

JUNE 1957

A Monthly Magazine issued by

The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days
foretold by Christ

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

THE HISTORY OF THE TRUTH IN THE LATTER DAYS

THE INSPIRATION DIVISION OF 1885

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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At the Table of the Lord

A Going Out

What momentous events were involved in Israel's "going out" of Egypt, showing the hand of their Father, and ours, working with them in their tribulation. If we can enter into their experiences, help may be found as we endeavour to leave behind all that the world worships, and thereby to become His peculiar people.

We remember that Israel was a people, few in number when brought down into Egypt by God to escape the famine. He caused them to prosper and to become great. Because of their number, Pharaoh, in fear, resolved to destroy them, putting them in bondage. In their oppression, they cried to God, and the record in Exodus 2 : 24, 25 is—

"God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel and God had respect unto them."

God sent Moses to bring them out. He was given Divine guidance, and with Aaron, was told to go to Pharaoh that His people might be allowed to depart. God hardened Pharaoh's heart, but nevertheless, Moses and Aaron were to go to him that "... the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." (Exodus 7 : 5). But what of Israel themselves—would they not see the hand of God upon Egypt confounding their gods and perceive their own specially blessed position ?

We look at the record of the plague of flies. Exodus 8 : 22, 23—

"I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there ; to the end thou mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth. And I will put a division between my people and thy people."

Here was a marked contrast to teach Egypt that there was a God in heaven who could cause great injury, but how much greater was the teaching for the children of Israel ! Would they not be made keenly aware of the all-powerful presence with them ? How grateful and cared for they would feel : how much under the protection of their God. Surely here was a division as the Lord had said, a "redemption" or "ransom" as the word in the Hebrew means.

Such is the experience of all who are God's peculiar people, that He will put a division between, which marks the separation. David knew this, and was able to express it in Psalm 111 : 6, 9—

“He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen . . . He sent redemption (division) unto his people ; He hath commanded his covenant for ever : holy and reverend is his name.”

As the faithful Israelite became aware of this division, would he not be made to feel keenly the holy position, under the covering of God witnessing His power on their behalf ? Would there not be awakened a real fear of God, and at the same time a hope and trust that He would lead them out of bondage to a certain redemption ? The mind of the brethren and sisters in Israel would echo the spirit of Psalm 130 : 7—“Let Israel hope in the Lord : for with the Lord there is mercy ; and with him is plenteous redemption.” Oh, how close His presence must have seemed as they saw the division so remarkably demonstrated. We, too, brethren and sisters, must see as clearly that “division between my people and thy people” so that we may rejoice in the redemption, realising that the latter is dependent on the former.

This demonstration to His people was repeated many times as the plagues were visited upon Egypt. “. . . All the cattle of Egypt died : but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.” Exodus 9 : 6. Also, verse 26, “Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.” Can we perceive the contrast—all green and growing things devastated by the judgment of God, until one came to Goshen and there green fields and flourishing crops, untouched by the wrath of the Almighty ? Each revealing His power to destroy along with His power to protect, and care for His own was meant to increase Israel’s fear and also their gratitude and trust.

Is not a similar comfort given to us, even a power perhaps not so dramatically displayed, but it is there for the discerning mind, the mind which questions and seeks the reason for events. Does it, brethren and sisters, fill us with gratitude, trust, yes, fear too, as we become aware of that power which could be turned against rather than for us ?

Light in Their Dwellings

What further lessons were the children of Israel to learn ? The record in Exodus 10 : 22, 23 is—“. . . There was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days . . . but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.”

Egypt was in darkness, but Israel had light. So with His people from the beginning ; they are to be children of light. It should be obvious even now who are the children of God and who are the children of darkness. The light reveals, does it not ? Moses went up into the mount to receive the law of God, and returned to the

people, and his face shone, reflecting the glory he had been permitted to see. It was obvious to all that he was a man of God. So it was also with Peter and John as we read in Acts 4 : 13, when they were accused before the high priest and the scribes: "and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Something about them spoke ; their manner, their humility, what they reflected.

Let us, brethren and sisters, show by our way of life that we are striving to be the children of God, followers of the Lord Jesus, exhibitions of His Light. Such was the desire of the Lord Jesus when He said :

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 5 : 16.

