

# The Scripture Standard

'What Saith the Scripture.' (Rom. iv. 3.)

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## What do 'Churches of Christ' Believe?

OUTSIDERS who read the statements of those who claim to speak for the Churches, and who are credited with making these Churches better known, and securing for them a place in the religious world, must be puzzled to know where we really stand.

In the Centenary number of the *Christian Advocate*, on front page, under title, 'The Charter of the Church,' are an open Bible and, below, the maxim, 'Where the Bible speaks we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent.' On the same page, we read: 'Accepting the Bible as the Word of God, and denying the right of any to add to or to take from that revelation, our people have ever sought to apply to all human teaching the accepted standard of Holy Scripture.'

But on page 153 of the same number, Principal Robinson says, 'In our use of the Bible our position has never been that of Protestantism (*sola Scriptura*), i.e., the Scriptures only. Both the above statements cannot be true, and who that really knows the history of the Restoration Movement can doubt which is the false one?'

In our first editorial (Jan. 1935), we wrote: 'We hope to be the fearless foes of all evil and error: these and not persons will be the object of our attack.' That is still our policy, and we shall continue to attack not persons, but all teaching that undermines the faith of the Gospel. The time for plain speaking is long overdue. Our noble pioneers would have

fought to the death statements that are now allowed to pass unchallenged. The Glasgow *Evening Citizen* of July 31st, the eve of the recent Annual Conference, published an article by Principal Robinson, in which he claims that Churches of Christ are 'a bridge between Protestantism and Catholicism.' (Judging by statements and practices, some seem to be well over the bridge.) He says, Churches of Christ 'reject the doctrine of private interpretation of the Word of God. . . . They claim that great doctors and teachers of the whole Church (now unhappily divided) must be appealed to.' This is a contradiction of statements in official publications, and of all that pioneers and leaders ever wrote concerning the position and plea of the Churches of Christ. As Bro. John Anderson, in a letter to the *Evening Citizen* said, 'the statement may be what he (Principal Robinson) desires the Churches of Christ to be brought to, but it is far from being a fair statement of their true position.'

What is the true position? In *Position and Plea of Churches of Christ* issued by publishing committee of Churches, we read, 'Whilst many other religious bodies acknowledge the Bible as the 'supreme standard,' we acknowledge it as *our only standard*. To us the writings of 'The Fathers,' the creeds of Christendom, the fancies of poets, the dogmas of doctors of divinity, and the decisions of councils and conferences, are totally without value as authoritative documents, however interesting they

may be as curiosities of religious literature. *We have no lawgiver but the Son of God; and no law-book but the Word of God.*' In *The Faith and Practice of Certain Churches of Christ*, by Lancelot Oliver (an official publication), we read: 'We do not agree with the use of human authoritative creeds. The Bible furnishes an all-sufficient revelation of the Divine Will, and a perfect rule of faith and practice . . . . *We all claim the right of private judgment . . . .* and refuse to accept any interpretation of the Word of God such as that of a pope, a council, a synod, or conference as binding. We claim the right to read and understand the Bible for ourselves, and if in the course of study and enquiry we find certain things are not supported by the Bible, we follow our own judgment, and not that of any official, or human creed, or Church.'

Quotations could be almost indefinitely multiplied, but these are sufficient to show what was the undisputed position of the Churches up to twenty years ago.

In Principal Robinson's *Thesis*, published in *Bible Advocate* (official), July 16th, he said: 'I believe that Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proved thereby is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.' He also said that we are to find in the primitive Church, as constituted by Christ and His Apostles, a model for all time.'

The 'Model Trust Deed,' which was endorsed by the Annual Conference of 1936, states that the Scriptures 'contain the sole and sufficient rule of faith for the Church of Christ,' while a statement frequently appearing in the *Christian Advocate*, says the Churches accept 'the Bible as the Word of God and the one authority in matters of faith and practice.'

So it is a case of Principal Robinson versus all the official publications, and

even versus himself! While the Churches remained loyal to their original plea, and demanded a 'thus saith the Lord,' or an approved New Testament example for their practice, solid progress was made. But during the past twenty years teaching has been given and circulated which has tended to undermine that impregnable position, resulting in a sure decline, and the present deplorable stagnation.

The only hope for the Churches of Christ is to get back speedily to where they stood during the first century of their existence with its truly marvelous triumphs.

