

MAY 1980

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"

"CHRISTADELPHIANS – THEN AND NOW"

"REMEMBRANCE"

"A JOURNEY TO NEW YORK" (Part 8)

"THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD"

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

All Communications

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

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

At the Table of the Lord

“Remember me, O my God, for good”

HOW PRIVILEGED WE HAVE BEEN to consider the record of Judah and Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah. He was a servant of God who did much to help his brethren, the people of God restored to Jerusalem after the seventy years captivity in Babylon. It was a particularly difficult time for his people — a difficult time too for Nehemiah as he worked and witnessed to help those people serve God acceptably. At times Nehemiah must have felt overwhelmed at the magnitude of the work given to him and at the attempts of the adversary to hinder it. Yet always his trust was in God as he went willingly about the work given.

To return to Jerusalem and to see the city lying in ruins — the walls broken down and the gates consumed with fire would certainly bring great distress to him. According to the chronology, the time of Nehemiah's experiences in Jerusalem was about 445 B.C. We know the final captivity and destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar was in 588 B.C. so Nehemiah's experiences in Jerusalem were well over one hundred years after its complete destruction. We are aware that over a period of 100 years, ruins can become devastated beyond belief, seemingly without hope of ever being rebuilt. Yet Nehemiah set about rebuilding of the walls and actually completed this work in 52 days. Neh. 6:15. Thus in less than two months, this which seemed so impossible a task, was accomplished.

Nehemiah was not alone in this work, of course. Many of his brethren laboured with him — at times working with one hand and holding a weapon to defend the wall in the other. The greatest help, that which made it possible, was the hand of God upon him and Judah to direct, to give courage, to comfort, to lift up in this time of testing and struggle. Indeed, we find that Nehemiah means in Hebrew “comforted of Yahweh”. What a joy and assurance it must have been to Nehemiah at the end of those 52 days of hard labour, to be able to see the wall complete, strong, upright, with its gates and its bars intact once again — a great comfort to our brother. How he would rejoice and thank God that his hard labour had prospered under His hand, for he would recognize that it was only possible as God worked on their behalf. Even through great trial he never doubted His Father's care. In fact we read:

“And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that *this work was wrought of our God.*” (Neh. 6:16)

God was so very clearly with His people that even those who tried to hinder the work, had to acknowledge that it was of Him. Can we see, Brethren and Sisters, what a great comfort this must have been to our brother? We can find the same comfort, the same strength as we find our prayers and the prayers of our brethren and sisters being answered by a merciful God. Have we not seen God's hand in our midst, accomplishing what human minds felt to be impossible, in response to fervent prayer? This is comfort from God. Let us value it and give thanks to Him. In many ways He is present to help if our desire is toward Him, if our trust is in Him no matter how difficult the task before us may seem.

Second visit to Jerusalem

Nehemiah must have returned to Babylon after a period of time, for we read in chapter 13:6, 7:

“But in all this time was not I in Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and after certain days obtained I leave of the king: And I came to Jerusalem. . . .”

We recall that it was in the 20th year of this same king that Nehemiah first came to Jerusalem. Neh. 2:1. Now twelve years later he was allowed to go again. When he arrived the second time he must have been shocked and discouraged, for he found Tobiah the enemy of the Jews, who had sought earlier to prevent the building of the wall, now *within* that wall! Indeed he had a chamber in the courts of the house of God, allowed there by Eliashib, the high priest. Neh. 13:7. Tobiah was an Ammonite, one who, according to the law of God “should not come into the congregation of God for ever.” Neh. 13:1. Yet here he was, allowed to dwell in the courts of the house of God. We do not know how long Nehemiah had been away from Jerusalem, but how quickly the leaven had crept back in. A warning to us, Brethren and Sisters, to be alert, determined to uphold the law of God, to maintain our separation, having no dealings with the enemies of God's people, no breaking down the wall which God places as a protection around His people. The children of God in Jerusalem, without the wisdom and perception of Nehemiah, had allowed defilement to creep in, culminating in the presence of an Ammonite in the House of the Lord. Perhaps it happened a step at a time, but however it did come about, when Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem, there was Tobiah established in God's house. Nehemiah's reaction was the only possible one for a man of God, “. . . it grieved me sore.” Neh. 18:8; and further, “I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.” No question what had to be done — quick action had to be taken to remove the defilement, to keep His house holy.