Token and Frontlets

As the culminating judgment upon Egypt, every firstborn was killed, while Israel's firstborn were saved by the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon the door, causing the angel of destruction to pass-over that home. This resulted in Pharaoh releasing the children of Israel, and sending them out of the land of Egypt, and thus it was deliverance. To remember this momentous event, and all that it signified to faithful Israelites, they were ever to keep to the Passover Feast, and also to reserve all the firstborn of man and beast for the Lord. God's instructions were :

"And it shall be when thy son asketh thee . . . thou shalt say unto him . . . it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes ; for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt."

Exodus 13 : 14, 16.

Israel was never to forget. These memorials were to be alive and meaningful and always with them. It must, in later years, have become a matter of form with them, for we are told that the scribes and Pharisees wore phylacteries containing these verses, and others from the law, bound on their hands and foreheads, as noticeable tokens of remembrance. The Lord Jesus condemned them in Mathew 23 : 5 "But all their works they do for to be seen of men : they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments." How vain and how repugnant to the Creator is an empty outward show of service. Here is a warning for us, lest we, accustomed to these things which are to be ever before us, allow them to become for us a form, an outward appearance, lacking the true gratitude, trust, and fear of God ; in short, lacking in that essential love which all His children must come to know.

They Went Up Harnessed

The record in Exodus 13 : 18 continues “ . . . the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.” An examination into the Hebrew of this word “harnessed” reveals that it means also “armed” or “armed men”. Surely Israel did leave Egypt armed, not with spears and swords, but with a strength far more potent than these—the “arm” was the Lord’s, to lead, and to protect.

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way ; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light . . .” Exodus 13 : 21.

When the army of Pharaoh pursued after them, and they appeared to be trapped against the Red Sea, their Arm reached out to show its might :

“And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them ; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them : And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel ; and it was a cloud of darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these : so that the one came not near the other all the night.” Exodus 14 : 19, 20.

Here was God’s power, a light and protection to Israel, but confusion of darkness to Egypt. How powerfully they were armed indeed ! And cannot that power of God be experienced even by ourselves who yearn to be Israel in truth, keeping us all through our night of probation as well ?

In Isaiah 52 : 11, 12, we read the Spirit’s words to those who desire to be separated unto Him—

“Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing . . . Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord. For ye will not go out with haste, nor go out by flight ; for the Lord will go before you ; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.”

Such was Israel’s experience and such is the experience of all who yearn to serve the God of Israel. For these, the words of Isaiah in chapter 58 verse 8, hold forth the promise of great joy, after the night of separation :

“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily ; and thy righteousness shall go before thee ; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward.”

The Song of the Redeemed

Can we, brethren and sisters, enter into these experiences of Israel as they were led out of Egypt and perceive how in our own

lives, this same hand is working even in the same way? We are called to be a separate people, God having put a division between us and the world. Can we rejoice, being thankful for His leading us as it were, harnessed that we might have all the protection and guidance that Israel knew?

Is there not a power which comes between, which is to us light, but to the world, darkness; a power which can divide the sea if necessary, for the saving of His people? Having seen the purpose of God in bringing all these judgments upon Egypt to teach them that He was God—but much more so, to teach His people of His power on their behalf, for their redemption—can we enter into the song of the redeemed, sung by Moses and all the faithful in Israel?

“The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”

Exodus 15 : 2.

Do we grasp it, and are we now preparing Him an habitation, so that He may dwell in us, as we strive to be vessels fit for His use?

“Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.”

Exodus 15 : 17.

Shall we dwell there, brethren and sisters,? Have we, even as Israel, “exodused”, and are we His habitation, exalting Him as His deliverance is made manifest to us in so many ways?

