

FOR CHRISTIAN
THOUGHT AND
ACTION

ENDEAVOUR

Dedication

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No. 1.

SUMMER 1961

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Dedication

Jesus, who lived on earth two thousand years ago, is no dead fact of the past.

He is real today. He is relevant today. He is powerful today. He lives today, triumphant and strong, our Saviour, our Redeemer, our Friend. He is the answer to all our needs. He is a Power for living in the twentieth century. His appeal is commanding in its power and adventurous in its outlook.

OUT OF HISTORY AND INTO TODAY

He comes to us first through His life on earth and His death on the Cross. His was the victory of gentleness over violence, of humility over pride, of self-sacrifice over selfishness. It was not therefore a weak surrender, but a victory strong beyond measure: the triumph of all time.

Those tremendous events of a few short years have made His name glorious beyond words. His life shattering in its impact, His story timeless in its magnificence.

The inextinguishable flame of Christianity sprang from the Person of Jesus. In His birth, as the expression of God's love for men and women, God's answer to human need. In the overwhelming impression of His personality as it was seen in His life on earth. In the dramatic impact of His trial and death on the conscience and heart of mankind.

As the new Faith swept the Roman world, the Christians of the first century found that face to face with this innocent suffering, with the glory of this love, they could not be quite the same again. Their conscience and their heart were touched: at last they understood and cared.

With Jesus as their Lord, they chose the way of surrender. The guilt of the past was lifted, the present filled with new power, the future bright with hope. They found this to be true in their experience. It can be true in ours, for the Cross has not lost its power.

There is another way in which Jesus comes to us. His power is not only a moral force stemming from His life and death, but a real physical fact.

His strength is available to us today, and when we trust Him and seek Him, our problems are within His power to resolve.

The unhappiness, the anxiety, the loneliness, which we cover so often with a false confidence, the longing for a faith to live by: these are His concern, and He is able.

In trouble or temptation He will always be near, and His strength can supply our need more abundantly than we can ask or think.

In our lives today, although invisible to our eye, the risen Jesus can be present with us, caring as He cared for all who needed Him when He walked the earth. If we trust in Him He will not let us go, for He remains the same gentle yet demanding Friend who will not fail. Nor will He change: He is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever." What He was, He is, and will be always.

His power never weakens. His love never fails. His touch has still its ancient power, and no word from Him can fail in its effect. He will not leave us comfortless: He will come to us and dwell with us, and be with us for ever. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

THE MORAL CHALLENGE

The friendship of this Jesus is the true answer to human need. It heals our sense of guilt and brings a new motive into our lives, compelling us to surrender to Him, to seek His way, and to let Him rule our hearts. It is like an awakening, or the end of a quest.

The dynamic quality of this experience challenges us in every way.

It inspires the desire, the need to follow Him, and offers the real solution to our problems, and not the seemingly easy, selfish, and in the end ineffective way we would choose ourselves.

He seeks to banish the easy hypocrisy into which we retreat so comfortably, so that at last we can see ourselves clearly, and see things as they really are. He seeks to smash the fairy tale world of our materialism with its false desires and tawdry hopes that cannot be fulfilled. He seeks to take apart the tangled web of our lives, and to cut the knots which cannot be untied.

THE SOCIAL CHALLENGE

The love and power of Christ, which thus pour into our lives, flood over into a concern for all men everywhere, without regard to their country, their colour, their religion.

The suffering of all men everywhere becomes bound up with Christ and with ourselves. When He preached the gospel of the Kingdom of God, He also healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the sorrowful, and expressed the love of God in a boundless compassion for humanity whatever its plight.

Deeply conscious that we ourselves might well have been born to such a life, and that like Him, we cannot stand aside from humanity, we realise that this divine compassion seeks to work through us. Constrained by the love of Christ, and resting on His all-availing strength, we know that we are all responsible for one another, spiritually, mentally and physically, and that God's unmerited mercy and tender care for ourselves must lead us to a gratitude toward Him and a concern for our fellow-men such as His own.

THE INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGE

His irresistible and all-embracing challenge affects our beliefs as well. It is an end of accepting Him as our Lord that "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Thus we are moved to examine with courage all that we think in the light of the Spirit of Jesus, to distinguish what are the real, the great truths of Christianity.

To distinguish what is vital and what is not. To distinguish what is central and what is not. To distinguish what is of first importance, what is secondary, and what is of little consequence. To throw off the imprisoning bands of social and religious pressures, and fearlessly to re-assess the old and the new, the familiar and the unfamiliar, with patient care: knowing that in His strength, the power to resist loving patience and wisdom is gone.

In the first century, when the Gospel spread like a flame through the Roman world, Christians found in it a new and impelling motive. It brought them not only forgiveness and peace, but also strength, joy, courage and a sense of purpose.

It was the life, the teaching, the death of Jesus, and all that He was and is, that had this tremendous effect, along with the great surge of power which speaks of the mystery in which our lives are set.

Jesus alive, crucified, risen from the dead, triumphant and returning: this whole picture of a Person changed their lives, a transforming power which opens up always by a surrender to its challenge.

He is no weak figure of the past, but a powerful Master, a Lord with authority, who demands our love, our allegiance, our all. In Him alone can our longings be satisfied, our lost hearts find content.

We dedicate this endeavour to our Lord, conscious of our failings, but ever mindful of His divine power.

We trust that, under God's hand, it may succeed in some measure in clarifying the dynamic quality of our Lord and His teaching in the background of Today, in deepening the spiritual experience of Christ which is the only true spring of service, and appraising all that we think in the light of His call with courage and humility. It may, we believe, be another fruitful outcome of the community's growth, and develop the essence of its tradition to meet the challenge of the twentieth century.

The Challenge of the Cross

OUR COVER DESIGN

A. J. Ford

A symbol of the Cross, and two types of Roman lettering make up the design.

The Cross, of course, has become the most generally accepted symbol of the Christian faith, and its use could be regarded as merely conventional. It appears at the beginning of our magazine, however, rather for the challenge it presents and the spiritual dynamic it can supply.

This symbol is a condensation of the whole Passion narrative and its meaning. It reminds us that it was ordinary people such as ourselves, motivated by the ordinary selfish interests which motivate us, who crucified the Lord of Glory, and that therefore the basis of our lives must no longer be self-interest but Christ himself. It reminds us that God allowed the death of his Son, and that Jesus freely submitted to it. Their love and concern for men was such that they wanted us to have this supreme challenge to repentance and good works.

Moreover, the Cross shows that they believed that the death of Jesus would not be in vain. The challenge would be heeded. God knows that human nature is not so hopeless that it cannot be redeemed. As Jesus said: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." We are reminded, too, that it was Christ on the Cross, suffering the worst men could do, who forgave His enemies, who gave hope and comfort to the dying in the person of the thief at his side, and who called for the love and care of those who are bereaved and distressed, as when He asked the

beloved disciple to be a son to Mary.

The Cross cannot be to us a merely conventional symbol, nor should it be an object for morbid contemplation. Though it reveals the worst that is in man, immediately it calls us to higher endeavour. It calls us to selflessness and uprightness in all our dealings, to forgiveness of enemies, to the ministration of the gospel of hope and comfort, and to attending with love our fellow human beings in distress.

Above all it emphasises that God is with us to the uttermost in our responses to this challenge, and that He believes that success is possible in each of us.

It is this brighter, forward looking aspect of the Cross which is taken up by our title, Endeavour, and by the lettering which forms the second element in the cover design.

Based upon two scripts used in early manuscripts, the lettering calls to mind the great devotion which many men have brought to the propagation of the Word of God. It stands for that service which the Cross inspires. And who shall limit this service, the forms it should take, or the help we shall receive in it? The photograph of the little refugee girl on page 8 represents the great and varied needs of the world which call for this service.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" The Cross above all else proclaims that God is indeed for us, and that as He is for us, so He is for those He calls us to serve.

The New English Bible

The Letter of Paul to the Romans (8: 31-38).

If God is on our side, who is against us? He did not spare his own Son, but surrendered him for us all; and with this gift how can he fail to lavish upon us all he has to give? Who will be the accuser of God's chosen ones? It is God who pronounces acquittal: then who can condemn? It is Christ — Christ who died, and, more than that, was raised from the dead — who is at God's right hand, and indeed pleads our cause. Then what can separate us from the love of Christ? Can affliction or hardship? Can persecution, hunger, nakedness, peril, or the sword? . . . In spite of all, overwhelming victory is ours through him who loved us.

A Reputation for Gentleness

Ruth McHaffie

On the first occasion when I was to visit my son's new school he thought it desirable to give me some instructions. "When you come charging up to the school . . ." he said. I felt obliged to protest that I had no intention of "charging up," but hoped to approach with the inoffensive demeanour expected of a harmless parent. Later it occurred to me how very descriptive was his schoolboy phraseology of the manner which we sometimes adopt toward others.

It is not surprising if the approach of one schoolboy to another is clumsy and if differences between the two of them provoke animosity. Nor is it surprising if men and women whose god is Self become antagonistic toward one another, under the slightest provocation. What *is* surprising is that so often since the founding of the Christian Church, many of those who have claimed to obey the God of Love, have shown just as much bitterness and antagonism toward those whose theological opinions have differed from their own, as have any worldly counterparts. They have considered it part of righteous Christian warfare that they should "charge up" to their spiritual opponents, committing even physical violence against them.

We, ourselves, are not moved to commit violent atrocities and we would all lament them, but bitterness because of opposite opinions still rears its ugly self, and though it may be exhibited by us, only in a refined way, it is yet sadly deplorable. Perhaps the most surprising fact of all is that even when we know how wrong such behaviour is, even when we outwardly restrain ourselves, yet there will be few hearts amongst enthusiastic stalwarts, which, if honestly searched, will never reveal a seed of bitterness quietly germinating in time of opposition. That we should "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away" and that we should be "kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another," are precepts easier stated than observed. Sometimes we find "angry young men" (and women!), disheartened by the

unloving spirit which they feel others show, calling so loudly and so vehemently for more love amongst us, that their very cry becomes bitter. What strangely confused creatures we are! How much, in our weakness, we need the forgiveness and saving grace of our Lord!

Yet we have reason to rejoice. Now, perhaps more than ever before, there is a stronger feeling amongst us that we must be less dogmatic, less self-assured, and more humble in our lifelong search for truth. We are more ready to consider fairly, opinions which are new to us, realising that we cannot expound Scripture with apostolic authority, but that in company with others, who are equally sincere, we can but present the truth as we believe it to be. There is a greater desire amongst us to have "a reputation for gentleness" (Phil. 4: 5 — J. B. Phillips), a quality to which the apostle Paul exhorted the believers of his day.

Looking back some sixty years ago we find our grandfather of strong conviction. He did not believe in hiding his light under a bushel and he was willing, even eager, to stand against opposition. He was forthright in his arguments and was apt to be vehement in his pronouncements against those who opposed his beliefs. Some of us may even look back with a shudder at the way grandfather attempted to present the gospel to "the alien," and remember that if his rheumatism prevented him from attending the business meeting, there to add his forceful contribution, then his family saw his indisposition as an ill wind which blew somebody some good!

Possibly it is only to our own younger days that we need look back to find hardness. Perhaps we used to believe that truth could be tied up in a neat parcel, and because of youthful idealism, which lacked loving understanding, we were bigoted and intolerant of the views of others, and therefore heedless of our Lord's pattern of forbearance. But maybe we have grown in grace so that today there are more of us saying, "Let us do away with hardness and have more love." We try to affirm our convictions in a kindly way and,

by our behaving more pleasantly in ecclesial relationships, it has been made possible for us to have re-unions instead of divisions, and differences of opinion without disfellowship.

Yet we have lost something! We have lost a liveliness which our grandfather had. However much we may dislike the more aggressive attitude of some nineteenth century believers, we cannot but admire them for their vitality and for their determination to stand up for what they believed to be right. They were people who *cared* and they cared greatly.

We live in an age of "couldn't care less" and we are influenced by the atmosphere of our day. It is not always our Christ-like love which enables us to allow others their opinions: quite often it is our apathy. If we have lost our vehemence, is it not possible that we have also lost our "go"? And are we not in danger of exchanging vital enthusiasm for sleepy insipidity?

The task before us is difficult. To have the spirit of crusade together with the spirit of peaceableness has been the duty of every Christian in

every age, but, always, only a few have risen to it. Could we not, now, make a determined effort so that more of us can become ardent soldiers for Christ and yet acquire that "reputation for gentleness"? Could we not remember, more often than we do, that as the "captain of our salvation" won His victories by love, so also must we?

Our brother John Thomas left us a stimulating heritage. He it was who wrote deprecating those "who would discourage or throw hindrances in the way of free, unbiased and independent examination and avowal of Bible truth" (Elpis Israel). He made every effort himself to examine the accuracy of his faith, and his example is an encouragement to each one of us.

If, with our Father's help, this magazine can create an atmosphere in which we can carry on that "independent examination," being unafraid of finding truth, but much afraid of losing love, then it will do well. If, in its lines and between its lines, there can shine the spirit of honesty, forthrightness and enthusiasm combined with gentleness, meekness and humility then it will achieve something which is very great indeed.

The New English Bible

The First Letter of John (3: 18-20; 4: 7-16).

My children, love must not be a matter of words or talk; it must be genuine, and show itself in action. This is how we may know that we belong to the realm of truth, and convince ourselves in his sight that even if our conscience condemns us, God is greater than our conscience and knows all.

Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God. Everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God, but the unloving know nothing of God. For God is love; and his love was disclosed to us in this, that he sent his only Son into the world to bring us life. The love I speak of is not our love for God, but the love he showed to us in sending his Son as the remedy for the defilement of our sins. If God thus loved us, dear friends, we in turn are bound to love one another. Though God has never been seen by any man, God himself dwells in us if we love one another; his love is brought to perfection within us.

Here is the proof that we dwell in him and he dwells in us; he has imparted his Spirit to us. Moreover, we have seen for ourselves, and we attest, that the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world, and if a man acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he dwells in God. Thus we have come to know and believe the love which God has for us.

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main . . . any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.

JOHN DONNE.



Looking Back on World Refugee Year

COLIN RUSSELL

World Refugee Year came as a challenge to the consciences of all thinking people. Inevitably it was a responsibility which fell heavily on the shoulders of every Christian.

Here indeed was Christ—hungry and thirsty, a stranger and naked, sick and in prison. The refugees were a people without any hope, and with no opportunity to help themselves. Hopeless, and helpless—and twenty million of them! In the face of this seemingly insoluble problem, World Refugee Year was launched.

About the same time one branch of our Youth Circle activities, "Service," was taking steps to become a special group, meeting informally at regular intervals. Between twenty and thirty young people gathered for the first meeting, ready for action and eager to co-operate in the service of others.

Happily we knew this to be more than just temporary enthusiasm, for their experience had already ranged from gardening for the infirm to amateur attempts at concert entertaining. Members had discovered the difficulties of conversing with old folk — of knocking on a door to say, "I've come to see you," and somehow going on from there! But the most valuable lesson was discovering the NEED—even for our little efforts.

Just as the organisation began to tick over, details of World Refugee Year came through. There was no danger of failing to realise the need here; on the contrary, the danger was that it should stun and paralyse into inactivity.

We were to make our contribution to W.R.Y., but W.R.Y. made its contribution to our little

group too. It was a challenge which, once accepted, could never heed the usual pleas for caution. It taught us that the drive of young people can be channelled and organised so as to bring success.

Many ideas failed, many more never came to fruition, but the important fact is that every idea was considered. Often it turned out that the most unlikely ones proved to be the most profitable. Our shoe-shine stand was one such idea, which at first seemed doomed to failure.

How many provincial towns still boast of such a service we do not know, but our citizens were awe-struck and most reluctant to step forward to our shoe-shine boxes in the busy Square. Perhaps there was good reason for their caution, for those who would presume it to be an unskilled job can never have taken brush in hand to an occupied shoe. We were swift to avoid the obvious error or smearing black polish on brown shoe. We were quick to learn the folly of convincing the innocent passer-by of his need for a polish when he was the proud owner of suède! But never did we overcome the hazards of cleaning the intricate network of ladies' shoes without blackening the stockings as well. Nevertheless the populace became cheerfully tolerant and after five Saturday mornings we had raised £60.

On the other hand, a project dear to our hearts came near to being a complete failure. The plan was to build a large float depicting a refugee scene and take it to different vantage points in the city. From this centre of attraction collections could be made, and refugee magazines sold.

After a long search a trailer was kindly loaned, a large back cloth painted, and a hut built. Then came the snags.

The city Watch Committee refused permission to stand it anywhere in the city, and the police required a special licence to tow it. Our white elephant seemed rooted to the spot, but eventually a licence-holder came to our aid, a local factory offered one day's accommodation, and other £30 went towards our target.

Perhaps it was our first project which gave the greatest worry. It was some four days before Christmas 1959, when a brother unfolded the idea of a W.R.Y. Christmas card with a well-worded appeal and an envelope attached for donations to be collected on Christmas Day or Boxing Day. Had we time left?

Dare we risk the expense of blocks being made and cards being printed? Had we time for police permission?

The cards went out, and £217 10s. 5d. came in!

There were other schemes which failed completely, like our baby-sitting service, which never had a client — and other ideas which were suffocated at birth by red-tape.

And now, when we look back on those crowded, hectic months, what lessons have we learned?

We were made aware of the great compassion people are capable of showing, if only the opportunity is brought before them. There was the five pounds slipped into an envelope during the Boxing Day collection, and the little group of children who looked at our display of refugee photographs in the Square, put their bus fares into the tin and set off to walk home (in their shining shoes). There was the story of the business man who went into a particular restaurant four times every working day. After each meal or coffee sixpence went

into our refugee tin displayed there. The tin remained for several months, and never once did our customer miss. These, and many others like them, were incidents which made the heart glad.

But above the clatter of collecting tins, and the hammering of the float, beyond the rows of dirty shoes and the door-knockers, is the memory of those exciting meetings where ideas and plans came bubbling forth from a group of young people. Our chief recollection is of hands shooting up to offer more time and greater efforts. These were hands which felt a duty stronger than putting sixpence into a tin; these were eyes which not only saw with compassion but also with responsibility. Here, we feel, were young people of a much criticised generation making a great effort to fulfil the Royal Law of Christ their King: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Refugee Year has passed, but we know the need is still there: not only in far-off lands, but often on our own door steps, where old people in particular suffer much in loneliness. The task is so great, and we soon tire of our own feeble efforts, but, thank God, we have a pattern which never failed and a picture which will never fade.

