

The Scripture Standard

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

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WATCHWORD FOR 1946:

'LOOKING UNTO JESUS.'

(Hebrews xii. 2).

THE figures used to describe the Christian life suggest ceaseless activity. It is a race in which, if we are not pressing on we are slipping back; a fight in which, if we are not overcoming we are being overcome.

Jesus is the 'author and perfecter of faith,' our Captain and Leader who has gone before, enduring and overcoming all opposition, transforming the Cross of shame into an emblem of victory, when by the Cross He triumphed over all the powers of darkness. 'Looking unto Jesus' will enable us to 'run with patience the race that is set before us,' and to keep to the appointed course.

In the context from which our watchword is taken, those Hebrew Christians are reminded of the 'great cloud of witnesses,' those heroes of the Old Covenant, who being dead still speak, encouraging us, like them, to be 'jealous for the Lord,' and 'valiant for the truth upon the earth.'

The Restoration Movement has its cloud of witnesses; men who suffered and sacrificed much to restore pure, unadulterated New Testament Christianity. Their work is valued too lightly to-day. Many seem to take a delight in pulling down what they built up at such great cost.

In an eloquent address at the grave of Bro. David King, in 1894, Bro. George Collin said: 'He was stern when any violation of truth and right was involved . . . The Prince of Peace himself was stern. Who ever rebuked sin with more severity

than Jesus of Nazareth? Who more stern in exposing hypocrisy and shams? . . . It is faithful followers of Jesus this age wants. Men who dare to be true to truth—true to the truth; men who will not sell their Master for silver or gold; men who will not sell themselves. David King was not for sale . . . He could tell the truth and look men and devils right in the eyes . . . Careful of God's honour, and careless of men's applause; a man too large for sectarian limits, and too strong to be bound in sectarian bands.'

David King was one of a noble band, a real cloud of witnesses. We need them like him to-day. Men who 'looking unto Jesus' fear only to displease Him.

'Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man and look above thee,
Trust in God, and do the right.'

'Looking unto Jesus' we shall become like Him. Paul wrote: 'But we all with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror [be holding as in a mirror,' margin] the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit.' (2 Cor. iii. 18. R.V.)

Looking continually to Jesus would be death to the worldliness which is eating the spiritual life out of Christians and Churches. We are exhorted to 'seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affections on things above, not on things on earth.'

'Take time to be holy, the world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret with Jesus alone—
By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be,

Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.'

Throughout this year may we all continually be "looking unto Jesus," and looking for Jesus who promised to come again, and whose word is faithful and true.

EDITOR.

Priority.

THIS word is in common usage to-day. We have priority of travel, priority of building, priority of food, particularly for children. The word means to have first place, or first preference. We draw attention, at this time, to the priority of moral, and spiritual issues of life, and would emphasise first the

Priority of God

'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' (Ex. xx. 1-6.) God must be supreme in our lives. He must be first in thought, and word and deed. There must be none before Him.

Mankind will, because he must, worship. In this he differs from the animals around him. So the hunter had his gods of the chase, the warrior his gods of war, the tiller of the ground his gods of fertility, who were propitiated and worshipped to obtain blessing and favour. In this land, we have passed that stage, and live now in the light of the knowledge of the true and living God. But we have not outgrown the urge, the instinct to worship. To-day, men worship wealth, power, position. These, not God, have priority. They are deified: 'These be thy gods.' The idol worshipper is still with us, in this miscalled Christian country.

Now, a man's life cannot rise above the ideals he sets before himself. The standard of his living is measured by the gods he sets up, and it is not surprising that his moral outlook is low and his spiritual vision non-existent.

'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' It is not by chance that this is the first law of the decalogue. By demanding for Himself first place in the hearts of men, Almighty God not only vindicates His character and priority, but also ensures the highest good, and greatest blessing, for mankind. To ignore or deny this law is to condemn one's self to live a poverty-stricken life, of low moral value, and complete absence of spiritual worth.

Priority of the Word of God

'In the beginning was the word.' (Jno i. 1-2 and 14.) That word is still with us, quick, powerful, sharp, active, incisive and decisive. The Word presents to us the mind and will of God, as none other words can. They are words of power and authority, and **must** have priority over all other words, no matter when, or by whom spoken.

In dealing with the moral and spiritual issues of life, much has been spoken and written that is wise and true, and, alas, much that is unwise and erroneous. But whether it be wise or otherwise it cannot claim priority over the Word of God. It is in attempting to give the human word equality with, or priority over, the Divine Word, that all religious problems and differences have begun and still continue.

The Word which was with God, and was God which became flesh and dwelt among us, has still its ancient power and undiminished authority and priority. Where we have that Word to guide and instruct us, we may act with calm confidence and certainty of success. Giving priority to the Word has been, in time past, the safety and strength of the Churches of Christ. That safety and strength is now in danger. It is being set aside. Practices and teaching are recognised and defended which have not the warrant of the Word. Three instances will suffice.

The ordination of women; the official linking with and recognition of sectarianism; and the introduction and dedication of musical instruments (*i.e.*, organs) for use in the worship of the Church. In these things, the Word of God is certainly not given priority. See to it, brethren, that the authority and priority of the Word is not weakened or supplanted by words of man's wisdom; beguiling, diverting, seducing the mind from the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. That Word which maketh wise unto salvation, and is able

to build, enlarge, and strengthen true Christian living.

'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' Therefore, every word is precious, vital, important, and must have unchallenged priority in individual, and Church life.

Priority of the Church

'He loveth the church and gave himself for it.' 'Unto him be glory in the church.' (Eph. v. 23-27, col. i. 18.) Had we no other words, these would be all sufficient to mark the exalted position, and high calling of the Church, and her priority in the world.

The Church is a called-out assembly. It is not 'our' Church. It is neither yours nor mine. It is Christ's. 'With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.' His purpose is to present her to Himself a Church without spot or wrinkle, or blemish or any such

thing. To this end, the Church must have priority over all institutions. She is a society, but she must not be classed or confounded with other societies of man's design or making. She is far above these, as is her calling and purpose, for she is of God. We who are privileged to be members of the Church must always strive to keep her unspotted from the world. She is a glorious Church.

In her constitution and doctrine, she is the perfection of divine wisdom; to tamper with that perfection is to create human imperfection, and rob the Church of her pre-eminence and priority.

Paying strict regard to and honouring the Word, we give to God, to His Word, and to His Church, their rightful priority. May we, by work and prayer, by His grace, and the aid of His Holy Spirit, not come short, but in all things give Him willing, unquestioned, priority.

