

The

Endeavour

Magazine

A CHRISTADELPHIAN REVIEW

TWO SHILLINGS

A NEW LOOK

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WHY ENDEAVOUR?

No. 21

Autumn 1966

AND so we turn to a new chapter in our history. And we describe ourselves as a "Christadelphian Review". Why a review and a review of what?

The apostle Paul wrote of the man who looked at himself in a mirror and then went away, immediately forgetting what kind of person he was. Both as a community and as individuals we are apt to become like that man. We do not see ourselves with a critical and discerning eye. Yet nothing could be more necessary. If we want to be like Christ then we must see ourselves objectively and compare ourselves with His image.

If when we look back over the years we can see nothing wrong in some of the ways in which we once acted, nothing wrong in some of the viewpoints we once held, if we are ashamed of nothing and wholly satisfied, then we are wilting personalities creating a wilting community. Smugness is a disastrous characteristic.

As Christadelphians we may have been too smug. Has not "We are the people" been our cry? Perhaps this explains why objection has been raised because "Endeavour" has tried to review, or look again, at our interpretations and at our way of life. But we consider it essential that we should continue to try, even harder than before, to review ourselves. And it is our way of life which is the measuring rod by which our depth of understanding can be assessed.

Recently we were helping the elderly church-going relatives of a late brother to sort out his affairs. When we came to say good-bye and our "pleased to meet you's" we were astonished that they added, "We thought you would be so stiff. We didn't think you would laugh". What an impression they must once have received of our community! Perhaps it is because a younger generation has rebelled against the stiffness of former days that so much empty-headed silliness has smitten our community. Perhaps our

(Please turn to back page)

The Letter of Paul to the Romans

by Ralph Lovelock

Part one — The Background

BEHIND THE remorseless progression of cold logic and the deep spiritual insight which together characterise the epistle of Paul to Rome lies a lifetime of personal crises and a series of well-laid plans, destined to be frustrated. When Ananias expostulated to God that Saul was an open enemy of Jesus, he was told "This man is my chosen instrument to bring my name before the nations and their kings, and before the people of Israel. I myself will show him all that he must go through for my name's sake." It was this dual ministry to both Jew and Gentile which was to bring so much mental anguish into his life, and we have a revealing glimpse of this in his letter (Acts 9:1-2): "I am speaking the truth as a Christian and my own conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, assures me it is no lie: in my heart there is great grief and unceasing sorrow. For I could even pray to be outlawed from Christ himself for the sake of my brothers, my natural kinsfolk." Before considering the letter itself, it will be helpful to look at the series of ecclesial crises out of which it arose, and which caused Paul in his letter to Corinth to close a list of physical sufferings with the significant words: "Apart from these external

things, there is the responsibility that weighs on me every day, my anxious concern for all our congregations. If anyone is weak, do I not share his weakness? If anyone is made to stumble, does my heart not blaze with indignation?" (II Cor. 11:28-29).

The Teaching of Jesus

It may seem strange that Jewish Christians, who had accepted unhesitatingly the complete authority of Jesus, should still cling so tenaciously to the Law of Moses. The difficulty with which they were faced lies in the teaching of Jesus Himself. It was not a choice between the things of man and those of God. The Law of Moses was itself the Word of God, and was a true expression of the will of God concerning those who would seek covenant relationship with Him. In the days of the ministry there were those who accused Jesus of setting the Law on one side, and thus denigrating the inspired expression of the will of God.

The Jew had been a persecuted and despised remnant for many years, and the natural retort to this was to despise Gentile culture, and jealously to value the Law as a supreme blessing which made the Jew, alone of all mankind, of any value in the sight of God. The Christian teaching that

all races were now to be equally acceptable to God, and were to live together as members of His family, evoked a violent reaction from the Jew, but was itself firmly based upon the teaching of Jesus. The rabbinic teaching that God Himself spent two hours every morning studying the Law is an illustration of the extreme expression of this very human reaction.

The ministry of Jesus was always directed primarily to the Jew. The early charge to the apostles, "Do not take the road to Gentile lands, and do not enter any Samaritan town; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," proves that the possibility of an extended mission was in the mind of Jesus, but was firmly rejected at that time. Similarly at a much later date, we have the words of Jesus to the Canaanite suppliant, "I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to them alone," which amply confirm this restriction of His personal ministry.

The final granting of the Canaanite woman's request proves, however, that it was not the unacceptability of the Gentile which dictated this present restriction but rather the practical opportunities of the moment. That the outcome of His ministry was to have wider implications is shown by His words: "But there are other sheep of mine, not belonging to this fold, whom I must bring in; and they too will listen to my voice. There will then be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16). When Jesus commented on a faith in the Roman which was greater than that which he had found anywhere in Jewry, he added, "Many, I tell you, will come from east and west to feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven. But those who were born to the kingdom will be driven out into the dark."

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This last passage tells us more than an anticipated widening of the gospel call: it foresees a rejection of the gospel by the Jews, and a consequent exclusion of them from its blessings. This is confirmed in a number of places, and is stated explicitly in the parable of the vineyard (Matt. 21:43): "Therefore, I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and given to a nation that yields the proper fruit." This was the type of teaching which gave rise to the charge against Jesus that He was denigrating the Law which was the distinguishing feature dividing Jew from Gentile.

The fullest recorded answer of Jesus to this charge against Him is recorded in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:17-20): "Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the Law and the prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to complete. I tell you this: so long as heaven and earth endure, not a letter, not a stroke, will disappear from the Law until all that must happen has happened. If any man therefore sets aside even the least of the Law's demands, and teaches others to do the same, he will have the lowest place in the kingdom of Heaven, whereas anyone who keeps the Law and teaches others so will stand high in the kingdom of Heaven. I tell you, unless you show yourselves far better men than the Pharisees and the doctors of the law, you can never enter the kingdom of Heaven."

This was a recorded teaching by Jesus which must have been used frequently by the opponents of Gentile inclusion. They could plead that even if Israel were to be rejected, and Gentiles were to be drawn into the fold, it must be on the basis of the Law; that they must become full proselytes and obey every least demand of the Law, exceeding even the observance of the Pharisee, if they were to enter into the kingdom of Heaven. It would have been on the basis of this inspired Word that we read (Acts 15:1): "Now certain persons who had come down from Judaea began to teach the brotherhood that those who were not circumcised in accordance with Mosaic practice could not be saved." These were obviously zealous members of the Church in Jerusalem, because James describes them as "some of our number," and in another place Paul describes the "advocates of circumcision" as certain persons who "came from James."

The way in which Jesus demanded a fulfilment of the Law which exceeded that of the Pharisee is brought out strongly in other sections of the Sermon on the Mount. The prohibition of murder was only partly obeyed while the hands were restrained but the heart allowed to hate and desire the death of another. The complete fulfilment involved the abolition of hate from the mind, and, if this were to be accomplished, there was no longer need for a physical restraint upon the act. So also, if lust be banished, there remains no longer need for restraint against adultery. An active love for all men, even for our enemies, which seeks their welfare, because "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." Towards the end Jesus explicitly states that this is the fulfilling which He means, "Always treat others as you would like them to treat you: that is the Law and the prophets."

In a later place (Matt. 22:40) Jesus expands this a little by including the love of God along with, and preceding, the love of neighbour. "Everything in the Law and the prophets hangs on these two commandments." This is the element in the teaching of Jesus which Paul took up when he wrote on this subject to those first troubled by the messengers from Jerusalem (Gal. 5:14): "For the whole law can be summed up in a single commandment: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'" When this earlier epistle came to be expanded into the more formal one to Rome, the point was expressed thus (Rom. 13:8-10): "He who loves his neighbour has satisfied every claim of the Law. For the commandments 'Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet,' and any other commandment there may be, are all summed up in one rule, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Love cannot wrong a neighbour; therefore the whole Law is summed up in love."

Finally, we may note two more sayings of Jesus which indicate that He intended to inaugurate a new era in which the spirit of the Law should become binding, and render unnecessary its letter. One is recorded by Luke (16:16-17), "Until John, it was the Law and the prophets: since then, there is the good news of the kingdom of God, and everyone forces

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his way in. It is easier for heaven and earth to come to an end than for one dot or stroke of the Law to lose its force." The other arose out of the question concerning acceptable worship posed by the woman from Sychar (John 4:19-26): "The time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem . . . the time approaches, indeed it is already here, when those who are real worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

The New Temple

At the beginning of His ministry Jesus uttered the cryptic saying recorded by John (2:19): "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again." The Jews understood Him to speak of the literal building in which He stood, but John says that Jesus spoke of His body as a temple. This saying was remembered by enemies as well as friends, and was brought up at His trial; point was given to it by the fact that Jesus, like Joseph, was a builder by trade, and it was possible to take this as a grandiloquent boast. This is the idea which Paul takes up in several of his epistles, that the individual believers are living temples, within which God dwells through His Spirit. Before Paul had become a believer, however, it was Stephen who shocked the orthodox in Jewry by realising and proclaiming this teaching of Jesus, and it was at his death that Paul had, for the first time, come face to face with the claim.

(Continued on page 9)

THE FOSSILS — Part two of an article describing some of the prehistoric stages of God's creation

(End of the Palaeozoic and the Mesozoic Eras)

IN THE last issue we examined a period of some 250 million years culminating in the Devonian period.¹ During this enormous time invertebrates, trilobites and brachiopods and later cephalopods and corals dominated the scene of life. Prior to the Devonian, life was entirely in the sea, but during this period evidence of life on land was found for the first time; plants such as ferns, and among the invertebrate animals, millipedes, spiders and wood lice were the most common.

To avoid the tedium of a detailed examination of stratum upon stratum we propose to take a more general look at the subsequent periods from the Devonian to the present time —eras more interesting to most of us because of the presence of a great variety of vertebrate (i.e., back-boned) animals. We propose to examine the major groups of vertebrates, fish, amphibia, birds and mammals or in Biblical terms the fifth, and first half of the sixth, day.

First, however, let us look at the earth itself. Following the Devonian, the Carboniferous and Permian periods were periods of renewed earth movements with the rise of mountains and much volcanic activity reaching a climax in Permian times. In the Carboniferous period, although hot desert conditions were widespread, in some regions conditions were warm and moist supporting a dense vegetation from which coal was formed. Continuous seams of coal today represent the actual sites of Carboniferous forest swamps, and the size of many of these swamps was considerable. Some Welsh coal-seams have been traced over an area of 1,000 square miles. The shale or underclay beneath a coal-seam often contains fossil roots of the trees which helped to form the coal. As

the trees and other vegetation in the forest died, their stems, branches and leaves fell into the swamp where they formed peat. An almost continuous rain of pollen contributed in no small measure to its formation. At varying intervals subsidence caused the forest to be flooded by fresh or salt water which largely killed off the plant life and formed a lake or lagoon in which sandy sediments were laid down. So long as subsidence continued, sediments went on accumulating, and pressure and chemical change gradually converted the buried peat into the familiar hard black coal.

In modern times the tropical vegetation on the slowly subsiding Ganges delta in India is forming beds of peat which, as a result of periodic flooding of the delta, alternate with sandy sediments deposited by flood waters.

In the Permian period which brings to an end the Palaeozoic era, most of the characteristic Palaeozoic fauna, including trilobites, died out. The formerly very abundant brachiopods however were still common.

FISH

Agnatha (Jawless)

The four classes of fish all have gills, skin with scales and fins. The earliest forms, as we have seen, appeared in the Upper Silurian. In the Devonian the common type was the heavily armoured group known as Ostracoderms. These, illustrated for example by *Cephalaspis*, had neither jaws, vertebrae nor true paired fins. Although they did not survive Devonian times similarly organised types exist today in the lamprey and hag fish.

Placodermi (Armour-plated)

The Placodermi differ from the above in having jaws and paired fins.

by John Weaving

These too were found in the Devonian but had died out by the end of the Palaeozoic era.

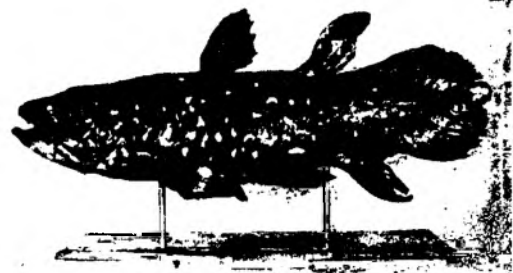
Chondrichthyes (Cartilaginous fishes)

The next group, which includes sharks, rays and rat fish, beautifully streamlined and capable of powerful swimming, again are found in the Devonian. All these fish lack true bone, their skeletons being cartilaginous. Many of these species of shark had died out by the end of the Permian but nevertheless they were remarkably like those living today.

Osteichthyes (Bony fishes)

Finally, the Osteichthyes. These are the familiar bony fish of our seas, streams and pools, differing from the Chondrichthyes in their bony skeleton, scales and in their possession of an air bladder. The oldest of the type are again found in the Devonian so it is not surprising that the Devonian is often referred to as the age of fishes.

A second division of the bony fish are the air-breathing types represented today by the lung fish. Though they cannot live permanently out of water they can survive droughts in muddy terrain.



(Fig. 1 Coelacanth)

¹ For chart of the geological epochs see *Endeavour Magazine* No. 12, Summer 1964, page 14.



(Fig. 2 Early Amphibian Fossil—Eryops)

A third division are the lobe-finned fishes. Once believed to have become extinct in the Mesozoic 20 million years ago, one type made its appearance again in 1938 when a *Coelacanth* was caught in the vicinity of Mozambique (Fig. 1).

Because of the similarity of the skeletons of these lobed-fish to some earlier amphibia some evolutionists consider them to be their ancestors; that is, they consider that the lobes have evolved into limbs.

AMPHIBIANS

Evolutionists consider the amphibians, represented today by the salamanders, newts, toads and frogs, are descended from the fish and ancestors of the reptiles. They are the earliest group of vertebrates capable of living on land although as their names imply they live partly in water and indeed need to return to the water for reproduction. It has to be admitted that the development of the frog from the fishlike tadpole makes the above inference a tempting hypothesis. However, it should be borne in mind that feasibility is no proof that this actually did happen.

The fossilised skeleton of one of the early amphibians from the Lower Carboniferous, *Eryops*, is shown in Fig. 2. Fossil evidence shows that this and similar amphibians were the dominant land vertebrates for about 100 million years, dying out in the Triassic.

REPTILES

The reptiles are differentiated from the amphibians in that they live entirely on land and whereas the amphibian's eggs are fertilised and develop in water, the reptile is reproduced from an egg fertilised within its mother's body. The embryo

develops and obtains nourishment from the large yolk of the egg, from which it hatches in a form capable of fending for itself.

The limbs of a reptile are suited for more rapid locomotion, for grasping, climbing and the like. These creatures dominated the earth for a further 100 million years spanning the Permian to the Cretaceous period. Fig. 3 is a reproduction of a scene from the Permian period showing the early reptiles *Dimetrodon* and *Edaphosaurus* characterised with their peculiar sails, the purpose of which can only be conjectured.

The Mesozoic era (Triassic, Jurassic, Cretaceous periods) extending some 150 million years to about 70 million years before our time was dominated by these reptiles, the champions of the "race" being the dinosaurs. They lived in streams, lakes and swamps, much as the crocodiles do today.

Brontosaurus, which lived at the end of the Jurassic, was the largest land animal of all times. It attained a length of 67 feet and an estimated weight of 30 tons! It was a vegetarian. *Tyrannosaurus*, on the other hand, was the largest flesh-eater; standing some 19 feet high, it had jaws lined with sabre-like teeth. It lived at the end of the Cretaceous period some 78 million years ago (Fig. 4). Also shown in this figure is *Triceratops*, another dinosaur protected by three horns and a bony frill covering its neck.

These huge creatures, after their domination of the earth, disappeared for ever.

