

The **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

VOL. 20, No. 12

DECEMBER, 1954.

TWENTY YEARS

IN January, 1935, the first number of *The Scripture Standard* was published : so that the present issue completes twenty years. In our first editorial we wrote : "Our purpose in erecting *The Scripture Standard* is to endeavour to rally once more the loyal-hearted to 'contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.' 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."

At the end of ten years, we wrote : 'Adapting Paul's words, we say, "Having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those taught in the Scriptures, and fought for by the pioneers of the Restoration Movement"' (S.S., Dec., 1944).

By the grace of God, we have continued our witness for another ten years. To Him our heart's gratitude is due. To His name be all the praise and glory !

Events have fully justified our witness. The Co-operation (now Association) of Churches of Christ has drifted far away from those distinctive and vital matters which justified their separate existence, and made them a real force in the religious world.

The chairman of their 1953 Conference, in a series of queries, aptly described their present tragic state : 'Shall we end our witness, break up our Association and cease to exist as Churches of New Testament order ? Should we merge, here with the Baptists, there with the Congregationalists, and so on ; or should we, cut off from long-established friendships and fellowship, drift into unknown seas, rudderless, without captain or compass, and end our Churches one by one as sorry witnesses to the truth of the sneer that those who talked most of Christian unity were themselves lost because they could not unite ?' (*Year Book*, 1953, p.39.)

Judging by their official magazine, and other literature, they have ended their distinctive witness. Through union with the Free Church Federal Council and inter-communion they are merged with sectarian parties, and are now drifting without captain or compass to utter shipwreck and extinction. History has repeated itself once more,

About eighty years ago, a prominent member in the Wigan district, of whom it was said 'he had the misfortune to get rich,' visited America, and seeing how the work went there, planned the conquest of England with American preachers and methods. Some of America's best-trained and ablest preachers were brought over, fine meeting-houses were erected, open communion and collections were permitted, and instrumental music in worship was employed. After forty years' strenuous and costly efforts as 'a dying cause' they were in 1917 received into the Co-operation of Churches of Christ. They had on paper, and mainly on paper, fifteen churches with fifteen hundred members.

During the same period, the old slow brethren, who refused to move from the New Testament position, established seventy-four churches and added 9,337 members. That should have been a lesson for all time. But after amalgamation with the 'Christian Association Churches,' as they were called, their methods, which had proved such an ignominious failure, were gradually adopted. They pleaded for establishment of a Theological College, for 'ministers' for each church, etc. When at 1917 Conference the amalgamation was being discussed, Bro. Buckeridge, who had been a Baptist minister, said, 'I am wondering why I left the Baptists.' Well, their methods have proved disastrous to Churches of Christ. In 1918 the membership of Churches in Britain was 16,437; the 1954 figures are 8,950, a decrease of 7,487. The spiritual life of the Churches is infinitely lower, and the average attendance at the Lord's Table is less than a third of the membership.

What Are You Going To Do About It?

Are you still going to remain among them, and drift with them to shipwreck? Are you going to sit still and, through fear to speak out, be part-takers of their deeds? Many say, 'We don't support them financially.' Well, that is really the end of your co-operation. But your church is on their list, and you are counted as being with them. Why not manfully 'come out from among them' and join those who by their refusal to move from the New Testament position have saved the Restoration Movement in Britain?

It is gratifying to know that those who sent out that notorious 'strictly confidential' circular, advising Churches to boycott Old Paths preachers and literature, are now advising that approaches should be made with a view to 'reconciliation with the Old Paths Movement' (*Year Book*, 1954, p.161). We heartily welcome this change of attitude; and we pray and hope for reconciliation by a return to the ground on which Churches of Christ stood at the first. Leaders in the Association freely concede that we have not moved from the original position of Churches of Christ. They even charge us with making no progress and with still being where the Churches were fifty years ago. We plead guilty to that charge. If the Churches were on right Scriptural ground then, why should we move? It is well to remember that 'there is an advance which is not progress, but apostacy.'

The result of that advance is seen in the deplorable and desperate state of Churches of Christ to-day.

On Which Side Are You?

There is no neutral ground. You are either with those who have wrecked the Churches of Christ, or with those who are trying to save them.

"In this strife none can be neutral,
Each must yield to some control,
We should boldly show our colour,
Form in line, and call the roll."

EDITOR,

THE MYTH OF DECEMBER 25TH

THERE is no evidence whatever that Jesus was born on December 25th. The keeping of Easter and Christmas are of pagan origin, coming from ancient Babylon and introduced into the Christian system when apostasy had set in.

When Jesus was born is not revealed, and it was not until the third century that the custom took root and December 25th observed: The very term Christmas — Christ-Mass — indicates its source. Hence the word should not be upon the lips, *nor on the greeting cards* of those pleading for a return to Christianity as it was at first. We lie to the children when we tell them Jesus was born on December 25th, and the religious world and the world in general is guilty of gross misrepresentation. A little common sense could dispel this myth for ever. In recent weeks, the restoration Churches of Christ here and overseas have begun Lord's Day morning readings from the Gospel of Luke. And what a glorious and profound book it is! I wonder how many have noted that in chapter one, verse twenty-six, that it was *in the sixth month* (i.e., September) when the angel Gabriel came to Mary with the message that she should 'bring forth a son.' Assuming conception took place within the next three months, Jesus would, in any case, be born the following summer.

Cold weather in Palestine, as in our country, is expected from December to March. Consequently the shepherds would *not* be keeping watch over their flocks then—three or four months more, or later, yes. Also, it was unlikely Cæsar Augustus would order 'that all the world should be taxed' and 'every man go to his own city' in cold, wet weather. There is every reason to believe Joseph and Mary went the eighty miles or so from Nazareth to Bethlehem in high summer.

Some of the hymns written about the birth of Jesus are most fanciful and have no foundation in fact. Think of No. 75 in the *Christian Hymnary* by Christina Rossetti:—

"In the bleak mid-winter,
Frosty wind made moan;
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow.
In the bleak mid-winter long ago."

This is probably as far from fact as anything could be.

Then in reference to the wise men who came from the east, W. C. Dix, in 'As with gladness men of old,' wrote:—

"As they offered gifts most rare,
At that manger, rude and bare."

Dix evidently was not familiar with Matthew's gospel, where in chapter two, he tells us that 'when they [the wise men] were come *into the house* they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down and worshipped him.' Jesus would be weeks or months old when the wise men arrived in the house. The religious world, as ever, prefers tradition to truth.

There is no harder task in the world than to get *religious people* to see and believe simple New Testament truth, and the sickening nonsense believed about the birth of Jesus is a glaring example.