A. H. ODD.

Apostacy.

Substance of Address by Bro. L. Channing, at Blackburn Conference.

AS we look around the world to-day, we are appalled at its frightful condition. Everywhere, we see the aftermath of war—misery, starvation, and ruin. What is the Church doing about all this? Is it condemning the carnage, the present immorality, and heathenism generally? Here surely is its opportunity to take its place at the head of mankind, and lead men to a new life, based, not on the plans of politicians, but upon love and service of Christ.

But, instead, what do we see, Here are the Churches for the most part empty and neglected, weak and powerless, split by dissension and strife. Instead of condemning these things, they are half the time actively condoning them, and the other half squabbling among themselves. What is behind the Church's apparent failure? The answer is soon found. The failure of denominationalism—which the man-in-the-street mistakes for the true Church of Christ—is due simply to the fact that it is not Christian. It preaches and practises not the pure Gospel of Christ, but its empty and soulless substitute, apostacy.

The word 'apostacy,' comes from the Greek *apostasia*, and means withdrawal.

Paul uses the word in 2 Thes. ii. 3, when prophesying of this time, and it is there translated 'falling away.' For the Christian, it means the abandonment of the fundamentals of the Gospel. The Epistles especially paint a terrible picture of the growth of this sin and its results, which we can plainly see confirmed to-day. History shows, too, that this terrible influence comes not at once, but by degrees, insidiously.

From the first there have been three grave forms of error, which are summed up in Jude xi. Let us trace these three in their results to-day.

'The Way of Cain'

From the spiritual aspect, Abel represents God's people, and Cain the world. Bearing this in mind, look at the sacrifice of each: Abel a lamb, necessitating the shedding of blood; Cain's, the fruit of the field, bloodless.

Now these two aspects represent the view points of God and man. God has from the earliest shown that the shedding of blood is a necessary offering for sin. The O.T. shows that atonement could only be procured by it, principally that of the lamb, of which Abel's is the

first recorded sacrifice. The N.T. shows that redemption could only be purchased by the offering of the Lamb of God—Christ Himself. 'God will not accept anything else, for 'without shedding of blood is no remission.'

Cain's sacrifice was bloodless, and he himself was in rebellion against God. This is a true type of the apostacy, that rebellion against God which teaches a bloodless religion, and rejects in some form or other the person and work of Christ, the slain Lamb of God. Truly this modernism is rife in the Churches to-day, under such titles as the 'New Theology' or the 'New Rationalism.' New indeed? It is as old as Adam, just stark unbelief. The way of the Blood is old-fashioned, totally repugnant to these so-called enlightened intellectuals. There are countless examples of those that set themselves up as Christian leaders, yet reject in this way the Deity of Christ, everything from the virgin birth to the resurrection. Let us not be deceived by their cry, 'Back to Jesus,' they take care to avoid calling Him, Christ. They mean back to Him not as Saviour, but merely as an ethical teacher, and condescend to give Him a place on a par with such as Mohammed or Buddha. Paul uttered a truth when he said to the Elders of Ephesus: 'Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.'

Cain stood condemned for his lack of faith, leading to jealousy and finally murder. We can plainly see lack of faith in this apostacy, leading to strife among the sects, and self-murder; for the rejection of the blood of Christ takes away the very means of life.

'The Error of Balaam'

Broadly speaking this represents the second way of apostacy, namely compromise with the world. Balaam sinned in two ways. First, he sought to use his divine gift of prophesy for worldly gain. When Balak, King of Moab, requested that he use the gift to curse the Israelites, promising him rich reward, he continually attempted to do so, but was each time frustrated by God's intervention.

To the Christian world, this is a type of sin of using the Lord's service as a means of earthly advancement. 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon,' said the Saviour. How many, to-day, are trying to do both? How many, to-day,

are entering the denominations, not as a calling, however mistaken that may be, but as a career? Hear what the Lord said of the type in His day—the Pharisees: 'They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi.' The Lord said: 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God . . . and all these things shall be added unto you,' but these reverse that command. This is one of the cardinal errors of Catholicism, the love of the world. If we, too, put the world before Christ in any way in our lives, then we are in the same category.

The second sin of Balaam was that he was directly responsible for introducing idolatry into Israel. Israel was as much to blame, for she was ready to follow such practices. Not satisfied with the worship of Jehovah, she sought conformity with the world around, in heathen and idolatrous worship.

The Churches to-day are infected with this spirit. The Gospel of Christ is not attractive enough. 'We must conform to the world,' is the cry. Give us socials, youth clubs, cinemas, bazaars, and so on. Such methods may at first appear to be successful, but ultimately they lead to loss of power, and deadness.

'The Gainsaying of Core'

We read in Numbers xvi., of this Levite being appointed for service for the Tabernacle, but not satisfied with this, he endeavours by rebellion, to usurp the priestly office of Aaron. This is a type of the third way of apostacy—priestcraft.

To-day, this rebellion is seen in sacerdotalism, which, with all its attendant errors, seeks to usurp the authority of the Divinely appointed High Priest, Christ. In practice, it seeks to divide the Christian brotherhood into classes of priest and laity, when the N.T. Church knows nothing of such divisions. 'Ye are a royal priesthood,' is said of all believers. The result is that simple faith in Christ is lost, and trust put in ceremony and ritual. In consequence we see congregations who are mere spectators of such ritual, acted by the priests, and not worshipping in fellowship. But worse, it brings idolatry, such as Masses, the worship of images, the veneration of relics and saints. But if sacerdotalism brings this in practice, it is even more deadly in its teaching. It denies

the Gospel, teaching salvation by works, by self-mortification, penances, monasticism, and so on. It hinders free worship, teaching the doctrine of intermediaries, blind obedience to the priests, confessions, and pardons. Above all, it denies the infallibility of the Word of God, and seeks to suppress it, substituting the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church.

This, then, is the disease from which Christendom is suffering to-day, apostacy, one which has a multiple of errors. This is the power which keeps the Churches empty, causes indifference to the Gospel, rank unbelief in the Word of God, and blinds men to the true glory of Christ. These things are not confined to the denominations. We have looked at these influences as they are seen around us fully grown, in order to bring home to us their deadliness. But each one of these has made its insidious entry into our midst. Modernism has reared its ugly head. That has been brought home to us forcibly by the recent discussions with some of the Co-operation brethren. If we are not on our guard, our Churches will be infected with this error also. Worldliness is rapidly becoming a mark of digression, with the introduction of methods and organisations unknown to the N.T. These things are not attractions, but counter-attractions to Christ. The Saviour said: 'And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto me.' Christ, and Christ alone, is the drawing power of the Gospel. It is our duty to lift Him up by preaching it, as He commanded. If He does not draw men nothing will. Priestcraft is primarily a thing of Rome, but it is not stopping there. The Papacy

is rapidly gaining a stronger hold in this country, and its influence is felt in the denominations. But, worse of all, it is creeping in amongst us, in the form of schemes for ordination, the observance of Anglican feasts, the growing emphasis on ritual, and the gradual changing from N.T. to theological terms. Little things may be, but they have a cumulative effect. Let us beware lest we, too, are enveloped in their coils.