J. A. DeF.

The History of the Truth in the Latter Days (9)

Christadelphians and Re-union

One of the outstanding features of the Word of God is that the record of those who have served the Truth in time past reveals their mistakes and sins as well as their righteous acts. Although David was a man after God’s own heart, particulars of his grievous sin are clearly given. How different from the worldly records of great men whose faults are overlooked by history as attempts to paint a picture of perfect heroes are made. The candid way in which the Word of God deals with men of old is a testimony to the Truth that “in the flesh dwells no good thing” and that “God is no respecter of person;” moreover, it shows that God’s mercy is extended to those who are prepared to seek His forgiveness with true humility of heart. In the case of David, this spirit of humility pervades his writings, as, for example, in Psalm 51—

“I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before

me . . . Restore me unto the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free spirit . . . a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Whilst men of many religious creeds are prepared to subscribe to this truth, there is reluctance, if not refusal, to acknowledge one’s own sins in a direct and fulsome way. In the decline of the Truth in the latter years, this has been very evident, and sin, grievous sin against God and His Word, has been excused as “weakness in the Faith,” resulting in the pulling down of the standard of Truth that the vanity and pride of men might be accommodated. How dishonouring to the great Creator who requires from those who would serve Him, the complete upholding of His law. How such behaviour tends to shut out the merciful provision for those of David-like spirit who, when they fail, as certainly they will, do not seek excuse by discounting the Law of God, but with true humility acknowledge the law and condemn themselves.

“Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth”

(Hebrew 12 v 6.)

Those who have read these articles on the History of the Truth will be convinced of the writer’s admiration of the stand which Robert Roberts took for the Truth ; how that through his godly efforts the Truth was preserved through many a crisis, how that he suffered division and all the pain that that would mean rather than have the Truth polluted and lost again in the lumber of Christendom from which it had been delivered some fifty years previously. To do justice however to the history of the Truth it is necessary to touch upon certain matters in which godly men failed, even in the latter days, and to endeavour to draw the lesson from the record of their failure. Therefore in writing the following account of some of the things which came upon Robert Roberts and the Brotherhood towards the end of the last century they are not recorded merely for historical interest, but that the divine lesson which those experiences afforded might be passed on to the present generation.

Towards the end of the eighteen eighties there was more than usual occasion for interest in the Jewish colonisation of Palestine, for a Jew living there came into contact with the Truth and offered to help the return of his people to the land. It was through this one that it was hoped brethren might be allowed to work for the fulfilment of something which was very close to their hearts, which they knew was required just prior to the return of Christ. Coincidental with this circumstance, which gripped the imagination of men like Robert Roberts, there appeared a phenomenal way of

making large sums of money, and the temptation which then came was, Can the brethren engage in the scheme with the alien, whereby undreamed sums of money would be quickly obtained to be used for the furtherance of helping the Jews back to the land ?

On the face of it this project seemed altruistic. Looking at the facts from this distance of time, it is clear where the first and great mistake was made.

The scheme itself was for the refining of sugar by means of electricity. The patent for the process was said to have been invented by a Professor in New York who had died and left the benefits of his invention to his widow. The invention, and such demonstration of its working as outsiders were permitted to see, attracted the attention of a reputable brother in the States, to whom the sugar produced was its own witness—of “suberb beauty and purity”—and no less than ten tons were produced in two hours ! All that was required to effect a production that would satisfy world demands, at prices far below those prevailing, were factories and machinery. It was computed that the process which instantaneously converted cheap raw sugar into best refined would make a profit of between £4 and £6 per ton. With world consumption something like 10,000 tons per day, untold wealth was in sight. First, of course, it was necessary to get sufficient money to launch the scheme.

To this end 10,000 shares were to be sold. Prices ranged from £50 to £100 per share which seemed high, but in view of the prospects it was thought that in a short while they would be worth several thousand pounds each.

The brother in the States was pressed by Robert Roberts to allow brethren who wished to partake in the scheme, and since this brother in the States avowed to give nine-tenths of the profits to the Truth, the commercial project was given a divine savour.

“Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers”

(2 Corinthians 6 v. 14.)

Many brethren at the time had doubts about whether it was right to buy the shares, but some put away their qualms when the Editor of the *Christadelphian*, Robert Roberts, gave his blessing. But whoever he be, whether it be David or Robert Roberts who departs for a while from divine principles, there is sure to be a sharp rebuke, for “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth”, and whilst there will be forgiveness to the truly repentant, suffering will follow as David had to learn by bitter experience. It is only in this way that faithful men can be taught that God’s ways are higher than their ways, “as the heavens are higher than the earth.”