A. L. FRITH.

'WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?'

FROM what has come to our knowledge, it seems desirable—and the Editor concurs—to carry a little further our investigation of the words above quoted.

A personal statement may be forgiven. While knowing how easy it is to deceive oneself, it has for long been my aim to disabuse my mind of any Biblical theory or idea which cannot clearly be proved from God's Word, and it is from that position we seek to approach this subject.

Let me first say there is an essential difference between the resurrection of Jesus Christ and that of man at the last day. The raising of the body of Christ was a prime requisite to establish the fact; only by presenting His actual body alive, to be seen and handled, could resurrection be proved.

When He returns at the last day, He will not come to prove the fact of a resurrection, acceptance then will be too late. He will come to bring it about. It does not follow, therefore, that because the resurrection of Christ was bodily, the resurrection of those who look for His appearance must or will be bodily also.

Now a reference back to conclusions reached in our previous article :
1. At death, the spirit is not buried with the body, but survives (lives unto God). 2. The body dissolves to the dust from which it came.

That the Scriptures positively teach the first cannot be denied; and if the answer to Paul's supposed question about the body, how it comes, is, there is no body—well, that is the answer, and the question becomes foolish, as Paul, I believe, frankly says.

Students of Jurisprudence contend that the most convincing evidence is the circumstantial, the incidental things that surround a matter to be decided, and it is to these we give attention.

As supporting instances mentioned in our previous article, we take the passage in Eccles. 12, which declares that, at death, 'the spirit returns to God who gave it.' In the N.T., when the Lord said to the daughter of Jairus, 'Maid arise,' we are told, 'her spirit returned.' Had He not intervened, her body would have been buried, but not her spirit. Moreover, it was 'her spirit' that 'came back,' showing the preservation of the identity of the person. Divest the parable of the rich man and the beggar of its pictorial elements, and what is left brings out the same teaching of personal survival. Lastly, the words of Jesus: 'Now that the dead are raised, Moses showed at the bush, when He called the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, for He is not a God of the dead, but of the living.' The phrasing of that reply is sufficient to prove not only survival of the spirit, but the preservation of personal identity.

Those who have sung in Handel's Messiah (as I have) or have heard from platform and over the radio wonderful singing of the best loved of all arias, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' will have had ringing in their ears Job's words, 'Though the worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.' And, if they remember what Paul writes—so emphatically—that 'flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God,' they may find satisfaction in knowing that the Hebrew words, translated in Job 16, 'my flesh' are elsewhere given as 'myself': 'in myself shall I see God.' That that is the true reading is sure from what follows: 'Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.'

We have stressed both survival of the spirit and preservation of the identity of the person because, once it is realised that the spirit—the essential part of a person—is not laid in the grave with the body, but survives and is

identified as living unto God, a resurrection of the body becomes meaningless. This being true, whatever may seem to be taught elsewhere in the Scriptures must be mentally adjusted to accord with it. 'Let God [in His Word] be true, though every man be a liar.'

As for the resurrection of the body, turn again to Paul's analogy : 'That which thou sowest [wheat or some other grain] is not quickened unless it die.' Of grain, I have no experience to draw upon, but have both sown and gathered potatoes. Lifting a row of these will reveal differences, root by root. Mostly, there will be no sign whatever of the seed from which a plant has grown. Occasionally, the seed's outer skin will remain attached to the plant, and, rarely, a whole potato may be found, rotten or perhaps still hard, but 'on the turn.' What can be drawn from these facts? Nothing that will suggest a resurrection of what was sown—the body. The only immortality that is suggested is that held by some—but which no Christian can accept—the immortality that comes from passing on to the next generation what has been received from the past, and added to by each one of us by the sort of life we live. That is not the Bible view of immortality, which is, we contend, the survival of personal identity by the preservation of the spirit.

'The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth' (John 5 : 28). John tells us that Jesus 'had no need that anyone should testify of man, for he himself knew what was in man.' With us identification is bodily, the only sure means of identification we have. It colours our thoughts and speech. When we think of the dead we think of them as in their graves, and so speak of them. If we change slightly the phrasing of the above verse and write, 'Those whose bodies are in their graves shall hear and come forth,' we do not think we change in any way what is being taught.

But what is the responsive part of a person, the body or the spirit? There is only one answer to that, as Paul writes : 'What man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him?' Why then look for, or hanker after, a resurrection of the body, when it is the spirit which is the real person? And the spirit is not in the grave with the body, but 'lives unto God,' whatever that may mean.

'Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed' (1 Cor. 15).

The death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, in remarkable fashion, pass through all the phases covered by Paul's revelation concerning the dead and those who are alive at the last day. The death of the Redeemer was the death of a man; the body that was buried was a human body, and the body that was buried was the body that lived again—risen from the dead. When He appeared to His disciples they thought they saw a spirit. 'Why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have.' He walked and talked with them. He took food with them; all of which means that He had the same mortal form as before He died. It must be so, or it was an imposture. No other way was open to prove to the disciples—and through them all that should hear through their word—that resurrection was a fact.

So it was in all His appearances up to the day of His ascension. He was the same Jesus who had been with them all through—mortal as they were mortal.

Then He left them—and what happened? Did the same law apply to Him as shall rule with those who are living when He returns—of whom it

is written, 'they shall be changed?' While even His apostles gazed upwards, was He changed—and did His mortal frame then take on immortality? The answer must surely be, Yes. For 'flesh and blood [and bones] cannot inherit the kingdom of God.' Is it not that that Paul means when he says speaking of those who are alive: 'We shall be changed'? All that goes to make an earthly body will be dropped and the spirit freed to join those who, up to that moment, had been the living dead?

We think belief in a resurrection of the body persists because of the use Scripture makes of the term 'body,' which calls for attention.

That the word 'resurrection' does not necessarily imply the raising of a body from the grave is seen in the words of Jesus to the Sadducees, which we partly quote, once again: 'As touching the dead, that they do arise . . .' nothing is there said, actual or implied, about the bodies of the persons named. The Greek word, *anastasis*, from which resurrection comes, is found in Luke 2:34, in words of Simeon: 'This child is set for the fall and rising [*anastasis*] of many in Israel,' and no one will claim that as referring to the resurrection of the dead.

As we understand it, resurrection of the dead means entry into a new state of existence. As Paul puts it: 'It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body.' The latter of these, from our human standpoint, is a contradiction of terms: 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones.' If it is spirit, it is not body. But we are not left altogether in the dark for interpretation. 'God is spirit,' and fills the immensity of space. We can write the words, but cannot understand the power and wisdom involved.

