The Church that Christ built.' A great number took these courses, and many expressed gratitude for help received.

Editor of 'The Scripture Standard'

At the beginning of November 1934, Bro. W. M. Kempster, who for fourteen years had been editor of the *Bible Advocate* (which stood for the original position and plea of Churches of Christ), intimated that publication of that magazine would cease at the end of that year. On November 3rd of the same year I was at the anniversary social of the East Ardsley Church, and was quietly taking tea at the second sitting, when a brother came and said: 'You are wanted in the ante-room; they are discussing the starting of a new magazine.' I said: 'Well, I don't want to have anything to do with it.' Other brethren came, and at their urgent request I joined those in the ante-room. A letter was read from our highly esteemed and still much revered Bro. John Scoullar, suggesting that they persuade me to be editor of the new magazine. I have had some shocks and surprises in

my life, but this was one of the greatest. Being editor of a magazine had never once entered my mind.

However it was agreed that four of us should meet on the Monday to try to settle the matter. The result was that with much reluctance I decided to try my hand at editorial work. As I was due at Blackpool for anniversary meetings that week-end it was agreed that I should talk matters over with Bro. A. L. Frith, and get his co-operation in our new venture. He wholeheartedly agreed to do his best. One day we sat at the back of Bro. Frith's shop in Fleetwood to make our plans. For nearly twenty years he proved a faithful and loyal colleague. Much, very much, of the success of 'The Scripture Standard' is due to his energy, and splendid organising ability. Most of his work was done behind the scenes, but what such workers have accomplished will be revealed and rewarded in that day when the Lord shall be the Judge.

In the first number of *The Scripture Standard*, January 1935, we said: 'In two senses the Scriptures are a standard: as a fixed rule or model, and as an ensign of war. We shall endeavour to keep these two meanings in view, seeking to test all things by the Scriptures of Truth, and making them the God-given banner to be displayed as the rallying ground for those who desire to 'fight the good fight of the faith.' We hope to be the fearless foes of all evil and error; these, and not persons, will be the object of attack. We shall use 'the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God for defence and attack, believing as David said of the sword of Goliath, "There is none like it."'

For twenty and a half years we did our best to keep to our original intention. We have had the support of many loyal brethren, of long standing in the Churches. The appreciation and encouragement received from these made the criticisms of others seem small pinpricks. Many who were towers of strength to the magazine have passed on. We thank God for them, and pray for grace to hold fast the faith to the end, as they did. Our warmest wishes and earnest prayers are for the future success of 'The Scripture Standard,' and the cause for which it stands.

Here these 'Notes on my Life' may well end. As I write this I am fast approaching the eighty-third anniversary of my birth. As I look back and think of the strenuous years spent in evangelistic work (up to date I have delivered about 15,000 addresses) then in addition to all this the training and editorial work, with much sickness at home, and household duties to attend to, I marvel at how it was all got through, and offer sincere and grateful thanks to God for health and strength so freely given to accomplish these tasks. I am fully conscious of many failings, and of much that might have been better done. But the final verdict on our character and conduct is not given down here, but will be given by the righteous Judge, Who 'seeth not as man seeth.' If only through His infinite grace and mercy, and His compassionate pardon of my failings, I can hear from His lips, 'Well done,' I shall be more than satisfied.

[Concluded]

Praying to the Saints

'WHEN ye pray say, Our Father,' not 'Peter,' 'John,' or 'Mary.' Our Lord told of a certain rich man who, when he died and went to Hades, addressed a prayer to a saint. Dr. Will Houghton, of Moody Bible Institute, made this keen comment: 'This is the only prayer in the Bible addressed to a saint, and it wasn't answered!'

CORRESPONDENCE

CONFERENCES AND COMMITTEES

Dear Bro. Editor,

After reading the replies to my letter in July issue, one thing struck me very forcibly. It was the complete absence of appeal to the New Testament. Not one passage of Scripture was quoted in support of their assertions. In view of the emphasis on the unscripturalness of Conferences and Committees one would naturally expect many passages condemning them. The brethren have failed to produce one. They have, however, made great play with my admission that they are unscriptural. Apparently they do not realise that the unscriptural can be pro-scriptural.

