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in opposition to the Dogmas of
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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

CHRISTENDOM – AND OTHERS – ASTRAY

BLESSED ARE YE, WHEN MEN...

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

CORRESPONDENCE

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

All Communications

W. V. Butterfield
16 Westfield Road,
Cheadle Hulme,
Cheadle,
Cheadle, SK8 6EH

J. Pinkerton,
38 Loughries Road,
Newtownards,
Co. Down,
N. Ireland

J. A. DeFries
R.D.1. Forestville,
New York 14062
U.S.A.

At the Table of the Lord

“**THY GENTLENESS HATH MADE ME GREAT**”

WE ARE PRIVILEGED, again, to be reading the Psalms, the expression of David’s heart, preserved through God’s mercy and grace, a help to us today. We remember that David was “a man after God’s own heart.” The expression of this heart would bring pleasure to God—joy that here was one whose heart was touched, impressed by the Spirit, the flesh cut off in that spiritual circumcision, so pleasing to Him. This was not easy for David, nor is it easy for ourselves as we strive to please God today. What help there can be for us in this struggle—help from the lips of David just as surely as if he were in our midst this morning.

We have heard David speak from the 18th Psalm. The title reveals his mind :

“To the victor, A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord, the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul . . . ”

David’s circumstances at many times had been difficult ; He was under affliction from the persecution of Saul, who sought his life because of jealousy. Later he had been forced to give up his rulership over Israel and flee from Jerusalem by his own son Absalom who sought to seize the kingdom. David had failed, more than once, sinning grievously because of his flesh and its lusts. Yet, God, in all these circumstances, had delivered David and he responded with the words of this Psalm we have read this morning. How pleasing to God these words must have been—words of recognition that it was God’s doing. God does deliver : He delivered David ; He will deliver us, brethren and sisters, if we, like David, seek Him, wait upon Him.

All too often, when deliverance comes, we may overlook gratitude to God, failing to acknowledge that the deliverance came from Him. We may fail to give thanks unto Him ; may fail to live more as He would have us live, more determined to keep our vows because He *has* delivered.

“**I WILL LOVE THEE, O LORD**”

Let us, then, listen to the expression of David’s heart as he acknowledged God’s deliverance, verse 1 :

“I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.”

Is this our reaction to deliverance ? Do we, can we say, “I will love thee, O Lord,” and not merely say it, but show it by obedience

to His Word, by striving to sanctify Him, to glorify Him as David did, indeed, as Jesus did ? We remember the words of Jesus :

“I have glorified thee on the earth : I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” (John 17 : 4).

We know how Jesus finished His Father’s work. He died on the tree, crucifying His flesh with all its temptations, acknowledging before all the world that God was right in demanding death of all men—even of such a man as Jesus who never sinned. This Psalm is entitled : “To the victor . . .,” or to the one who overcomes. Surely, that was Jesus, alone, and the spirit of Jesus is seen in these words. We can almost hear Him, “I will love thee, O Lord, my strength,” and know He would go on, determined to obey His Father in love. Let us make these words—the spirit of David, the spirit of Christ—our spirit as we, too, know deliverance from all our adversaries, especially from our main adversary, our flesh.

“THY GENTLENESS HATH MADE ME GREAT”

Further, in this Psalm, we read of David’s mind, verse 35 :

“. . . and thy gentleness hath made me great.”

The gentleness of God was as much a help, a strength to David as was the shield of His salvation and His right hand which holds up those seeking to serve Him. What was there in God’s gentleness that made David great ? If we can discern this, we too, can be helped to please Him. We find “gentleness” is used as “meekness,” “humility,” and also find that it comes from a root meaning “to afflict,” “to submit oneself,” “to chasten,” “to humble.” God does chasten, afflict those whom He knows are in need of such—for what purpose ? It is to humble, to make meek, to gentle. David realized this as he said, “thy gentleness hath made me great.” As the result of God’s chastening, God’s affliction, gently administered upon David, his spirit, in turn, became gentled. The words of this Psalm, which we also find in II Samuel 22, were written, according to the chronology in II Samuel, about three years before his death. In his life, David had experienced much affliction, realized it was of God, and that God’s purpose in placing it upon him was to “gentle,” to humble, that he might become meek.

“IT IS GOOD FOR ME”

We remember David’s words in Psalm 119 : 67 :

“*Before* I was afflicted I went astray : but *now* have I kept thy word.”

Recognizing the need for affliction, David also said, verse 71 :

“It is good for me that I have been afflicted ; that I might learn thy statutes.”