Jesus breathed on His disciples, saying, 'Receive the Holy Spirit,' and a breath is a reality and immeasurable, as is the wind to which He likened the spirit when speaking of being born again. He also said, 'My words they are spirit.' All words have spirit of one kind or another, but as they are passed from one to another we have no means of assessing the power that is motivated by them. All this illustrates the reality of spiritual existence in a form outside human experience and knowledge which resurrection will reveal. This is what John tells us: 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be,' and I contend that those who insist on a resurrection of the body claim to know what is unknowable. Paul supports John. He says, 'Our vile body' shall be 'changed' ['made of another form' is given as a literal rendering], that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, which is again something we cannot know. Our view is that that spirit which was once identified with a man's natural body, kept and preserved by God, in His good time will be raised, 'lifted' to a higher sphere of living, and given a 'body' such as will correspond with the new state into which he enters at his resurrection. Having borne the image of the earthy, he may henceforth bear the image of the heavenly.

W. BARKER.

'WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?'

Dear Brother,—I feel that there must be many simple Christian people like myself who have experienced a sense of shock, and perhaps alarm, by the suggestion in October *Scripture Standard* under the heading, 'With what Body do they Come,' that the body of a Christian is put into the earth, or otherwise disposed of, and is, as our Bro. W. Barker suggests, 'lost for ever.' Bro. Barker says

he 'does not think Scripture warrants a belief in the resurrection of the body at the end of the age.'

At the risk of being thought one of the fools referred to by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, I suggest that there is abundant evidence in the Word to show that there *will* be a resurrection of the body at the time appointed by the Lord Jesus.

John 5:28 reads: 'Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which

all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and *shall come forth,* etc.

Our Bro. Barker wisely says that the analogical likeness of a seed to a deceased human body must not be pressed too far. Are we not straining the analogy too much when we say that a condition for the resurrection of the body is that it must have the germ of life in it the same as the seed has? I suggest that at this point we dispense with human reasoning and logical arguments, and bring to mind the almighty power of God 'which raiseth the dead' (2 Cor. 1:9).

I find a likeness of the seed to the body in that they are both put into the place of death, and they both come out of the place of death. Our Bro. Barker points out that when we think of man as having body, soul, and spirit, the analogy ceases to be, because the seed is devoid of spirit, soul and body. I would also point out that the likeness of the body to the seed no longer exists, while they are in the place of death, because the seed *never* dies, while the body is dead.

There is no doubt that 'they that die in the Lord' (Rev. 14:13) will have undergone a tremendous change when they come out of the graves for "So is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body' (1 Cor. 15:42-44).

Remarkable indeed is the change that has been brought about, depending not upon any law, natural or spiritual, but upon the wonder working, miraculous power of God, who 'giveth it [the same seed] a body as it hath pleased Him' (1 Cor. 15:38).

It is significant that when our Lord comes again for His own, He will operate first of all in the domain of death, where ungodly men last saw Him, for "The dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 3:16). This statement must refer to the physical body in the grave, or in the state of death, because the person who has obeyed the Gospel call to belief, repentance, confession, and baptism, receives by the new birth, eternal life from God, and being in a state of life does not require to be resurrected from a dead state, thus when we read of resurrection of or from the dead, it must refer to that part of a Christian that is in the grip of death or the grave.

I know Bro. Barker does not suggest that our God is limited in His ability to bring the dead to life, but there may be those who do. There are three supernatural occurrences that took place when Jesus died on the cross, recorded in Matthew 27:51-53. The rending of the temple veil from top to bottom, the earthquake, and 'the graves were opened,

and many of the bodies of the saints that slept arose and came out of the graves, after His resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.'

In the light of our knowledge of God from His Word, I would ask with the Apostle Paul in closing, 'Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?' (Acts 26:8).

GEORGE McILROY.

[The foregoing letter was received by the Editor after the article over my name printed in this issue, was sent to him. To some extent it touches on points made by Bro. McIlroy, but (D.V.) I will reply more directly in next month's issue.—W. BARKER.]

'OUR BELOVED BROTHER PAUL.'

On pp. 151, 152 of October S.S. W.B. has (perhaps unwittingly) adversely criticised the Holy Spirit's word, uttered through our beloved brother Paul. (1 Cor. 15), who by the Holy Spirit demands of those who think themselves a prophet or spiritual, that they acknowledge that his writings *are* the commandments of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37). And Peter also wrote by the Holy Spirit: 'Our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things (our Lord's long suffering), in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction' (2 Peter 3:15, 16).

Claiming humility, W.B. states he has looked into Paul's three revelations (really God's) as to how the dead are raised, and does not 'think Scripture warrants a belief in the resurrection of the body at the end of the age.' He further intimates he dislikes being termed a fool in plain English. Well, who does? And yet circumstances sometimes force us to admit past follies. Why not wisely admit we are foolish now?

Foreknowing W.B.'s dislike of too great plainness of speech, the Holy Spirit through Paul says of the dead body, 'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.' W.B. sadly errs in selecting 'animal' as the Scripture meaning of a word which, by context and 315 years of Greek scholarship, means the natural body of a human being, in some of which the Holy Spirit of God deigns to dwell, scorning temples made with hands, and especially the bodies of animals (beasts) as of dogs, cats, horses, camels, oxen, and even apes, though some people seem proud of a fancied resemblance to the last-named, and seek to establish a relationship to them as forebears of themselves.

While those animated things were created on the fifth day, man, the crowning work of creation was made in God's image on the sixth day and was given

dominion over all other earthly life. God further bestowed such exceeding grace upon mankind—sinners doomed to eternal torment—as to love us all to such an extent that He gave His co-eternal Son—the Word by whom all things were made—to be born of a woman, to become the resolute willing sacrifice for all mankind, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Furthermore, God ordained that since by one man sin entered the world and death (corruption) by sin, by *Man* should also come the resurrection of the dead (incorruption).

On this point, the Holy Spirit, through the great apostle Paul says: "Now, may the God of peace, himself, sanctify you *wholly*, and your entire spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is faithful who calls you, who also will perform it." (1 Thes. 5:23, 24).

W. W. SCOTT (Canada).

[The above letter and the one that follows it are of such personal character that it would be folly indeed to attempt any reply to them. They are printed so that readers may judge for themselves the way some people react to a sincere desire to know the truth. —W. BARKER.]

Dear Brother Editor.—Congratulations and thanks to Bro. Groom and the Hereford Church for the article on 'Man as he was, as he is, and as he may become.' Let us have more of this sound scriptural teaching; it is the only way to prevent members from drifting into unscriptural speculations based upon ideas they have picked up elsewhere.