Yet the shame of God's people was not ended. Nehemiah found that God's sabbath was being broken by the Jews in Jerusalem, for the daily work was being pursued on this divinely ordained day of rest. Was it being done because there wasn't a clear perception of God's mercy in the provision of the sabbath? For this day was to give rest from labour — appointed in God's wisdom, who knows what men need and what they are like — seeking ever their own gain. Was there too, a lack of perception of the rest to which the sabbath pointed? — that glorious kingdom where the faithful will enjoy rest from all the labour, trials, and sorrow of the flesh? Some then in Nehemiah's time, disregarding the merciful provision laboured and sought gain. Again Nehemiah was firm. He shut the gates on the eve of the sabbath and opened them only when the day was over. Still there were some who waited with their merchandise outside the gate until the sabbath was past. On the surface this may seem to be commendable — after all they did not *labour* on the sabbath. But they were waiting impatiently for the day of rest to be over so that they could resume their work for gain, a technical position but one lacking the spirit. Nehemiah, in tune to the spirit of His law, was quick to put an end to their circumventing of God's word.

Can we then, Brethren and Sisters, get hold of the godly mind which was Nehemiah's in all his work extending over that long and difficult period in Jerusalem? He revealed a love, a care, a zeal for the word of God and for the people of God whom he loved. As a result, he was sustained in that work and constantly guided in the way God would have him to go. Let us believe that we too can find that same consolation if our purpose and our determination is that God's will be done, no matter how impossible or difficult it may seem. Doing so is not easy, it will no doubt bring reproach as well as endless effort and selflessness, but at the same time great comfort from God, giving encouragement in the struggle to get the victory over the flesh nature. Nehemiah needed constant help, continuous comfort and sought it often in his battles against the enemies of Israel and of God.

“Remember me . . .”

Nehemiah's cry to God is found in chapter 13 verse 14:

“Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of God and for the offices thereof.”

He must have feared lest his good deeds be wiped out before God. How could they be? Only if evil deeds superseded the good, thus cancelling out the righteous already done. What was the remedy? Nehemiah's words, “Remember me, O my God . . .” can help us, Remember, we find, means be mindful of, think on. The prayer was

that God should ever be thinking of him in his inherent weakness and grant the strength, correction, and encouragement needed. He realized that unless God were mindful he would surely fail and all his work would be in vain.

Further in verse 22 Nehemiah prayed:

“Remember me, O my God, concerning this also and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.”

Do we not all need to be spared in God’s mercy? To spare involves the thought of being covered, shown pity, receiving mercy. Our brother thus discerned and never forgot his great need for the covering granted of God. This, Brethren and Sisters, is worthy of careful note. Being flesh, when we accomplish a work which is recognized as right and of value, we are then in a position where self-esteem can make us feel strong and “righteous”. How many have lost the Truth at exactly this point in their lives. What a warning and example we see here in Nehemiah. His appeal was *not* “remember my great work” — No — but rather in the spirit of “remember how frail I am and help me not to fail.”

How poignant and meaningful to us that the last words of our brother, Nehemiah also echoed this great need, *“Remember me, O my God, for good.”* This mind of the prophet reminds us of David’s spirit when he said, “What is man that thou art mindful of him?”. Psalm 9:4. Indeed where is there room for pride or certainty as we consider our own individual circumstances?

Do we not sorely need God’s mercy, Brethren and Sisters, need His being mindful of us, remembering us for good, with that love that He to His does show? If we, like Nehemiah, like David, can strive to be ever mindful of God and of His work, seeking for obedience in ourselves, waiting in submission for His outworking, He will in turn remember us in His great compassion and will comfort us, His children now in tribulation. *And* He will grant His everlasting care and love when the days of our captivity are over.

