

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

Driving the Wedge In.



WHEN an American preacher, who is behind the 'Ordination Plan' (which is similar to that proposed for Britain), was told: 'You are driving a wedge between the Churches. You will be responsible for splitting this great brotherhood wide open,' he replied: 'I don't care. I am through with pussyfooting. We are not in accord—the split is already here. Let's recognise it, and get it over with.'

That frank reply aptly describes the position in Britain. The wedge has been driven in, 'the split is already here.' Divisions, districts, and Churches are divided, and those who drive the wedge in do not seem to care. Many cannot, or will not, see that it is those who drive the wedge in who do the splitting, and not those who try to stop them.

Once Churches of Christ in Britain were a happy united people. Wherever you went, there was the same fellowship, the same simple memorial feast, plain Gospel message, and plea for unity on the New Testament basis.

But what a change now! If some leaders of thirty years ago were to return they would not recognise the Churches of Christ. Loyal members visiting some churches are shocked and grieved to find 'the Pastor' or 'Minister,' the organ, and a service more like that of the Anglo-Catholics than that of a New Testament Church. Much of what is called worship to-day is not worship, but is theatrical, affected, and empty.

For these departures and innovations, which have divided the Churches, no Scriptural support can be produced. That famous Scottish preacher, Doctor Norman Macleod, at the inauguration of a Church organ, said: 'There was no authority for it in Scripture; but there was also no authority for infant baptism.'

The same is true of 'the pastor' and 'the minister.' Professor Beet (Methodist) told Doctor Clifford, (Baptist), 'There is as much Scripture for infant baptism as there is for the Minister.' From a Scriptural standpoint, these things are on the same level; and those who support organ, pastor or minister, cannot successfully oppose those who practise infant sprinkling.

At the recent Annual Conference of Churches of Christ, held at Ulverston (our native town), the wedge was driven further in. It was agreed,

not without opposition, to apply for 'affiliation to the Free Church Federal Council.' (*Year Book 1941, p. 158*).

Our fathers in the faith refused all such affiliations, and gave good reasons why. But in recent years, some Churches and individual members have joined Free Church Councils, and taken part in their activities. Before us as we write is *Report of Inaugural Meetings of the Free Church Federal Council*, and also *An Outline for Local Councils*, from which quotations below are made. The new Federal Council is a fusion of the National Free Church Council and the Federal Council of the Free Churches. At the opening ceremony, the chairman, the 'Rev.' M. E. Aubrey, C.H., M.A., said, 'In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I declare this Free Church Federal Council to be duly constituted.'

One reason for creation of the new Council, as stated in the 'Moderator's Address,' is because the former Council 'lacked official recognition of the higher ecclesiastical courts of the denominations.' The new Federal Council consists 'of duly appointed ministerial and lay representatives of the constituent denominations.'

In a list of 'Members of the former National Free Church Council,' under heading 'Ministers,' we note the following: 'Rev. A. Julian Elwes,' and 'Prin. W. Robinson, M.A., B.Sc., D.D.'

☉ It is claimed that 'denominational loyalties are neither submerged nor disregarded.' Of 'the Annual Meeting' it is said, 'This should be a convincing demonstration of our faith and fellowship.' As the Federal Council is composed of Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Moravians, and others, and now Churches of Christ are to be added to 'the constituent Denominations,' we wonder just how this 'convincing demonstration of our faith and fellowship' will be made manifest. Will they sing:

'We are not divided,
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.'

If they can go so far, why not end the farce of struggling to maintain the separate existence of the Churches composing the Federal Council?

A further object of the Federal Council is to give 'united witness to the spiritual significance of Christmastide, Eastertide and Whitsuntide.'

Among items of interest in a report of inaugural meetings is the following: 'At the luncheon in the Bonnington Hotel, Southampton Row, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. R. Wilson Black, the chief guests were: His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury,' etc. What part or lot can any who know, and respect, New Testament teaching have with a Council which recognises such unscriptural distinctions, names, titles, festivals and practices?

Happily, as stated in the *Christian Standard* of the 'Ordination Plan,' this 'was not adopted in the brotherhood when the Richmond Convention passed it; it will be adopted only if and when the individual congregations acquiesce and adopt the proposal.' So in Britain, each Church is free and independent. They are not bound by decisions of annual conferences which do not represent, and have no right or power to legislate for, the Churches. Because 'it was evident that a considerable number of members and Churches had not taken the matter sufficiently seriously,' the Annual Conference at Ulverston decided that 'Report of Commission on Ordination' 'lie on the table for one year,' and that 'a copy be sent to each Church.' We sincerely hope that the report will be read by the Churches; and that they will reject proposals which, if adopted, will create a clerical caste, and rob Churches and preachers of freedom. It is another of those schemes, of which there have been so many, to bring Churches of Christ into line with sectarian bodies, that they may

be recognised by, and stand well with such. Like ancient Israel, instead of influencing those around, Churches of Christ have been influenced by them, and so the salt has lost its savour.