"O God, we thank you for Jesus Christ, who by His love for mankind has taught us the power of love. Implant this love within us, that, loving Him with all our heart, we may love all men for His sake; to the glory of your Name. Amen."



*By courtesy of
The Save the Children Fund,
12, Upper Belgrave Street,
London, S.W.1.*



LOOKING FORWARD

THE NEED FOR ACTION

John Weaving.

The World Refugee Year has been a land-mark in the lives of thousands of refugees. In years to come many will look back with gratitude to this year of release; many Jewish refugees will think of it as their year of jubilee, release from a slave's life.

I think too it has been a land-mark in the life of the community, now about 100 years old. This international appeal has moved our hearts to a wider vision of the need for the small help which we could offer, in the name of Christ, to suffering humanity.

Quite naturally, growing up from a small community, fighting for its own existence, the community in the past has generally and rightly felt that its first responsibility was to succour its own needy. As it grew and became firmly established, it was able to extend some help to its neighbour, and individually and collectively we have helped the Jews in their difficult period when every man's hand was against them on the continent of Europe.

Refugee Year helped us to realise that "our neighbour" is a vast body of people some 20,000,000 strong of many nationalities and creeds. The success of Refugee Year far exceeded everyone's hopes, and although our own effort may not have been large, it was made with a spirit of enthusiasm and love. So let us not now relax our efforts, but go forward to the future inspired by the start we have made.

In stretching out a hand to those of other nations and other creeds, indeed sometimes non-Christian creeds, some have felt difficulty. Is it right that we should give them physical food before spiritual food? Should not our help go first to those consciously seeking the truth? These are indeed problems to which we must find a scriptural answer. We cannot find many direct scriptural references: "The stranger that dwelleth with you . . . thou shalt love him as thyself, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

The refugee problem is, however, a 20th century problem to which we must apply 1st century Christian principles. Let us pose the question: What would Christ do if he heard the cry of the refugee today? Surely His response would have been the same as it was to blind Bartimaeus. "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Or to the Syrophoenician woman, or to the ten lepers. It might be argued that these were signs, but we know sufficient of the Master that His nature was such that He could not pass these people by on the other side. Here our love for the Old Testament may lead us to a false conclusion: "I loved Jacob but I hated Esau." This statement had relevance to a time long past. Since the Atonement, Christ appeals to all men individually and regardless of race "to repent." But again, it may be argued that to send £100 to rehabilitate a refugee gives no assurance of his repentance. Nevertheless the thought that it will rehabilitate a man, however imperfectly, into society again should be sufficient reward. While if he realises that his help has come from a Christian hand, he may well seek the Master that guided it.

By and large our preaching of the Kingdom of God in the past has been by lecturing and by directing particular attention to its future establishment. Important as this is, we are nevertheless living in the present and refugees, literal and spiritual, are suffering now. Indeed there is a very real sense in which God and Christ are reigning now. They will give release to troubled minds and speak peace to the heart. It is for us to live by God's laws and serve Him as our King.

It is fast forcing itself upon us that Sunday lectures and special efforts are now no longer effective means of preaching the Gospel, and many are saying: What can we put in its place to bring men to Christ? Although we do not profess to provide a complete solution to this problem, we do feel that we shall certainly be following the

Master if we could but put His teaching into practice, really and effectively, in our lives.

"By their fruits you shall know them." Let us be honest: what do our fruits look like? Do we as a group present a people outstanding for our sincerity, generosity, and love for others? Do we in our preaching put minds at rest? Do we present to them the image of our Lord and Master?

What we require individually and collectively is a revolution in our outlook and way of life. It is useless waiting for others to move: let us start ourselves, and not tomorrow but today. Let us show practically in our lives that ideal for living that we theoretically profess—the ideal we see in Christ, "the Word made flesh." Let us put aside petty strife, jealousy, wranglings, and get down to the things that matter, good living and denying ourselves for the benefit of others. Then people will see that we are Christ's followers, which will surely be far more convincing than telling them so from the platform!

It is granted that spiritual things are more important than physical. But in fact they go hand in hand. In the words of James we cannot have faith without works, we cannot convince a person that he lacks nothing if he has not sufficient to eat. If we go about doing good, people will soon want to know something about the faith that moves us.

But what can we do practically? The easiest way is to give money, and this is very important, and should be sufficient to hurt—like the widow's mite. "Oxfam" and the "Save the Children Fund" are two societies which we can be assured will use our money to the best advantage for the relief of human suffering.

As well as the easy way, it is even better to help personally. The welfare state does a lot, but there are plenty of gaps for us to fill—plenty of lonely people, many blind, many crippled, spastics, mental defectives literally crying out for help. There are plenty of children's homes, where children need to be "adopted," even if it is only for weekends and a holiday, and to have someone to love them.

As we have seen, an enthusiastic Youth Circle with the spirit of service can do much.

It may appear to be a valid criticism of what has been said so far, that this would result in bringing the gospel only to those who are physically handicapped or orphaned. However, this is by no means entirely the case. Though we must not advertise our good works, nevertheless many more will be sure to hear about us in this way than by coming to lectures, and if they can see in us real practical Christians with a sound religious and Biblical knowledge, a people to whom Jesus is clearly Lord and Master, then we shall be preaching more eloquently than the most talented speaker.

In a word, however unpleasant it may sound, if we could combine the works of the Quakers with our theology we should surely, by God's grace, be a real power for conversion.

Even then it will still be a valid criticism that there will be many who are apparently whole enough bodily, but spiritually desperately sick, who will not have heard of us. They may be Catholic, nominally Protestant, or even agnostic or atheist. At the moment we are shut off from these people by a wall largely of our own making, which is called "our separation from the world." Remembering our imperfections, and Christ's admonition, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," let us dig it down and meet them on their own ground, making our separation one of spiritual strength.

Let us not assume a critical attitude and cross-examine them for their false beliefs, but instead rejoice with them for those things which we have in common. With many this may be quite a lot, namely, the Christian Life, the general principle of atonement in Christ and a life after death. Friendly discussion and working together in worthwhile activities will provide opportunities for exchange of views often by no means of one-sided benefit.

To sum up. In looking forward in our preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God, we must each one start with himself, aiming always to become more like the Master we serve. Let us go forth in His strength, doing good at every opportunity, not counting the cost, so that others may see in our community a reflection of the love of Christ, and so may be filled with the desire to become citizens of God's Kingdom, with Jesus as their Saviour and King.

Must I go hungry?

This week, hunger will maim thousands of children who have never had a chance of enough to eat—in Africa, the Near East, Asia. Care from Oxfam feeding centres and clinics saves over 30,000 from malnutrition every day. But our constant task is to fight hunger at its outset—with seeds, wells and projects that will grow more food to help bring hunger to an end. Your gift will bring happiness to more of mankind's suffering family.



10/- *provides a child with a daily nourishing meal for a month.*

£5 *provides 140 children with a mug of soup each day for a week.*

COULD YOU SPARE an occasional hour for collecting 1/- Pledged Gifts and distributing a monthly news-sheet to friends? Write to the Secretary for explanatory leaflet: 17, Broad Street, Oxford.

Send your gift to **Famine Relief, Barclays Bank Ltd., High Street, Oxford.**

OXFORD COMMITTEE FOR
FAMINE RELIEF

"THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE is neither a revision of the Authorized Version nor intended to replace it. Rather it is an authoritative attempt to present the meaning of the original, as understood by the best available scholarship, in English which is as clear and natural for the modern reader as the subject matter will allow . . .

"The translation is not the expression of any denominational or doctrinal leaning; it aims to be in style neither traditional nor modernistic. It is offered simply as the Bible to all who in reading, teaching or in worship may care to use it."



THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE: THE REVIEWERS REVIEWED

G. G. McHaffie

At the date of writing, some three weeks after the appearance of the New English Bible, the New Testament, the first impact is beginning to settle. The press in all its phases, from religious to rationalistic, has reviewed the book handsomely. The conservatives have been conservative; the fair, fair; the cynical, cynical. There has been much high sounding talk from quarters which, in the normal way, one would suspect of having little Bible interest.

Out of this a none too valuable pattern of review has emerged. In *The Observer*, for instance, we have Dwight Macdonald shedding crocodile tears over the "Jacobean grand style" being "taken down more than a few pegs," and the "total loss" of I Cor. 13, while confessing, "I am not a Christian or even religious."

If we are not Christian nor religious, or deliberately uncommitted on either count, the only points open for our review are those of literary style. But this type of review is misconceived. The purpose of the Bible is not to underpin our prejudices, nor titillate our desire for fine literary cadences, nor, indeed, to display the English language at its best, but to confront us with the message of God. It is true that real poetry and fine writing can help enormously in our appreciation of great thoughts, but I think we must disentangle the message of God from the necessities of literary culture. In this connection a fair question is whether or not the New Testament, as originally

written, was an example of Greek in the "Jacobean grand style."

Prior to the 1820's it was usual for scholars to judge the Greek of the New Testament by the literary standards appropriate to the classical era of Greek literature. Under this comparison the New Testament made a poor showing and was thought to be compounded of indifferent Greek, written, in fact, by people who had very careless ideas of the language, who mishandled grammatical cases and tenses, and who muddled prepositions. In 1882 Dr. G. B. Winer published, in Germany, a grammar of the language which demonstrated the distinctive nature and self consistency (subject to individual grammatical differences among the writers) of New Testament Greek.

Since then, with the additional help of discoveries of papyri, it has been shown, and is now accepted, that the language of the New Testament is that of the common people as used in their daily lives in and around their own homes, and in their thoughts about God. There are exceptions, of course, notably the preface to Luke's gospel and also where words have been moulded for the special purpose of the revelation, e.g., "love."

I have little doubt that most intelligent people in this country can, without great difficulty, understand nearly all the archaisms of the A.V. Those who, from their youth up, have been reading this version find them no trouble. For a great number

of people, however, who are enticed in one way or another to start Bible reading, they are an unnecessary barrier. There is danger for the serious believer, too. The archaisms and familiarity may act as a bromide insulating the spirit from the challenge of the message. Hugh Dickinson's review aptly describes this as "reverential insensibility."

The new translation sets out to meet a need which is real and in the process new slants are inevitable. One of the Beatitudes given in the Sermon on the Mount is a case in point. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." (Matt. 5: 6., A.V.) This has always suggested to me the quest for inner sanctity of being. The N.E.B. has: "How blest are those who hunger and thirst to see right prevail." This vastly widens the scope of Jesus' blessing. Not only is "right" within the heart of each disciple the goal, but it shows the need for the true follower of Jesus to hunger and thirst that he might see an end of all social evils. He will, therefore, rejoice in small satisfactions now, and have the assurance of satisfaction in the day when "The sovereignty of the world has passed to our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. 11: 15, N.E.B.) This is fully in accord with the wide individual and social meaning of "justice" in Greek usage.

This translation comes to us as the product of many of the top scholars in this country. To what extent would it be presumption and vain labour for ordinary folk to suggest alternative renderings to bring out other meanings? The answer is that no one translation can convey all the meanings from one language to another. No translation can ever reach such perfection. Words from one language have an aura of meanings associated with them which do not necessarily adhere to their normal equivalents in another. The passages bearing on the resurrection in Paul's epistles will bring this out.

A feature which is surprising is the translation of the Lord's Prayer. I find it difficult to understand the desire of the translators to preserve the archaic personal pronouns, concession as this may be to existing usage. J. B. Phillips' translation loses nothing in reverence by its straightforward contemporary English. But if

something of the old form was to be preserved, would it not have been better to preserve it whole? We might then have kept the age-old, but surely more contemporary desire, "deliver us from evil" instead of "save us from the evil one."

The position here is that in Greek we have a frequently used construction where an adjective stands with the article, but with the noun understood. Examples of such nouns are "man," "woman," "one," "land" and "place." In addition, the adjective may be used with an article to mean the abstract quality defined by the adjective. In English the equivalent may be seen in such expressions as "the good," "the beautiful," meaning the essence of goodness or the essence of beauty. There is a further complication in that differences develop in regard to the adjective, according to whether it is masculine, feminine or neuter. It so happens that "evil" in the Lord's prayer, being genitive, could be either masculine or neuter as these forms are the same. The possibilities are, therefore, that we have.

(a) the neuter case expressing the abstract quality of "evil," "badness," "wickedness" or "the evil thing," (the last would be somewhat unexpressive), or

(b) the masculine case meaning the "evil" or "wicked" "man," "one" or even "being."

The translators of the N.E.B. have clearly chosen (b) and even more so in Matt. 5: 39 where precisely the same words and case are translated "the devil" instead of the A.V. "evil."

Personally I would prefer (a) but this cannot be determined on grammatical grounds alone, and serves to indicate that the mind of the expositor is always necessary to open up the Scriptures.

We may take it that there will be a number of other passages over which we could dispute. Many of us will still be looking for the perfect translation to suit our own predilections. We shall probably never find it.

In other fields the best is often the enemy of the good. In pining for perfection, we can all too easily neglect the good which is available to us. If this translation does not earn, on closer acquaintance, our best acclaim, it is to be hoped, nevertheless, that it will prove good enough to sustain a renewed interest in Bible reading.

BOOK REVIEW



GOD OUR CONTEMPORARY by J. B. Phillips Hodder and Stoughton—3/6d.

This paper-back book is to be highly commended. The author is well known for his ability to present familiar words and ideas with freshness and clarity. In this work he is concerned with the difficulty of "communicating" the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the contemporary world. He discusses the criticisms of Christianity which are often raised by humanists and scientists. The problems of suffering and evil are courageously faced and the author is to be thanked for the honest way in which he presents an answer to this particular difficulty. On the back cover of the book is this sober passage, which is really its theme:

"Our society today bears all the marks of a God-starved community. There is little real moral authority because no ultimate Authority is known or acknowledged. The limitations of Science and the inadequacy of Humanism in supplying this authority, must be fearlessly pointed out. Modern man can never possess a faith which can both command his loyalty and influence every part of his thinking and feeling until he discovers the unique authority of Jesus Christ. This is no time for reticence. *Unless it can be communicated*, what is meant to be Good News for all men everywhere becomes a frozen asset."

The book is thus a challenge to all who call themselves Christians. We have our responsibilities to the society in which we live. Young people will find the book particularly helpful.

K.C.

DYING WE LIVE (Letters from German Prisons. Translated by Reinhard C. Kuhn. Foreword by Trevor Huddleston). Collins Fontana Books, 2/6d.

If you wonder how Christians are enabled to face suffering and death victoriously, read these

moving letters from men and women who stood against the evil of Hitler's Germany, and who died by execution, in the full assurance of their faith.

It is our privilege in this book, to share their deepest thoughts at the crisis of their lives: "no cause for sorrow, but rather great joy."

These letters show that the spirit of Stephen's martyrdom, and of the other martyrs of the Early Church, is still active today.

P.K.

BREAKTHROUGH. A Universities Christian Review, 10/6 for six issues, including postage. (Communications to John Walters, St. Edmund Hall, Oxford).

This remarkable magazine, now more than a year old, is an undergraduate publication which is the combined work of a number of universities.

It is not always easy reading, but is well written, very well produced, and almost invariably contains much that is worth saying.

Its purpose is to harness "the quickening tempo of university Christian life" and thus to advance into "new areas of Christian thought and witness."

It seeks in doing so to disentangle Christian witness from its painful legacy of obsession with the dull and the dingy, and particularly its amateurish use of the means of communication of ideas in this century. One of its writers protests against "a conscious and deliberate self-dedication by the Church itself to the cult of the mediocre."

Breakthrough is certainly innocent of this fully justified criticism. Perhaps more surprisingly, it is strongly positive in tone in making its lively and valuable contribution to thought.

J.W.

Meeting Point: The Future

Ken Camplin

Short term residential gatherings can be a real spiritual stimulus and a happy experience for members of a small community, especially for those from isolated parts. The writer has regularly been to such "gatherings" or "conferences" held in various parts of the country. He is convinced that these gatherings could be developed more profitably and his impressions of the Edinburgh Youth Gathering may serve as a useful indication of the possibilities.

Youth Gatherings are held at Edinburgh each New Year lasting three or four days. The aims of these events are to bring young people together so that they may help one another by sharing thoughts and experiences of the Christian life. A warm-hearted and enthusiastic spirit permeates these Gatherings. A keen search for Truth is at all times apparent but this quest centres on the fact that we desire Christ to be in every part of our lives. Practical Christianity is the key-note.

The majority of the sessions are devoted to short addresses given by young people, followed by group discussion. In this way many problems are raised and some solutions are suggested. Topics range from "We need a more Christian attitude towards make-up" to "Young folk are irresponsible" and "The pre-existence of Christ". A typical session at this year's Gathering was entitled "Our attitude to . . ." and opinions were expressed about "Refugees," "Racial Prejudice," etc. Some aspect of campaign work is usually the topic for another session.

At least one evening is set aside for addresses by "elders." In the past, amongst others, brother Harry Whittaker and brother Harry Tennant have spoken. This year brother and sister McHaffie talked about "Understanding Ourselves." Brother George dealt with the problem of "Conscience" and sister Ruth the difficulties associated with "Our Conversation."

On the Sunday evening an "Agapé" was held after the manner of the First Century Church. This was a Love-feast. In Apostolic times the Memorial service was accompanied by a simple meal,

hospitality strengthening the fellowship of the Body of Christ. At Edinburgh every effort was made to capture the atmosphere of an early ecclesia. Between the first address, a study, and the second address, an exhortation, some simple food was passed round and eaten. In the course of this interlude the president alluded to the Love-feast in the First Century Church.

There are many other features of the Gathering. On the first evening a light-hearted programme is arranged in the form of a "Soirée" or "Ceilidh." This successfully serves the purpose of "breaking the ice." A ramble, over the Pentland Hills, or alongside the Firth of Forth, is one of the joys of our fellowship together.

A pastoral visit is arranged to a local Children's Hospital when it is convenient. Everyone takes a small present to give to the young patients. In the twenty minutes spent in the Wards the restrained atmosphere which meets us changes to one of hilarity. In this way we endeavour to share our joy with those who are much less fortunate than ourselves.

About eighty young people from all parts of Britain attend this annual Gathering. All our meetings are held in the Moray Lodge Hall, by kind permission of the Edinburgh Ecclesia. We stay in three hotels which are about twenty minutes' walk from Moray Lodge, the organisers encouraging friendliness by separating those who come from the same ecclesia (with certain exceptions!). Morning and evening prayers are held in the hotels.