To that position we stand, and from it we are not prepared to move. We call upon all who still claim to hold the Scriptures to be the sole and only standard to cease giving their support to those who are denying their authority and all-sufficiency, and who would leave us with no standard. A determined stand must be made now if the Restoration Movement is to be saved, and your help is urgently needed.

EDITOR.

#### EDITOR'S ADDRESSES (D.V.)

Oct. 1-18—c/o 44 Lord Street, Hindley, Wigan, Lanes.

19-31—c/o 24 Newton Street, Ulverston, Lanes.

November—'Inglenook,' Clumber Street, East Kirkby, Notts.

It will save time and trouble if correspondents will please note the above.

### **Points.**

THE Holy Spirit never works without human co-operation.

A preacher must believe his beliefs.

Disaster comes by drifting, and drifting begins in compromise.

The Devil exhausted himself in the Garden of Eden. Falsehood and heresy are never new.

## *The New Birth.*

THE conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus (John iii.) took place during the closing days of the Jewish Age. The old Covenant was still in force—that is, the first Will which God gave for the Jews only. Jesus Himself honoured that Will as He lived under the old Covenant. He honoured it by observing it perfectly. At the same time He taught great principles to prepare the people for the New. His preaching was of the most revolutionary character, preparing people for the New Covenant and a Kingdom not of this world. Under the Old Covenant, people were members because born in a certain house and with certain blood in their veins; and by reason of a natural fleshly birth were members of the Jewish Covenant or Commonwealth. In view of the New Covenant, Jesus taught that they must be new-born.

In our study of the New Testament we should understand when the Old Covenant ceased to be authoritative and when the New began. Some think it began with the birth of Jesus, because Matthew begins his Gospel with the birth of Jesus. It began with the death of Jesus; not with His birth. The death of Jesus Christ marked the end of the one and the beginning of the other. So the Apostle Paul could say: 'But now once at the end of the age hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.' When Christ offered Himself a sacrifice, that was the end of the Jewish Age—of Old Testament times.

This conversation which Jesus had with Nicodemus stands as an eternal contradiction to the idea that the Old and the New are one and the same Covenant. If the Old and the New are identical, why did Jesus deny membership to a man who was a Master in Israel—of high position in the Jewish commonwealth. What Jesus said to Nicodemus swept the foundation from under his feet, and

left him outside the Kingdom of the New Covenant. 'You must be born again'—born anew.

His position and standing did not count for anything in the New.

It was a striking statement, and we want to examine the conversation between those two. 'There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came to Jesus by night.' We will not spend time to speculate why he came by night. We shall never ascertain, because nobody in the wide world knows. We know he did come by night; we shall never know why, and it is idle to speculate. He paid to the Master the Highest compliment possible. He said, 'We know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.' He not only spoke for himself; he spoke also for his fellow-rabbis. He said, 'We know.' They had the best reason in the world for knowing: 'No man can do these miracles . . . except God be with him.'

No man can truthfully say anything against Jesus and His claims. No wonder Nicodemus said, 'We know that thou art a teacher come from God.' That was a beautiful admission.

Jesus, however, paid no attention to that compliment, coming though it did from a master in Israel. He replied, 'Except ye be born again—born of water and of the spirit—you cannot enter the Kingdom of God. You must be born again.' That was a startling statement to the man. It took the foundation right from under him. By birth he had his membership in the Jewish church, and surely Jesus did not mean to say that he needed something more,

This same plea is made more authoritative to-day by many people, I want to speak in all kindness; but the idea that individuals become Church members by birth is wrong

and does much harm in the world: and the Churches are being filled with men who have never been born again. The world is simply full of this theory, and the words of the Master come ringing down the years, 'Ye must be born again.' If I speak earnestly it is because I believe the Master's statement that men must be born from above—born of the Spirit.

Many people build up a theory on these two expressions and neglect to quote other inspired statements on the same subject. Is it not fair and right to ascertain what the Holy Spirit says on the subject of the new birth, to gather together all that the Spirit has said? When we do so we find, 'born from above,' 'born anew,' 'born of the Spirit,' 'born again,' 'born of the will of God,' 'born of water and of the Spirit,' 'born of incorruptible seed.' Let all the truth be quoted. 'Born from above.' That emphasizes 'above'; but does it follow that God does all things for us, that we are wholly passive and helpless because it says, 'Born from above!' This idea is in the world. The Apostle James wrote, 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.' Even the bread we eat is from above. Does that statement show that man has no part in providing the food we eat? No, certainly not! If man has nothing to do in the matter of his salvation, how could God hold him responsible? Jesus said, 'Unless ye are born again you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.' If God does that for us, and we fail to be born again, is not God to blame? That teaching is as black as infidelity.