That has been the whole trouble with professing Christian bodies down the entire age, the substitution of worldly or 'scholarly' speculation for the revealed truths of Christianity.

This question of the inherent mortality of mankind since the fall, and the redemption (or buying back) accomplished by Christ Jesus in His death and resurrection, is the very heart and kernel of the Christian Gospel. To compromise on that is to deny Christ. To believe any other than the full redemption of man, spirit, soul and body—labels one a non-Christian.

At the present time, so very near to the Coming of our Lord, 'who shall change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body,' it is essential that we examine ourselves to see whether we conform to the required standard, lest we be ashamed before Him at His coming.

Our prayer should be that of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 'The very God of

peace sanctify us *wholly*, and I pray God that our *whole* spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto [or at] the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

H. ARDRON.

AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

TWO of the foregoing letters quote 1 Thess. 5: 23 as an answer to what I have written against a resurrection of the body at the last day. Lest I am thought to be evading Paul's words as quoted; this reply is made.

The apostle was exhorting the Thessalonian Christians to walk worthy of their calling. His theme was sanctification of the whole man, body, soul and spirit, and has no reference to the resurrection of the body. Spirit, soul and body constitute a *living* person, not one who is dead. Moreover, only a living person could sanctify himself. At death, spirit and soul have departed, and the body is an empty shell.

Paul's prayer that they be preserved blameless was written to Christians who apparently were living in daily expectation of the coming of Jesus Christ. Here is Moffatt's translation of the verse: 'May the God of peace consecrate you, through and through. Spirit, soul and body, may you be kept without break or blame till the arrival of our Lord, Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, he will do this.'

How wrong in their expectation those early Christians were, the years that have passed since then testify. A warning to all those, in this day, who indulge themselves with expectations of this kind.

W. BARKER

MAN AS HE WAS, IS, AND MAY BECOME.

Some have expressed surprise that the article on this was published with no note or comment from us.

We did insert a note in November S.S. that 'the Editor does not necessarily endorse all that appears in the magazine,' etc.

We hope (D.V.) to publish some notes on the article in our next issue, as some of its statements should not go unchallenged.

EDITOR.

CONFERENCE—April 9th, 1955.

Will any church desirous of entertaining the conference please communicate with the conference secretary?

Also as it is customary for the conference committee to prepare the agenda for the conference, will any brother who wishes any subject to be discussed at the conference please advise the conference secretary, A. Hood, 8 Torquay Avenue, West Hartlepool, Co. Durham. Phone: Hartlepool 4716.

FAMILY CIRCLE

conducted by Harold Baines

ART OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

AS I intimated in the introduction to this series, unaccompanied congregational singing was, and still is, in many Churches of Christ, an integral part of Church life. That its quality has declined somewhat in recent years is no doubt due to a variety of reasons to which the writer could refer, but which is really outside the scope of this present series.

Congregational singing is an art, an accomplishment not achieved easily, one in which every member of the congregation must play a part.

How often do we not hear, after a good service, 'Hasn't the singing gone well to-day?' and if you look for a reason you find that every member of the congregation has put *heart* into it, for that is the art of congregational singing.

Many denominations have begun to realise that the so-called "Aids to Worship," in organs and choirs, have not achieved what they were intended to achieve. An organ requires a trained musician as a first qualification, and a trained choir soon wants to sing anthems and cantatas to 'show off' their training, and the accent of singing tends to be diverted from the congregation to the choir, making the former an audience and not a congregation at all, somebody just gathered to listen, not to participate.

Let me suggest one or two essential constituents of good singing. First, a good singing leader or precentor, one who knows his tune book and his congregation. Nothing tends to destroy the tempo of good singing sooner than unfamiliar and unsuitable tunes to well-chosen hymns. A precentor needs to *know* his congregation, its singing capabilities and its range. For instance, a small congregation, say, at a prayer meeting, with perhaps a dominance of male members, often requires a different pitch of tune to a large audience with predominating female voices.

It is also unwise to choose four-part harmony tunes with complicated bass or tenor 'runs' in them if there are no tenors or basses to handle those runs. So, my fellow-church singing leaders, know your singers and their capabilities.

My second rule would be: Singers, follow your leader. Don't jump in front and don't lag behind. How often do we singing leaders find that, after having led off with the tune, the job is taken out of our hands at the next verse by some powerful dominating and perhaps untuneful voice that hasn't the time or patience to let the congregation finish one verse before they are away on the next, so don't forget, brothers and sisters, follow your leader.

Thirdly, a word for those who choose our hymns. Give a thought to the type of meeting, its size and capabilities, and don't be afraid of revising your choice of hymns if you find there is a likelihood of them being unsuitable. Give a thought to your precentor. Remember, in a hymn he has to note the measure, find a tune to that measure, and the key or pitch in which it is written. And yet how often is he "put on the spot" by thoughtless brethren reading out a short verse of hymn and calling a congregation to rise and sing before ascertaining whether the precentor has a tune ready.

So the art of congregational singing can be summed up in the word combination: a sense of mutual responsibility by leaders and wholehearted support by the congregation itself.

APPRECIATION OF SISTER WHYTE.

On the 14th October, 1954, we laid to rest in its original earth the earthly tabernacle of Sister Whyte, of Crofthead, Fauldhouse.

With confidence we spoke of the hope she had of a glorious resurrection from the dead. It is difficult in a short statement to give justice to any mention of this worthy saint.

Her life was a monument of victory over the things which try the faith of many. She was widowed early, and with four girls to raise she returned to her profession of school teaching.

I do not ever remember hearing her grumble, but have experienced her correcting influence when prone to indulge in that condition myself.

I learned to love and respect our sister in early life. As a boy, I visited her home and found the time spent there, after attending Bible classes with her family and others under the guidance of James Wardrop, a delightful discipline.

Her benevolence and high qualities were often spoken of by the people of the district. I was often made proud to hear men speak of her while I worked beside them.

My first attempt at preaching was largely due to our sister's influence. She suggested the title and the headings and sub-headings of that talk. In later stages of my development, she was my severest critic, but only once did I resent it, and that one occasion I regretted, for I soon learned that her aim was wise and good.

This may sound too much like a personal appreciation, but I feel sure that I was not alone the subject of her care and guidance, and so I write for many others also.

She was a keen supporter of every effort to spread the good news at home and overseas. Her support was expressed in practical ways.

A few days before she fell asleep in Jesus, I had the pleasure of sitting at her bedside. While she sometimes wandered in her talk to scenes of her childhood there was still evident that crisp expression which was so characteristic of her.