What, then, shall we do about this? The answer is found first in Paul's words to Timothy: 'Hold fast the form of sound words.' Let us see that we are securely anchored to the pure Gospel, as revealed to us by the preaching and example of Christ and His Apostles. And, secondly, as Paul said to those Elders at Ephesus: 'Therefore watch.' See that we do not deviate from the pure N.T. teaching in the slightest degree, for any such deviation is the beginning of apostacy. However good or innocent a practice may seem, if it is not in the Word of God, and is in the Church, then have it out. If it is outside the Church, then see that it does not get in.

The Church is depicted in Scripture as a bride, a chaste virgin, betrothed to Christ, whose sole object is faithfulness, purity, and absolute love, to be rendered to the one she loves. If we are truly abiding in Christ, then we are part of the true Church of Christ, a Church that has not, and cannot fail, for the 'Gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'

This is the Church, which, when her work on earth is done, will one day be glorified in heaven. Let us so walk in Christ, that nothing may rob us of that glorious inheritance.

L. W. CHANNING.

Women in the Church.

THIS subject is like all others, in that an understanding of it is obtained if we seek to find all the passages with a direct reference to the matter, and then try to put aside our practices, feelings, and opinions, and quietly face the Word of God.

As the apostolic teaching claims to be based on the law given at the creation, we have to consider what the O.T. teaches. Then, while we may draw in-

ferences from the records of the Gospels, we cannot expect to find therein direct teaching, as the Lord lived amongst Jews who rigidly observed the guidance obtained from the manner in which God formed the woman and from the divine injunction given to Eve at the Fall. But we can look for direct personal and general teaching from Paul, whose mission brought him to heathen lands, where he was surrounded by the un-

natural and unseemly behaviour of the prophetesses in their temples. There in the feasts and at their private worship, the officiating women seemed to claim to be free from all public law. This, to a degree, might influence women in other spheres and create practices and tendencies that the apostle had to guard against. Had our Lord been in Paul's circumstances, we presume He would have spoken out, just as the Holy Spirit did through Paul.

Our considerations might be given under three heads:

1. Is it a universal and abiding law of God that women be subject to man?

2. Are Christians under this law in their everyday private and public life, and in their personal and community Christian life?

3. Is it a violation of this law for a woman to teach or have a position of prominence over men, even in her whole community life in the Churches of the Saints?

As to No. 1 we would quote:

Genesis ii. 18: 'And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helpmeet for him.'

Genesis ii. 22: 'And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said . . . she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.'

Genesis iii. 16: 'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'

1 Corinthians xi. 8: 'For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.'

1 Timothy ii. 13: 'For Adam was first formed, then Eve.'

The law made in the days of Adam, as to woman's position, has never been annulled. It does not rest on the Law of Moses which passed away at Calvary. The Apostle refers to it as being still in force, and he insists that the conduct of the Christians be in keeping with what it requires. The law made no personal

exceptions, and did not distinguish one occasion from another. The motive or capability of the woman has no bearing on whether or not her conduct is lawful. Eve was not condemned for lack of ability, but because she disobeyed God. She did what God did not permit, and she could not plead necessity or mercy to justify her act.

Often we hear men venture to assert that the lifting of women to places of public prominence will do good, but we conclude that the law is not an arbitrary act of God, but that it is necessary to prevent a disaster, such as was at the Fall. Woman was not formed suitable for prominence over man, but was made to be his help. Under the law of God, women attain heights of character and sweet influence greater than that ever possessed by the women who wish to act like men.

Seeing that woman has not evolved beyond what God created her, I leave the foregoing passages with you.

As to No. 2 we quote:

Ephesians v. 24: 'Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.'

Corinthians xi. 3: 'But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and that the head of the woman is the man.'

Colossians iii. 18: 'Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.'

Titus ii. 4: 'Teach the young women to be . . . obedient to their own husbands.'

1 Peter iii. 1: 'Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands.'

1 Peter iii. 5: 'For after this manner, in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands. Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.'

As to the command given in each of these passages, there is nothing to suggest that the law was only local or temporary. The Apostles and their gifted helpers sought to bring each local Church under the law that had held good in all creation since the days of Eden.

All positions or services which bring distinctions in the Church—the Body—are only for a few years and pass away at death. They only pertain to our

short life in the flesh. In the great enduring spiritual matters we are one in Christ Jesus. Notwithstanding our temporal differences yet we are all in one Body, and have all one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father.

As to No. 3, we quote:

1 Corinthians xiv. 34: 'Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.'

1 Corinthians xiv. 37: 'If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual let him acknowledge that the things that I [Paul] write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.'

1 Timothy ii. 11: 'Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression.'

There is nothing to suggest that this law only affected the Lord's Day meeting for worship. A meeting is either in the world or in the Church. The law holds good in either. The words, 'in the Church,' would convince those who claimed that in the meetings of the saints they were free from the law, that they were in error.

In Corinthians, Paul is correcting abuses that his attention has been called to, but in Timothy he gives general instructions in comprehensive language.

We do not read of a prophetess teaching in public; but in the O.T. we read of Deborah, the prophetess, judging over Israel. The circumstances and urgent necessity seem to have given her little choice. One exceptional case does not upset a well-established law.

It is as hard for many persons to believe the numerous passages of the Apostles that we quote, as it is for others to believe the Lord, when He says: 'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.' They quote one passage to contradict another, and sometimes they finish by suggesting that the Apostles could not be aware as to how the world would develop. Others teach

that the Church is a living organism, and as a result the scholarship of the world must now determine what variations are necessary for our modern times.

Let us say that the Churches that permit women to teach in public, have not developed beyond the apostolic teaching—how can we develop beyond what is perfect? but rather they have, like Eve, degenerated into the disobedience which brought separation from God.

JOHN ANDERSON.

Encouragement from U.S.A.