There is in man's salvation a divine side and a human side. When Jesus said, 'You must be born again,' He used a figurative expression to emphasize a great and important truth. The fact that it is a figure of speech does not necessarily involve the idea that that which it emphasizes is not real and true.

Jesus in connection with the great changes in heart and life and relation from sin and the service of the Evil

One to the service of God, called it by a figure of speech. So great is the change that He called it being made over again. 'Except a man is created anew, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.'

Now we go to the Apostle to learn what Jesus meant by this figure of speech. The Apostle Peter informs us, 'We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible: by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.' The Word of God is that by which we are born again. James' declaration agrees with this, 'of his own will begat He us by the word of truth.' The word of truth is that through which we are born again. Being born again of incorruptible seed is believing the Word of God. In i Cor. vi., the Apostle Paul, after naming that long dark list of evil things, said to the Corinthians, 'Such were some of you; but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.' Were these Corinthians born again? Certainly. No one was ever washed, sanctified and justified without being born again. In Chapter iv. 15, he wrote 'Though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.' You wonder how it was done? Acts xviii. 8, makes it plain. 'And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.' Were they born again? We have learned that they were. How was it accomplished? By hearing, believing, being baptized. What was the Gospel that Paul preached there: 'For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.' (xv. 3, 4.) 'I determined not to know anything among you but Jesus Christ, and Him

crucified.' (ii. 2.) They had believed this gospel and had obeyed it, being baptized. To hear, believe, and to obey is to be born again. I ask, 'If a man believes what Jesus says and does what He commands, is He saved?' 'Yes,' you reply. 'Is not that man born again?' 'Yes,' you say. Then by your own admission, that is the new birth. Jesus said, 'Go ye into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' A saved man is a man born again. That strips it of all its mystery.

'But,' you say, 'surely you don't mean that baptism is being born of water?' I mean that exactly. In Col. i. 18, we are told that 'Christ is the first born from the dead.' If the Apostle by a figure of speech could liken the resurrection to being born out of the grave, surely it is a beautiful and fitting illustrating of baptism and coming out of the water, to liken it to being born again. Jesus speaks of being baptized as being 'born out of the water.' The German translators render it thus '*aus dem zoasser*'—'out of the water.' To be born again is to be born out of the water; but you cannot be born of something that is smaller than yourself. You can't be born out of the water in a bowl. The reason why John was baptizing in Enon, was that there was much water there.

Now birth does not give life. Birth only puts us in a position to exercise the life we already have. We must first be begotten of the Spirit, then born out of the water. We are begotten of the Spirit when we believe what the Spirit says about the peerless Saviour of the world. If there is no life before birth there cannot be any life after it. We must first be begotten. That is the result of Gospel preaching and men believing it. We should try to say only what the Spirit says on the subject. 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten or born of God.' A good many teachers quote that passage to the exclusion of every-

thing else that is said on the subject in the Scriptures, to sustain their view that all that is necessary is to believe. Faith, and faith only. In chapter ii. of the same epistle (John) ver. 29: 'He that doeth righteousness is born of Him.' Righteousness means doing right—simply *doing* right. What God commands is right. When we do what the Lord commands we do right. But someone asks, 'Why is it necessary that man must be born again?' Because heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. We must be made ready for it or we should not be happy there. It is a most reasonable thing. Men must be born again in order to enter into the Kingdom of God and be happy there. This new birth gives us the highest possible relationship—sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. When born again we are born into the family of God, the Holy Spirit becomes our guest, and we are joined with all the redeemed who have gone over the river and those who still in this world look for the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

W. D. CAMPBELL.

### *From the Treasurer.*

Will readers please note this is the October issue, after this November, and after that a very busy month, with piles of correspondence, and endless jobs to do.

May I, therefore, implore you all to send me your gifts, renewal of subscriptions, changes of address, and other details as soon after reading this as possible.