And with all the frantic efforts made to speed up progress, and to stand well with others, Churches of Christ are rapidly losing ground. Twenty years ago, 191 Churches reported a membership of 16,068; this year the figures are 150 Churches, and 14,303 members. If anything like discipline was exercised in the Churches, and actual membership given, the figures would be infinitely worse than they are.

The further the wedge is driven in the greater will be the decrease, not only numbers but, what is far more important, in spirituality and loyalty to the things for which Churches of Christ profess to plead. That unity is essential to success was made clear by our Lord, when He prayed, 'That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe,' and real lasting unity can only be attained by a complete return to the simple faith and order of the New Testament Church. EDITOR.

EDITOR'S ADDRESS:

During October, please address letters—
c/o Mrs. Hunter, Gilbert Street,
Hindley, Wigan.

LET us give as we have been prospered. 'Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.' (1 Cor. xvi. 2). 'Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.' (2 Cor. ix. 7). 'If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?' (1 Cor. ix. 11). 'Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn' (verse 9). Our people are good givers, but there are some who will receive benefit by reading these passages. *Sel.*

Baptism.

THE following letter was sent to the Editor of *British Weekly*, but was not published. Strange that these people will support and publish statements about baptism which all know to be doubtful, and which all who claim to be scholars know to be false, but persistently refuse to publish the truth on this question. What hope is there for unity with such people?

EDITOR.

To the British Weekly.

Dear Editor,

If Mr. Gwlym H. Harvard knows the Greek, surely he should be aware that the phrase: 'Baptism by sprinkling' is a contradiction. 'Baptism' is a specific action commanded by Christ in the Great Commission (see Matt. xxviii. 18, 20). 'All authority is given unto me, both in heaven and upon earth; go ye therefore, and teach [make disciples of] all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. . . .

What is that action? The Greek word used by Jesus surely supplies the answer. The noun 'baptism' cannot mean other than 'to dip.'

All the circumstances named in the New Testament, in connection with this ordinance, agree. Take Romans v. 3, as an example. 'We were buried therefore with him by baptism, unto death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life.' 'Baptism' here, surely, is spoken of as 'a burial' and 'resurrection.'

If Mr. Harvard will take the trouble to substitute 'sprinkle' and 'sprinkling' wherever 'baptise' and 'baptism' are named in the New Testament, he will see that 'sprinkling' simply cannot be made to fit. In some cases there is absurdity.

The question is 'What did Christ command?' If He commanded immersion, He did not command sprinkling; If He commanded sprinkling,

He did not command immersion. Let the Scriptures decide!

Space will not allow me to give the reason for the retention of the Greek words, both in the A.V. and the R.V. J. B. Rotherham, however, in his *Emphasised Bible*, invariably translates 'immerse,' and 'immersing' and 'immersion.' So do Campbell and Bowes.

Lastly, the design of baptism, as taught in the New Testament cannot possibly be understood or realised by the use of the word or by the action of sprinkling.

Christian unity would be speeded up if all were determined to be loyal to the New Testament in this matter, regarding the action, subjects, and design of baptism.

J. HOLMES.

To Be or Not To Be.

(This article has reference to an Ordination Plan in U.S.A., but has lessons for Britain too—EDITOR S.S.)

AS far back as 1790, in a speech upon the Right of Election, John Philpot Curran, the Irish statesman, said:

'It is the common fate of the indolent to see their rights become a prey to the active. The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance: which condition, if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime and the punishment of his guilt.'

With these words the Irish orator called his people to be alert, ready, informed; and he warned them that to become slothful, lazy and inactive would be to tear out the foundations of their liberty and create a vulnerable weakness through which they might be taken advantage of by more active persons.

How applicable are these words to our own situation to-day! The philosophy of dictatorship has gone 'hog wild' in the world; and it is accompanied by a psychology of acquiescence that makes it even more to be feared. When a foe is recognised, one can at least organise his defence, but many of us have attempted to evade this modern evil by denying its existence and telling ourselves that we are secure and that there is not a thing in the world to be concerned about. Thus, by our own indolence and inactivity, we become a party to the destruction of all that we hold dear.

This is true not only in the political world; it is also true in the Church of Christ. Paul warned us that we must be 'instant [eager, active, urgent, importunate] in season and out of season,' but many of us have not heeded his warning; we have sunk into the depths of formalism so deeply as to quench all the real spirit in our faith; we have become mired down in a lethargy and indolence that blinds us to the dangers of accelerating trends among our people. Our Churches are not informed; our preachers are so busy with local affairs that they have no time to look outside the local Church long enough to see what is going on in the brotherhood at large. The result is that too many of us are unable to detect the perils in modern trends. Placing absolute trust in the leaders of our brotherhood life, we have become unconcerned about any trend that does not seem to affect us directly and immediately in our own tiny circle. While we have been sleeping in this lethargy, those more active have been taking advantage of us.