Can we, then, brethren and sisters, perceive how he valued this gentling of the Lord. Affliction does not seem to be something to be sought after, a blessing from God, for the flesh objects strenuously to it and rebels against it ; but when we recognize God's purpose in placing it upon us, should we not rejoice at this blessing of God, working to gentle our spirit ?

“YE SHALL AFFLICT YOUR SOULS”

The importance God attaches to his children being gentled is seen in the Law. In Leviticus 16 : 29, 31, we read of the day of atonement :

“This shall be a statute for ever unto you : that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall *afflict* your souls and do no work . . . For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you . . . It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall *afflict* your souls . . . ”

Further, in Lev. 23, speaking of this same day of atonement, verse 29, tells us :

“For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted (gentled) in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.”

Unless our soul can be gentled, brethren and sisters, there can be no atonement, and there remains only a cutting off from the people of God, a losing of the hope of salvation. How important, then, is His affliction, not just that we seek it, but allow it to work, to humble, to gentle our flesh which naturally is hard and wilful.

In Isaiah 48 : 10, we read :

“Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver ; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.”

It is, indeed, this furnace of affliction that refines, that genges. It is the fire of affliction which consumes the flesh, leaving only that which is precious and pleasing to God, a sweet savour. How much we need that refining, brethren and sisters. God realizes this, and in loving correction provides this furnace for those whom He has chosen, for those whom He knows *can* be gentled. Do *we* realize it and, therefore, rejoice in the affliction which He, in His infinite wisdom and mercy places upon us, seeking earnestly for the lessons ?

“CHOOSING RATHER TO SUFFER AFFLICTION”

There are many examples of those who have been gentled and have pleased God as a result. In Numbers 12, we read of Moses, suffering affliction at the hands of his brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam, who because of jealousy, said, “. . . Hath the Lord indeed

spoken only by Moses ? hath he not spoken also by us ?" The record given by God is found in verse 3 :

"Now the man Moses was very meek (gentled), above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."

Why was he so ? Perhaps Hebrews 11 : 24-26 helps us to discern :

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter ; choosing rather to *suffer affliction* with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt . . . "

We have had a glimpse of the treasures of Egypt in the pictures of the fabulous riches found in the tomb of Tutankhaman, a Pharaoh who ruled, it is thought, about the time of Moses. Moses chose rather the afflictions of *his* people, knowing it was of God and that it would gentle his soul. Was this why God witnessed of Moses that he was the meekest man in all the earth ? By these afflictions, by the reproach of Christ which he esteemed, he was humbled, became meek.

We think of Jesus who said, Matthew 11 : 28, 29 :

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden (affliction ?), and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me (How can we learn of Him, of His victory except we bear His reproach, are afflicted ?) ; for I am *meek* and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Can we, then, brethren and sisters, perceive that this, which gentles and humbles, brings us closer to the Lord Jesus, closer to His spirit of love and obedience ? Did not Paul value this as he wrote to his brethren in Corinth :

"Now I Paul myself beseech you *by the meekness and gentleness of Christ . . .*" (II Cor. 10 : 1).

Paul recognized that he must move in gentleness as he sought to help his brethren ; and affliction had brought him to this appreciation.

The Lord Jesus tells us :

"Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth."
(Matt. 5 : 5).

Why will the meek inherit the earth ? Is it because they have *learned* by affliction, by pain, by sorrow, and so can hope to be great when Jesus returns to gather unto Himself all those who have gentled their soul ?

It is not easy to submit to affliction, to be gentled, to have the flesh with all its violence crucified ; yet, how needful it is if we are, as David, to have the hope of being made great. We find this word means “to increase,” “to nourish.” We do need nourishing, brethren and sisters, to sustain in the struggle to get the victory over all our adversaries, and above all, over our fleshly inclinations. We cannot do it ourselves ; we need God’s help. God knows this, and does grant His gentleness that we may be as James exhorts :

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you ? let him show out of a good conversation his works with *meekness* of wisdom.” (James 3 : 13-18).

Verse 17, tells us :

“ . . . The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

Can we perceive David’s spirit as he wrote, when overwhelmed with God’s deliverance, “I will love thee, O Lord” ? Can we see how vital, how powerful a force is the affliction we endure as God’s children ? Let us rejoice in it and reach for that greatness which is *sure*—if we can develop our hearts as David, under God’s Hand, was able to do.

J. A. DeF.

Christendom — *and others* — Astray

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ

“*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*” (Exodus 20 : 3).

