

The **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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ON BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

ON March 14th, the New English Bible: New Testament was published. At the time of writing there has not been the opportunity for me to read the whole translation, and therefore a fair and balanced review cannot yet be written. Although book reviewers do not always read the books they review, I am one of those who believe they should. Consequently, I hope to give my views on this New Testament in the next issue of the *S.S.* I shall confine myself here to the question of Bible translations in general.

Why these Translations?

The question must be passing through the minds of many Christians and Bible-lovers, "Why another translation? Haven't we enough?" Indeed, many sincere souls do not see the need for any other translation than the Authorised Version (although who authorised it and what it was authorised for no one can tell). Some find themselves confused by the rapidly increasing output of Bible or N.T. translations. We have, to name only the best known, the Authorised Version, the Revised Version, the American R.V., Goodspeed's American translation, Moffatt, the Revised Standard Version, Knox (a Roman Catholic translation) and now the New English Bible; the Twentieth Century N.T., Weymouth, Phillips, and Schonfield (a Jewish translation). Many wonder which of all these is the Bible!

But surely it is good that in this age of materialism such great interest is taken in Bible translation. Ought we not to be glad that the Bible is still regarded as so important that the finest scholarship is devoted to making plain its meaning? No one should welcome these new translations more than those Christians who regard the Bible as the inspired and infallible word of God, not only the word but the words of the Holy Spirit. If we attach such vital importance to the words of Scripture it is obvious that we must know, so far as possible, what these words were, when they came from the pens or lips of the "holy men of God" who "spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." The first object of Bible translation, then, is to establish what was originally said and meant by the writers of Scripture, expressed in the language of the present day.

God's revelation is given to us in words. He has spoken to us in His Son. But nowhere outside the pages of the New Testament shall we find any authentic record of what Jesus did and taught. Hence we must always come back to the written record. Language, words are constantly changing. A word quite well understood a few years ago may now have lost or changed its meaning. On the other hand, history and circumstances bring new words into being. These changes of course affect words in the Bible as in every other respect, and this fact forms a second reason for Bible translation.

The Authorised Version

To many the A.V., and that alone, is the word of God. They are not very clear as to why they believe this. On that Version we have been brought up, both in our Christian life and as a nation. We never heard any other translation read in worship, nor did we dream of reading any other in private. We hardly regarded these others as the Bible at all. When today we go into a bookshop and ask for a Bible the bookseller takes it for granted that we mean the A.V. He knows that if we wanted any other translation we would ask for it. And the book must "look like" a Bible, that is it must be printed on India paper, in chapters and verses, must be silk-sewn and bound in leather, preferably black.

I am not being conventional when I state my belief that the A.V. is the finest literature ever to be produced in the English tongue. The greatest literary scholars attest this fact. It has woven its way into the speech and character of our people in all walks of life. In the most unexpected circles it is quoted (sometimes, it is true, without realisation of the source of the quotations). It has influenced our whole civilisation. It will never be displaced, such is its literary beauty; its sublime teaching and its familiar expressions are rooted in the hearts of its readers. But it is true to say that the A.V. has a largely sentimental and conventional hold upon many, Christians and others. Through lack of knowledge of what Scripture is, many seem to look upon the A.V. as the original and only-inspired word of God. We have often heard the story of the dear old lady who said, "The Authorised Version was good enough for Paul, and it's good enough for me." I have heard so many versions of that tale that I do not believe it, but it can serve as an illustration of this attitude.

Reasons why

Some regard any Bible translation in the speech of every day as sacrilege, irreverent handling of the word of God. Yet His word has always been written in language that all could understand. Of the Son of God it is written that "the common people heard him gladly." The New Testament was written in a Greek that could be understood by all who could read. On the one hand was the classical Greek in which the masterpieces of the Greek poets, dramatists and philosophers were written. On the other there was the simpler and rougher everyday Greek spoken throughout the Roman Empire. In this latter the N.T. writers wrote. We speak of it as "N.T. Greek" and indeed have our textbooks under that title.

In the same way, the beauty and power of the A.V. were because the words were those of the common people. Compare it with the Bishops' Bible of 1568 and you will find the difference between classical, ecclesiastical jargon and the everyday speech of the people. The objection urged against modern speech translations that they are not "dignified" or "do not sound like the Bible" could with equal force have been urged against the A.V. at the time of its appearance.