Our last evening together is usually a memorable one. After supper we go to a quiet spot, such as Calton Hill, to sing hymns.

Questionnaires on all features of the Gathering are handed out before we leave Moray Lodge for the last time. These are carefully noted so that future Gatherings may be even more successful.

Thus, there are many ways in which the fellowship enjoyed at Edinburgh confers blessings on its members. Those who are troubled by practical and intellectual problems may reveal their diffi-

culties, often being helped to overcome the obstacles by others who can take an objective view, having already passed through that particular phase. Some are mentally and spiritually depressed before they come to Edinburgh — few leave depressed. Most of us take with us an earnest longing to share the joy of knowing Christ with others. We gain the assurance that we can be with Jesus in our everyday life.

There is little doubt that such gatherings leave a lasting impression and we as a community might give more thought to extending them. It would be interesting to consider the age ranges which should be drawn together—15-25, 15-30, 15 plus, 25 plus, or 30 plus?

At Edinburgh the majority of the addresses are given by young people, but how far should the gatherings be training grounds for young speakers? Should there be gatherings whose sole aim is to train potential speakers? There are two points arising from the first question: By giving young speakers an opportunity it is possible that we may listen to second-rate material. On the other hand, if we only have experienced speakers, we may have less real participation by the group as a whole.

Finally, should residential gatherings be adopted as the responsibility of the Church, having as the general aim the improvement in scriptural understanding, pastoral practice and community spirit? The answers to these questions might well engender a revival among us.

Endeavour

Manuscripts are always warmly welcomed, and all will be acknowledged.

A generous amount of space will be given to the expression of views in the correspondence columns. In controversial matters, only letters clearly written in a spirit of Christian love will be published. It would be helpful if correspondents would indicate whether they would prefer a letter to appear anonymously.

Views expressed in Endeavour are not necessarily those of the Endeavour Committee, but may be published because they make a valuable contribution to discussion.

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FOR CHRISTIAN
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ENDEAVOUR

Love, The More Excellent Way

Things True and Honest

The Call for Separation

Luke's Appreciation of Stephen

The Symbol of the Cross

Correspondence

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The Son of Man is Come to Seek . . .

Book Review: Sects and Society

Endeavour

FOR CHRISTIAN
THOUGHT AND
ACTION

No. 2.

WINTER, 1961

Love, the more excellent way.

It would not have been surprising if God had withdrawn from man's world altogether, because of our waywardness.

He could, on the other hand, have loved only the responsive and relatively good. Instead, He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that we might have eternal life.

Thus it is that we have the wonder of God's redeeming mercy abundantly poured out through Jesus. This brings us a message whose heart is found in the unquenchable power of this love, from which all things spring.

This love reaches out through our hearts, with a boundless compassion in which we are more conscious of our own failure than that of others, and therefore seek not to cast out, but to welcome in, as we ourselves have been freely welcomed into the church of God by a love we do not, and can never, deserve.

IN PREACHING

This leads us to consider how the experience of this grace and truth in our Lord should overflow

to others: for overflow it must, if it has been experienced at all, and transmit its message.

Since we believe that vital truths have been imparted to us through the community's tradition, it follows that in our witness for God, our distinctive beliefs shall be clearly expressed in preaching. But they must also be clearly related to the central theme of Christian experience, and must be expressed in a loving manner.

It is no part of our wish to suggest the abandonment of preaching in favour of "good works." But preaching, as we find to our cost, can easily be carried out from inadequate motives. It can be an adventure in disputation, give scope for aggressive impulses, or increase a sense of superiority by possession of understanding apparently denied to others despite their learning and ability.

While some may respond to approaches of this kind, the only true form of preaching is based on a deep concern for others. It is not possible to separate such concern into two compartments: their eternal welfare, their need now. If for doctrinal or other reasons we are not moved to

action by the suffering of mankind, a lack of concern for others will tend to spread through our thinking, and affect our desire to save the lost. Both kinds of concern should spring together, irresistibly and indissolubly linked, from a deepening experience of God's love toward us.

Our preaching is often ineffective today. This may be due to many factors, but we may well ask ourselves: if we preach the Truth as a cold, hard theology, divorced from the power of love, in which we seek to prove that we are right and others wrong, may it not thus lose in power and validity?

We may also consider how our unbalance tends to defeat our objects in preaching. We have all known many loving and generous minded brethren and sisters, whose devotion has been an example to us. How is it then that we are widely known as the church with the cold hearts, which does not love its fellow-men, and thus find it difficult to obtain a hearing for our Faith?

What mistake in our emphasis have we made that we can be likened, by a very fair observer, to a revolutionary party, waiting in ingrown narrowness for the "revolution" of the Second Advent, which will make us the aristocracy of the coming age, almost rejoicing in the world's misery and emotionally involved in our predictions of disaster, out of which we alone emerge triumphant, our superiority and authority acknowledged (Dr. B. R. Wilson, *Sects and Society*, pp. 351-2)?

The splendour of the community's tradition is too easily imprisoned in difficulties of our own making, which crush with the dead letter of law, the grace and truth which our Lord so abundantly revealed.

TO MANKIND

The teaching of Jesus about the way in which His disciples should act towards other people shows that they should seek to express the character of God as revealed in the life and teaching of their Master.

The teaching in the Sermon on the Mount makes this clear (Matt. 5:44-48, Luke 6:35-6, N.E.B.):

"Love your enemies, and pray for your persecutors; only so can you be children of your heavenly Father, who makes his sun rise on good and bad alike, and sends the rain on the honest and the dishonest. If you love only those who love you, what reward can you expect? Surely the tax-gatherers do as much as that. And if you greet only your brothers, what is there extraordinary about that? Even the heathen do as much. You must therefore be all goodness, just as your heavenly Father is all good."

"You must love your enemies and do good; and lend without expecting any return; and you will have a rich reward: you will be sons of the Most High, because he himself is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate."

The effect of this teaching on individuals and on ecclesias is that they should seek to mirror in themselves the love and kindness of God to the evil, the unholy, the unthankful. When therefore people cry in despair, are perplexed by the tragedies and cruelties of life, and blindly wonder about God, they ought to be able to feel His warmth through the ecclesia of the brethren and sisters of the Lord. The ecclesia must therefore be as a city set on a hill: Christians must let their light so shine before men "that they may see your good works," not to glorify man but to glorify our Father who is in heaven. The glorifying of God will follow if the action of the Christian springs from the revelation of the character of God as revealed in Jesus.

In order to bring to men and women the knowledge of God in this way, Christians must move among them, separated from them by an entirely different outlook, but sympathetically involved in their sorrows. Such action does not seek acclaim from the world, and can often bring rejection, suffering and violence to those who attempt it.

This involvement was seen when the church in the early centuries showed unprecedented compassion for pagans dying of plague, when everyone else had fled.

There is no doubt that this is the path which Jesus trod, the path which led to the Cross. For that reason we chose as our cover design a symbol of the Cross, embodying the challenge of suffering love. The Cross symbolises that by which the world is crucified to us and we to the world.

In undertaking this work Jesus was exposed to all forms of misunderstanding by those who were strangers to the love He expressed, and because He was so involved with people in their sorrows and their sin, it was said (Matt. 11:19, N.E.B.):

“Look at him! a glutton and a drinker, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!” And yet God’s wisdom is proved right by its results.”

There are two ways of regarding separateness from sinners: the way of the Pharisees, which was in evidence even in Isaiah’s day: “Come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.” This way is marked by aloofness from sinners, but it only reveals a form of self esteem which is itself a characteristic of worldliness. The other way is the way of friendship shown by Jesus: this is the true nature of separation, and it involves, instead of antagonism, a devoted attempt to reject the world’s dedication to self and to seek instead the ways of love and sacrifice.

In the Western world today we are experiencing conditions of affluence previously unknown. The world around us accepts all this, enjoying its consumer privileges. The selfish, materialist standards of the acquisitive society, which glorifies worldly success, press ever more heavily upon us, and it is essential that we perceive the real nature of separation, and not divert our attention from the real dangers by claiming a separation which tends only to shore up our own self esteem. If we too accept the advantages of our civilisation, devote a modest coin to the ecclesia, but have little regard for those who suffer, perhaps because of economic conditions which make nations such as our own prosperous, are we any less worldly than those around us?

We are well aware that the problems of the world are beyond solution in the absence of Christ.

Yet Christianity is essentially a present reality implemented by a future fulfilment, and the tendency to emphasise our Lord’s Second Coming to the extent of apparently opting out of responsibility in the present reality, has done us much harm, within and without. Our faith does not offer us an escape from reality, but a fuller entry into it. We believe that the teaching of Jesus shows that vital divine principles are involved here, which need clear re-statement.

TO OTHER CHURCHES

This love involves that in our differences with other Christians, we shall maintain attitudes of consideration and gentleness.

We know that some churches occupy a position many times removed from the simplicity of truth preached in the first century, but we know also that the brotherhood as a whole is greatly indebted to the commentaries, expositions and devotional writings of those who are not of our community, many of whom have beliefs and problems not dissimilar to our own. We have equally freely used their hymns and translations.

The fundamental differences which in fact exist will of themselves prevent the extension of fellowship, and thus the supposed problems scarcely exist. It is surely unrealistic to issue blanket condemnations of all others: we must therefore break down the wall of aloofness, but not the wall of distinctive beliefs. The duty of maintaining the Truth is not really served at all by nursing it behind a wall of invective and unfair judgment. The breaking down of such a wall would not lead to a diluting or weakening of the Truth, but would renew it, making our witness arise out of a living experience of the views, the problems, the inner hopes and fears of our contemporaries.

It would seem that our needless anxieties have led us to a mistaken extreme, and cut us off from loving contact with these people, and thus from a means of helping them.

WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

It is very sad that our meagre forces should be weakened because of the tendency, when any thinking occurs, when any life appears, to oppose it with over-anxious zeal. Misunderstandings arise too easily because we are thus inclined to act without sober and generous consideration for the feelings of other brethren and sisters.

Let us seek to refrain from sweeping and groundless assertions, and from exaggerating differences. Instead let us all discuss our problems thoughtfully and patiently, as our Lord would wish, in the loving spirit which can reconcile such differences as are real.

We seek therefore not a retreat into the past, nor an escape into the future, which only multiply our problems, but a courageous attempt to face reality with all its difficulties, in a strength not our own.

It has been suggested that we wish to promote a "broader way." We are not always sure what is intended by this phrase, for it is seldom used of the things of which Jesus was speaking in the Sermon on the Mount. If it means that we believe that far more generous attitudes of judgment are needed, this is true; if it means a lowering of true standards, it is the reverse of what we seek.

Let us all give devoted consideration to the realities which face us, and the love which has reached out to all men, and has reached even ourselves: that we may re-dedicate ourselves to the service of our Lord. That we may bring true hope to others who need it, and who need us. That we may seek the way of sacrifice, so that we may not live to ourselves, but to Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, and rose again, and comes to judge us all; so that we may live the rest of our life in this passing world, whether it be long or short, in a spirit of love.

A PRAYER

Lord, make us instruments of Thy will: where there is hate, may we bring love: where there is offence, may we bring pardon: where there is discord, may we bring peace: where there is error, may we bring truth: where there is doubt, may we bring faith: where there is despair, may we bring hope: where there is darkness, may we bring light: where there is sadness, may we bring joy.

O Master, make us seek not so much to be consoled as to console: to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; in self-forgetfulness that we find; in pardoning that we are pardoned.

THINGS TRUE AND HONEST

W. G. Lambert

If the few minutes' research which I devoted to this matter have not been misused, it was in the year 1872 that the Birmingham Ecclesia for the first time had a Fraternal Gathering. I think there will be no one here to contradict the date, from personal memory at least, and so whether it was this precisely or in this region does not matter. Fraternal Gatherings have a circulation, as you will see, among us for a very long time, and the number of people present this afternoon will certainly make one think that they have some justification, that people find they satisfy some need. But what is this need that they satisfy? Why have we assembled here on this Saturday afternoon? There is an obvious social purpose of such a gathering. We have gathered to meet one another, to greet one another, to see those whom we have not seen for weeks or months past. We need not be ashamed of the fact that these social occasions have their uses and purposes among us, but we should not at the same time make any pretence that a social gathering is other than social. It has its purposes: let us recognise it and let us not exaggerate what it is. But what other purpose does this Fraternal Gathering have beyond that of a social occasion for meeting our brethren and sisters in Christ?

I recently had occasion to read something that had been written about Fraternal Gatherings and in case you did not know why you came here or what you were doing here, I will give you this impression which someone has received of our gatherings. He is speaking of the lack of

exposition that we tend to find nowadays, for example, in exhortations that we hear Sunday morning by Sunday morning, and having commented upon this he says as follows:

" This (that is, this lack of exposition) is even more apparent at fraternal gatherings, which seem better fitted to amuse the goats than to feed the sheep. The relationship between fraternal subjects and real life is at best tenuous and the avoidance of anything thought-provoking or controversial makes most subjects dead letters from the outset."

This of course is a little satirical, and in order to convey the point there has to be a little exaggeration, but the point surely is made on the basis of sound observation. Many of the things that we hear at Fraternal Gatherings are not designed to provoke thought, rather to reassure us, to help us to settle down and to feel convinced what a wonderful thing it is to have been here, even though we may in fact have enjoyed most the social greetings. The subject of this gathering promises to be a little better, in that it begins to deal with a series of topics of which the apostle to the Gentiles says, "think on these things": and so it is we give you his injunction to think on these things. "Think," not as the philosophers would think, because Paul is not speaking their language, but rather to think in the sense of finding what the principles that we follow really mean with regard to our everyday life.

A little exposition I think is called for. The things that are chosen to be the objects of our thoughts are listed in a way which is not characteristically Hebrew. I think you will at once see that you would not expect this kind of a list of beautiful things to be found in one of the prophets. The way of a Hebrew prophet would be somewhat different. Paul has in fact used something that would be more familiar to the Greeks, as it is of course to a Greek-speaking audience that he is writing, but while he uses a form of words which is a Greek idiom, the content of the words conveys things that are as far from Greek as one could conceivably imagine.

Our programme divides up these six characteristic things upon which we are to think into three groups of two. Some of the commentators I have consulted are of the opinion that one should rather divide them into two groups of three, but however we do our arithmetic in fact the listing is not intended to be a thing that one studies, taking each word and reflecting upon it at profound length. Rather, as a whole, these six virtues convey to us one thing and one thing only, the true Christian virtue upon which our minds should constantly be exercised.

There is, however, a little need to look at these terms in detail and I will accordingly restrict myself to the first one which in many ways is comprehensive, summing up all the others: things that are true. We use the word "true" not infrequently. We speak of our faith as the Truth, yet I wonder if we know what it means. To the Hebrews "truth" was not what we usually mean by that word. Truth was something that belonged to God. It belonged to God not as a proposition that God exists or that God is just or that God is merciful. It was not anything of that kind. Rather it was a permanent characteristic that God had, and that God still has, and that God will always have. Truth in Hebrew is more in the English language "constancy" or "reliability." It is therefore not like the truth that we usually think of as something impersonal, but rather something intensely personal. The

characteristics, the unchangeable, immutable characteristics of God are things which one experiences: one learns of them not just with the mind, but also with the heart. The truth, therefore, of which the Hebrews speak is religious truth.

Now in contrast, when Paul wrote there was another kind of "truth," the "truth" of the Greeks. This was a little nearer the way that we usually think of "truth."

Propositions that are trustworthy, that can be defended without fear of contradiction, facts which are unquestionably so and not fiction: it is of course impersonal, a thing that one may learn and absorb, without in any way being affected by it. It is philosophy and not religion. I would stress, of course, that the Hebrew concept of truth is in no way involved in factual inaccuracies or anything of this kind. This is all included, but the Hebrew sense of truth is infinitely more comprehensive.

There is a third sense of truth, a sense of truth which one finds all too commonly among those professing to be brethren and sisters of the Lord. A truth which is a little nearer to the Greek than to the Hebrew, but not quite the same as that of the philosophers that Paul and the other early Christians knew of, and with those teachings they had to deal when arguing with the Greeks. Rather this sense of truth comes from, of all places, the 19th century rationalists: those who looked upon truth as being factual truth, literal truth, that if something could not be factually and literally demonstrated then it was not "truth." So that one could say that "two and two make four" is a true statement, but "God is merciful" would from this point of view be something hard to prove without, of course, an inspired scripture from which one could take the proof. The rationalists argued against those who believed in scripture on their own premises of truth: literal truth or no truth. We have sometimes to our shame taken the rationalist premises and have created philosophy, but bad philosophy.

Truth we must have. Truth we must have, and fight against error, and I wonder if we are doing this as much as we might. Our spiritual forebears were those who searched for truth, who were determined that at all costs they must have it, but what of ourselves? I read, as you may have read, something recently in a magazine which spoke of the doctrine of the person of Christ. It said that there were some people who were wondering whether the Statement of Faith contained the full and absolute truth of the New Testament on this point, and the writer said that at any rate what the Statement of Faith contained was good enough and it would serve for our purposes. Now it would seem to me this kind of thinking is putting us on the brink of apostasy. What we need to do is search for the truth. Our spiritual forebears did this. They left us a heritage, and the question is: are we going to stop seeking for truth, or are we going to continue where they left off? There is a very real risk in this and those who are thoughtful and have looked among us see the results of this lack of search for truth. They observe, for example, how dull and uninteresting are some of the Bible Classes, exhortations and lectures to which we have to listen. Dull, because there is there no lively searching for truth, no presentation of that which has been found in the scriptures of truth, but rather an endless repetition of things that have been inherited from the past. There is a great risk that we may think that the sword of the Spirit lies in interpretations of 19th century political occurrences and in denouncing beliefs and religious ideas that are no longer held by any persons in the modern world. We live in the 20th century. We must face this situation; we need to, and if we do not do this, then we are, I think, betraying what was bequeathed to us by our spiritual forebears. The search for truth must endlessly continue.