All through their replies they are doing what they charged against me; "begging the question." I did not beg; I stated facts and drew the logical and necessary inference from them. That the Committee represents the Conference, and the Conference represents those who have supported morally and financially, from the beginning. The last eight words are represented by "etc.," in Bro. Winstanley's reply. Those words qualify my statement. I would not presume that the Conference and Committee represent those who neither support nor agree.

Bro. Channing goes further than Bro. Winstanley and tries to prove Conferences and Committee are *anti-scriptural*. Neither Conference nor Committee are guilty of any of the evils he mentions. On the contrary they have supplied that which has been lacking on the part of the Churches. Bro. Channing goes too far. No one can have it both ways. He acknowledges the good work they have accomplished. The Master told His critics, "Either call the tree good and its fruit good, or call the tree evil and its fruit evil." (Matt. 12 : 33).

He says the Conference and Committee are *anti-scriptural*. It is therefore evil, so its fruits are evil. I am sure Bro. Channing does not mean that. All the same, that is the logical conclusion of what he has asserted. Then those brethren who have trained under its auspices by Bro. Crosthwaite are—*What?*

Brethren who object to the Committee remind one of the disciples who went to Jesus and said, "Master we saw one cast-

ing out devils in thy name and we forbade him because he followeth not us. Jesus rebuked them, saying, Forbid him not; there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." (Mk. 9 : 38; Lk. 9 : 49).

Would they dissolve the British and Foreign Bible Society, or the Bible League, or any other organisations seeking to preserve and defend the God-given Book and extend its influence?

The Holy Spirit has revealed all necessary Truth concerning the salvation of sinners. He has given all that is necessary for the growth in grace and knowledge of the believer. He has made known all that is necessary for the life and government of the Church, but He has given only one instruction regarding evangelisation, *i.e.*: "GO and preach the Gospel." The how, when and where are left to us, and, as I have already said, it is no coincidence. He who knows the end from the beginning, knew also that there would be many Churches who could not train and send out evangelists.

What then are the alternatives?

(1) A group of churches working together with a committee directing the work of evangelists.

(2) The Conference and its Committee remain.

(3) The evangelist who goes out in faith to preach the Gospel. He is the only scriptural evangelist.

Now, will these brethren produce from the New Testament the evidences for Churches sending out evangelists? And since they believe that which is unscriptural to be unlawful, will they go all out and condemn the unscriptural practices of the Churches?

Finally, I will concede another point: the Church is the most appropriate organisation for evangelism . . . IF . . . the oversight is capable of training brethren, and the Church is able to support them. Even that concession does not give the Church a monopoly of evangelisation.

SLATER WILSON.

Dear Brother Editor,

All that Brethren Winstanley and Channing have written can be used with equal force against Sunday Schools, Bible Schools, and publishing magazines, etc.

The General Evangelist Committee was formed to help weak Churches, and to break up new ground, and so long as it kept to that, excellent work was done. It was the amalgamation, in 1917, with American Churches in Britain that wrecked this work. They proved the little leaven that leavened the whole lump. It was they who pleaded for the establishment of a Theological College.

Bro. Winstanley says the existence of the Committee is a cause of division. It is only so to those who have been taught by Americans to object to it. There was no division in our ranks until certain brethren visited America and came back full of this "local assembly only" idea.

Bro. Winstanley says, "With one exception, all the full-time workers in Britain are serving without recourse to such a body"—the Committee. Is not that because they have chosen. and seemingly prefer, to be supported by Americans, rather than by British Brethren? Is it not a fact that some who are opposing what they call an unscriptural Committee, are supported by those who permit the unimmersed to break bread, take money from non-members, have "ministers," and run Theological Colleges?

There are others of us, besides them, who are standing for "principles." So long as God permits me to remain here I shall do all in my power to prevent the Churches in Britain from being Americanised.

WALTER CROSTHWAITE.

