

SPECIAL—LITERALISM

The Berean

CHRISTADELPHIAN

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE EXPOSITION AND
DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED
TO THE SAINTS; AND OPPOSED TO THE DOGMAS
AND RESERVATIONS OF THE PAPAL AND PROTESTANT
CHURCHES; WITH THE OBJECT OF MAKING READY
A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD.

EDITED BY G. H. DENNEY & G. A. GIBSON

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WESTON-SUPER-MARE. —A. E. Tandy, Fairhaven, Bleadon Hill, Bleadon.

WIGAN. —G. Halliwell, 151 Moor Road, Orrell (2.30 p.m.).

WORCESTER. —H. Blake, 18 St. Dunstan’s Crescent.

The Berean Christadelphian

Edited by G. H. DENNEY and G. A. GIBSON.
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Matt. 16: "I will give unto thee, Peter, the Keys of the Kingdom."

"It is said that when the Jewish Sanhedrin made a man a 'doctor of the law' they used to put into his hands the key of the closet in the temple where the sacred books were deposited and also they gave him tablets to write upon, signifying that they gave him authority to teach and to explain the Scriptures and the law of God to the people." Note: Emphatic Diaglott.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS:

LITERALISM: THE SECOND COMING. SIGNS OF THE TIMES.
THE MOVEMENT BACK TO ZION. APOSTASY.

Volume XXXII AUGUST, 1944 NO. 380

EDITORIAL

Literalism.

In the columns of one of London's newspapers last month our teaching regarding the literal Second Coming of our Lord Jesus was attacked and the Editor of this paper was said to "make a fetish of literalism." The accusation has some ground of truth in it. We do believe in the literal return of our Lord.

If a "fetish" represents this as our one great desire and hope, then we are glad to admit it.

But let us point out how feeble is the position to-day of those who hold and teach that there is no literal meaning to be attached to the plain statements in the New and Old Testaments on this extremely important matter. They are impaled on the horns of a great dilemma.

If our Lord did not intend His followers to believe in His own literal return, how do we account for the fact that the whole of the Early Church believed it so thoroughly? Did Jesus deceive His followers?

Gibbon properly points out that the Christian Church until the end of the second century had "the expectation that before the conversion of mankind was accomplished, war, human government, the Roman Empire and the world of men would be no more." "The ancient and popular doctrine of the millennium," he says, "was intimately connected with the second coming of Christ. As the works of the creation had been finished in six days, their duration in the present state was fixed for six thousand years. This would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years. Christ would then reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection. This idea seemed so well adapted to the desires and apprehensions of mankind that it must have contributed in a very considerable degree to the progress of the Christian Church." ("Decline and Fall," ch. 15).

Now this testimony of one of the greatest of all historians cannot lightly be brushed aside. Mr. Gibbon had made a profound study of the matter. Originally a member of the English Episcopal Church, he was ejected from his university while still a student because he joined the Roman Catholic Church. Later, in France, he discovered the impossibility of reconciling, the lives of the priesthood with their public profession. So he gave up any adherence to Christian sects altogether.

But he also points out for us how the Church of Christ changed from its first view, but he does not give the explanation of the change which the Scriptures give, showing that, like many others, he had not studied the Scriptures for themselves, but had only studied the history of the Church from human records outside of the realm of Divine Inspiration.

If he had read Paul's letters to the Thessalonians and to Timothy, or studied Christ's words in Luke xxi. and Matt. xxiv., etc., he would have seen that the change was predicted and condemned absolutely as rank apostasy, only to be destroyed by our Lord Himself. He could have read Jude setting forth that the Faith was "once for all delivered" to the people of God and his unmeasured condemnation of those who set out to alter that faith. Gibbon contents himself to argue that this doctrine of the literal second coming was merely a temporary measure to engage the sympathies of men. Says he, "When the edifice of the Church was almost completed, the temporary support was laid aside. The doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth was then treated as a profound allegory. It was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism. A mysterious book of prophecy (the Revelation) which still forms a part of the Canon, but which favoured the exploded sentiment, very narrowly escaped the proscription of the Church."

The Church's Failure.

The second horn of the dilemma is that the purely spiritual and allegorical, and merely Church's claim that the Second Coming is indicates that the leaders of Christianity would at last convert the whole world, is being shown to be false by the march of events.

Who can claim to-day with any show of reason that Christian sentiments are making progress towards complete domination of human thought? The reverse is true. Christianity has been so false to the name it bears that it has allowed the world to conquer the Church, and not the Church the world. Seeking to link itself always from Constantine's day till now with the governments, the pomps and vanities, of this world, it has failed in its mission and has become merely an instrument of human ambition. There is less of Christian action in the world as a result, year by year, and soon it will be true that, "as it was in the day of Noah, so shall it be in the day of Christ's return" (Matt. xxiv. 37). That may be true already if the likeness to "all the earth being filled with violence" through man's departure from God be a true criterion (Genesis vi. 13).

The Remnant.

Another fact partly neglected by the author of the Decline and Fall, and almost completely ignored to-day by the "wise of this world," is that there has never yet perished from the earth the remnant of Christians, who believe, as implicitly as did their first-century brethren in the literal return of our Lord to establish His Kingdom upon earth. They can be found ever since the third century always outside the great organised Churches of Christianity. They are still here, and they will be here "until He comes." For is it not written, "Unto them that look for Him, He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28).

It is appropriate to link with Paul's words the promise made to Daniel.

"Blessed is he that, earnestly waiting, cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days (a time period now nearly expired). Go thou thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest and shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days." "At that time shall Michael stand up that great prince that

standeth for the children of Thy people. There shall then be a time of trouble unparalleled, and at that time the people of God shall be delivered." In this hope we abide.

EDITORS.

Signs of the Times.

"The plowing of the wicked."—Prov. xxi.

The Terror!

Slowly, but surely, Europe, prostrate for nearly four years under the iron heel of the tyrant, is staggering to her feet and is mustering her strength for one terrible struggle. As God has said, it will be every man's hand against his brother. Nations to-day are torn with ideologies and factions, and Hitler's armies number thousands of military slaves.

What has been the prime factor in creating this situation? It has been and is none other than the flying terror. The air assault on Germany and German war industry has dealt a blow from which the Reich cannot recover. Hitler thought with this weapon to crush the world; instead, the terrible weapon of total war has been turned against him, and air bombing, savage, pitiless and indiscriminate, was conceived in this madman's brain.

This terror has given breathing time for Germany's foes to gather their tardy but overwhelming strength. And avenging armies are closing in on all sides. The Reich is facing disaster and political death — the fate she thought to unleash on her neighbours.

But whatever the terror may be, or the arrow that flieth by day, the servant of God will take comfort in the beautiful words of Ps. xci., and realise that the wickedness of this world cannot alter the Divine purpose or destroy any of the Sons of Deity.

That terror, which began with the horrors of the bombing of Guernica, Warsaw, Rotterdam and other cities, has now returned to Tarshish, and the destructions of Coventry and the ports is renewed in the uncanny malevolence of the pilotless bomb. Mr. Churchill's speech in the House of Commons, July 6th, strikes a note of confidence in the ultimate defeat of this sadist weapon. He is right. For, even as Russia was not to fall before the German onslaught, even so Britain must triumph in this present conflict in order to meet the requirements of the sure word of prophecy. Hitler's end is not far off, leaving the two great protagonists of Ezekiel to regroup for the fateful field of Armageddon (xxxviii. and xxxix.).