In the beginning, the Restoration Movement was a *movement*, not a museum. We came into being as a People with a Plea, a Plan and a Purpose. Our Plea is for the Unity of all Christians; our Plan is the Restoration of the New Testament Church; our Purpose is that the world

might know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. We took the New Testament as our sole authority in matters of faith and practice; we preached the New Testament plan of salvation; we believed in the absolute autonomy of the local congregation; we repudiated all man-made ecclesiastical systems, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant denominational, as works of the devil.

Our forefathers took this stand, not because of any dislike for the people who constitute the membership of denominational Churches, and not because they were 'reactionary individualists, distrustful, jealous, arrogant, uneducated,' but because they loved God and men and could not sit idly by and permit God to be robbed of His glory while man was robbed of salvation. It required courage, conviction and fidelity to God's Word to accept social and religious ostracism and against all odds to look the devil in the face and call his name.

Thousands of our brethren have believed so much in the great fundamentals of the Restoration Movement that they have simply presumed that all others of the brethren believe them, too. We have been 'resting, sweetly resting' in complete confidence; trusting absolutely in the faith and integrity of our brotherhood leaders. We have ceased to be vigilant and to keep ourselves informed, and, while the Churches of Christ have been resting in a sweet and lazy lethargy, more active persons have been working.

Any person claiming to be a Christian dislikes the word 'suspicion.' Something is wrong when Christians suspect one another. The result is that, while some of us who have kept our weather eye open have at times felt that all things were not exactly as they should be, we have hesitated to do anything about it because we believed in the integrity of men who claimed to be Christian leaders, and, while we thought actions were sometimes strange, we have tried hard to believe in the 'spirit' of all persons involved. While our Lord warned us

of the consequences of judging one another, He also laid down the proposition that 'by their fruits ye shall know them.'

When John the Baptist saw the Pharisees coming down to the Jordan River where he baptised, he said to them, 'Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance.' No one could have convinced John that the Pharisees had come down there to repent, until they had given some evidence of a changed heart. It is just as true that, if a brother brings forth fruit worthy only of suspicion, he has no grounds for crying 'unjust' when some one asks him what his intentions are.

For the past several years, our brotherhood has been suffering because of a spirit of unrest. Cries of impending ecclesiasticism have been raised. Liberals and conservatives have sought a common denominator of fellowship and co-operation. In the place of unity there has been disunion and distrust. The source of all this has been doubtful; no one has been able to place his finger upon it. Preachers have been afraid to speak their conviction because some ghost might place his finger upon them; something fearful and haunting has sent into hiding some of the greatest talent our brotherhood has produced. At a recent Indiana convention, several young men left the convention room and went into the hallway rather than to stand up for their conviction and become labelled. What has been going on!

Now, brethren, there needs to be no doubt in our minds. The ghostly Goliath has come out into the light and we can see him. He represents no individual, but a group of individuals. Since he has made an open and clear statement of his ideologies and purposes, he has not only bared his identity, but he has also revealed his weakness. His vulnerable spot may be labelled *information*.

When some of us have questioned the policies of certain of our more

prominent brethren, we have received in reply a frown and a look of utter disgust that seemed to say, 'With what arrogance do you suspect the powers that be!' When we have stated that we believe modern trends advocated by some of our brethren would result in ecclesiasticism and centralisation, we have received for an answer, 'Why do you suspect everything we do; why do you not trust us? Our *spirit* is all right. Pay no attention to the letter of our words. At least, we are advancing in the right direction.' The late Will Rogers used to say, 'I don't know anything 'cept what I read in the papers.' We also occasionally hear the words, 'Take a Dutchman for what he means instead of for what he says.' Now, pray tell, how can we know what a man means if he does not mean what he says? Only in their writing and in their speech can we possibly understand the spirit of the brethren who advocate drastic changes in the policies of this great brotherhood. If the late Neville Chamberlain had taken a certain Dutchman for what he said, Europe might be at peace to-day.

I, for one, no longer suspect; doubt and wonder have given way to knowledge. There is no other way by which I can know the intentions of my brethren than by taking them at their word.

Brethren, those who feel as I do about these things are sincere; it is in the interest of brotherhood that I write. No one dislikes controversy more than I do, but you can't get rid of controversy by simply denying its existence any more than Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy can get rid of sin by denying its existence. We do not dislike our brethren with whom we disagree, but we do believe the policies they are advocating have their counterpart in modern trends toward dictatorship; they are deadly.