WE have received a very helpful letter from Bro. R. Lemmons, of the Central Church of Christ, Cleburne, Texas, from which we give the following extracts:

'Dear Bro. Crosthwaite, the "Scripture Standard" fell into my hands through the kindness of our mutual friend and brother John Straiton. I have just finished reading every word of it with deep interest. (I received the September issue.) Several things compel me to write to you.

'First on the list is a desire to commend you for the splendid editorial. You have stated soberly the only possible hope of escape from complete digression, there, or anywhere else on the earth.

'Secondly, the repeated mention of the name of Bro. Winstanley brings back memories of my attempt, in which Bro. John Allen Hudson and John Straiton aided, to bring Bro. Winstanley to America for a visit with the Churches, and perhaps study if he wished, just before the outbreak of war. It does my heart good to read of his work.

'And thirdly, the seemingly unlimited spirit of investigation and desire to save the Church from the shackles of any sort of authority greater than the local congregation—a desire expressed even by those who seemed to lean upon such an organisation—was a cause of rejoicing.

I have, since a boy, been interested in the Church in England. It seems that the Churches there are now making the break that the Churches in America were forced fifty years ago to make, to preserve pure New Testament Christianity. Your vigorous appeal on page

seventy-two, for congregations to separate themselves from an un-Scriptural organisation brings forth my heartiest Amen! The Churches in America that have not been swept into the stream of apostasy are growing, and their zeal to preach the Gospel to people who have never heard it, is something to rejoice over Another encouraging feature is, that with few exceptions, our younger men are our strongest men, and just as loyal or more so than their older preach-

ing brethren I believe that the feeling is general that the Church of Christ in America is on the threshold of a great age of fruitful reaping for the Master. I gather some of the same spirit from reading the copy of the "Scripture Standard."

'May the Lord bless you in your work with a long and useful lifetime, is my prayer.'

Yours in the Faith,

REVEL LEMMONS.

Essentials and Non-Essentials.

'Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.' (Psalm cxxxviii. 2.)

GRAVE indictments are made against some Churches and individuals, who are accused of division making, and a suggested solution of the differences which exist, and which act as bars to fellowship, is that 'we should all hold fast to the essentials of the faith and practice of the Church as we see it in the New Testament; and that outside those essentials we should willingly and joyfully grant freedom instead of scenting heresy afar off, and being always ready to believe the worst. It is further suggested, that 'it is therefore of primary importance that we should devote ourselves to the question what are essentials, and what non-essentials.'

In the 'Declaration and Address,' issued in 1809, which played such a large part in the inauguration of the Restoration Movement, Thomas Campbell says (page eleven): 'We dare neither assume, nor purpose, the trite indefinite distinction between essentials and non-essentials in matters of revealed truth and duty; firmly persuaded that, whatever may be their comparative importance, simply considered, the high obligation of the Divine Authority revealing, or enjoining them, renders the belief or performance of them absolutely essential to us, in so far as we know them. And to be ignorant of anything God has revealed, can neither be our duty nor our privilege.'

Is not this equal to saying that in the divine arrangements 'essentials and non-essentials' do not really exist as such, either under the old economy or the new? All God's arrangements are perfect in

themselves, and each item in the divine scheme has its proper and legitimate place. God has no afterthoughts; and to suggest that we are at liberty, either to add to or take away under the pretext of 'essentials and non-essentials,' what has been plainly revealed, under divine inspiration, for the guidance of His people, is to suggest 'license,' and not 'liberty.'

Is it suggested that there are 'non-essentials' in the faith and practice of the Church in the New Testament? It would appear so! Far better to be employed in clearing out the non-essentials from the Churches of to-day.

Further (page ten), Thomas Campbell says: 'So that our differences at most, are about the things in which the kingdom of God does not consist, that is, about matters of private opinion or human invention. What a pity that the kingdom of God should be divided about such things. Who, then, would not be the first amongst us to give up human inventions in the worship of God, and to cease from imposing his private opinions upon his brethren, that our breaches might thus be healed? Who would not willingly conform to the original pattern laid down in the New Testament, for this happy purpose?'

Again (page sixteen): 'That with respect to the commands and ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ, where the Scriptures are silent as to the express time or manner of performance, if any such there be, no human authority has power to interfere in order to supply the supposed deficiency, by making

laws for the Church; nor can anything more be required of Christians in such cases, but only that they so observe these commands and ordinances as will evidently answer the declared and obvious end of their institution. Much less has any human authority-power to impose new commands or ordinances upon the Church, which our Lord Jesus Christ has not enjoined. Nothing ought to be received into the faith or worship of the Church, or be made a term of communion amongst Christians, that is not as old as the New Testament.'

With the chairman of the Conference and with Thomas Campbell, the writer is in hearty agreement, that 'division amongst Christians is a great evil, fraught with many evils. It is anti-Christian, as it destroys the visible unity of the body of Christ.'

We would ask, however, who are the division makers? Those who introduce division-making innovations into the worship and practice of the Churches (and some of whom question the accuracy and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures, as the rule of faith and practice, and even throw doubt upon the divinity of our Lord, by charging Him with mistakes and ignorance), or those who oppose, whose sole desire and endeavour is to preserve unity, or to restore unity where broken, by adhering, and by persuading others to adhere, to what Alexander Campbell called 'the ancient order of things'?

The writer considers himself amongst those against whom the indictment is made, but is quite unrepentant and unashamed; and would say, again with Thomas Campbell (page twenty-seven): 'We dare, therefore, neither do, nor receive, anything as of divine obligation, for which there cannot be expressly produced a "Thus saith the Lord," either in express terms, or by approved precedent. According to this rule we judge, and beyond it we dare not go.'

Let this be the test of our practice and worship, and we need not trouble about 'essentials and non-essentials.'

Hear Thomas Campbell again (page thirty): 'Does not the visible Scriptural unity of the Christian Church consist in the unity of her public profession and practice, and, under this, in the manifest charity of her members one toward another; and not in the unity of the pri-

vate opinion and practice of every individual.'

May the Lord help us to 'walk by the same rule, profess and practise the same things, that this visible Scriptural unity may be preserved without corruption.'

Finally the statement of Thomas Campbell (page thirty-two) is surely decisive: 'We dare no longer concur in expressly asserting or declaring anything in the name of the Lord that He has not expressly declared in His Holy Word. And until such time as Christians come to see the evil of doing otherwise, we see no rational ground to hope that there can be either unity, peace, purity or prosperity in the Church of God.'

One could quote further relevant matter from the 'Declaration and Address' if space permitted. Let every 'Scripture Standard' reader, however, study this noble work with his Bible beside him, and confirmation in 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints' will be the happy result.