And now we come to this other aspect, the more important and comprehensive aspect of truth: the truth which really is with God alone and which men may have only as something that they receive from God. God is Truth; those who associate themselves with the purpose of God likewise share in this truth. Thus it is,

that just as God is holy, those who pursue the truth of God must also be holy. This is all involved in truth. Yet look at our practice—what do we do? What are the causes for which we may put out of our membership a person whom we consider unworthy? Doctrine? some little point of the Statement of Faith? But how often will we put out of our number one who has acted unworthily of the spirit of Christ? Of course, I know, joining the armed forces, divorce, and marrying a person not in our fellowship, and so forth. But there are many things in our lives that can be worse than these. How often, if a brother or a sister falls, how often will an ecclesia have the courage to say: "This conduct is unworthy of the Lord!" All too frequently we allow this aspect of truth to be forgotten. What would happen: suppose a certain brother in the course of two years made himself two million pounds by somewhat unscrupulous business procedures? I wonder if the ecclesia, in whose midst he was, would act: whether they would see any reason for acting, or whether they would merely observe that this had been done, that he had attended the Sunday morning Breaking of Bread regularly, and was apparently a member in good standing.

The truth of God requires personal holiness to the extreme that we have not yet achieved. We may not achieve all we strive for, our failings are ever with us, but the need is there, and this need is one which will make us, as a community, so much more effective and vital in the world. With what do we go to our friends and neighbours? With the fact that we regularly attend the service on Sunday morning, that we may listen to a not too interesting address on Sunday night, that we may go to Bible Class rather less frequently? Do we approach with this? Is this what they have observed? And do we then try and present them doctrines, and deny doctrines of which they have never heard? I think there is a need for much more self-dedication on the part of all of us. I think we all, if we look into our hearts, can see that we have not, as we should have done, given ourselves in the service of Christ.

Consider those who lived in earlier generations, who made endless efforts, who always put themselves to inconvenience, in order to spread the message of the Lord. Consider the poverty in which the great majority lived compared with the present day. In contrast we have an enormous amount of wealth, but do we ecclesially have the same wealth as we do privately? Is it not a fact that when one comes upon a question of a little advertising that might cost £100 or more, somebody raises his eyebrows — this is a lot of money. It is a fact we have a lot of money to spend on ourselves. I wonder if we give the same percentage to the work of the Lord, as was given by our spiritual forebears in the 1870's, for example. And not only with our wealth but also with ourselves. How many of us are preparing ourselves to serve the Lord? How many of us are willingly devoting evenings to equipping ourselves? How many of us are devoting serious attention to the lives that we are leading? Have we done enough? Is our home an example of the kind of people we are, or

does the Sunday speaking brother look round and with a little dismay observe the *News of the World* tucked away somewhere? Sometimes there are surprises that one has when one does go into homes of brethren and sisters.

All these things are but aspects of truth. The truth that is the truth of God. The truth by which we should live. It is no arid formula of doctrines. It is no listening to dull lectures. The truth of God is something which should be lively, and which should flower in ourselves even though we may never set foot on the lowest step of the platform. If within ourselves we have this truth of God, then we are ready as ambassadors, then we are ready to go into the world to show men what we have, to show them our lives that we lead. For in this present world, there are many looking for a better way. The trouble is we have not so far shown them where this better way really lies. The reason we have not shown them is we are not living it ourselves as we should.

The text of an address, delivered at a Fraternal Gathering of the Birmingham (Central) Ecclesia, held in the Botanical Gardens, Birmingham, on June 24, 1961.

A PRAYER

Give us the strength to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed. Give us courage to change the things that can and should be changed. And give us wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.

The Call for Separation

John Weaving

Jesus said, in that crucial week before His sacrifice, that He had "not come to judge the world, but to save the world." But His light so shone before men that in fact it did, like a two-edged sword, separate men into two camps—those who loved light, and those who preferred darkness. It was a crucial week for the Master, but it was a crucial week for man also. In that week many hearts were revealed. Judas, Peter, John, the other disciples, Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the High Priest, the Sanhedrin, the thief on the cross, Pilate.

Week by week we remember this time. By whom would we have stood among these people? With John and Mary Magdalene, we would like to say—but should we? Each made his decision from the heart and the answer came in accordance with the degree to which it had been enlightened by the "Light of the World."

We were not there, neither was Paul. But he realised, nevertheless, that he and all men had to make the same decision for the Master and light, or for the world and darkness. He in particular had to interpret the Gospel, given to a Jewish community, to the Gentiles. As part of this interpretation he quotes from Isaiah: "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6: 17). What did Paul mean by this separation and what does it mean for us today?

FORMS OF SEPARATION

Let us try to approach this matter objectively. The aim of the call for separation must manifestly be for the purpose of building up the "new creature" into the fullness of the stature of Christ. What forms can separation take?

There are perhaps three possibilities:—

1. To cut oneself off from the contamination of the world completely by physical separation in some form of monastery.
2. To live in the world but to separate oneself from any contaminating influence.

3. To live in the world, to mix with its inhabitants, but to live on a different plane, namely, that shown by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount.

We should perhaps make the observation that the "laws of Christ" in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere are not of the same character as the ten commandments. Christ taught largely by principle and example, frequently using analogy and parable for illustrating His meaning. Thus what may be suitable for one person at one time may in other circumstances be inappropriate. But I think we may dismiss the first alternative, for although separation is complete and direct contamination from third parties impossible, the follower of Christ is commanded to "love his neighbour." In a monastery, even a self-imposed one, he would normally have little contact with him. So that except perhaps as a discipline for a time for contemplation of the infinite, this cannot be the life for a disciple.

The second alternative, which may be thought to be the best, is in fact very difficult to put into practice. While we could in theory refrain from having non-Christadelphian friends and business associates, from television, cinemas and public houses, this by no means separates us from "the world." Early years are the ones in which character is most largely moulded, so separation to be effective would first and foremost require separate schools (this is recognised by Roman Catholics). In adult life separation is still far from complete for of necessity a large part of our life is spent on work with all sorts of people who can impress their influence.

The third alternative of spiritual separation is clearly practicable but does it expose the disciple to injurious temptations and evil influences? We need, therefore, to decide between the second alternative imperfectly applied and the third alternative. "Genius is developed in the cloister but character in the stream of life."

THE LETTER TO CORINTH

We must, of course, go back to the Bible. Let us look at the context of Paul's quotation.

It was a letter to the Corinthian church—Corinth, a city of commerce and immorality; a church made up of people who had seen the light; many no doubt previously immoral men and women. "And such were some of you." Here indeed there was a need for separation between light and darkness. The call had come to the Corinthian Christian with urgency—"Come out." There must be no return to idolatry or immoral practices, or indeed condoning of such practices with their former associates. These practices belong to "the Flesh" and the call of Christ was to live in "the Spirit." The definition of these two terms is not easy, but Paul leaves no doubt about what he means when he writes to the Galatians about the works or fruits of the Spirit and the Flesh.

"Anyone can see the kind of behaviour that belongs to the lower nature: fornication, impurity, and indecency; idolatry and sorcery; quarrels, a contentious temper, envy, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, party intrigues and jealousies, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who behave in such ways will never inherit the kingdom of God.

But the harvest of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law dealing with such things as these. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the lower nature with its passions and desires. If the Spirit is the source of our life, let the Spirit also direct our course" (Gal. 5: 19-25, N.E.B.).

Clearly the Corinthians had to separate themselves from those pagan idolators who practised fornication and drunkenness and who were ever at strife, and instead live in harmony with those who followed after the Spirit with longsuffering, self-control and love. The definition of the fruits of the Spirit and the Flesh (A.V., "lower nature," N.E.B.) gives us a clue for definition of "the Spirit" and "the Flesh": "the Spirit"—things

pertaining to God, and "the Flesh"—things pertaining to man.

The same thought is expressed by Paul to the Philippians: "Enemies of the cross of Christ . . . who mind earthly things. For the citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3: 18-20). Such a definition we find also in the Old Testament.

"The Egyptians are men, and not God;
And their horses flesh, and not spirit."
(Isaiah 31: 3.)

THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH

Thus to be in "the Flesh" is to be an enemy of God and the servant of sin; to be in "the Spirit" is to be the servant of God and of righteousness. In a sense these are like two realms separated by the waters of baptism. When we make the decision to serve God and Christ with the outward symbol of baptism we step into the realm of the Spirit. In a real sense we step into, or become part of, the House of God, the Temple; there we serve Him, receive nourishment, and are honoured with the term of being "in Christ." We are so closely associated that no other preposition such as "with," "near," or "by" is adequate. We think of the figure of our Lord; the true vine, and the branches.

This we may say is the theory—the ideal—but how does it work out in practice? Most of us must feel what a wonderful plan, but how badly we let our God and Master down by failing to rise up to this high calling. In the first place we should have become "new creatures" (2 Cor. 5: 17) but in fact how dreadfully like our old selves we still remain. So in the House of God we have to fall down before the Mercy Seat.

What are we to do? Paul tells us in the 8th chapter of Romans: "Live after the Spirit." He shows the contrast of the two lives: the Flesh—a life of self-indulgence and gratification of the flesh; the Spirit—a life of self-control, or selflessness in following the Master. One is death, the other life. It is then surely clear that the separation for which the Apostle Paul calls is moral and spiritual, and not local. There was no need for the Corinthian Church to withdraw to a monastery in the wilderness. In fact, the contrary.

"In my letter I wrote that you must have nothing to do with loose livers. I was not, of

course, referring to pagans who lead loose lives or are grabbers and swindlers or idolators. To avoid them you would have to get right out of the world." (1 Cor. 5: 9-10, N.E.B.).

Indeed, Paul recognised his loving duty to go back to these sinners and help them. "To the Jew I became as a Jew . . . To those without law . . . as without law . . . that I may by all means save some."

THE WAY OF LOVE

There is a very real danger that our separation may cut us off from helping others by the simple fact that our lives are so orientated that we do not meet them. Let us look at the opinion of an independent commentator who has reviewed our society critically, but fairly.

"Basic to Christadelphian social teaching and practice is the exhortation to be separate from the world, to love not the world nor the things which are in the world. Even in its more laudable activities, the world is no place for the brother of Christ. What the world does may not be intrinsically evil: that the world does it makes it indisputably evil. Christadelphians, therefore, seek to keep themselves apart from other men — the Gentiles, or the alien, as they refer to them. They associate as much as possible with others of like faith. Thus some activities, such as rambles and cycling, even games (as concessions to children) may receive limited approval, but not among companions from the world". (B. R. Wilson, *Sects and Society*, p. 281).

Agreeing that a definite and spiritual separation is necessary, is it not possible to meet more of these people, so that we can help some of them to a fuller life? Let us take an analogy: if we saw someone drowning in a lake, who would not go and save him? How much more important where eternal life is concerned. But if we are

to be life-savers, we must be able to swim. What does this involve? Firstly, that we should be well grounded in our faith, and secondly, that we should have the means of helping others. This means study and preparation, self-discipline and a willingness to try to understand the difficulties of others.

Is there a danger that in going out to help others we may ourselves fall into temptation? This question cannot be answered with a clear yes or no; so much depends on the individual and the influences. Each case must be looked at with care and discretion. It would take a strong character and personality to preach the Gospel in a public house in the east end of London, but the quiet word in season when working with others in service of the needy could only be a source of strength.

Finally, let us consider the spirit in which we serve.

"I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong, or a clanging cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy, and know every hidden truth; I may have faith strong enough to move mountains; but if I have no love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13: 1-2, N.E.B.).

Surely love should drive us from our ruts (I speak for myself first) to make some sacrifice for others? We remember that when Jesus was asked for the greatest commandment, He said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. . ."

He was not asked for the second, but He gave it. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." On another occasion when asked, "Who is my neighbour?" He gave the beautiful illustration of the Good Samaritan—of a race which the Jews despised. Let us then follow the example of the Master and go out and help these people. Let us choose the way that suits our bent and whether it be in Sunday School, Youth Circle, by lecture or personal help, or the cup of water in Christ's name, let us do it with love and zeal.

A PRAYER

Lord, where we are wrong, make us willing to change, and where we are right, make us easy to live with.
Peter Marshall

Luke's appreciation of Stephen

K. Drage

"What is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, then vanisheth away." The vapour of Stephen's life soon vanishes, blown away by the storm of persecution, and it almost seems that it vanishes before it has time to form. Luke records the acts of Stephen with brevity, but he does not intend that we should miss his greatness. There is something in his use of Stephen which makes us pause and ask, though not perhaps as James intended, "What is your life?"

His speech is the longest recorded in Acts. Although Luke tells us little of his work, he lingers on Stephen's words, and Stephen is seen by Luke to possess great Christian qualities, being full of faith, power, wisdom and the Holy Spirit.

Why should Luke dwell so much on these aspects of Stephen? Luke, in common with all the inspired writers, uses his material skilfully, miracle, speech and act weaving a pattern. In his *Acts of the Apostles* we start from the temple, the centre of orthodox Jewry, and journey outward to the centre of the Gentile world, to Rome. Thus in the first policy speech in Acts, we hear Peter saying: "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." There is not only a journey to be travelled over land and sea, but there is a journey in thought, as men and women have to re-adjust themselves to the impact of Christ's teaching.

Luke surely sees Stephen playing a vital part in this development of the church from insignificance to universal status? Since he dismisses Stephen's work in one short verse, his interest must have lain in Stephen's appreciation of the Christian gospel. Since Stephen is described as being full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, his utterances are of great importance. This is also emphasised by the

way in which Stephen is presented to us, for we cannot ignore the numerous similarities which exist between Stephen and Christ, in their trials and their deaths.

The next question is: Why should an emphasis be made on the gospel at this stage, for it is natural to assume that Christ taught His disciples, and all they had to do was preach. Yet Luke feels that at this point of his narrative, the Christian message must be considered more than its proclamation.

To answer this question, we must look at those events which brought about the arrest and trial of our Lord, for in these Luke sees a comparison with Stephen.

THE CONFLICT OF JESUS

It was the scribes and Pharisees who began the conflict, a conflict which was to be bitter, and end with our Lord's crucifixion. The clash arose over the Sabbath, though this was only a test case, for the conflict went far deeper. The synoptic writers record the first challenge as coming from the Pharisees, when the disciples picked ears of corn on the sabbath (Matthew 12). This is quickly followed in all the synoptic records with the account of the healing of the man with the withered hand on a sabbath day. It is then that we first read of the scheme of the Pharisees to encompass our Lord's death.

In Matthew's 12th chapter, Christ answers the Pharisees' charge by first quoting from the "former prophets" the occasion when David defiled the tabernacle, and then by referring to the law, a more authoritative source as far as the Pharisees were concerned, and showing that the law allowed the priests to break the sabbath in their daily service. They are reminded of the quality God

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Chapter 7.

And he said, ' My brothers, fathers of this nation, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to Abraham our ancestor while he was in Mesopotamia, before he had settled in Harran, and said: " Leave your country and your kinsfolk and come away to a land that I will show you." Thereupon he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Harran. From there, after his father's death, God led him to migrate to this land where you now live. He gave him nothing in it to call his own, not one yard; but promised to give it in possession to him and his descendants after him, though he was then childless. God spoke in these terms: " Abraham's descendants shall live as aliens in a foreign land, held in slavery and oppression for four hundred years. And I will pass judgment", said God, " on the nation whose slaves they are; and after that they shall come out free, and worship me in this place." He then gave him the covenant of circumcision, and so, after Isaac was born, he circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs.

' The patriarchs out of jealousy sold Joseph into slavery in Egypt, but God was with him and rescued him from all his troubles. He also gave him a presence and powers of mind which so commended him to Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he appointed him chief administrator for Egypt and the whole of the royal household.

' But famine struck the whole of Egypt and Canaan, and caused great hardship; and our ancestors could find nothing to eat. But Jacob heard that there was food in Egypt and sent our fathers there. This was their first visit. On the second visit Joseph was recognised by his brothers, and his family connexions were disclosed to Pharaoh. So Joseph sent an invitation to his father

demands in worship (cf. Amos 5:21), and that if the temple allowed such breaches of the law, then His "offences" are all the more justified, because here is a "greater than the temple."

It is obvious from this argument that the law and the temple were so completely entwined in Jewish thought as to be indistinguishable. The temple represented the whole Mosaic system, and by saying that there was a greater than the temple, Christ is challenging this system, and not just one aspect of it. The argument has proceeded from the particular to the general.

The "greater than" is surely our Lord, though both the Revised Version and the New English Bible render the phrase "something greater," using the neuter.

THE LIVING TEMPLE

These arguments are brief, but I think it is sufficient proof that the concept of the living temple was a major issue and a challenge to orthodoxy when we find that it is the main charge brought against Christ at His trial: "This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days" (Matt. 26:61). Though the witnesses are described as false ones, John admits the content of their witness: "But he spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:21). It is this very phrase, "temple of his body," which enriches our concept of fellowship with the Father.

The natural consequence of looking away from the temple and its system to the living temple was the universal mission of the gospel, and the command to look outward to the Gentiles. All the synoptics end their gospels with Christ's command to preach to all nations. Luke, no doubt forging a link between his life of Christ and his Acts of the Apostles, alone adds that the work was to begin in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). Yet there is a hint that Luke feels our Lord's attitude towards the temple has not been perceived by His disciples, for he says they "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (24:53).

When we turn to Acts, the difference between Christ and His disciples appears to widen on this aspect. It is true that they preach Christ crucified,

but they still cling to the temple system and its worship, so that even priests could officiate in the temple and be members of the church (Acts 2:46, 6:7). This is also seen in the attitude of the Pharisees to the church. The only persecution affecting the church springs from the Sadducees (Acts 4:1, 5:17), no doubt because of the church's emphasis on resurrection (Acts 4:3). The Pharisees appear to take no part in the two persecutions prior to the appointment of the Seven, and indeed in the second take the edge from the Sadducees' wrath by the speech of Gamaliel, a leader of the Pharisees (Acts 5:33-40).

We may ask why the Pharisees should say of the church that it might be of God, when they described our Lord as being of Beelzebub. I think the answer is found in the attitude of the church to the temple system, for that content of Christ's teaching which challenged the temple was missing from their witness, so that they might appear to be little more than another Jewish sect. It is possible that the church was well aware of Christ's words on the subject of the living temple, but was afraid to take them to their logical conclusion, and surely this is quite natural, for from childhood the lives of its members had revolved round the temple system, so that there would have been a reluctance to leave it.

Even after the events recorded by Matthew in his 12th chapter, we still find the disciples looking with adoration at the temple (Matthew 24:1). Therefore while the church failed to preach this aspect of Christ's teaching, it enjoyed peace and favour with all the people (Acts 2:47), and remained centred at Jerusalem. But Stephen knew its importance, and did not keep silent, so that the peace was shattered, and the tension of our Lord's life returned, with the Pharisees and all the people filled with wrath, persecuting our Lord's "body" yet again (Acts 6:12).