This rare volume was showing signs of wear in its handsome covers, which for so long had borne the stamp of the author. The index was slightly disarranged, because eternity was already making itself felt on the page of time.

The story of her life has been closed, and we wait the day when the Author and the Finisher will give that new binding to His works, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal immortality.

W. STEELE.

A HYMN FOR THE 'BREAKING OF BREAD.'

(Tune: 'Abends')

Oh Saviour dear, how sweet to be
Amid life's cares, from care set free,
An honoured guest at Thy behest,
Around Thy Table, Lord, with Thee!

What do these symbols mean to me:
The bread and wine? O Lord, I see
Therein Thy body, Love divine,
And blood which flowed for sin of mine!

And so there comes communion sweet
From this blest union, here so meet,
Of my dear Saviour's life divine,
Offered, united, Lord, to mine!

My peace I give, my peace I leave,
Not as the world, oh, do not grieve!
Let not your heart e'er troubled be,
Be not afraid, but lean on Me!

And so, dear Saviour, we will meet,
On this Thy day, of days most sweet,
Just to remember Thy great love
Till endless joy with Thee above.

S. JEPSON.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

NOTES ON THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR DECEMBER, 1954.

Dec. 5.—Isaiah 61; Luke 4:16-37.

Dec. 12.—Ezekiel 47:1-12; Luke 4:38 to 5:16.

Dec. 19.—Amos 7! Luke 5:17-39.

Dec. 26.—Exodus 18:13-27; Luke 6:1-19.

Jesus is rejected by His own townsfolk (4:16-30).—It is clear that the events here recorded follow those recorded by John in his gospel—the miracle at Cana, the cleansing of the Temple, Nicodemus' visit and the woman of Samaria. He had been gladly received in Capernaum and district and had worked miracles there—verse 23. We think this visit to Nazareth must have been His only and final visit during the time of His public ministry, and is therefore the same with that recorded in Matt. 13:54-58 and Mark 6:1-6.

Only a short time before this scene, Jesus had been in the midst of these people as the village carpenter. He

makes a stupendous claim, and His gracious speech confirms it. It was further confirmed by what these daily companions of early days knew of the past life and the immediate past of preaching and healing, and they wondered at first with an astonishment beyond words.

It might be so with us when our companions outstrip us entirely in later life, but may God forbid that we be moved by the motives that seem to have actuated the Nazarenes (and later those who were successful in their murderous intentions). Their astonishment gave way to unbelief. The beauty of a peerlessly pure life, and words of profound wisdom and grace, lost their charm as unbelief and jealousy developed into murder. Here is no pandering to human nature, but plain statement of truth—first the revelation of their own wrong condition of heart, then the recital of God's mercy towards the 'outsiders.' Only His dauntless and majestic bearing saved them from becoming in act what they already were in heart. Meditate on the Saviour's thoughts as He left the scenes of His childhood and early manhood never to return. Compare John 8:59; 18:6.

The cure of the Demoniac (4:31-37).—Capernaum now becomes the centre of the Saviour's mission and life. His fame was already spreading (verse 14). Farrar fittingly describes His life as 'the unwearied toil of a self-renouncing love.' Here in the synagogue the spell of His teaching brings the multitude together but the meeting is interrupted by the ravings of one under the power of demons (messengers of the evil one). It seems strange that these give testimony to the identity of the Lord, but He invariably silences them as on this occasion, and His power to overcome is so plainly manifested that all those under the same domination have hope, and seek relief with complete assurance (verse 41). This incident is but one case of many.

Further cures (4:38-44).—We know from John 1:40 and 41 that Jesus was already known to Peter, Andrew, James and John, and it may be that Jesus would now reside with Peter from time to time, so it is not surprising that one of His earliest miracles brought immediate health back to his wife's mother. The scene at sunset has been well put into poetry and song by the hymn writer, but there could hardly be anything so graphic as the gospel narrative. Our familiarity perhaps hides what we should see here—an immeasurable benefit to multitudes in sore need of help and not having anyone to turn to—until the prophet from Nazareth appeared.

How glorious a fulfilment indeed of Isaiah 9:1 and 2; 53:4 (the sympathetic doctor feels his patient's pain). Doubtless the multitude waited till sunset to avoid breaking the Sabbath—or its traditions. Note there was no delay or doubt

here based upon the patients' condition. It was perhaps a perfectly natural and selfish desire to keep Jesus in the one place, but we note (1) He sought quietness, (2) His great mission was to preach—that is 'evangelise.' Mark 1:36 tells us this retirement was for prayer, but Simon and others 'hunted Him down' (A.V. 'followed after Him').

The final call of four apostles (5:1-11). The crowds on the shore of the lake were pressing around and making speaking to be properly heard, difficult. Jesus accordingly takes a better way by moving out on the water and using Simon's boat for the purpose, afterwards suggests letting down the nets. We can safely assume He knew the unsuccessful efforts of the night. It would be folly to expect to fish successfully in the day when the night efforts had failed, and yet it is hardly a surprise that Peter obeyed in view of the relationship already established, and the miracles already wrought in the midst. But what did follow filled all with awe and astonishment, and proved the turning point in the lives of Andrew, Peter, James and John. We observe Peter's deep consciousness of unworthiness and sin, so necessary if we are to be acceptable in God's service. 'Forsook all'—what a depth of meaning in this.

Healing a leper (5:12-16).—The Mosaic laws for lepers is one of separation, and to touch one would make the person 'unclean' until he had fulfilled the requirements for cleansing. This man is in desperate condition 'full of leprosy.' Matthew (8:2-4) and Mark (1:40-45) give us his full entreaty—'worshipped,' 'beseeching,' 'kneeling'—and Luke 'fell on his face.' He has realised the power without realising the willingness of the Saviour. We do not even know however that he gave obedience to his Saviour in fulfilling the requirements of the Law, and he certainly did not obey the command 'tell no man,' so that Jesus was driven into the 'desert places' (Mark 1:45). But He needed to be there also for prayer.

The healing of the Paralytic (5:17-26).—Mark again records a detail we might otherwise miss (2:1). Jesus comes back to Capernaum. The crowds gather, scribes and Pharisees with them (for no good purpose perhaps). Jesus teaches in a house.

Four friends brought the sick man so far and were so persistent, but Jesus, we notice, recognised *their* faith, and forgave the man his sins—that was his most urgent need whether his friends knew it or not, and that is always so with us too. This being a divine prerogative—and always so regarded—brought criticism, which was immediately and effectively silenced by the physical miracle which followed. The 'couch' would probably be more like a mat, or at most a palliase. The multitude were

satisfied and glorified God, but we fear it was not so with the 'masters of Israel.'