J. HOLMES.

♦

Books.

BY favour of Bro. John Allen Hudson, who served Churches in Britain with much acceptance, about a dozen years ago, we have received two books, published by 'Old Paths Book Club,' in U.S.A. The title of one is 'Preaching in the Twentieth Century.' It deals with the 'Art of Preaching,' 'Preaching in the Restoration,' 'Preaching in a Denominational World,' 'The Bible in Preaching.' A good many subjects are covered, much valuable information is given, and this book would help all preachers, young and old.

The title of the other book is 'Great Pioneer Papers.' It contains selections from the writings of Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, Robert Richardson, and others, dealing with 'The Restoration Movement,' 'Authority in Religion,' 'Interpreting the Scriptures,' 'Faith versus Opinion,' 'The Holy Spirit.' At the end there are short biographical sketches of some of the pioneers. Those who desire to know what the pioneers really thought and stood for should get this book.

All information can be had from Bro. John Allen Hudson, Old Paths Book Club, 1347 West 64th Street, Los Angeles 44, California, U.S.A.

Scripture Readings.

Acts of Apostles, Chapters vii., viii., and ix.

1. Stephen's Speech: The accusations Stephen faced were these: (1) That he was saying things against the Temple and the Law; (2) that he said that Jesus would destroy the Temple; and (3) that Jesus would change the customs delivered by Moses. He knew that he was facing unscrupulous men, probably not prepared to consider any argument. He recounted incidents in the history of the race, which demonstrated that its origin was from Mesopotamia, and that rejection of God's counsel had been the way of the people in the cases of Joseph and Moses, whom God used to deliver them; that they had chosen the Golden Calf even after the deliverance from Egypt, and that it was not until Solomon's time that the Temple had been built. Even then God had made it clear to them that He was not confined to a human building.

It seems clear that Stephen was rather defending what he was stated to have said, than denying it. He sums up, as had the Apostles before him, by accusing his judges of rejecting Jesus in the same way as the people had previously rejected the prophets. These men claimed to be upholding Moses and the worship of God, yet were rejecting both in their attitude to the Gospel. There surely comes a point in controversy when minds are closed, and it becomes necessary to state truth plainly, rather than to reason tactfully.

2. Stephen's Martyrdom: The final scene is striking by its contrasts. The Council grows frantic with rage and hate. Stephen beholds, in calm reliance upon God, the heavenly vision—the reality, the unseen things which are eternal. In undignified haste and blind fury the Council becomes a riotous assembly of murderers, and with hardly a pretence of sentence, puts its innocent victim to death. We view with sincere admiration, the guileless committal to His Lord, and the almost verbal imitation of the Saviour's own spirit—as the first Christian martyr dies.

3. Samaria: Jerusalem, Judæa, Samaria . . . Judæa, is already a field for the Gospel through the work at Jerusalem, but the death of Stephen, and

the scattering of the disciples which followed, would complete that work, and did lead to Philip's labours in the city of Samaria. He was one of the seven deacons, and was subsequently known as Philip, the Evangelist. Thus the only two of the seven we hear of again became effective preachers. The responsibilities placed upon them by Church and Apostles, and the gifts they then received through the laying on of the Apostles' hands, led to a development of their work and character, making them more prominent and useful in the service.

The Samaritans practised circumcision, but were regarded with most bitter hostility by the Jews at that time. It shows the influence of Christ upon Philip was widening his outlook and removing his national prejudices, that he should be willing to preach to such. His miraculous gifts and his eloquence in 'preaching the word' brought wonderful results. God used him to bring these despised people into His light. This passage particularly throws light upon the position of the Apostles. Philip had the gifts of healing, but he could not bestow them upon others. The Apostles sent Peter and John to attend to that matter. Obviously, when the Word had not been committed to writing, the local Churches must depend for their knowledge of Christ upon those of their number upon whom God had bestowed these special gifts of the Spirit through the Apostles. Hence, the necessity of the visit of the Apostles and the effort of Simon the Sorcerer to buy their power. Much has been written and speculated about him, but we must remain content with the information we have. The exhortation of Peter and Simon's response, indicating his realisation of the sin, enable us to see the terms upon which forgiveness was available to him, and his attitude.

4. Philip and the Eunuch: God intervened to send Philip to a barren and deserted spot. Moses was removed to the 'backside of the desert,' we remember, before his great work began. But Philip soon had revealed to him what his work was. We see that God is interested in every soul that seeks Him. It is really delightful to read of the glad surrender of the Ethiopian as the good news of a Saviour is unfolded by the preacher. The angels rejoiced when 'there was great joy in that city,' and likewise when the Eunuch 'went on his way rejoicing.' The

terms of salvation are made abundantly clear in the incidents recorded in chapter viii., and we have also lessons of importance in the method of making known the truth.

5. The Conversion of Saul: This is one of the most striking narratives in the New Testament. Parts of the story are recounted three times—in this chapter and in chapters xxii. and xxvi. It provides one of those many incontestable evidences of the truth of the Bible. The impress of the mind of Paul the Apostle is upon the history of the world since his day. We can only comment upon one or two points in the chapter.

God intervened in this life. Yet for the instruction of this chosen vessel in the matter of his salvation, he is referred to a man (Ananias), who has learned the Gospel and knows the way. That way is the same as we have already learned by the other cases of conversion recorded in this history.

We must refer the reader to Gal. i. 17 for light upon the sequence of events in verses 19 to 26. There is admittedly some difficulty reconciling these, and not all expositors are in agreement.

The wonderful change in the persecutor must have been a great blow to those who were urging him on, and what an encouragement and joy to the lovers of the Saviour! The kindly intervention of Barnabas is to be noted (verse 17) as characteristic of the man. The result of this great event reflected upon the Church throughout 'all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria.' Barriers are being broken down, and men reconciled to one another as they are reconciled to God. And so it must be. R. B. SCOTT.

QUERY

'SHOULD a Christian vote in Parliamentary elections?' Shall be glad to receive brief replies to above query.—EDITOR.

Should Christians Vote?

Dear Editor,—In reply to your question, 'Should a Christian vote in Parliamentary elections?' I should answer 'No.'

I am aware that many difficulties are involved in thus answering in the negative, but they are all soluble. I will endeavour by question and answer to set forth my reasons.

1. How did human government originate? The first experiment in human

government was rebellion against God, and rejection of His government.

If my answer is correct, then naturally a Christian cannot support either directly or through delegation, a government that came into being and continues to exist in rebellion against God.