In the burning desire to satisfy what seemed so legitimate a project, the divine precept of not being yoked together with the unbeliever was sadly overlooked by Robert Roberts. In fact, he wrote an article under the heading "Yet not altogether" (*Christadelphian*, December 1888) to try to show that the buying of the shares was permissible. In the course of the article it is transparent that desire had supplanted reason, causing the overlooking of God's law. Having established, as he thought, the legitimacy of the buying of the shares, which meant joining with the alien, he went on to state in no uncertain terms the merits of the company in these words—

"These remarks are suggested by the objection raised in some quarters against the participation of some brethren in the Electric Sugar Co. The objection, where it is a sincere one, is based on misconception. The Electric Sugar Co. is not a 'bubble' company; it is not speculation in the sense of being a chance affair. It is a solid, honest, legitimate trading enterprise which has taken some skill to develop, and in which a brother may feel more than usual liberty, because of the guarantee that exists that all things connected with it will be done according to honour and godliness."

Scarcely had the ink dried that formed those words than the 'bubble' burst. God would not be mocked; it was necessary that people, beloved of Him, should be chastened that they might learn His ways. Within a matter of only a few weeks of having written the foregoing, Robert Roberts was compelled to write something which at the time he never dreamed he would have to do, namely the article on the "Sugar Disaster" (*"Christadelphian"* February 1889). After giving some details of the fraud, these poignant words appear—

"We have received a great and stunning blow. The Editor is a fellow-sufferer with them in a practical sense. If he advantaged by the operations which have taken place (which he did through the company recognising the value of his services as referee), it was in shares which are now worthless. He did not turn the opportunity to convenient account and leave the risk to others. He was in the same boat, and suffers with them in all its ruin. At the same time he cannot shut his eyes to the fact that he is greatly responsible for the misplaced faith which has placed them where they are . . . for the moment he is overwhelmed by the greatness of the disaster."

There are those alive who can still remember something of the ruin, of the desolation where brethren and sisters had given their life's savings in the project which had received the blessing of their

leader. Grief in many cases gave way to bitterness, with the result that the sufferings of Robert Roberts were greatly increased. It is doubtful whether he, in a physical sense, ever overcame the devastating effects of this blow. Someone told the writer what a marked change it produced in him, he who had been so valiant in the Truth's fight, had worsted men of the calibre of Charles Bradlaugh in debate, had displayed his prowess in his style and bearing, was now bowed and broken. It was not his own loss which grieved him, but the losses which he had been instrumental in inflicting upon so many.

If ever there were an incident in the lives of brethren to teach a simple lesson, this is surely one. God does not permit His people to be joined to the alien in any way. Throughout the Scriptures God shows that He requires His people to be separate. In these days they are to come out of the world, to be separate from it and to touch not the unclean. The context of these words supply the heading to this paragraph—"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"—and there follows :—

“What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness, and what concord hath Christ with Belial, or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel, and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” (2 Corinthians 6 vv. 14, 16).

In the sad fall from the Truth when Christadelphians have been faced with these words they have tried to argue that they only apply to marriage! Such a pretext for escaping all that God requires in a people being separated from the world is scarcely worthy of refutation. It is true that in some Bibles the marginal reference is to marriage, but a thoughtful reading of the whole passage will show that these divine words are intended to sum up the position of the life of the people of God as being separate in all things from the world, which they claim to leave and renounce when baptised. It is known that share-holding has now become common amongst Christadelphians, and it may even be argued by some that they have gained in consequence and received a blessing. What should be realised is that where a people leave the Truth they leave God ; He is no longer their dwelling and He gives them up to their own ways as they become part of the world ; therefore the fact that Christadelphians are shareholders, that many are directors of commercial concerns must not be taken as consent of that which is right, but rather of an indication of a fall from the Truth to such an extent that they are outside the Truth, no longer meriting rebuke and chastening of the Almighty. It may not be known to all that even the Christadelphian Magazine is now a commercial company and registered according to British law as such, and that one of

its directors is a director of no less than seven or eight other commercial undertakings.

What would Jesus say if He were present to comment? Would His remarks be similar to those by which He condemned the ones who were professing to uphold the Truth in His day, but whom He said had made the House of God into a house of merchandise?