Consider, too, the changes in words and meaning in the 350 years intervening. Even the most devoted lovers of the A.V. have been puzzled at times by some of its wording. For instance, how many understand now what is meant by 2 Cor. 8:1—"We do you to wit"? Perfectly well understood at the time, but what are we to make of it today? A good modern translation will show its meaning. Do we know that the A.V. translation of Rom. 1:13 gives a meaning to us clean contrary to what it had at the time? Paul says that he "was let hitherto" from visiting the Christians at Rome. Today "let" almost always means "permitted, allowed"; in the A.V. it means hindered, prevented. We express the old meaning in the phrase "without let or hindrance." Again—a happy hunting-ground of those who say the Scriptures contradict themselves—we have the two passages Gen. 22:1—"God did tempt Abraham," and Jas. 1:13, where it is said of God "neither tempteth he any man." When we know that in Genesis, as shown in later translations, God tested or tried Abraham the meaning is clear. And what today do we understand by "ghost"? A spook, spectre, apparition. Is that the meaning in the term "Holy Ghost" in the A.V. and R.V.? No: in A.V. times the word meant breath or spirit—thus the holy breath, the breathing-out of God.

Then it is sometimes urged against modern translations that they are made by ecclesiastics, concerned to justify their own church practices. This is partly true,

especially in regard to the translation of "controversial" terms like baptism. But it is equally true of the A.V. King James I in 1604 insisted that the translators should not alter the accepted and venerated ecclesiastical terms. This was an intended blow at Tyndale's New Testament of 1534, which rendered, for example, "church" by "congregation." But the A.V. returned to the word "church." The Anglicised Greek words baptism, etc. were retained on only a majority vote of one, instead of being translated "immerse" etc.

Discovery of translation material

Another very important reason for the need of new translations is that, since the A.V. of 1611 and even the R.V. of 1881-5, great numbers of more ancient and more accurate Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible have been discovered and translated. Some of these are far more authoritative than any manuscripts available at the time of those translations. Indeed, time and study of the manuscripts and versions from which the A.V. and the R.V. were made have revealed many inaccuracies not known at the time. But we need not fear that in the A.V. we have a translation that we cannot trust. It has been computed that only one verse in a thousand has a different meaning today from that of 350 years ago, and among these is not a single passage affecting the salvation of any.

Let us not confuse "modern" with "modernism." Unconsciously we can do this. A modern translation can be more fundamental and anti-modernist in that, as shown above, it goes back to more ancient and accurate documents and approaches nearer to the meaning of the original.

Not only have archaeology and scholarship discovered and deciphered these priceless manuscripts, but findings not immediately related to the Scriptures have thrown great light on the meaning of God's word. Thus, the Dead Sea Scrolls have given a deeper understanding of the Hebrew and similar languages as used during the time of Christ; and even the finding of such articles as clay bricks, monuments, tablets with their cuneiform inscriptions, and fragments of letters have often illuminated the words of the Bible by their use in everyday transactions.

There seems a kind of suspicious attitude by some towards new translations; as though, because they are the work of scholars beyond our attainments, the faith as revealed in God's word is being undermined. Let us remember that if it had not been for the work of such scholars few of us could read a word of the Bible. Shakespeare said that he had "little Latin, less Greek": most of us can plead lesser still!

Even mental and spiritual indolence can be the cause of closing our minds against accepting or using them. We have become so accustomed to the cadences of the A.V. that its reading, especially aloud, has little effect upon us. Some do not even take the trouble to reach for a Bible when a brother is reading in the church meetings. We take the A.V. for granted. We do not want to be jolted out of our stereotyped modes of thought and our acceptance of things that have never touched us deeply. We can so easily become lethargic. This was illustrated by a tale told by Dr. John Huxtable in a talk on "Lift up your hearts" the same week in which the N.E.B. New Testament was published. He told of a farmer who strongly objected when the clergyman read from any other version than the Authorised. When the parson asked him why, he answered, "Well, when you read from any other Bible it makes me think, and I don't like to be distracted when I'm worshipping God."

The Bible translator, William Tyndale, gave his life that we might have the word of God in a tongue we can understand. Of him, John Foxe, in his *Book of Martyrs* relates the anecdote that "Soon after, Master Tyndale happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him drove him to that issue that the learned man said, 'We were better be without God's law than the Pope's.' Master Tyndale hearing that answered him, 'I defy the Pope and all his laws,' and said, 'If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest!'"

With the giving of the Bible, through these translations, to the people in our common speech, we can hasten that day.

EDITOR.

'WHATSOEVER IS NOT OF FAITH . . .'