God has given us a wonderful heritage; we are the bulwark of the free Church. If we allow indolence and laziness and fear of a mythical ghost to silence us in this hour, we will lose our most priceless heritage. *Awake, brethren—read—write—speak*—and our loyal brethren will arise to the point of order and put to flight the usurpations of denominational-minded leaders.

LESTER H. FORD.

Worldliness.

THIS is a much talked-about subject, but little understood and less heeded. A re-study of it in the light of the Scriptures may help us to a better understanding.

In Rom. xii. 1-2, the apostle Paul writes, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the tender mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' Note particularly the expression, 'And be not fashioned according to this world.'

Note next this passage: 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of this life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever' (1 John ii. 15-17).

From these Scriptures it is certain that no man can love the world and fashion his life according to it and be a Christian at the same time. By the term 'world' we understand either wicked people, or the deeds practised

by wicked people. Jesus says, 'The sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of light' (Luke xvi. 24). In 1 Cor. v. 19 we read, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.' It is clear that the term 'world' in these passages signify wicked people.

In John xvii. 14 we have this statement, uttered by our Lord the night before His crucifixion, 'I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.' To some of the Jewish teachers Jesus once said, 'Ye are from beneath; I am from above: Ye are of this world; I am not of this world' (John viii. 23). From such passages taken from the language of our Lord it is evident that he used the term 'this world' to signify those who are controlled by the desires and powers of this world.

In John xii. 31 we have this further statement from the lips of Jesus. 'Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.' Again in John xiv. 30 He says, 'I will no more speak much with you, for the prince of this world cometh; and he hath nothing in me.' By 'the prince of this world' Jesus certainly meant the devil. But read this statement from the apostle Paul: 'And even if our Gospel be veiled, it is veiled to them that perish: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them' (2 Cor. iv. 3-4). In Eph. vi. 12, Satan is referred to as the 'ruler of world powers.' When Satan tempted Jesus he offered him 'all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them' if our Lord would bow down and worship him. Millions are bowing down before Satan and worshipping him to-day for an infinitesimal part of this world, and its fading glories.

A consideration of the above facts should help us to understand better just what we mean when we speak of 'worldliness.' In Titus ii. 12 Paul

says, 'for the grace of God hath appeared unto all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world.' Note: the apostle says we should deny 'ungodliness and worldly lusts.' The same writer further says, 'And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also ye once lived in the lusts of your flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as the rest' (Eph. ii. 1, 2).

In the light of these facts, let us now look at a passage found in Gal. v. 19-26, wherein the apostle to the Gentiles lists the most outstanding works of the flesh, all of which are base and worldly in their very nature: 'Now the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' The only word in this passage which needs defining is 'revelling.' The Twentieth Century Dictionary defines it as, 'A feast with noisy jollity; carouse; a spectacular dance performed in procession and pageant.' Now note the last three terms used by Paul in his list of the works of the flesh: 'drunkenness, revellings, and such like.' If this does not list dancing along with the works of the flesh then language has no meaning. Now note the apostle's conclusion again. 'Of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.'

If there be no difference between

the life and practice of a Christian and one who is not, then how is a Christian ever to become 'the light of the world'? If a Christian is to participate in every amusement and practice of those of the world, then why did James say, 'Know ye not that the friendship of this world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God' (Jas. iv. 4). If the Church is going to condone every practice of the world and cover it with the mantle of charity then what is the sense in the following language, uttered by our Lord? 'If the world hateth you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you' (John xv. 18-19). If the Church is to be made an institution for sponsoring all forms of worldly pleasures and amusements, so as to 'catch the crowd' then why did Paul say, 'be not fashioned according to the world, but be ye transformed'?

In recent years the Bible has been but little read in the homes; it has been legislated out of our schools; and it has had but little place in the Church—particularly among the denominations. In its stead we have had an overdose of worldliness, of sports and amusements; and now we are reaping the fruits of our sowings. Homes are being broken up by the wholesale; the Churches are filled with empty pews; crime is on the increase—and the young who are not yet old enough to vote are the chief offenders. Not only have the schools, the Churches, and the homes winked at all kinds of worldliness but they have actually become a party to the same. Some of us are afraid to speak out against any sort of worldliness for fear we will create a furore that will embarrass us. We may bring down upon us the wrath of some 'good Christian mother,' who has high social ambitions for her children; or we may get some of the best Church leaders

suspicious of us; or, worse still, we might get some college president on our necks.

I say these things not because I am disgruntled; not because of any opposition I have ever encountered from anyone; and not because I am growing sour; but I fear we are leaning toward the world more than we are toward the Lord. Jesus said, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' Some of us seem to think that if we are to 'catch men' we must ape the world—especially high-pressure salesmen. If we catch men we must 'follow Jesus.' He was 'not of the world,' neither were His apostles. No more can we be of the world if we are to be His disciples. Friends, a congregation of fifty 'converted' members will save more people in twelve months time than will a congregation of a thousand half-converted members.