The last days of Robert Roberts

Towards the end of 1894 a notice appeared in the "Christadelphian" that the Editor, Robert Roberts, may have to summarily cancel all his lecturing appointments. This gave rise to much speculation. He had been introduced by a well-meaning brother to a commercial project which it was thought was so profitable that it might recoup all the losses incurred by the Sugar disaster, and enable those who had suffered, and which had caused Robert Roberts so much grief, to be repaid. This time a factory was started, although it never produced anything, with the object of making 'unbreakable glass'. In connection with this a notice appeared in the "Christadelphian" as follows:—

"The Editor has come into association with another brother in the starting of a manufacturing business in Birmingham with the object of recouping the losses, of which he was the innocent cause, to many brethren by his misplaced confidence in the Electric Sugar Co. . . A factory has been acquired and equipped in the last six months and has nearly reached running point. About fifty people are employed, among whom the leading men are brethren . . . a little more plant is needed . . . it is here where opportunity exists for brethren or sisters at home or abroad to unite with the Editor. The supposition is that such may have various sums in hand which they are afraid to invest in an age when roguery is at the bottom of so many enterprises. Perhaps they have £10, £20 or £100 which is yielding them next to no return and which they would put into something which was safe and well-yielding—if they could find it. If such sums are placed in the Editor's hands for the purpose in question the Editor will make himself personally responsible for them."

Again the terms of the arrangement made with the alien savoured of partnership, and the lesson which might have been learned from the Sugar Disaster needed still further to be impressed. In the kindness of God the minds of those concerned should have been alerted to the fraud by something which happened prior to the crash of this venture. The man responsible for foisting upon Robert Roberts and those with him the bogus invention was found to be a deceiver in certain particulars, but was so plausible that these were explained away. Or may it have been that the intents

of the heart were so set upon the gain that they were brushed aside?

Retribution came quickly for in the same "Christadelphian" carrying the above notice the report was published of the failure of the concern and the gross deception which had inspired its commencement. Indeed there was no such invention as had been alleged of 'unbreakable glass' suitable for table ware, window panes and other articles.

This second blow upon Robert Roberts was crushing. Its effect was to cause a total collapse. His doctor was amazed at a perfectly healthy man being in such a condition—until he knew the cause of the breakdown. He advised a long sea voyage. Robert Roberts visited New Zealand and Australia, working hard as opportunity afforded and giving lectures at various points of call. He returned to Birmingham in 1896 with the resolve to go to Australia again with a view to taking up residence there, and so it was that he embarked on his last voyage from England that was to take him into the silence of the tomb.

Some work had been arranged for Robert Roberts in the States and so after reaching Australia and giving lectures at various places, and also in certain towns in New Zealand, he left his wife to go to Melbourne whilst he was to make a journey across the Pacific to the western seaport of San Francisco. It was intended that he should only stay here a day or two and then continue on his journey, but instead his life journey was ended on the day he should have left. He was found dead, dressed and with his things packed in his hotel bedroom on the morning of September 23rd, 1898. The circumstances of his death brought about what seems more than an ordinary circumstance for his burial, for he was laid to rest side by side with Dr. Thomas in New York.

And so two, who, under the hand of God were pioneers in raising the light of the Truth from the surrounding darkness lie side by side awaiting the call of the Master to resurrection and judgment. There seems to be, as one gazes upon the tombstones, a special message for those who perceive the falling away of the last days. Inscribed on the monument over the grave of John Thomas are the words which were intended as a witness but surely now are a warning:—

"He contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints and at his death left behind him as a result of his labours, a body of people, in different parts of the world, known as

Christadelphians
to continue the work begun."

Were Robert Roberts to arise and survey the present state of Christadelphia, how sad he would feel: his name freely used in admiration and his words freely quoted, but the spirit of righteousness with which he fought for the Truth and took it safely through various divisions, including the Inspiration Division, denied and condemned. Present Christadelphian leaders have much to answer for in this respect.

(. . . to be continued)

The Inspiration Division of 1885

Was it righteous ?

Was it justified ?

Seventy two years ago this month, on June 12th, 1885, the Christadelphian Body was rent in twain by the Partial Inspiration Division. It was this Division which gave rise to the two main sections of Christadelphians, namely, "Temperance Hall" and "Suffolk Street." Now, after this long period, "Temperance Hall," and "Suffolk Street" have re-united, and in doing so have disannulled the Division of 1885.

Every Christadelphian is now faced with the very simple but supremely important question—

Was the Division of 1885 righteous and justified,
or was it not ?

