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Canon Bryan Green Replies to Dr. Shields' Sermon of Nov. 9, 1952 and Dr. Shields Replies to Canon Green

St. Martin's Rectory,
12 Sir Harry's Road,
Birmingham, 15, England.

CANON BRYAN GREEN, B.D.
Rector of Birmingham.

Dear Dr. Shields:

Thank you for your courtesy in promising to publish any reply from me concerning the sermon you preached on my Evangelical position. I am entirely in agreement with you on the value — nay, the necessity of free speech.

I think that on the whole, it is helpful that in a Christian publication like yours, the theological position both of movements and of men should be accurately examined.

I am not so sure, however, whether it is helpful to preach a sermon immediately after an Evangelistic mission, criticizing one who has tried to present the Gospel of Christ for the salvation of men and women. I am certain you must have known from your informants that many did thank God, come into a true conversion, and were born again by the Holy Spirit. It would not be helpful to these "spiritual children" to find that the one whom God used to lead them into the light was being criticized concerning the Gospel he preached.

Obviously, you differ from me on this matter. It would, I am sure, have been better, even if you did think it wise to preach the sermon, to have made it clear beyond all doubt that you thanked God for the spiritual results of the preaching. The lack of sympathy and understanding here, does not seem to me to be in accordance with the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ, if I may say so.

To turn now to your criticisms. I am glad that you yourself recognize in the sermon, the danger of relying on newspaper reports. I am only sorry that you were not present yourself at some of the meetings, then you could have judged the position accurately. As it is, you had to say, "I think I have had experience enough to understand his position pretty well." I am afraid you have misunderstood it — moreover, there was no ambiguity in what I said, I was perfectly plain.

First: I do believe in the Virgin birth and I said so. In answer to a question, however, I did point out that in my opinion, it was possible to believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, without believing in the Virgin birth — and then added, "personally, I do believe in the Virgin birth".

I also believe in the physical resurrection of Christ. I made this perfectly clear on the Tuesday night and I gave the six reasons why I believe that He is God.

But the most serious of your criticisms is the one which, if I may say so, is the furthest removed from any semblance of validity. It is entirely unwarranted and unfair. I fully believe in the Death of Christ as the only sure ground of our salvation. The Cross, in the true sense that by the blood of Jesus Christ we are cleansed from sin, was the centre of my preaching. For instance on Wednesday night, the whole sermon was on justification by faith, and my text was Hebrews 10:19. On the second Sunday evening when we had our biggest crowd — some 14,000 people — the whole address was devoted to the Cross. My text was Romans 5:8, and I quoted at least nine other passages of Scripture in which the word "blood" occurred.

I made it plain that night that it was a substitutionary atonement and that Christ did something for us on the Cross, without which we could not be saved. Moreover, the Mission hymn, as any one of your informants might have told you, for we sung part of it every night, was:

"And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?"

You are right when you quoted me as saying, "I hate such hymns as, 'Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?'" At that moment, I was pointing out that such sentimental and unaesthetic hymns to bad tunes like crude and unworthy pictures of the Cross in lantern slides, have in fact, I think, put people off from a true facing of Calvary.

These are your main criticisms as I read your sermon. There are others which to me are of secondary importance concerning the interpretation of the symbolic Bible language about heaven and hell. Here it is clear that we do differ. We should also differ I fancy, on many other points in the interpretation of scripture though I too bow before it as the Word of God. These, to me, are not as important as the other points you raise.

We should also differ, and in this I am glad, in our attitude to our fellow Christians who are seeking to preach the Gospel that men may find God through Christ by the Holy Spirit. I welcome and rejoice in all preaching of Christ which God honours and uses to bring new life to men and women. You, evidently are more concerned with such preaching which conforms to your particular viewpoint, and which contains your own special shibboleths. Long may we differ! I hope that God will continue to bless your work and I could wish that you might want to say—"May God bless yours".

Yours sincerely,

BRYAN GREEN

The Gospel Witness

and

Protestant Advocate

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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16

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Dr. Shields' Reply to the Foregoing Letter

JARVIS STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Canon Bryan Green, B.D. Toronto, Canada
Rector of Birmingham, January 22nd, 1953.
St. Martin's Rectory,
12 Sir Harry's Road,
Birmingham, 15.

Dear Canon Green:

I am in receipt of your letter dated December 24th last, and I thank you most heartily for writing me.