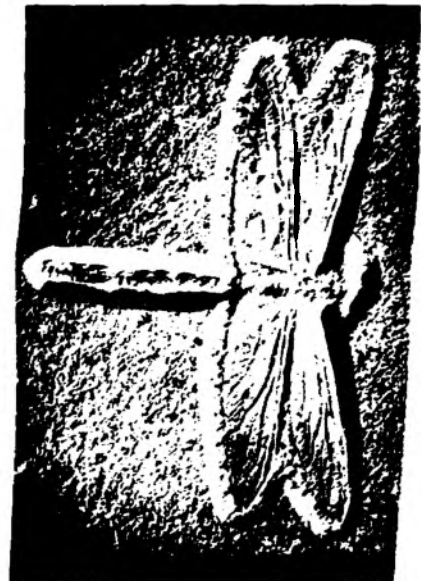
(Fig. 3 Permian Reptiles and Amphibians—*Dimetrodon* *Edaphosaurus* and *Casea*)



THE AIR

Insects

Before we consider what is, perhaps, the most interesting class of animals—the mammals, we should look at the animals of the third environment, the air, a part of the fifth day of creation. It has been remarked that from the fossil record the earliest aviators are the insects and for about 100 million years they had the air to themselves. The insects belong to the phylum Arthropoda and are the most abundant of all living groups. The first unquestionable abundance of winged fossil insect dates from the Upper Carboniferous. Cockroaches and dragonflies (Fig. 5) date from this period, some with a wing-span of 30 inches. Other groups resembled grasshoppers. At the end of this



(Fig. 5 Fossil Dragonfly)

period there is evidence of many modern groups, lace-wings, stoneflies, mayflies and beetles. It is interesting to note that an evolutionist remarks, "in one sense, in fact, the insects have not undergone any fundamental change since the appearance of Permian forms capable of complete metamorphosis."



(Fig. 4 Triceratops and Tyrannosaurus)

Flying Reptiles

The oldest known flying vertebrates come from the Jurassic, the pterosaurs, which were in fact flying reptiles. These had a wing structure similar to the bats,² membranous wings supported by their long forearms. They had a light skeleton, many of the bones hollow and air-filled, about the size of a sparrow. Some had toothed jaws and long tails (Fig. 6). However, in the next period, the Cretaceous, Pteranodon had a wing-span of 25 feet and long pointed "hammer heads." Their wing structure appears to be less efficient than birds and bats and the "flight" was probably supplemented by extended soaring and gliding. These shared the same fate as the contemporary giant reptiles and became extinct at the end of the Mesozoic.

Birds

Archaeopteryx is the earliest-known bird, that is, a vertebrate with wings and feathers. These birds had some reptilian features such as teeth, bones without air cavities and a jointed tail, but, like modern birds, were believed to be warm blooded and they also had feathers.

Fossilisation is less common with birds than fishes as they are easy prey to predators, but three almost complete skeletons have been found from this period. After these, there is a gap in the fossil record of some 50 million years when we have some flightless, toothed, diver-like sea birds

(Hesperornis) in the Cretaceous, and in contrast, Ichthyornis, a strong flier probably like a tern in appearance and habits.



(Fig. 6 Flying Reptile—Dimorphodon)

In the earliest period of the Cenozoic (recent life) era there were large flightless birds³ with strong legs and also some wading birds as large as ostriches. In the Miocene, ducks and pelicans frequented rivers and lakes, together with long-legged water birds like ibis, while, in the antarctic, were early types of penguin as tall as man.

In the early part of the most recent period, the Quaternary, most of the modern birds appeared, as well as the penguin-like Great Auk, recently extinct.

(To be continued)

² First appearing in the Eocene period.

³ Such as Diatryma.

THE ENDEAVOUR MAGAZINE

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Erratum

The Endeavour Magazine, Summer 1966. Blocks on pages 9 and 14 have inadvertently been transposed. Figure 1 is actually on page 14 and Figure 3 on page 9.

THE ENDEAVOUR MAGAZINE

The purpose of "The Endeavour Magazine" is to help:

- By providing a forum for fair discussion of difficulties concerning Christian belief in the modern world—especially those difficulties facing young people.
- By encouraging deeper devotion in our Lord's service.
- By offering suggestions for the practical expression of our faith.
- By introducing articles designed to help in Bible study.
- By bringing to the notice of readers books of value which might otherwise escape their attention.
- By producing literature for spreading the Gospel.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Our first Summer School was held successfully in August at Fircroft College in Birmingham. God willing, we will hold another one in 1967 from Saturday, 19th August — Saturday, 26th August. More details next issue.

Towards Reformation and Renewal

by George McHaffie

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN community has entered what is called the space age with evident perplexity. The civilisation of the last century, in which the community was born, is, at least in Britain, no more. Progress is, with few exceptions, at a standstill and in many parts there is decline. In such circumstances it is not surprising that there are widespread heartsearchings about our real aims and about the relevance of our attitudes and beliefs.

The heartsearchings provoke unfortunate repercussions in certain quarters. It seems that some find comfort in urgent assertions of their orthodoxy; in seeking to establish an authoritarian hold over the flock; in trying to compel uniformity and suppress the appearance of any ideas which were not hallowed by acceptance at least 50 years ago. This series of articles is written in the belief that authoritarianism of this kind is useless and harmful; that loud protestations of orthodoxy are, as often as not, like whistling in the dark to keep one's spirits up.

Our general aim is to explore the origins of our faith, to show something of the framework of Christian witness on which it is based and to trace out instructive affinities with other movements. Truth we believe has nothing to fear from investigation. Some speak as though any attempt to re-appraise our faith is virtual irrelevance and springs only from evil motives. I can but say that what follows has been written as a sincere attempt to uncover reasons for the contemporary malaise, lack of drive and our failure as a community to find an adequate response to our preaching.

It may be that some feel uneasy about admitting to the existence of any problems in the community: perhaps even a little ashamed. There is nothing unique about our position.

Other churches are often hit harder than we are by a realisation of their decline. Christian literature makes it clear that an enormous turmoil on this aspect has been going on for a long time.

All true revival and every genuine reformation must spring from the roots of the faith and be built up from there. For our start it is necessary to go back to more distant roots than Dr Thomas' work, to a tradition of which he became part.

The Outcome of the Reformation

It can be said as a general truth that there were three streams of Christian tradition flowing from the reformation of the 15th and 16th centuries.

1. Reformed Roman Catholicism:

The Roman Church took warning from the reform movements and, while maintaining its traditional creeds and liturgy, endeavoured to clear out many pre-reformation abuses.

2. The Protestant Churches:

The Lutheran, Calvinistic, Scottish and English Churches which retained the traditional creeds and showed a wide variety of church government and varying degrees of liturgy.

3. The Anabaptists:

This stream was always much smaller and, in wilder times, much at the mercy of the other two and persecuted by both. It held loosely the historic creeds, refused state allegiances and seldom attained the worldly respectability inherent in the others.

It would be a gross and unfair oversimplification to say that only the third stream contained truth but, nevertheless, the cradle for the growth

of a church after the original pattern of Christ, is found there more than in any other. Simplicity of worship, freedom of compromise with the demands of governments, insistence that the Christian is one who takes an adult decision in the matter of discipleship are three basic elements which fault the first two streams. The Roman Catholics and Protestants have had their wars and committed atrocities against each other but both alike have cruelly martyred numerous adherents of the Anabaptist tradition from whom alone, in reformation times, sprang a true appreciation of non-violence demanded by the Sermon on the Mount.

The Anabaptist stream has itself, however, at times grown some quite unacceptable branches. Associated with the Baptist and Adventist principles there has been unreasoned fanaticism and militarism, a fascination for varieties of gnostic heresy (believing that material things, e.g., man's body, are evil); there have been fantastic prophesyings and premature anticipation of Christ's second coming; there has been a tendency to reject a reasoned approach to religion in favour of emotional guidance which has led to claims of unique and often spectacular spirit gifts. Exclusive and bitter sectarianism has been common.

Simplicity of worship.—It may be fairly said that out of the Anabaptist movement there have arisen not only the Baptists of today but Quakers, Pentecostals, Mormons (the leading legends owe a lot to a Baptist preacher), Plymouth Brethren, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Unitarians.

Spiritual enthusiasm.—There has also been much mingling of the streams. The Plymouth Brethren were originally a breakaway from the Anglicans but rapidly absorbed Anabaptist principles; present-day Baptists appear to be seeking more and more identification with the Protestant stream; Methodism, again an Anglican breakaway, shows many characteristics of Anabaptist piety. Evangelical parties of all churches, state and non-state, show the absorption of what was once almost exclusively an Anabaptist outlook on personal decision for Christ.

In the final count, it is the writer's belief that all that is best and truest has in large measure been cradled and pioneered outside the bonds of the Roman Catholic and Protestant streams.

It is not possible to argue the case at length here to show which, if any, of the early Anabaptist streams gives the most useful lead, but if one looks for a church which avoided the excesses of the extremer groups, which did not forget reason in the conduct of its affairs, which was the first to revive the truth of the Sermon on the Mount and which faithfully practised baptism by immersion, one is led to a community called the Polish Brethren who flourished from the middle of the 17th to about the middle of the 18th century. Poland was the scene of their activity for the simple reason that, at that time, it was the only place, Protestant or Catholic, where there was freedom of religious expression. One of the greatest leaders of the thought of this Church, though oddly enough not a member of it, was Faustus Socinus and the teaching of the Church is generally described as Socinian.

The Socinians.—The word itself has for a long time been a term of reproach in theological circles because of its association with radical views on the Trinity, the atonement and hell-fire. On the other hand, it has been said of the Socinians that they combined the fervour and simplicity of worship of the Anabaptists with great learning. In their time, they were feared as a formidable enemy to Protestant Christianity and were led by men of great scholarly ability. They conducted a vigorous publishing effort from their centre at Racow and their books and thinkers penetrated (often clandestinely) the universities of Europe.

The distinctive tenets of the Socinians were:—

1. God is one—as Father—as distinct from the Trinitarian Formula.
2. Jesus Christ—Son of God—a man born of the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit and after His resurrection raised to a position of divine honour.
3. The Holy Spirit is the power of God and not a separate personality.
4. The sacraments accepted were the Lord's Supper and baptism by immersion of adults.
5. The prevailing views on the Cross (penal substitution) were vigorously opposed in favour of a moral view.

6. Holding political office and participation in war was rejected.
7. They opposed the doctrine of eternal torments, held that man was mortal, immortality conditional.
8. They were among the earliest exponents of freedom of conscience and enquiry in the post-reformation era.

It will be evident, even from this brief sketch, that the principles of a type of witness, such as the Christadelphian body later adopted, are here, and I think there is little doubt that Socinian thought greatly influenced Dr Thomas.

Resurgence of Jesuit activity in Poland led to persecution and martyrdom of the Socinian Church, together with many other Protestants who were banished from the land. Freedom then ceased in Poland. The Socinians were scattered throughout Europe losing their corporate identity but influencing other Churches, particularly the early Mennonite Baptists in Holland. There is much evidence of Socinian influence and sympathy in later times and among notable people, e.g., Sir Isaac Newton. Many of their principles are now triumphant in modern Christendom.

An interesting account of the Socinians will be found in Wilbur's book *A History of Unitarianism: Socinianism and its Antecedents*, also in *Socinianism in 17th Century England* by H. McLachlan, and their

position is summarised by R. S. Franks in *The Work of Christ*. More recently, the history of the times has been written up extensively by G. M. Williams in *The Radical Reformation*.

Elements of Dr Thomas' Stand.—Some appear to relish the idea, and it may be that he himself fostered it, that Dr Thomas, unaided, uncovered the truth from the great mass of error hiding it after centuries of apostasy. I do not think, however, that we seriously detract from the work he did by suggesting that on the contrary he gathered liberally from abundant material to hand. Similarly, we may consider that he fought constant battle with the whole of Christendom, pursuing a lonely and unpopular path. I think, however, that in many of his statements he was following a trend popular in certain influential circles. If this can be established, the reasons why he did not have more success might be instructive. For example, it might be possible to ascertain whether an unbalance of emphasis arose. It might also be useful to enquire whether a church can be nourished mainly by doctrinal battles without losing some of the finer elements basic to Christian witness.

In order to evaluate this I propose to review the leading points in Dr Thomas' teaching against the background in which he worked.

(To be continued)

THE WAR GAME

—a review of the controversial
film the B.B.C. refused to screen

WHEN I interviewed B.B.C.'s rebel producer and film-maker Peter Watkins on the student programme put out over the close-circuit T.V. system of the University of Strathclyde, I had not seen *The War Game*, the film the B.B.C. refused to screen. "Too horrible," they said. The film is politically hot because the situation it depicts—a nuclear attack on Britain—starts from a threatened

American escalation of the war in Vietnam.

The term "war game" is used of an American technique recently introduced to this country in business and defence studies in which possible courses of action are simulated and their outcomes explored. Mr Watkins' *War Game* was a projection of a possible outcome of a real political situation.

The film has been criticised by many reviewers as being C.N.D. propaganda, but although Peter Watkins' motives for making the film sprang from C.N.D. sympathies, the film itself is a simple but devastating portrayal of what nuclear war will mean (if it does come, as Mr Watkins believes it will) in terms of human misery, suffering and despair.

Although the projection of the sequence of events leading to the nuclear holocaust may be questioned by nuclear strategists as being unlikely and even naive, the main purpose of the film is simply to show what nuclear war means—not in theoretical megatons, Strontium 90 and other relatively meaningless technical jargon, but in terms of people—in terms of visual horror.

It is not a film for the nervous. It is brutal, sickening and terrifying despite, or perhaps because of, the deliberate avoidance of such things as impressive shots of mushroom clouds. The style is that of a documentary, and although this makes its impact more intense and realistic, there is an unfortunate admixture of factual information and projective speculation which to some extent hampers the total effect for a critical audience.

The film is being shown in cinemas throughout Britain and a 16 mm. version is available for private hire.

Why should you see *The War*

Game? If for no other reason than because it brings home much more forcibly than all the glib and easy talk from our platform, the horror of what is meant by phrases like "the Bomb" and "the Last Day." One often wonders whether in our smug sureness about the prophesied end there is a lack of the compassionate yearning for the salvation of our fellows which is the prime characteristic of the followers of Jesus. How easy to talk of "the wicked" and of their non-importance. "It's all they deserve

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.
(Mal. 4:1.)

anyway," we say when contemplating the Day of Judgement. It is much harder to think in this egoistic, callous way when we see depicted with horrifying realism, the fear, the desperation, the devastation of ordinary people like the folk next door; the bewilderment, the shock, the fright of innocent toddlers whose eyes are blasted out by the glare of a distant nuclear explosion, described by a frightened father in the film as being "like the slamming of a mighty door in the depths of hell."

If we haven't faced up to it before, the film asks us whether we are really interested in saving the world and mankind from itself—or whether we are happy simply to damn it out of hand.

The War Game makes a more effective presentation of the Christian standpoint on war (as Christadelphians and some others understand it) than has been achieved by Christians, and faces up to contemporary—and timeless—problems more honestly and searchingly than most Christians do.

I came away from *The War Game* feeling as I do after reading a novel by William Golding—this is the reality of death, however it comes; this is the horror of man's condition and nature. I remember the incident in the film in which two men were shot by the police in the street for resisting authority. A bedraggled priest falters through the Lord's Prayer with them, breaks off at "Thy will be done on earth . . ." and staggers off with the desperate benediction "God have mercy on their souls!"

Blasphemous? Propaganda? Shocking? Perhaps. It's certainly not a great work of art—but it's a film every Christian ought to see.

John Wilson.

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS (continued from page 3)

The Church at Jerusalem had already experienced the beginning of schism in the quarrel over the relative treatment of Aramaic and Greek-speaking Jews within it, and Stephen was among the number appointed with special interests in the Greek-speaking community. This very appointment would mark him out as liable to an emotional attack by the "Hebrews of the Hebrews." Any whispered campaign against him would find many minds ready to believe the worst on the flimsiest of evidence. Thus, it is probable that the charge brought against him was a distortion, a half-truth, yet nevertheless accurate verbally in its details. The accusation is interesting (Acts 6:13-14). "This man is for ever saying things against this holy place and against the Law. For we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and alter the customs handed down to us by Moses." Just so was a similar

distortion brought against Jesus at His trial.

In his defence Stephen outlines the giving of the covenant to Abraham, and the subsequent provision of a Law through Moses. He emphasises that Israel was consistently disobedient to the Law, and confirms that he had indeed taught the true temple to be other than the building in Jerusalem by quoting from Isaiah (66:1-4). In the context of this passage, which deals with the very failure of Israel to keep the Law, the accurate performance of the ritual without any spiritual response in the believer is said to be equivalent in God's eyes to pagan abominations, and the real abode of God is said to be within the believer himself; this implication may be confirmed by reference to the previous prophecy (57:15) concerning this same matter.