Faith

FAITH is action based on belief,—that which I do because of facts which I believe. The woman with the issue of blood truly believed, "For she said within herself, 'If I but touch his garment, I shall be made whole.' Putting her belief into action she came through the crowd and touched. In her touching, she was made whole and Jesus said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Sin

Sin is disobedience to God. Every sin is some form of disobedience. Sin is that which brings death to man. Whatever is done for any other reason than that we believe it is God's pleasure to have it done, is disobedience, and worketh toward death.

A Life of Faith

"The righteous shall live by faith." In this the saint has a wonderful liberty. The apostle Paul expresses it in this way: "For ye are not under law but under grace," and this same apostle states, "All things are lawful for me." But there must be some limit. None would suggest that, in this statement, Paul was declaring that it is lawful for a saint to take life, to steal, to commit adultery. All things are lawful, according to faith. He says, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith." To live this life of faith is a MUST for every saint. It is not a casual existence, which gives mental and verbal acknowledgment to the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, but a life in which every action is performed, every deed done, every word spoken, because we believe it is God's will to have it so. God's will is not some irresistible effect which must be borne without protest, but a desire which it is the duty and the privilege of the saint to execute.

What I Believe

That which I believe makes all the difference. The apostle Paul shows the possibility of two saints doing exactly similar actions, yet to one it is sin, to the other lawful. This because of that which each believes. Paul uses the example of meat sold in his day in the shambles and, previous to sale, offered sacrificially to an idol. Paul could give thanks to God for the provision of this food, and eat it without sin or without any thought of worshipping the idol to whom it had been offered. To another, who believed that by eating honour was shown to the idol, it was sin. Consider the actions of Daniel and his three friends (Dan. 1:18). To suggest an example from our own day: some brethren believe it wrong to play games, however quiet, on Sunday. Others believe that saints are free agents and that Sunday is the same as any other day as far as games are concerned. Other considerations may prevent them using their time in this way; but to the former it would be sin to play, to the latter not so.

Are you sure?

"Are you sure it is wrong to do this or that?" How often saints take this attitude when they desire to gratify certain desires of the flesh. "Are you sure it is wrong to go to the pictures? Does the Bible say that I must not go dancing? What is the difference between television and listening to the wireless?" "Look at Romans 14:23. If you have the least doubt whether the thing you propose to do is well-pleasing to God, then for you to do it is sinful. The question must always be, "Am I sure it is right?" Of course you would not do a thing you were sure was wrong. Paul says that to do a thing in doubt is sin.

Between God and the Saint

"The faith which thou hast have to thyself before God" (Rom. 14:22). No other can interfere, none can tell you what things you believe. People may try to tell you and to force their beliefs upon you, but your faith is between you and God. Again there is no call for you to consult with others as to what you believe. According to your knowledge of God's Word, and thus His will for you, so you believe. It is

between God and you. In this it will be seen that it is incumbent upon all saints to be well informed. "I did not know" will be no excuse. It is impossible to deceive God.

Lastly, no justification is required. So soon as the saint feels that there is a need to prove to his brethren the rightness of his action, so soon does he show his own doubt. Thus, when one would hide his actions from the brethren he condemns himself thereby.

God-given Help

God has not left us without his aid in this matter, but has placed within each of us a conscience, a monitor which prompts us to do that which we believe to be right. It should be carefully noted that conscience never tells us what is right but is as a goad, urging us to do that which we believe to be right. The same thought as expressed in the previous paragraph is found here also. Con-science means "with knowledge." While that implies that we are prompted according to our knowledge—our belief—there is also a position of dual knowledge. I know and God knows, and the two are bound up in the fact that I know that God knows, and furthermore that God knows that I know.

It is reasonable to infer from the apostle Paul is teaching that any action done contrary to this prompting is sin. The reverse is also evidenced—that to live in harmony with your conscience is right. "I have lived, before God, in all good conscience until this day" (Acts 23:1). Yet Paul had made mistakes, he had caused the death of many saints, he had persecuted the church. But in all this, between himself and God he had lived according to his knowledge, his belief of the will of God. Can we then exonerate murder? God forbid. Have no fear. To all who live a life of faith, seeking the truth and doing according to their knowledge of God's will, his knowledge will be increased and perfected, for thus is the promise (James 1:5).

Faith is the Key

"All things are lawful to me"—that is, all the things which I believe are right. If I have no doubt then I can associate with the denominations, I can preach from their pulpits, I can have fellowship with those who use instrumental music in worship, I can partake of the cup of the Lord when individual cups are used, I can take part in and support conferences and committees, I can play games on Sunday. If I believe that by engaging in any of these, and indeed by doing anything at all, I am acting in accord with the desire of God, then I have the authority so to do. But if I doubt, if I wonder, if all I can say is, "Well, I cannot find anything wrong with it," then to me it is sin.