So, Brethren and Sisters, keeping the help and example of Nehemiah in our minds, can we not go on with the work of our probation determined and sharing the spirit of the faithful who sealed the covenant at that time, “. . . we will not forsake the house of our God.” Neh. 10:39.



Christadelphians Then and Now

ORIGINALLY CHRISTADELPHIANS WERE POOR. This kept them from many temptations. It may be gathered how poor they were when a penny a week to buy a hymn book was subscribed. Being poor in this world was conducive to being rich in faith. The Truth was their only possession without competition from any worldly wealth or position. Their education, too, was elementary. Higher education, with its dangers was out of reach.

Perhaps the dangers of higher education were not realised early enough. It was indeed sad to see sound Christadelphian families sink in the service to the god of higher education. The faith of respected heads of Christadelphian families was diluted by the ambition that their children should have the benefit of higher education. Universities attracted quite a number. The attitude of Universities towards the Truth was one of disdain if not of contempt. Yet they had to admit failure in their asking for the cause of all creation.

We remember Rutherford saying that instead of their searching and researching gradually narrowing the field for investigation, the opposite was the case. Research instead of leading to a focal point, revealed that unsolved problems increased; and those solved were minimal indeed. It was and still is like Newton said that the discovery of some items (and he certainly discovered much) was really insignificant compared with the whole — like a man gloating over finding an ordinary pebble on a beach covered with many millions.

The original Christadelphians were a despised community; ignorant of the sciences and original languages. Clerics were pointed out to us with the letters after their names indicating their learning. This seemed to impose an authority, but it was obvious it was only the authority of Gentile learning and not the authority of Christ. To those young in the Truth it did seem to dismay when the comparison was made between the learning of the leading clerics and the leaders in the Truth. With maturity of age it was realised that this comparison was wrong, and that God in His wisdom only chooses —

“The foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.”

And the divine reason is given for such discretion—

“That no flesh should glory in his presence.” (I Cor. 1/27-29)

If this latter statement is kept in mind, it will at once be seen how low the great apostasy has sunk. Vestments, mitres, jewels, are used to impress the ignorant, but they do not alter the flesh in the least. They are a masking of that which they seek to make appear important. How thankful we must be that we are permitted to understand God's view of such attempts to deceive the simple by "outward adornment." All those "great ones" come to the same end as all flesh, when there is no difference between them and the beggar in the streets.

There was no temptation in the early days to covet positions of wealth or influence in the world; in fact they looked upon the world as God sees it—

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:16)

Now it is not uncommon to find those professing to be "brethren of Christ" as shareholders and even directors of worldly companies. The Magazine of the main body is constituted a "Limited company" with "articles of association" which are contrary to those "called"—

"Acquire and take over as a going concern and to carry on the business now carried on at 21 Hendon Rd . . . under the style of C. C. Walker, all or any assets and liabilities of the proprietor of that business. . . ."

"To carry on business as proprietors and publishers of the monthly magazine known as the "Christadelphian" and of any books . . . relating or directed to the propagating or encouragement of Christadelphian doctrine or general Christian knowledge. . . ."

"To take or otherwise acquire and hold shares in any other company or association having objects altogether or in part similar to this Association, or carrying on any business capable of being conducted so as directly or indirectly benefit this Association."

"To accept gifts and legacies subject to conditions or trusts attached to such gifts or legacies or any of them and to take over, purchase, acquire, build, manage, exchange, improve, develop, sell, let, mortgage, dispose of, turn to account of profit, or otherwise deal with in any lawful manner any lands of a tenure and any estate interested therein, and either with or without building thereon, and to accept with or without conditions and hold and administer gifts and bequests of real and personal property of any kind and to receive funds

of money by voluntary contributions, subscriptions, donations legacies, payments by public bodies or any other lawful method, and to take such steps as may be deemed expedient for such purpose.”