LAST MONTH CONSIDERATION was given to the wonder of being able to appreciate in measure the majesty and holiness of the eternal God, who appeared to the Ecclesia at Sinai, and was described to them in all His manifold *powers*, as Elohim (the word meaning *powers*). It was a privilege to be joined to the Ecclesia at Sinia, feel and see the majesty of the Almighty, be inspired with reverence for His holiness, and in the experience of the heaven and earth shaking-power to realise that this manifestation was not to terrorise, but to impress frail minds that the *powers* of the great God were indescribably great ; sufficient to create all the wonders seen in the heavens and the earth ; but what was so important to the Ecclesia (*and to us*) able to make earthly men and women recipients

of God's powers—*love, righteousness, peace, meekness* and all that constitutes godliness.

Throughout the ages this work has been going on directed by the God of heaven, and in the last dispensation raising up mortals to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

No power on earth can or could achieve such a delightful result, to be seen in the fullness when a "nation shall be born in a day," and the radiance of godliness shining in each and all will eventually illuminate a dark and dreadful world.

Earthly powers can destroy with evil intensity, but they cannot produce any medicament or power to make men good, or godlike. On the contrary, the world left to its own devices, proceeds rapidly down the slope of degradation and depravity.

Nations may boast of their ability to explode a nuclear bomb, sufficient in power to turn the sand of the desert into glass ; mutilate and kill millions by the explosion or condemn to a lingering death by radioactive fall-out. Yes, such are the powers of men, to assert the pride of the flesh, and frighten nations to give up what another demands.

How delightfully different is seen to be the *powers* of God ; the end of which is to be life for worthy ones, instead of death for multitudes who are in the hopeless plight of not knowing how to avoid the disaster they know must come.

THE AFFIRMATIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE TRUTH

Knowing the subtlety of human nature, God has been careful not only to say what should be believed and obeyed ; but He has also given commands that the opposite of these things—the negative—must be condemned. The wisdom of this will be seen presently.

The commands given to the Ecclesia at Sinai were *positive*, but God in His kindness knew that these might be affirmed at the same time as those things opposed to such commands—the negative—could be embraced. God has said that the human heart is "deceitful and desperately wicked." We all know this by our own feelings and experiences, and the history of the Truth has been a profession of what God requires, but made worthless by upholding or condoning the opposite.

This is particularly seen to be the case in how the "others" have attempted to make what they call a "Statement of Faith" all-sufficient, often adding in their declaration that this must be accepted *without reservation*. But many have made their own interpretation of such a "Statement," and hence the chaos prevailing among

the sects of the "others." If only the Spirit of the Law, which is the Spirit of Christ, governed their thinking, then they would see that God's word is the only "Statement," and every affirmative in belief must be accompanied by a negative—a robust denial of the opposite. In other words, in respect to *the* Truth, every "yes" must have a "no."

The carefulness of the Almighty in this is deeply to be appreciated. Were not the *positive* commands at Sinai sufficient for the Ecclesia? God thought otherwise, and in a powerful and dramatic way led the Ecclesia to show that an affirmation of belief without a denial of the opposite, was valueless, destructive of faith, and the means of sowing the seeds of apostasy.

Let us then be prepared to admire God's care in the precaution He arranged for the Ecclesia in this matter. We must go into the land, not far to a suitable site where half the tribes could assemble on one mountain, and the other half on one nearby.

We are at Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal. All the Ecclesia assembled by divine command. Six tribes on each Mount. We listen :

"And Moses and the priests spake unto *all* Israel, saying Take heed, and hearken, O Israel ; *this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. (What an honour).*

Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.

And Moses charged the people the same day, saying (These shall stand upon Mount Gerazim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan . . .)" (six tribes).

"And these shall stand upon Ebal to curse." (*the six other tribes.*)

The scene is unique. Half the Ecclesia uttering the words of blessing, to which none would object ; the other half pronouncing a divine curse upon those who dared to subtract from what was declared. The positive command was :

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exod. 20 : 3).

This, to be fully believed, required condemnation of any view which might be a deviation. To make this principle clear to all the Ecclesia, those assembled upon mount Ebal were to say "amen" to the declaration :

"Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a *secret* place."

(Deut. 27 : 15).

Twelve times was the voice of those on Ebal heard condemning beliefs and practices which were in opposition to the positive commands.