Oh, Ye of Strong Faith

There is a great burden on those who have faith. Not, as so often is imagined, to show this faith to the brotherhood, nor to display it before those who are not so enlightened, nor to exercise it at every opportunity; but, "Take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to the weak" (1 Cor. 8:9. Please read on to v. 13). Paul was prepared to forego that which was quite lawful to him, lest he should offend those of weaker faith. His was not the attitude, "I am right and I am going to do as I please." He was right, he had the liberty to do, but he said "All things are lawful; but all things edify not." O that we might have the grace of the apostle in the exercise of our faith, "Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbour's good."

Summary

If thou hast no doubt, not the slightest question, but truly believest that the proposed action is in accord with the holy will of God, then thou mayest do it; thou hast thy liberty, because of thy faith. But beware that none are caused to stumble. For, however foolish may seem their reasoning because of their lack of faith, Thou hast sinned if, because of thy liberty, another brother is caused to stumble.

Scripture passages: Romans 14:12-23; 1 Cor. 8:8-13; 10:23-33.

P. JONES.

A TOUR OF PALESTINE. IV.

By G. LODGE

WE spent the next day touring schools in Tel Aviv. Outside the Kibbutzim, education is compulsory from the age of six to fourteen. At fourteen, a child may be transferred to a technical school or a high school, if psychological tests and school reports are favourable. All education requires fees to be paid by the parents and, as a result (I think), is prized and valued.

Beersheba

Our next visit was to Beersheba in the south, just within the Negev desert. The journey showed the success achieved by irrigation, in the fight against sand which is blown over the Mediterranean from the Sahara (so we were told), and alights on the southern parts of Palestine. Eventually, one side of the highway was green farmland and the other side pure desert, with sand-dunes; then the road ran on to be enclosed by the desert on both side.

In Beersheba it was market day and the Bedouins (Arabs) from the surrounding areas entered this Jewish city to trade. Out of curiosity, we enquired the price of a camel and were told that it was 450 to 600 Israeli pounds (i.e. from £75 to £100). This clearly meant that the camels were their wealth, as they had precious little of anything else. We saw various products being sold by "weight" against very arbitrary weights (pebbles being used in one case) and on very rickety home-made scales. I suppose that is the point of the barter that accompanies a sale. All this on a fairly flat but open piece of desert land alongside a main street, with no shelter from sun or wind. Many of the party had a camel ride before we left the market.

Nearby is a well, known as Abraham's well. The ancient wheels which used to be worked by animals to draw up the water have now collapsed and lie alongside the well—as they will probably continue to do if it depends on the Bedouins repairing them!

Because of the expected increase in temperature as one moves towards the Dead Sea (which is nearly 1,300 ft. below sea level), it was decided by a majority vote not to proceed to Sodom. This was due to the number who were either ill or had just recovered from illness and so felt that they could not stand a long, hot desert ride. This was a disappointment for me personally, but we were assured by the guide that the real site of Sodom had been found by divers beneath the Dead Sea, and the modern Sodom is not interesting.

Jerusalem

We made our way therefore to Jerusalem, lunching at Gath and then passing by Askalon. We saw the Hebron range of hills in the distance. We arrived in Jerusalem about 3.30 in the afternoon. The Israelis occupy the business, modern part of Jerusalem.

The following day we toured the new Hebrew University buildings and heard a lecture on the Dead Sea scrolls by one of the Jewish professors. The main import of his talk, so far as I was concerned, was that Qumran (where the scrolls were found) was certainly a village of the Essenes—a religious sect of the Jews. He asserted also that any likeness between their (Essene) teachings and those of Jesus was more imagined than real. This incidentally from a Jew, who could surely be impartial on such a topic. He also gave it as his opinion that it was extremely unlikely that Jesus was put to school in Qumran, as some have suggested. We were then shown the seven scrolls possessed by the Jews (remember that Qumran is in the Jordanian half of Palestine).

Later that day we visited Mount Zion, crossing the valley of Hinnom (where the citizens of Jerusalem in ancient times used to burn their refuse. Hence, Gehenna—hell fire—as a place of everlasting destruction (Matt. 10:28 or Mark 9:47).

We were shown the reputed upper-room of the last supper. It would have been a very high-class apartment in its day—too high-class for Jesus and his band, I

should have thought. The guide would have it that Jesus washed his disciples' feet downstairs, but we must let the Bible know best on that score (John 13:2-5). The Jews believe the tomb of David to be in the lower part of this building. This same building has been used for worship by Jews, Moslems, and believers in Jesus at different times. From its roof, we looked across into the country of Jordan, and caught our first glimpse of the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane, the road to Jericho, and the Dome of the Rock.