LOOKING OUTWARD

Luke, with his historical sense, was fully aware that if the church had remained centred at Jerusalem, with its Mosaic associations, the gospel might never have reached the Gentiles. It was Stephen who looked away from the temple order

suggesting first that psychologically it is far better to start from common ground and then work towards the differences rather than *vice versa*, and secondly, that our attitude should be a friendly one, recognising that though in error in some of their views they may nevertheless be just as sincere as ourselves.

I had no intention of implying that we do not have to judge with regard to belief; but where we have others sincerely endeavouring to put into practice their interpretation of the teaching of Christ and manifestly doing good works, then it behoves us, due to our own imperfections in living the Christian life, to be circumspect in the way we judge such *people* (though we judge their *beliefs*) for fear of falling into the grievous sin of hypocrisy.

It is largely, I feel, because we assume that people with wrong beliefs cannot be sincere that we have cut ourselves off from any contact with them, and thus from helping them to correct their false doctrine. I consider, therefore, that our separation should be one of spiritual strength that will enable us to work with them without falling, and help them to the fuller life which we enjoy.

With regard to life after death, it should be appreciated that most denominations believe in the resurrection of the dead as well as the immortality of the soul. The point I was endeavouring to make is that any belief in a life after death assumes the recognition of judgment and reward, and thus a responsibility towards God. This is nearer to the truth than the situation of Sadducees in Christ's day, and atheists in ours, and can form a common ground on which to work towards the truth of the matter. In short, I feel we must point out quite clearly the errors in their doctrine, but that we should do this with a loving spirit, always recognising our own limitations in our following of the Master.

JOHN WEAVING.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to you for the wonderful work which you are doing. I trust that your

work will do much to revitalise our movement, to deepen "the spiritual experience of Christ which is the only true spring of service."

. . . It seems that the general feeling is that your first issue had too great a bias towards the practical implications of Christian discipleship. Many have misunderstood your motives and have felt that you would neglect the spiritual needs of the people, while caring for the material. Others are reluctant to relinquish their conviction that our strength lies in our "separateness." I feel sure, however, that much of the criticism levelled against *Endeavour* has been caused by a lack of understanding of your aims, a misunderstanding of terms. I hope that your second issue will clear up much of this misunderstanding and will find a more sympathetic audience. I know that there are many, like myself, who are working to this end. In spite of the adverse criticisms of *Endeavour*, you have already done much to provoke thought and action throughout the brotherhood, and to stimulate thought and discussion on these matters is, I feel, a great step forward.

My prayers are with you in this work that it might bring more to a realisation of the transforming power of a Christ who can abide in us for the furthering of His love to all.

Notts.

R.F.

Thank you very much for sending us the first issue of *Endeavour*. It is a breath of fresh air, and I welcome the opportunity to subscribe to such an endeavour.

I believe that Brother Weaving summarises our need when he states that "what we require individually and collectively is a revolution in our outlook and way of life. Let us show practically in our lives that ideal for living that we theoretically profess . . . get down to the things that matter, good living and denying ourselves for the benefit of others. Then people will see that we are Christ's followers, which will surely be far more convincing than telling them so."

Maryland, U.S.A.

E.M.

I have just read your *Endeavour* No. 1, Summer, 1961, and I must say I came out of this sort of thing 14 years ago and I do not wish to go back. You are taking the "broad way"

Jacob and all his relatives, seventy-five persons altogether; and Jacob went down into Egypt. There he ended his days, as also our forefathers did. Their remains were later removed to Shechem and buried in the tomb which Abraham had bought and paid for from the clan of Emmor at Shechem.

' Now as the time approached for God to fulfil the promise he had made to Abraham, our nation in Egypt grew and increased in numbers. At length another king, who knew nothing of Joseph, ascended the throne of Egypt. He made a crafty attack on our race, and cruelly forced our ancestors to expose their children so that they should not survive. At this time Moses was born. He was a fine child, and pleasing to God. For three months he was nursed in his father's house, and when he was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter herself adopted him and brought him up as her own son. So Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, a powerful speaker and a man of action.

' He was approaching the age of forty, when it occurred to him to look into the conditions of his fellow-countrymen the Israelites. He saw one of them being ill-treated, so he went to his aid, and avenged the victim by striking down the Egyptian. He thought his fellow-countryman would understand that God was offering them deliverance through him, but they did not understand. The next day he came upon two of them fighting, and tried to bring them to make up their quarrel. "My men," he said, "you are brothers; why are you ill-treating one another?" But the man who was at fault pushed him away. "Who set you up as a ruler and judge over us?" he said. "Are you going to kill me like the Egyptian you killed yesterday?" At this Moses fled the country and settled in Midianite territory. There two sons were born to him.

' After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the flame of a burning bush in the desert near Mount Sinai. Moses was amazed at the sight. But as

at Jerusalem, and opened the church's eyes to the way in which Christ would lead them. Stephen's emphasis was on something new. Whether Stephen himself saw the logical conclusion of this change in emphasis as being the call to the Gentiles does not concern us at the moment, whatever other members of the church thought. What matters as far as Luke is concerned is that Stephen sowed, or rather re-sowed, the seed, and for that reason his presentation of the gospel was all-important. It was left to others to water and to reap.

Luke appears to stress that Stephen's appreciation had to come from outside the confines of the Judaistic church, whose members were brought up as strict, orthodox Jews. It required an uninhibited mind. We are introduced to him through the Hellenistic controversy, when there had been complaints of the neglect of widows of the Greek-speaking section of Jewry (Acts 6). We do not know the full reason for this curious breakdown in Christian charity. Perhaps it arose from that inbred characteristic which separated the Palestinian orthodox Jew from his Greek-contaminated brother. Neither do we know if Stephen was himself a Hellenist. Like all the Seven his name was Greek, and considering the circumstances this would suggest that he was a Hellenist. His preaching place was also new, the Synagogue of the Libertines. If his brethren went to the temple daily, he looked away from it, if only a few yards.

We have already noticed the similarity between Christ and Stephen. Stephen was full of faith and power, and did great wonders and miracles among the people (Acts 6:8), and Luke stresses more than once that Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3, 5, 10; 7:55).

Surely here is another of whom it could be said that he was "greater than the temple." The vision at the end of Stephen's trial is the vision of the glory of God which the Old Testament associated with the temple (cf. Psalm 63). The charge brought against Stephen is almost identical to that brought against our Lord, a fact more clearly seen when we remember the close association of the law and the temple. We also notice that in both cases the witnesses were false. Christ's prophecy of sitting at the right hand of Power and

of His coming end His Jewish trial, while a similar vision based on this prophecy concludes Stephen's trial, with similar judgment. There is the same forgiveness of the executors—only Luke records this of Christ—and in both cases devout men bury them.

Their deaths are even more striking in resemblance. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews says, when directing his readers from the orthodox Mosaic system, that the Cross was outside the camp (Heb. 13:12). We read of Stephen that he was stoned outside the city. If the emphasis is the same, so is the exhortation, which is to go to him (i.e., Jesus) without the camp (Heb. 13:13), leaving the Mosaic system of orthodox Jewry behind. In stressing this similarity in the trials and deaths of our Lord and Stephen, Luke is showing us that both met their death because they spoke against the orthodox conception, and that Stephen was the first man so to speak since our Lord's crucifixion.

THE DEFENCE

In one particular Christ and Stephen differed. While Christ was silent at His trial, Stephen gave a long defence. It is at this defence that we are now going to look.

The charge was that Stephen preached that Jesus would

- (1) destroy this place
- (2) change the customs that Moses delivered to us.

At first sight his defence looks no more than a historical narrative, but Stephen is using forms well-known in his own day, and is speaking from history. He shows how God's revelation and fellowship with men were not confined to the Mosaic system, how Israel had always rejected the law and God's prophets, and how the prophets were a type of Christ.

In the very opening phrase of his defence Stephen focuses the minds of his hearers on the manifestation of God that was to be found in the holy of holies. It was the "God of glory," the God who dwelt between the Cherubim, who appeared

he approached to look closely, the voice of the Lord was heard: "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Moses was terrified and dared not look. Then the Lord said to him, "Take off your shoes; the place where you are standing is holy ground. I have indeed seen how my people are oppressed in Egypt and have heard their groans; and I have come down to rescue them. Up, then; let me send you to Egypt."

' This Moses, whom they had rejected with the words, "Who made you ruler and judge?" — this very man was commissioned as ruler and liberator by God himself, speaking through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. It was Moses who led them out, working miracles and signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and for forty years in the desert. It was he again who said to the Israelites, "God will raise up a prophet for you from among yourselves as he raised me." He it was who, when they were assembled there in the desert, conversed with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our forefathers; he received the living utterances of God, to pass on to us.

' But our forefathers would not accept his leadership. They thrust him aside. They wished themselves back in Egypt, and said to Aaron, "Make us gods to go before us. As for that Moses, who brought us out of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." That was when they made the bull-calf, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and held a feast in honour of the thing their hands had made. But God turned away from them and gave them over to the worship of the hosts of heaven, as it stands written in the book of the prophets: "Did you bring me victims and offerings those forty years in the desert, you house of Israel? No, you carried aloft the shrine of Moloch and the star of the god Rephan, the images which you had made for your adoration. I will banish you beyond Babylon."

' Our forefathers had the Tent of the Testimony in the desert, as God commanded when he told Moses

to Abraham, but this revelation was outside the temple and the promised land. It was in Gentile Haran. Similar manifestations were made to Joseph in Egypt, and to Moses at the burning bush and at Mount Sinai. Joseph and Moses are also seen as types of Christ, indeed Moses even prophesies of Him. Both Joseph and Moses were rejected by their brethren as was our Lord.

About half of Stephen's defence is concerned with Moses, and the respect which Stephen shows refutes any idea that he wished to destroy the work of Moses. Like his Master, Stephen has come to fulfil, not to destroy. Moses was not in error, for he was given "living oracles" through angels. He was with the true church of God in the wilderness, but Israel turned from him to idols, so that God gave them up to their idolatry. There is in this a condemnation, and in the quotation taken from Amos (Acts 7:42) there is the suggestion that Israel's worship had followed the same pattern ever since. It was they, not Stephen, who had changed the customs given by Moses, it was they who had changed the tabernacle to the tent of Moloch, and it was God who had blinded their eyes (cf. Christ's comment on parables, Matt. 13:13).

The mention of the tabernacle concentrates the argument on the temple. Once again Moses is exemplified, for he built the tabernacle according to God's pattern, but once again the emphasis is outside the land, for it was built in the wilderness and it was here that God met His people. This abode of God was not static, because Joshua brought it into the land, and David brought it into Jerusalem. It was David's desire to find a habitation for God, but Nathan had denounced the idea of the necessity of buildings made with hands (2 Sam. 7:5-7), so that when Solomon built the temple it was not the habitation of God, but "a house." It would seem that Stephen sees no divine presence or glory in Solomon's temple or the following structures on the same site, for "the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

At this point Stephen has come to the conclusion of his defence. He has skilfully shown, from the law itself, that the present system is in error, and it is his accusers who have changed the law. It is his turn to charge his judges, and in one

short quotation the full force of Stephen's teaching is seen. He quotes from Isaiah 66. Where Stephen stops Isaiah continues: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit." It is in this man that God's glory and Spirit will abide, and not in buildings.

With our own personal libraries we tend to forget the scarcity of books in those days. Scriptures were learned by heart—indeed the oral word was more highly considered than the written. As Stephen spoke the words of Isaiah, his judges would be mouthing them, silent reading being unknown to the ancients. They would be continuing the quotation, but in complete contrast hear Stephen's condemnation, which takes the place of Isaiah's continuation: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit."

The charge is too blatant to be ignored, for they are being told that they are following in the way of Israel in the wilderness. They cast out God, they kill His prophets, even the Christ. They resist the Holy Spirit, they resist God's presence among them. Worse is to follow, for their spiritual poverty is suddenly exposed by Stephen's manifestation of the Holy Spirit. They persecuted the Spirit and drove it out, but now it is seen manifested in Stephen in all its glory: he has communion with God, is part of the living temple not made with hands, and sees a vision his judges cannot share. It is desolate and wrathful men who now condemn Stephen to death.

THE SPREAD OF THE WITNESS

If this appreciation of Stephen is correct, he did not lose control of himself and so prematurely end his speech. This idea is sometimes used to explain why Stephen never fully developed Christ in his theme of the living temple. But Stephen had said all he intended to. He was content to rest his case on examples from the Old Testament, and to show in a similar way to Christ's in Matthew 12, that even within the confines of the law his theology was correct. That Christ played an important part in Stephen's theology is first seen by the charge: "We have heard him say, that

to make it after the pattern which he had seen. Our fathers of the next generation, with Joshua, brought it with them when they dispossessed the nations whom God drove out before them, and there it was until the time of David. David found favour with God and asked to be allowed to provide a dwelling-place for the God of Jacob; but it was Solomon who built him a house. However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men: as the prophet says, "Heaven is my throne and earth my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord; where is my resting-place? Are not all these things of my own making?"

'How stubborn you are, heathen still at heart and deaf to the truth! You always fight against the Holy Spirit. Like fathers, like sons. Was there ever a prophet whom your fathers did not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One; and now you have betrayed him and murdered him, you who received the Law as God's angels gave it to you, and yet have not kept it.'

This touched them on the raw and they ground their teeth with fury. But Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, and gazing intently up to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'Look,' he said, 'there is a rift in the sky; I can see the Son of Man standing at God's right hand!' At this they gave a great shout and stopped their ears. Then they made one rush at him and, flinging him out of the city, set about stoning him. The witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. So they stoned Stephen, and as they did so, he called out, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he fell on his knees and cried aloud, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them', and with that he died.



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this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place . . . ” and by the vision before his death portraying the exalted Son of Man, the vision which has Messianic associations (cf. Psalm 110, Acts 2:34). Nevertheless, in his defence Stephen does not use arguments like those we find in Ephesians 2, so that some have suggested that Paul’s theology of the living temple does not originate from Stephen. It is difficult on the evidence we have to evaluate Stephen’s view of the relation between Christ and the dwelling of God in buildings not made with hands. Stephen himself never mentions the word “temple” in relation to the Christian church, yet I feel that Luke saw Paul as Stephen’s heir. We are first introduced to Paul at Stephen’s death, and Luke is at pains to point out that Paul’s fellow countrymen, men of Cilicia, heard Stephen preach, the inference being that Paul was there. Luke also shows that it was Paul who appreciated the dangers of Stephen’s views to the orthodox position, and was therefore foremost in persecuting the church.

Not all the church was scattered by this persecution (Acts 8:1). The apostles, we read, remained at Jerusalem, and no doubt some members of the church remained with them. Why were they left unmolested? When we remember that the circumcision faction was centred at Jerusalem, we will suspect that with Peter they were strict in the Mosaic practices, and that only those with views similar to Stephen’s were hunted down. The persecution drove the church from Jerusalem into Judea and Samaria, the emphasis being on Samaria, for Philip, one of the Seven, went there. Philip no doubt held similar views, so that when we remember the Samaritan attitude to the temple at Jerusalem (John 4:20) it is not surprising that his gospel was received so readily in Samaria.

It is not until we read of this persecution that we fully appreciate how limited had been the Christian witness, in geographical terms, until this

time. It is only now that we find the gospel being preached outside the confines of Jerusalem. Indeed, prior to Stephen’s death, the witness had been confined to the temple. It was Stephen who had started the stone rolling, perhaps not realising that it was to roll to Rome. For this reason Luke sees Stephen as an important landmark in his history of the journey of the gospel to Gentile Rome. He is seen not only as the first Christian martyr, but the church’s first prophet, of whom it might be said, as of Moses: “He knew the Lord face to face.”

In a study of this type, we tend to forget the passions of the people who took part. We forget the agonising process as the church opened its eyes to where its Lord would lead it. We forget how views held from childhood had to be fundamentally changed if Christ’s work were to be done. We forget the price Stephen had to pay in condemning formal worship, and practices which denied God an entrance into the hearts of men.

We will fail in our study if we dismiss Stephen as an intellectual. He was one of those rare men who had a vision of God, and wished others to share it, to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to feel the warmth of His presence with us through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Stephen’s martyrdom speaks beyond the archaic controversies of the first century. It speaks of God not contained in forms, but moving among living men. He dwells in the poor of spirit and comforts them. Whatever the world may do, it cannot destroy the fellowship they have with their Father in heaven. It is an eternal truth which has to be stressed in every age lest forms should dull our faith. The Most High does not dwell in buildings or institutions made with hands:

“ But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word.”

The Symbol of The Cross

A. J. Ford

Some concern has been expressed concerning the use of the Cross in our cover design. It has been pointed out that some forms of it already had pagan significance before it was adopted by Christendom. It is argued that the emblem is that of an "apostate" Christianity, coming into use more and more at a time when the Church was drifting farther and farther away from the first century truth. The suggestion is that a symbol with pagan associations must be offensive to God, that in any case to use it associates us too much with Christendom at large and that it might well betoken our own declension from apostolic truth.

It is true, of course, that pagan forms of the Cross preceded Christian ones. Objections to our cover design have referred particularly to the *Crux Ansata*, or handled cross of Egypt, which was associated with life. Also much reference has been made to the fact that the letter *tau* was often in the form of a cross, and some have contended that this was the initial and symbol of the Babylonian god Tammuz, who was believed to die and rise annually.

We need not consider at length, or question the scholarship involved in these objections, for they do not constitute an argument against a Christian use of the Cross with a Christian meaning. After all, written words are only symbols. Originally they were used primarily in association with magic and for pagan religious purposes. This fact did not prevent the prophets and apostles from using words, and thus giving us the Scriptures. They did not regard writing as a work of the devil or as having innate corrupting power. Similarly, ritual washings and sacramental meals were also part of pagan religion. Their occurrence in the mystery religions seems to have closely resembled later Christian forms. This did not prevent Christ from adopting the symbolic rituals of baptism and the breaking of bread service.

Christianity can, and does, take over existing forms. It can transform them and give them its own meaning, whatever their past associations, as it does with our own individual lives. This is proved in some measure so far as the Cross is concerned by the way most people today accept

the Cross as the symbol of Christianity, independent of sectarian differences. They do not trouble their minds about pagan associations.