The death of Stephen, the first of

many martyrs to die for his faith, ensured that this concept was burned into the consciousness of every Christian; while the persecution which scattered them took the new religion into regions where believers were added who had a less distorted worship for the Law as supreme. Peter was chosen to receive a revelation directing that even Gentiles could be counted holy by God. Saul the persecutor became Paul the apostle. The Church at Jerusalem was suddenly alarmed by accounts that many pagan Gentiles had been allowed to join the Church in Antioch, and Barnabus was despatched with speed to investigate and report. The first major schism, destined to split the whole Church, was about to grow out of the evangelising zeal of men like Barnabus and Saul.

(To be continued)

Preaching Our Message to Young People

by Melva Carter



THE OBJECT of any preaching is to convey a message to people so that everybody knows the same facts as the preacher, feels the same emotions as the preacher, and therefore will wish to follow the same way as the preacher. Now if this is our object, why should our preaching to young people be different from our preaching to everyone else? We have been preaching for 100 years now. Does the truth change? No, the gospel does not change, but our message should.

Changing with the Times

Each generation finds some part of God's truth harder to accept than other parts, and has a preference towards sections it thinks are specially applicable to its own day. When preaching, it is necessary to emphasise those parts which people find difficult. So, in the first century, preaching emphasised the Sonship of Christ, His death and resurrection. A century ago people took far more interest in prophecy than they do today, when many suppositions and predictions have failed. The present generation thinks that even the gospel itself is not applicable to today.

Unfortunately, Christadelphian teaching has not changed with the problems. Can we expect a people who do not believe that God exists to be very concerned with the intricacies of the Old Testament prophets? Today our message must be: "God exists" and "The Bible is inspired," and we have to answer the basic moral problems of suffering, war and disaster.

Previous generations have taken the existence of God as axiomatic, not requiring proof. Young people at school today are not just spoonfed

with facts; they are taught to think things out for themselves. This involves questioning the fundamentals of belief. It is not wrong to question such things; true beliefs can withstand questioning, can they not?

Belief and Conduct

In education today, subjects are divided into Sciences and Arts. Science concerns facts, discerning between truth and falsehood. This is done by our intellect. The Arts involve another part of our mind: our emotion, our love of things beautiful and dislike of things ugly. The third section of our minds—our will—controls our actions, deciding between good and bad, right and wrong. It is influenced in these decisions by our belief in certain facts and by our emotions toward certain things.

All our actions are a direct result of our beliefs and feelings. Actions are the first things people notice and are most influential in creating first impressions, which often are the lasting ones. Visitors learn more in five minutes after the evening lecture, when they can observe our behaviour, than during the whole of the address. They see our actions; then we must show them the reasons behind our actions—the beliefs and love which permeate our whole life.

How can we show these if we are not convinced that Christ rose from the dead, that He is working in us, and if we do not have the love of Christ within us?

Conduct

We are very good at preaching our beliefs, or at least our differences from the beliefs of other churches. Our knowledge of Scripture stands

us in good stead here. But unfortunate side effects may develop. We can so easily adopt the attitude of "You are wrong and I'm going to prove it." We should be trying to help our hearers, not to strive with them. We must avoid giving them the impression in our first breath that we are always right and they are always wrong. This only creates unnecessary opposition.

In the advertising world one of the aims is to create a favourable impression of the product. Although we may dislike the comparison of preaching with advertising, must we go to the extreme of ignoring all its lessons? Please let us try to find some area of agreement and lead our hearers gradually from there. A willing pupil is much easier to teach, and teaching is much easier than preaching.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the criticisms made of the evening lecture is that whilst it was the best way of "proving" our beliefs about, for example, immortal souls, these doctrinal beliefs are not the main current problems.

If the Bible is assumed to be inspired, we can lecture quite easily on most of our other beliefs. But most people today do not believe in inspiration and this means that we are restricting ourselves to preaching to the nearly converted.

We must replace our preaching to non-existent nineteenth-century Christendom with preaching to twentieth-century agnosticism and atheism.

Love in Action

Christadelphians tend to be somewhat afraid of the word "emotion" and think that "emotional" is synonymous with "irresponsible."

Surely we believe in God mainly because we have seen His hand at work in our own lives; yet we cannot prove this. We feel Him helping us now, and yet this is foolishness with the world. How can we make these, our trembling thoughts, known to others? We dare reveal these only to our close friends, people whom we know are sympathetic. How can we divulge these thoughts to people whose way of thinking we do not understand?

Many a normal Christadelphian is out of touch with the average teenager of today. Do not think of those teenagers seen at lectures, but those who frequent the coffee bar down the road. There is no common ground at all, yet if we are to understand their problems and to be of any assistance to them we must find out how they live and how they think.

We must show them the same love that Christ shows to us, we must identify ourselves with their troubles, and attempt to show them that we, too, have had difficulties, and show them our solutions. For this, we must have more knowledge of their way of life. This has its attendant dangers, as some will be quick to point out. But we must not live in a monastery—our monastery must live within us.

It is very difficult to love someone we do not understand. Let us beware of the attitude of the self-righteous Pharisees. As we look down in disgust at the appalling morals and habits of the decaying youth of today, let us not think of the command to be separate, but let us realise that these poor people need the gospel, that they need sympathy and help — the help which only Christians can give. For we have something of countless value, a great treasure — the hope that is within us. In the words of Scripture, "Things beyond our seeing, things beyond our hearing, things beyond our imagining, all prepared by God for those who love him; these it is that God has revealed to us through the Spirit" (1 Cor. 2: 9-10, N.E.B.).

It is a measure of our love of God, how much we pass these things on to others.

But how do we pass on the message? How do we contact today's young people? They will

not wander into the lecture. We must preach to those around us, our neighbours and the people we work with. How? By our actions. By demonstrating that Christ has made a difference to our lives and outlook, emphasising the practical effects of Christianity. But what effect has it had on our lives?

If they see in us a pattern which they would like to follow they will naturally make friends with us. If we love them wholeheartedly and without reserve, just as Christ loved us, we can then tell them our beliefs. Telling these does not involve proving at this stage, unless we are asked to do so; this only underlines the fact that there are opposing views. We should not put ourselves on the defensive against an imaginary opposition. Imagined opposition soon becomes real opposition, and this prevents us from helping others to think things out rationally. The soft-sell is preferable to hell fire and brimstone, since it gives us opportunity to display our more Christlike qualities, the fruits of the Spirit. "By their fruits shall ye know them."

Paul says, "The word I spoke, the gospel I proclaimed, did not sway you with subtle arguments; it carried conviction by spiritual power, so that your faith might be built not upon human wisdom but upon the power of God" (1 Cor. 2: 4-5, N.E.B.).

Actions are very important; they may be the first stage by which someone is called to God. When we start preaching our doctrines let us use words that are easily understood by today's teenagers; in particular, let us avoid Christadelphianisms. Let us use a recent translation of the Bible "that they may discern and understand God's word to men. That Word must not be disguised in phrases which are no longer clear, or hidden under words that have changed or lost their meaning. It must stand forth in language that is direct and plain and meaningful to people today" (R.S.V. Preface.)

Milk before Meat

These suggestions are not a dilution of the truth, but the milk before the meat. We fail so often not in converting people from other (respectable) Churches, but in converting people from agnosticism and

apathy, the two greatest "religions" of today. It is to these men and women we should be preaching.

We must direct our preaching to those with whom in the past we would not have associated. We must love the unlovable, we must touch the heart of the untouchables, we must convert the unconvertibles — yet not us, but Christ in us.

This is the task assigned to us: "To announce the secret hidden for long ages and through many generations, but now disclosed to God's people, to whom it was his will to make it known — to make known how rich and glorious it is among all nations. The secret is this: Christ in you, the hope of a glory to come" (Col. 1: 26-27, N.E.B.).

HOW TO SAY NO TO A STARVING CHILD

Tell him half the world is hungry. And since you can't help them all what's the point in helping one.

Tell him the problem is far too big for any organisation.

Tell him how sorry you are. How wrong you feel the whole thing is. That it's cruel. But you're so busy.

Or say YES with a gift to Oxfam—because you know nothing can ever justify needless human suffering.

OXFAM

274 Banbury Road
Oxford

Lectures on the Origin of Man

Last night I attended a baptism which vividly reminded me of my own baptism two years ago and the turbulent weeks preceding it.

I had been brought up in a Christadelphian family and wanted to believe in the existence of God. The one thing which prevented me was the mental picture of a green snake standing on its tail and "talking" (my serpent had a sly grin on its face while seducing Eve, which made the conception all the more ludicrous)! I just could not believe it. The impressive example and teaching of my parents was in danger of being laid waste by that "bogey" in Genesis 3.

At that time I went to a lecture entitled "Evolution and Christianity" by Brother Ralph Lovelock which largely convinced me of the fact that, ignorant as I was of the nature of Eve's tempter, I could still serve God acceptably. I was baptised some two weeks later.

Over the last two years my thinking has changed radically; I still do not know whether the "serpent" should be taken literally or otherwise. However, God's statement through Isaiah "My ways are higher than your ways" and similar scriptural passages which give perspective to the finite-infinite relationship exhort us not to dogmatise one way or the other. Certainly it is wrong to scorn as "brethren and sisters of simple faith" those who happen to be of the literal persuasion.

I hope this letter may be of use to those of our body who reject, out of hand, Brother Lovelock's approach.

M. G. Moore

London.

The Nature of Eve's Tempter

I was interested to see the article by Brother Dennis Draper in the Spring issue, which arrived a couple of days ago. Sad to say, I cannot altogether agree with him, and I'll proceed to tell you why.

1. The idea of pre-Adamites is not abhorrent to me; in fact, it helps when one comes to the generally accepted

datings for Neanderthal Man, etc. My worry is not *when*, but *where*. If it was not because he was the first in time of the biological species *Homo sapiens* that Adam is presented to us in Genesis, wherein was he special? The only remaining answer, it seems to me, is that the Lord God put him in a garden in Eden, so separating him from "the world," and establishing a new moral relationship which did not previously exist. If it was as part of his punishment for his sin that Adam was condemned to thorns and thistles, which he encountered on his exclusion from the garden, surely it would only have been at this stage that he encountered those men-in-a-biological-sense who would represent even more certainly "the world." The idea of these beings sharing Eden with

fact that the story of Adam and Eve loses its point if they were *only* individuals; they have to be *representative* of the race. Their experience of temptation and sin was the experience of every man and woman who reaches an age of discrimination. This is why the fruit's appeal to Eve is listed in its threefold aspect, corresponding with the "lusts" of 1 John 2:16. When Paul says in Rom. 5:12 that "death spread to all men because all men sinned," he does not mean that each man dies as a result of his individual transgression; else what of innocent babes? Nor does he mean that God took a unique, unrepresentative sin of Adam and imputed it to the whole race in defiance of His innate justice. Rather is it imperative to Paul's argument that the trans-

Correspondence

Adam and Eve (and sharing their communion with their Creator?) seems to deprive the "first man" of his last vestige of primacy.

2. In claiming that a God Who created an amoral talking animal and put into its mouth words of temptation was in fact creating sin, Brother Draper has not quite disposed of the idea of the serpent as a specially created beast. After all, we admit that God created *man* with a potentiality for sin, and that the creation of sin is not involved, because man's own moral responsibility now becomes involved. Supposing then that He created a talking animal having powers of reasoning and of moral responsibility. Such a beast is outside our normal ken, but the record does not give any indication that the serpent was "literal" in the sense of "normal." Then the temptation comes from the serpent in a real sense, using words of his own choosing; and the application to the "seed of the serpent" is perfectly apt, referring as it does to men who exalt their own natural powers of reasoning, and who carry the full moral responsibility for this exaltation of self-interest over God's interest.

3. The only remaining problem (as I see it; others can always see difficulties in my arguments better than I can) is: *Why* would God do this? The answer is found in the

gression—and therefore the temptation—be of the very character that would lead to failure and death if any other man or woman had been chosen to undergo the test. But temptations come to the rest of mankind from two sources, sometimes intertwined, sometimes quite separate: from within, and from without. Adam was tempted from without by Eve; but how could Eve's temptation be rendered "normal"? Only by the introduction of an apparently abnormal factor which, however, produced normalcy and not uniqueness in this critical respect: a talking serpent!

John Byrt

Murrumbidgee, Victoria.

The Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith

Recently we had an opportunity to meet with two members of the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith. Our discussions, and our reading of several of the doctrinal writings of that community, have convinced me that they hold the Truth as we understand it. There are some differences of

emphasis and different traditions in their organisation, but nothing of a fundamental nature that we could find.

As we separated after several days each party agreed that we had learned much from the other. So much so that I am prompted to write this letter to you.

The Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith has communities in the U.S.A., in Canada, in the Philippines and—more recently—in India. Total membership is about 6,000.

I believe that much could be gained, in the Truth's witness in these last

days, by an increasing association between the true believers. This does not require a union between the Churches, and indeed, each would lose by the necessary constitutional changes. But I would have no hesitation in joining in worship with the Church of God or accepting their members to worship with ourselves. I believe that we should encourage such association.

These are the last days. Antichrist has its movement for union. Our voice should be as strong as possible and this would be helped if all who hold the Truth have friendly and earnest hands outstretched to help

one another in this necessary task. In the Philippines, for example, the witness for the Truth would surely be strengthened by both Christadelphians and members of the Church of God combining to give united witness to the Truth. According to my information, our two communities do already co-operate to some measure in part of the U.S.A. (I stand to be corrected if this is not so).

I may be grasping a nettle in writing this letter, but it is my belief that somebody should promote a discussion on this matter.

Ron Bray

Mooroolbark, Victoria.

THE LONELINESS of the long-distance Christadelphian

"The social revolution of university education has produced new problems. It has introduced a more harassed, more anxious and more worried type of student, and a more harassed atmosphere at the university" (F. Zweig, *The Student in the Age of Anxiety*).

NOW THAT society places a great importance on higher education, and university is looked upon as the pot of gold at the end of a sixth-former's rainbow, some disturbing features, arising from the pressures involved, are coming to light—a considerable wastage rate (students who leave without completing their course), a high degree of neurotic illness and spasmodic outbreaks of hooliganism. That university is not, in reality, the utopia many sixth-formers dreamed of is probably more the fault of the school than the university. That university challenges the intellectual, religious and emotional fibre of many students is not often considered by the laymen, steeped as they are in the popular press's image of a rag-day fun palace.

What are the problems confronting the undergraduate which can be intensified for the young Christadelphian? Firstly, entrenched in the

stalwart Christadelphian has been the general feeling that education was anathema to the Truth. Knowledge of the secular world not only puffeth up but is vain deceit and foolishness with God. The fruits of higher education—the high status jobs and professions—have received an equal amount of suspicion. Well-meaning older brethren have been quick to point out that almost any job will do: the important thing is to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Quite right, but the world is becoming increasingly more complex and greater qualifications are demanded for hitherto lowlier jobs. Christadelphians, being rather an intellectual breed, have been carried along with the tide. With more universities, training and technical colleges, have come more students from middle- and working-class homes, and hence more young Christadelphians with "A" levels.

"When are you going to start work?" "What are you going to be?" are familiar questions in the ears of "A" level candidates. Admittedly, education is much more accepted among us than some

years ago when Bryan Wilson wrote *Sects and Society*. But the trouble is that few Christadelphians—like other non-university parents—are aware of the nature of university education. For many it is little more than an

by Paul Pearson

extension of school or an institution for the sinister cramming of scientific facts. Whilst anything scientific savours of evolution and the Arts subjects propagate wicked secular philosophy, the social and behavioural sciences are looked upon as an even greater threat to the religious view of Man.

Courses can differ considerably depending on, usually, whether the chosen subjects belong either to the Arts or Sciences. Those of the latter, often with many lectures and laboratory classes, provide a more structured working environment leading ulti-

mately to their fulfilment in a specific career. Like the American system, the student is being trained for a job rather than necessarily receiving an education in the true academic tradition.

Pushed on from school the student soon realises that there is no teacher to keep his work up to scratch or bother about last night's homework. He has to learn to plan his own work schedule and is often surprised that attendance at lectures or handing in essays is not always obligatory.