In the evening of this eventful day we went to a Jewish synagogue to witness a service intended to usher in the sabbath. (This was Friday evening—the sabbath begins at 6 p.m. approximately). We were taken there, incidentally, by a man we met at the Hebrew University earlier in the day, who had at one time taught in the grammar school at Dewsbury and had lived quite near to my present home. A small world, isn't it?

The lack of spirituality was most marked. The service was "sung" by everyone, when they were not busy greeting the forty per cent. of late-comers, or chatting, or rebuking the little children running about. They were led by a cantor (precentor), who in this case sang only the first few bars of each section and then waited for the different sections of the congregation to arrive at the end of that section before proceeding to launch them on the next part. During the service the cantor lost his place and the congregation good naturedly put him right. The whole service was "set" and had no place for private prayers nor selected hymns, nor for any variation by as much as a word. Towards the end of this service, timed fairly accurately to coincide with the setting of the sun the whole congregation turned to face the back of the Synagogue, where the doors were, and sung the hymn of welcome to the sabbath. The tune for this was "Leoni," with slight variations. The building was modern, the size of a cinema and built rather like one. Only men were downstairs, the women being accommodated in the balcony, stretching over half the floor area. I estimate the attendance to have been upward of 1,500. Only a very small proportion of these appeared to take the worship really seriously—and they were usually older people. This nation really needs a prophet of God.

(To be continued).

"A THREAT TO THE NATION"

A LEADING ARTICLE in the *Practitioner* states that shareholders of the tobacco industry "cannot be allowed to wax fat at the expense of the health of the rising generation."

The article declared that whatever might be the final verdict on the role of cigarette smoking in the development of lung cancer there was unanimous agreement in the medical profession that heavy smoking was bad for health.

"When will the tobacco manufacturers realise that by their efforts to stimulate the smoking of cigarettes they are doing the nation a disservice and threatening so to interfere with the health of the nation that Parliament may be required to take action in the matter?"

Ominous plans

In spite of "overwhelming evidence" of the dangers of smoking, the tobacco industry had almost doubled its advertising expenditure last year and in the first nine months of the year had spent £2.2 millions on advertising. "Their future plans are even more ominous."

The article refers to reports that advertising campaigns are tending to be directed towards teenagers, and asks: "If this is the case, then what is the use of doctors, schoolteachers, and social workers doing their utmost to prevent children acquiring this habit?"

The tobacco companies and their shareholders had got to realise that far too many people were smoking far too many cigarettes. "Unless the industry rapidly shows a greater sense of responsibility to the community, Parliament will have no alternative but to act—say, by doubling the duty."

SCRIPTURE READINGS

READINGS FOR APRIL

2—Jeremiah 36:20-32.	Eph. 2.
9— " 52:12-34.	" 3.
16—Lamentations 5.	" 4:1-16.
23—Ezekiel 1.	" 4:11-32.
30— " 2 to 3:11.	" 5:1-20.

The Letters to the Ephesians.

For the purpose of our notes this month we consider there are three letters to Ephesus. The first is recorded in Acts 20, and was not a letter but a personal interview of a very intimate and touching character. The second is the one bearing the title, which we are now reading through. The third is the message recorded by John in Revelation (2:1-7). These furnish us with information about the church at that city—its history and character. We should look very carefully over these deeply-interesting and instructive portions of the sacred writings, certainly written for our instruction by divine not human intention.

Ephesus was a most important city, capital of the Roman province called Asia, covering the coastline of Asia Minor from Troas to Miletus, and a big inland district, including all the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3, and extending eastward to Galatia. For Paul's first visit we read Acts 18:19-21. His first visit was very brief but he left Aquila and Priscilla there, who were able to enlighten Apollos upon his coming there. Paul's second visit lasted about two years and is recorded in Acts 19. It was brought to an abrupt close by the riot, and we do not read of a further visit, though one may be indicated in 1 Tim. 1:3, subsequent to his Roman imprisonment and trial (Acts 28:30 and 31).