The Christian use of the symbol may well be sanctioned in Scripture. In Ezek. 9: 4-6, one is told to put a mark on the forehead of the faithful in Jerusalem. The word which is here translated "mark" is the Hebrew word *tau*. It appears likely that this mark was in the form of a cross, especially as the letter *tau* was commonly a cross in early times. It would not have the symbolic value associated with the Cross of later times, but such a use suggests that there was no hesitance involved in its use as a distinguishing mark of God's elect.

It is true that the Latin form of the Cross did not come into public Christian use until after the accession of Constantine. However, this was not due to early Christians being worried about pagan associations of the symbol. They were quite prepared to make use of other pagan analogies in their art, for example, the story of Orpheus. Nor can the appearance of the symbol be attributed to doctrinal declension. The fact is that early Christians did not dwell upon the horrors of the crucifixion, which was what the symbol of the Latin cross would convey first and foremost in those days. They were inspired mainly by the resurrection of Christ and their own hope of triumph over death. It was this aspect of their faith which they would want to present to their contemporaries. They would not wish to press the use of a symbol which was then fraught with penal significance, and which reminded human authority of its part in Christ's death.

When, however, Constantine abolished crucifixion and favoured the Church, the worth of the symbol was better able to establish itself. Even so, it was not adopted into public Christian use as an object for morbid contemplation but rather as an emblem of joy and victory: "The Son of God was crucified not that the cross might disgrace Christ, but that by the sacredness of Christ the cross should become the emblem of victory."

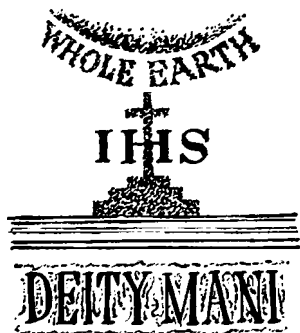
Further, in regard to the Cross being associated with "the Apostasy" and the Church's falling away from 1st century truth, it may be pointed out that the Scriptures themselves are used by Christians with all of whose ideas we do not agree, yet no one would suppose that this invalidates the Scriptures or makes them dangerous. The canon of Scripture, too, was virtually decided soon after the accession of Constantine, yet no one regards it as suspect on this account.

In point of fact some forms and uses of the Cross among Christians appear well before Constantine and the Peace of the Church. The making of the sign of the Cross with the hand or finger is referred back to the time of the apostles by Basil. Cyprian, in the 3rd Century, speaks of it being used in baptismal services then. Tertullian (c. 200 A.D.) said: "Whatsoever occupation engages us, we mark the brow with the sign of the cross."

It is likely that Christians of those early times used the sign to remind them of Christ, rather than of His crucifixion in particular. After all, the Greek letter *chi*, written X, was the initial letter of the name Christ. Among other pictorial forms of the Cross, mention might be made of a *tau* form, or St. Anthony's Cross, which appears on a 3rd Century tomb in the St. Callistus cemetery. It appears thus: IRE T NE (*irene* being the Greek word for "peace"). Use of the symbol of the Cross, therefore, was not confined to the Christianity which was the approved religion of the state from the 4th Century A.D.

One can, of course, appreciate the point of view of anyone who does not want any pictorial forms to help him in his religion, and who feels that they may get in the way of pure thought and devotion. Minucius Felix said: "Crosses we neither worship, nor desire." This is a matter of individual temperament which we can respect. But to argue against the symbol of the Cross on the grounds of pagan or heretical associations is not sound. To regard the sign as unscriptural may be regarded as doubtful. Moreover, to regard its use as contrary to the initial

aims of our movement would not seem to be the opinion of its founder, Dr. Thomas, for he used the Latin form of the Cross very clearly in his *Pictorial Illustration of Deity Manifested in the Flesh*, nor of Brother C. C. Walker, who published it. Bro. R. Roberts also uses it in *The Slain Lamb*.



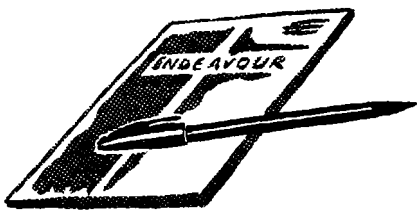
A rough copy of a detail from the design of Dr. Thomas. The letters IHS are the first three letters of the Greek form of Jesus.

Our cover design may well be varied in course of time, but meanwhile the symbol of the Cross remains for the reasons stated in the previous issue. Like the written word-symbols which form the gospel narrative, it is full of meaning and challenge, and a spur to meditation. Not least, we stand by it now because:

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| † Crux Ansata | ✕ Chi, the initial letter of Christ, also Burgundian or St. Andrew's Cross (attributed to Andrew by medieval legend) |
| ⊥ Letter tau, or St. Anthony's Cross | |
| ⊕ Greek Cross | ✕ Iota & Chi the initial letters of Jesus Christ |
| ⊥ Latin Cross | ✕ Chi & Rho the first two letters of Christ placed by Constantine on his Labarum |

The cross is not an ornament to be worn around the neck; it is an attitude to be carried in the heart. D. B. Strobe.



correspondence

May I record my impressions after reading the first number of *Endeavour*?

There is a good deal of emphasis placed on the practical side of our religion. That is as it should be, for it is in harmony with the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," we are told through James. But the practice of religion does not stop short at supporting charitable organisations, or even performing more personal works of charity. In my judgment, rather too much is made of those aspects of Christian activity.

At the outset, we are reminded of the power of the Cross, and of the very real experience that we can have of Christ dwelling in our hearts. This, again, is as it should be. We should all be able to echo the words of Paul, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." And in our preaching, the Cross of Christ should have a much more prominent place than it does.

At the same time, I must confess to being alarmed at some of the statements that I read. In more than one article, there seems to be a veiled plea for a broader way, for less insistence on the importance of correct doctrine. For instance, in the article entitled "Dedication," we read this concerning the magazine: "It may, we believe, be another fruitful outcome of the community's growth, and develop the essence of its tradition to meet the challenge of the twentieth century." The word "essence" surely implies making a distinction between what is important and what is not, and rejecting that which is not important. Are we being given to understand that such a pruning process ought to be carried out on our Statement of Faith?

When we come to the article by Bro. John Weaving on "Looking Forward," we find that we are urged to rejoice with people of other religious persuasions "for those things which we have in common." Is he suggesting that they are our fellow Christians, but belonging to different branches of the Church?

One of the things that we have in common with them, says Bro. Weaving, is a belief in a life after death. I find it very difficult to imagine how I could find any common ground with someone who believes in the immortality of the soul and in heaven going. Perhaps Bro. Weaving does, too, for he goes on to speak of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God; which can hardly be done without showing such people that their views are false. . .

Cheshire.

C.F.

We appreciate the kindly comments made by the writer of this letter. We believe that the distinctive Christadelphian beliefs are both true and important. The "essence of the community's tradition," we believe, consists of basing ourselves entirely on the Bible, striving to find its meaning for ourselves, and subjecting all ecclesiastical tradition to the most searching scrutiny. Truth is thus experienced, and not merely assented to, and we are thus enabled to face the ever-recurring need to consider matters of emphasis and presentation in seeking to challenge each generation with the whole counsel of God.

We have asked the author of "Looking Forward" to enlarge on the meaning of the article. He replies as follows:

I would like to thank the writer of this letter for his comments, and would assure him that when I said, "rejoice with them for those things which we have in common," I was

which leads to destruction, see James 4: 4, Psalm 2, Eph. 5: 11, 2 Thess. 2: 9-12 and many others.

If you wish to pursue this course, I think the only honourable thing to do is that you should leave the Christadelphian brotherhood, who cannot go further than James 1: 27.

Warwicks.

A.W.

The article on "gentleness" made a profound impression and confirmed that the root cause of a series of disastrous experiences which have come upon me, has been just my capacity for "charging up."

Yorks.

J.L.

I have read your first issue and I think you are to be warmly congratulated on such a splendid effort. I like it immensely and I look forward to further issues in anticipatory pleasure.

. . . I think the thing that appeals to me most is the insistence you place on action—as a body our activities cover so small a range they are almost pitiful to contemplate. Individual activity is one thing, but collective activity will have a far more telling effect. If then, your magazine can stir the brotherhood (I could almost write "rouse" the brotherhood) into action, your efforts will not be in vain.

So I pray that God's blessing will rest on your "endeavours."

Sussex.

H.Q.

Allowing for the fact that one issue cannot adequately express all the reasons for the views held by the writers, we find it necessary to express the utmost concern and disturbance on account of the unbalanced, impracticable, and in some respects contradictory teaching which is maintained throughout the pages of the magazine, which we consider arises inevitably out of a departure from the principles of God's selection and our separation from the world clearly taught in the Scriptures.

It is not our intention to set before you a detailed examination of the many untenable statements made in the first issue, but we feel it necessary to make clear we do not countenance the mistaken humanitarian views which are being promulgated, which have the effect of diluting the teaching of God's Word.

Warwicks.

We have received eight letters expressing agreement with the terms of this letter, which was circularised.

It is clear from the letters circulated that you will have a lot of difficulties and opposition to face. I hope that you will not be discouraged and will have the comfort of knowing that there are many of us who are praying that God will bless your efforts.

Sussex.

C.B.

You may care to explain what "spiritual dynamic" will be imparted and to whom, when the pseudo-Christian world will march upon the Lamb and the saints enthroned in Mount Zion, with the insignia of your magazine emblazoned in a single item of heraldry, upon the banner which has marshalled Yahweh's deadliest enemies to their final doom.

Salop.

G.P.

I look forward to my next copy — with Christian wisdom and discretion this magazine should help towards an extension of the love of our Lord and His compassion to all, within ourselves, while we do not forget the Covenants of Promise.

Oxfords.

C.B.

I have been kindly lent a copy of your first magazine, and am greatly impressed by it, for it seems to me to supply a need in our Body. May the Lord bless your efforts.

Surrey.

C.C.

May I say "thank you" for the copy of *Endeavour*: it was like a breath of fresh air to read of Christian love as an active force in an evil world. Sometimes one gets the impression that this is something one should read about and talk or even argue about, but still something which is too precious and delicate to be practised in this evil world. Such a view, of course, tends to forget that the Source of all Christian love was not ashamed or afraid to go into the evil of the world, armed only with purity, meekness and love, and commands that we should do the same.

But this brings me to a point of criticism.

The emphasis throughout tended to be on the practical issues of good works, almost to

suggesting first that psychologically it is far better to start from common ground and then work towards the differences rather than *vice versa*, and secondly, that our attitude should be a friendly one, recognising that though in error in some of their views they may nevertheless be just as sincere as ourselves.

I had no intention of implying that we do not have to judge with regard to belief; but where we have others sincerely endeavouring to put into practice their interpretation of the teaching of Christ and manifestly doing good works, then it behoves us, due to our own imperfections in living the Christian life, to be circumspect in the way we judge such *people* (though we judge their *beliefs*) for fear of falling into the grievous sin of hypocrisy.

It is largely, I feel, because we assume that people with wrong beliefs cannot be sincere that we have cut ourselves off from any contact with them, and thus from helping them to correct their false doctrine. I consider, therefore, that our separation should be one of spiritual strength that will enable us to work with them without falling, and help them to the fuller life which we enjoy.

With regard to life after death, it should be appreciated that most denominations believe in the resurrection of the dead as well as the immortality of the soul. The point I was endeavouring to make is that any belief in a life after death assumes the recognition of judgment and reward, and thus a responsibility towards God. This is nearer to the truth than the situation of Sadducees in Christ's day, and atheists in ours, and can form a common ground on which to work towards the truth of the matter. In short, I feel we must point out quite clearly the errors in their doctrine, but that we should do this with a loving spirit, always recognising our own limitations in our following of the Master.

JOHN WEAVING.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to you for the wonderful work which you are doing. I trust that your

work will do much to revitalise our movement, to deepen "the spiritual experience of Christ which is the only true spring of service."

. . . It seems that the general feeling is that your first issue had too great a bias towards the practical implications of Christian discipleship. Many have misunderstood your motives and have felt that you would neglect the spiritual needs of the people, while caring for the material. Others are reluctant to relinquish their conviction that our strength lies in our "separateness." I feel sure, however, that much of the criticism levelled against *Endeavour* has been caused by a lack of understanding of your aims, a misunderstanding of terms. I hope that your second issue will clear up much of this misunderstanding and will find a more sympathetic audience. I know that there are many, like myself, who are working to this end. In spite of the adverse criticisms of *Endeavour*, you have already done much to provoke thought and action throughout the brotherhood, and to stimulate thought and discussion on these matters is, I feel, a great step forward.

My prayers are with you in this work that it might bring more to a realisation of the transforming power of a Christ who can abide in us for the furthering of His love to all.

Notts.

R.F.

Thank you very much for sending us the first issue of *Endeavour*. It is a breath of fresh air, and I welcome the opportunity to subscribe to such an endeavour.

I believe that Brother Weaving summarises our need when he states that "what we require individually and collectively is a revolution in our outlook and way of life. Let us show practically in our lives that ideal for living that we theoretically profess . . . get down to the things that matter, good living and denying ourselves for the benefit of others. Then people will see that we are Christ's followers, which will surely be far more convincing than telling them so."

Maryland, U.S.A.

E.M.

I have just read your *Endeavour* No. 1, Summer, 1961, and I must say I came out of this sort of thing 14 years ago and I do not wish to go back. You are taking the "broad way"

the exclusion of devotional or expository articles, giving the impression that we should neglect preaching in favour of other fields of activity.

This apparent lack of balance is unfortunate and has given rise to a great deal of criticism (much of which is itself unbalanced), and I do hope that in future magazines, God willing, you will devote more attention to the Scriptural basis for these "new" conceptions of service.

Then perhaps we will see that these "new" conceptions were first introduced a little more than nineteen hundred years ago.

Derbys.

D.E.

I like the spirit and style of the magazine very much and am sure that it will meet a need that exists among us. Perhaps there will be some unfavourable reaction to face.

Essex.

J.M.

I have read the first *Endeavour*, and how thrilled and grateful I feel for its *raison d'être*. I have felt really unhappy for a long time because I have been sure that the expression of our beliefs and professions in works of the spirit has become almost sterile. The feeling of aloofness and superiority which is among us just does not fit in with Christ's precepts, and while I am sure our understanding of the Scriptures is good and commendable, and must always take first place, what we learn is not bearing fruit.

No, our lectures are making no impact at all on the public, and somewhere we are going wrong, and I am convinced you are putting your finger on the missing faculty. We seem half dead, static and unfruitful. God bless all the members who are so courageously facing up to facts.

Staffs.

B.D.

I am startled to find in reading an advance copy, many of my own thoughts exactly expressed. Hitherto, I had been unable to detect any difference between the spirit of Christadelphians in this obese city and that of normal citizens living by the famous "rule of the upright thumb."

Warwicks.

A.D.

Congratulations on producing a very welcome and much-needed magazine. May the committee produce many more with the Lord's blessing.

God bless you in all work for and in His name.

Notts.

M.C.

I have read the first issue of your magazine. It is clear to me, as I suppose you also know, that the viewpoint you advance is very far removed from the traditional Christadelphian viewpoint.

I am not concerned with arguing the merits of either case but it appears to me that if you possess the Christian attribute of honesty you will quickly leave the Christadelphian movement and either join others with similar views or set up an independent witness of your own.

Staffs.

E.W.

I am in absolute sympathy with you in your desire to render assistance to deserving causes outside Christadelphian circles.

I meet those who would appear to think that such help is *not* called for from the brotherhood.

During the East Coast floods, a few years ago, I suggested to one of our leading brethren that we have a collection to aid the distressed, and the reply I got was: "Let the world assist: they do nothing."

I tried again last year to assist in Refugee Year, but with the same result.

One would imagine that love of one's neighbour in the minds of some, is almost a crime.

Wishing you every success in your efforts, but do adhere to the true doctrine.

Hants.

J.M.

I have read your first issue of *Endeavour* with great interest, and find much in it that is refreshing in spirit and sincere.

However, it is a pity that in your first issue you did not "come clear" with a straightforward statement of aims, and the section of the community for whom the magazine is intended.

The absence of a clear statement and of the name Christadelphian together with the appearance of the symbol of the Cross (anathema in traditional

circles), and reviews including one on *Break-through*, rather sweeping criticisms of the usefulness of the lecture hall and the dogmatism of traditional Christadelphianism—all these seem, consciously or otherwise, intended to alienate this venture from the older section of our fellowship—to widen the rift between young and old.

May I ask, for your own good, have you an editor or a reviewing sub-committee? or do you hope always to shelter under the doubtful protection of that clause: "Views expressed in *Endeavour* are not necessarily those of the committee?"

I hope that your venture may succeed, and may establish itself as a useful channel through which youth can express itself, and all ages can benefit from an open but *benevolently guided* exchange of views and ideas.

I am glad you have limited the issues to four a year: that means you may try for quality rather than quantity.

You will, I fear, have a storm to weather — partly of your own making—maybe as I have said unwittingly.

However, the sincerity of your effort will become apparent in the way you react to criticism, and the degree to which you are able, as a committee, widely separated, to work together in unity, and strive for a high standard which will both comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable—but not to the extent of immediate alienation.

Youth needs to learn the gentle art of persuasion before resorting to a new dogmatism.

Glos.

D.F.

Endeavour does not have an editor; it is intended that the work of final production should move round the Committee. The Endeavour Committee accepts a general responsibility for material published, but can see no reason to suppress views which vary from, or oppose, its own collective opinion, if they appear to make a valuable contribution to discussion. It would wish to publish such views as far as possible without alteration or comment, as in this issue.

As a bit of criticism may I point out that to many the design of the Cross on the cover

prevents them considering the magazine. I have heard many say so. Personally, the contents are my first consideration, and I think the practical outlook of this magazine is just what is wanted. I would also like to see the editorials *always signed*—there is nothing in the magazine to show who is the editor.

With best wishes for the success of your very courageous adventure.

Warwicks.

E.B.

It is well prepared and printed. No criticism of others magazines in circulation, or of other brethren, is to say the least, refreshing.

On the debit side the following comments have been made: The emphasis seems unbalanced, and is only concerned with "Christian love and charity" and what is described as "spiritual experience." There is no evidence of any clear Christadelphian doctrine.

The first two are excellent and have a proper place in our lives, both inside and outside ecclesial life. They are not very sure what is meant by "spiritual experience."

Taking the article on "Dedication" as a whole, it is felt one could read a similar thing in any parish magazine.