Dear Bro. Melling,

To examine the position and practice of Churches of our Lord is a healthy sign, and every Christian should ask our God and Father for needed help to make all necessary adjustments that the New Testament is actually in practice: in worship and teaching.

Questions are asked: (1) 'Where can "local assembly" be found in the New Testament? An "assembly (*ekklesia*) cannot exist on earth without its locality, so that to seek in the Bible for "local assembly" is useless. Added to them (Act. 2:47 R.V.) is in Greek "upon the same [spot] or together.'

(2) 'Oversee evangelists.' Are evangelists satisfactory? Should men be paid and directed to evangelise? Do such paid workers replace or complement indi-

vidual saints advertising the Christ? If it is allowable to employ evangelists, the employers should direct and control in addition to paying them.

(3) 'Does the assembly represent the Churches?' All assemblies of the Saviour should stand in the law of the Lord and contend for the gospel.

(4) Since the Church is the 'light of' and must hold out the light to the world, it is responsible to Christ and also to the world.

(5) 'Acts of Apostles' shows evangelistic work in operation. I am grieved to notice ignorance on this point.

(6) If building, renting or using meeting houses, having Sunday schools, printing hymn books, magazines, etc., is wrong, these should be dispensed with. However, in discussing 'conferences and committees,' it is preferable, until this question is settled, to keep strictly to one question. Big meetings and numbers appeal to the flesh and fill the house, but it is very questionable if they advance the reign of our Lord and King. Conferences and committees have not always left an untarnished record. Give them a wide berth and cling to the Rock of Ages.

W. H. CUMMINS.

Dear Editor,

According to his letter in July issue, Bro. S. Wilson assumes that the Lord tells us to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel" without giving instructions for the organisation of the Church. Our brother's copy of the New Testament must finish at John's Gospel.

It was to the apostles that the Lord gave the great commission (not to us, notice; they were His sole committee) and the apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, established the Church consisting of many local manifestations of the Lord's Body, each to be overseen by elders and served by deacons. Each of these congregations, assemblies or churches became in its own area the Lord's evangelistic agency, responsible to no one but the Lord, guided only by the inspired Word, and authorised to undertake any legitimate Gospel endeavour without waiting for the sanction of any synod, conference or committee.

The Epistles mainly guide churches in the Lord's work and Acts of Apostles affords valuable examples. Let us not say

that the Lord has given no instruction in this vital work.

This may also serve to answer Bro. Crosthwaite's 3rd, 4th and 6th questions in August number. The rest are remarkably irrelevant but will be answered in due course.

R. A. HILL.

Dear Bro. Editor,

The question of evangelists in days of old scarcely troubled the Churches as to how they were chosen, or where they were to labour, or find the finance. Everything went very smoothly. The Gospel was preached, converts were made and the Churches blessed. Nobody questioned its scripturalness or authority.

A scriptural answer for evangelism may be found in Acts 6:1-7: Stephen had the spirit of God. That is essential and a first qualification for all preachers and teachers. He was not chosen from a Church or by a Church, but from the multitude of disciples. What happened? 16,000 members proved the ability of our old way of evangelism, and no one ever thought to question the means used, as they were all well grounded in the truth and in the fundamental principles of the Gospel. They taught as they read and studied, they were sincere and in earnest, they were logical, capable of convincing, convicting, and converting sinners.

I care not who decides to choose our evangelists, whether individual Churches or representatives of Churches, so long as we find the right men with the true spirit and zeal for preaching the gospel. 'Go ye into all the world' is sufficient authority. I wonder how many Churches are large enough and able to find a

qualified man among their number, and capable of supporting same. Very few. That is a good reason and a justification for trying to find ways and means from a number of Churches. Surely there is nothing unscriptural about that. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty' says Paul, again, 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' Neither in one man nor in one Church is all wisdom. 'In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.' 'There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.'

WILLIAM FERGUSON.

[The above letter has been curtailed, but the relevant portions have been printed.—Ed.]