Our first "letter" then shows that overseers were in charge of the assembly. It also gives us a picture of the labours of Paul in the city. His personal work there, and his daily discussions in the school of Tyrannus made such an impact on the people that the whole province heard the word of the Lord Jesus—note how this is stated, not the word of Paul! Paul had chosen, so to speak, a strategic position to influence the

whole population, and so abundant was the blessing of God that an important trade was much affected, and old entrenched superstitions exploded (Acts 19:19 and 25). However successful a work may be, Satan is at hand to mar it, and therefore our "letter" is mainly warning of danger. Among those chosen men were some who would fall to be faithful to their trust. What they must guard against is perversions of the truth ("the faith once and for all delivered") by men seeking followers, and their safeguard is "the word of His grace," closely connected with "ministering unto" their own "necessities" and the needs of others with their hands, "so labouring" in the way the apostle had himself. Paul foresaw that some would make a living out of the church. The apostasy illustrates this in no small measure, and the warning is quite up-to-date. Prayer and manifestations of sincere and profound affection conclude the message.

It is widely held that the letter we next consider may not have originally borne its title. The thought arises from the absence of the word Ephesus from many manuscripts, and the absence of personal greetings which so often characterise Paul's letters. It may be then that the letter was intended for general circulation among the churches in Asia and other districts, being delivered first to Ephesus as the capital and centre. Evidently this is what happened anyway—as it has to all the scriptures. The tremendous importance of the whole collection provides an example of our Father's wisdom and provision of all things "that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). It is possible that "the letter to Laodicea" (Col. 4:16) was this one, the principle of exchange being set out there.

The letters to Colossæ and Philippi, and that to Philemon, were almost certainly written during Paul's imprisonment at Rome, as was also this "to Ephesus." They have some similarity, especially Ephesians and Colossians. Someone has well called this letter "one of the divinest compositions of man." We are called on to consider the greatness of the privileges we enjoy in and through our Saviour. God has revealed to us His purpose to consummate all human history in Christ, and in this triumph we share solely by His grace. The position given to the Saviour at

God's own right hand is far above all powers in earth and heaven, and more particularly for us He is the Head of His assembly, which ideally embodies His character and thus represents Him. Alas, how far we fall short of this.

The contrast between the fallen and lost condition of Gentiles, and this close relationship with Christ should fill us with astonished gratitude. We should recognise that it is all of grace, none of merit. The Jews did have a relationship by the gracious calling of God in their covenant, but in Christ we are "lifted right out of the old life" (2:6, Phillips). Jew and Gentile are brought together, and God chose Paul to serve Him particularly in this work. He most humbly gives thanks for this, and wants his readers to realise its implications: "to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

He sets forth the unity of the church as designed by the Father, the gifts provided to bring it to maturity, and to guard us against being deceived into digression. Each member of the body has direct connection with the Head, and this should ensure the harmony of the whole body. The letter from 4:17 is filled with exhortations to holiness of life with much detailed instruction, such as for ex-thieves to take positive action, and correct relationships for wives, husbands, children, fathers, slaves and masters. A really close study will help us all to grow up into the Head (4:15).

Considering the original work of the apostle, his appointment of elders under divine guidance (Acts 20:28), the work of Timothy (1 Tim. 1:3), and the letter just reviewed, we are not surprised to read in the final letter (Rev. 2) that this assembly had worked hard and patiently. We are glad that it had tried the false apostles and rejected them. Some had spoken perverse things and been exposed. The evil practices of the Nicolaitans were detested there also. However, a most serious lessening of love had developed. The members of the body had apparently ceased to love the Saviour with the original fervour, and we must suppose also their love for one another had declined. This brought the warning which we hope was heeded in time. If love leaves the church, nothing can replace it and all its other efforts will be unavailing. "Let all that you do be done in love."

R. B. SCOTT.

THE HOUSE OF GOD

No moulding mound of stone and mortar built,

Your grandeur not of sculpture nor of art;

No spires and Gothic arches, nor the gilt
And paint of texts on some external part

Of your most sacred fabric, church of God;

His word is written deep—upon your heart.

No crosses and no stained-glass windows see;

No symbols and no images engraved
Of things in earth or heaven, in wood or stone,

No earthly altars, as of those depraved,
Your freewill offering takes, pure church of God;

'Tis by the righteousness of Christ
you're saved.

Within you there's no sound of organ note,

No chanting tones of choirs, nor measured beat

Of cymbals nor of drums, nor e'en a flute

Is ever heard; yet unto heaven the sweet

Incense of praise ascends; true church of God,

The worship of the life and heart is meet.

Ye are the temples of the Spirit, all
Who are washed by the water and the blood;

The sanctified below, who at the call
Of their great Master rose upright and stood

Upon His holy Word; the church of God,
His ark, delivers from the 'whelming flood.

His Spirit sends His messengers again—
No earthly robes on them by men bestowed—

Their labour is of love and not of gain,
They sacrifice their lives for their beloved,

As living stones within the church of God,

With loving faith, both steadfast and unmoved.

JOHN M. WOOD.