If the Division were justified on the grounds that the authenticity of the Bible was being attacked and its accuracy questioned, then should not Suffolk Street Christadelphians have been called upon to admit this as a condition of Re-union ?

If on the other hand the Division were not justified, but was unrighteously forced upon the Brotherhood by Robert Roberts and those with him, then should not Temperance Hall Christadelphians have been asked to admit this, as a condition of Re-union ?

The Suffolk Street View

As to the view held by present-day Suffolk Street Christadelphians, there is no doubt. The following quotation taken from a letter appearing in the current issue of the "Fraternal Visitor," and signed by some of their leaders, reveals their mind—

"When in the past the Suffolk Street ecclesias referred to their fellowship as open, we should remember that they maintained that the division of 70 years ago was unjustified."

The Division unjustified ! Such is the belief of Suffolk Street ; one which in reality declares that Division should never have taken place, that Robert Roberts and those with him were unjust in forcing and maintaining the Division, and that in consequence,

Suffolk Street have been for seventy years the victims of wrong and unrighteous treatment on the part of Temperance Hall.

The Temperance Hall View

How do Temperance Hall regard the Division of 1885? Do they accept the contention of Suffolk Street that it was unjustified and that there should never have been a Division? Or do they earnestly contend that the Division was the righteous action of faithful brethren who were compelled to separate because of an adamant refusal of some to accept the Bible as the wholly inspired Word of God

If this were their belief, one would have expected them to have contended for it, by insisting, as the first essential to Re-union, that Suffolk Street acknowledge the righteousness and justification of the 1885 Division. But Temperance Hall have not done this. In fact the above quotation that "they (Suffolk Street) maintained that the Division 70 years ago was unjustified" is taken from a letter issued by the Re-union Committee and signed by leading representatives of Temperance Hall.

Thoughtful Christadelphians will perceive that the whole question of Re-union really centres around this point, namely, Was the Division of 1885 just, righteous and necessary, or was it not? This simple question was recently put to the Editor of 'The Christadelphian' in a letter dated April 1st—

"Was the action of Robert Roberts in supporting a division in 1885 righteous and necessary for the preservation of the Truth against the heresy of Partial Inspiration?"

No reply being forthcoming a reminder was sent. This brought a reply endorsed "Not for Publication" from which readers will draw their own conclusions as to the position of the Editor of 'The Christadelphian'. Indeed, he has as good as said in subscribing his signature to the above statement regarding the Suffolk Street position without protest that he agrees with it, and that therefore in his opinion the division of 1885 was not justified.

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How deplorable that the brave and courageous work of Robert Roberts at this time, who stood like Phinehas in the day when the veracity of the Scriptures was assailed by false brethren, should now be overthrown, and the wrong against God and His Word allowed to triumph. To plead that the Temperance Hall and Suffolk Street faith is right by an appeal to a Statement of Faith is not enough; the Apostle James says, "Show me thy faith by thy works." The righteous work now required to show true faith, pleasing to God, calls for condemnation of those who doubted God's Word, and upholding Robert Roberts' action as righteous

in separating from the doubters and those with them. Failure by Suffolk Street in 1885 to do this meant they lost the Truth and lost the fellowship of God and His Son. Now the departure of Temperance Hall from the Truth is being further proved. The call of the Spirit is "Come out and be separate and touch not the unclean."

“ The Signs of His Coming and of the end of the world ”

In most countries of the world, scattered here and there, can be found men and women who firmly believe the return of Christ is near. Usually they belong to little known sects, insignificantly small when compared with the state religions, but collectively forming a huge throng of many different tongues and races, but with the common conviction that Christ is at hand.

Yet despite this apparent unity of mind, an examination of their beliefs reveals an astonishing state of affairs. First, they are found to be divided into an unbelievable assortment of sects and denominations, some influential and prosperous, others struggling to exist, and bearing a perplexity of names. Closer inspection reveals the existence amongst them of every conceivable belief—and heresy!—so that the mind resolved to sift them out is soon left staggered in confusion.

Common to all these sects is one tragically ironic feature : each is convinced and satisfied it is the true church of Christ and has “the Truth” of God. Alas, all cannot be right ! There can only be one true Body of Christ : the rest are deceiving themselves—and deceiving others.