THE NEW HYMN BOOK

Arrangements are now almost complete for setting the book in type. A few final details are to be settled, which prevents an announcement of prices being made. But churches are asked to be prepared to redeem their promises made of financial help and to consider the number of copies to order.

When final arrangements have been made and prices fixed, the churches will be circularised, as well as notice being given through the 'S.S.'

The book will comprise 435 hymns, printed in clear type on good paper, stoutly bound in black or blue cloth, as desired. A de-luxe edition on India paper, bound in good quality leather will be available, and will make beautiful presentation copies.

'Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones'

(Matt. 18:6).

THERE are no idle words where children are,
Things spoken in their hearing carry far.
Producing fruit of evil or of good
To our great future human brotherhood.

The word dropped lightly from our careless lips
Into the fertile child mind seeps and drips
And intertwines with thought and impulse so
It may decide the path some souls shall go.

So speak not thoughtlessly when they are by:
Your words fall not on sterile soil nor dry;
Thoughts sown in plastic minds are carried far;
There are no idle words where children are.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sep. 2.—Jonah 3.	Acts 28 : 1-16.
" 9.—Jonah 4.	Acts 28 : 17-31.
" 16.—Psalm 90.	James 1.
" 23.—Lev. 19 : 1-29.	James 2 : 1-13.
" 30.—Gen. 22 : 1-19.	James 2 : 14-26.

JOURNEY'S END

We have noted again and again Paul's ambition to get to Rome, and we conjecture his reason for it as being two-fold at least. As a preacher of the gospel he desired to preach to as many as possible, and therefore the centres of population and civilisation would attract. Then he was acquainted with the church in Rome, had written them a letter, and hoped to be useful to them in a way which only an apostle could—that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift' (Rom. 1 : 11).

The voyage from Caesarea had begun probably in late September; the wreck would be about the middle of October and the stay in the island of Melita (Malta) was for three months (Acts 28 : 11). Paul thus would get to Rome quite early in February. His time in the island had been very profitable in both spiritual and material aspects. He was able to manifest the power of God and the love of Christ among those who so kindly treated him and his companions in travel. The Lord certainly blessed him and every need was supplied. The rest of the journey was without untoward happenings, and was, so to speak, lit up by the love of the brethren, who at Puteoli desired Paul to tarry with them seven days—to include a Lord's Day doubtless—and from Rome came to meet him forty miles to Appii Forum. We can well imagine the feeling of thankfulness and encouragement, filling the apostle's heart, through this evidence of concern and welcome.

It would seem that the two years mentioned by Luke in this rather abrupt end to his history, either included or preceded the trial. This trial would be at the convenience of the Emperor, and subject to the appearance from Judaea of Paul's accusers. The time was indeed well spent as pictured in the two last verses of the book. The prisoner was limited severely by physical restraint, being chained to a soldier, but the word

of God was not bound. He was able to use the Spirit's sword with most noble effect. We can assume with little doubt that Paul's letters to Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians and Philipians were written during this period, and from them gather much information upon Paul's thoughts and character. We recognise that through him God speaks to us and gives us guidance upon the application of His will to our own lives. The world would be infinitely the poorer, did we not have these holy influences, which form the warp and woof of Paul's life and are now interwoven with our own if we are faithful.

Concluding our study of the ACTS, we may well glance back over its story to place the epistles of the New Testament in their historical sequence. Some of our conclusions might be subject to correction but there is general agreement on most of them. We will confine ourselves first to the letters of the apostle Paul.

(1) The first letter to the Thessalonians was written quite early in his stay at Corinth (see Acts 18 : 1-18). His work there lasted 18 months, and

(2) The second letter to the Thessalonians was written later in the same period. These facts are borne out by the contents of the letters.

(3) The first letter to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus during his long sojourn there of over two years as recorded in Acts 19 and 20 (verse 1).

(4) The second letter to Corinth must have been written during his journeying in Macedonia on his way to Greece, and thence to Jerusalem (see Acts 20 : 1-3). His intention to sail from Corinth to Jerusalem was changed on account of a plot against him, and he went again into Macedonia and via Troas and Miletus.