Love is nourished by love.

We help ourselves by helping others.

Fear is the absence of faith in the Lord.

Control of our life takes constant effort,

“DO-GOODERS”

IT is a pity when people use slick derogatory phrases, not thinking of the harm they might do. The other day a speaker told a gathering of social workers that their job should not be regarded as just another bit of work by “woolly do-gooders.”

It was plain enough what was meant in that case. But the term “do-gooders” is an unfortunate one, too often used nowadays. In fact, it has somehow become almost a dirty word—like “intellectual,” “cultural” and (at least until recently) “peace-lover.” In this sense, strangely enough, it can be traced back to a bishop, of all people; Bishop Mandell Creighton, who once wrote that “no people do so much harm as those who go about doing good.”

Just what he meant by that, or in what context the words were uttered, is now forgotten; and it is impossible to ask him, because he died in 1901. But the label “do-gooders” has stuck with unfortunate results. Of course, there are a few people here and there whose overpowering and self-esteeming benevolence becomes irritating after a time. But they are such rare exceptions that it is wrong indeed to make a sweeping generalisation about all who try to help their fellow men and women, with sincerity and often at considerable sacrifice.

Incidentally, “do-gooder” is an escape route—an “alibi,” in modern jargon—for those who are always ready to pass by on the other side—the “I’m all right, Jack” brigade. We would do well to forget the term “do-gooder,” and instead remember the lines of the great John Wesley:

Do all the good you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.

And to remember, too, some of the simplest and most moving words ever uttered; Peter’s summing-up of the life of Christ: He went about doing good.

—Selected.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Site of “The Good Intent.”

MANY enquiries have been received about the proposed building for the church in Tunbridge Wells, on a site formerly earmarked for a public house. This brief report will be of interest to the many brethren who want to know how far our plans have progressed.

Plans for the buildings have been prepared by Brother John Partington, of Hindley, and have been approved by the Town and Country Planning Authority. We shall shortly be getting estimates from twelve building firms, and shall then be able to assess our financial position in relation to the cost of building.

Buying the site has given us probably the best publicity that we have ever had in this area. We erected a large sign on the land, announcing “BETTER INTENT”, then stating who had bought it, and why. We got a good “write-up”

in the two local papers, and lots of people have indicated their pleasure that the site of a proposed “pub” should now be earmarked for a religious meeting-house—which is indeed a much “better intent.” We hope we may see actual building commenced in early summer.

Brethren, pray for us, that we use wisely and well every opportunity God gives us to serve Him.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

BOUND VOLUMES OF “S.S.”

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Our body is a dwelling place for the Lord. Let us keep our life clean that we be not ashamed to be in his presence.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Reading: Friends' Meeting House.—May I advise the brotherhood that there is now a meeting in the town of Reading. The brethren assemble at 3 p.m. each Lord's Day in the centre of the town. We appeal to all church secretaries to consult their records as to whether any members have moved into Reading or vicinity, such information would be gladly received by Bro. Glyn Jackson, at 10 Dene Close, Earley, Reading. Brethren please bear in mind this small work in your prayers and should you be travelling anywhere near Reading there will be a great welcome for you.

K. SPENCER.

Tranent.—Again the power of the Gospel has been manifested in Tranent. The church here was overjoyed on Lord's Day, February 5th, to witness the baptism of one of our Sunday school scholars, Marilyn Junior. We hope that she with us will continue to grow in the grace of our Lord and Saviour, and we give all glory to His name.

D. SCOTT.

Wigan: Scholes.—A young member of our Sunday school, Carole Ashcroft, was baptised on Lord's Day, February 26th. We pray that her responsibilities to her Saviour will be ever present with her, and that she may grow in the faith and experience much spiritual blessing. We wish our sister Carole a long and faithful life in the Master's service.

J. ASPINALL.

TELL HIM SO

If you hear a kind word spoken
Of some worthy soul you know,
It may fill his heart with sunshine
If you only tell him so.

If a deed, however humble,
Helps you on your way to go,
Seek the one whose hand has helped you:
Seek him out and tell him so.

If your heart is touched and tender
Towards a sinner, lost and low,
It might help him to do better
If you'd only tell him so.

Oh, my sisters, oh, my brothers,
As over life's rough path you go,
If God's love has saved and kept you,
Do not fail to tell Him so.