This essential principle was clearly understood and upheld by the pioneers. The words of R. Roberts are like a refreshing breeze, compared with the sultry and murky speculations of the sects of the "others". He wrote :

"Every affirmative proposition has a converse. Every yes has a no ; and if a man is not prepared to accept that "no" it shows his "yes" is not worth much. For instance, if a man profess to believe in the God of Israel, he is bound to say that he does not believe in the gods of the heathen. If he were timorous about affirming the latter, would it not show that his belief in the God of Israel was no belief in the real sense, but merely a fragment of ancient polytheism, which recognised different gods for different nations.

"There is a *negative* as well as a positive side to the faith in our day . . .

Positive belief (that is full assurance of faith) on one side necessitates and produces positive unbelief on the other. A man heartily believing the truth will heartily reject error : and if he does not heartily do the latter it is a proof that he is incapable of heartily doing the former."

THE REMEDY NOW

This is no different than it was in Apostolic times or in the days of Dr. Thomas and R. Roberts. The divine command is :

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing . . . From such withdraw thyself" and the reason is made plain :

"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump ?"
(1 Cor 5 : 6).

The prevalent idea of trying to persuade those in error by the use of accommodating words and phrases, is like trying to unleaven leaven. As impossible in the natural as it is in the spiritual. The present policy of the "others" of refusing to condemn, of refusing to withdraw from those in error, has resulted in many sects professing the name that they have *the* Truth, whereas it has resulted in a number of groups in which error has destroyed their witness, and dissension their unity.

We can picture the pioneers with Israel, lifting up their voices in loud acclaim, as those were to be condemned who dared to subtract

from divine truth ; and note that if in “secret” this was to be condemned. But can we fit in to such a divine demonstration, the “others”, whose “yeses” and “noes” are a confusing babel ?

THE DIVINE REASON FOR THE EXCLUSION OF ALL OTHER GODS

The Ecclesia were not only told this, but it was explained to them they could not be worshippers of the one God of Israel, and the gods of any other people. The reason scarcely lies on the surface. Here a digression may be helpful.

What is wrong in a brother going to a Church “service,” a wedding “service,” a funeral “service,” where the prelates of Christendom preside, professing a belief in God, but denying absolutely belief in the God of Israel ? The lesson now is as clear as it was three thousand years ago.

“For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods : so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.”

(Deut. 7 : 4).

The experience of the Ecclesia in the wilderness, in the land, and in the last hundred years is the same : Consort with those who deny the God of Israel, apostasy will ensue and *the* Truth will be lost. It is not sufficiently recognised . . .

“For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God : the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.”

(Deut. 7 : 6).

Undoubtedly hard to believe three thousand years ago even as it is now ; but the necessity of doing so has been proved time and again throughout the history of the Truth, both in ancient times and now. The results of failing to appreciate by practical application the reason for being a separate people has resulted in the most horrible practices among the “heathen” nations ; and in those professing *the* Truth in being caught in the whirlpool of orthodox evil, so that the God of Israel is not before their eyes, and everyone can do that which is right in his own eyes.

GOD'S KINDNESS SEEN IN HIS CARE

Jesus did not need to be told for He knew what was in man. This is also true of His Father. How readily man could make a god out of wood or stone, or perhaps what is much more subtle out of his own imagination. Most feel the need for a god ; someone higher than themselves, who will provide and protect in time of need, but one who will always approve and never condemn.

It may seem to belong to a bygone age that God commanded--
 "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any
 likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the
 earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

(Exod. 20 : 4).

The greater part of Christendom live in breach of this command, for their Churches are filled with idols ; some elaborately gilded, some adorned with precious stones costing millions of dollars. We shall not forget in the days of our ignorance going into the cathedral of St. Gudule in Brussels. The altar in front of the congregation was dominated by a huge gilded figure, four or five times life size, supposedly representing Gudule (whoever he was). As devotees entered they bowed themselves to this giant, who took not the slightest notice; and although he had ears he could not hear, and had eyes he could not see. Christendom have invented a system whereby men can please themselves, and on payment can be absolved of all sin, and have the promise of life beyond the grave. If one would be warned of what departure from God's commands can lead to, then take a careful look at Christendom, whose ways allow for hating one another, killing one another. Christendom is undoubtedly astray.

"LITTLE CHILDREN, KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS" (1 John 5 : 21).

The Ecclesia in the wilderness as we have seen were distinctly told, that they must not have other gods in "secret."