At the time the above extract was made there was a surplus of nearly £18,000, and an acknowledgement of a legacy of nearly £800.

After reading the foregoing, the devout enquirer will be promoted to ask, how can such an organ witness to the light in its condemnation of the darkness, with whom it promises affiliation under certain conditions?

What a vast change has taken place in the body professing the Truth in the course of a hundred years. At the beginning the original Christadelphians were a despised but albeit a united company. Now they have become numerous (relatively speaking) and respectable in the eyes of the world. They are no longer despised, but looked upon as good as any of the other sects. What has caused this? Their failure to uphold the light and condemn the darkness has made them like any other sect; having certain of their own doctrines, but because of “good works” regarded with as much respect as any other denomination of Christendom.

Apostasy has gone so far as to bring the once cherished name of Christadelphian into the collection of all the other names of Christendom, and indeed to place that name with them on the rider of the “scarlet coloured beast.”

The appeal is not to be deceived by numbers, by “large gatherings” remembering the healthy days of the Truth was when numbers were few and despised by the “names of blasphemy.”

W.V.B.



Remembrance

WE ARE ONCE AGAIN READING from the Book of Psalms, the pruned words of the Spirit through David. These words which have been preserved for 3000 years are truly a great blessing and provision for us, as we strive to put down and conquer our inherent flesh nature.

How much we need help as did David in the struggle to be “after God’s own heart.” Being allowed to know David’s spirit as expressed in the words of the 70th Psalm is of particular help. The Psalm is entitled “To the Victor — A Psalm of David To Bring to Remembrance”. The Psalm is given then, to bring to remembrance the victory we must seek after, to bring to remembrance the great hope and mercy of God extended to those who, like David, seek after Him. That David sought God is clearly evident from his words in verse 1 :

“Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord.”

David sought God for deliverance, a help in time of need. He remembered the necessity for victory which he knew could only be realized through the promise of God’s provision. We know how sore were the trials of David, of the great tribulation he experienced at the hand of those around him who sought his life, of the inward struggle to control his flesh which at times overpowered him. Yet, in spite of all this, his spirit was able to speak the words of verse 4, “Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee. . . .”

We might ask how our spirit compares with that of David’s. Are we, as we encounter the conflicts and trials of our daily living, seeking God? Further, are we rejoicing and showing gladness in God and in His provision for us? The words of this particular psalm then are aimed to bring us to the remembrance that we must have — to be glad and rejoice in our special position with God, lest we forget and fail to value it as we should.

To forget this merciful provision is a great danger and an ever present possibility, for we can see how that many of God’s children had forgotten this as we read in Exodus 16 verses 1 – 3 of the journey in the wilderness of Sin:

“And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

There was no rejoicing or gladness seen in the camp of Israel, yet we know that God was providing for them, for the first verse tells us that it had been 45 days since the children of Israel had departed from Egypt. God had provided during that time to strengthen and keep them in their journey, or they would not have been able to endure; but such it would seem was not good enough and the congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, *really* against God.

God, we have read, at that time provided manna, and yet we know it was not long before they forgot and failed to value this provision and they again murmured. This warns us of the ever present danger to forget the goodness of God and fail to rejoice in that which we have been given.

David's words help us to keep in mind what our spirit must be like, a spirit of discerning God's goodness and rejoicing in it. To display such a rejoicing spirit as this at all times, even when placed under trial or when afflicted, is difficult. Yet, if we can remember that such circumstances in which we might find ourselves are also provided by God, to prepare us for victory, does it not help?

Recognizing that we have this hope of victory set before us should serve to help us to rejoice as we are allowed to look forward to the eternal joy to be afforded those found worthy.

If we stop and truthfully examine ourselves, do we not find that there is very little within us to make us glad. For we find we are much like David as he described himself in verse 5 of Psalm 70 as he said, "I am poor and needy."