Such an "artificial" environment inevitably produces problems. Arts students never seem to know quite where they are in their scheme of work (if they have one) and do not receive the "feedback" along their course like the science students. Hence the only criterion of having done sufficient work comes with the sessional examinations; and by then it is too late.

Equally, the highly prized academic environment is alien to most lower-middle- and working-class parents. Frictions arise with an undergraduate who is unable to discuss problems arising not necessarily out of his work but out of conversations with highly intelligent, well-informed students of diverse and contrary opinions. The problem of communication between student and parent may be a very real one and it may be advisable for the student to live away from home. Significantly, students who come from public schools are better able to adjust.

Living away from home, however, can add to the insecurity of a student's status. Independence is uncertain. Society demands a responsible attitude from the student academically and financially, yet gives him no official status, unlike his old school pals who are now in well-paid jobs with a clearly defined role.

Although the university tradition encourages a free flight for the intellect the cold facts of examinations have to be faced. The liberated mind has to be shackled to specific answers to specific questions. Academic freedom can easily fall foul of the high standards demanded by examinations. This is particularly relevant for the Arts student who receives little knowledge of results on his course and where much depends upon personal assessment of essays: subjective interpretation compared to the black and white of science.

These and other factors contribute to a considerable degree of neurosis. Half the wastage rate of 14 per cent is comprised of students who leave prematurely because of psychological difficulties: roughly between 1 in 6 and 1 in 10 students suffer some psychological disorder. A greater number of Arts students break down—as might be expected—and those students from a working-class background are more vulnerable; equally so, those residing in a Hall of Residence. That such disturbance affects the class of degree is self-evident (yet some studies show that paradoxically there is a high level of neurotic disturbance among students obtaining first-class degrees!).

Overall, these sinister facts are unpleasant. Some of the reasons have been mentioned, but these in turn precipitate others. Generally, there is little or no personal attention given to the student, even if he or she is assigned to a tutor. The feeling of "not belonging" may be intensified among general degree students (those taking a number of subjects compared with the honours student) and those in large departments, where the professor may only stumble across an individual student once in the course.

Universities are recommending a year of full employment prior to entering in order to obtain a more mature student, but with first-generation students increasing in number the problem is likely to become more intense. Illness or personal problems must not be allowed to interfere with examination performance. If they do the result is often disastrous. Once the snowball starts it is difficult to stop and is further aggravated by not only "academic overload" and financial problems, but also by anxiety over future employment and, quite likely, for unattached late adolescents, sexual and emotional difficulties. The earlier age for physical maturity and protraction of adolescence runs counter to the educational strictures imposed by society.

A young Christadelphian is hardly likely to approach the Student Health facilities to cope with his or her emotional problems. Since many Christadelphians are largely ignorant of the nature of stress disorders, an anxiety state would, from a religious viewpoint, imply a lack of faith: neurosis is in that sense a spiritual and not a medical problem, and Christadelphianism unlike Catholicism does

not offer spiritual psychotherapy. The relationship between psychiatry and religion is, of course, too profound to be discussed here.

In practical terms, lecturers are quite often unconcerned about the student's lot and a young Christadelphian is not likely to unburden it to his tutor who, not surprisingly, has a different scale of values. Nor on the other hand is he likely to tell a member of his ecclesia, largely unfamiliar with university life.

University can be a very lonely place, and particularly so for someone who is not inclined to participate in the social functions of the students' union and the many societies. Young Christadelphians may not be keen on attending wine and cheese parties to meet their inebriated lecturers, or join the notorious pub crawls of engineering students, or indulge in late-night bottle parties. It is true that the traditional university is itself quite unprepared for the youth culture of the day, and the permissive atmosphere has no defence against the importation of the fun ethic with its Saturday hops, pop stars, juke boxes, etc. Hooliganism and vandalism, as sensationalised by the Press, may quite easily be the result of the "teenies" getting their own back on the chosen few. Yet inevitably among the chosen few are those who are not adjusted to university life and pushed on from school to another three or four years of unwanted study.

Not everyone is a dedicated introvert lover of his subject, yet social life in the brotherhood is not one of its strong points. This to a large extent cannot be helped. Ecclesias comprise too many different age, intellectual and socio-economic levels to effect mutually stimulating social groupings (though some would argue that, conversely, integration of all these factors is of paramount importance). Youth circles tend to embrace a wide age range of individuals rather than constitute a cohesive social unit.

Is it the fault of the ecclesia that students of Christadelphian parents in another town tend to drift away from the meetings—some to marry other students? A student who is already baptised into the Truth usually mixes better with the ecclesia of the university town: the problem lies with those who are not committed and find undergraduate life more alluring.

(Please turn to back page)

The Debate about God

THE REACTION of the British public to the publication three years ago of *Honest to God* took the publishers by surprise. For the views expressed by the Bishop of Woolwich were not new and had their origins in the 18th and 19th centuries. This is one of the points which appears in David Jenkins' book *Guide to the Debate about God*.

As a "way in" to the debate this book could hardly be more helpful. Taking an historical approach Jenkins shows how Bishop Butler (1692-1752) argued from reason that some transcendent being must exist, and from revelation through the Bible that this being must be the God of Christianity. Schleiermacher (1768-1834), on the contrary, instead of appealing by reason to nature or morality for evidence of God, looked to *feeling*. Thus he maintained a separation between science and morality on the one hand, and religion on the other, believing that religion "resigns at once all claims on anything that belongs either to science or morality." He did not see this as a surrender to science in any way, but seems to have taken this attitude in the hope of freeing religion from mere opinions or precepts about the world in general.

Jenkins shows how this thought developed through more recent theologians—Bultmann, Barth, Brunner, Tillich and Bonhoeffer. He regards Schleiermacher's dichotomy between science and religion as a mistake which tended to lead later theologians to adapt their religion to comply too much with science—something which Schleiermacher intended to avoid.

Jenkins' conclusion (insofar that one can draw conclusions in the middle of a debate) is that Butler and Bonhoeffer are on the right trail in emphasising that, in view of the biblical doctrines of the Creation and Incarnation, religion and science cannot be separated. (Bonhoeffer, incidentally, seems to be regarded by many theologians as much more orthodox than he is presented to us in the quotations in *Honest to God*.) We are also reminded of the "historicity of Jesus Christ" and of the "givenness of the Bible"—two

issues on which Jenkins considers many contemporary theologians to be inadequate.

In *Religion in Contemporary Debate* Alan Richardson points to the good and the bad in religion and shows that "religionless Christianity" (more applicable in Germany than in Britain) is a protest against a pietism that does not influence everyday life.

The author discusses the humanistic standpoints taken by some theologians and criticises in particular Paul van Buren, one of the "God is dead" advocates in America. He argues that a transcendent God is needed if we are to have a "genuinely radical discrimination" of right and wrong. Richardson considers that if van Buren, whose "secular Gospel tells us nothing about a Christ who has come from the Father," is correct, then the glory has departed from the Christian religion.

THREE 1966 PAPERBACKS

Guide to the Debate about God,
by David Jenkins

(Lutterworth Press, 8s. 6d.)

Religion in Contemporary Debate
by Alan Richardson
(S.C.M. Press, 6s. 6d.)

Honest Religion for Secular Man,
by Lesslie Newbigin
(S.C.M. Press, 7s. 6d.)

In the chapter on "Varieties of Religious Atheism" he gives Tillich some rough treatment:

There is no closer connection between the Gospel of Christ and the "System" of Tillich than there was between that Gospel and the various gnostic "systems" which appeared during the earlier centuries of Christian history (page 51).

Tillich's fundamentally atheistic philosophy is concealed by his incurable religiosity . . . (page 52).

In discussing communication he argues against Bultmann for "demythologising the Gospel history out of existence" and says that very little demythologising of the Bible is needed.

In the final chapter he discusses "The Death of God" as "a report exaggerated" and concludes with stressing the Christian understanding of God as the only answer to man's condition.

In several aspects *Honest Religion for Secular Man* by Lesslie Newbigin

makes the same points as Alan Richardson's book. Newbigin is concerned to show the need and place of Christians within a society freed from the former restraints of class or religion (the secular society).

As in another of his books, *A Faith For This One World?* (reviewed in *Endeavour*, Autumn 1965, page 18), he sees Christianity as having an importance for the whole world, especially now that all races and cultures are being drawn into one civilisation. Newbigin argues that the present science and technology have arisen in the West as a result of the biblical view that history is going forward, that God is active in the world. Nevertheless, he has no delusions about man's own capabilities: he believes that a personal faith in God is as essential as ever. Only this can uphold personal integrity, concern for the weak, and all other Christian values.

It is at this point that he comes into conflict with van Buren and the Bishop of Woolwich, and he gives a penetrating criticism of their writings. His emphasis on the importance of history gives him added reason for opposing their view that the resurrection of Christ is merely "myth" and never actually took place. He opposes also the existentialist philosophy of Bultmann as being of no help to modern man but only serving to stress his loneliness.

These three books are of importance because they represent the turning of almost a full circle in the *Honest-to-God* debate. They reassert fundamentals of Christianity, while being fully alive to the problems presented by the modern world and by other contemporary theologians. As such they are recommended for stimulating reading.

Ian McHaffie.

Lesslie Newbigin

scm paper

Honest Religion for Secular Man



(Continued from front page)

former attempts at ultra-separateness from neighbours, irrespective of whether they claimed to be Christians or not, accounts for the close association with materialistic foolishness which is so prevalent amongst us today.

Why are so many young people turning away from the community in which they have been reared, or becoming unthinking followers who reveal only a nominal attachment to the Name of Christ? Is it because, either as parents or as a community, we have not nourished them in the right way?

Unless the doctrines we teach result in our becoming representatives of Christ to those whom we meet—the friends who know us a little, the family who knows us

well, then the doctrines are useless. If we see God as hard, unbending and willingly pouring fearful judgment on erring humans, then we either become that kind of character ourselves or our belief and trust in God become so watery that we are lukewarm followers, finding consolation only in material prosperity and pleasure seeking.

If, on the other hand, our doctrines reveal the love of God for the world then our characters will be loving, too. And our community will be loving. Then will all men know that we are Christ's disciples.

We need to look, look again and look again at our doctrines and at our way of life to see what manner of persons we really are.

George and Ruth McHaffie.

THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG-DISTANCE CHRISTADELPHIAN (continued from page 14)

As an outline of university life this article may appear very discouraging to the potential student. Truly this is the grimmer side of what may otherwise be a rewarding and stimulating experience. Yet some or all of these problems will be faced to a lesser or greater degree by students to whom university is unknown territory. For these first-generation

students the penalties of failure are heavy: as one sociologist says, "If such a student fails, his failure will stay with him for his whole lifetime. He will often have nowhere to go as he cannot go back where he comes from."

Christadelphians, despite their spiritual objective, are only human. It is up to brethren and sisters to

accept the changing complexities of society, to come to grips with the role of education, to be more sympathetic to the scientific and critical attitude of the New Enlightened and to understand and be ready to help with the religious, intellectual and personal problems of the Christadelphians of the future.

WHY ENDEAVOUR?

Why was ENDEAVOUR started?

Because it was felt by many that although we possessed basic truths we often failed to present a balanced and vigorous gospel to a twentieth century society.

What are the objects of ENDEAVOUR?

To discuss openly and fairly the many different points of view on Christian thought and action which have arisen in our community.

Since the Magazine has caused offence to some should it not cease?

If it has caused offence by encouraging people to live less worthy Christian lives, yes. But if offence has been caused because people do not like to think more deeply or because they do not like to believe their particular viewpoint could have been mistaken, no.

But did not Jesus say "Blessed are the peacemakers"?

Yes, but, like Jesus, we are not always able to make peace. The first Christians "turned the world upside down". Christadelphians have offended the orthodox churches by claiming to preach truth as opposed to their error and by dividing from them. It is reasonable, therefore, that if a group among us feel that our community needs to re-think and make modifications then we should be free to say so. It is how the suggestions are received that determines whether there is peace or strife.

But surely we have the truth?

We have a large part of truth. No human knows all truth. We can always add to and re-assess our understanding.

Are we not happier to continue without too much thinking?

Some people think that we are. But we cannot preach to others unless we can answer the challenges of the modern world. When it was said that the earth was round and not flat many people tried to go on believing that it was flat, and quoted the Bible for support. Similarly, science has now shown that there has been continuous life on the earth for millions of years, though the Bible, interpreted literally, seems to teach otherwise. Some of us try to deny scientific evidence while others say there is a vast gap between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis Chapter 1, for which there is neither biblical nor scientific evidence. Unless we preach in an informed way can we expect intelligent people to accept our faith?

Why do some of our intellectual and young people think ENDEAVOUR is unnecessary?

Probably because they do not want the labour of thinking out their beliefs. They may be too busy studying for, or working in, their careers and it is much easier to hold the more generally accepted views of the community. Some are not interested enough in their faith to do more than superficial study, if any at all.

Doesn't a magazine like ENDEAVOUR gather discontents?

It does gather some of these but Endeavour has the support of many mature and faithful brethren and sisters.

Should I read the Magazine if it contains much that I disagree with?

Our supporters do not necessarily agree with all the Magazine contains and we do not ask them to do so. Neither do our committee members necessarily agree with all that is written by each other or by other writers. The Magazine exists for discussion.

What does ENDEAVOUR hope to achieve?

It hopes to establish an atmosphere in which open discussion can be tolerated happily and even encouraged. It hopes to help our community to become one which can preach essential Christian principles to a world which is fast fleeing from all belief rather than a community which concentrates on showing how wrong the teachings of other Christian bodies are considered to be.

Is it having any success?

Yes. Many brethren and sisters no longer feel that they are alone in having doubts and difficulties and they know that these can be discussed in Endeavour. Clandestine discussion is no longer necessary.

If I want to criticize ENDEAVOUR or its contents will this be published?

Yes, if the criticism is written sensibly and in a Christian spirit.

How can I help ENDEAVOUR?

By explaining our purpose fairly to enquirers, by being courteous in discussion and by remembering that older people often find change hard to accept.

The Endeavour

Magazine

A CHRISTADELPHIAN REVIEW

TWO SHILLINGS

A NEW OUTLOOK

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SUMMER SCHOOL 1967

No. 22 December 1966

***I**n our last issue we considered the need of looking critically at ourselves. In forming our judgments we have the help of the Word of God, whether we think of this as the written Word or as the Word which lives in our hearts. We have also our minds, given us of God, with which we can reason. We have, too, the minds of one another, so that we can exchange thoughts and, as a result, often change them. God, Who is the source of all reason, expects us to use this power which we have. One correspondent tells us that if the Bible said black were white he would believe it because it is the Word of God. But it would be against God's nature to ask us to believe anything which is not reasonable. It is as though God is always saying to us, "Come now, and let us reason together".*

Some of us, as Christadelphians, have firmly believed that we, a very special people, are the only people who have arrived at correct conclusions. What special talent have we which makes us able to have all the truth and nothing but the truth, while others, equally earnest and searching with equal zeal, fail to reach such an attainment? We may be convinced that we are right and they are wrong, that our interpretation is altogether that which God desires, yet who but God Himself can act as arbiter?

We have inclined to think of all those who claim to be Christians but who are not Christadelphians as belonging to "the world". They are the "Gentiles" and only we are "Israel". We have often called them "strangers" and described them even less becomingly. Is this not too presumptuous? Are not many of us today willing to be more generous? We see the world with all its atheism and its disregard for the Word of God and the power of God. And distinct from the world we see the Christians—those men and women who are striving to understand and do His will.

(Please turn to back page)

Born in Humility

by Norman Fitchett

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger: because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2: 4-7).

IN THESE simple words the gospel writer tells us of the journey of Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Their journey would arouse no more than passing interest. Hundreds of people would be on the move. Arrival at an overcrowded inn was a common experience in those difficult days and perhaps it was not the first time that a child had been born among the straw of the stable. It was as simple and unobtrusive as that, and yet it was the way that God chose to enter the arena of human life. God had done this before with the high drama of earthquake, fire and stormy wind, but here with the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. Nazareth was despised as provincial; its people were regarded as the lowest of Jewish society; carpenters were common artisans. The carpenters he chose were the high society of the town. When he came, his word was a word of power, and he lived his life as a wandering teacher, with a message to lay his head. Just as his environment was humble and simple so His whole life was characterised by a progressive humility until "he humbled himself,

and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross".