The human heart is a ready receptacle for keeping an idol in "secret". This may be in the form of relations not in the Truth, to whom affection is unduly paid, and care taken not to keep separate from them—a son, a daughter, a mother or a father. This has resulted in the "others" allowing for the destruction of a fundamental principle of the Truth : a denial that those who have not been baptised, but may have had some connection with the Truth, are not without hope. This is a very cherished idol, often polished with the phrase "for God is merciful." They forget or rather ignore that there are conditions for the bestowal of God's mercy. If these have not been observed then who is to blame ? Certainly not the Almighty God who will see that any who diligently seek Him, will be found of Him. The rest spend whatever their lifespan may be, enjoying at least some of His goodness, and then finish where they began, in mother earth.

There are many idols which the human heart will secretly hold, cherish, and will not let go. In addition to family not in the Truth, there are many legitimate things which can become idols : business, work, hobbies, housework, gardens etc. Where any of these find a

predominant place in the heart, they inevitably push out the God of Israel, so how important is the exhortation :

“Little children keep yourselves from idols.”

(to be continued)

“Blessed are ye, when men . . . shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.”

(Matt. 5 : 11).

THE LOT OF THOSE upholding the Truth for Christ’s sake has always been an unenviable one. Contending for what they know the Truth requires, and adept at using the sword of the Spirit, their defeated adversaries try to undermine the witness by speaking “all manner of evil against” those whose sole desire is to serve their Master.

Jesus suffered greatly in this respect. Accused of consorting with devils, and the prince of the devils, and also of the greatest sin of all—blasphemy, the adversaries could not gainsay the witness of Jesus. To overcome His teaching and the condemnation of self-righteousness, every means was adopted to try and denigrate Him ; to trap Him in His words ; and all this failing, they moved with fury to have Him put to death. How disgraceful for a life spent in trying to serve !

The Apostles had the same experience. Paul lamented of the many “perils” he suffered, “in perils among false brethren,” which perhaps underlines that which was the hardest to bear :

“That which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the ecclesias.” (2 Cor. 11 : 28).

It is often more than enough to withstand enemies without, but the pain and sufferings caused by those within can be indescribable. Almost anything is taken hold of by such adversaries in trying to put down those who uphold the Truth. Reasoning, entreating, will not dispel the onslaughts of the “accuser of our brethren.” These dreadful times have had to be borne by all trying to follow in the footsteps of the Lord.

Coming to more recent times—the pioneers—Dr. Thomas and R. Roberts—were greatly maligned by those who rose up within, and tried “to draw away disciples after them.” True, the pioneers made

mistakes, but their lives were those of unswerving devotion to the propagation of the gospel, and never were they guilty of seeking personal advantage. Of course their adversaries thought otherwise, as did Korah, Dathan and Abiram in the time of Moses. The fate of these should be a warning to self-seekers, and make them realise what they owe to those who serve without any idea of self-interest.

Dr. Thomas was scorned for his lack of knowledge of Hebrew. He did not use the pointed text which in Hebrew supplies the vowels, but what of this? The "pointing" was not introduced until the ninth century.

Previously, memory and the passing of the pronunciation from father to son had sufficed. But the adversary thought that here was something to expose a proud streak in Dr. Thomas, and to those unaware of the facts the slur had an effect.

Later, even Dr. Thomas's medical qualifications were impugned. It was said his degree of "M.D." was bogus. This sort of thing was readily taken up by his adversaries without question; or even seeking to ascertain the truth of the matter. Adversaries do not want the truth of the matter. For them the only satisfaction is to see the contenders for the faith humiliated and scorned. R. Roberts said he had seen the original certificate giving Dr. Thomas the degree of "M.D."

There has come into the writer's hands copies of the "Lancet" (the premier medical journal in England if not in the world) for 1830 and 1831. There are several contributions of a learned and advanced character from a young man of 25—Yet Surgeon to the Dispensary, Well Street, Hackney, London—one at that time called "Mr. J. Thomas."

One contribution shows how acute was the brain of "Mr. Thomas": "Treatment for Asphyxia." He pointed out the necessity to preserve life of making a cut into the trachea—the tube to the lungs—and supplied an illustration of the apparatus by which oxygen could then be pumped into the lungs, when it was no longer possible orally. This very treatment saved the life of a great film star some ten years ago, one who has since made a fortune in a movie called "Anthony and Cleopatra"—one hundred and thirty years after "Mr. Thomas" made the suggested treatment to the medical peers of his day. One has only to read Dr. Thomas's contributions to realise that he was no ordinary doctor, but one who if he had so desired could have become one of the leaders of his profession. Yet, thanks be to God, "he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Had he done

the former, great as he might have become, his grave would have been his eternal home ; now he lies in Greenwood Cemetery, New York, but only for a time.