The word "poor" used here means to be depressed in mind or circumstances, the word "needy" to be of want. We find that we are often in want, that we are often cast down especially when we consider the weakness of our flesh and in such a condition does not the mind tremble and fear rather than rejoice? It does, and such must be the case of those sensitive in spirit, but there must not be a forgetting of another of God's provisions, that of His Son the Lord Jesus, the Victory, the one brought to remembrance by these Psalms.

David knew of the Victor, he knew of His provision and purpose, of the one promised who was to serve as the Messiah, the anointed

one to be a mediator between God and His people. David helps us to remember Christ and that He is our only means of overcoming, to help us when we feel depressed and wanting, to bring to mind the one through whom we can ease our fear and trembling and reveal a joy and gladness.

How much is expressed then in those words of David we have been considering:

“Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.” (4th verse)

What a help they are for they bring to remembrance what our spirit should be like — a spirit of rejoicing for the goodness of God extended, even in times of sorrow and suffering. They bring to remembrance the victory we must constantly strive for and they bring to mind the Victor, the only means of salvation through the forgiveness of sin.

There is yet another aspect of this verse not to be overlooked and that is “. . . Let God be magnified”. What does it mean to say “Let God be magnified”? We find that the words “magnify” comes from a prime root meaning “to make large”. How then can we go about magnifying or enlarging God?

Mary magnified or made large God in her living, for we recall her submissiveness, her obedience unto God when she said “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” Mary’s was a spirit which spoke and said to God by her actions that she loved God and sought to praise and honour Him.

We are further helped by the words of our brother Paul in Philipians I verse 20 as his spirit speaks and reveals to us the degree of his persistence and steadfastness in his striving to magnify God in his life. Paul said:

“According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.”

We see from these words of Paul, his realization of the necessity of giving all glory and honour to God, and that he could accomplish this by the magnifying of Christ in his body, by striving to reveal a Christ-like spirit, a spirit which must continually struggle to control the flesh which naturally endeavours to magnify itself.

We know that Paul's conviction to put down his flesh in order to glorify God and Christ was a determined one, no matter what the price to be paid "whether it be by life, or by death". We must ask ourselves how our determination compares for are we not seeking the same victory Paul sought?

Are each of us struggling as hard as we can or should to magnify God and His Son in our body? Are we striving to be as much like Christ as we can? These are questions we must constantly be remembering to ask ourselves and honestly answering. Perhaps then we can see and more fully value and appreciate the help given us by the Spirit in this Psalm of David — help to bring to remembrance the great mercy of God and likewise our responsibility because of it.

How much then is given in these few words penned by David, to help us to remember the victory set before us, to help us remember the Victor and to bring to remembrance God who has provided for these blessings. We must remember then to rejoice and be glad in God's goodness and strive to continually magnify Him.

In remembering and striving to keep the words of this Psalm will we not be joining David as he has asked in the 34th Psalm the 3rd verse:

"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."

By doing so, is not our hope in victory to magnify God eternally?

M.C.S.



A Journey to New York (*Part 8*)

Return to Niagara

THE SUNDAY HAD BEEN A WARM, SUNNY DAY, the meeting together of the little flock beneficial to all. The meal in the basement of the Meeting Room's building, after the morning service, most enjoyable. The basement was well equipped with tables and other amenities, and being a basement exercised a cooling effect upon the eaters.

But time was flying by and now it was Monday again; still warm, but not oppressively hot as it can be so often, and the humidity was at quite a moderate level. We found that it had been arranged for a return to Niagara. Six of us were to travel in the large car loaned by our Brother host. Our younger Brother was to be our chauffeur; indeed at this time we were staying as guests at his house. We sped along the thru-way, and it did not seem long before the Buffalo skyline came into view with its array of tall buildings. Leaving this view on our right we forged ahead towards the frontier, crossing the Peace Bridge at Fort Erie, where we had the necessary documents examined and stamped by Customs officials, before emerging onto Canadian soil.