Into a familiar pattern of daily routine, as contemporary as it was historical — a roadway crowded with travellers, an inn with all accommodation booked, shepherds working night-shift on the hills, a people increasingly subject to the demands of state and suffering many deprivations of liberty — into this pattern, as familiar now as it was then, the eternal God was manifested in Jesus of Nazareth.

Humility is the central feature of the birth of Jesus. This is stressed by the Holy Spirit in the words of Mary:—

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He

hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. (Luke 1: 46-53).

The mission and preaching of John the Baptist underlines the same idea. He was

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth. (Luke 3: 3-5).

By our baptism we confess that pride is evil and that humility is good. By it we believe that pride is scattered and brought low, and that by this kind of humiliation we shall eventually be exalted. It is often in later life that we come to realise more completely that baptism does not wash away our human nature, only the sins of human nature. So we find, in the experience of life, that pride is not always scattered and brought low, and that humility is not always as evident as it might be.

As soon as we begin to think that we must have been better than other men or God would not have chosen us, or that we are not now as other men and make calculations about our spirituality; when we expect others to conform to our personal notions and prejudices without objection; when we assert our right to fair treatment or demand the respect of others; when our apologies are reluctant or insincere; when we justify our position by refusing to forgive; when we self-righteously assume that we fully understand the meaning of humility; it is then that we are guilty of the sin of pride. The flesh is exalted, the spirit is brought low.

There were many in the Galatian ecclesias who were guilty of the sin

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of pride. In the face of increasing Gentile participation in the liberties of the Gospel, there were some who still clung to the obsolete traditions and requirements of the Law. It appeared that they were unable to accept in humility the will of God in bringing about radical changes in the old patterns of their religious life, and it is certain that they did not take kindly to the new ways of thinking. The apostle Paul could see that the whole concept of Christian liberty was being undermined, and that the spirit of Jesus Christ was not in them. So he writes:—

Oh my dear children, I feel the pangs of childbirth all over again till Christ be formed within you... (Gal. 4: 19, Phillips).

Later he describes the sort of ecclesial environment which must exist before Christ can be "formed within" them. The word "formed" indicates the need for a complete transformation of character and behaviour compatible with the spiritual nature of Christ.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (Gal. 5: 24).

Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. (v. 26).

For if a man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. (6: 3).

That transformation of character begins with the surrender of the will and an acceptance of the spirit of Christ.

As Jesus was born and lived in an environment and attitude of humility, so He is born again and again in our lives. But this is only so if the heart is humble, and pride has been scattered. Just as in every moment of pride we put Him once again to death, and "crucify the Son of God afresh", so in every moment of real humility Christ is born again in our hearts.

When we acknowledge our constant need for the gracious forgiveness of God and of others; when we sincerely grieve because we have caused offence; when we suffer ourselves to be defrauded, or in patience and meekness accept the fact that criticism is justified; when we willingly seek the lowest place and the uncongenial task; when we say and mean it "Thy will be done" and follow it up with faithful submission; when we become more and more aware of the danger of pride; then, and then only, are we learning to be truly humble, and have set our feet on the path that leads to spiritual maturity in Christ.

The test of all Christian virtues is to see whether they work in daily life: in the familiar patterns of everyday life. Does it make any difference when we take our place on a road crowded with travellers, in strange surroundings among those who do not know of our allegiance to Christ, and where we might easily forget it? Does it make any difference in our work during the day (or for some

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during the night)? In a world which becomes increasingly subject to the demands of state do we in patience accept its legislation whether we agree with it or not? It is in these environments that we can reveal our true humility, and when others see it, they have truly seen again, as the shepherds saw it so long ago, the glory of the Lord.

O Jesus, child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in;
Be born in us today.
We hear the holy angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel.

BROTHER JAMES WHITE

READERS WILL be sorry to learn of the death of Bro. James White at the early age of thirty-six.

The first two issues of *Endeavour* were published under his editorship in 1961. He was also responsible for a time for the accounts and for other work involved with the production of the magazine. But he was already failing in health before the third issue and was obliged to relinquish the responsibility.

James had haemophilia and for the last eight years had suffered weekly visits to hospital to have blood transfusions. Because of the severity of his illness in early life, he had not had the benefit of normal schooling and was largely self-taught. The writer's earliest recollection of James is of visiting him as a young lad of sixteen, in Glasgow, bedridden — but full of good spirits. He was behind with his arithmetic but was already reading Greek and, with the help of a brother, studying Hebrew.

As he grew older he developed an appealing spiritual style. In spite of being so confined himself he showed a remarkable appreciation of the Christian's responsibility

to those in the world. He was greatly exercised by the plight of all who suffered and was the information secretary for Christadelphian refugee appeal which was circulated to ecclesias during World Refugee Year in 1959.

James's outlook may, I think, be well summarised in some of his own words in his editorial for the first *Endeavour*:

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.

Our sympathies are extended particularly to his wife, Sister Joan, who has stood so strongly by him at all times, and to his family. We know that, with us, they wait for "the ransomed of the Lord" to return when "they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

G. McH.

Towards Reformation and Renewal — Part Two

Bible Prophecy

by George McHaffie

IN THE autumn issue several leading points of doctrine were set out which while being characteristically Christadelphian yet unite our witness with preceding generations.

Associated with our witness there are other aspects of belief which are not confined to a minority of Christians but which can claim adherents from nearly all sections of the Christian movement. Prophetic interpretations of current political events are an example of this. Efforts to deduce the likely date of the Second Coming were popular during the first three centuries but waned for a period and then gathered momentum again by the tenth century.

During the period of primitive Christianity, approximate dates for the Last Judgment were repeatedly set. And as each date passed without the appearance of the hoped-for events, an error in calculation was admitted, and the date was reset. The years turned into centuries and the belief was evolved that one thousand years — one day in the eyes of the Lord — would have to pass from the birth of Christ to the day of His Second Coming. (Joseph Gair, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew*.)

Interest in prophecy has been uneven throughout history with peak periods corresponding to great national and international upheavals.

Prophetic Forerunners

The Reformation was one such period and there followed the era of Mede, Sir Isaac Newton and Bishop Newton. This upsurge tailed off by the middle of the eighteenth century, largely through disagreements in interpretations and the counter suggestion that the church would have 1,000 years of victory to put the world right before Christ came. (Post Millenarianism.)

It is probable, however, that no other period in the world's history has shown such an interest in prophecy, and been in a position to draw on such resources of scholarship, as that which followed the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century.

With the benefit of hindsight we can see that the French Revolution was the outcome of the intolerable oppression of a ruling class which had no sense of responsibility for its subject people and was incompetent to govern. To the pious churchmen of the time, however, it seemed as though God's eternal basis of law and order was being swept away beneath a flood of impiety. The resultant wave of prophetic interest led to the continuous historical interpretation of the Book of Revelation reaching what was to be for all practical purposes its final form. The first five vials of Revelation 16 were generally agreed as being fulfilled in the events following the French Revolution (understandably enough if one really believed that the end was at hand). Earlier identifications of the seals and trumpets were put together in the overall interpretation of the book.

The Seventh Day Adventists have carried out research in great detail into the history of interpretations of the Book of Revelation. The result is published in four volumes as *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers* by Leroy Edwin Froom (1946). For the period 1799-1845, 62 major expositors in Europe are listed. The majority were in Britain and all but four pursued the continuous historic interpretation. Dr Thomas differed only in detail and in the interpretation of Ch. 10 from the historical elements of these expositors. Around the year 1840 interest on the part of the

professional preachers faltered. This was due partly to disagreements about details of the interpretation but chiefly to the leading British exponent, the Presbyterian Edward Irving, falling into doctrinal disagreement with his church. Irving was one of London's most popular preachers but developed views on Christ's nature, and condoned ecstatic outbursts in his congregation which were unacceptable to his presbytery.

While, however, in this country, enthusiasm was dying down, in America it was being born and continued so for at least another 20 years. Enthusiasm was maintained particularly among the laity by the proximity of expected terminal dates and political upheavals. The years 1843, 44, 47 were widely expected to yield great things in fulfilment of the period 2,300 days (Dan. 12:11) (B.C. 457 plus 2,300 on the basis of a day for a year). Similarly, interest was maintained by the 1,260 days (Dan. 12:7) being calculated to end in 1866.

One of the last, greatest, most scholarly and careful of the expositors of the orthodox church was Edward Elliott who commenced in 1837 to write a book called *Horae Apocalypticæ*. Published in 1840, it saw editions in 1846, 47, 51 and 62.

Eureka

It will be seen from the above that Dr Thomas's work (*Elpis Israel* commenced 1848) coincided with the waning of professional exposition in Europe while yet many still had their hopes set on the years 1848-49. He was at the height of American interest on the subject and published *Eureka* (Vol. I 1861, Vol. II 1866, Vol. III 1869) at the peak of interest in the terminal date 1866. He wrote, therefore, after an intense period of study on the part of Christians of all persuasions (Dr Thomas mentioned many of these in the preface to *Eureka* Vol. III), and entered into their labours and at a very popular time for such expositions. In his writings, Dr Thomas discounts much of the work of the other expositors but this appears to be mainly because of their attitude to the immortality of the soul rather than because of any difference on historical interpretation.

The continuous historic interpretation of the Book of Revelation as Dr Thomas received and accepted it was

largely the outcome of the work of expositors standing foursquare in the tradition of the Reformation. The Reformers themselves were bitter in their attacks on the Anabaptists. By adopting the historical interpretations defined by expositors such as Elliott (Church of England), Dr Thomas was following a path alien to the tradition in which he himself stood.

The structure of the Revelation is such that any interpretation requires the identification of two opposing forces. One is that of Babylon (and her progeny); the other is that of Jerusalem (and the people of God). From the standpoint of the Reformer, Rome is the great enemy and persecutor. For the sixteenth century Anabaptist, Rome may indeed be an enemy and persecutor. But if he is being martyred by drowning at the hands of reformation-inspired persecution (in mockery of the baptism he proclaims) then his identification of who is the persecutor and who the people of God will not be that of the Reformer.

The tension created by this difference of views runs through Dr Thomas's exposition of the Apocalypse. For example, in the interpretation of the Death of Witnesses (Rev. 11) which occurs toward the end of Volume II of *Eureka*, we have a long exposition interspersed with condemnations of Greek, Latin and Protestant apostasy. His exposition of the text of the Apocalypse, however, relates to witnesses of a Protestant character, holders of the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, infant baptism and so on which he, in the immediate context, condemns. Similarly the death of the Witnesses is interpreted as their *political* death. Though if it were suggested that politics and witnessing for Christ were associated in any other context great exception would be taken. If the political aspect of the witnessing is removed the exposition does not stand at all for during the period when the witnesses are reputedly dead they are admitted to be a "powerful and ever-watchful body" (*Apocalypse and History* Page 99).

There are, of course, numerous criticisms which have been and could be made about the line of exposition taken in *Eureka*.

The most serious objections are probably as follows:

(i) Biblical language, figures and

symbols which are well established in Scripture as a whole, are given meanings devoid of spiritual content. For example, the strongly messianic passages of Rev. 12 about the man child who would rule "with a rod of iron" are related to the Roman Emperor Constantine who sought to bring unity to his empire by adopting one religion for it—Catholic Christianity—and succeeded in presiding over the first persecution of Christians by Christians.

(ii) For a "continuous historic" interpretation it seems oddly lacking in modern references. True the "war in the air" has been suitably up-dated (it will be war above the air before long). But what can we make of the vials described as "the last plagues of all, for with them the wrath of God is consummated" (Rev. 15:1) being related largely to the Napoleonic wars? Has there been no war on the sea since Nelson? Yet if we try to update this what a gap is left in the "continuity"!

(iii) The Apocalypse draws enormously on Old Testament allusions and direct quotations. This is the key to the meaning of the book. What should be observed, however, is that the Apocalypse transforms Old Testament prophecy and gives it a new and Christian context. In Rev. 19, for example, the Gogian prophecies of Ezek. 38 and 39 are re-set with the object of the attack not "cattle and goods" but Christ and the saints. The pre-Christian temple passages in Ezekiel Ch. 40 onwards which presume a Mosaic legal groundwork are given a Christian setting and are re-interpreted in Revelation 21 and 22. The "continuous historic" approach on the other hand gives precedence to historic allusions over scriptural ones.

During private discussions on the meaning of the Apocalypse one often meets the question, "If the line taken in *Eureka* is questionable what is the alternative?" The fact that no Christadelphian exposition has been produced which commands wide

assent as an alternative is often taken to be sufficient reason for thinking that there is none. Defenders of the traditional exposition often make it easy for themselves by assuming that the only other alternative is the "futurist" view which sets the entire action of the book in the future. It is suggested, however, that if anyone conscientiously sets out to find in detail the meaning of the Revelation, giving due weight to the meaning of the words and symbols as presented in the rest of the Scripture, he will be well satisfied with the result. Such use of the book, without recourse to abstruse political history, will be nearer the use intended by John on the Isle of Patmos when he wrote it.

Apart from the Apocalypse the same pre-occupation with contemporary excitements may be traced in the exposition of other prophecies.

Britain and Prophecy

One of the most eagerly followed and frequently quoted statements by Dr Thomas on prophecy is what he said about Britain and the Jews as found on page 442 of *Elpis Israel*.

But to what part of the world shall we look for a power whose interests will make it willing, as it is able, to plant the ensign of civilisation upon the mountains of Israel? . . . I know not whether the men, who at present contrive the foreign policy of Britain, entertain the idea of assuming the sovereignty of the Holy Land and of promoting its colonisation by the Jews . . . the finger of God has indicated a course to be pursued by Britain which cannot be evaded and which her counsellors will not only be willing but eager to adopt when the crisis comes upon them.

The following views on this passage will sufficiently illustrate general feeling.

In these extracts is foreseen a course of events of which there was no indication at all at the time they were penned, but which have been completely realised . . . *God's Way*, page 228.

It is the fact that the arguments and conclusions here advanced (in the pamphlet) are not new at all but were first published nearly 100 years ago before there was any sign of that development in the land which seems so natural to us now, before there was the slightest indication of Great Britain being

interested in either Palestine or Egypt . . . (page 13, *Britain in Prophecy*). As proof, the quotations from *Elpis Israel* are given.

Since Dr Thomas wrote, Britain has obtained the sovereignty and lost it, leaving a trail of bitter memories in Jewish hearts through her suppression of the Jewish immigration urge, and only on Britain's departure has a real return to the land been possible. Granted, however, that Britain occupied a valuable role for a while and that that is sufficient to meet the points made above, how justified is the claim for unique prescience in *Elpis Israel*?

A number of books have been published in recent times which review the relations between Britain and the Jews. One such is the book *Bible and Sword* by Miss Barbara W. Tuchman (Alvin Redman Ltd., London 1958). Only a reading of the book can bring the full impact of the evidence to bear but it can be shown in a few quotations that far from being "a course of events of which there was no indication at the time they were penned . . ." "before there was the slightest indication of Great Britain being interested," the whole plan, political and religious, had been the excitement of the day for years before.

On the 11th August 1840, Lord Palmerston, then Foreign Secretary, wrote to the British Ambassador in Constantinople:

Their minds at the present time among the Jews dispersed over Europe, a strong notion that the time is approaching for their nation to return to Palestine . . .

The letter then went on to ask the Ambassador to influence the Sultan to encourage the Jews to settle. A few days later, August 17th, *The Times* published a leading article on a plan "to plant the Jewish people in the land of their fathers" which it said "was under serious political consideration", their rights and privileges "secured to them under the protection of a European Power." I quote from Miss Tuchman's book, pages 113-115:

There was no doubt as to the identity of the European Power *The Times* had in mind . . . The article created a sensation. "The newspapers teem with documents about the Jews" recorded Lord Ashley . . . Obviously neither Palmer-

ston nor *The Times* had come up with the same idea within a week of each other by pure chance, each had been led to it by . . . the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury . . . His motives were religious . . . (he) envisaged an Anglican Israel restored by Protestant England at one stroke confounding popery, fulfilling prophecy, redeeming mankind Belief in the second advent has always been a moving principle in my life (said Shaftesbury) . . . since according to prophetic scripture, the return of Jews was indispensable to this great event . . . his daily prayer . . . daily hope . . . "Oh pray for the peace of Jerusalem" were the words engraved on the ring he always wore on his right hand.