Meanwhile, the terror in another form is upon the unhappy Jews. More thousands have been sent in sealed waggons from their homes in Hungary to the slaughter-house in the secret wilds in Poland. Hungary will pay a bitter price for thus surrendering her Jewish citizens victims to the fury of the madman of Berchtesgaden. "I will curse him that curseth you . . ." says Jahveh. History shows that the curse has never yet failed.

"Trust not in oppression and become not vain in robbery. . . ." —Ps. lxii.

Delight in Lies.

Current affairs give no true perspective of world events—the Divine aspect, that is. Terrible battles, the disappearance of vast armed forces as though they were mere elements dissolved in the alchemy of war, the fall of so-called impregnable fortresses, routs turned to nauseous massacres, rubble mounds the sole remains of civic pride, the screech of the war machine in full crescendo—all give a, confused picture, which, apart from Jahveh's revelation of its bearing on the future, is a meaningless lapse into barbarism.

That it has a meaning is clear to the servant of God. But that meaning is only shown in the scriptures of truth, a source of information scorned by the political and ecclesiastical wiseacres of this world. This age is heartless, debauched in crime, self-deception and deceit. The background to it all is well illustrated in the sadistic call of Von Schirach, the leader for the education of the German Youth movement:—"We want fearless and commanding young men with the strength and beauty of beasts of prey." And this is the age as moulded in the dreams of Hitler's millennial ambitions.

What says Jahveh of this insurrection of the workers of iniquity? He says that He will "shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. . . . So shall they make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away." In this wild crisis which is come upon the world we catch a glimpse of the legacy of hatred and sullen fear of those lost centuries which lie behind history—mankind split into clans, nations and tribes because of the presumption of Babel, and from thence onward because God was not in all their thoughts, doomed to the direst terrors until the Prince of Peace should come and restore the kingdom unto Israel, and advance the glory of His Father to the uttermost ends of the earth (Ps. lxiv. and lxxii.).

The men of this age do not anticipate this! The lecturer in political science at Edinburgh University, recently questioned whether it was possible to produce institutions and laws and government to settle relations between States until there was a general international society. The Bible solves his question. Christ is the coming world Ruler; upon His shoulder will rest the Key-Symbol of government, from His capital City shall a universal law be promulgated, and before His Everlasting Throne shall all nations pay homage (Is. ix. and xxii., Mic. iv., Zech. xiv.).

Hitlerite Germany is not an inheritor of the Roman tradition, but a tool in the hands of God for the weakening of the Ten-Toed political divisions of the great and terrible Iron-Beast Kingdom of Daniel's vision, preparatory to the coming of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to sweep the whole earth with the broom of destruction, by fire and by sword to effect the vengeance of Jahveh for the missions inflicted upon His people, Israel.

"He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction."—
Proverbs xvii

**It shall bring
him to the
king of
terrors.**

"Yea, says Job (xviii.), "the light of the wicked shall be put out . . . the steps of his strength shall be straitened and his own counsel shall cast him down. For he is cast into a net by his own feet . . . his strength shall be hunger-bitten . . . his roots shall be dried up

. . . his remembrance shall perish from the earth . . . he shall neither have son nor nephew among his people . . . they that come after him shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before him were affrighted." Hitler's dream empire is dissipated before the avenging armies of Meshech, his philosophy of "Mein Kampf " has brought millions of his deluded people to the pit of destruction.

The Russian tidal wave still sweeps on. Vilna has, like Minsk, fallen, and the great German bastion of the Baltic States will be speedily over-run. Further south, Moscow announces brilliant victories and the utter rout and appalling slaughter of corps after corps on the White Russian and southern fronts: the much-mentioned Curzon line is already ruptured. The boasted impregnability of the Vaterland line becomes a mere myth before the vast armoured columns and Cossack horsemen Stalin moved against them. One ghastly feature common to all the Russian communiqués is the prodigious tale of the slain and comparatively few prisoners taken. The opening Psalm gives the clue—the ungodly are "like the chaff which the wind bloweth away." Wars come when wickedness reaches a climax.

Since the fall of Sebastopol the grand strategical plan of the offensive against Germany is unfolding with an ever-increasing violence. The Finno-Karelian defences have been smashed, the centre of Hitler's eastern front torn open, and now follows an abrupt diplomatic move against Bulgaria. Undoubtedly coming events are casting their shadows before—dark fear trembles over Sofia and Bucharest; the-Balkan menace is to mature. The three satellite powers, jackals hanging on the skirts of Nazi ideology in hopes of offal Hitler may fling them, self-blinded in their choice, have ignored the opportunity to get out of the war. True, indeed, as God's servant affirms, their own counsel brings disaster—if not self-destruction.

Bye-gone attempts to grasp at world dominion have all followed one pattern. Hitler's greedy ambitions for pre-eminence and the prestige which position and power give, follow the same exemplar. He is just a fugleman, copying the world-old wickedness of his forerunners in the race for world power, and, like them, pre-doomed to perish at the blast of Him who slays the wicked with the breath of His lips.

"I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them. . . ."—Ezekiel xi.

**Ye have feared
sword and I
will bring the
sword upon you,
saith the Lord.**

God's dealings with Israel show His intentions,
His dealings with the Gentiles are demonstrative
of His omnipotent direction and control.
Men will not have this, but world history
proves it. The continent of Europe is drenched
with fears—fears of the wave of war sweeping
over them and dread of destruction and death

wreaked by German armies as they are forced back on their own frontiers. The capture of Caen and the rapid push up the Italian peninsula brings fresh quotas of terrors. It is the inevitable reaping of the wild sowings of past years. World rulers have plunged deeper into evildoing and the masses of the people entered an orgy of pleasure. The Bible sets them all out in correct perspective . . . "these are the men that devise mischief and give wicked counsel." The world has richly earned this tragedy.

God turns the very reasoning of the rulers to folly. "Das Reich" in June, 1942, said that "by the time the Anglo-Saxons were ready Russia would be out of commission." Hitler, like all tyrants, is grossly superstitious, but his ersatz astrologer appears to be of the same strain as the ancient soothsayers. These are all "wizards that peep and mutter . . . in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery, for they say, The Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth" (Isaiah viii. and Ezek. viii.).

All this adds to the confusion, mental distress and vague misgivings concerning the future—"men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." The words of Jesus are at long last moving to swift fulfilment. To the forebodings of these great ones of the earth, greedy after world power, is added the torment of failure and certain retribution at the hands of their outraged fellow men.

Even the Euphratean sign adds to the tale of world confusion and uncertainty. Quite recently, from highly responsible quarters, a demand has gone out from Ankara, for a Russo-Turkish pact. Taken in conjunction with, recent happenings in the Near East, with Anglo-Turkish relations, and the impending Balkan crash, it seems an eminently reasonable project. But Russia is ominously silent! The diplomats of the United Nations may be perplexed, but not so the servant of God. The key to the riddle is in the scriptures of truth, not in the chancelleries of Europe. Moscow, as Ivan the Terrible declared, is the Third Rome. She will yet plant her standards in the City of the Byzantium Caesars, and contend with Tarshish for the dominion of the world.

CARMI.

Stalin's Asia.

Bro. W. S. Davis, the Rec. Bro. of the Santa Barbara, Cal., U.S.A., Ecclesia, has sent along a very remarkable article appearing in the local press under the above heading and written by B. D. Casseres. We quote therefrom: —

"What's Russia up to in the Pacific—and in Asia?"

After nearly three years of an alliance with Japan she now takes away Japan's oil and coal concessions in northern Sakhalin. Well, that's all to the good for us—or is it?

Stalin has the longest head and the most cunning mind among the Allied leaders. He is the only one of the Big Three who knows exactly why he does things. And that why always means profit for No. 1—that is, Stalin's Russia. He does nothing for friendship's sake. He does nothing on principle. He doesn't care a hoot for democracy or liberty. And as between Japan and the United States he hasn't the slightest prejudice one way or another. He'd just as lief see both out of the Pacific.