A couple of years ago a lady said to me, 'Most people have just enough religion to make them miserable.' When I asked what she meant she explained, 'They have too much religion to do the things they would like to do, but they don't have enough to do what they ought to do. In their dilemma—trying to hold on to Christ with one hand and the world with the other—they are the most miserable of any group of people.' I have often thought of this, and the more I do the more convinced I am that she was right. The sooner we let go of the world with one hand and take hold of Christ with both the happier we will be and the greater good we will do. In conclusion you may use the following as a definition for worldliness until you find a better one. Worldliness is anything—whether it be pleasure, business, society, or any other matter—that comes between us and our interests in spiritual things.

Christian Standard.

AS many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.



Young Folk's Corner.

CONDUCTED BY UNCLE BERT.

Month's Motto:

'Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.' (Rom. xii. 9.)

The Best Love.

Dear Boys and Girls,

There was once an eastern lady, who, before leaving on a long journey, asked her three sons to give her an expression of their love for her. The first brought his mother a marble tablet on which he had inscribed her name. The next presented her with a rich garland of fragrant flowers. But the third entered her presence, and said: 'Mother, I have neither marble tablet nor fragrant flowers, but I have a heart; upon it your name is forever engraved.' Which son loved best? The third, for he gave the greatest gift, *all he could*—lasting love and affection.

The richest and most costly gift means nothing unless it is prompted by love. The apostle John, writing of the greatest gift of all time, said: 'God so loved . . . that he gave his only begotten Son . . .' God gave *because He loved*, and real giving is always inspired by true love. God asks each one of us: 'My son, give me thine heart.' If you would please Him, you must give Him your heart—*your all*. Nothing less will satisfy Him. Did not Jesus say that the greatest commandment is to 'love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . soul . . . strength'? Again, He said: 'Who-soever forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple.' With God it is *all or nothing!* Nothing must be held back.

Let us each ask ourselves: 'Is my love for the Saviour so great that I am

willing to give Him my heart, my self, *my all!* If you answer 'Yes,' yours is the best love.

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S QUESTIONS.

1. Job (Job i. 1).
2. The Lord Jesus (1 Peter ii. 6, Eph. ii. 20).
3. Zaccheus (Luke xix. 4).
4. Judas Iscariot (John xii. 6).
5. Mary (Luke i. 28).
6. Paul (Acts xxvi. 24).
7. The Lord Jesus (John vii. 20).

Can You Solve This?

A MAN who once their lives to save
Some prophets hid within a cave.
A PLACE where stood a happy home,
Where our dear Lord was glad to come.
A PRIEST who served till he was grey,
But failed to teach his sons the way.
A WOMAN, kind, and true, and pure,
Who garments made for all the poor.
SOMETHING which cannot speak nor
feel,
And yet to it the people kneel.
A MAN who in a chariot rode—
And there was taught the way of God.
A PROPHET who, at God's command,
Rebuked the king of all the land.
A YOUTH who early served the Lord,
He'd found salvation through the Word.

Initials shew to you and me
The kind of children we should be.

Faith.

Faith came singing in my room,
And other guests took flight;
Fear and Anxiety, Grief and Gloom
Sped out into the night.
I wondered that such peace could be,
But Faith said gently: 'Don't you see
They really cannot live with me?'

'Lord, increase our faith.'

Who?

WHO is a brave man, who?
He who, fearing God, fears nought beside,
And dares do right, whate'er betide;
This man hath courage true.

The Second Coming of the Lord.--IV.

OUR LORD, speaking of John the Baptist (Matt. xi. 11-14), declares that he was the Elijah foretold by Malachi. Upon referring to the prophecy (Mal. iv. 5), Elijah was to come 'before the great and dreadful day of the Lord.' (See also Matt. xvii. 10-13). In Matt. xvi. 21, Jesus begins to tell His disciples of His sufferings at Jerusalem, and, alluding to His coming again, in the glory of His Father, declares that 'there be some standing here that shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom,' the coming being associated with the Judgment and the rewarding of every man 'according to his deeds.' That clearly means that some of His disciples would be alive to see that great event. Mark ix. 1 should be connected with Mark viii. 34-38, and Luke ix. 26-27 and John xxi. 21-23 should also be read in this connection. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, declares that 'they were not in darkness that that day should overtake them as a thief' (v. 1-6). They had no need that aught should be written to them concerning the coming of the Lord, nor of the fate of those who died before His coming, for he writes, 'We that are alive, that are left at the coming of the Lord, should in no wise precede those who had fallen asleep.' (Consult 1 Thess. i. 10, iii. 13, iv. 15-17, and v. 4-10). Writing to the Romans (xiii. 11-12), he tells them their salvation is nearer than when they first believed, and in that marvellous chapter in 1 Cor. dealing with the certainty of the resurrection and the glorious reward of the saints, the change is to take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.' Upon referring to the Book of Revelation (chap. xi.), at the blowing of the trumpet by the seventh angel, it was the time of the dead that they

should be judged, and the rewards given by God to His servants, which seems to indicate that the Book of Revelation was known to Paul. In writing to Timothy, Paul exhorts him 'to keep the commandment without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' which clearly implies an expectation during the lifetime of Timothy.