It would help now, if our agents, where possible, would remit up to, say, the end of June, or better still, September. Thank you for what you intend to do in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A. L. FRITH

10 Poulton St.,  
Fleetwood.

Overseas readers please note my full address on page two of cover,

## *Buy a Sword.*

'PEACE on, earth' was the song of the angel heralds at Christ's birth, and truly the Gospel has ever spread peace in its train. It is, then, perhaps, difficult for us to reconcile the words of Jesus recorded in Luke xxii. 36, with the rest of His teaching. He there says, 'But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet; and he that hath none, let him sell his cloke and buy a sword.' (R.V.)

Jesus was preparing His Apostles for the new era which was to commence after His death, and for His second commission to them. 'But now . . . .' He said, after referring to the past, and to His first commission (35 v.)

That Christ was speaking of a literal sword cannot be accepted, in view of the rest of His teaching and His words later, on the betrayal night: 'Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword' (Matt. xxvi. 52). The Holy Spirit clearly spoke through Paul: 'For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds' (2 Cor. x. 3-4). Paul's list of spiritual armaments in his letter to the Ephesians (vi. 13) gives us the figurative meaning of Christ's words, for he speaks of 'the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God,' and in the letter to the Hebrews we read, 'For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword.'

What have we to fight, with this sword? Many things, all evil. Do you recall how Nehemiah and his friends, home on leave from captivity, rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem, each one of them having 'his sword girded by his side, and so builded' (Neh. iv. 18)? That is how every child of God must build in the work of the Church of Christ, and he has similar

things to fight. Here are three of them:

i.—Compromise. Nehemiah's adversaries, the Samaritans, had once been Israelites, but having mixed with the world and introduced alien forms into their worship of Jehovah, had become half-castes, physically and spiritually, and tried to hinder the faithful in their work. So compromise with the world hinders the work of the present-day Church.

Modern evils, gambling, alcoholic drinking, tobacco smoking, when found among Christians, disguise their faith, hinder their witness, and cancel their preaching. 'Ye cannot serve God and Mammon,' and if the walls of the Church are to be effectively built, we must fight compromise with the world,

Compromise with the denominations, too, will hinder the witness of the modern Church of New Testament order, for as it was compromise with the world in varying degrees that introduced denominationalism, so Christian unity, for which many of us profess to strive, can only be brought about by the abandonment of worldly pandering and compromising, and by contending earnestly for 'the faith once delivered to the saints.'

2.—Indifference was the next temptation for the Israelites. Are we not tempted also to allow the walls of the Church to remain, without offering a helping hand to the work? 'Will ye rebel against the King?' asked the adversary, and Nehemiah replied, 'The God of heaven, he will prosper us.' A truth we must remember when we are accused of rebelling against the king of this world. We shall not lose anything by going heart and soul into the Lord's work, but rather 'he will prosper us.' We must fight indifference,

3.—Scoffing Nehemiah had to face: 'If a fox go up he shall break down their stone wall,' laughed the enemy. Such scoffing from unbelievers may

embarass us unless we hear the assurance of Jesus, 'Everyone therefore which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man which built his house upon the rock.' Let scoffers laugh if they will, our sword will protect us.

But note that scoffing often comes from our own brethren, who say that modern methods are needed in our evangelising or our walls will not stand. Let us use our sword while such ideas are but young, before the wedge of modernism has become fixed, and let us hear the words of Paul, 'For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' Paul did not require elaborate meeting houses or musical performances, nor even 'excellency of speech or of wisdom,' in proclaiming the Gospel (1 Cor. ii. 1), yet no modern doctor of divinity was half as successful.

Let no child of God say there is no need to fight. Let no soldier of Christ cry, 'peace at any price,' when our King of kings has invested him with a sword.

'And, he that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one.'

R. A. HILL.

### *The Call of Christ.*

FOLLOW ME:

Not just a little way.

But to the very end.

Faithful and true though the road is rough,

Remember, I'm your friend.

Work for Me:

Each labourer I need

Alert to do my will,

The world will scoff, oppose and jeer you,

But I am with you still.

Fight for Me:

O soldier of the Cross,

Rise, learn your sword to wield,

I call you not to a rosy bed,

But to a battlefield.

Q.E.H.

## *Bible Readings.*

### OLD TESTAMENT.

Psa cxi THESE psalms are a call to render praise to God. We cxi might well desire a cheerful heart that tastes His gifts with joy. The writer finds reason for praise, and so may we, in God's work, His honour and majesty, His righteousness, all of which are from everlasting to everlasting. If we would work the works of God, we find here they are truth and judgment, and His precepts are pure.