So the paradoxical and formidable question arises in my mind:

"In demolishing the Japanese Empire, do we work for Russia?"

History is full of such strange quirks—as, for instance, when France thought she was fighting for "liberty, equality and fraternity," she was really fighting for the would-be world dictator, Napoleon, and when Germany socked Russia in June, 1941, she saved England and maybe the U.S.A. and sealed her own doom.

Moral: Beware of Stalin when he comes with gifts to the U.S.A. from Sakhalin—or anywhere else!"

Lessons from St. Paul. No. 11.

Synonyms of Salvation.

In the preceding article we discussed the complex nature of Paul's faith which, going forth to meet the grace of God in Jesus Christ, established fellowship or union with the Father through the Son, a "mystical" union which Paul expressed by the unique phrase "in Christ."

This faith of Paul's has been described as "the centre of energy from which radiate all his confessions concerning salvation in Christ." Some of these "confessions" have already been examined in previous articles. We shall now look at them afresh in company with other "concepts of salvation." We say "concepts"; this is their usual description. But they are not really so. They are expressions, mainly figurative, which the Apostle seizes to convey—we might almost say "picture"—the great experience which has been both his and theirs who are his brethren in the Lord. These pictorial expressions do not describe different experiences, but are different views, drawn from different aspects, of one and the same experience — the experience of salvation. This is illustrated by the significant use of the figure of justification, which is prominent only in two epistles, Galatians and Romans. It occurs but once in Corinthians (1st Ep. vi. 11); it does not occur at all in Thessalonians, Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon. It is used in Romans and Galatians because the debate is with Jews or Jewish Christians, who would be very familiar with this conception. Its absence from the other epistles shows that the experience Paul uses the term "justification" to describe can be equally well pictured by employing other phraseology or figurative expressions.

In each of the figures we are now to examine man stands before God in a different guise. It is the same man and the same God, but their relation is pictured in different ways. First, man stands

before God as one accused; the result "in Christ" is justification. Next, he stands before Him as an enemy; reconciliation is effected through Christ. Third, he is in the position of a debtor—to obtain forgiveness because of Christ. Fourthly, as a slave; he is redeemed by Christ, through Whom (fifthly) he also receives the adoption of sons.

Justification. —The first picture is of man standing before God's judgment seat as one who has been accused (cf. Rom. iii. 19). The proceedings of the last judgment (which takes place when Messiah comes to inaugurate the new world-order in the Millennial Age) are brought forward to the present in view of the fact that a new age has already been inaugurated by the resurrection of our Lord. The manner in which and the reason why salvation, eternal life, participation in the Kingdom, are spoken of in the Apostolic writings as both already present and yet still in the future were discussed in article No. 7 (in the February, 1944, issue, p. 41). The idea of judgment and justification are similarly treated. The judgment is still fixed for the future; yet the proceedings are anticipated and judgment is given now. Not that, in relation to any individual, the judgment thus given is settled and unalterable in the future, but that when a man becomes "in Christ," he ceases by virtue of that state to be one accused. If for any reason the man ceases to be "in Christ," then he again becomes "one accused."

In Christ, then, the accused ceases to be accused; he becomes, in fact, "unaccused" or "unblameable and unreprouvable in God's sight" (Col. i. 22). No longer is he condemned: "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). Instead, he has been granted liberty (Rom. viii. 2), i.e., he has been acquitted. Who now "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect"? (verse 33).

This acquittal or justification has been obtained by, of, or out of faith (Rom. iii. 26, 30, vi., ix. 30, x. 6, Gal. ii. 16, iii. 8, v. 5), or through faith (Rom. iii. 22, 25, 28, 30, Gal. ii. 16). This faith was not only the form, but also the result of man's response to God's grace. By it he became "in Christ," which is synonymous with "in faith" or "in the faith" (1 Cor. xvi. 13, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, Gal. ii. 20, Col. ii. 7, 1 Tim. i. 4). Justification by faith is therefore justification "in Christ" (Gal. ii. 17), or "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. vi. 11), through whose death and by. God's grace man becomes the possessor of a "righteousness of God." Two quotations suffice to illustrate this: 2 Cor. v. 21: "For God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made, the righteousness of God in him." And Romans iii. 21ff: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested . . . even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe." We are here concerned only with the fact of justification by grace through faith, and not with the ethics of it or with the bearing of Christ's sacrifice. This justification or acquittal is a present experience, this possession, of righteousness is a present possession and is the normal condition of the Christ which has been brought about by God's grace in Christ (not by man's merit or works). And yet, as we remarked earlier, notwithstanding this present possession, the justified man is not completely and finally righteous (just as he has not yet completely inherited the Kingdom—he is an heir, not an inheritor—the Kingdom has yet to come); he has still a goal of righteousness before him. While in Gal. ii. 16 Paul speaks of justification as something already obtained or obtainable through faith, in chapter v. of the same letter he speaks of waiting for the hope of righteousness through faith, i.e., at the Judgment. There is, to borrow another's words, a "dynamic tension between the consciousness of present possession and the expectation of future full possession."

Reconciliation. —This term develops the idea of man as an enemy estranged from God. Men were "alienated and enemies in their mind by (or through) wicked works" (Col. i. 21); they had become "far off" from God (Eph. ii. 13). The Law had multiplied transgression; sin had brought forth fruit unto death and so the breach was widened until men who were made for harmony with God became his enemies (Rom. v. 10), being actuated by the carnal mind or the thinking of the flesh (Rom. viii. 7), which imbued them with hostility and antipathy towards God.

This was man's state. Paul teaches that God does not stand on right and impose terms of conciliation. Rather does he effect a reconciliation by healing the breach hitherto existing, i.e., by bringing peace. This is Paul's message to the Corinthians, where he says that God "hath reconciled us

to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. v. 18-19). This word of reconciliation is given fullest expression in the Epistle to the Ephesians (already quoted), where the Apostle says: "Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace who hath . . . abolished in his flesh the enmity . . . so making peace . . . that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby, and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh: for through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father (ii. 13-18).

The close relation between justification and reconciliation is seen most clearly from the letter to the Romans: "Being justified by faith (i.e., in Christ), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. . . . For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (margin: reconciliation)" (Rom. v. 1-2, 10-11).

Forgiveness. —The third group of metaphors have their basis in the parables and prayers of Jesus. The Lord's Prayer' contains the supplication: "Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us" (Luke xi. 4). The qualification here is illustrated in the parable of the unforgiving debtor, related in answer to Peter's question: "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?" The lord in the parable "was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due unto him," which provoked Jesus' final comment: "So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses" (Matt. xvii. 21-35).

Man's accumulated debts are forgiven in Christ. That is the teaching of Paul. His sins are remitted—for this is what forgiveness means. So to the Colossians, Paul wrote: "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (ii. 13-14). The same figure brought into relation with redemption appears in the Ephesian letter: "In whom (Christ) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (i. 7), a phrase which has a parallel in Col. i. 14.

Forgiveness of debts or remission of sins paves the way to reconciliation. Man's estrangement from God is caused no more by his hostility than by his hopeless conviction that he has forfeited for ever the love of a righteous God. "Men were enemies largely because they thought that God could not but be their enemy. They despaired of forgiveness because they were ignorant of the nature and power of love." But God "commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Forgiveness was freely offered and by man's acceptance reconciliation was freely achieved.