Other writers of the N.T. speak in the same strain. James writes: 'Be patient, therefore, brethren, till the coming of the Lord,' 'stablish your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand,' 'the judge standeth before the door.' The Apostle John, too, writes expectantly, saying, 'Little children, it is the last hour, and as ye have heard that Anti-Christ cometh, even now have there arisen many anti-Christ, whereby we know it is the last hour.' Quite agreeing with Rev. x. 6-7, that there 'should be no more delay.'

It is quite true that the Saviour Himself, in His wonderful prophecy of this great event, said, 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man, but my Father only.' At the time it was uttered it was quite true, but in the ensuing thirty-five years, the Apostles, blessed with the overflowing of the Divine Spirit, were gradually enlightened concerning the time of these things, and the Book of Revelation was specially given for the information of the people of God. I think I have quite established the fact that the Apostles fully expected the coming of the Lord in their lifetime. This is freely acknowledged by theologians, but by many it is asserted that they were mistaken. Shall we say the same? Or shall we so interpret Scripture to accord with our own ideas? Never! Let God be true, even if it means every man a liar, and let His Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

The next subject: 'What is the city, and who are the people that are the objects of God's wrath,' will naturally follow.

J. A. WHITE.

It cannot be done.

AMONG the letters received in commendation of the editor's recent article on 'A Pious Fraud' is one in which its writer said: 'You have done a good service in so clearly and conclusively exposing the Presbyterian minister, Mr. Mahan, who for years published false documents about Pilate's court, representing them as being true and correct accounts from antiquity concerning certain events in the life of our Lord.' So far, so good; but this is not all. There is a thorn along with the rose.

The writer of the letter, whose name need not be mentioned in this connection, suggests, among other things, that 'in less space than you have used to expose Mr. Mahan, you can indicate to your readers that the teaching that Jesus will return before the thousand years is *Scriptural*.'

This correspondent greatly overestimates the editor's ability when he suggests that he 'can indicate' that the teaching that Jesus will return before the thousand years is scriptural. The editor cannot do the impossible. Admittedly, if the Bible taught what he says it does, it would not take much space in which to indicate it. But that is where the rub comes. The Bible does not teach it.

From this suggestion the editor asks to be excused. He would not, for any kind of consideration, seriously undertake to prove that 'the teaching that Jesus will return before the thousand years is scriptural.' If His life depended upon it, he is of the conviction that he could not prove it. Not only so, but it is His settled conviction that no living man can prove it. None with whose efforts he is acquainted have succeeded in doing it. In order to harmonise the premil-

lenial theory with the Bible it would be necessary to do in principle what the student suggested when he told Mr. Bryan that he could harmonise the Bible with the theory of evolution. He said that all that was necessary was simply to discard the first two chapters of Genesis and a few similar passages. But that would be mutilation rather than reconciliation. The premillennial theory irreconcilably clashes with many plain statements of the Bible. If the brother who wrote the letter in question thinks that the editor has the slightest disposition to wink at or encourage the teaching of premillennialism, he is *exactly wrong* at that point in his thinking.

Gospel Advocate.

What Paul Excludes.

WHEN we come to examine carefully Paul's statement as to the origin of the Scriptures—and especially his own writings—the most significant fact is not so much what he declares about divine origin as to what he very specifically excludes in the area of human origin. In other words, Paul is not content to say that the message he received came to him from God; he says clearly that it did not come from man and, to make the matter even more emphatic, he says that the divine revelation was not supplemented by human teaching (for that is what he means in Gal. i. 12, when he says, 'nor was I taught it.').

By thus specifically cutting out human origin in any sense, Paul meets the situation of his day and also anticipates the destructive criticism of our day.

Moreover, Paul leaves no ground for confusion by means of a liberal interpretation of the term 'Holy Spirit.' Some people use that term as embracing any good Christian disposition, such as motivates all sincere Christians. Paul clearly says God, and excludes human agencies.

Jude carries the matter yet farther by the phrase 'once for all.' In other

words, it was not part of a revelation to go on through other Christians down to our day. It was a complete definite revelation given to Apostles—unique, not on a par with other spiritual insights and interpretations.

The Holy Spirit has anticipated the critics and forewarned and forearmed the Christians.