Frankly, I recognize no "courtesy" in promising to publish any reply from anyone from whom I have differed: it is a matter of simple justice, and any other course would be entirely unfair.

I am glad you agree that in such a publication as ours the theological position both of movements, and of men, should be accurately examined.

In reference to the third paragraph of your letter, I may say that I am not of the number who decry great evangelistic movements as belonging to some earlier day, when people, allegedly, were more responsive to the gospel. Believing as I do, and as I feel sure you do, that not a single soul can be converted without the operation of the Holy Spirit, we must believe that if it pleases Him to regenerate one soul, there is no logical reason why we should not expect the regeneration of a thousand. But having said this, I venture to add that the greatest possible care needs to be exercised in such movements that personal force or magnetism be not substituted for the work of the Spirit of God. I believe that an effective preacher could be a successful salesman, and persuade the prospective customer to sign on the dotted line. And there is always a possibility of erring in that direction, as I fear, when I had less experience, I have erred myself.

In the course of forty-three years in one church, in a place like Toronto one has the opportunity of observing many of these mass movements, and of appraising the ultimate results. In most cases they have been extremely disappointing, for the reason that too much stress has been laid, as I have suggested it may be, on the mere mechanics of Evangelism. And because that is so, it is extremely hazardous to presume to arrive at any accurate appraisal of the permanent spiritual results of such a mission.

You implicitly question the wisdom of speaking critically "immediately after an Evangelistic Mission". I may be wrong here, but because certain matters were questioned by so great a number, I felt the *immediacy* of the matter was important.

I sincerely thank God for every one who, as you put it, has "come into a true conversion, and (was) born again by the Holy Spirit". It is my sincere hope that the number was very large.

I really thought, and still think, that I exercised every care, not to undermine any real spiritual influence the preacher exercised. If I failed to make it clear that I was thankful for any spiritual results, let me correct the error now. There are many who do preach Christ crucified as the sinner's hope, with whose general body of teaching neither you nor I could agree. Notwithstanding, whatever body of people they may be who profess and call themselves Christian, in so far as they preach the gospel of salvation, I rejoice and pray God's blessing upon them.

But a long experience has taught me there is a true analogy between spiritual and natural birth, and the subsequent care of the newborn; and the difficulty to-day is to find churches sufficiently warm and spiritual in their

atmosphere, with pulpits sufficiently clear and pronounced expositively, to provide the babes in Christ with a proper spiritual nursery, which will be contributory to the young converts' growth in grace, and in spiritual knowledge.

I assure you that at this point there is no lack of sympathy and understanding, and I am sorry if you think that I said anything that was not in accordance with the mind or the Spirit of Christ.

I deeply regret that I was unable to hear you personally, and still more deeply do I regret that I had no opportunity of meeting you.

There is danger in relying upon newspaper reports, I grant you, but any criticism I passed was not only based upon newspaper reports, for the fact is the farther a preacher gets away from the simple and unalterable principles of the gospel, the more popular he is likely to be with the ordinary newspaper reporter. And anything slightly unusual is disproportionately emphasized, and sometimes in such a way as to throw the whole address out of focus.

I assure you it was not indifference to your presence, or mission, which occasioned my absence from your meetings. I am sure you find it, yourself, easier to drop in upon an occasional meeting when you are away from home, than when at home and you are thronged with your parish duties, which occupy you day and night.

I have a church that is of some magnitude. I preside over, and lecture weekly in, a theological seminary, and have editorial responsibility for THE GOSPEL WITNESS, which is seldom read by less than forty thousand people every week in more than sixty different countries. That is my only apology for not being at your meeting. I hope, however, you will not misunderstand me when I say that many members of my congregation are not theologically ignorant, and are Biblically, perhaps, better informed than the average church member. It was their anxiety for the effect upon young converts, and people generally, that led me to speak as I did.

(I wrote the foregoing without having in mind the particular dates of your Mission. I wrote it as a general principle, for I never get a chance to go to hear anybody. But having written it, my Secretary reminds me that I was out of the city, speaking in Winnipeg, the week beginning November third.)

As a further justification for my precautionary sermon, I may say that in Jarvis Street we regard the Biblical instruction and training of new converts as of equal importance with their conversion, just as the training and education, and indeed, discipline of the child, is as important as its birth.