Redemption. —This term becomes immediately intelligible as soon as we view it against its first-century background. It is closely connected with slavery. Redemption was the emancipation of a slave by purchase, and among the means of emancipation was the sacred rite of purchase of the slave by a deity. "The owner comes with the slave to the temple, sells him there to the God and receives from the temple treasury the purchase-money, which the slave has previously deposited there out of his savings. The slave thus becomes the property of the God, but as against all the world he is a free man."

By using this phrase Paul pictures men as slaves—slaved serving several masters—sin, the Law, idols, men, corruption. But freedom has been obtained through Christ—they have been "bought with a price." They are not their own, but are the slaves of Christ, His property and bondmen (though outwardly they are free men), not again to be made bondslaves to the world.

Adoption. —This figure is also connected with slavery, though it has a legal basis. Greek practice (with which Roman practice differed little) required that if a man without a son wished to avoid leaving his property to his next of kin, preferring someone unrelated to him, he adopted him. The adopted son at once left his own family and joined that of his adopter, forfeiting by so doing all rights as his natural father's son. Often a man, becoming attached to one of his slaves, adopted him in this way, first of all securing his freedom.

The appropriateness of this term to describe the salvation through Christ is self-evident. But it cannot better be expressed than by Paul to the Galatians: "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (iv. 4-7).

But what we said of judgment and justification applies also to redemption and adoption. These are present experiences, as salvation in one sense is something already possessed. Yet the full possession remains for future realisation. We have been redeemed, yet still we wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body (Rom. viii. 23), a redemption on that "day of redemption" unto which we have been "sealed" (Eph. iv. 30). Heirs by adoption we may be, but inheritors we have yet to become.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

TERTIUS.

A Serious Subject.

Responsibility

The Scripture deals with the question of the responsibility of the individual toward God, man's maker; in this way: —

- Adam.**
 1. Knowledge of God's law entailed responsibility to obey upon Adam and Eve.
"Thou shalt not eat of the tree in the midst. In the day thou eatest of it thou shalt die" (Gen ii. 17).

"Dust thou art, to dust shalt thou return" (Gen. iii. 19) was the sentence given when disobedience resulted.

"So death passed upon all men, for all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12).
- Noah.**
 2. When Noah's testimony failed to rouse the world of men to a realisation of their sins and to repentance, God destroyed the world. This was because all men were "ungodly" (2 Peter ii. 5). Ungodliness is unbelief.
- Ignorance.**
 3. Willing ignorance is a state of sin. (2 Peter iii. 5).
 4. There is a difference between ignorance of God's law and refusal to accept it or to obey it when presented. The judgment seat is for those who knew God's law and rejected it. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it

not to him it is sin," the sin of omission (James iv. 17). Those who sin knowing not the law against which they offend will perish without being called to the judgment seat. "As many as have sinned without (or outside of) the law shall also perish without (or outside) the law."

It should be noted that both those who know and those who do not know God's law are sinners, but their appearance before the judgment seat depends upon God's decision as to whether they were instructed sufficiently to be brought forward to His Son's judgment seat.

On the other hand, men who fulfil some of the laws of God without recognising them as such do not thereby obtain salvation or even a call to judgment.

Knowledge is the test in respect to post-resurrectional responsibility.

But ignorance of God's law does not make sinful deeds innocuous. Sin is no less sin, and must so be recognised. If it were not so death would be an unjust punishment. On the other hand, God draws men to Him who desire so to be drawn and who seek his face.

"No man cometh to Me apart from the Father who sent Me draweth him." "I will raise all such at the last day" (John vi. 44).

A condition of salvation for all men is repentance. "Repent and be baptised" rings through the whole of the work of the apostles.

"There is joy in heaven over the sinner that repents" (Luke xv. 7).

From the World. When a man comes from the world to a knowledge of the Truth he views his past life in the light now afforded to him. He repents of his past sins, makes covenant with God to "sin no more" and turns right away from the evils of the past.

If he is carrying with him some burden begotten of his past sins he must relieve himself of it.

If he has been a thief he must thieve no more and must, as far as lies in his power, make restitution.

"Let him that stole steal no more, but let him labour and let him give" (Eph. iv. 28). If he has been a frequenter of drunkards or harlots he must shun his past companions and walk cleanly before God. If he has been engaged in some unworthy occupation or association he must give such up. His new "vocation" is one "he must abide in," having been called thereto. (1 Cor. vii. 20, etc.).

A publican, as several of that occupation have done, when they found the Truth, must leave his unworthy work. The servant of God can hardly find congenial company in a bar parlour or a tap room. A brother cannot remain a bookmaker and encourage gambling.

Many such occupations will occur to the mind. God's servants are called to holiness.

If a man has an unbelieving wife, possibly a very difficult one, he cannot disclaim his responsibilities towards her and his children. "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after Me is not worthy of Me" (Matt. x. 38). Men must strive in their service to God to be peacemakers and difficult to offend. If a man following the sinful practices of the world around him has divorced his wife for any cause or has been divorced by her under some national law, he cannot, on embracing the Truth, treat the matter as of no account and seek to form another matrimonial alliance while his first

wife still lives. "There be eunuchs (or celibates) who are such for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Matt. xix. 12).

And so on through all the new life of the saint he must "keep himself unspotted from the world," and he must always observe to do the things that please God.

Beware!

The word "beware" is not strange to the readers of "The Berean Christadelphian." It simply means "To take care: to guard one's self." Our elder brother, Jesus, used that word on several occasions, as, for instance, in the 16th chapter of Matthew's Gospel. He says: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

"And they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'It is because we have taken no bread,' which, when Jesus perceived, He said unto them, 'O, ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that you should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?'

"Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (vv. 6-12).

We now ask the question, Why beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Jesus gives us the reason in Matt. xv. 8 and 9. There He says: "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

It is good for us to have "the truth as it is in Jesus" (Eph. iv. 21), for "He is the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John xiv. 6). It is good for us to stir up our minds about the various subjects of the truth, and thereby be vigilant, and strong, and have on ourselves "the whole armour of God."

The Apostle Paul said on a certain occasion, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. xi. 1). He had cunning, false-doctrine teachers to combat against in his time of service in the truth; and he knew the value of and the necessity of being strongly equipped with the truth, and to be led by the truth.

He says in the 6th chapter of Ephesians: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (vv. 10-17).

According to this portion of the Scriptures, we are called upon to be (1) Strong in the Lord, (2) To put on the whole armour of God, (3) The breastplate of righteousness, (4) On the feet (to walk in the way of the truth), the gospel of peace, (5) The Shield of faith, (6) The Helmet of salvation.

These are necessary things for us. To have them we must work for them.

In the 10th chapter of Mark's Gospel, at verses 11 and 12, it is written: "And He saith unto them, 'Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.'

“And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”

According to this portion of the Scriptures, a man putting away his wife, and marrying another, even if he is ignorant of this teaching of Christ, is committing adultery.

The same thing applies to a woman. If the woman puts away her husband, and marries another, even if she is ignorant of Christ's teaching, she is living in a state of adultery.

The act does not become a righteous one because of ignorance.

"Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John xv. 14).

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,’ but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

"And if any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also" (Matt. v. 38-40).

"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine: I will repay, saith the Lord.’”

"Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom xii. 17-21).

"See that none render evil for evil, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1 Thes. v. 15).

Can we truly say, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. cxix. 105)?
Motherwell.

JAMES BROWN.

Ruth Considered as a Type.

I have found in the history of Ruth a beautiful study, and an exact illustration of the Daughter of Truth, or the Bride of Christ. Ruth was a Gentile, who came from the land of Moab. with Naomi, her mother-in-law, who represents Truth, or the Household of Faith. Naomi was an Israelite, returning to her own country. Ruth, with an affection which works obedience, not only came unto her, but faithfully followed her, declaring Naomi's people should be her people, the Naomi's God should be her God. Ruth is a wild olive tree, grafted contrary to nature, into a good olive tree (Rom. xi. 24).