Publicans and sinners (5:27-32).—The tax-gatherer proved to be a very useful apostle, having given us so wonderful a story in the first gospel. Perhaps there is an even greater break from the old life in this case than with the four above-mentioned. It would seem that Matthew was a comparatively wealthy man—as were so many of the tax-gatherers. He held a great feast in his house, not to return to it any more—'we have left all and followed Thee.' The critics are well answered again—and there is surely pointed irony in it, calculated to make students of the Law of sin and death, think upon their condition before God.

New and Old Customs (5:33-39).—The question of the contract between John and Jesus is raised on the matter of fasting. He lived a separated life to call men away from self-indulgence and sin, and for his proper work in Israel this was necessary. It was necessary for the Saviour's purposes that His disciples should live among men in friendly relationship on order that they should inculcate the new behaviour, and while they were with their Master this was safe for them. Their time of grief was to come, however, and it would be an entire break with the old dispensation. To patch the old up with parts of the new would spoil the new and not repair but further damage the old. The new must be accepted, the old put away. Nevertheless it was true in spite of the new being better, that it would be natural to want to hold on to the old. I have heard it said 'We are all conservatives at heart'—which is not politics but a sensible warning about rejecting new thoughts without consideration. However we cannot improve upon God's thoughts.

The Lord of the Sabbath (6:1-5).—There is a development of antagonism towards Jesus. Much of it finds vent in criticising His own and His disciples' behaviour on the Sabbath. A multitude of trivial regulations has been added to the Law itself by the 'traditions of the elders,' and these are what the disciples broke. The Saviour, however, takes the question further, points out the apparent attitude of David and the then high priest, and then Himself claims Lordship over the Sabbath—which of course meant defiance of the regulations and anticipation of the Law's removal.

Further defiance of the Traditions (6:6-11).—It may be that the man with the withered hand had been brought to the synagogue with the purpose of trapping Jesus (verse 7 indicates this). He knew their thoughts, and made so open an attack upon their evil thoughts that all would know them. Mark gives us an additional fact (Mark 3:5). Jesus was angry being grieved for their hardness

of heart. Christians are required to be 'tender-hearted.' The result of this miracle was 'a council against Him' (Matt. 12:13), an alliance with enemies to destroy Him (Mark 3:6), and 'madness' the motive.

Choice of Apostles (6:12-19).—How vital this matter was no one can fully realise. Well has our Lord set us the example when vital matters have to be considered in our lives or in the Lord's work. 'All night in prayer' would be a small thing. I suppose we all know a disciple is a learner; an apostle is a messenger or ambassador—'one sent out.'

We must learn before we can take greater responsibility. 'Twelve valiant saints, the chosen few on whom the Spirit came' are here being prepared for their great work. This time of the Saviour's ministry is filled with works of mercy so that the whole country and even surrounding districts knew and sought after Him—Tyre and Sidon, and Greeks—so great was His fame.

R. B. SCOTT.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Birmingham, Summer Lane.—We had a wonderful time at our eighty-ninth anniversary tea and meeting, on Saturday, November 6th, being much encouraged by a large company of brethren who came in coachloads from Leicester, Nottingham and Derby districts, besides some from the local Churches and Leamington. After tea in the school-room, we assembled in our chapel and annex under the presidency of our Bro. W. G. Griffin, and a most helpful time was enjoyed as we listened to messages from our visiting speakers, Bro. R. B. Scott, of Kentish Town, and Bro. Chas. Limb, of Eastwood. Bro. Scott remained over with us to the Lord's Day, when he exhorted the Church at the meeting for Breaking of Bread, and preached the Gospel for us in the evening. We are grateful to all who by their services made this memorable occasion so enjoyable, and particularly so to our visiting speakers, whose messages were a source of inspiration.

FRED. C. DAY.

Capetown, Woodstock.—On the morning of September 12th, 1954, we witnessed an elderly woman confess the Lord Jesus and become united with Him in baptism, before our Breaking of Bread service, after which she was received into fellowship with the Church. Then on the afternoon of October 3rd we were again privileged to witness two of our young Bible School scholars (sisters) who had attended same for a period of twelve to fourteen years, and a teen-age also, put on the Lord in baptism.

One of these sisters was Doreen Gedult of whom it was mentioned in our last report had received her last Bible School prize this year, after having attended for fourteen years. Thus these two meetings were again to us a real 'spiritual refreshing,' and where the writer and Bro. Gray of the Woodstock Assembly were privileged to express words of encouragement to the candidates and all present.

We therefore continue to labour trusting, by the grace of God, that these 'seasons' might provoke us to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. The 'harvest is indeed plenteous,' ready for the reaping, to the glory of God, if we will but realise our calling to exercise our responsibility in this respect. Pray for us, as we pray for you, that many souls might be saved, as Christ is coming, and when He comes He may say, 'Well done.' T. HARTLE.

East Ardsley.—The Church held its anniversary services on Saturday and Sunday, October 30th and 31st. A good number of brethren and sisters from other Churches partook of tea. The evening meeting, which was very well attended, was presided over by Bro. T. Blackmore (Wortley) and the speakers were Bro. Eric Winter (Blackpool) and Bro. Len Channing (London). The messages of all three were indeed very inspiring and well delivered. The theme of each speaker was Christian living and witness, and there was no mistaking the earnestness of the preaching. Many expressed the deep impression the messages had made upon them.

On the Lord's Day, Bro. Winter edified the Church at the breaking of bread, and Bro. Channing preached at the gospel service.

The whole week-end was indeed one of uplift, encouragement, and blessing.

E. PICKERSGILL.

Great Yarmouth.—The annual rally organised by the North of Scotland Fishermen from Buckle and Peterhead was held on October 23rd at 7 p.m. in the Park Baptist Tabernacle Hall. There were fifty-six present, composed of twenty-seven brethren representing churches in Buckle, Cleveleys, Dewsbury, Eastwood, East Kirkby, Morley, Peterhead, and Tranent, and twenty-nine non-members.

After the singing of 'All hail the power of Jesu's Name,' Bro. Fred Sugden, from Morley, who was chairman, gave a warm welcome to all present, in a few well-chosen words.

The speakers were Bro. L. Frith, from the Church at Cleveleys, and Mr. W. Steele, from Tranent. The Gospel was faithfully preached to a very attentive audience, the former using the story of Naaman the Leper as the basis of his message, and the latter, 'The Willing Mind.' Some solos on Gospel themes were also rendered. Half way through the ser-

vice, a light meal was served by the sisters.