2. What do human governments exist for? To make laws and to enforce them and they are the agency through which God takes vengeance and executes wrath on evildoers. (Rom. xiii. 1-7.)

Can a Christian perform these functions? I answer, 'No.' A Christian is completely furnished unto all good works; his laws are made.

Can he enforce—compel—obedience to law? It is within his province both by his life and teaching to persuade and influence, but not to use compulsion.

Can he avenge wrong-doing? It is in the same context, where we are told that this is a function of civil authority, that we are also informed that Christians must not engage in this, but leave it with God.

If a Christian cannot do these things himself, he certainly cannot delegate another to do them for him. We must accept the responsibility for what we influence or delegate others to do for us.

F. WHITFIELD.

EVANGELIST FUND

Up to December 6th, 1945, the following amounts were received for the Evangelist Fund:—

Nos.	£	s.	d.
734	1	0	0
5	20	0	0
6	2	0	0
7		10	0
8	16	6	10
9	1	0	0
740		10	0
1	4	3	0
2	50	0	0
3		5	0
4		10	0
5		10	0
6	3	0	0
7		5	0
8	1	0	0
9	2	10	0
750	2	0	0

We again express our thanks for the support we have had from many brethren. Thank you!

R. McDONALD.

READING CARDS

SUGGESTED readings for Lord's Days in 1946. These are ready and may be had on application by return post. No charge, but say how many required, please! A. L. FRITH.

Old Paths Conference.

April 20th, 1946.

THE next Conference will be held (D.V.) at East Kirkby, Nottinghamshire, on the above date. The Church extends to all brethren and sisters, who in all matters of 'faith and practice,' wish to get back to the New Testament position and there abide, a most cordial invitation.

It has been said: 'East Kirkby is an awkward place to get to.' Well, so have some other places at which conferences have been held, yet this has not proved a serious barrier. We are but twelve miles from Nottingham, from which city there is a good bus service every quarter of an hour. We shall endeavour to provide hospitality for as many as need it IF brethren will kindly let us know their requirements at an **EARLY DATE**. We expect to secure the Baptist Chapel, Forrest Street (five minutes' walk from our own meeting-house), which will provide ample accommodation for all our needs. The programme of meetings will be as follows:—

11 a.m. to 12 (noon): 'Prayer and Praise.' Lunch, 12.15 p.m. 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.: 'Business Session.' Tea, 4.45 p.m. Six o'clock: Evening meeting.

Other details will be given in a later issue. Everything humanly possible will be done to provide for the needs of all. **BOOK NOW** and help, by your presence and prayers, to make this forthcoming conference a time of real spiritual uplift and progress.

All communications to be addressed to: W. B. Jepson, Havendale, 26 Pearl Avenue, East Kirkby, Notts.

This may interest YOU!

A

BIBLE VACATION SCHOOL

From SATURDAY, June 8th to

THURSDAY, June 13th, 1946

To be held in Hindley

Plan your holiday now!

Further particulars in future issues of 'S.S.'

Secretary: Robert Hargreaves, 71 Ather-ton Road, Hindley, Wigan.

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT

Morley.—Church Anniversary, Saturday, February 24th (D.V.), 1946. Chairman, F. Sugden (Morley). Speakers: L. Coley (Leicester) and R. B. Scott (Kentish Town).

Further particulars later. Yorkshire brethren, please book the Date!

The First Church.

'WITH the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' (Rom. x 10.) 'Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for [into] the remission of sins.' (Acts ii. 38.) 'Buried with him (Christ) by baptism.' (Rom. vi. 4.)

'The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.' (Acts xi. 26.) 'Churches of Christ salute you.' (Rom. xvi. 16.) 'Church of God.' (1 Cor. i. 2.)

'And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship [partnership, contribution], in breaking of bread [Lord's Supper] and in prayers.' (Acts ii. 42.) 'Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.' (Eph. v. 10.) 'Upon the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread.' (Acts. xx. 7.)

'Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' (2 Pet. iii. 18.) 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.' (1 John ii. 15.)

'I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety [craftiness] so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.' (2 Cor. xi. 3.)

Preach the Word.

NO preacher with an insipid 'message' can strengthen a Church or establish a strong Church. We must have preachers with deep convictions and the courage to preach God's word as it is written. Preachers who compromise with sectarians cannot strengthen a Church nor build up the cause of Christ in any place. Preachers who move into a town and seek affiliation with all of the clubs in the town and seek membership in 'the ministerial alliance' weaken the cause of Christ in that city. No preacher can have fellowship with the civic clubs and religious organisations and keep himself free from compromise with Gospel truth. Preachers who are preaching for the money will soon sap the spiritual vitality from the Church. Churches that employ preachers should quit inquiring whether are are 'good mixers,' but should make inquiry whether they are sound in the faith and a spiritual power. Churches that employ preachers that are weak and compromising will soon become a social and religious club rather than the body of Christ. Preachers with impure motives become worldly-minded, and the Church suffers every time. May Churches and preachers not forget the task of preaching the Gospel and holding up Christ as the light of the world.

—'Gospel Advocate.'

The Sabbath Commandment.

IF we are commanded to keep the Sabbath day, why did Paul say: 'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days?' (Col. ii. 16.) Why tell these brethren not to judge anyone concerning the Sabbath if the Sabbath commandment is yet in force? The penalty for violating the Sabbath was physical death. Who to-day is to execute those who violate the Sabbath commandment? Take your time about answering. These facts must be considered: (1) No man was commanded to keep the Sabbath day until the Jews were commanded to keep it as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage; (2) the commandment was to the Israelites and not to the Gentiles; (3) Christians are not commanded to keep the Sabbath day. The first day of the week is not the Sabbath day, or 'the Christian Sabbath.'

The Jews observed the Sabbath as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. They were commanded to observe every Sabbath day. How were they to observe the day? They were to rest from manual labour on that day. 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.' The Sabbath commandment is not in the new covenant. We are not commanded to keep it. The Israelites were commanded to keep it as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. (Deut. v. 3.) The Sabbath day was the seventh day of the week. Jesus remained in Hades over the Sabbath day, but he arose from the dead on the first day of the week. On the first day of the week we observe the Lord's Supper as a memorial of the body and blood of Christ. Sunday is not the Sabbath day.