Jesus declared His sheep would hear His voice, and would follow Him. Ruth turned not back, as did Orpah, but she forgot her father's house; bereft of all she once thought dear, with only one friend, she journeyed toward Beth-lehem, or the House of Bread. This is the only place where the daughter of truth can find spiritual food: but must she stop here? No; like Ruth, she must listen to the voice of truth, and go and glean. Many fields were before Ruth, but it was her hap to light on a part belonging to a mighty man of wealth, whose name was Boaz, the meaning of which is "strength," who

proved to be her kinsman. The first command he gave her was not to go into any other field, but to abide fast by the reapers, to follow them, and let her eye rest only on the field they were reaping. As Gentiles, many fields have been before us, but only truth, with her unerring finger, points us to the field of our kinsman, who is indeed a mighty man of wealth, full of strength. Truth bids us not to glean in any other field, but to follow the reapers, who are the prophets, Christ, and the apostles.

Like Ruth, the daughter of Truth also feels her unworthiness. In a childlike spirit she bows before her kinsman, saying: Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? The kinsman declared he had heard of her fidelity to Naomi; how she had left her father and mother, the land of her nativity, and had joined herself to a people which she knew not before. Boaz rejoiced in her faithfulness, and prayed a reward might be given her by the God of Israel, under whose wings she had come to trust. Ruth was greatly comforted, and prayed she might find favour in her kinsman's sight, for she perceived she was not like one of his maidens. She, like the daughter of Truth, was not the natural tree, but by faith she stood. The kinsman invited her to come and dine; she sat beside the reapers, did eat, and was sufficed, after which she repeated her gleaning. Her kinsman commanded the reapers to let her glean among the sheaves, and reproach her not, and let fall also some of the "handfuls of purpose," and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. Ruth as a stranger, according to the law, could only glean the portion allotted for the stranger, which was the outskirts of the field. As Gentiles we could glean no more, although we have all had the Word of Truth in our possession; but only truth, beautiful truth, showed us the field of our kinsman. As Ruth progressed after Boaz, she became acquainted with the mighty man of wealth, so do we. Truth whispers, "Gather not only the stranger's portion, for you are no longer a Gentile, but a fellow-citizen of the household of faith; gather amongst the sheaves, and glean the 'handfuls of purpose' dropped for thee by the prophets, Christ, and the apostles; none shall reproach thee; none shall rebuke thee, for behold art thou not in the field of thy kinsman, who is a mighty man of wealth, and his name is Eternal Strength?" Ruth did not weary with her work, though she toiled all day until evening; and it is written she did beat out what she had gleaned. What a lesson for the daughter of Truth! Like Ruth, we should in a well-directed mind husk the wheat of the Word. The Scriptures of Truth are a system of Divine ideas, which are often concealed at first view, as the fruit hides the seed which is in itself, and we know the seed alone is the productive part, so the Divine ideas contained in the Word must be searched out. If we divide rightly the Word of Truth, we shall find the little germ in which there is life. "To him that hath it shall be given." Ruth brought the pure grain to her mother-in-law, for she left the chaff on the threshing floor of her kinsman; and a bountiful supply she brought; so that after she was sufficed, she had a reserve. Naomi knew she had been in no stranger's field, and declared Ruth's gleanings proved to her that the God of Israel had not left off His kindness to the living, and to the dead. The daughter of Truth must thus glean, bringing to the household the pure grain, and plenty of it, so that the faithful may say to her: "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" Naomi clearly showed Ruth the mighty man of wealth could alone redeem her, for he was her kinsman. She charged her to enter no other field, and to keep company with none but the kinsman's reapers. Ruth continued to glean as her kinsman commanded her, until the barley harvest and wheat harvest was ended. Be faithful unto death. The barley harvest beautifully represents the Old Testament, the wheat the New; but the barley must be reaped first. It is written, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him." The wheat next. Truth whispers to her daughters, "Follow the reapers until the harvest is ended." If we do this, we shall know of the doctrine, and Truth will seek for us rest, as did Naomi for Ruth; but, like her, we must listen to Truth's gentle voice, and say as Ruth did: "All that thou sayest to me, that will I do, for to hearken is better than to sacrifice."

Many, yea, very many, of the beloved and faithful are now sleeping where their kinsman, "the mighty man of wealth," whose name is "Strength," once lay, and must remain in the threshing floor until morning. But the Man of Strength will take off the veil, which Paul calls the flesh, and, as Boaz did to Ruth, will fill it, so that she went not empty away. Naomi declared the kinsman would finish the work that day, and would not rest until it was accomplished. How suggestive! We perceive the land to be redeemed must, as it were, have the signature of the natural Israel, and the wild by nature. For Boaz said, what day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth, the Moabites, to raise up the name of the dead. It was proved that Ruth had a nearer kinsman than that of Boaz, but

he could not redeem the inheritance, nor raise up the name of the dead, lest he mar his own inheritance. But Boaz, the mighty man of wealth, who said "I AM AFTERTHEE," declared he would redeem it, if the nearer kinsman would give him the right. He did so, and the mighty man of wealth not only redeemed the inheritance, but purchased Ruth to be his wife, and they two became one flesh. Blessed be the Lord God who hath not left us this day without a kinsman, whose name is famous in Israel, who has indeed been a restorer of life, to raise up the name of the dead, that the name of the dead be not cut off from his brethren, and from the gate of his place.

The people and elders prayed that Ruth also may, like Leah and Rachel, build the house of Israel and be famous in Bethlehem. Gentile Ruth did, from her issue, fill up the "Holy Square," the hundred and forty and four thousand, but for Obed, no Jesse; but for Jesse, no David; but David, no Christ; the mighty man of wealth, whose Name is Eternal Strength. Ruth was indeed famous in Israel, and her daughters will call her blessed.

—From "The Christadelphian," March, 1872.

"**THE WHOLE FAMILY.**"—Eph. iii. 15:

Ecclesial News.

Ecclesial news is welcomed and will be inserted from those Ecclesias throughout the world who wholeheartedly and unreservedly believe and uphold our Statement of Faith, known as the Birmingham Amended Statement, and who as a result restrict their fellowship to such in accordance with Divine direction.

* * *

ITHACA, N.Y., U.S.A. —Cayuya Height Road, R.D.1.

I would like to inform you that we are leaving Ithaca and are going: to live in Detroit about the 15th of next month, so I and my sister wife will be members of Detroit Ecclesia, so this will terminate the meeting here; only my nephew, Bro. Harry Gulbe, will remain here in these parts and be in isolation, working at Harringbros Farm, about 10 miles from Ithaca.

So will you please send our Berean Christadelphian magazine to the meeting hall, 2610 Ewald Circle, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

So please take my address off the back cover as recorder of Ithaca Ecclesia.

With fraternal greetings, your brother in Christ. —Fred Gulbe, Rec. Bro.

LONDON, N., WINCHMORE HILL. —Adult School Hall, Church Hill. Breaking of Bread: 4.30 and 6.30 p.m.; Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m.

After nearly five years of pain and suffering our beloved Sister Ida Garrett, at the age of thirty-six, fell asleep on June 26. Our sister, throughout her great trial, was an example to us all of faith, patience and endurance. Her confidence in the realisation of the glorious hope sustained and comforted her in her affliction. She was laid to rest on June 29 at Manor Park Cemetery, Bro. G. H. Denney speaking words of Truth and hope to the brothers and sisters and relatives assembled at the graveside. —C. H. Bath, Recording Brother.