With the singing of 'Will your anchor hold in the storm of life,' and prayer, a profitable evening in the service of the Lord was brought to a close.

On Lord's Day morning, October 24th, we met in the Labour Club Room to Break the Bread. Twenty-eight brethren were present. Bro. R. McDonald, of Dewsbury, presided over one of the most inspiring meetings the writer has attended for years. Mutual ministry was practised throughout, and every visiting brother except one helped in the service. Bro. C. Limb, of Eastwood, exhorted us to greater effort as the Day of the Lord approaches.

In the evening, Bro. Fred Hardy presided at the Gospel service. There were 24 brethren and 14 non-members present. Bro. W. Steele was the preacher. His message was based on 'The Elder Son and a Loving Father.' There was no response to the invitation at the close of the service, but we believe a great deal of good has been accomplished as the result of our services over the week-end.

Our warmest thanks are due to all who attended and helped in the meetings, and, on behalf of the Fishermen, thank you most sincerely for the uplifting time you have given us. To God be the glory!
DAVID DOUGALL.

Yarmouth.—I cannot imagine any place in England more difficult to get to from the west coast than Yarmouth. The journey there and back took me twenty-three-and-a-half hours. Leaving Fleetwood soon after dawn, darkness had fallen long before arriving. For miles and miles it is a single line, only one train passed in the opposite direction. On arrival rain was falling sharply, and never was a face more welcome than that of Bro. Dougall. We were fortunate in having nearly a fine week-end, a heavy storm only during the meeting on Lord's Day.

It was pleasing and cheering to see so many brothers and sisters known and beloved at the meeting on Saturday evening, as well as seeing and greeting in the flesh many who go down to the sea in ships. Correspondence is a poor substitute for contact. The week-end could be expressed in words by Charles Wesley slightly transposed:

'Even now we thought and spake the same,

And cordially agreed;
Concentred all through Jesu's name,
In perfect harmony.'

There was a deep feeling of unity of spirit. In this connection the meeting on Lord's Day morning will long be remembered. Bro. McDonald, who presided, struck the right note. His conduct of the meeting was without loss of time, yet not hurried, and reminded me of Br. Scouller's words years ago: 'The less said at the Table, the better.'

This work at Yarmouth should go on. It was dropped years ago by Co-operation Churches, which was a great pity. Our brethren from Scotland—some of them spake little but felt much—were highly appreciative of what was being done. Bro. Dougall is doing a grand work and was overjoyed.

A. L. FRITII.

Nelson, Southfield Street.—The thirty-sixth anniversary of the commencement of the Church here was celebrated on Saturday and Lord's Day, October 23rd and 24th. On Saturday they came by rail, coach and car from Hindley, Wigan, Blackburn, Burnley and East Ardsley. The proceedings commenced with the usual social cup of tea, and a homely chat with each other concerning things of our pilgrimage. At 6 p.m. we assembled to hear an excellent address delivered by Bro. Tom Kemp on 'The Name of Jesus.' Excellent congregational singing (thanks to our visitors) characterised the meeting. Altogether it was a helpful and inspiring gathering. The message and presence of so many brethren and sisters did our hearts good, and gave us a new impetus to press forward in the good way.

On Lord's Day, Bro. Kemp continued his ministry to the Church with an address in the morning, spoke to the school in the afternoon and proclaimed the Gospel in the evening. Our best thanks are due, and gladly given, to our brother for his able ministry in God's Word when our souls were richly fed thereby.

ALEX. CARSON.

Newtongrange.—The Church held its annual social on October 16th, and we were pleased to see brethren from as far as Ayrshire, amongst a gathering of over a hundred. Bro. A. G. Gardiner exhorted the assembly from Galatians 6, to continue in that way shown to us in the Scriptures, encouraging us to work out our salvation 'in fear and trembling.' He stressed the impotence of desiring spiritual things with our whole heart, so that there might be no room left for those things which were carnal. 'Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'

Bro. E. Jess (Pennivie) then spoke of the family of God, and how they were drawn together. He illustrated the wonder of God's love for us, and how it permeated the whole structure of His Church, so that all men might, by seeing the evidence of our love for one another, know that we were Christ's. Even as Paul prayed for the Philippians, so do we now that 'your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.'

The Sisters of the Church were extremely diligent in providing tea and food both before and after the social. Were it not for their love and industry, these meetings could not be the happy gathering that they are.

A. J. BROWN.

Tunbridge Wells, 5 Mount Ephraim Road—On Tuesday, October 26th, the Church met in social capacity at a local cafe to convey its good wishes to Bro. P. G. Ogden on the attainment of his eightieth birthday. Our brother was commended for his loyalty to the ancient order of things through the years, and the prayer expressed that he may be with us for many years yet, to bear testimony to the faith once delivered. A copy of Young's Analytical Concordance was presented to our brother. It bore the signatures of all the members, and contained an inscription conveying their good wishes.

On Saturday, November 6th, our one month's evangelistic effort began. Bro. Andrew Gardiner preached to a good audience, a number of non-members being present. He served with us on the Lord's Day, and again preached the glad tidings on Tuesday, November 9th. On this occasion the number of non-members present was much larger. Some of these friends manifest a deep interest in Christianity as Jesus taught it. We pray that they may become obedient to the truth. During the month we anticipate seasons of refreshing. Brethren R. B. Scott, R. Limb, A. Allan and P. Partington will assist us. Brethren, pray for us.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

Wigan, Albert Street, Newtown.—We have now concluded our three weeks' mission started on Saturday, October 2nd. Our Gospel meetings have been well attended, and once again we have had cause to rejoice in seeing the power of the Gospel working in our midst. On Saturday, October 24th, two more came forward and decided to follow Jesus, Evelyn Hilton and Edward Warburton, this making five altogether during the mission. Our thanks are due to Bro. Leonard Channing for the inspiring messages, and personal visitation. He spared not himself to win souls for the Master, and he has left others near to the Kingdom.

We look forward to Bro. Timmerman coming at the end of the month, and pray that God will bless the efforts put forth. To Him be the praise and the glory. Again we express our thanks to all in the district who have supported us.

W. SMITH.

OBITUARY

Fauldhouse.—The Church has sustained a loss in the passing of Sister Hannah Whyte, Senr., at her home, Ashgrove, Fauldhouse, on October 11th, at the age of seventy-nine. She has been in membership with the Churches for sixty-two years, most of which has been at Fauldhouse, except for the early years of her married life. During all these years, she has taken a keen interest in all Church

work, both at home, and the O.S. Missions of our Churches, and was deeply interested in temperance, Band of Hope, and Sunday School. It has been my good fortune to be in fellowship with the Church at Fauldhouse since September, 1925, and to have the joy of fellowship and hospitality of her house, which with her, and her family, meant a deepening of christian experience and regard for the position and plea of the Church.