Once more we travelled alongside the left bank of the Niagara River, which in a sense is not really a river at all, but rather a thirty-six mile long inland strait between Lake Erie and the lower-lying Lake Ontario. The water descends some three hundred and twenty six feet over this thirty-six mile stretch, but more than half of this drop occurs suddenly when the water makes its plunge at Niagara Falls.

The old Water Works building came into view again, and we knew that soon the great wall of descending water would capture our attention. Two-hundred thousand cubic feet spills over at every second of the day and night. A great white curtain that never fades, and an echoing roar from below that never stills. A sight and sound that becomes indelibly printed upon the senses.

But this day was to hold other events of considerable interest. We were to visit Marineland and Game Farm! Soon we were to recall the words of James, "For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind."

Looking down into an arena, where lay a deep pool containing a million gallons of salt water with sluices adjoining a kind of jetty or stage beyond, we saw an almost unbelievable display of animal antics. Dolphins came into the pool from a separate pool when their sluice was opened. Several of them in formation leaped and dived, and at times twisted round as they came up out of the water! These clever creatures apparently had been brought from the Gulf of Mexico and had undergone a six months training period, and we saw that they were now able to spring out of the water through hoops, dance on the water on their tails, and jump in a combination of various athletic movements.

But after they were safely out of the way through their sluice gate, another water gate opened, and two great fish appeared, Kandu and Nootka, the Killer Whales. What magnificent intelligent creatures they were, taking their trainers for a ride on their backs! The male Kandu competing with the female Nootka in a log rolling race, across the water of the pool. Then leaping out of the pool to a great height to reach a coloured ball suspended way above the pool, then falling back into the water with a tremendous splash. Water hurdles, races, high jumps, and even kissing a spectator who bravely came to the edge of the water, followed in quick succession. The Killer Whales are the only species of whale that attacks large prey. But at Marineland they had been tamed and were surprisingly friendly. But we were caused to wonder at the amount of work, and painstaking care which undoubtedly must have been needed to bring such creatures not only to perform in this way, but to do it so willingly.

A Giant Elephant Seal also made a contribution to the antics by lumbering onto the jetty leaving a damp trail behind him, whereupon he took a large replica of an banjo and affected to be playing this instrument. There were sea-lions with a ball. Seventeen Siberian and Bengal tigers on the stage, some jumping through flaming hoops. Elephants standing on one leg, exerting themselves to appear graceful, though quite unable to hide their lumbering manner. But perhaps the most amazing event of all was the team of Black Bears, pedalling specially strengthened cycles of various kinds, including a "Penny-Farthing"! One of these large animals even rode around the arena, in a most confident manner, upon a specially adapted Motor Bicycle, the engine moderately revving away. Perhaps it was as well that the Bear could only ride around and around, for if it had been able to get upon the open road, there would be no telling where it would have ended up!

After seeing what must be the most superb display of trained animals anywhere, we roamed the grounds of the Game Farm, where were over four hundred gentle Fallow Deer, who were used to

people approaching near to them. In an enclosure there were a few of the now almost extinct American Bison, huge shaggy coated animals, larger than Buffalo, and once called wrongly by that name when roamed the prairies in vast herds. We could not help feeling amused at the Lion enclosure where some of the Deer were taunting their natural adversaries at a safe distance, but still quite close to the strong barrier fence. The chagrin of the lions was unmistakable, and also of their being well aware that it was no use, they would have to wait for their keeper to bring them their dinner!

But there was still a further event, kept in store for this expedition.

We were to have an evening meal in the Skylon Tower! As we went up in the lift which clings to the outside of this huge concrete and steel erection, and peered through the window, the ground receded rapidly. At the top was the Revolving Dining Room, its movement imperceptible, but during the course of the meal we had turned full circle, seeing the Falls from various angles, and the Ontario plain stretching away towards Hamilton. Much information was given at various points of the compass, for there were plaques that marked out places of interest, some relating to historic events. Finally after an excellent repast we ascended to the out-door observation deck seven-hundred and seventy-five feet above the Falls. The view was magnificent, the Gorge and River spread themselves before us, and cars immediately beneath appeared as specks upon the vast panorama. The darkness now fell upon us, and we retreated from it by a return to ground level, and finding our car, made off into the night on the return journey from Canada to New York, after a most memorable day.