PLYMOUTH. —Oddfellows' Hall, 148 Union Street (next to Gaumont Theatre). Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 2.30 p.m.; Lecture, 4.0 p.m.; Bible Class (house-to-house), Thursdays, 7.30 p.m.

With sorrow we have to record the news that Sister E. M. Gruitt fell asleep on June 20, at the ripe age of eighty-seven years. Hers was a long probation, for she entered the, "Way of Life" sixty

years ago and, as far as we in our Imperfect state are able to estimate, her pilgrimage was a faithful one. She was a shining example to all, both young and old, for as long as she could walk unaided she would be present at all Ecclesial meetings, thus giving others encouragement by her support. Her probation has ended and she fell asleep and was laid to rest in full assurance of faith, so that we feel that we can confidently commit her future to the Righteous Judge of all. Our sincerest sympathies are with Brother Gruitt, who has been bereaved of his life's partner, and we commend him to the tender care of our Father, "who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." * From the signs of the times we believe that the separation will be a short one and pray that we also may endure to the end, cheered with the thought that while we have thus parted with many during our pilgrimage there will be a great and happy reunion in the "Day of the Lord," who shall gather to Himself a multitude which no man can number and make, them kings and priests upon the earth.

We also sorrow over the loss of two of our members in another manner, for it has been our painful duty to withdraw fellowship from Brother and Sister A. G. Brown for failing to give a Scriptural reason for continued absence from the established assembly for the Breaking of Bread. It is our earnest desire that they will see the necessity of observing the Lord's command and so return to their first love, reuniting with us in remembering Him "until He comes."—Hubert R. Nichols, Recording Brother.

[*Note. —We add our own testimony to the loving faithfulness of our dear Sister Gruitt. May we soon meet her again.—G.H.D.]

OSHAWA, CANADA. —29½, Simcoe Street, South, Ont.

The notice in the "Intelligence" dealing with the matter of divorce in the May number, evidently from "The Dawn," stated that the evil of divorce and remarriage had found its way into the Ecclesias, where it began to be looked on as no worse than marrying outside the Truth. We would say that such a statement is far from the Truth, as we have been associated with the Canadian Ecclesias and also some of the American Ecclesias for over forty-two years and we have yet to find one instance of a divorced person being in fellowship and, any of those making a charge as outlined above, we request them to give us all the details as to the name of the person and the Ecclesia with whom they are in fellowship; also, any brother or sister in fellowship who is contemplating such an action. We have found the Ecclesias maintaining a high moral character during all the years we have been associated with them. Such statements are made with the idea of gaining support for their ideas to deceive the ignorant and trap the innocent.

Yours faithfully—Jos Beasley, Recording Brother.

ST. ALBANS. —Oddfellows' Hall, Victoria. Street. Breaking of Bread, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

We lose by -transfer to Harrow, Brother H. M. Doust, but have gained from Winchmore Hill Brother and Sister J. Thomas, who are now residing in St. Albans. It becomes increasingly difficult to arouse interest in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Nevertheless, it is the duty of all disciples of Jesus to continue private effort in addition to Ecclesial activities. The Crown of Glory is for those who faint not, but hold fast and endure unto the end. —C. Seagrave, Recording Brother.

NOTE. —Several items arrived late and are held over.

Preaching the Truth.

HOW SOME HAVE FOUND THE TRUTH.

Little Stories No. 31.

A Birmingham merchant making his calls often talked with Christadelphians about aspects of the Truth. He claimed to be an "idealist" who "did his best," believing that he should do all in his power to "put the world right now," not waiting for a distant day when Christ would come. He called this hope "the distant drum."

The present war crisis seemed to wake him up to the realities of the present time. So he heard anew the Gospel message and learned the Divine programme. He then read "Elpis Israel" and "Christendom Astray," and many hours were spent in study and conversation. After trying desperately to push the claims of the Truth out of his mind he finally surrendered to it. He has been baptised and rejoices in hope with us.

The Book of Revelation

No. 11. THE FIRST SEAL—Rev. vi. 1

The first seal of the great scroll of human history was broken by the Lamb—Christ Jesus. John describes what it revealed as a white horse whose rider had a bow. The rider thereon went forth as a conqueror, but while having a bow he had no arrows.

This implies that the work of conquest was of an entirely peaceful character.

Horses are used in the Scripture as indicative of the Spirit of God moving forward to accomplish the Will of God.

In this case the symbol is doubly applicable. Not only is the work of the horseman a movement by the Divine Spirit as the works accomplished by the rider with the bow did so exhibit, but the works were to be done in a world empire that itself delighted in depicting itself as an intelligent horse power. Coins were struck exhibiting this symbolism from time to time. The best way to combine the two is to conclude that under the first seal the Word of God, aided by His Spirit, went forth in a time of worldwide peace to do a certain work.

The reader desiring to study the horse symbol in the Scriptures should refer to Job xxxix. 19 to 25, Jer. viii. 6, and Zech. x. 3, etc.

This bloodless warfare refers to the work of Paul and so many others who went forth to preach the Gospel in the Roman habitable. Their weapons, as Paul rightly says, were not carnal, though mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of human thought.

Their warlike equipment was spiritual and of God. Their loins were girt about with Truth. Their breastplates were the consciousness of their righteousness. They went out to preach and to serve, not to rule and to seek self-aggrandisement.

Their real weapon was the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Their feet were shod with the enduring substance of the gospel of peace. Their heads, i.e., their minds, were dominated by the helmet of salvation (Eph. vi. 4 to 17).

Of their victories the names of many ecclesias remind us. Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth and even Athens, with its wealth of learning, show but a few of their accomplishments. "They went everywhere, preaching the good news."

The authorities tried ineffectually to stay their progress. Said Pliny: "The temples are deserted, the sacred (pagan) ceremonies are neglected." No power could arrest the progress of Christianity while the work of the first seal went on.

The Pax Romana, or Peace of Rome, then prevailing, provided travel possibilities without restriction. No passports or gates barred the ways of the Empire. Providing the preachers had the pluck and strength to travel on foot, everywhere were good roads and reasonably priced hostels. If they could pay for transport by coach or ship then they had ample means for travel in comparative comfort. Paul, with his resources, was able to travel "first class." God always chooses fitting instruments for His work.

Nothing more fitting for the great work could be imagined and the world spread of the Christian faith in just a handful of years can only be properly described as a Divinely arranged and controlled work. Hence the fitness of the symbol of the white horse and the peaceful, successful rider, who "went forth conquering to conquer."

G. H. D.

CHRIST'S BIRTH

The Star of Bethlehem.

Fifty years ago Professor Lauth, of Munich, an astronomer, drew attention to the fact that Sirius (often called the Dog Star), the brightest of the fixed stars, rose at sunrise on the first day of the Egyptian month Mesuri, for four successive days for four successive years. This would not happen again in the lifetime of anyone then living, for this took place in the years 7, 6, 5 and 4, B.C. The date generally assigned for our Lord's birth is B.C. 4, i.e., late in the fourth day of the human story of the six days or 1,000 years. "For a thousand years is as a day." Physical and spiritual agree, for the sun was ordained to rule the Day on the fourth day of Creation (see Genesis i.).

Jesus was therefore born at the close of the fourth day and spiritually rules the Day of opportunity: is the Light of the world: and will be the Sun of Righteousness, who will come to heal the Earth of all its evils.

Now the wise men came from the East and South to hail the birth of Jesus. They had learned from Daniel's prophecy of the time of our Lord's nativity. Probably they were told to look for a sign in the heavens. Sirius would possibly be the one so given to them. In that case they would in the fourth year of its appearance determine to follow it to the next point at which it would arrive at dawn. This was Bethlehem.