In this connection, it is impressive to review some of the warnings of Jesus on this very point. To the disciples on the Mount of Olives He said :—

“Take heed that ye be not deceived ; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ : and the time draweth near : go ye not therefore after them.” (Luke 21).

On the same occasion, He confided :—

“There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders ; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” (Matthew 24).

That many will be deceived is confirmed by Christ’s further warning :—

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophecied in thy name ? and in thy name have cast out

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devils ? and in thy name done many wonderful works ?
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you :
depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7).

So the warnings could be multiplied. There is the parable of the foolish virgins whose frantic appeals, “Lord, Lord, open to us” were answered with the cold rebuke, “I know you not.” Coming to the Old Testament, there is the message of Malachi :—

“But who may abide the day of his coming ? and who shall stand when he appeareth ?” (Malachi 3).

Then there is the prophecy of Paul :—

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils . . .” (1 Timothy 4).

These are but a few of the warnings, all directed to the same point—to the danger of being deceived. Of them all, perhaps the most impressive is that of Christ when He said :—

“There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.”
(Luke 13).

With all this in mind, the rise during the past century of a multitude of religious sects, each proclaiming, “I am Christ (i.e. the Body of Christ) and the time draweth near” constitutes a most powerful sign that these are the last days. In some respects, it is the most important of all signs, for inherent in it is the plea to examine oneself, to beware of being deceived.

What kindness of the Almighty is here—but how often is it appreciated ? Many talk of the Signs of the times, of the return of Israel to the promised land, of the rise of the King of the North, of knowledge being increased, and of many “running to and fro”. All these are impressive signs of the end—but what of the deception foretold for the last days ? This is a subject passed over by most, on the assumption, “It doesn’t apply to us.” In this way, the warnings are unheeded, countless numbers are deceived, and the words of the prophet Amos take on a lively meaning :—

“Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord ! to what end is it for you ; the day of the Lord is darkness and not light . . .

I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell your solemn assemblies.” (Amos 5).

What is the lesson for us ? Is it not evident that the only people who will not be deceived will be those who fear they may be deceived ?

J.R.M.

News from the Ecclesias

Criccieth, Pentrip, Black Rock, Portmadoc. Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.0 a.m. Revelation Study 3.0 p.m.

Arrangements are in hand for two further lectures in Portmadoc during June, to be followed by others in July, and possibly one in Criccieth.

We are looking forward to the help and company of brethren and sisters during the summer, including the visitors from Eden. —per J.R.M.

Eden, New York. Grange Hall, Church Street. Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.15 a.m. Sunday School 10.0 a.m. Revelation Study 1.30 p.m. Bible Class: Midweek, alternately in Forestville and Hamburg.

Responses to the recent invitation inserted in the Toronto, Ontario Newspaper are being received, and the contacts continue from Springfield, Massachusetts. Thus, any who still embrace the early teachings of Brother Thomas and Brother Roberts are having opportunity to get in touch with The Remnant who believe these matters are vital.

The Annual Sunday School Review is planned for Sunday, June 2. At this time the children will be rewarded for work well done.

By the time this is in print, it is hoped that Brother and Sister DeFries will be in England. The face to face contact is keenly anticipated. J.A.DeF.

Manchester. Memorial Hall, Albert Square, Manchester. Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m. Lecture 3.15 p.m. Thursdays 7.15 p.m. at Onward Hall, Deansgate. Law of Moses Class: Second Saturday each month at 3.30 p.m.

With joyful anticipation we are looking forward to the coming of our American visitors and are grateful for the valuable help that such visits afford. What a proof of His spirit that this is capable of establishing true unity with differing minds and temperaments, whereby men of different nations can be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," a foretaste surely of the blessed experience to be granted to all those who will have the inestimable privilege of spending eternity with a variety of minds, and yet all of His mind taken out of every "kindred and nation and tongue and people."

June 15th is the date for the Annual Sunday School Outing at which we shall be pleased to see brethren and sisters and children from other ecclesias with the hope that we shall enable the young minds to appreciate who it is who makes such abundant provision for their pleasure.

We are glad to say that one is attending the lectures evincing more than usual interest, which we hope will result in fruitful increase.

A special lecture has been arranged in our own room for June 16th, to be given by Bro. DeFries of New York on the subject, "The Mystery of Life—and the problem of Death: What are God's conditions for a sure return from the grave?"
W.V.B.