(to be continued)



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

“And they shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness.” (Isaiah 8:22)

CERTAINLY ANYONE LOOKING at the situation in the earth at the present time cannot avoid the conclusion that the world is in a mess. The new government in Britain, set to control inflation and the devaluation of money, and which came to office with high hopes and professed determination to achieve a great renewal, has seen the nation sliding into decline with little or no support from its disenchanting people.

The United States in the midst of “a run up” to a Presidential election is also in the throes of inflationary difficulties; but not so chronic or intransigent as in Britain. Nevertheless problems loom and as rectifications are attempted other problems grow out of tentative solutions.

One of the great difficulties for Americans is their need for petroleum to facilitate mobility, so essential amongst communities spread out over large tracts of countryside. The United States authorities realising the need for oil conservation planned for regulations becoming more stringent each year so that by 1985 new cars coming off the motor vehicle assembly line would be capable of averaging about 28 miles per gallon. By British standards this appears to be a modest requirement, but by American standards the policy was quite drastic and revolutionary. So much so, the U.S. administration has had to have a re-think by relaxing such fuel-economy demands on its motor industry with two hundred thousand workers laid off indefinitely, and considerable financial deterioration. Meanwhile foreign cars are pouring in, many from Japan. American leaders have now expressed that their idea to require an average 40 miles per gallon for new cars by 1995 has now been found to be unrealistic.

Yet the oil difficulty remains. Recently Saudi Arabia's Oil Minister said that he urged the creation of an international energy-saving programme and development of new power sources to move the world “away from the edge of an abyss”. Saudi Arabia however would continue at present to maintain an output of oil that is about a third of the total production of the Organisation of Petroleum

Exporting Countries. Arabia therefore is "cushioning" the West from the more adverse stringencies of a cut back in oil production. But Kuwait and Libya, as well as Iran have either reduced or are in the process of reducing output to ensure that with less demand as a result of higher prices, there will be no surplus and therefore no reduction in what is required by them in payment per barrel of oil. Rather the OPEC are looking forward to the next meeting in Algiers scheduled for June, when they are hoping for further increases.

Breathing space therefore, which Saudi Arabia is giving to the West, and in particular the United States, is not being taken advantage of. The U.S. administration throws it away on the altar of America's motor industry in Detroit.

From Russia, via Central Intelligence Agency research, comes the news that there is a rapid fall in Soviet oil output, which soon may mean that Moscow will be in competition with Western countries for fuel imports. In three years it may well be that Russia will be needing over half a million barrels daily, even though at the present Communist countries are exporting some oil to the West, no doubt for the purpose of getting foreign currency. But that is not the only news from the North. Russia and the East European satellites are sliding into economic trouble aggravated by America's embargo on sales of grain to the East, and the holding back of technological benefits. Most acutely affected is Poland. But Russia itself is short of raw materials, (no doubt exacerbated by its immense war production), or iron, steel, rolled metals, non-ferrous metals, mineral fertilisers and some chemical products. Also spare parts needed to maintain industrial and agricultural equipment are in short supply, and there is a noticeable slow-down in output of consumer goods. The people having to suffer comparative want, as the quota to arms stockpiles escalates.

But Russia determinedly pushes on in its super-power efforts. Twenty eight underground nuclear tests took place in the Soviet Union last year. More than in any other country; more even than in the United States. Expenditure on a considerable scale is also taking place in furthering strategic alliances with smaller nations. For example, the recent treaty of friendship with South Yemen, which gives Russia the right to station troops planes and men in that country. Russia is ever ready to supply arms to any nation which is prepared to adopt an anti-Western stance, and never requires immediate payment for such materials. So the Soviet people are labouring to proliferate machines of destruction, a task which deprives them of consumer goods and therefore of a better existence. To a greater or lesser degree this also applies to Western nations. Even a small nation such as Belgium is in recession, where the

unemployment figure has been the greatest total since the last war.