Attempts to buy large areas of Palestine had, as early as 1840, received the blessing of Queen Victoria and *The Times* carried a suggestion from a correspondent that Britain should buy Palestine for the Jews.

It is clear from all this that there was a large and influential body of opinion in England, at least ten years before the appearance of *Elpis Israel*, who saw in British protection of the Jews and influence in Palestine, including purchase of the Land itself, the surest token of the early realisation of the second advent.

Which, then, came first—interpretation of Ezek. 38:13 "Tarshish" and the "Young Lions" as a symbol of Great Britain protecting the Jews or political interest and hence a searching for some prophetic peg on which to hang the events?

Looking back now on the "Tarshish" interpretation, a nation, "willing and eager" to control Palestine, we can see that the expected fulfilment has fallen through, but more than this must be said. We have an example of how the pressure of contemporary events can blind eager, prophetic scholars to obvious facts. Without British interests already materialising, would anyone have suggested that "Young Lions," always a symbol of irresponsible ravaging (see Hosea 5: 14), would be on hand to "protect" cattle? Surely not! Would anyone interpret names indigenous to Arabia, Sheba and Dedan, as referring to some distant power even of an invading coloniser?

The picture which emerges from

Ezek. 38 is of an Israel threatened on all sides with their traditional enemies in Arabia (like young lions) longing to take a spoil in conjunction with a northern invader.

I have dealt at some length with the prophecy aspect because it formed so large a part of Dr Thomas's work and because it offers such scope for comparisons and revealing of trends. It shows Dr Thomas caught up in a contemporary excitement. In the preface to *Eureka* Volume II, he speaks of it as "well-timed" . . . "two years or so later would have been unseasonable and possibly too late." Most of the points he was exercised about have now taken their place as forgotten history. A great deal of the subject is a by-path.

The effect of all the expenditure of energy on prophecy on the community's development can only be guessed. It is a subject which tends to encourage an all or nothing approach. Those caught up by it devote enormous time in a constant attempt to match political development with Bible words. Most of the efforts are mercifully forgotten after a few months. The dominance of interest in what is, after all, secular history in our community in times past may be seen from the following quotation from *The Christadelphian*, 1896, p. 417.

What other books would you recommend me to read besides the Bible and those written by Robert Roberts? — Rollin's *Ancient History*; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Russell's *History of Modern Europe*; Dr Thomas's *Eureka*. — Ed.

We must seriously question whether such pre-occupation has had the effect of turning minds to spiritual thoughts. We may suspect, instead, that even faith itself can be diverted to the wrong object. Instead of a faith grounded in the experience of life in Christ, in the reality of worship, in utter trust in God as Saviour and ever present help, we may find that our real confidence in God is based on some political event past or present, and our spiritual temperature measured by the existence or otherwise of a threat of global war. Ethically this has had the effect of unbalancing judgment. Frequently the interpretations have been favourable to our own race and in danger

(continued at foot of next page)

Religion in Secular Society

CHRISTIANS WHO wish "To see ourselves as others see us!" will not be disappointed in reading this book, but they must be prepared to find the views of one who looks from outside. For instance, Dr Wilson finds an explanation for the origin of sects and their possible developments into denominations in man's social behaviour rather than in his seeking after revealed truth. He is obviously aware of sectarian claims to be seeking revealed truth so his observations come as a challenge to religious institutions to examine their motives. Are they being borne along by their environment or are they seeking revealed truth?

Religious thinking — practice — institutions were once at the very centre of life of Western Society, as indeed of all societies. . . . In the twentieth century the situation has manifestly changed and the process of change continues.

This quotation is the theme of the work. The author examines statistics and trends from various angles. His style is not easy and is designed more for sociologists than religious readers, though the latter will find much that is profitable.

Dr Wilson offers an explanation of the differing end-effects of

secularisation in the United States from those in Great Britain and European countries. Church attendance in the U.S.A. is 63 per cent (45 per cent each week) compared with 10-15 per cent in England and 3 per cent in Norway. It is suggested that in the U.S.A. church attendance is

BOOK REVIEW

Religion in Secular Society,

by Brian R. Wilson

(C. A. Watts & Co. Ltd., 1966, 15s.)

socially the "done thing" and because denominations have largely lost their doctrinal differentiation that interest in doctrine and the Bible is almost non-existent. Thus, "those able to name the four gospels" is 35 per cent of church members in the U.S.A. and 61 per cent in Great Britain, so that in England we have poor attendance with the large majority of the community committed to a secular society while in the U.S.A. there is good attendance with a nominal interest. Dr Wilson writes, "Church allegiance is a matter of social respectability."

Though this is statistically shown to be true as a generalisation, yet, in the reviewer's opinion, it does less than justice to a large body of sincere Christian people in the many U.S.A. denominations and sects. The reviewer would therefore have liked to have seen some case histories extending over three or four generations demonstrating the secularisation process with an attempt to determine the reasons.

The author sees in the ecumenical movements of today signs of apathy and weakness, a condition in which parties no longer care about the doctrine for which they once vehemently pressed.

The readers of this magazine will be particularly interested in part four, which deals with the sectarian and denominational attitudes. He says:

They have played an important part in the development of Western society. . . . Sects are always somewhat exclusive bodies which impose some test of merit — of faith, knowledge of doctrine, obedience — on would-be entrants. They keep members under scrutiny and seek to regulate the pattern of their lives in particular ways. They normally have a procedure for excommunicating the wayward and for ensuring the purity of the community.

The members of the major churches are often indistinguishable from one another in most of their secular concerns. . . . But the sectarian is almost always conspicuous by virtue of his religious commitment. . . . The fact that a man is one of Jehovah's Witnesses, or a Christadelphian, or even a Quaker, tends to become evident sooner rather than later.

The author notices development in sectarian societies:

Thus some revolutionist sects have tended over time, as adventural hopes have been disappointed, to become more pre-occupied with the means of their own insulation from the wider society.

He sees introversion as a secondary development which may give way to further response, and again quotes Quakers and Christadelphians as illustrating this tendency, the former giving way from introversion to a more evangelical persuasion in the mid-nineteenth century, while regarding the latter he writes:

There are some indications that, after a period in which a devotional attitude has been more pronounced among Christadelphians, some among them now begin to show much more concern for "good causes" in the wider society, from which not so long ago they would have held aloof.

At the risk of over-simplification we would state that the author in his conclusions sees the "church" once claiming a monopoly of spiritual power, fallen in the present secular society to a sect; that is, a protesting minority, trying to save itself from extinction by ecumenicalism.

John Weaving.

BIBLE PROPHECY

(continued from opposite page)

of equating our own country's enemies with God's. A negative attitude to human suffering has also to be laid at the door of a prophetic interpretation which has conveniently concluded that a suffering nation is under prophetic judgment.

Much prayer and thought is needed to restore the priorities of Christian witness. In practice this has been perceived, though not often articulated, for many years and caution in "prophesyings" has unfortunately, often been wrongfully ascribed to indifference. Some reconsideration will be given to the subject in a later article.

Summer School

BIRMINGHAM 1966

a report by Heather Mander

IF THE stimulus of fellowship and freedom of truth is worthy to be cherished, then those who attended the Endeavour Summer School can testify to its value. The study was held from 20th-27th August, with the majority of days divided into morning examination of the Psalms led by Bro. Wilfred Lambert, and Galatians led by Bro. George McHaffie. The afternoons were left free for open discussion, private study and recreation, whilst the evening lectures were devoted to a varying number of topics.

On Saturday evening, in the opening address, Bro. Wilfred Lambert introduced the course to us. It was not to be highly organised, nor yet a mere holiday, but a time in which we would be able to think out for ourselves the basis of our faith, and put into practice the principles of a Christian life, helping us to become more the type of people that Christ wants as His servants.

Studying The Bible

Like many other things nowadays the background knowledge of the Bible, which contains the fundamentals of our belief is being affected by modern discoveries, and the Christian needs to be aware of these if he is to help others to share his belief. A mere reading of the Bible may induce an emotional reaction, particularly if the reader has been in similar circumstances to the writer, but a deeper rational type of understanding is necessary for many passages, and this can only be gained by study. Familiarity with the text to be studied is essential. Bro. Lambert suggested that the passage should be read two or three times, if possible using different translations. Next dictionaries and commentaries could be used, at least two, because each writer has his own ideas, and it is possible to get a very biased view from one alone. Everyone should make themselves responsible for look-

ing up the subject to be discussed at the Bible class, then much useless talk would be avoided.

Our attitude to prayer was then considered, and Bro. Lambert suggested that sometimes prayers could be written down. Some of the best and most comprehensive prayers he had heard were given in this way. During the week we tried to put into practice these ideas, both individually and collectively.

The main study of the week was devoted to one Old and one New Testament book. Bro. Wilfred Lambert led the study on Psalms, and Bro. Ralph Lovelock and Bro. George McHaffie on Galatians.

The Letter to the Galatians

In his talk on the background of the Epistle to the Galatians Bro. Lovelock said that it was written against the controversy over Gentile Christians and circumcision. The Jews felt that the one specific approach to the unchangeable God could not be altered, and did not realise that Christ's authority had superseded that of Moses. When the trouble over circumcision started in Antioch in Syria, Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem and was impressed to see the Spirit of God working. He went to fetch Paul, because he, Paul, was specially suited to deal with the situation. Paul possibly wrote the letter to the Galatians while going from Antioch to Jerusalem before the council of Jerusalem some years later. The epistle shows Paul's worried mind. He was angry, agitated and excited, and speech such as "I travail in birth again" is anything but cold. In his epistle to the Romans Paul deals with the same problems, but here they are no longer presented under tension, and ideas are elaborated, so it is helpful to refer to parallel passages in Romans when dealing with Galatians.

Bro. George McHaffie gave the remaining lectures on Galatians, and

divided the subject into four parts. Chapters 1 and 2 — Paul's authority and the Judaisers. Chapter 2 verses 16-20 — Faith and Law. The curse removed. Chapters 3 and 4 — Abraham. The promise. Chapter 5 — Flesh and Spirit.

Paul's critics were concerned because he had no authority from the apostles in Jerusalem. They claimed that because of this he was only teaching half the gospel. The Judean Christians still visited the Temple. As Jews their form of religion had been very legalistic, and they had transferred this attitude to their Christianity. Matthias had been chosen by lot, by the apostles, but Paul claimed that his authority was "not after man" but "by the revelation of Jesus Christ." He had a direct call and assignment from Christ for his work of preaching to the Gentiles. Bro. McHaffie asked to what extent can we feel that we have had a call to our Christian work, and what are the modern forms of following the law?

Justification by Faith

The Jewish growth was under the law of Moses, but the Jews discovered that it was impossible for them to keep the law, and so it became a burden to them. They had developed an honourable attitude to life, and the Jewish Christians, encouraged by passages such as Jeremiah 31: 33 and Ezekiel 36: 26 thought that the Spirit would help them to keep the law, and so they would be right with God. However, no man can say he is right in God's sight by the things he has done, so the importance of justification by faith. A bad man may hear the gospel and have faith and become righteous. How can God call a person right before anything righteous has been done? No man can have faith in Christ without it causing a tremendous revolution in his life. Bro. McHaffie suggested (and this led to a great deal of discussion) that the stages of salvation were threefold: (1) justification — putting belief in Christ, and the fundamental change in the way of life. (2) sanctification — the cleansing action of life; and (3) glorification in life eternal.

Jesus fulfilled the law, and by His manner of life showed us the fruits of the Spirit which it is impossible to codify.

The gospel is one of justification

through faith, and this was enlarged upon in the next address on Galatians when the promise to Abraham was discussed. Abraham was promised that in him and his seed all nations should be blessed, and this blessing comes through faith. We are the children of Abraham, not merely by belief, but by our faith (ch. 3: 7). It is this "faith" characteristic which Paul upholds in his argument. Men are justified, and salvation comes, through faith in Christ. This should be the centre of our preaching and form the basis of our transformed life.

Flesh and Spirit

The term Spirit is not explained to us in the Bible, and its use in the Old Testament suggests breath or wind. It is closely linked with man's emotions, because they are often expressed by breath or affect breathing, but it also has an ethical content, e.g. Ezekiel 37 where God promises to breathe His Spirit into His people so that they do good. In Galatians 5 there is the suggestion of power in the use of the word "Spirit," but more important is the alteration of life.

Flesh is also given personality. It is weak and contains evil, but the idea that it is inherently evil does not accord with the resurrection or with other of Paul's writing (cf. 11 Cor. 3: 3). We must manifest good in the flesh by the transforming power of the Spirit. The analogy of Sarah and Hagar shows that those of the Spirit are divine in origin, but those of the law are from the flesh. We can only live the life of the Spirit if the breath of God is breathed into us, and this life is far superior to the life of the law.

The Psalms

In his study on the Psalms, Bro. Lambert advised the use of the Revised Standard Version, as the Authorised Version has the Psalms printed as prose, not poetry. Until recently most manuscripts dated from c. A.D. 900 and all agreed except in minor details. The Jews preserved no old manuscripts, but the Septuagint which was used in the time of Christ shows little variation. However, the Dead Sea Cave manuscripts, published last year, show surprising differences.

There were probably thousands of Psalms, and those we have form the

hymn book for the second Temple. They are in five books as the R.S.V. shows, and each ends with an expression of praise to round off the book.

Many assume that David wrote the Psalms, but many are not by him, for instance 137 which was written during the exile. The value of the Psalms does not depend on who wrote them, or in the circumstances in which they were written. The dates when they were written is uncertain, but many were very early. The poetic forms used in some are pre-Hebrew, but quite unlike any poetry that has gone before in that the Spirit is new and the teaching is new. Possibly one or two were written as late as Ezra and Nehemiah.

The headings show quite substantial differences in the various manuscripts, and can therefore be classed as editor's comment rather than inspired writing as they were obviously not originally part of the book. They often gave instruction for the type of tune to be used or the musical rendering to be given. Differences also occur in the numbering. Psalms 9 and 10 are one psalm in the Septuagint, as also are 114 and 115, but 116 is split into two in the Greek Bible which also has psalm 147 as numbers 146 and 147.

It is interesting to note that the name Yahweh in Psalms numbers 42-83 has been almost completely substituted by the words Adonai or Elohim as the name Yahweh was too holy to use in case of mispronunciation which would have been blasphemy.

Although the historical approach of trying to find by whom individual psalms were written is often unrewarding they can be classified into types. There is the same structure in each psalm of one type. They include

(i) Hymns of praise — sometimes the outcome of an historical event, but more likely composed deliberately for Temple worship. These called for the praise of God, gave reasons why such praise should be given, and often ended with a prayer. Such psalms are 29, 33, 47 and 66.

(ii) Individual Psalms — addressed to God by an individual and used by many individuals in their worship. These were thanksgiving for deliverance from illness or enemies, complaints about enemies, or showing

trust in God. Such are 13, 16, 17 and 51.

(iii) Collective — These could be divided into the same types as the individual psalms. They address God and explain why help is required. Perhaps some natural disaster or warfare is involved. Numbers 74, 90, and 137 are examples of these.

(iv) Royal psalms. The Temple and Solomon's palace were adjacent. Some psalms were written especially for the king. Psalm 2, one of the royal psalms, contains suggestions of a world-wide dominion, which is related to Christ (Acts 4: 25). Other royal psalms are numbers 45, 49, and 69.

(v) Songs of Zion.

(vi) Historical.

(vii) Praise of law.

(viii) Praise of wisdom.

(ix) Liturgical — for particular religious ceremonies.

The songs of ascent, psalms 120-134 had three possible functions. They were used when the Israelites came out of captivity in the time of Ezra, for going up the steps of the Temple.

Evening Discussions

The evening lectures were also most interesting and gave food for talk late into the night. Bro. Ralph Lovelock in his addresses on "The One Church" pointed out that it was continuous from the church in the wilderness, and although much of the church is astray, so was it before the exile. Its duties were to all men (Matt. 5: 46, 47) and we should recognise this fact.

On the Atonement Bro. Joe Matthews said that the type of sacrifice of Christ was of a man who would willingly sacrifice himself for others. Blood sacrifices were not what God ultimately wanted, but "a broken and a contrite heart." Christ acted toward God and man in love. We too must act in this way.