It only remains to ask whether these men were speaking the truth. Were they competent to know whether the Word came to them from God? And were they honest men? Those are the real questions. The answer to both is in the marvellous character of what they taught and what it has done in the world. Have we been blessed by a lie told by liars?

Christian Standard.

The Stain.

AN old paper tells the story of a man who was washing the large plate glass in a shop window. There was one soiled spot which defied all efforts to remove it. After hard rubbing at it, using much soap and water, and failing to remove it, he found out the trouble. 'It's on the inside,' he called out to someone in the store.

Many are trying to cleanse the soul from its stains. They wash it with the tears of sorrow; they scrub it with the soap of good resolves; they rub it with the chamois of morality; but still the consciousness of it is not removed. The trouble is, 'It is on the inside.'

Nyasaland.

BEFORE August closed, some fortunate early readers of the September *S.S.* had written me expressing their pleasure at the report of Bro. Ronald, which appeared almost word for word as he had written it. Indeed, it was a splendid report of the effect of work undertaken by the Churches and the evangelists. The converts won for

Christ were the result of the Churches having sent two of their preachers to Southern Rhodesia, to care for the men of Nyasaland who had gone there seeking work. The man of Chikwawa is to be commended in that, having learned of the Saviour, he returned home and began to make known the Saviour he had found, with the result that others were won for Jesus Christ. The seed sown in Rhodesia brought forth fruit there and Nyasaland, though it was first sown in Nyasaland many years ago. There, the faithful brethren still work on, strong in their faith and labour of love.

And now to resume the report. Northern Province: Brethren Wellem and Benson, who were some time ago transferred to work in this province, arrived at Lilongwe on April 8th, and have united with Brethren Jackson and Lamuel. They had a splendid Gospel meeting at Chimdumdu Church, Dedza District, on April 19th and 20th. Six candidates confessed their faith and were baptised into the One Name before many people.

Bro. Rabson, of Ncheu District had a good meeting at Kamwamba village, where six were baptised on April 20th, before many witnesses. On April 5th, at a Gospel meeting at Nkhumkhumba Church, five confessed their Saviour and were immersed into His Name before many people. On May 27th, at Likangala Church, five were added to the Lord by confession and baptism, while two were restored to the Church.

Bro. Ronald writes, 'Brethren, lift up your eyes, and look on the Nyasaland fields, for they are already white to harvest. Help us to sow the seed in the fields of Nyasaland, for to sow is our present duty. 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.' 'For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shown toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister.'

Bro. Ronald concludes his very inspiring and thrilling report by urging us to 'Remember the bread of the Word of God, which is the Bible, that is most urgently needed by the brethren in Nyasaland.'

W. M. KEMPSTER.

News.

Aberdeen.—On Lord's Day, August 17th, George Sargent Murray, a young man from Buckie, but meantime residing here, made the good confession and was baptised into the Lord Jesus, receiving the right hand of fellowship on the following Lord's Day. This is the first convert from the labours of our young evangelist, Bro. Frank Worgan, who is serving the Church during August and September. We rejoice that the Word, so eloquently proclaimed, has born fruit, and pray that others may yet acknowledge the sovereignty of our Lord. T. J. LOBBAN.

Cape Town, Woodstock.—We are glad to report the pleasure of having with us for two months young Sister F. E. Short, of Southern Rhodesia, daughter of Brother and Sister W. N. Short.

She arrived here on the 2nd July, 1941, and sailed for U.S.A. on the 18th July. She is going for a period of about three to six years (D.V.) to study on mission work.

We do admire the faith, courage and purpose of these young people passing through here, and pray and hope that Sister Short's voyage may be a safe one by God's guidance and grace.

We also report a singing class has been lately started, conducted on Tuesday evenings, with the view of learning new hymns and various voices. Since its introduction it has proved successful and we hope for future success of same.

Otherwise, in these dark and perilous times, we must testify that, although we have not gained many souls for the Lord of late, we have been richly blessed since launching out in this vicinity seventeen months ago. And we are still determined, by God's grace, to contend for the old paths, without compromise, and pray that our humble labours may, God willing, shew forth their fruits accordingly, 'Knowing that God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love.'

In the meanwhile, with patience, we await the glorious appearing of our Saviour. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus. T. HARTLE.

Glasgow, Shettleston, 515 Amulree Street.—It gives us great pleasure to report an addition to our numbers by the immersion of Miss Mary Travis, at Coplaw street meeting-house, on 31st August. She was

received into fellowship on Lord's Day, 7th September. We pray that our sister will find much happiness in her new life.