R. Roberts experienced similar treatment at the hands of the jealous adversaries. They even said he wore his hair too long. What things the adversary will take hold of to make out a case to pull down the workers in the Truth, that they might be exalted. How often he mourned his lot, but refused to give in. How often he was ill because of the slander of his accusers. He wrote how he felt :

“We have identified ourselves with the truth in its purity, without mixture or compromise, and please God, shall adhere, without flinching to this policy to the end.”

Two days before the “end” R. Roberts lectured in San Francisco just as he arrived from Australia. He had dressed, packed and was ready to continue his work in crossing America, when, on his room being entered, he lay on the floor—dead.

Now he lies at the side of Dr. Thomas, awaiting the call of the One who is “the resurrection and the life.”

W.V.B.

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

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground . . .”

(Malachi 3 v 11).

THOUGH THE ABOVE WORDS had a message for a particular time in the past, they have an application for the present.

There are those in these times who would “devour” and who are therefore to suffer the divine rebuke. There are also some who need reassuring that the devourer “shall not destroy the fruits” of the ground.

Men in these days have spoiled the creation, and have marred man's way of life. There has been a lot of technology, but beautiful and meaningful tranquillity has been driven away before the advance of science and been lost in the ways of modern living. The History book speaks of the industrial revolution and the new technological revolution. Revolution is the right term ; things have com-

pletely reversed, and been turned upside down. The scriptures define these events in critical terms, and show that from the divine viewpoint they are neither important nor lasting. Only the work of God matters, and He most surely will preserve it and restore its beauty. Hence the following rebuke :

“Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay : for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not ? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He hath no understanding ?

Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest ?

And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy one of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed . . . ” (Isaiah 29 : 16-20).

Men seem to think they can do in the earth whatever they desire ; and fail to take God into account because they do not believe in God. But “shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not ?” In the days of the building of the tower of Babel men overlooked the simple and yet profound fact that God is in control, therefore at that time their work was confounded and they were scattered. Is it any different today ? Will God act differently ?

Perhaps the poor state of the environment is not fully realised, even by the thoughtful, because of familiarity and usage. Consideration may help to show how great the deterioration has been through technology even though many good things have also been developed.

At the time of writing, another Nuclear weapon test in the Pacific Ocean is being prepared by France, who chooses to ignore New Zealand and Australian protests. France speaks of this latest experimental bomb as being “clean” as though to convince the protesters that they have nothing to worry about. But how can anything so dangerous and contaminating be clean ? Nevertheless Britain does not raise its voice on the behalf of its former colonies because politics and the European Common Market are more important than the Australian environment. In fact the environment appears to be of little concern in any nation, particularly the Industrial Nations.

At the present time the United States, and others, are heavily

committed to the fast breeder nuclear reactor system in their plans for future power requirements. But nuclear power generation which appeared so promising some twenty years or so ago following the building of the first "nuclear breeders" at Chicago, is really a subtle danger to people and their environment, especially those living in the vicinity of such power stations.

If the United States, for example, were to continue, then it is estimated that there would be around the figure of 500 "breeder plants" in operation in the U.S.A., in thirty years time. These plants excrete a dangerous and very poisonous metallic isotope of plutonium, and waste disposal from these reactors already is a problem. The authorities in the U.S.A. however have been very pleased to record that they have achieved to date "one hundred accident-free reactor years." But as new "breeder plants" are built so the chance of accident increases, for breeders are just, and only just, controlled nuclear explosions. It is not unreasonable for a set of minor mishaps to cause one of these power stations to explode with obvious devastation over a very wide area. The atomic scientist refers to such a possibility as a "large accident"; But it is the kind of accident that could have appalling results, yet is dismissed from any serious concern by governments involved in such things, because in their own view it would be unthinkable for other countries to steal a march upon them in the nuclear race. It is a case of expertise and national prestige getting more and more remote from any controlled purpose, or safeguard for the wholesome things of life which God has given.

There has been some sort of admission that technology has been too casual about the precautions it has taken. A committee of the U.S. National Academy of Science's National Research Council has declared that the United States Atomic Energy Commission's technical guidelines on permitted emissions of radioactive substances allow a level that is much too high. There is far more in this admission than the general public realises. It reveals that many concerned in science and technology are advancing their achievements at great speed but are almost wholly devoid of wisdom to foresee what the end of their ambitious projects might be. It appears that they live for present success, and let the future take care of itself. This is an almost insane outlook, which unfortunately for mankind is also only too evident in other features of modern life.