(5) Probably while at Corinth on this last occasion he wrote to the Galatians whom he must have visited on his way through the 'upper country' (1 : 1).

(6) The letter to the Romans was also written about the same time and from Corinth. Cenchrea is the port of Corinth (See Rom. 16 : 1, 2 and 23, with 1 Cor. 1 : 14 and Acts 19 : 29; 20 : 4).

It is generally supposed that the letter of James comes earliest of the other writings, possibly before the council at Jerusalem—Acts 15 : 13. Letters from Peter, John and Jude are normally assigned to a date after the conclusion of Acts.

We have already assumed that four epistles were written during the two years of Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, but those to Timothy and Titus belong to a later date. The most likely conclusion is that Paul was released and

was able to undertake such considerable journeys as are indicated in I Tim. 1 : 3 (Ephesus and Macedonia), Titus 1 : 5 (Crete), II Tim 4 : 20 (Miletus), Titus 3 : 12 (Nicopolis). Then there is finally his second imprisonment in Rome (II Tim. 1 : 16 and 17). Many think he was able also to visit Spain (Rom. 15 : 24), and Gaul, but the evidence is not very reliable. There is one thing we can be certain of. Paul's life was given entirely to the service of His Saviour. He had learnt in 'whatsoever state I am, therein to be content.' For him there could be no satisfaction in life unless it was lived for Christ.

So the end of the journey we have been considering was not the end of Paul's life. He had still much more to do and to suffer, that the longing of his heart might be fulfilled to 'know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.' These same things he presses upon each of us also, praying that the very ambition of his great soul might be ours too . . . to forget the things which are behind, and press towards the goal, 'the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' (Phil. 1 : 21; 3 : 8-16).

We observe that Paul's first effort in Rome was with his own countrymen, in accordance with his habit in every place, and his love for them (Rom. 10 : 1). The result was the inevitable division among them, which his closing words anticipated by solemn warning of consequences of rejection. They did at least give him a hearing, and it was not a matter of a 30 minutes sermon, but earnest reasoning from the scriptures from morning till night. There was no compromise about the Gentiles. Whatever their prejudices it was clear that 'this salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles.' Perhaps this rather than any other points brought hatred and persecution, and finally contributed to his martyrdom, which took place in Rome about 68 A.D., according to fairly reliable tradition.

The closing verses of the second letter to Timothy give us the final picture. The servant of Christ views the end of his earthly journey, expresses his readiness for it, his satisfaction that the conflict is now to conclude, and that assurance of the reward for faithfulness which includes all the victors, not himself only (II Tim. 4 : 6-8).

Urgent requests, exact instructions are mingled with sorrowful admissions and thankful praise. We have the unfaithfulness of Demas, the enmity of the copper-smith, the departure of some on missions, and the desertion of some from cowardice. Parchments of special usefulness, a cloak, and a sick helper have been left behind. Timothy and Mark are urgently wanted. Faithful friends are remembered (Rom. 16 : 4; II Tim. 1 : 16-

18). What vivid recollections of the past are here epitomised! Finally his faith in the ever faithful one—'The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto His heavenly kingdom: To whom be the glory . . .'

Jesus said, 'That they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven' (Matt. 5 : 16). Shall we then glorify God for His work in and through this so great servant of His, and pray that we may be counted worthy to join him in heaven? R. B. SCOTT.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

East Kirkby.—The Church rejoices in reporting another soul brought into the Kingdom of our Lord. On Lord's Day, July 22nd, we heard the good confession made by Janice, daughter of Bro. and Sis. Frank Longden. She was buried with her Lord in baptism the same hour. We thank God for the power of His word and pray that our dear young sister may be kept ever steadfast in the faith.

TOM WOODHOUSE.

Edinburgh.—Our free thirty-lesson Correspondence Course on the Bible has enrolled about seventy. Our Sunday morning School is scheduled to begin September 2nd, at Hyvot's Bank School. We plan to continue to worship in the Protestant Institute Hall during weekdays. Evening classes are to begin October 1st. Several from England and Scotland attended European lectures at Frankfurt. Thirteen nations were represented.