The declaration in the former psalm (3 v.), 'His righteousness endureth for ever,' is in the latter twice applied to man, but as in Psalm ex., we would understand it as applied prophetically to highest man—the Saviour—for whom the wicked will grieve, when all enemies are put under His feet. 'Holy and reverend is His name.' This is the only occasion on which 'reverend' is used; and from that fact we deduce the irreverence of men who apply it to themselves.

The contrast between the Ps. cii. brevity of man's life and the eternity of God may well

humble those who meditate thereon. Even the earth and heaven, which to the human mind appear to be founded for ever, are destined for destruction. There is no proof anywhere of the eternity of matter, and the Scriptures uniformly teach that they too are waxing old. In that wonderful eulogy of Jesus Christ (Heb. i. 10), the closing passage is applied to the Saviour. He, as we know from John i. 3, is the maker of all; so shall He change them and fold them \_past when their purpose has been served and their groanings over; and it is certainly only through Him that the children of His servants shall be established.

Greater blessing and benefits are ours than ever the psalmist knew; but it is doubtful whether we rise to the height of thankfulness which filled the heart of the psalmist as he penned this song of thanksgiving. For sins forgiven, for healing and keeping power, for mercies by day and night, for sustenance and means of grace, for boundless mercy, let us ever praise Him who has

wrought such miracles of love for unworthy and frail mortals, who even mock Him when they do not fear. The blessings are for those who remember His laws and do them.

The earth with its complexity and beauty, the power seen in wind and wave, call forth unbounded admiration and wonder. The providential care that overshadows man and beast, and their utter dependence on God are here vividly illustrated. Little wonder that the writer exclaims, 'How manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all!'

Spontaneous generation was at one time put forward to explain the beginnings of life, but had to be abandoned. The psalmist, wiser than the philosophers, asserts that life is from previous life, and the Spirit of the Lord, potent in creation, is active, in life production. We too may well praise when we remember that He who rolls the stars along spoke all the promises.

From the redeemed, the goodness of God calls forth praise,  
**Ps. cvii.** \* yet it is matter for wonder that men do not praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works. The picture truthfully sets forth God's dealings with Israel in the wilderness. Rebelling against the Lord, they wandered, in bitterness of soul, but on returning to God, their prayers were heard, and they were relieved from their distresses. Foolish sinners may still return to Him who sendeth His word for healing and restoration. The helplessness of sailors in times of storm is characteristic of all who forsake God, yet His ear is ever open to their cry, and He can still the stormy wave.

#### NEW TESTAMENT.

The witnesses are not onlookers,  
**Heb. xii.** as is sometimes suggested, but those who *give testimony*. The 'cloud of witnesses' are those heroes of faith mentioned in chap. xi, who testified by their life and death to the reality of their faith in God. We are exhorted to run with patience and endurance, the Christian race. The old covenant, with its law given amid the thunderings and lightnings of Sinai, is contrasted with the new covenant, ratified and sealed with more precious blood; and the Kingdom set up by the Saviour is,

identified as the true Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem—a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, and must therefore outlast the earth.

This chapter contains miscellaneous exhortations as to love of brethren, hospitality, marriage, contentment, etc., that are as pertinent to-day as in the first century. What a precious truth is here revealed, that amid the changing scenes of this life, Jesus is ever the same. Centuries do not age Him; nor do they depreciate the truth He has revealed. Wisdom bids us not be tossed about by every wind of doctrine, more especially if such teaching tends to depreciate the Saviour. 'Those who serve the tabernacle' may be godly people, and of fine character, yet their character and standing conferred not a single privilege in the Church of Jesus Christ.

The worth of the notes appended to these letters is seen in this instance, which records that the letter was written from Italy by Timothy. While verse 23 states that he had been set at liberty, but had not yet arrived! How he could have written the letter in these circumstances is indeed a mystery.

1 Cor. This is not simply a homily on Love as many suppose. It has a definite connection with the faults prevalent in the Corinthian Church. So when Paul says, 'love envieth not; is not puffed up; doth not behave unseemly; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness,' it was because the brethren were envious of the man who spoke with tongues, and he who had that gift was inordinately proud of the fact; they behaved at the Lord's Table in a most unseemly way (chap. xi. 21) and had tolerated gross sin. Love should not do such things. This chapter is very important in its declaration of the temporary nature of the gifts and powers imparted by the Holy Spirit. See also Eph. iv. n.