Bro. George McHaffie looked backward and forwards at the Christadelphians, and encouraged us to preserve a continuity with the past in our community, (which had not been as static as we have sometimes been led to believe), whilst growing with current knowledge.

Bro. John Sealey reminded us that Christ was ready to forgive even those who killed Him. He suggested that to understand is to forgive and

showed us our responsibilities in this respect, as God will forgive us only as we are ready to forgive our fellow men.

There was much discussion on various aspects of the lectures, and of our religious life, both during the times set aside on the programme for

this and on other occasions. No report of the week would be adequate without some reference to the atmosphere of family love that prevailed. No one monopolised the discussion and ideas were put forward with a feeling of give and take. There were many vastly different points of view

expressed, but an overall sense of unity in serving Christ prevailed.

Altogether the week was most helpful, and I am sure all who went were glad to hear that plans are in hand for a further course to be held, God willing, during the summer of 1967.

Blind Leaders

Come, come George! You really will have to be more careful. You know what happens when the blind lead the blind?

"Thou approvest the things that are excellent, being instructed (thyself) . . . and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes."

And yet, George and yet . . . you as a would-be reformer send out "a Christadelphian Review" with "A New Look", on the front page (and the back) signed by yourself and your helpful wife Ruth, with a message to your readers about the need to "see ourselves with a critical and discerning eye", "to review ourselves," and to beware of "smugness" (a form of self-confidence?) — all of which is "excellent" — advice.

But, George, and Ruth, how much more well-meaning advice how much more helpfully good leadership, how much more confidence-inspiring would be your analysis of profound and difficult problems, relative to modern life or to pre-historic fossils and origins, if you only took the trouble to get your most elementary facts right.

What are we to think of two editors, who aspire to teach others, who subscribe with all the emphasis of italics to the false statement — "The apostle Paul wrote of the man who looked at himself and then went away immediately forgetting what kind of person he was?"?

I for one, — and I am probably not alone — am left with the feeling that if these well-meaning guides can be wrong about such a simple and easily checked matter, how wrong may they not be about many more complex subjects upon which they undertake to instruct the young?

Think of your example, George!

I seem to remember that a passage in Acts was twisted and misapplied, without retraction, to score a debating point in an editorial comment.

Yours blissfully

Albert Collins

P.S. I wonder if you will publish this contribution to "the discussion"?

We apologise for this error to which Bro. Collins and a reader from Canada call our attention. Editors should, of course, make every effort to be accurate — and should not have confused the apostle Paul's mirror with that of the apostle James.

a word." Only too gladly have we strained at intellectual gnats while we have swallowed moral camels. Only too often have we judged a man's intellectual ability and even his moral worth by his facility at quoting texts.

In this magazine we have never suggested that we do not make mistakes. We have admitted that our teenagers will notice that "we, too, make mistakes and that we do not always rise to the standards they would like". (P. 26 Autumn 1965). It is because we realise how easy it is to be wrong and how necessary it is that we should carefully examine



Correspondence



For a number of reasons Endeavour does not receive as much concentration and time as it needs which increases the possibility of imperfections. What really surprises and concerns us, though, is not our fallibility (which we willingly acknowledge) but that after further correspondence with Bro. Collins we conclude that he wishes us to take him seriously when he suggests that our "false statement" casts doubt on our ability to attempt an analysis of "profound and difficult problems, relative to modern life or to pre-historic fossils and origins." Because of this seemingly grievous error of mis-naming an apostle do we really become unreliable in our efforts to guide young people in the perplexities of modern life? Is it so bad a mistake that it makes us "blind leaders of the blind" and unable to consider fossil evidence in relation to the origin of the earth?

Bro. Collins' remarks, though written in so jolly a style, are representative of the attitude which Endeavour stands against. Only too "blissfully" have we in our community made others offenders "for

our ideas, and even more important, our way of life, that the magazine is published.

Those whom Jesus called "blind leaders of the blind" were not those who still sought for more light and for forgiveness, but those who were so sure of themselves that they thanked God that they were not as other men.

It is perhaps a little unkind to add that Bro. Collins has quoted neither Romans nor the editorial accurately.
G. and R.

Eve's Tempter

May I thank Bro. Byrt for his interesting and courteous letter on this matter?

The main burden of my article was to establish that Eve's Tempter was morally responsible for his words, that, in fact, "when he spoke a lie he spoke of his own." I am gratified that Bro. Byrt accepts this main conclusion.

The suggested identification of the Serpent with some sort of man was

not made with the idea of creating a niche in the Book of Genesis for Neanderthal Man. It was made simply because I could not think of any other creature possessing the attributes of Eve's Tempter. It is true of course that it was possible for God to create a creature with all these attributes and with the moral freedom required. But we end up with a creature uncommonly like man. In fact Bro. Byrt could not avoid using the creation of man as a parallel.

I had never thought of Adam and Eve's primacy of consisting of their mere presence in the Garden. I
(continued on back page)

Letter from Bro. Lovelock

In The Christadelphian for December 1965 the resignation of Bro. Ralph Lovelock from the Publishing Committee was announced. In the announcement it was stated by the Committee, "We wish to make it plain beyond all doubt that our action has nothing whatever to do with Brother Lovelock's fellowship in the Brotherhood." It seems, however, that this view of the matter has not been generally accepted. Bro. Lovelock now writes of events subsequent to his previous statement in the spring issue 1966.

Thank you for your offer of space to continue from the point where my previous statement left off with the story of the controversy over my notes on Genesis. As anticipated at that time, several ecclesias did write to Watford expressing indignation and demanding that I be disfellowshipped. In addition to this several of the brethren at Watford complained of being "lobbied" on this question while fulfilling speaking appointments.

The arranging brethren at Watford spent very many hours discussing the issues involved continuously from January to October, much of it in verbal discussion, but inclusive of a number of official letters in addition. Throughout this protracted period they persistently refused to discuss the basic problems which lay at the root of the matter, and concentrated only on attempts to find valid scriptural objections to my notes.

Over this period a number of scriptural objections were raised successively, but each of these was

dropped subsequently as I was able to show that the objections themselves were contrary to scripture. Finally they wrote to me saying that they had decided to recommend withdrawal on the basis that I did not accept three clauses from the BASF. In reply, I not only confirmed that I did accept these clauses, but entered into considerable detail concerning the meaning which I gave to every part of them. They then decided to drop this charge, and wrote their own six-point statement which they demanded that I accept if I wished to continue in fellowship with them. This statement amounted to an extension of the BASF, and the only points in it which I was unable to accept were not in the BASF. This concerned the inheritance of the law of sin in our members from Adam, which I accept, but refuse to accept on their authority that it is chemically inherited being convinced myself that it is psychologically inherited.

In the three evenings of business meetings at which this matter was presented to the ecclesia a considerable controversy ensued. The meeting was told by the chairman that the reason my previous resignation had been rejected was because the arranging brethren wished to retain my membership while they carried out a thorough examination of my beliefs and issue an official condemnation if they found them false. Both inside the meeting, and outside of it to members of other ecclesias, details of our discussions have been unfairly used, wrenched from their context and quoted as evidence that I believe things which in fact I completely reject. The ecclesia was threatened by one of the arranging brethren that if they rejected the recommendation to withdraw from me, those rejecting the recommendation would themselves have to take up the cudgels with the ecclesias objecting and defend my position. The meeting was told by three of the arranging brethren separately that I had no qualifications in science and was completely unfitted to discuss the matters aired in my notes, a statement which I considered to be irrelevant even if it were true, since they, in discussion, had insisted in leaving "science" out of the matter, basing their approach solely on biblical grounds.

In the outcome, 58 per cent voted for withdrawal, 38 per cent against,

and 4 per cent abstained, approximately 60 per cent of the ecclesia being present. Immediately before the vote was taken, one of the arranging brethren assured the meeting that I would shortly be denying that Jesus was the Son of God; I would like to state publicly that this assurance by him is completely without justification and utterly untrue. It is because I accept the divine authority of the whole Bible that I have striven to meet a growing awareness of problems in our body with a solution which will allow our young members to retain their belief in inspiration instead of assuming that parts of it are mythology. Unless we cease to ignore facts, and learn to face them and discuss their relevance to our life in God, we will rapidly become a body to which only the ignorant or the mentally dishonest can belong. We commenced our history as a group who fearlessly discussed all current problems in the light of the Bible, and did not hesitate to discard theological dogmas where they were shown to be a hindrance to our understanding of the Word of God; it is high time that we reverted to that healthy spirit of a century ago.

Two Protests

We feel that we must express our concern at recent events in the community on the subject of fellowship.

Our approach to the Father is only made possible by His abundant mercy in pardoning "our ways" and His looking with kindness on our feeble efforts to walk in "His ways." The understanding of this basic distinction between the divine and human standards is the core of our acceptable approach.

We believe that recent decisions do not fully comprehend this principle, but seem intent on pulling up what are considered to be tares before the appointed day. It is clearly better to be able to face God having loved and tolerated too much rather than to find that our human judgment of others has been too fine.

Where doubt exists we believe it is our duty to hold fast rather than cast off.

Melva Carter, Julian Dawes,
Ruth Greenwood, Heather Mackay,
Laurie Mackay, Peter Powell.
London.

As a parent with sons faced with masses of scientific facts and theories I was tremendously interested in Bro. Ralph Lovelock's lectures on the "Origin of Man."

At last! Here was a brother who not only knew the Bible but also the scientific facts relating to the antiquity of the human race—a very rare com-

bination—and what a relief it was to me to learn that the two were in harmony.

Here was a theory that it was our limited understanding of the Scripture that was at fault and not the facts—as distinct from the theories of science that were erroneous.

Now herein is a marvellous thing!

The brotherhood has elected to withdraw from him!

The brother who not only understands the problems of the young—and not so young—and can also provide answers—has been turned away! London.

Doris F. Powell.

THE WATFORD STATEMENT

WE FEEL SURE that thinking brethren and sisters in whom the love of Christ dwells will be distressed by the casting out of the church of our Bro. Ralph Lovelock.

We can appreciate that those who have little interest in archaeology or the study of early man will not feel keenly the problems faced by Bro. Lovelock nor wish to pursue the logic of his conclusions. The question which should be asked, however, is not — Is Bro. Lovelock right? but, Should Bro. Lovelock be disfellowshipped?

For more than one hundred and fifty years evidence has been accumulating which points far beyond 4,000 B.C. for man's beginning. Long before it was as demonstrable as it is today. Dr Thomas accepted the geological evidence and followed a line of exposition which presumed that the "pre-Adamerian inhabitants" of the world were under divine law, capable of sin, condemned, and were now awaiting judgement. Most Christadelphians who follow Dr Thomas in this believe, however, that the "pre-Adamerian inhabitants" were wiped out by a cataclysm. But there is no evidence whatsoever for this, either scientific or biblical. A careful refutation of the cataclysm theory will be found in the book *The Word of God* by a late editor of *The Christadelphian*. Bro. C. C. Walker, who generously comments on Page 36, "... no moral damage results from a mistaken interpretation here. Let those who prefer Dr Thomas' view stick to it; but let them not condemn others who can no longer do so."

Far from being evidence of a break in the continuity of modern man around 4,000 B.C. there is evidence of such sophisticated techniques as cave painting, stretching from around 12,000 B.C. down to 2,000 B.C. and

much else beside which anyone can ascertain for themselves from numerous careful scholarly works.

The Watford ecclesia have been given nearly five pages in the December *Christadelphian* to state their case. It must be acknowledged that the tone of the statement contrasts most commendably with the tone which our community has set in similar situations even in the recent past. Particularly commendable is their declaration that the brotherhood needs "... to turn attention to the solving of these difficulties in an atmosphere of calm, sincere, conscientious study, unhindered by the rumours, mistrust, suspicion and hasty judgements that have been all too prevalent among us in recent times." The tragedy is that wherever an informed Christadelphian *does* turn to solve the difficulties, the action of the Watford brethren will be seen as a precedent for any group of prejudiced brethren (with no clear idea of the issues) to cast him out of the church.

The basic trouble in the Watford situation can be read out of their statement. One is astounded to find that brethren of twenty, thirty, forty or more years standing in the Truth admit they were "new to the subject" only about twelve months ago. This is a most revealing admission. Our whole community suffers from a similar failing. We have been hiding our heads in the sands of ignorance for years on this and other subjects which are vital to our ability to grapple with the problems of the twentieth century. Nor can we seek excuse on grounds of being deficient in scientific knowledge. If we can appreciate that the world is round and not flat we can appreciate that it is very old. If we do not like atheistic scientists' writings we can read the work of evan-

gelical scholars such as are published by the Paternoster Press e.g. *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*.

We are all aware that when we first come up against problems of faith it can be upsetting. What are we to make of the maturity of brethren, however, who cannot pursue a discussion on early man without experiencing "all the threats of agnosticism and destruction of faith"? We do not doubt that this is a real experience; many of us have felt it. The feeling has its roots in fear and does not pass until we have resolved our doubts. But are brethren who are still in this phase of a subject to be trusted in their judgment in casting out of the church? The fact that they have not thought their way through it comes out in various ways. They seem to think it adequate to attempt to resolve a question on which "Scripture is absolutely silent," "purely from the point of view of its scriptural implications." From this they condemn Bro. Lovelock because his views of Scripture "were not in accord with those commonly and traditionally held amongst us." What hope then, of a vital response to a new situation?—none! It has all been laid down for us traditionally long before the information was available on which to form a judgment. This is the formula which has been the stumbling block of all religious thinking on scientific subjects from Galileo's time onwards.

We refrain from pursuing the inconsistency of expedient disfellowship with the instructions of Paul who could never have contemplated it in a situation where both parties would go their "separate ways before God" or indeed for a view which is acknowledged to be "conjectural."

We leave to the brethren and sisters' thoughts a procedure which refuses a resignation so that an inquisition can be carried out to see whether one should be cast out of the church.

Nor in this case is there any undesirable moral and spiritual outcome. Men of every race and colour today are, cultural differences apart, sinners in identical terms as that set out by Paul in Romans 1:18 — 2:29. All stand in the same need of redemption, reconciling love and forgiveness of God which is offered through Christ to all. On this there is not the slightest disagreement. The question under dispute has, therefore, no practical bearing whatsoever on the main task of the Gospel to bring Christ to all nations.

In the past, breaks in fellowship have occurred where a clearly formulated alternative view has been possible. In this case there is no evidence that the Watford Arranging brethren have solved the problem of Genesis and early man. Indeed, the community is singularly lacking in attempts which will stand up to scrutiny. Those that are available can only be described as drawing their "sanction from a theoretically possible

but otherwise *unnatural* meaning imposed upon a passage of Scripture" for which Bro. Lovelock's exposition is condemned by the Watford Arranging brethren.

For those who wish to pursue the subject further the following are the main options:

1. Persist with the traditional view, which satisfied virtually everyone three hundred years ago, that man was created without antecedents, around 4,000 B.C.
2. Adopt the view that the first man of the present race was created as a new creation around 4,000 B.C. but that all previous men (cave painters, etc.) were wiped out by a cataclysm either then or by the flood.
3. Assume that the first man, Adam, must be related to the period of the uprise of modern man in Europe 30,000 or more years ago.
4. Follow Bro. Lovelock's compromise between (2) and (3) above.

The first view ignores archaeological evidence and will appeal only to a certain type of mind which prides itself in doing so.

The second view attempts a compromise with scientific evidence but adopts a non scientific expedient, the supposed cataclysm, to support it.

The third view offers the most hopeful and defensible acceptance of scientific evidence but hardly squares with the chronology of Genesis. We believe, nevertheless, that this view commands widespread, if covert, assent in the brotherhood today. We observe a tendency in recent Christadelphian writings to impose accommodating meanings on the chronology.

The fourth view accepts the chronology and the science but cannot avoid the implication that not all living are descended from Adam. Furthermore, although this view has been in circulation for over sixty years, it will now lead to one's dis-fellowship.

So all views have their problems; dare we hope that if we do not look they will go away? Are we approaching the situation where membership of the Christadelphian body will demand that we deny the factual knowledge of the twentieth century? Do we wish to be reasonable intelligent Christians or just cranks?