Weeds and Grass.

The term grass is often used for that miscellaneous collection of plants known as weeds. It is so in 1 Peter i. 24. "All flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away."

"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

Peter is quoting from Isaiah xl. 6: "All flesh is grass (or weeds) and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth. But the Word of our God shall stand for ever."

It will be seen that a contrast is drawn between that which is transient and fragile and, on the other hand, that which is permanent.

Now let us turn to a contemplation of weeds. These have been described as either plants the use of which is not properly known, or plants in the wrong place, or plants that have deteriorated and lost their usefulness. If weeds are to be taken as a symbol of the human race, then it is not very flattering.

Isaiah li. 12 says:—"Why be afraid of a man that shall die, or of the son of man who is made as grass" (or weeds).

David says:—"As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it and it is gone" (Psalm ciii. 15).

All gardeners know that the first rule in respect of all plants is that if left to themselves they deteriorate. Cultivation must be continuous and skill in that respect alone ensures the maintenance of a standard or the improvement of any kind of plant.

**First.
The Best** Now if we believe the Bible we part company at this stage from the believer in evolution, who looks upon the weed or the lowest form of any plant as the first or primitive character and attributes all improvement to cultivation and man's ingenuity.

The Bible teaches that the highest form was the first and that it was because of man's own fault that the burden of cultivation was laid upon him. Gen. ii. is emphatic that all things put within the power of man at first were very good. When, however, man turned away from God's way, the doom that came upon him is best presented as we have it in Genesis iii.:—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the dust."

Therefore the best was first, and we live on an earth in which labour gives results. But without labour all things become more or less unprofitable. The experimental stations of the Ministry of Agriculture and of the colleges of agriculture exhibit what can be done.

At Balloch Park, at the southern end of the Loch Lomond in Scotland, some marvellous results of agricultural research are to be seen—to the ordinary gardener an impossible dream. There are many illustrations of development. The orchid that runs along the German hedgerows is of the same family as the wonderful flowers of the African swamp. To cultivate the orchid is an expensive hobby.

The best vegetables we have to-day are the result of good cultivation; some, in fact, have been developed from wild plants

Deterioration. of the woods. But leave any kind of cultivated plants or bushes to look after themselves for a few years and the result is deterioration.

The finest rose will go back to the briar. Who has not seen the tiny little pansy that succeeds its cultivated parent if neglect comes upon it? So it is always true that deterioration sets in as an apparently natural course unless the "sweat of the brow" and the skill of the gardener is employed.

The vine is another good illustration of this, and is so used by our Lord in John xv. 2. "Every tree that beareth fruit

Men as Weeds. is purged or pruned, that it may bring forth more fruit." The lesson follows that men and

women in an uncultivated condition are just weeds and of no use and little ornament. Solomon wisely points out the certain end of those who merely live carelessly to the flesh. They are like the beasts that perish (Ecc. iii. 19), or like the thorns that "crackle under the pot" (Ecc. vii. 6). Education means to "draw out" or develop the possibilities of the boy or girl. Without it little use can be made of life.

"He that soweth to the flesh shall reap corruption" (Gal. vi. 8).

If education merely means, helping men and women to read and to write—to get a living and to enjoy the good things the earth provides for those who work—then it profits only for the present life.

There are, however, much greater possibilities in the human mind. There can be spiritual cultivation.

Our Lord Jesus indicated this when He said, "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up" (Matt. xv. 13).

The Bible speaks often of some among the weed family of humanity who yield themselves to Divine cultivation. God is willing to do the work of the husbandman for any human soul, or plant, that will submit to His will and be cultivated by Him. Submission to the Divine will is the first necessity. Then the husbandry commences.

James points out as a lesson in patience for all believers in the Lord's second coming: —"Be patient therefore brethren unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James v. 7).

The prophet Isaiah puts forwards the very beautiful symbol that some men are plants worthy of husbandry from above and that such at last shall be preserved as worthy.

In his ch. 60 he speaks of the Kingdom of God upon earth as a garden or paradise and of its dwellers therein as: —"Thy people shall be all righteous: they shall dwell in the land for ever: plants of my planting: the work of my hands, that my light may be seen in them."

Again, in ch. 61 v. 3 he says of the coming Kingdom: — "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes: the oil of joy for mourning the garment of praise instead of sorrow: that they might be trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified."

When reward is promised for righteousness, it takes the form of Paradise restored, and Paradise is but a word untranslated that means a garden. So as the Lord "planted a garden eastward in Eden" at the beginning, so He will plant another when His purpose is fulfilled.

"To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the garden of God" (Rev. ii. 7). That tree is Jesus Christ, for He is the one human plant that has attained to complete and final perfection under the husbandry of His Father.

Isaiah speaks thus of him: —"A branch (or tree) shall grow out of the roots of Jesse and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him."

Zechariah adds: —"Hear now I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH." "In that day ye shall call every man his neighbour under the vine and the fig tree" (Zech. iii. 8 to 10).

Submission. Hence it follows that submission to the Divine will is the first rule of all for those who would

rise up to perfection. An understanding of such submission begins in the simple words, "He that believeth the Gospel and is baptised shall be saved."

It goes on in the spirit of Israel at Horeb, "All that the Lord hath said we will do and be obedient."

Its spirit is breathed in the words of Micah:—"He hath showed thee, oh man, what is good and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah vi. 8).

An understanding of the submission leads us to an appreciation of Psalm xxiii.

Sometimes in our probation we find ourselves by quiet or still waters, sometimes in pleasant pastures, but also at times in the valley of darkness and the shadow of death. But we do not and cannot complain of these changes in our circumstances. All are part of our development. Bombs may whistle about us and God may allow us many discomforts. The soil of our habitation may not always be to our liking. But all these, and every circumstance of our lives, can minister to our stronger growth, our greater faith and our increasing hope. Psalm xci. is still true for the husbandry of God. "He shall deliver thee" is the final phrase for those who love Him and submit in humility before Him."

Let us therefore keep our trust in Him and our trust with Christ each week, knowing that our hope and our faith is not in vain in the Lord.

The final issue of this great cultivation is seen in the work of the saints of God in the age to come. The simile, of husbandry is carried right through to the very end.

The whole multitude of the elect are finally described as the wood or forest of life. So we close our meditation with John as he sees "a pure river of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it and on either side of the river there was the wood of life, which bare twelve kinds of fruit and yielded fruit every month, and the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations."

Then will be peace on earth and glory to God. To-day is the sowing time; then will be the reaping time. The sickle will be put in and the harvest will be reaped.

So, although to-day we see with David "the wicked in great power and spreading himself like a green bay tree, yet he passeth away, and lo, he is not; he cannot be found."

The fact remains that God marks "the perfect man and He beholds the upright. The salvation of these is from Him. He is their strength in the time of trouble. He shall help and deliver them because they trust in Him" (Psalm xxxvii.).

G. H. D.

The Movement Back to Zion

Bro. C. Seagrave writes: —

I have just read in this month's (June) "Berean" "Dr. Weizmann Comes to the Rescue." How many know the "inside story" relative to his work during the last war?

Here it is, taken from Lloyd George's Memoirs. You will see, he could have asked for position, honour, wealth, but he asked for something for "The Land" and "The People." And the outcome? The Balfour Declaration. What reward will he get for the work he has done this time? Might

he not ask for the implementation of the promise given some 25 years ago? In view of the import of the Balfour Declaration, and the fact that Britain still has to make a decision on this matter, readers of "The Berean" may be interested in the enclosed extract as an amplification of the matter appearing in this month's (June) issue.