A. HUGGINS.

Hindley, Wigan.—The anniversary of the opening of the meeting-house was held on September 13th, 14th and 15th, when by the generosity of the brethren at Tranent, we had the services of Bro. W. Crosthwaite. Memories of past victories and blessings were revived. Our brother spared no effort, and preached the Word with power. On Saturday evening, we had a very good gathering, including many brethren and sisters from the district Churches. Bro. L. Morgan, secretary of the Church, presided, and gave an interesting account of the pioneers who commenced the cause in Hindley on January 19th, 1873. Some of the pioneers could neither read nor write, but by constant effort and study they learned the way of God more perfectly. They were truly evangelistic, and in less than five months six were added to the Church.

Reports were given by the secretaries of the Young People's, Women's, and Men's Meetings, the Church, and the School.

Solos were rendered by Sister Leyland and Bro. Jacks. Bro. Crosthwaite gave an inspiring message, based on a saying of Solomon's: 'A living dog is better than a dead lion,' in which he emphasised that a small Church, alive and active, is better than a big one dead; and the humblest member who uses his slender gifts is better than an over educated do-nothing. On Sunday we had a day of rich fellowship, and a real feast of good things. We had large gatherings, morning, afternoon and evening, and messages were delivered which will linger in our minds for many a long day.

Special mention should be made of a very fine message in the afternoon, based on the word 'School,' in which the importance of winning the children for Christ and His Church, in Christ's own way was stressed.

We had a fine meeting in the evening, when an address on 'The Mission of the Church' was delivered. At this service Sister Johnson sang a solo.

The services were brought to a close on Monday evening, when a good congregation heard a powerful message on 'Strange Fire,' in which the danger of introducing into the

worship and service of the Lord things not found in His Word, was illustrated by incidents from the Scriptures. Sister L. Morgan and Bro. Jacks rendered a duett. It has been arranged for Bro. Crosthwaite to spend six weeks with the Church at Hindley from the beginning of October, so we are looking forward to an early return visit (D.V.) We feel that many are very near to the kingdom, and we pray that God will bless our united efforts to His glory. 'Brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified.'

L. MORGAN.

Nelson, Lancs.—Saturday and Sunday, September 13th and 14th, marked a new venture in the Church's history. The first *all-men's* week-end effort took place and was a huge success. On the Saturday, more than eighty sat down to tea, and everybody voted it equally as good as any that ladies could provide. At 6.45, community singing was heartily indulged in until 7, when the actual evening's proceedings began. There was a really fine programme, to upwards of ninety, by brothers of Nelson and Burnley. Bro. Arthur Brown, of Manchester, gave a fine address to a wrapt audience.

On Sunday, Bro. Brown exhorted the Church, and in the evening preached the Gospel, and our cup of joy was full when Muriel Roberts decided for Christ, expressing her desire to be immersed. A very pleasing feature of the effort was the presence amongst us of Bro. and Sis. Ballam, of Windsor Street, Liverpool. Their presence was a joy to us, and especially the way in which Bro. Ballam presided over the Gospel meeting. God is being wonderfully gracious to the Nelson Church, and our deepest prayer is that He will make us all worthy of these blessings, and give us continually strength of purpose to obey His will in all we undertake for Him.

Ours to serve—His the glory. F. SYLES.

Netherfield.—For a period of six weeks, July 6th to August 17th, the Church has held an intensive mission, being privileged to have the services of Bro. A. E. Winstanley, evangelist.

Our Brother's services with us have been most beneficial and encouraging. The Church has been awakened once more to the

need of evangelization, and also spiritually blessed and built up by the wonderful efforts of Bro. Winstanley in Gospel preaching and exhortations to the Church.

During the month of July, Gospel services followed by open-air services were held on Lord's Days and Thursdays. Advertising of the meetings throughout the district was done, and some 750 leaflets being distributed weekly, and personal invitations given. Interest was gradually aroused, and during the last two weeks Gospel services were held on Lord's Days, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Attendance increased and a good number of friends came along to hear the message. On the last Lord's Day, August 17th, the meeting-place was full, and we had the joy of witnessing the baptism of two elderly ladies, Mrs. Stapleton and Mrs. Knighton, who had made their decision known during the last week. It was a fitting climax to our Brother's efforts, and we are hoping that the interest which he has aroused will be maintained and that others will be brought into the kingdom.

Besides his work in this direction, Bro. Winstanley was also active among the young people and children. Each Monday evening, a Young People's meeting was held, when Bible problems were dealt with. On Tuesdays, the Children's Service, called 'Sunshine Corner,' became a feature which all the children looked forward to and enjoyed.

At the Farewell Service on Monday, August 18th, several members gave their thanks and appreciations for the services of our brother. It was evidently the general feeling that his stay with us was all too short.

We pray that the Lord will bless our Brother in his labours, and that others may have the same blessings which we have enjoyed.

W. WHITE.

Correspondence Classes.

THERE is still time for students to enroll for the winter session. Will all who wish to do so please write at once to Bro. W. Steele, Ravenshough Cottage, Prestonpans, East Lothian.