If justification had been possible by the old law Paul might surely have claimed to such; yet his birth, education, training, and prospects were cast behind as worthless in the attainment of righteousness, which must be attained through faith in Christ Jesus, and which held promise of resurrection unto life. The word 'perfect,' in verses 12 and 15 does not refer to perfection

of conduct or life) but to the perfection of revelation, which was being given line by line, and precept by precept, even to the Apostles. The perfect revelation was not completed till long after Paul had passed to his reward; its completion was delayed till nearly the close of the century, when John was given that wonderful revelation of things to come.

It is clear that the writer knows James i. nothing of that popular, but erroneous, doctrine, that ten tribes (Israel) were lost at the time of the captivity. Dispersed—scattered abroad—they may be; but lost, No! Temptations are not intended to break men down, but to test whether they are fit for service. God does not tempt men, but permits Satan to test them. (See the case of Job.) Our own desires are not always evil, but Satan suggests the attainment of them by wrongful and disobedient expedients. There is no sin in temptation. The old hymn rings true:—

'Yield not to temptation,  
For yielding is sin.'

James is most practical in his exhortations, and he re-asserts the Master's words as to the necessity of doing as well as hearing. j. s.

### *The Fight of the Faith.*

INSTEAD of influencing those round about with the principles of the gospel in its primitive purity, many in the Church to-day are being influenced by them, and thus speak a corrupted language, the language of Ashdod. 'Our Church,' and 'Your Church,' 'Our Pastor,' and 'Your Pastor,' are familiar expressions frequently heard from the lips of those who ought to know better. A man, who at one time was considered an outstanding evangelist and one of the hardest hitters in Texas, was heard recently to speak of 'My Pastorate.' What do these things indicate? Coming events 'cast their shadows before,' and if anything is to be learned from the experience of the past, unless there is an increased

emphasis on the principles that inspired the restoration movement, and a return to the 'old paths,' a dark and gloomy day is dawning.

To speak thus oftentimes stigmatizes one in the minds of some as a pessimist, a reactionary, a misanthrope. It is urged that we should view the matter in a more favourable light. 'Have we not,' they say, 'grown respectable in the eyes of the world? Do not they recognize us as one of the leading denominations to-day? Do not our meeting houses compare favourably with any? Are not our preachers recognized and invited to participate in the things where formerly they were not? These are but a few of the things which are cited in support of the theory that a better day has dawned upon the Church. But are not those straws in the wind of popular favour but indications of a general breaking down in the principles that once motivated us? The Church has always prospered in exact ratio to the extent it was able to attack and destroy the bulwarks of denominationalism. In any given community where sectarianism thrives and prospers, the Church wanes and dies, while it gains the ascendancy as it is able to successfully triumph over error. For this reason it is fatal for the Church to compromise with the denominational world. Being antagonistic one to the other, it is a bitter fight to the death.

Unfortunately, in many communities we have lost sight of these significant facts. Let one raise his voice in the presentation of the truth, in contrast with error, and there are those in the Church who will oppose it and resort to every conceivable means to prevent the preaching of the plain unvarnished truth. 'Preach the truth and let others alone,' is the swansong of soft-soapers, the world over. As a result of this insidious influence which has been brought to bear on those who preach, some have yielded, and so an uncertain sound is heard from many pulpits to-day. These things ought not to be, and should

create considerable concern on the part of those who love the cause of Christ and long to see it triumph over the doctrines and commandments of men. Elders and leaders in the Church should impress those who come their way preaching that they must contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and if they refuse to do so, that their services are no longer needed. It is only thus that the Church will be able ultimately to prevail.

Preachers of the gospel who appreciate the responsibility that rests so heavily on their shoulders, will not stop short of every right way in impressing people with the necessity of knowing and obeying the truth. If then they become incensed and aroused at the preaching thereof, it it must be chargeable solely to those who love error better than the truth which makes men free.