CLYDE PITT FINDLAY.

Ince.—The Church wishes to inform the brethren that no further action is being taken, for the time being, with regard to the proposed whole-time evangelistic work of Bro. Philip Partington, as insufficient support was guaranteed in response to their recent appeal.

Kentish Town.—We record with joy the baptism of Mrs. Annie Faint on Wednesday, July 25th. In this act of humble obedience lies much blessing for herself and the Church. She has a burden of bodily weakness to bear.

Peterhead.—With joy and gratitude to our Heavenly Father we record the addition of another two to our number. In the home of Bro. Summers, where a number of brethren and friends had gathered together to enjoy a time of hymn singing, Betty Buchan expressed her desire to follow the Lord. She was immersed on 11th July by Bro. David Dougall, who also preached the gospel. When Bro. Dougall gave the invitation

to friends present, we had the joy of seeing Lorna Geddes come forward and confess her Lord in word and action by immersion into His name. We give praise to God for His goodness and trust our growing sisters will be loyal and true in His service.

On Saturday, 14th July, together with the Church at Buckie, we held our annual rally in the Masonic Hall. There were almost 200 present including many friends from Peterhead, and representations from Albert Street and Scholes, Wigan, Hindley, Haddington, Newtongrange, Tranent and Wallacestone Churches. Our guest speakers were to have been Bro. Clyde P. Findlay from Houston, Texas, and Bro. Steele, from Tranent. But Bro. Findlay, through illness, was unable to be with us. Bro. Dougall was a willing substitute. After a few words of welcome and exhortation by the chairman, Bro. Sam Hunter sang a hymn of praise and read the Scripture lesson from John 3:1-17. Bro. Dougall then spoke on 'Obedience,' stressing its importance in the affairs of life and in the eyes of God. He showed we could only be justified by faith through obedience to the faith. After Sis. Slessor sang a hymn of invitation, Bro. W. Steele gave a clear scriptural interpretation of Acts 13:48, denouncing the teaching of false teachers. In closing he made a strong appeal to the many friends present. After the meeting tea was served by the sisters.

We take this opportunity of thanking all who helped to make this rally a success, and all who have so willingly helped us in the ministry of the Word during the month of July. A. STRACHAN.

Woodstock, Capetown.—We are glad to sound out some very interesting news. On 21st July a special evening of hymns, anthems, talks and testimonies was convened by our young people. There were 114 present, including brethren from Churches in the peninsula. We were convinced that some of the people in the meeting were convicted of the truth, but did not make their decision.

Of late during my travels I have been able to visit a new work, started by a Bro. Lotters at Simonstown, twenty-three miles from here. Though only the brother and his family and one other baptised believer, there are great prospects of this work growing, because Bro. Lotters holds a permit which grants him the right to preach the gospel, within a radius of three miles from the meeting-place, amongst natives, coloureds and Europeans.

Then there is an area about seven miles from Woodstock, Bridge Town, where some of your brethren live, and whose homes are opened for us to proclaim Christ amongst unbelievers. It is a large area, consisting of more than 300 houses surrounded by vacant ground

with scope to establish a permanent work, should God permit.

[Bro. Hartle also reports that he has been able to organise the feeding of poor under-nourished children, with the help of one or two volunteers. He hopes by this Christlike work not only to see the Bible School grow but to win his helpers into the Church. Since he took up full-time work in the gospel Bro. H. has travelled much and has been able to reach a wide circle with the gospel.—Ed.]

OBITUARY

Buckie.—With great sorrow we record the passing away of another faithful saint, Bro. George Sargent, well known to many, who passed away on July 13th at the age of seventy-five. Immersed fifty-one years ago, our brother has been loyal to the witness of Churches of Christ, and deplored any departure from the New Testament. Many times he was heard to say, 'Brethren, let us go back to Jerusalem.' He made the Word of God his constant companion and was a great worker in the Church. He was preceptor and Sunday School superintendent for many years.