The Sabbath commandment was given to Israel at Mount Sinai, but it is not binding on Christians. The Sabbath commandment was not given until Israel crossed the Red Sea. It was the fourth commandment of the Decalogue given at Mount Sinai. It was a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Even Abraham was not commanded to keep the Sabbath day. We can find every commandment of the Decalogue in the New Testament except the fourth commandment, which is the Sabbath commandment. (1) 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me' is found in Acts xiv. 15. (2) 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image' is found in Rom. i. 21-24. (3) 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain' is found in James v. 12. (4) 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy' is not given in the New Testament. (5) 'Honour thy father and thy mother' is given in Eph. vi. 2. (6) 'Thou shalt not kill' is given in Rom. xiii. 9. (7)

'Thou shalt not commit adultery' is given in 1 Cor. vi. 9. (8) 'Thou shalt not steal' is given in Eph. iv. 28. (9) 'Thou shalt not bear false witness' is given in Col. iii. 9. (10) 'Thou shalt not covet' is found in Eph. v. 3. There are other places in the New Testament where these nine commandments are given, but the fourth commandment, 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,' is not given in the New Testament, and it is not to be observed by Christians. The penalty for violating this law was death. Will the Seventh-Day Adventists stone the man who violates the Sabbath commandment? We are still waiting for the answer. The Sabbath observance was a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Are you asking for proof? Well, here it is: 'And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.' (Deut. v. 15.) There it is. It was to the Jews as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Then, how can we observe it? We are not commanded to keep the Sabbath day. Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week, and we meet on the first day of the week to commemorate the death and resurrection of Christ by eating the Lord's Supper.—'Gospel Advocate.'

Women Smokers.

STATISTICS, recently compiled, show that women have superseded men as the nation's leading civilian cigarette smokers. They bought sixty-nine per cent. of the 329,000,000,000 cigarettes a year manufactured in the United States for civilian use. We can remember the time when a gentleman at least hesitated to smoke in the presence of a lady. If the old Roman, Cicero, were alive, he might well cry again: "O tempora, O mores!" "Oh what times! oh what customs!" Can you image Hannah puffing away on a cigarette as she ministers to the infant Samuel! Can you think of Mary, the mother of our Lord, as an inveterate smoker! If they were alive to-day, would they fall in line with the social drifts and tendencies of our degenerate times? Women may have as much right, per se, as men to smoke; but they have more to lose in smoking than men do. The more they ape men, the less they are respected by men. Smoking adds nothing of value to feminine beauty, health, and charm.—'Gospel Advocate.'

BIRTH.—On November 27th, 1945, to Bro. and Sister Albert Longden, East Kirkby, a son—Roger.

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL ON BIBLE STUDY

I SOLEMNLY say, that although I was considered at the age of twenty-four a much more systematic preacher and text expositor than I am now considered, and more accustomed to strew my sermons with scores of texts in proof of every point, I am conscious that I did not understand the New Testament, not a single book of it. Matthew Henry and Thomas Scott were my favourite commentators. I read the whole of Thomas Scott's commentary in family worship, section by section. I began to read the Scriptures critically. Works of criticism, from Michaelis down to Sharp on the Greek article, were resorted to. While these threw light on many passages, still the book as a whole, the religion of Jesus as a whole, was hid from me. I took the naked text and followed common sense; I read it subject to the ordinary rules of interpretation, and thus it was it became to me a new book. Then I was called a natural man, because I took the natural rules of interpretation. Till then I was a spiritual man and a regenerated interpreter. But alas, as I learned my Bible, I lost my orthodoxy, and from being one of the most evangelical in the estimation of many, I became the most heretical. I can only say for the spirit which actuated me, that it was a most vehement desire to understand the truth. I did most certainly put the world out of sight. I cared no more for popularity than I did for the shadow which followed my body when the sun shone. I valued truth more than the gold of Ophir, and I sought her with my whole heart as for hidden treasure. My eye was single as King James's translators said. I paid no court to the prejudices of the world, and did sacrifice every worldly object to the Bible. I would only add that experience has taught me that to get a victory over the world, over the love of fame, and to hold in perfect contempt human honour, adulation, and popularity, will do more to make the New Testament intelligible than all the commentators that ever wrote.' ('Millennial Harbinger,' Vol. I, p. 138.)

STREAMLINED CHURCH MEMBERS

A FEW days ago I bought a book bearing the title, 'Streamline Your Mind.' In its pages I learned a great deal about how to study efficiently. A man can only think on one subject at a time. Much of our study is ineffective because we let our minds spread out too much.

What is the idea in a streamlined train or automobile? All superfluous parts are removed, and the essential parts are so arranged that they do not

catch wind and create resistance. It requires considerably more power to pull a train that is not streamlined, than it does to pull one that is streamlined.

Christians are commanded to lay aside every weight and their besetting sin. They cannot run well with these hindrances tied to them. We need to throw off all excess baggage, eliminate non-essentials, and lay aside all superfluous things—streamline ourselves for the task before us. Many a person is failing in the Christian life because he is trying to carry some unnecessary burden. Some people have sins that they actually think are virtues. Some people have the besetting sin of finding fault with everything and everybody, and they think they could not go to heaven without it.

Impatience is a growing vice. We are living in a fast age. Everything is on wheels or wings, and we get mad because the wheels do not turn fast enough. Nearly all of us are sons of Jehu, and we drive our chariots furiously. I have an idea that this is the hardest driven, most hurried and harried generation that the world has ever known. And what is it all about? Where are we going? What are we trying to do? I think as good an answer as any is 'nowhere and nothing.' We are beating the air: we are like children chasing thistledown—like a pup that wears himself out trying to catch his tail. We are very busy doing nothing.

Church members have caught this spirit. They need to discard their foolishness and settle down to sane living. They are overloaded with trinkets and trifles. They crowd out the joys of the Christian life with things that have no value. They need to streamline themselves for the service of God by casting off their excess of worldliness. They try to conquer the world when the world has already conquered them. Happy is he who can escape the Satanic strategy of overloading.—Firm Foundation.'

PATTERN OF LIFE

NOT till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.
The dark threads are as needful
In the weaver's skilful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
For the pattern He has planned.

'Is Evolution True?'

Report of debate between J. Wilson and W. Crosthwaite. Copies from L. Purcell, 13 Union Street, Motherwell, Scotland. Price 3d. each.

News.

Blackburn, Hamilton Street.—We are pleased to report another addition to the Church from the Lord's Day school, May Norman. May has been a scholar from infancy. She made the confession before many witnesses and was baptised on Lord's Day evening, November 25th, and received into fellowship on December 2nd, 1945. We pray that she may keep faithful to the end. H. WILSON.