EXTRACT FROM WAR MEMOIRS OF DAVID LLOYD GEORGE.

But by the spring of 1915 the position in the American acetone, market had become extremely delicate. British cordite firms were competing with each other and with the agents for the Allies. Prices were being forced up. American contractors, were selling their output twice over and defaulting on their contracts. They even went to the length of insisting upon an advance in price upon their existing contracts with the British Government, and in the case of their default it proved impossible to recover damages from them.

Prompt steps were taken over here to eliminate the competition between British cordite makers for American acetone. But when this had been done and arrangements had been made for the purchase of all overseas supplies immediately available, I was confronted by a much more serious crisis. In the survey we made of all the various prospective requirements, it soon, became clear that the supplies of wood alcohol for the manufacture of acetone would prove quite insufficient to meet the increasing demands, particularly in 1916. The matter was urgent, for without the acetone there would be no cordite for our cartridges, for either rifles or big guns.

As chairman of the Munitions of War Committee, I took this matter greatly to heart. While I was casting about for some solution of the difficulty I ran against the late C. P. Scott, editor of the "Manchester Guardian." He was a friend in whose wisdom I had implicit faith. I told him of my problem and that I was on the look-out for a resourceful chemist who would help me to solve it. He said: "There is a very remarkable professor of chemistry in the University of Manchester willing to place his services at the disposal of the State. I must tell you, however, that he was born somewhere near the Vistula, and I am not sure on which side. His name is Weizmann." Scott could guarantee that whatever the country of origin, Weizmann was thoroughly devoted to the cause of the Allies, that the one thing he really cared about was Zionism, and that he was convinced that in the victory of the Allies alone was there any hope for his people. I knew Mr. Scott to be one of the shrewdest judges of men I had ever met. The world renown of his great paper had been built up on the soundness of his judgment—of men as well as of affairs. But I also trusted his patriotism implicitly. Pacifist as he was, he believed in the essential justice of our intervention in this war. I took his word about Professor Weizmann and invited him to London to see me. I took to him at once. He is now a man of international fame. He was then quite unknown to the general public, but as soon as I met him I realised that he was a very remarkable personality. His brow gave assurance of a fine intellect and his open countenance gave confidence in his complete sincerity. I told him that we were in a chemical dilemma and asked him to assist us. I explained the shortage in wood alcohol and what it meant in munitionment. Could he help? Dr. Weizmann said he did not know, but he would try. He could produce acetone by a fermentation process on a laboratory scale, but it would require some time before he could guarantee successful production on a manufacturing scale.

"How long can you give me?" he asked. I said: "I cannot give you very long. It is pressing." Weizmann replied: "I will go at it night and day."

In a few weeks' time he came to me and said: "The problem is solved." After a prolonged study of the micro-flora existing on maize and other cereals, also of those occurring in the soil, he had succeeded in isolating an organism capable of transforming the starch of cereals, particularly that of maize, into a mixture of acetone butyl alcohol. The generations of these organisms die very quickly, and in quite a short time, working night and day as he had promised, he had secured a culture which would enable us to get our acetone from maize.

Now maize contains about two-thirds its weight of starch, our sources of supply were very wide, so that this discovery enabled us to produce very considerable quantities of the vital chemical. To-day this discovery is the centre of an important industry.

In King's Lynn there was an oil-cake factory which had been converted in 1912 to make acetone from the starch content of potatoes. It had come into the field with promises of supply, but the quality of its output was not satisfactory and financially the company was unsteady. So in March, 1916, it was nationalised and by June it was making acetone from maize by the Weizmann process with highly successful and valuable results. The shipping shortage in 1917, which forced us to restrict all unnecessary imports, introduced yet another experiment. In the autumn of that year horse-chestnuts were plentiful and a national collection of them was organised for the purpose of using their starch content as a substitute for maize. The King's Lynn factory carried out the manufacture, and though at first the poor quality of the material hampered output, these difficulties were overcome and the Weizmann process was turning out acetone from horse-chestnuts by the time the factory closed in 1918.

When our difficulties were solved through Dr. Weizmann's genius I said to him: "You have rendered great service to the State, and I should like to ask the Prime Minister to recommend you to His Majesty for some honour." He said: "There is nothing I want for myself." "But is there nothing we can do as a recognition of your valuable assistance to the country?" I asked. He replied: "Yes, I would like you to do something for my people." He then explained his aspirations as to the repatriation of the Jews to the sacred land they had made famous. That was the fount and origin of the famous declaration about the National Home for Jews in Palestine.

As soon as I became Prime Minister I talked the whole matter over with Mr. Balfour, who was then Foreign Secretary. As a scientist, he was immensely interested when I told him of Dr. Weizmann's achievement. We were anxious at that time to enlist Jewish support in neutral countries, notably in America. Dr. Weizmann was brought into direct contact with the Foreign Secretary. This was the beginning of an association, the outcome of which, after long examination, was the famous Balfour Declaration, which became the charter of the Zionist movement. So that Dr. Weizmann, with his discovery, not only helped us to win the war, but made a permanent mark upon the map of the world.

Comparative Religion

No. 3. THE INFILTRATION OF APOSTASY IN THE EAST

In our last article we showed how the names of Montanism and Kataphrygianism became applied to those who in the Eastern Roman Empire endeavoured to maintain the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Gradually these people drifted, as seems always to be the case, and finally they lost their identity. Possibly a misconceived desire for martyrdom as a short cut to salvation had a good deal to do with their failure. This tendency has always been a characteristic of human nature and it is still seen at times. At the beginning of the third century a Roman presbyter who was a native of Phrygia stood out very boldly for the Truth—the one true faith—and he succeeded in getting together the remnants of those who still held to the old way. He, however, suffered martyrdom under Valerian.

Nicene Creed.

The attempt of Constantine to achieve unity in the Christian churches was mainly an Eastern effort and the Nicene Creed was an attempt at uniformity resulting from the conference at

Nicaea. It became an instrument of excommunication, as well as of unity, and those who still held the Truth had a bad time. Gradually, the Greek Orthodox Church developed itself, not so much by changes of doctrine, as by changes of practice. Then the Russian portion of that Church saw great development. Of its history and its many strange leaders much might be said.

The Empress Catharine, much against the will of the Church, gave exemption from military service to adherents of the Truth in Southern Russia, with legal freedom to hold their own religion, a privilege they held till the advent of Bolshevism. In view of Rev. v. 9, it is possible that there are still some in Russia's vast territories who hold and teach the Truth. This the Day of Judgment will reveal. At this point we recommend a reading of "Eureka," and particularly page 367 of the first volume, where the work of apostasy and its time periods is so clearly set forth. When this has been digested we hope to return with you to a study of the Western Empire and its movements.

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Jewish Relief. — We have received £2 from two Sisters, Plymouth Ecc. £4 2s. 0d. An account of our expenditure in the matter is privately circulated in order to save valuable space for reading matter.

Pilotless Planes. —Many friendly inquiries reach us as to what we have to endure from Hitler's latest devilry. The world's Press tells the story. We trust in the promise in Psalm lixi., but we

link it with Job ii. 10 and xiii. 15. So we bear as cheerfully as we can the discomforts this latest development brings.

Germany's Hopeless Position. —All the world sees now—some countries tardily—that the Nazi regime is doomed. But those who study the Scriptures for themselves in the light of the true Gospel never doubted it. The Catholic regime in Spain now seems to be facing the inevitable and the man who supported the Italian Catholic move upon Abyssinia, the present British Ambassador to Madrid, has been elevated to the peerage!

Ealing. —Will intending visitors please note that there will be no meetings on July 30th.

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