The symbol of the Cross (although we as a body recognise its true significance) surely in these days has become more the symbol of apostasy . . . Roman Catholic Church . . . Jehovah's Witnesses . . . the Established Church, than of true Christianity, and for these reasons is better not used in illustration.

Staffs.

N.H.

Thank you for a stirring effort, which voices the feelings of so many brethren, whether they be third or first generation Christadelphians, and who are not so able to express them.

Worcs.

R.M.

In my opinion, the thoughts you express are tacitly held by a considerable number of our community, but, like myself, they keep quiet for fear of causing trouble. Fear, however, is a very poor motive, and while I have always endeavoured to give no offence to those who by temperament or education are limited in their

vision, nevertheless, the time for facing the challenge may have arrived, especially for the sake of our younger generation.

The effort to discourage you in your work by a certain ecclesia I deplore, but hope that no issue will be forced over the matter.

When all has been said, there must always be allowances for our opinions and shades of difference, which, if they did not exist, would mean we were very poor individual Christians.

As one who concurs with you on these things (especially a wide view of charity) and have gone on doing nothing about it, I shall appreciate it if *Endeavour* rouses me to some action. I do not anticipate that your views will ever be tolerated by those of our number who look on the "separateness" of the Christian from the world as the foremost consideration, and interpret such a view as meaning the complete "rightness" of Christadelphians and the complete "wrongness" of everyone else.

Glos.

V.L.

Your first issue of *Endeavour* has been read critically with interest, and appreciation of the positive spirit of the contributors.

The writer joins hands with you in what you are "endeavouring" to do: trusting you will keep this in mind, I hope you will bear with two things I feel want saying.

First, I hope you have gathered in prayer that the criticism which is bound to arise will be met with the spirit of gentleness mentioned by Sister McHaffie.

I was one of the "angry young brethren" until I turned 40 and I now stand in the middle, surveying the many of the grandfather generation you speak of, and they are being deeply hurt by a younger generation on the other side of me. They are as deeply hurt as the many young brethren who have left our body in disgust and impatience. The difference in outlook is like a huge axe cleaving what should be a harmonious fellowship in The Spirit of Christ.

... Unwittingly you have offended in putting the Cross (in the way depicted) on the front of your magazine: Dr. Thomas's view of "The Mark

of the Beast" is still that of many of our brethren and sisters.

Sussex.

J.J.

I have received a copy of the first issue of *Endeavour* from the Recording Brother of my ecclesia and have read the articles with interest and pleasure. It would seem that, to a great degree, matters of practical Christianity have been sadly neglected in our body and it is pleasing to see such a good effort being made to rectify this.

Thank you for the obvious effort the Committee have put into this scheme, and may our Heavenly Father bless all those concerned with it.

Essex.

C.C.

I am deeply sorry that certain sections of our community should take such an un-Christian attitude to the magazine and the committee members, and I pray that those who have been severely criticised and cross-questioned may be given the strength to withstand it. At the same time I was very pleased to hear that all do not share the views of the critics. Perhaps the day may come when even more light may shine upon us and we may embark together on wider seas of Christian thought and action.

What I have heard of the criticisms seem to be rather vague, and assert things rather than prove them. At least *Endeavour* was brave enough to come out into the open.

Derbys.

N.F.

The magazine, we think, is a very fine effort, positive, yet cautious. No doubt things will liven up through the correspondence column, and this will possibly be one of the most useful features in stimulating active thought about the subject matter of the articles, which could otherwise be passed over, missing the implications.

Perths.

J.J.

I enjoyed reading the first issue, agreed with its aims and the spirit of love in which it was written, and look forward to the next issue.

Warwicks.

R.C.

Seeing that a new magazine has been freely distributed around the Ecclesias, called *The Endeavour*, there is need for some comments, seeing that it is chiefly by the younger generation, for the younger generation. There is a great outcry among the elder generation in the household, that the younger generation has not studied the works of the Truth. This magazine is proof that they have not the knowledge of those important truths which are revealed to us in the works of Brother Doctor Thomas and Brother Roberts and Brother C. C. Walker. They have adopted as their symbol on the front cover of their magazine "The sign of the Cross," which they say is the symbol of Christianity, the accepted symbol of the Christian Faith, while it is fully explained in "Eureka" that it is the symbol of apostasy and is "The mark of the Beast," a symbol of shame and degradation.

. . . They preach openly from the platform that Yahweh, is the God and Father of ALL. That seeing that Adam was "the son of God" that all are descendants of Adam, then all are Sons of God, and that all can address God as

"Our Father who art in Heaven." That God has mercy and compassion on all men and that Jesus did likewise during His ministry on earth. This is contrary to Bible Truth.

Worcs.

L.H.

I very much enjoyed the first issue as I feel it contained the practical and loving Christianity of which I personally feel very much in need.

I agree with the principles underlying the criticism of *Endeavour* in The Christadelphian, for it is essential to maintain truth as purely as we can, but I don't personally feel that *Endeavour* is either tending, or liable to do anything detrimental to the maintenance of truth. On the other hand, I feel that our community can benefit greatly from a more loving approach and a more spiritual attitude to our religion. We have to strike a balance, for we need both doctrine and practice, and I hope *Endeavour* will be able to continue to remind us of the practical application of Christ's gospel of love.

Warwicks.

M.L.

The Christian's First Responsibility

Alan Hayward

This article came to be written because the writer had no alternative.

It happened like this. A group of us were discussing the first issue of *Endeavour*, and lamenting its one-sided approach to Christianity. "Look at it like this," we said. "Supposing someone were to pick all the stories out of the gospels which describe Jesus as going about doing good, feeding the hungry and healing the sick, and print them as a pamphlet entitled 'Jesus Christ.' The resulting picture of Jesus would contain nothing that was untrue, and yet it would be completely lopsided. It would be thoroughly misleading, and in the hands of the immature it might do more harm than good. And if it continues to place its total emphasis on one aspect of practical Christianity, and to pass over the

most important 'good work' of all, *Endeavour*, too, is likely to mislead its readers."

"Well, why don't you *do* something, instead of just moaning about it," said a sister. "Go on, write an article to help restore the balance. The *Endeavour* Committee might be glad to have it."

And so here is an attempt to do as she said.

First and foremost, the true Christian must be a preacher.

Before any readers start to disagree, let us make clear just what is meant by "a preacher." A preacher is not someone who merely stands on a soapbox and spouts. A preacher is someone whose main ambition and work in life is to draw men to Christ and the salvation that lies in Him.

Preaching, in the sense just defined, is the very essence of the Christian life. Unless we are grieved that the masses of mankind are "strangers from the covenants of promise, without God and without hope in the world," we cannot claim to be Christ-like. Unless this knowledge moves us to wear ourselves out, trying to persuade a few folk to save themselves from this untoward generation, we are not following His example.

WHY CHRIST CAME

The One who commands "Follow Me" left us in no doubt as to the main object of His own life.

He never said "The purpose for which God sent me was to relieve human suffering." The doing of good works was tremendously important with Him. He said that it was a proof that He really was the Messiah (Matt. 11: 4). But for all that it was not the prime purpose of His existence.

He defined His main responsibility like this. "I am come that they might have life." "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore was I sent."

In other words, His main job was to save men from their sins. To do that He had both to tell men what to do, and to show them what to do. So He lived a life of loving service to all, and was quick to relieve suffering whenever it came His way (and come His way it very frequently did!).

But He never lost His sense of proportion. He always saw Himself as a Saviour who also helped those in trouble; not as a Helper who also saved sinners.

FOLLOWING HIS STEPS

Perhaps the best illustration of His sense of proportion is in the story of the man who came and spoke of his father's funeral. Jesus did not mention the aching hearts of those who had lost a loved one. Being bereaved is tragic; but Jesus thought only of a far more tragic fact—

that the mourners were walking along the road of sin and death. "Let the dead bury their dead," was His stern rebuke.

Would we have shared His feelings if we had been present on that occasion? Or would we have been shocked and thought Him callous?

Before attempting to answer that question, let us test ourselves by asking a related question. When you opened the first issue of Endeavour and saw the picture of a starving refugee child, what was your reaction? Did you think only of the tragedy that millions of people are homeless and hungry? Or did you think also of the much greater tragedy that thousands of millions are starving to *eternal* death, for want of the Bread of Life? The mind of Christ worked that way. Do ours?

NO EXCUSES

Human nature is absolutely brilliant at making excuses. We need to be on guard against it all the time. Especially dangerous is the temptation to think "I'm so busy doing A that I've hardly any time for B."

No doubt some people will be tempted to seize upon the call for preachers as an excuse for not being generous to the poor. Others will be tempted to use the need for works of love as an excuse to ease up on preaching. But the true disciple will avoid making any excuses, and get on with the job as hard as he can.

Let us be honest with ourselves. Most of us are not doing anything like as much preaching as we ought. When we look out of our bedroom windows at the smoking chimney pots around us, we know that nearly every one denotes a household of unredeemed people, themselves destined one day to vanish like smoke. We know, too, that Christ stopped at nothing in His efforts to turn such as them from death to life. *He* was prepared to die for them. What are *we* prepared to do for them?

Is it too much to suggest that the very minimum which a young disciple, unburdened by heavy ecclesial responsibilities, ought to devote to preaching is one evening a week throughout

the year, plus one week of his holidays? Or that the very least we ought to contribute towards preaching is a shilling in the pound of our income—a mere semi-tithe? Compared with Christ's contribution towards the salvation of mankind that is not asking a lot, is it?

Although special lectures do not make many converts nowadays, personal witness by sincere brethren and sisters is still as effective as ever. An evening a week spent talking the Truth to people we know, or have canvassed, works wonders. Don't let us say "I'm not cut out for that sort of thing." Spreading the gospel is like rock climbing or playing the piano: it comes naturally to hardly anyone, and only by perseverance and practice do most of us become any good at it.

And if we really do happen to lack the ability to tell people the good news by word of mouth, we can at least give out leaflets offering the magazine "Glad Tidings" or a correspondence course. This also has been proved an effective way to bring the Truth to people in the modern world, and a deaf mute can do it just as well as an Apollos.

THE WAY OF SALVATION

There is a tendency nowadays to say "We ought to preach Christ, not Christadelphianism." This is a dangerous saying. There is a certain amount of truth in it, but there is a good deal of untruth latent in it, too.

Let us never forget that it is the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation. Not a

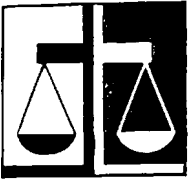
man's works, however loving he may be, but only the gospel can save him. And not a so-called gospel shorn of the Apostles' doctrine, nor a mere sentimental attachment to the name of Christ, but only "THE gospel (the Greek is emphatic), "THE faith once for all delivered unto the saints." Any other gospel, says Paul, brings a curse (Gal. 1: 9).

So in order to bring men to Christ, we must bring the Truth to men. When we preach the Truth we are not just propounding a set of doctrines—we are urging men to embrace the only way of salvation.

There is no room for arrogance here. We must not say that "you cannot possibly be saved unless you become a Christadelphian." Only God knows just how much Truth He demands in a man. If He sees fit to forgive certain doctrinal errors in certain individuals, so be it. But it is not for us to presume on God's mercy. We cannot go by what we may think He might possibly choose to do. We can only work by the general principle that He has laid down: that we must "preach THE gospel," whereby "he that believeth (it) and is immersed (into it) shall be saved."

Christ deliberately went to an agonising death so that a way of life might be opened up. We have been allowed to find that way of life. How can we ever thank Him enough? We cannot. But at least we can show Him that we appreciate this unspeakable gift, by making it our great aim in life to share it with as many as we possibly can.

We would be glad to receive articles and letters discussing the question: *Modern Preaching: New Methods for New Situations?*



The Supremacy of Good

S. R. Gibbons

*"He died that we might be forgiven
He died to make us good . . ."*

Good because God is good, and because the sins of mankind preclude us from divine fellowship; good because we need to be good if we are to survive into an age when goodness and love will be universal. The principle of goodness runs unmistakably through the life of Christ, it illumines His every word and shines forth in every deed. "Good master," said a certain ruler to Him, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Christ's answer probes his understanding and turns back on the questioner what had perhaps been a patronising or sarcastic way of address: "Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is, God." The answer implies an identity of goodness as between Jesus and His Father; as far as this attribute is concerned they are one in the most real sense—God is fully and completely manifested in His Son.

The goodness of Jesus is then the goodness of God. It marks Him out as a character of compelling and unique beauty. Unfortunately, it also made Him the target of suspicion and jealousy, and aroused against Him the bitter enmity which culminated in Calvary. And strangely enough it was here that the goodness of God triumphed utterly over the self-deception, ill-will and plain badness of men.

The goodness of Jesus is also the ideal and pattern for His followers. To succeed in goodness

as He succeeded is beyond them, but with such an example before them they have the inspiration to make real progress, to bring divine goodness to bear in their own lives and those of others. The goodness of Christ is something to be sought diligently by the individual, and is to be the hallmark of the Christian community. God is good; His Son is good; and His servants are to strive after the same goodness: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

In Jesus then we see something transcendent, superlatively different from ourselves. The surest guarantee that the wonderful figure of the gospels is not an invention or a figment of the imagination is that human inventiveness with all its ingenuity, and human imagination, no matter how inspired, could never produce such a character as this. In His singleness of mind, in the depth of His love, in the incisive independence of His judgments and in the reality of His compassion He is beyond all other human experience—without precedent or rival.

It has always been a human failing to lose balance and proportion in the emphasis we place on the various aspects of life. Thus Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees for their insistence on the minutiae of the law while omitting "weightier matters"—judgment, mercy and faith. They were like the man who would carefully filter out from

the wine the tiny insect but ignore the much more injurious "camel." Only Jesus truly puts "first things first," setting divine goodness and love in its prime place in life, as He goes about preaching and living the kingdom of God on earth.

Jesus' attitude to petty restriction and pointless tradition is perhaps one of the most refreshing things in the gospels. His challenge to prejudice and hypocrisy, little-mindedness and bumbledom generally is completely open and straightforward. There is no attempt to "cover up" or conciliate, no appeasement, no effort (so typical of most of us) to have the best of both worlds. When His disciples break the Sabbath by plucking the ears of corn He answers the challenge of ultra-conservatism and reaction by referring with approval to the tremendous outrage on sacred law committed by David when he and his men violated the Holy Place itself and ate the consecrated loaves. Ostensibly a most reprehensible affair: yet Jesus plainly implies that here was a triumph of commonsense and reason over indiscriminate observance. Evil, actual starvation, threatened David; and good, the alleviation of severe hunger, resulted from the action. Jesus enunciates a principle staggering in its implications for the Jewry of His day, and no doubt for us, too: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Sabbath law was meant to help, not hinder, and too rigid an attitude could nullify the positive good which Sabbath observance was intended to induce. The Lord plainly indicates that even sacred law can be applied unimaginatively and irrationally, and that the overriding consideration is that positive good should result.

The issue is presented in even clearer terms in Mark 3:1-6. Jesus is in the synagogue on the Sabbath and encounters the man with one hand withered. Also present were those whose minds were blinded with small things, the fact of the Sabbath obscuring the greater fact of the man's need. There was the need, the positive good, waiting for a healer with the balance and discernment of Christ; and set against it was the ancient divine law of the Sabbath which the Pharisees present no doubt intended should be observed to the letter, whatever the circumstances. It was a pregnant and vital moment as tradition,

indifference and red tape, hitherto all-powerful, met divine love and goodness in the wonderful person of Christ. There could be no doubt as to the result. "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" In these words Jesus presents the issue in most brutally clear terms.

The Sabbath, far from being the dead and deadening thing Jewish traditionalism would make it—a monument to a short-sighted and inactive faith—should of all days be the most appropriate for doing good. Forced thus to face the practical implications of their attitude His opponents are silent. They would preserve their cherished ideas—but leave the man uncured; Jesus, on the other hand, acts fearlessly and positively, and the withered hand is restored.

It is surely pertinent to ask ourselves whether we today may not sometimes find ourselves faced with a similar choice, to do the good, or not to do it, according to whether we are prepared to cast away our cherished prejudices, or whether we shall insist on exalting our pet theories into rigid principles. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The great danger is that we may perhaps be so blinded by the conventional notions of our community that we may fail to question them or test them by the radical example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christianity is surely the most revolutionary faith ever preached: we must not let its tremendous impact and freshness be lost or stultified through our failure to look to the gospel records themselves in their stark, challenging simplicity rather than to our own traditions and conventions, which need constant reappraisal in the light of Bible study.

We have occasionally heard proffered as an excuse for inaction the idea that we must "not let our left hand know what our right hand doeth." It seems an extraordinary perversion of Christian teaching that one commandment should be so interpreted as to nullify another. Jesus is speaking of almsgiving in Matthew 6:3, and certainly assumes that the alms will in fact be given. The qualification that the giving shall in no way be ostentatious or self-righteous, as that of hypocrites, does not absolve the Jew from the duty to give, and it should not be used to absolve the modern

follower of Jesus from the duty to love, and to do good unto all men. Let positive good be the guide and motive as with Christ Himself, and we shall already be observing the spirit of Matt. 6: 3.

There are of course numerous occasions when Jesus commends to us this same principle that good is the prime concern and the standard of Christian judgment. In Matt. 7: 19-20, concerning true and false teachers, Jesus indicates that a profession of faith must be followed by "good fruit," and that if the fruit is lacking the profession is suspect. In Matt. 12: 33 the same principle is invoked when answering those who attributed His works of goodness and love to the power of Beelzebub; in Luke 13: 6-8 it is made the occasion of the parable of the barren fig-tree, and applied perhaps specifically to Jewry. It is the theme of Jesus' answer to the queries of John Baptist in Matt. 11: 4-5; and indeed it is implicit in John's own words of warning in Matt. 3: 10.

Perhaps most obviously of all it is central to the well-known but perhaps not-so-well-heeded parable of the Good Samaritan, with its plain and powerful teaching that we are not to let any human barrier whatever prevent us from shedding abroad the love and the goodness of God. And it ought to be said also that perhaps one of the

barriers from which our community suffers most is that of the "Do good by all means as individuals but don't organise it" type of argument which is so often and so misguidedly repeated among us—as though something which has God's blessing when performed individually loses it when the individuals band together and appoint a secretary. Matters of principle, particularly of divine principle, do not change when larger numbers are involved. It could well be said that the New Testament example of preaching the gospel (word-of-mouth preaching, that it) is on a severely individual basis. And yet we organise our preaching activities not only on an ecclesial but also occasionally on a national basis, and rightly. Why not apply the same reasonable extension of principle to our Christian good works, and make our Christianity more effective by organising, where necessary, to the best of our ability?