G. N. WOODS (*Firm Foundation*).

### *In Spirit and in Truth.*

'IT stands opposed to ceremonialism, symbolism, ritualism, and materialism. 'God is a Spirit.' . . . If He were a material deity, I might bring Him fruits, and flowers, and music, and so on. If He were a God of ritual, I might, deck myself with crosses, burn candles to Him, and waft incense in His honour. But our God is a Spirit who rejoices more in the falling tear, the upheaved sigh, the heart prayer and the heart praise which the 'common people' render unto Him, than all the draperies and symphonies and conservatories of a man-made ritual. What cares the Spirit for your painted windows, your snow-white altars, and your glittering brasses, and I know not what beside? To Him they must be playthings and toys. If He takes any notice of them at all, it must be to laugh at them, and to have them in derision. Man's appointments and inventions must pale before the appointment Christ has made, *viz.*, that in every

place true worshippers may offer up their praises and prayers without the gestures and genuflexions, the properties and paraphernalia of Romanism and ritualism. Every rite is a wrong, unless it has a 'thus saith the Lord' to back it up.'

THOMAS SPURGEON.

### *Bvo. W. H. Cook— An Appreciation.*

IT is eighteen years since I first met Bro. Cook. He had gained a splendid reputation as a preacher then. We were pacifists during the War, but were never jailed together. His reputation stood very high with those not of our persuasion, even those who were anti-christian held him in high esteem for his radiant faith, and beautiful disposition.

He had one consuming passion—to preach the Gospel. He knew his Bible, his quotations from it during an address were numerous, fitting, and accurate. He put everything into his addresses, for weeks they were 'on the stocks,' gradually being built from the Word of Truth, and they were delivered with an earnestness that captivated young and old. He 'held' his audience, not only by mastery of his subject, but also by his fervour and sincerity.

His genial disposition made him a great favourite. He was quick to make friends and he had the happy knack of retaining them.—It is no exaggeration to say he was welcome in hundreds of homes. Many, indeed, are there who will mourn the sudden passing of 'Willie.'

Our fellowship has been sweet. His memory will be fragrant and lasting.

R. MCDONALD.

### *Leeds Conference.*

THIS was held on Saturday, September 18th, and was attended by a large number from Churches in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

An optimistic spirit was manifest in all the proceedings.

A very fine meeting was held in the evening, presided over by Bro. W. Steele (Dalmellington) and addressed by Bren. W. Hoyle (Liversedge) J. A. Hudson (U.S.A.) and W. Crosthwaite.

Fuller report D. V. next issue.

## *Dead Christians.*

IT is a contradiction of terms, an impossible thing, in the proper use of the words, that there should be a *dead* Christian. The very name Christian is indicative of *life*, as belonging to one begotten from the dead. But there is a secondary, nominal, or professional use of that divine name, which is appropriated by a multitude who manifest little or no evidence of the life which is characteristic of those who are born of God; and it is to such that it may be permissible to apply the term *dead*.

. It is an awful thing to be *dead*. In the natural world it is the consummation of things to be dreaded; rightly denominated 'the king of terrors.' But we have to do just now with that legion of souls which have the name Christian, and yet are *dead*. Dead in trespasses and in sins from which perhaps they were never really awakened; dead it may be, to the life in Christ which they did once possess; choked by the thorns of worldly care and the deceitfulness of riches; dead through having carnalized the things of the kingdom • of heaven; but *dead*; dead to all that constitutes the vital, joyful, humble, and spiritual manifestation of the Christ.

It is the startling, terrible thing with regard to this deadness, that its victims seldom come to a realizing sense of their condition. Too generally they are complacent and contented as to their spiritual state; they are 'Church members' most probably; 'in good and regular standing,' at least they have never been 'excommunicated.' They 'do something religious' every Sunday as a rule, or at least occasionally; and keep on such terms with some society and its minister that they have at least a nominal title to the name Christian; but they are *dead*, dead; twice dead and plucked up by the roots, so far as anything in them pertains to a name in the Lamb's

Book of Life, and a right to enter through the gates into the City.

We know of but one remedy for this awful lethargy of spiritual deadness; and that is the Word of God. It must be read, and talked and *lived*, in the power of the Holy Spirit; right among and to those who are already dead or drowning in the perdition of ungodliness and worldly lusts. Christians, worthy of the name, are a peculiar people, whose religion is pure and undefiled, and not a mere profession.—*Evangelist*.

LITTLE good can come to us if we determine to stand on our rights, and are obstinate and self-willed. This world is not the place where justice will come to us, but let us never be less than just in our relations with others. Remember about that second mile: 'Go with him twain.'