The aero industry following the era of Mach 2 and Mach 3 supersonic flight has been looking ahead to the "hypersonic era" in a decade or two of speeds of Mach 5 and 6; but not only to faster aircraft but also much larger as well. But what of the population which might live in the flight path of such monstrous machines, and what about the pollution of the upper atmosphere? A Boeing

airliner releases well over a ton of carbon dioxide into the air every ten minutes of flight, and a single jet plane crossing the Atlantic burns thirty five tons of oxygen.

Another consideration is motor vehicle contamination. Strict new vehicle pollution laws are in process in North America requiring a ninety per cent cut in hydro carbon emission. But in Los Angeles, after two years of enforcement of control devices on motor vehicles, carbon monoxide in the air was still increasing by 735 tons a day with oxides of nitrogen by 150 tons a day. But the British Government along with many countries at the other end of the scale does not yet require similar controls, nor are vehicles sold within Britain fitted with anti-pollution devices. But pollution of the atmosphere does not come solely from air or land conveyances. Industrial production is going up and with it corresponding air pollutant emissions. To combat this coal is being replaced with what are termed cleaner fuels such as oil and natural gas. Smoke and grit may thus be diminished, but hydrochloric acid from oil burning industries is rising as also the emission of sulphur dioxide already estimated at more than six million tons a year. But it is not only the air that is being polluted. Investigation has shown that many many thousands of biologically active materials which include radioactive wastes, detergents and pesticides are being poured into the oceans. But the effect for the time being is not apparent, for many of the repulsive smells of the past have gone from modern waste disposal, but the pollutants though odourless are far more dangerous, hidden as they are in the air and water in increasing quantities. Let it be noted that seventy per cent or more of the world's total oxygen production by photo synthesis occurs in the oceans, largely by planktonic diatoms. As for rivers, in the United States particularly, it is expected that at the present rate of pollutant accumulation, all the surface waters of the United States will become so contaminated as to lose their biological capability for self purification within a decade or two.

This subject goes much further than the details aforementioned. Another item is the chemical pollution of food. Sweeteners in soft drinks, hormones in chickens and cattle to fatten them, chemical flavouring and synthetic colouring in canned foods. And now the scientist is looking forward to producing one ton of pure protein from two tons of petroleum and of algae farming, to be grown on decomposing effluent.

What a future ! Technological expertise without wisdom to control and direct it. Science without appreciation or care for the good things designed and given by The Creator. "I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes and he shall not destroy the fruits of your

ground," says the ancient message. Science has become very dangerous, but the "days are to be shortened," as Jesus promised. The present trend speaks of a need, but God is aware, and that need will be met by divine intervention that must surely come, if the world is to be delivered from its folly and madness.

D.L.

Correspondence

To G. P. Dawn Christadelphian, Stourbridge.

Even supposing you are right on the matter of the Holy Spirit and we are wrong, although considered to be right by at least one of your leaders, how can you invite us to a Body so fundamentally astray on two grave issues ?

Will you please say whether a Body can have the Truth, which holds or condones two obvious heresies ?

1. That all fellowships have the Truth.
2. That no man is to be judged in the matter of salvation—baptised or unbaptised.

It is believed that all that is required is a simple answer "yes" or "no".

Since writing the above we have had a reply in which we are accused of changing the statements or questions above. This is not so, as will readily be seen by consulting the original correspondence with the ex-Editor of the *Dawn*. (Copy of which will be forwarded on request).

The amazing fact is that if our allegation of grave error on the part of the *Dawn* can be so easily demolished, why do the leaders remain silent, and one even refuses his address that we might put the simple questions to him ?

It will be recognised immediately that never would any who could answer for the benefit of their own stand, take up such a defeatist attitude. Can it be imagined that Dr. Thomas or R. Roberts would have remained silent if they had been alleged to be in error ?

Is it not patent that the Author of "Light and Shades of the Truth's History" is afraid of the questions, and refuses to come to the light ? This will tell what is the position of the *Dawn* without our saying anything.

The Original Christadelphians

We are accused of making a false claim that we are upholding the position of the original Christadelphians. Shall we see if this is the case ?

Dr. Thomas 1865

“He that is not with us is against us ; and he that gathereth not with us scattereth abroad.”

“I, for one, know no one in this warfare as a *brother* and friend who is neutral or not gathering.