East Kirkby, Beulah Road, Notts.—We have just celebrated the 'coming of age' of the Church, which commenced on November 29th, 1924, in the writer's home, at 50 Clumber Street. It has been a season for rejoicing, and serious reflection. Wisdom in the realm of business directs that periodically we should take stock. How much more necessary in the deeper and more important things of life? Truly, the Church has much to be thankful for, but at the same time we have been made to feel deeply conscious of our own shortcomings and failures. It has verily been twenty-one years of warfare, but, as in the case of God's ancient people, 'we have had His pillar of cloud by day; and by night the pillar of fire to lead us, day and night.' We are grateful for God's guidance, deliverance, and protection. 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us,' wherein we rejoice and ascribe any achievement to His holy name.

The proceedings commenced on Saturday, November 24th, with the usual social cup of tea, of which about seventy partook. A good number of brethren and sisters came from as far as Leicester to join with us in our celebrations, which gave us much cheer. Our speaker for the week-end was to have been Bro. Walter Crosthwaite, who is highly esteemed and loved for his work's sake. But in his unavoidable absence, Bro. Lance Frith deputised for him. He, along with Bro. Leslie Coley, greatly strengthened our souls, and rejoiced our hearts in the timely messages they gave to a crowded house. A report of the history and progress of the Church was given by the secretary; also items of special singing were rendered by the Ilkeston and Leicester brethren, to the enjoyment of all.

On the Lord's Day, Bro. Frith addressed the Church in the morning, and with characteristic zeal and earnestness, proclaimed the Gospel in the evening, his subject being 'Man's Plight—God's Power.' Truly, he strengthened and refreshed all our souls. We thank God that he has so far recovered to health, and pray that he may be completely restored, and be used mightily by God in his service. Thus we step forward into the future with renewed confidence and courage, to continue 'the fight of faith,'

trusting Him in whom we are more than conquerors, through Him that loves us.

W. B. JEPSON.

Kirkcaldy, Rose Street. On Saturday, 24th November, we had the pleasure of social fellowship with many brothers and sisters from other Churches. The occasion was a Social of Rose Street Christian Fellowship. Over ninety brethren sat down to tea, after which another feast of good things was provided. The speakers were Bro. T. Nesbit, from Tranent, and Bro. D. Dougal, from Wallacestone. Both gave of their very best, and with the many items of song and recitation a very happy evening was spent. We are grateful to our brethren from Glasgow, Slamannan, Bathgate, Tranent, Newtongrange, in addition to brethren from the Churches in Fife for making the meeting such a success. A. ROBERTS.

Morley.—A very successful autumn rally was held on Saturday, October 20th. We were cheered and encouraged by a goodly number of visitors from far and near.

Our special speakers, Brethren E. W. Jepson and L. Morgan, served us well. Bro. Morgan continued his labours the following day, speaking at both afternoon and evening meetings to good gatherings. Forty brethren stayed to tea in the schoolroom. We indulged in chorus singing under the leadership of Brethren Morgan and Jacks. At the Gospel meeting, our brother from Lancashire let himself go, and a time of blessing was experienced by all. A sister, separated from us for many years, expressed her desire to be received back into fellowship as a direct result of this stirring week-end. Bro. Ed. Pickersgill was chairman on the Saturday, and Bren. F. A. Hardy and Winters shared the duty on Lord's Day.

We rejoice to further announce that since then another sister, long separated, has been re-united with us, and on Lord's Day, November 4th, we had the further joy of witnessing the immersion of a sister into the ever-blessed name. Truly the effort was worth while and our brethren's addresses a real blessing. Others are interested. F. SUGDEN.

Newtongrange.—We are very happy to report that, on November 3rd, the Church was once again overjoyed to hear the good confession and witness the immersion of a young man who has been attending our meetings for some time. Bro. Worgan addressed the gathering on the Young Ruler, leaving us with much food for thought, which we hope may bring forth fruit to the honour and glory of our Lord and Master.

Bro. Joe White was received into fellowship with the Church on November 4th, and we trust that he may be kept

faithful to the end, and may become a great help to the furtherance of the cause of our Lord and Master in this place.

W. H. ALLAN.

Newtongrange.—Once again we rejoice that two young people have decided to follow the Lord. Bro. and Sister Gavin Muirhead, confessed their faith in their Lord and were immersed into His name on November 16th, 1945. May the Lord bless and keep them in His paths. Sister Muirhead is the daughter of Bro. and Sister Robert Morris, and we rejoice with them that all their family are now members of the Church.

We ask your prayers that the work here may go on with increased vigour.

Newtongrange. We are glad to report further additions. One restored to fellowship, and nine formerly immersed received.

W. H. ALLAN.

Slamannan District.—The half-yearly conference of Sunday school workers was held in the Meeting Place, Slamannan, on Saturday, November 17th. It proved a meeting of real interest. The usual routine business having been attended to, the chairman, Bro. D. Stewart, introduced Bro. Wm. Steele, to give the conference address on 'How can we best exhibit Jesus to the children?' Bro. Steele approach this subject from the parable of the 'Sower.' As well as sowing the seed, we require to spend quite a bit of our time in the preparation of the soil. The best kind of soil we can get is soil which is absolutely virgin. It is better to try to prevent young lives from becoming ruins, than to spend most of our time in re-building ruins. In the parable of the 'Sower,' we learn the seed

was sown. The seed was the Word of God. 'That Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . .' We have a grand subject, to present Jesus to the minds of the children. In presenting Jesus, we must show Him as the children's Friend. There ought to be some image of Jesus about ourselves. We must try to live somewhat of the life that Jesus Himself lived. There can be no better example to children, because they can see us through and through.

The address was warmly appreciated, and a number of brethren added their testimony to the truths expounded.

The next conference is to be held (D.V.) at Fauldhouse, and Bro. Wm. Wardrop is to give the address on 'The Christian Attitude to Modern Social Evils.'

A vote of thanks to all who had taken part brought the meeting to a close.

J. NEILSON.

Ulverston, Ford Villa.—Circumstances compelled us to start meetings at the above address. The first meetings were held on Lord's Day, September 16th, and these have grown in numbers and interest. All who attend speak of the good spirit manifest, and the warmth of our meetings.

We meet to break bread at 2.30 p.m. each Lord's Day. Gospel proclamation at 6.0 p.m. Tuesday: Preaching at 7.30 p.m. Fridays: Bible Class at 7.30 p.m.

We always have some non-members present. We are doing our best to establish a Church according to the New Testament pattern, and to preach salvation through a Divine Christ, crucified for all, and now risen and glorified, who is one day coming to claim His Bride the Church. 'Brethren, pray for us.'

W. CROSTHWAITE.

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