We who knew him shall miss his warm-hearted love and fellowship, but we know that he is now free from pain and is rejoicing with those who stand before the throne of God, where 'they shall neither hunger nor thirst any more. For the Lamb shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.' Our sympathy goes out to his widow and we commend her in her sorrow to the care of our heavenly Father, 'until the day dawns and the shadows flee away.'

The funeral took place on July 18th, conducted by Bro. Sam Hunter, assisted by Bros. W. G. Reid and J. Geddes.

J. GEDDES.

East Ardsley.—We regret the passing of our Sister Mrs. Ash, on July 6th, after a long and painful illness. She had been able to meet her brethren at the Lord's Table only on rare occasions, but those were times of uplift and spiritual joy to her.

During her twenty years' association with the church she was a quiet but ardent worker, helping many with words of cheer and encouragement. Previous to her joining the Church of Christ she had been a Methodist for the major portion of her life. When she saw the light more plainly she did not hesitate in fully obeying the Lord's commands.

Bro. W. Wintersgill conducted the funeral, both in the meeting-room and at the graveside.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Christianity, it is true, does not solve all puzzles. It does not pretend to find an answer to every question. If it did, that very characteristic would prove it to be of human origin. That it shades off into mystery at a thousand points; that it tests us by difficulties; that it requires us to walk by faith, and to deal with forces half known, and less than half comprehended, shows its agreement with the general scheme of human life. These conditions of incomplete knowledge are part of our discipline.

A world in which everything was known, that had not a mystery that challenged our wonder, or a discovery to tax our intelligence, would leave us with half the motives for effort slain. But even those who remain unconvinced of the truth of historic Christianity must admit that it answers all the ends of a true religion. It sweetens life; it creates sains; it inspires missionaries; it brings gifts of divine peace to dying hours. It is an energy lifting the whole race up to new heights of goodness. It is a barrier to all forces which would destroy society.

W. H. FITCHETT.

COMING EVENTS

Hindley: Saturday, September 15th to Lord's Day, 23rd: Mission meetings every night 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Bro. A. E. Winstanley. Please join us in prayer for the success of this effort.

Loughborough, Oxford Street: 115th Anniversary Rally (D.V.), 22nd and 23rd September. Saturday: Tea 4.30, meeting 6.15, to be addressed by Bro. H. Baines

(Morley) and Bro. T. Woodhouse (East Kirkby). Chairman: Bro. Peter Hill.

Lord's Day services will be addressed by Bro. Baines.

We extend a warm invitation to all.

Cleveleys: We hope to have the services of Bro. W. Crosthwaite on Saturday and Lord's Day, September 22nd and 23rd (D.V.). On Saturday, at 6.30, by special request, Bro. Crosthwaite will speak on the subject, 'Where is the Church that Christ built?' Lord's Day: Breaking of bread 10.30; evening meeting 6.30. In the Co-operative Hall, Beach Road.

We should welcome the support of brethren, especially at the Saturday meeting. Refreshments will be served at the close.

Some brethren have difficulty in finding the hall. If travelling from Blackpool, get off the tram at West Drive, the **first stop** out of Cleveleys—a very short run. Go over the main road by the Congregational Chapel, then first turn right. The next stop is Beach Road. If you get off here, go straight over the main road into Beach Road, then first turn left.

Secretary: Eric Winter, 77 Kelvin Road, Norbreck, Blackpool.

CHANGE OF SECRETARY

Ince (Wigan): Bro. Philip Partington, 636 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan. Please also note change of Bro. Partington's address.

BIRTH

To Alan and Esther Tranter (née Black), Tanganyika, a daughter, Judith Katherine, on July 25th.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly. Prices: Home, one copy 7/6; two copies 13/6; three copies 19/6, post free. U.S.A., one dollar per copy. Canada, Africa, Australia, New Zealand: One copy 7/-; two 13/-; three 19/6. All orders and payments to the Treasurer: PAUL JONES, 122 Heathfield Road, Birmingham 19.

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