“They may virtually acquiesce in the theory of the truth, but can we call them friends and *brethren* ? Are they Christ’s *brethren* ? How can they be, seeing Christ is the truth ? If they were Christ’s brethren, they would love the zealous and disinterested advocate of the truth and would be careful to do nothing that would embarrass them. Shall I call such enemies of Christ (*and surely the partial inspirations were W.V.B.*) my friends and *brethren* ? I tell you nay. I will have none of such, if I know it . . . *The greatest and most dangerous enemies* of Christ are those who pretend to be His friends, but are not faithful to His doctrine.”

This expresses our stand precisely—that of the *original Christadelphians*.

R. Roberts 1875

When asked why he did not address as “*brethren*” those who departed from the Faith over the nature of Christ, he replied :

“They cannot be called *brother* without implying that the doctrine of Christ is of no importance . . . We take the middle ground of simply using their natural name after the Apostolic fashion illustrated in Paul’s allusion to Phygellus and Hermogenes.”

“True that a man once a brother is always a brother, in the technical sense, till the Lord cut him off at the Judgement-seat ; but if he depart from the faith, *the term ceases to be a convenient description of him.*”

Again this expresses our stand, and supports our claim that we uphold the position of the *original Christadelphians*. Although R. Roberts wrote differently in 1885 under the great stress of circumstances then prevailing, if the whole context of his writing over the immediate two years is considered, then it will be seen that the foregoing represents his mind. Let those who say we are not upholding the doctrine of the *original Christadelphians* say whether they agree with the foregoing. We shall be glad to publish their replies.

In any case, ought we not, to go to the Word and the testimony, rather than base our position on an isolated excerpt from the writings of men. In this respect one quotation from divine writ should be sufficient :

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.”

This we believe *now* as did the *original Christadelphians*, and further

“Neither bid him God speed !”

Is not this the case by addressing such as “*brother*,” doing him a grave injustice by making him feel that failure to abide in the doctrine cannot be judged as cutting off from God until the Judgment ?

W.V.B.

News from the Ecclesias

EDEN, NEW YORK : Grange Hall, Church Street.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread 11-30 a.m. Sunday School 1-30 p.m. Bible Class : Midweek, Forestville, Buffalo, Hamburg and Orchard Park. Alternate week : Revelation Study.

We have joined with our brethren and sisters in spirit as they have been permitted the blessing and privilege of the fraternal gathering. It is a reminder that soon the Lord Jesus will return, when He will gather to Him those who are blessed to share His eternal companionship. May we be allowed that privilege, God willing.

In our everyday lives, in the work of the Truth, in the struggle to please Him, in the witness to His Word, the hand of God is felt to encourage, strengthen, to lift up, to remind us how weak we are as flesh and how much we need His help.

J.A.DeF.

“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread : Sundays, 11-30 a.m.

Bible Class : Mid-week.

It was felt a privilege for one to attend the Fraternal Gathering at Manchester for the week-end April 21st, and much spiritual

strength was received. On Sunday, April 29th, we were glad to have visitors from Manchester, Brother and Sister D. Lancaster and Brother and Sister G. Butterfield. Brother D. Lancaster helped us by exhortation.

We now look forward to further visits as the holiday season approaches. Meanwhile we feel blessed with various helps that He provides according as He knows our need.

per D.L.

NEWTOWNARDS, CO. DOWN, Northern Ireland.

Breaking of Bread, Sunday 11-30 a.m.

Sunday School 2-0 p.m.

Bible Class—Wednesday evening.

Those of our number who were privileged to be at the fraternal in Manchester felt greatly helped by the exhortations and the renewed companionship of those of like mind, so vital to the strength and unity of the one Body in love. Gratitude is also due for the care and hospitality given by all. For the Sunday School quarterly address we had for our Subject "There is that maketh himself rich . . ." (Prov. 13 : 7).

MANCHESTER : Memorial Hall, M.A.P.S. Building, Albert Square, Manchester.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m. Lecture 3-30 p.m. Fridays : Bible Class 7-15 p.m. Milton Hall, Deansgate.

Being permitted to assemble for our Fraternal Gathering on April 23rd, we were heartened by the company of some from Ireland and Wales. The exhortations were upon a subject making us rejoice in being together, blessed with the presence of Him whom we were gathered to remember : "With Jesus. Ye are my friends if ye do whatever I command you." Such friendship is invaluable, for death and the grave will never sever it for the faithful.

The closeness of those overseas was made precious by the warm and encouraging messages from Ireland and U.S.A.

W.V.B.