Her home has always been an open door to the visiting brethren who came to preach and teach, and most of the Evangelists and Missionaries across these years found in her a helpful and loyal friend. Many of the young men and women were encouraged to attempt higher service in Church, school, and home. To all of us she has been an inspiration and example and a replacement of her characteristics will be awaited with joy. Her work and memory fill our hearts with gladness, and thankfulness. Some years ago, she had a severe illness which left her health impaired, and less active, yet you could always depend on her presence at the meetings even when not feeling very strong.

She was with us on Sunday, 10th October, and was very cheery, and glad to take part in the worship. She had a calm and peaceful passing, and although the Home call was sudden we are glad she has run the race, fought the fight of faith and entered on the rest that awaits the faithful.

"The God of mercy will indulge

The flowing tear, the heaving sigh,
When honoured parents fall around,
When friends beloved, and kindred die.

To Thee, our Father, would we look,
Our rock, our portion and our Friend
And on Thy covenant, love and truth,
With humble, steadfast hope depend."

With her passing we are reminded of the labours of her esteemed father, Bro. James Anderson, evangelist, for the Slamannan District of Churches of Christ, who served the brotherhood for fifty years, also his son, John, and daughters, the late Mrs. Piggot, Mrs. Robert Halliday, and Mrs. Livingstone, all of whom have done fine work in the churches at home, and on the mission field.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to her family—all of whom are members of the Church, and take an active and personal interest in the Church worship and Sunday School; also her sisters, relatives and friends. We commend them to promises and consolations of the Eternal Father.

Bro. William Steele, Tranent, officiated at the home and the grave, and spoke of a great friend and faithful service, and the blessings promised to those who are in Christ.

D. M. STEWART.

[During the twenty-one years we spent in the Slamannan district we too shared fellowship with Sister Whyte and family in the Church and her hospitable home. Of her it can truly be said, "She hath done what she could," and that surely is the best of all epitaphs.—Editor].

Ilkeston.—The Church here has suffered the loss of another member of long standing, Sister (Miss) Sabina Gregory, daughter of the late Bro. and Sis. Abraham Gregory, passed to her rest on Lord's Day, October 17th, 1954. She was immersed by her father on December 16th, 1902, and was reputed to be sixty-six years of age. Thus in early life she gave herself to the Lord Jesus Christ and has ever held fast her faith in Him.

Of a reserved nature, she ever approved things which are excellent, 'whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report.' She suffered much during the last two or three years, and was never in robust health, but while it was physically possible, she loved to meet with her brethren for worship. Life for her has not been easy and was rather lonely, living alone and maintaining her own home since her parents deceased many years ago.

She was much respected by her employers for long, faithful and efficient service, and highly esteemed by her fellow employees. Thus another patient, heroic life of devoted service to God and man has closed. Such lives, though unknown and unsung on earth, may find an honourable place in the records on high. Her mortal remains were interred in the Kirk Hallam parish burying ground after a short service in Burns Street chapel, conducted by the writer on October 20th, 1954.

S. JEPSON.

Wallacestone.—With much regret we report the passing of our aged Sister Binnie at the age of eighty-three years. We have sustained a great loss, for there has been removed from our midst a gracious Christian personality, whom we all loved for her charming disposition. During her Christian life she was a compound of the Christian graces of humility, meekness, gratitude and contentment. Ever present at the Lord's Table, she was an example to all who knew her.

We shall miss her, but we sorrow not as those without hope, because we believe that those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him, and they shall be for ever with the Lord. Our deepest sympathy is with our esteemed Bro. Wynn, and we pray that the God of all comfort may sustain him in his great loss.

Her remains were laid to rest in the Polmont Cemetery, the writer officiating at both services.

A. BROWN.

THE SUGGESTED BIBLE READINGS FOR 1955.

GOD willing, next year we shall continue reading through the gospel recorded by Luke, with Old Testament readings having resemblance to or bearing upon the selected portions. Following the gospel, 'the former treatise,' it is suggested that we continue with Luke's second book, the Acts of the Apostles.

In the introductory verses to Acts, Luke writes of his former book as recording what 'Jesus began to do and teach.' Although he does not say it, it is clear that Luke means the Acts to continue these things. Indeed, the book has been well named 'The Gospel of the Holy Spirit,' for what Jesus began to do in the days of His flesh, He continues to do through His Holy Spirit. It is, too, the book of conversions. After portraying the matchless life of the Son of God on earth, Luke shows in Acts how men became followers of Jesus, how they were identified with and saved by Him, and how the work of Christ continues through the Church.

In former years, Bro. Frith has been responsible for distributing the reading cards. Bro. Philip Partington has been appointed to this work now, and brethren requiring copies of the reading cards should send to him at **78 Chapel Green, Hindley, near Wigan, Lancs.**, enclosing stamps or postal order to cover cost (1d. each) and postage. C. MELLING.

COMING EVENT.

Slamannan District.—The New Year Social Gathering of the Churches of Christ in the Slamannan District will be held (D.V.) on Saturday, January 1st, 1955, at twelve noon in the Church Meeting Place, New Street, Slamannan.

Will Churches usually represented at this gathering please inform the under-

signed, as soon as possible of the approximate number intending to be there.

For the convenience of those travelling, buses leave for Slamannan from Airdrie at 8.45, 9.55 and 11.10 a.m. and from Falkirk at 9.0, 10.15 and 11.20 a.m. Speakers to be announced later.—Hugh Davidson, 107 West Hamilton Street, Motherwell.

WANTED.

Churches of Christ Year Book, 1954. If anyone has a copy to sell or lend please write to Bro. A. L. Frith, 12 Poulton Street, Fleetwood, Lancs. They are sold out at Book Room.

'Memoir of David King.'

'On the Rock,' by D. R. Dungan.

Prices, etc. to Editor, S.S., Ford Villa, Hart Street, Ulverston, Lancs.

FROM THE TREASURER

TO ALL AGENTS AND INDIVIDUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

Copies of the 'Scripture Standard' for 1955 (D.V.) will be sent to all as at present, unless notice is received to the contrary.

If you want the same number of copies as you are now receiving, you need not advise.

If you want more or less copies, please notify the Treasurer.

Any new orders to the Treasurer.

My thanks and appreciation to all concerned.

PHILIP PARTINGTON, 78 Chapel Green Road, Hindley, Wigan, Lancashire.

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