In the sixth paragraph of your letter you say:

"I do believe in the Virgin birth, and I said so. In answer to a question however, I did point out that in my opinion, it was possible to believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, without believing in the Virgin birth—and then added, 'personally, I do believe in the virgin birth'."

I am glad to have your unequivocal statement: "Personally I do believe in the Virgin birth." That is good. But you say, that in response to a question, you said, "I did point out that in my opinion, it was possible to believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, without believing in the Virgin birth."

But why throw this sop to unbelief? Furthermore, it is surely not possible to deny the Virgin birth, without denying the divine inspiration and authority of Holy

Scripture. Matthew and Luke positively affirm it. Mark and John certainly assume it. It is just that sort of thing that distressed so many. For, thus to speak rather lightly of the disbelief of Holy Scripture, is to surrender the Citadel of Inspired Truth to the Modernists. If one may pick and choose between the dicta of Holy Writ, by an inevitable implication, one substitutes his subjective inclination for objective authority, and the Word of God loses its authority altogether. And if we have no supremely authoritative Bible, how and upon what ground may one believe in the Deity of Christ?

I am delighted to have your clear statement that you believe in the physical resurrection of Christ. In view of your plain statement, I do not know how anyone could have formed the opinion that you were not particularly positive about this. However, I fully and frankly, and rejoicingly, accept your statement. But I still believe it is possible so to declare one's conviction on such a matter as the resurrection of Christ, as to render it impossible for any sane person to misunderstand.

The most serious of my criticisms, which you say is entirely unwarranted, and unfair, was my question as to your attitude toward the atonement by blood. Again, I say I accept your correction, and rejoice unspeakably in your unequivocal statement that "I made it plain that night that it was a substitutionary atonement, and that Christ did something for us on the Cross, without which we could not be saved."

That is all to the good, and the statement of your position in that respect, to me at least, and I should think to all reasonable people, is eminently satisfactory. But why was the question raised?

You say:

"You are right when you quoted me as saying, 'I hate such hymns as, Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?'"

And you class it among, "the sentimental and unaesthetic hymns," etc. I was not very far out, then, when I said:

Let me go farther. Canon Green said, "I hate such hymns as 'Are You Washed in the Blood of the Lamb?'" For the sake of argument for a moment let me assume that his esthetic poetic taste felt that the truth was rather crudely stated. Well, even if that were so, the conscientious teacher ought to know that millions of people believe it, and he ought to be very careful to say nothing that would shake the confidence of any believer in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

If I may say, without disrespect, do you not think it would have been better to have avoided offending the sensibilities of so many good people? I am with you in your objection to many "sentimental and unaesthetic hymns to bad tunes"; and there are many of them. But is this one of them?

Granted, for the sake of argument that it was offensive to your esthetic, poetic taste, there are countless thousands who are profoundly convinced of the truth of the hymn, who see nothing unaesthetic in its form. It seems to me that a proper understanding of the importance of that truth would have led one to refrain from saying, "I hate such hymns." There are many hymns which are not to my liking, but if the truth of the gospel is in them, I should certainly refrain from lampooning them. And after all, I venture to repeat what I said in that sermon about being "washed" in the blood of the Lamb:

But what saith the Scripture? "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? . . . These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white—how?"

—in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood . . . to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." That is the Bible. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him, do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Do you think Canon Green was right in speaking after that fashion? I am old fashioned enough to glory in Cowper's hymn:

"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, though vile as he,
Washed all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

I send you herewith copies of my later sermons on Heaven and Hell, and possibly at this point we are not far apart. Though we should differ on other points in the interpretation of scripture as you suggest, I glory in your saying, "I, too, bow before it as the Word of God." That is the great desideratum to me. We may differ in our interpretations of scripture, but if we receive the Scripture itself as the authoritative Word of God, I have no doubt that in time the Holy Spirit will unravel the rest: Thus we may "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace", "until we all come unto the unity of the faith".

I, too, welcome, and rejoice in all preaching of Christ which God honours, and uses to bring new life to men and women. You are entirely wrong in assuming that I "am more concerned with such preaching which conforms to (my) particular viewpoint, and which contains (my) own special shibboleths." The only shibboleths with which I am concerned are such as are indisputably scriptural.

You conclude:

"I hope that God may continue to bless your work, and I could wish that you might want to say — 'May God bless yours'."