Little wonder that the following comments have been made in the National Press:-

“For a long time, as we followed this course, (i.e. towards a new society with materially comfortable living) we were able to believe that we were on a kind of great escalator, carrying us effortlessly upwards out of darkness, superstition and ignorance of the past towards some unimaginably bright, utopian future. But the real importance of the past ten years is that, much more forcefully than ever before, we have been brought face to face with the possibility that the whole experiment is not going to work. . . . in short, we have been trying to do something which simply cannot be done. As all sorts of things these days bear witness, from the spiritual bankruptcy of our arts to the almost universal disillusionment with “political solutions”, we have hopelessly lost the way — and whether collectively we can find it again without having to go through a series of appalling catastrophes becomes increasingly dubious.

. . . People are determined to cling on to the religion of progress in some form or another, armouring themselves more and more against the reality of what is happening with jargon and slogans, because the alternative is just too horrific to contemplate.

But away from the public hubbub and the deafening self-deceptive platitudes of conventional unwisdom there is an untold multitude of separate, more or less isolated individuals who, in the quiet of their inner selves, take a view not dissimilar to mine. . . .”

The writer then goes on to quote one of the letters he had himself recently received:-

“I am much less of an optimist, for time is running out on the exponential curve of man’s technological growth: and the skies are darkening. Is the wonderful experiment of life on earth moving inexorably to an appalling close, or are we being dragged helplessly towards some toil-less, pointless, micro-processed, kaf-kaesque hell? I do not believe that the chip can be programmed to provide heaven.”

The writer has also quoted from recent conversations with various

people, such as the taxi driver who said:-

“All the life seems to have drained out of it (i.e. London) — today something seems to have happened to everyone. Do you think its just this country, or is it the same all over the world?”.

And again another taxi driver who said,

“What do you think has gone wrong . . . we’re all better off — but somehow the whole atmosphere’s changed. We’ve lost the quality of life — everything seems so tatty, so trivial.”

Another conversation by the writer which commenced through him expressing doubts about his using a poisonous weed killer brought out the following remarks:-

“We’re not going to be here much longer are we?”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, there’s going to be a war, isn’t there?”

“Got to be — I mean, we’re so destructive.”

“They tell us that leopards and snakes and lions are deadly animals, but they’re nothing like so deadly as men.

We kill everything. The only way out is that we’ll have to kill ourselves, or nature won’t survive.”

Thus is fulfilled the prophetic scripture:

“And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness.” (Isaiah 8:22)

D.L.



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 and Orchard
Park. Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

Contacts continue by letter and personally in the work of witnessing. We are grateful for the opportunities granted.

Events in our daily lives help in the perception of the over ruling care of God.

Letters and messages from our brethren and sisters are much appreciated, making the ties that bind ever stronger.

J.A.DeF.

“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.
Bible Class: Midweek.

We were very grateful to be able to be at the Manchester Fraternal Gathering on Monday 7th April.

It was such a blessing that everything worked out so smoothly enabling us to arrive in good time, and feel settled to enjoy the provision in the subject which was considered.

How precious is The Faith in these last days, how great the need to hold on to it, for it is the only means of eternal welfare.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER: Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread: 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the ante room to large hall,
Wednesday evening.

Following our recent circularising of Christadelphians there have been a number of replies. Some express interest, and appreciation of our efforts, and go so far to admit that the body of Christadelphians has declined in faith, and steps are being taken to remedy this trend. Good as this may appear, it will not be effective. Once the leaven has entered, it is bound to spread through the whole body.

The only course for those who would please God is to obey His call "to come out and be separate". Any work short of this will be no better than "daubing the wall with untempered mortar". The issue for each is serious: follow the multitude in its evil, or separate and seek the one body wherein alone Christ dwells.

W.V.B.