OBITUARY

Tranent.—The church in Tranent has suffered a severe loss in the passing of our aged brother, John Nisbet, on Monday, February 27th, in his 86th year. Bro. Nisbet was a member of the church for fifty-three years, a brother beloved of all who knew him, and a great source of inspiration, especially to those younger in the faith. While not a public speaker, he preached the gospel in the best way he knew how—by the life he lived. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his widow and family, whom we commend to our heavenly Father to sustain, comfort and keep them in their hour of sorrow

D. SCOTT.

Ilkeston.—We regret to announce the passing of our sister, Florence Parkin, who fell asleep in Jesus on February 6th, 1961 at the age of fifty-five. In early years our sister took an active part both in church and Sunday school work. She was of a cheerful disposition and was much liked, always being willing to help and very generous in giving. She passed away after a long illness, borne with great patience and fortitude. Our sympathy goes out to her dear husband, daughter, and all her loved ones, and we pray that the God of all comfort will sustain them in their great loss. The funeral service was conducted by the writer.

F.G.

AN APOLOGY

In March "S.S." appeared an obituary notice of Sister M. F. Booth. In it was the statement that Sis. Booth's death had been "unhonoured and unsung" in that no notice or obituary had appeared in the local press.

A niece of Miss Booth's has written to correct this statement, pointing out that a notice was put in the local paper and an obituary appeared on another page, and that "to suggest she died unhonoured and unsung" is untrue.

We have found in the "Wigan Observer" for December 23rd, 1960, the notice of death, but have looked in vain through that issue and the two succeeding issues for any obituary notice.

We sincerely and humbly regret distress which has been caused any relatives or friends of Sister Booth by our incorrect statement, and most gladly withdraw the statement.

C. MELLING.

COMING EVENTS

MISSION AT BLACKBURN

The church at Hamilton Street, Blackburn, is to hold an intensive gospel mission, with Bro. Albert Winstanley as preacher, commencing Saturday, April 1st, to Lord's Day, April 9th, inclusive: Every night except Monday, April 3rd, and Friday, April 7th. Community hymn-singing before each meeting. Lord's Days: Breaking of bread, 10.30 a.m.; gospel 6 p.m. Weeknights, 7.30 p.m. We appeal to the brethren to come over and help us in this campaign.

A note from each church as to numbers expected to attend the conference will be helpful.—Harry Wilson, 10 Hollin Bridge Street, Blackburn, Lancashire.

Brighton.—The church here is proposing to hold the anniversary meetings on April 22nd and 23rd and would welcome the presence of any of our brethren from other churches. Tea will be provided at the chapel in Oxford Street, (London Road) at 5 p.m., on Saturday, 22nd, and the public meeting will be held at 6 p.m., when Bro. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells) will be the guest speaker and also at the meetings on Lord's Day, 23rd, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Your presence would be a help.

E. T. THORPE, Secy.

Newtongrange.—Sunday school teachers' conference, May 6th, 4 p.m. Speaker, Bro. Jim Morris (Newtongrange). Subject: "Preparation for the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah."

Hindley Bible School.—Saturday, May 20th, to Tuesday, May 23rd. Prayer meetings, lectures, discussions, gospel meetings. Preacher: Bro. W. Crosthwaite (Ulverston). Write for hospitality to: Bro. T. Kemp, 52 Argyle Street, Hindley, Wigan, Lancashire.

Eastwood: Seymour Road.—Seventh anniversary of the opening of our meeting-place, Saturday and Sunday, May 6th and 7th, 1961. Speakers: Bro. F. Worgan (Ince) and Bro. A. E. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells). Saturday, May 6th, tea 4.15 p.m.; evening meeting 6 p.m. A very cordial invitation. An intimation of probable numbers would greatly assist catering.—Chas. Limb., secy.

AN INVITATION

Cleveleys.—May we remind brethren spending their holidays in Blackpool or the Fylde coast that we shall be pleased to welcome them to our meetings in the Co-operative Hall, Beach Road, Cleveleys.

The meeting for breaking of bread is at 10.30 a.m., and evening meetings will be held, when possible, at 6.30 p.m. If any visiting brother is prepared to serve the church please advise the secretary, Bro. Eric Winter, 77 Kelvin Road, Norbreck, Blackpool.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The address of the secretary for the church meeting at Wallacestone now is James Grant, 45 Kirkwood Avenue, Redding, By Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Scotland.

MARRIAGE

Bro. John Sharp and Sis. Margery Robertson, in the meeting-place at St. David's, Newtongrange, on February 25th, Bro. Morris Finlay officiating.

BIRTH

To Derek and Margaret Daniell, of Tunbridge Wells: a son, on Tuesday, 14th March. Both fine.

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EVANGELIST FUND: Contributions to R. McDONALD, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, nr. Wigan.
NYASALAND Mission: Contributions to W. STEELE, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

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