The Preacher

THERE WAS a chill wind blowing but the young man with the well-worn brief case seemed too wrapped in reflection to notice. The dry leaves swirled round his feet in the eddies of dust which had already dulled the well-rubbed gloss on his worn shoes. Human life is like that, he thought, green and gay in the spring, but like every living thing it had its end in the dry withering that is death. His reflections were cut short as the green and red corporation bus drew up and he took his place on the lower deck, which was, as it was every Sunday, nearly empty.

Settling down in his seat, he opened his case and withdrew a large and shabby Bible. He always checked over his carefully prepared notes on his journey. It fixed the points, clearly defined as they were, more firmly in his mind. It was good to go over them and feel the warmth and enthusiasm of his ideas and exposition steal into his heart.

It was this warm and sincere fervour, coupled with clear and reasoned exposition of Bible topics, which made him a preacher much in demand among the small and scattered meetings of the tiny Bible-minded community to which he belonged.

Having satisfied himself of his message, he let his thoughts turn to the audience to whom he was to speak. "Suffer the word of exhortation", was a well-worn quotation, but, he thought with a wry grin, sometimes it was the speaker who suffered! He groaned inwardly as he thought of the reception that previous visits had taught him to anticipate. Several straggling rows of blank, uncomprehending faces whose monotony was broken only by an occasional half stifled yawn, or a furtive sweet-sucking. That wasn't so bad, he reflected, if that was all. But it was afterwards he dreaded. At most meetings, with typical Scots reticence, he would receive a some-

what embarrassed comment, like, "Thanks, Sandy. Ah enjoyed ye this mornin'." to which he would murmur a modest and confused admission that the pleasure had been his to come. The women were usually a little less taciturn. "That was a fine exhortation, Sandy. We could

a short story by John Wilson

do wi' more o' that." and in the same breath, "How's yer mum and dad, an' a'boday at Kirkton?" But this Sunday he was going to a meeting renowned for its egocentric and contentious character.

He entered the hall. It was cold, bare and empty. Unbuttoning his coat, he sat at the wheezy harmonium and began to pick out a familiar hymn tune.

The door opened, and stopping abruptly, he swung round on the stool to face the newcomer. A tall grey-haired woman in a brown coat walked in and with a grimace,

which might have been taken for a smile, said, "Oh, you're here, Sandy."

He nodded and he stepped forward to offer his hand, "Yes," he said, "I got the early bus." He stood helplessly as she passed him and began to lay a cloth on the table and arrange the lectern and a half-filled glass of water. The door swung open again and the bulk of the members came in in a body. They hurriedly shook his hand, and after hanging up their coats on the shabby coat-rack, stood at the back of the hall chatting in intimate groups. He felt out of it all, as if he were cut off from their stream of thought, as if he was an intruder in their midst. He wondered why they kept asking him to come, and why he could always find no excuse to refuse. They obviously did not like him, and he did not feel at home with them however much he tried to set aside his personal feelings and inclinations.

The president for the day arrived, and led him to his seat beside him, behind the desk. The preliminaries over, the president called on him to speak. It was a short address (they always stipulated fifteen minutes at the most and he had tried this time to avoid arousing animosity by complying), but it was packed, as much as he had found possible, with example, illustration, and lessons to apply to practical life drawn from scripture sources. It was funny, he thought, how you could, in the middle of speaking and getting your points over, think about the audience. He weighed them up, even as he spoke to them. He looked at them as his face turned this way and that to embrace his audience, and he tried to see what was written on their faces and what was in their hearts. Some slouched in their seats with eyes fixed on boots, some stared in a trance-like vacancy at a point somewhere to the side of his left ear. Some sat, hunched in corners, with mouths tightly lipped and sharp eyes alert-like vultures, he thought, waiting for the word out of place, the slip of phrase, the disagreeable idea. Two faces were strangely out of place. Elderly, but somehow young. They listened with interest, and he noted, with pleasure. He could tell that by the eyes-eager and shining, and by the excited smile which made the faces alive and youthful. Perhaps they were the reason he kept coming back. He knew that they at least,

appreciated what he had to give.

The meeting was over. The comments and criticism began. He had drawn his lesson from the downfall of Lot in Sodom. He had pointed out the dangers attendant on a too-close association with the outlook and practice of an atheistic and materialistic society.

His lessons had been forceful, and he now remembered that they had also been, for his present audience, unintentionally apt. They resented his conclusions. They seized upon an opposite line of thought and endeavoured by drawing attention to other aspects, to negate his searching thoughts. They misquoted and misrepresented him, they disagreed volubly with some of his practical remarks. They certainly had failed to "suffer the word of exhortation."

He gently argued his fundamental points, he quietly accepted the just criticism that his portrayal had been somewhat one-sided, but pointed out that it had to be so in the limited time available. Their disagreement was petulant, their criticism fierce, their censure harsh—he felt he knew the feeling of the fox when brought to earth. He was glad when he was back in the fresh air and under the wintry sun again. But the briskness of the air, instead of brightening him, succeeded only in magnifying by contrast, the heavy dispirited feeling which possessed him.

His legs dragged him wearily to the bus-stop, and there supported his body with its heavy-laden heart. His thoughts were a turmoil of despair, irritation and sadness. It was not that he wanted recognition for himself. It was not even his vanity which was at stake, a preacher had to watch out for pride—it was always cropping up—but he had learned to recognise it, even if he had not learned completely to conquer it. It was the sense of frustration he felt in doing a work to which he felt he had been called, and yet one in which he seemed to achieve so little. He could not understand it. He tried to speak in the right spirit, with a sense that he was but a tool in the Divine workshop—yet there seemed so little evidence of fruit. Yes, there were the two who had listened so intently this morning, but then they were so much on the same spiritual wave-length, that he probably had not given *them* anything they did not know or have before. It was the

others. Their harshness, their disagreeableness, their perverse opposition to all he ever said, their scathing criticisms of the sectarian thought and practice of the other associated meetings as if they were set apart and somehow superior—these were the things about them which puzzled and troubled him. Each visit, each year, seemed to present no mellowing of their pride and prejudice; each exhortation, each address, each lecture seemed only to increase the bitterness and scorn which poured from their hearts and mouths.

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" The familiar quotation rose to his mind, and its implied answer increased his growing sense of futility. What was the point of trying to change these people, who did not see or feel their need for reformation of character? What was the point of trying to impose on them his interpretation of what was good and right? How could he be sure that his view of life, his attitude and approach to their common and accepted beliefs and principles, was the right or only one? We each walk according to our light, he mused, and, if our light be darkness. . . . He suddenly realised, that his thoughts were the echoes of a familiar passage. "Walk in the light" it continued, he remembered. You couldn't do it, he thought, if it wasn't possible. Either their light was darkness or—could he be certain that it was he, and not they, who walked in light?

Thinking that it would be too presumptuous to answer, he thrust the thought from his mind, and tried to assure himself that his dividing line was too sharp, and that in both attitudes there must be an admixture of light and darkness, error and truth. Each shall be judged, he decided, by his works. But he was not satisfied. There still lurked in his mind an unhappy suspicion that this solution was an equivocal over-simplification.

He had little enthusiasm for lunch. But for courtesy's sake he tried to make cheerful conversation with the quiet young visitor his wife had brought back from their own little meeting for lunch. He was a dark good-looking lad, and as shy as most of the seventeen-year-olds he knew. He wondered why he had not noticed

(continued on back page)

SOME REFLECTIONS ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

by Ron Bray

IN THE latter half of the eighteenth century there occurred a period of religious activity, notably in the United States, which was described by historians as the great awakening. This was somewhat promoted by a revulsion of feeling against the atheism of the French Revolution, aided by the arrival of Whitfield, who was associated with the evangelical revival of Wesley. At this time there was a shift of emphasis from intellectual belief to personal religious experience. This, in its turn, led to demands for complete religious liberty, Baptists, Quakers and rationalists being of one mind on this issue. One of the great frontier sects of the early nineteenth century was named the "Disciples of Christ," a group of dissenting Baptists founded by Thomas Campbell (who went to America in 1807) and his son Alexander, who associated with his father's work from 1810. Dr John Thomas, being the son of a dissenting Baptist clergyman, naturally gravitated to this body in his early days in America (from 1832).

In the early years of last century, America saw the "great revival" in Bible study with its emphasis on prophecy. America also remembered its Puritan founders and a religious zeal took hold of the nation. Camp meetings of vast numbers spread like wildfire through the country; meetings were organised by itinerant Methodist circuit riders. Such men as Miller, Marsh and Drummond gave their views regarding the Advent and the Millennium, sometimes with such emphasis that the more emotional of their listeners had mental breakdowns.

When the eleven disciples stood looking upwards after the ascension of Jesus, an angel spoke to them.

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"—and added that Jesus would return. The angel seemed to be saying "Don't just stand there: do something." The people of the nineteenth century camp meetings seemed just to "stand there" and wait. The writer sometimes wonders whether our own Christadelphian body has stood too long looking up at heaven whilst the world goes by.

From about 1848, Dr Thomas had been instrumental in forming societies of converts. He had broken with the Campbellites when he became "convinced by a study of the Bible that the cardinal doctrines of the existing churches correspond with those of the apostate church predicted in scripture." However, his societies of converts took no distinctive name until the outbreak of the civil war. In 1864 Dr Thomas coined the name "Christadelphian" (brethren in Christ) to provide a distinctive title. This name is registered in Ogle county, Illinois, U.S.A.

Now, whilst Dr Thomas interpreted scripture, Robert Roberts organised our sect and, as a result, we have inherited certain features (such as the order of service) from the nonconformist pattern of the last century. Dr Thomas did not favour democratic procedures, with regular elections, such as we have maintained. Another feature of our community has been its attempt to stabilise its doctrine, even on issues which seem to defy definition. We have developed as an inward looking fraternity, seeing ourselves more clearly than we see the world in which we live. As the writer of *Sects and Society* observed, a Christadelphian knows his brethren and sisters in the next town better than his neighbours in the same street.

We do not seem to have recognised the anomaly of an inward looking community claiming to be the repository of the Truth proclaimed by the most outward looking Person who ever lived. If Jesus had been as introvert as our church, He would not have died for the world. He would not have known its need.

This attitude on our part has led us to excesses of misplaced zeal. We have used the word "withdraw" when we meant "excommunicate"! We have interpreted "disorderly walk" to suit the believed need of an occasion (although the scripture clear-

ly defines it as applying to a limited field). Worse still, we have caused a person to suppress honest doubts in the name of ecclesial harmony and peace. Yet all such doubters only ask a fair hearing for their problems and a sincere and convincing reply. The present writer shared the guilt for this attitude, for it has taken him over thirty years in the Truth to realise its folly.

Dr Thomas plainly favoured the slave owning Southerners in America (page 119, Autobiography, R. R.). I think today we would disfellowship him! And with more reason than some of our "withdrawals" have had? The writer recalls a business meeting of a particularly boisterous nature which ended in two brethren being excommunicated. On asking whether more love should not be shown, I was told that the "withdrawal" was carried out in love. We remember wondering whether love had a definition of which we had not heard.

Jesus said "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It is our good words, mark you, that make our contemporaries glorify our Father. Individually, we do not doubt, our good works are done, but until our body becomes more outward looking, and sees the material needs of the world, we will fail to make others glorify the God the Christadelphians worship. Of recent times, we seem to be awakening from our hundred years' sleep, and our missions overseas begin to show that we do care for the suffering millions around us. The Master was a Person of service, He served His fellow man. With His disciples He fed the hungry, healed the sick, gave to the poor, comforted the suffering.

Whilst working in a hospital, the writer noted the almoner say such things as, "This matter needs further attention. I will ask the aid of the brotherhood of St Laurence—or the Sisters of Mercy." If only we had been known as a people to call upon in need, would not our message of salvation have received more earnest attention?

Is it not time that, as a greatly blessed community we reach outward more vigorously, not only with the message of salvation but also with our hands and hearts, helping to ease the suffering that sin has caused?

(Continued from front page)

We do not necessarily agree with all the doctrines they teach (though we usually have a large area of agreement, larger than many think). But we are unwilling to abuse them as once they were abused and we prefer to give honour where honour is due.

But once we allow that our interpretation on any particular point might be wrong then we find ourselves in a very different position from those who think this impossible. We now feel that we must not confine our reading to the books and literature written by those in our own community. We want to look further and see what conclusions other minds have made. In the past brethren have advised that studious Christadelphians should confine their reading to the books produced by our own writers together, perhaps, with an occasional ancient history book. This may once have satisfied but education (whether we think it desirable or not) has so penetrated our community that no thinking person is prepared to be guided by such advice today. And, indeed, why should we be? Why should we not reap the benefit of the thinking of many minds? Most of our speakers and writers do, of course, make use of commentaries, books, hymns, etc., which are produced outwith our community, but sometimes still with the idea that those who wrote them are not only outwith our community but also outwith the love of God.

Yet we are told by other brethren and sisters how

pleasantly surprised they have been when attending a Bible discussion class held by some group other than our own, to see the zeal, the knowledge and faith of those joining in the exercise. We are, happily, losing that self-satisfying notion that the Bible is our private preserve only to be revealed to others by ourselves.

We shall find it necessary, therefore, in this "review" not only to look inward but also to look outward. We need to see how others are coping with the tremendous difficulties which this complex age presents. We may not agree with much of what the Bishop of Woolwich has to say; religion-less Christianity may hold no appeal for us; the report on *Sex and Morality* may not insist on the standard we would set; but all these attempted solutions are the product of men struggling to snatch from disaster a generation which is on the brink of it, and to present God to men and women who refuse to know Him. It is in this light that we must make our assessments and our criticisms. We cannot afford to put "God in a Box" as J. B. Phillips would call it. Nor can we afford to put ourselves in a box. Though not of the world we must be in it, realising its painful struggles. We must listen to the voice of others who are battling against the same forces as ourselves in a sea of unbelief; we must be ever ready to reassess our beliefs and our ways, our interpretations and our methods so that they match up to the challenge of the age in which we live.

George and Ruth McHaffie.

THE PREACHER

(continued from page 14)

before, and supposed that he had thought of him as a child. We shall have to take more interest, he thought, our young people are growing up. He thought with a pang of the numbers of their young people who had shown no interest in the things close to his heart, and had gone to seek for pleasure and excitement in the world. It was sad. They were left with the dully apathetic ones, who could hardly even make intelligent conversation. It was no great promise for the future, he thought gloomily. "Pardon?" he said, "I'm sorry I was thinking." He smiled ruefully at the boy. He noticed that his clear grey eyes were wide and serious. "I was saying that," he hesitated, then, overcoming his shyness, "I've been thinking for a long time of—" His expression told the boy that he understood what he was trying to say, his heart leaped with joy, and his face lit up with sincere pleasure. "I'd like you to teach me," the boy said simply. And he knew that his years of preaching had not been without purpose. The call had come independent of him, and now, for the little he had to do he had been well prepared.

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 11)

should rather have thought that it was because of their special potentialities that God placed them there.

The question of the presence of the Serpent in the Garden is common to all interpretations except the one that sees the Serpent as a subjective figure of Eve's mentality. One thing however seems certain. Whereas it is specifically stated that God planted the Garden, made the trees to grow, and placed Adam and Eve in it, the record never tells us that God put the Serpent there. Indeed its classi-

fication with the beasts of the field strongly suggests that it had no proper place in the cultivated environment of the Garden. How then did it get in? It has been suggested, with some plausibility, that Adam in his folly invited it to enter.

Bro. Byrt's remarks on the representational aspect of the sin of Adam I think are valid. All this would tend to the conclusion that the temptation in Eden was not "special" and miraculous but was a recognisable situation—and therein lies much of its exhortational value.

Leicester.

Denis Draper.

SUMMER SCHOOL 1967

SATURDAY, JULY 29th-SATURDAY, AUGUST 5th*

OUR Study Week will again be held, God Willing, in the house and lovely grounds of Fircroft College, Birmingham. The course will be run on similar lines to last year and will have the Gospel of John as the main study.

The cost of the week will be about £9 10s. It is important to know the approximate accommodation required, and those wishing to attend should write as soon as possible to our business address:

The Endeavour Magazine, 104 Lady Byron Lane,
Knowle, Solihull, Warwickshire.

* Please note that the date has been changed from that previously announced.