## *News.*

**East Ardsley, Yorks.**—Anniversary meetings. Saturday, November 6th, tea, 4.30 p.m., meeting, 6.30 p.m. Chairman, Bro. H. Baines (Morley). Speakers, Bren. L. Morgan (Hindley) and E. W. Jepson (Doncaster). Lord's Day, speaker, Bro. L. Morgan.

**London Kentish town, Hope Chapel, Prince of Wales Road.**—Sixty-sixth anniversary of opening of meeting house. Wednesday, October 6th, tea at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m. w.c.

**Belfast.**—Opening of Meeting House, Berlin Street.—In the West of Scotland, about the middle of July, a vast number are on holiday. Ireland has an attraction for many, and the shipping companies are taxed to provide accommodation for those who travel to the Green Isle. This year, there was a special attraction for some: a Church of Christ in Belfast had secured a building, the formal opening of which was on July 17th. On such a notable occasion, I had a desire to be present and participate in its joys. It was a great pleasure to meet

brethren I had not seen for many years, and some I had never seen before. Although strangers in the flesh we were one in spirit, and could say from the heart:

'Blest be the, tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.'

The first meeting was on Saturday, July 17th, at 2.30 Bro. G. Millar (Belfast) presiding. A warm welcome was given and reference made to the building as a more desirable place than that in Old Lodge Road. The Church retained with firmness her plea for Christianity according to the Scriptures, and desired to stand fast in the faith delivered to the saints. The speakers, Bren. J. Anderson, W. Hendren, J. Wardrop, and W. Crosthwaite, sounded out, with no uncertain voice, the plea to walk in the good, old way, and secure the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Some seek to introduce things contrary to the examples set us by Divine authority. Our safety lay in faithful adherence to the Word of God, and our strength in being steadfast and immovable therein. Then followed tea, which gave an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with each other. The social hour was indeed a happy one. Another meeting was held at seven. Bro. Hudson, Birmingham, presided, and Bro. W. Crosthwaite spoke, warning us against apostacy from the faith which in the past had crept in little by little until shipwreck of the faith was complete. The address was elevating, and we felt it was good to be there.

We looked forward with eager expectation to the Lord's Day. Considering it was holiday week in Belfast, there was a splendid attendance at all the meetings. Some visitors on holiday at Bangor came and had fellowship with us. Bro. John Anderson presided at the meeting for worship and Bro. J. Wardrop referring to the promises of God (Heb. xiii. 5-8) spoke words of encouragement. The fervent prayers and hearty singing were most impressive, and it was a time 'rich in blessing,' and so impressed us with the Divine presence that such an experience will not be forgotten while life shall last.

At 2.30, Bro. Crosthwaite presided and Bren. J. Anderson, J. Wardrop, G. Hudson, and J. Hamilton, were the speakers. Various aspects of the things we plead for were set forth. The only means to save sinners and

make them saints was the Gospel. The religion of Jesus purified the life of those who accepted it, and opened up channels of blessing for others.

In the evening, a very fine Gospel meeting was held. The hall was well filled and Bro. Crosthwaite was at his best. Psalms xx. 5, lx. 4 were the texts quoted. He spoke of the banners that decorated the streets of Belfast. These had a purpose. That for which the Banner of Truth stood was the salvation of men, and the unity of believers. The message was clear and delivered with impassioned fervour. Appeal was made to mind and heart and we wondered that anyone could resist it.

On Monday night, Bro. Hudson had to leave for home. A meeting was held at seven, and short addresses were delivered by Bren. Hudson, Anderson, and Wardrop. The first speaker gave some practical truth on life: J. Anderson on the influence of the gospel on the individual and in relation to each other. The last speaker referred to eternal life; and the fact that God had not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and a sound mind. Thus we had to say farewell to our warm hearted brethren in Belfast. Our heart's desire is that they may prosper as they are faithful to God and abound in His work. The joy of our visit was a foretaste of the joy that awaits us in the crowning day that's coming by-and-by.

A VISITOR.

## *Nyasaland.*

BRO. RONALD'S latest letter says on June 25th, Bren. Hetherwick and Wellem were sent to baptise candidates at Makala where Bro. Tauro is working. Five deacons and one elder were appointed to take charge of the three different places in Mlanje District.

In acknowledging recent remittances, he expressed 'Thanks to the good brethren who send support through you as the channel, for the preachers and school teachers here,' and quotes, 'God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which you have shown toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister.'

Brethren, our funds are almost exhausted.

W. M. KEMPSTER.