Jesus went about doing good, and the good in His life was surely not divisible into two watertight sections — "preaching the gospel" and "good works." The division is entirely artificial. Both are vital parts, and interdependent parts, of the life in Christ, and neither can exist without the other. Both are manifestations of that supreme, prime good—the goodness of God, on which we all depend.

A PRAYER

Since we strain at gnats and swallow camels, give us a new standard of values and the ability to know a trifle when we see it and deal with it as such.

Peter Marshall

*Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, Here I am.
If you take away from the midst of the yoke,
the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
if you pour yourself out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as the noon-day.*

(Isaiah 58: 6-10, Revised Standard Version).

THE SON OF MAN IS COME TO SEEK . . .

Sheila Harris

A certain famous writer has described how the truly righteous man, having reached the vision of perfect and unchanging goodness and beauty, although his one delight would be to stay there for ever, yet is constrained by his compassion for humanity to descend into the dark cave of human experience to draw others to the light. This was indeed the glory of the life of our Lord, who from the mount of transfiguration descended to the suffering of the cross because of His love for God and for man. We see Him constantly associating with the afflicted, the rejected, the lonely and the diseased, so that they might be lifted from that slough of despond to the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

We have been called to share the life of Christ, to fellowship His sufferings, to carry the cross after Him and to bear in our body the marks

of the Lord Jesus. As we have gone round preaching, no doubt in zeal and enthusiasm for the Lord, we have often surely met with the brusque rejection, the blunt refusal of our offer or a completely negative "No, thank you"—and we have returned to recount only the interesting conversation with one who was already an enthusiastic member of a Church: and the others have been forgotten.

So many people in this busy world are forgotten, neglected, unwanted, lonely. So many shut themselves in a shabby room or empty house, suspicious of every knock at the door, perhaps hardened, or embittered by the fact that the world has seemed to close its eyes upon them. An old lady aged 86 wrote the following a few days ago:

"I am a very lonely person being so very deaf, and have no relatives anywhere near me. I am sometimes a month and do not have a visitor. I lost my husband just 16 months ago."

Jesus said "the poor always ye will have with you." As we look round our modern cities with their outward affluence and prosperity, we may doubt this. But "the Son of Man is come to seek." In the time of Jesus they seemed to come flocking to Him, and yet we do not know how many He singled out like Zacchaeus, whom He noticed in spite of the crowds around Him. It would be a wonderful thing if people flocked



to us because of our Christian witness, but more often it takes time and patience and love and help and sympathy to show whose we are, and whom we serve. Like our Master, we must seek prayerfully for the souls in need whom it may be our joy to help.

But how do we seek? The problems are the means of access and the winning of confidence. A lonely, neglected person views a stranger with suspicion and our well-meant efforts may meet with a rebuff. Moreover, there is the difficulty of finding them at all, so often do they hide away in their shabby rooms.

In every town there is an Old People's Welfare service, often associated with a Council of Social Service. It is their task to know of the needy, lonely people: some of the most valuable of their work is done by visitors who offer to take a friendly interest in some old person. This is indeed the easiest way of discovering those in need and gives a means of access which will allay the fears and suspicions of the old person completely.

And so the door has been opened. How do we go in? In the gospels we see Jesus in contact with many different people, and yet no two did He treat alike. If we look there for definitions of behaviour, they defy description—His rebukes to the Pharisees, His gentleness to sinners, His challenges, His severity, His compassion. They are all marked by one unifying feature, His unerring judgment of the person before Him. How harsh His words to the Syro-Phoenician woman seem until by her answer we realise that this was just the right way to treat her. Jesus' disciples need no less discernment in their dealings with people—a clarity of vision which comes from spiritual refinement. Yet if

our vision is dim and our judgment deficient, a heart of compassion will win through where all else fails. We shall see what the need is—the shopping, the washing-up, the clean curtains, but above all perhaps the sympathetic ear to listen to the tales, the woes, the aches and the pains — and slowly, quietly, patiently to lift the other into a new world of hope and faith.

“And Jesus, seeing the multitudes, had compassion on them.” If our giving of time or interest, a hot dinner or a ride in the country, flows from a spirit of Christian love, it must bring Christ nearer to both giver and receiver. In the first century it was this love which challenged the pagan world and drew men to Christ. As the door closes after our visit (and above all let them be regular and reliable) perhaps something may remain to cheer the lonely hours —some warmth, some happiness, something of the spirit of Christ.

Loneliness can be a frightening and frustrating experience, affording no outlet for fear, joy, goodness or grief: the hours of darkness can appal with their emptiness. But to the Christian these are indispensable moments of communion with God in which we can attune ourselves to His voice. So perhaps our visits may enrich even the lonely hours of our friends, giving new hope and grace. And as we go to give, may we be humble enough to learn that the still, small voice of God which too often is drowned by the hubbub of our world can echo in tones of especial comfort to the lonely, so that the darkness may be dazzled by the radiance of divine grace.

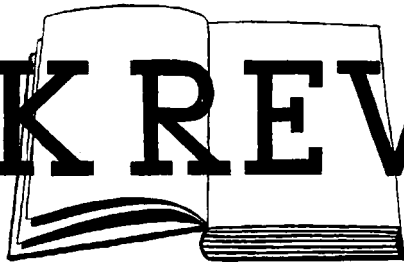
He came “to bind up the broken-hearted,” “to give beauty for ashes,” “the oil of joy for mourning.” God cares. Do we?

Will all who are interested in further opportunities for service, or who experience practical difficulties in carrying it out, write to the Endeavour Committee, 20 Saunby Close, Arnold, Notts.

A PRAYER

O God our Father, who is in every place, and from whose love nothing can separate us. You have given us everything, and have withheld nothing from us: help us to give everything to you, and to withhold nothing. Be with all who feel alone, who do not know what a friend they can have in Jesus. Make their extremity your opportunity. Break in upon them with your presence, break in upon us, and by a touch which has still its ancient power, heal us all.

BOOK REVIEW



SECTS AND SOCIETY

G. G. McHaffie

Sects and Society. Bryan R. Wilson.
Heinemann, 35/-.

This book is a review of three British religious groups: Christian Science, Elim and Christadelphians. It has been widely reviewed in the press. These reviews have, in general, been rather sketchy, suggesting hurried reading, and have done little more than pick out a few outstanding points for comment. The book deserves more than this. Readers accustomed to the usual run-of-the-mill comments by other religious bodies on our community will be agreeably taken by the fairness of the assessment which Dr. Wilson gives to our aims and attitudes. He writes as a sociologist and for his purpose has no interest in caricature which ruins so many other attempts to write us up—or down.

At the outset it might be worthwhile to state what we consider the legitimate aims of the sociologist are in the field of religion. The sociologist is interested in the way people act in organised groups and identifiable groups at large, but much work has also been carried out among religious groups. One of the conclusions which has arisen as a result of this study is that sects begin as a movement of protest against prevailing standards in society and in orthodox religion, but through subsequent generations develop into denominations which lose their opposition to prevailing society and reach a state of acceptance in

it. As a result of his study, Dr. Wilson concludes that this process is "... by no means automatic for all minority religious movements. . ." (page 338).

The sociologist can be said to have much interesting and useful comment to make on the structure and organisation of a community, and his analysis of the forces which lead to schism can be very penetrating. If, however, the sociologist deliberates on the truth or otherwise of a doctrine based solely on his sociological findings, then he is stepping outwith his legitimate sphere.

For example, he may show that the doctrine of the second advent flourishes most among the poor (the "socially deprived") and this may well be true. If, however, he then concluded that poverty was the origin of the doctrine we would be at liberty, based on other considerations, to say that his conclusion was merely an opinion. On the other hand, I think that most would be disposed to feel that when Dr. Wilson says that the Elim group "... offers very obvious analogies with group psychotherapy, in which the minister is leader; and the intensity of the services—with spontaneous testimonies (often with every show of deep emotional involvement)—is a near natural approach to the situation offered in psychodrama" (page 346), he is giving more than a social psychologist's opinion: he is offering a searching explanation of the satisfaction claimed by the participants.

ORGANISATION

Dr. Wilson devotes a chapter to the examination of the way in which our activities are organised. He says correctly, "Christadelphian teaching as such has no organisational implications except perhaps subscription to the New Testament principles of fellowship with other believers" (page 267). "Organisation as such is unimportant to the Christadelphians and the desire is to prevent its obtrusion into the vital matters of the edification of the saints and the publication of the good news to the strangers" (page 268). "The Christadelphian ecclesias are entirely independent and autonomous. . ." (page 273). A sociologist would be interested to see how these ideals work out in practice, especially in view of the normal tendency of communities towards increasing centralisation in the direction of their affairs. Dr. Wilson sums what has happened in a paragraph. "In spite of the strength of the opposition among Christadelphians to the development of any centralised authority, the years have seen the introduction of different organisational structures for various purposes. Delegates and committees have emerged . . . and seek to organise the work of the movement in particular directions more effectively than it could be done at ecclesial level. Such developments have not always been entirely welcomed. . ." (page 277). As an example of such organisations, "Local ecclesias might also seek to evangelise neighbouring districts. But over time this work fell more and more to the Auxiliary Lecturing Society which with its regional branches became increasingly recognised as the evangelising agency of the movement" (page 277).

For our own part we may find it necessary to consider whether opposition to this tendency is justified. The principle of ecclesial autonomy is clearly a good one when matters of dispute are involved. The brethren on the spot are in the best position to judge. But when work has to be done or national problems to be solved, there seems sound sense in ceasing to regard the church as a geographically separated series of units but as one body. From this point of view organisations covering a wide area and acting on such matters as preaching, military service and reunion promote their purpose most efficiently.

Much the same point crops up again under the next heading.

SCHISMATICS

This topic could hardly be evaded. Dr. Wilson says, "The open Bible, whilst making every man his own arbiter of doctrine, makes him resentful of the decisions of others. In such communities government is brittle and order difficult to preserve" (page 249). This is doubtless true, though the resentment is no proper part of the Christian's make-up. For most of us with our sights set on the specific issue in a dispute it may be difficult to take an impartial view, but the following quotation will bring out an aspect or two which many have long suspected. "... The important divisions have all been led by men who were counted among the movement's elite. . . This in itself may illustrate the factor of ambition and desire for power as an important, perhaps often crucial, element in sect divisions. . . Clashes of personality, perhaps specifically concerned with the ambition to lead, appear to have been at the basis of most schism in Christadelphianism, and not a differential desire to compromise with the world" (pages 340 and 341). Dr. Wilson considers that the organisation of our community has contributed to this schismatic tendency. "Schism does appear to be inversely correlated to centralisation" (page 341). "A central authority might well have prevented the gradual multiplication of differences and the recrudescence of schismatic development" (page 275).

A parallel example would, I suppose, be found in the Jehovah's Witnesses' organisation, which is highly organised from one centre. This body is comparatively free from schism. Within its own lights the central authority seems to be imaginative, adaptable and enterprising in its leadership. As a result we see one of the best propaganda machines in the protestant world. For all this advantage, however, conversation with a Jehovah's Witness usually reveals a slavish adherence to a party line and a lamentable lack of either ability or desire to be drawn on matters outwith the scope of the material supplied from the centre. This is too high a price to pay. On the other hand a forum of some standing seems desirable to act as a means of resolving difficulties

and so to avoid the situation where a question is solved according to the will of he who can dominate by generating the most heat. Though speaking ecclesially, Bro. Thomas laid down guiding principles for such a group "... choose a council of the wisest men among you and let them be your Witenagemote. Consult privately with them upon all things you desire to ventilate and do not trouble the congregation in its private meetings" (*Ambassador*, May 1866, page 93, 94).

There is one aspect of this question which is outside the scope of sociology and concerns rather Christian conduct. At present we have the large body of the Central Fellowship with a number of small schismatic groups. To the uninitiated the differences between the groups and the Central Fellowship, to say the least of it, appear thin. In order to keep conviction burning in its ranks the splinter group's magazine space (if it has one) may be devoted to a recital of the faults of the rival groups. What in other spheres would be described as gossip and tale-bearing becomes a necessary virtue to keep the group's spirit alive. Dr. Wilson makes an interesting comment on this. "The charge of false doctrine, or, almost as bad, associating with those who hold false doctrine, has been frequent; the charge of un-Christlike behaviour has often followed, and generally the charge of associating with the world, and engaging in worldly pursuits. This last, however, has not been invoked as a cause of schism, it has come as a retrospective rationalisation of an existing situation, just as sodomy was added to heresy as a charge in the Middle Ages" (page 341).

This practice sets a premium on the censorious, suspicious, prying, spiritually proud and unfeeling type of character, whose moral faults far outweigh the real or imaginary intellectual faults against which the splinter group protests. Bro. Thomas, in the letter already quoted, likens this attitude to a demon and says, "It set up the inquisition and is essentially and always inquisitorial and incessantly prying into matters beyond its jurisdiction. It professes great zeal for the purity of the church and would purge out everything which offends its sensitive imagination. But is it not a good thing to have a church

without tares, without a black sheep or a spotted heifer? Yea, verily, it is an excellent thing. But, then, it is a thing the Holy Spirit has never yet developed; and cannot now be developed by any human judiciary in the administration of spiritual affairs." It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the breakaways have not been able to live at peace with themselves, but have disintegrated into fragments, with their gospel witness reduced to ineffectiveness through preoccupation with questions and strifes. All this, too, while professing that the cause of the breakaway was the maintenance of the truth.

THE EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE

"Secular education is inevitably an issue of challenge for the exclusive sect . . . in the early days Christadelphians tended to regard all departments of human knowledge with suspicion" (page 249). On the following page there is a brief quotation from Bro. Frank Jannaway, "University training unfits a man for the work of expounding the Bible." To the onlooker this suspicion and condemnation will suggest a fear that beliefs held are not so securely based that they can stand informed inspection. Through the ages entrenched religious traditions have feared the work of the scholar, but tirades against learning as such miss the point. It should be obvious that to make a sound judgment, the more facts we have at our disposal the better. To shut our eyes to whole areas of evidence is no way to defend truth. The accumulation of knowledge is no challenge so long as we seek to use it in praise of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Learning becomes a dangerous thing, only when it is harnessed to some dogmatic presupposition such as Marxian dialectics in the Communist universities. Christians are also capable of dogmatic presuppositions. We are credited by Dr. Wilson with moving somewhat. "Today, Christadelphians generally have a much relaxed attitude towards education. . ." (page 290).

One further topic under this head is worth reflection. "The education which is favoured tends to be scientific rather than liberal" (page 290). The value of this observation would, I think, have to be examined against the general background of the decline of the arts which is

characteristic of our civilisation. Personal aptitudes must also be considered. When we consider the background to Bro. Thomas' writings, the voluminous quotations from ancient writings, Early Fathers, historians, and the repeated references to the Hebrew and Greek tongues, we would have expected to see a more frequent choice and encouragement of vocational training in the arts, which would have been carried over into the defence of our theological position.

HOSTILITY TO TEMPORAL POWERS

It was earlier pointed out that one of the tendencies which the sociologist looks for in the life of a sect is movement towards denominationalism. This is shown by loss of opposition to contemporary society. In writing of the period of the negotiations with the Government over conscientious objection, Dr. Wilson says, "Since the movement was now treating with the state for special privileges the hostility to temporal powers which so marked the writings of Dr. Thomas disappeared and was replaced by a greater emphasis on 'rendering to Caesar'" (page 264). This has a good and a bad side to it. If it marks a desire to be accurate in our judgment about the state, well. But if it marks a complete avoidance of any criticism at all under the plea of not interfering in political deliberations, then we are choosing a soft option and evading our plain duty as witnesses for Christ against the evils perpetrated in our land (Ezek. 9: 4).

THE ROLE OF THE SECT

I think it would be fair to say that the assumption which underlines Dr. Wilson's book is that sects represent an inferior grouping within an otherwise maturer society. We may concede straightaway that sects often are the refuge of all sorts of escapees from the hard world, those

who want to escape into fantasy, those with a grudge against people, the "culturally deprived," those who want to be big fish in a little pond and so on. But in a sick society (and which society is not sick?) there is a need for a righteous protest against the false assumptions, secular, religious and moral, of the age. The larger denominations may cradle some valuable protests, but in the main they are compromised by their socially accepted status and caught up in the wrong tide of affairs.

Jesus clearly regarded His Church as having the role of a sect, being Himself an outcast from society. "If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own; but because you do not belong to the world, because I have chosen you out of the world, for that reason the world hates you" (John 15: 19, N.E.B.). To fulfil its role, however, the attention of the sect must be devoted to its main object of revealing Christ to men. Dr. Wilson has a powerful comment about our position during the First World War, "To all appearances the experience of adversity had had a stimulating effect on the brotherhood: the rebellious tendency of the movement could be externalised in such circumstances and inner contention forgotten" (page 258).

This well sums up our need today—stimulation and externalisation. But how can we rise to this?

Firstly, there must be a recognition that the problems of the space age are not necessarily solved by the answers given to the problems which arose in the day of the gas mantle. Secondly, I think, by learning from the mistakes of the past and abandoning destructive contention. Let problems be discussed with cool heads and unprejudiced minds, and have done with the hurling of imprecations and emotionally loaded catch phrases against those who differ from us.

A PRAYER

We confess, our Father, that we know we need Thee, yet our swelled heads and our stubborn wills keep us trying to do without Thee. Forgive us for making so many mountains out of molehills and for exaggerating both our own importance and the problems that confront us.

Peter Marshall

Endeavour

The Endeavour Committee welcomes the addition to its number of Wilfred G. Lambert and George G. McHaffie.

The Committee is always pleased to receive manuscripts, and all will be acknowledged. A generous amount of space will be given to the expression of views in the correspondence columns.

Views expressed in Endeavour are not necessarily those of the Endeavour Committee, but may be published because they make a valuable contribution to discussion.

Correspondence about opportunities for service should be sent to the Endeavour Committee, Dove Cottage, 20 Saunby Close, Arnold, Notts. Please address all other editorial correspondence and manuscripts, until further notice, to the Endeavour Committee, Moray Lodge, 176 Granton Road, Edinburgh, 5, and business communications to the Endeavour Committee, 18 Corrie Croft, Birmingham, 26, making all remittances payable to "Endeavour."

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