That I do say with all my heart, and fervently pray that God may bless you more and more. But please allow me, without offence, to say I do not think He will bless you any less if you seek to avoid needless offence to spiritually sensitive people; and refrain from telling people in effect how little they need to believe. In short, I pray that your trumpet may sound loud and long, and that henceforth it may give no uncertain sound.

May I add that I have long been interested in the Diocese of Birmingham. In Jarvis Street Church, Sunday evening, January 22nd, 1928, I baptized Rev. Charles Fisher, M.A., who had just before resigned as Vicar of

St. John, Harborne, Birmingham. After some time in Canada Mr. Fisher returned to England, and died there about four years ago.

I have also been interested in Birmingham because of the vagarious eruptions of your Bishop Barnes. I found myself in perfect agreement with the Archbishop of Canterbury, though not an Anglican, who said that if he entertained such views as Bishop Barnes, he would resign, or words to that effect.

I expect, like my own, your study and offices are well provided with capacious waste baskets. I have not counted them, but I think there are at least seven or eight in the outer office, and one good big one in my own office; so that if I send you anything that is in the way, you will be able to consign it to one of your waste baskets.

I am venturing to send you a copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS of some years ago, an extraordinary copy, be it admitted, of one hundred and seventy-six pages, entitled, "Ichabod". It will give you some idea of the theological discussions we have had in this country. I am sending you also a few of my books, and a copy of our Fire Edition of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, its re-opening number, and our Illustrated number. I do not expect you to read them, but perhaps, in view of this correspondence you may be interested enough to turn the pages, and thus receive a perspective view of one who is by no means an unkindly critic.

O, yes! I am going to ask you to accept, with my compliments, THE GOSPEL WITNESS for a year. If you prefer not to receive it, and you will write on the envelope, "Not wanted. Return to sender," that would save you the trouble of opening it. However, my hope is that you will not refuse it, since many Anglican clergymen of all ranks, including Bishops, with many prominent leaders in religion and educational spheres, throughout the world, are numbered among our subscribers.


I sincerely hope our paths may yet cross somewhere in the world, where we may at least enjoy a hearty handshake.

I may say I withdraw nothing of my *convictions* which inspired my *criticisms*, whether my criticisms were right or wrong.

With warmest regards, and praying God's richest blessing upon you, and all your work,

I am,

Sincerely yours,



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The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HOW THE LAST BECOMES FIRST

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 18th, 1953
(Electrically Recorded)

"And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

"When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?"

"The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me."

"Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."

"And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."—John 5:5-9.

Prayer Before the Sermon

We cease not, O Lord, to be amazed at Thy condescension in stooping to hold converse with Thy human creatures. So grievously have we all offended against Thee, so completely have we all forfeited the last right to come where Thou art, that we find it difficult often to understand that this is true, that Thou hast said where two or three are gathered in Thy name Thou art there in the midst of them. But we believe Thy word this evening; we believe that Thou art in the midst of this assembly. We rejoice to reflect that Thy nature is not changed by Thine ascension to the right hand of God. Thou hast taken our human nature with Thee; Thou didst not shed Thy human body. And we rejoice to believe that the Incarnation is now an eternal fact, that Thou art before the Throne making intercession for us, unworthy as we are.

Thou hast not only saved us by blotting out the handwriting that was against us, and the ordinances that were contrary to us, nailing them to Thy cross; Thou hast not been content with removing our sins, and blotting out our transgressions as a thick cloud, but Thou hast brought us into the most intimate relationship with Thyself. The father did not consent that the prodigal, returning penitently to his father's house, should dwell without among the servants, but he received him to the hospitality of his heart and of his home. Thus Thou hast received us. And though we had taken the portion of goods which was ours, and had wasted it in riotous living, we had not really diminished the resources of Thy grace, for Thou art as rich as ever, and Thou art well able to supply all needed grace to Thy children. Thou hast indeed, in Thy plan and purpose, according to Thy word, blessed us even now with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as Thou hast chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Thee in love. What these spiritual blessings are we cannot fully comprehend; we know some of them. But what a wealth of blessing awaits the appropriation of those who by faith dwell in the heavenly places.

Be pleased this evening, Lord, to lift us up above the murk and mire of this lower world; yea, lift us so near to Thyself that the world's pull of gravitation shall be less, and that we may feel the superior drawing power of the Spirit of God, separating us from the old life, and from the world that lieth in the wicked one, and so clothing us with Thy righteousness, and bedecking us with the beautiful ornaments of Thy grace, that Thou shalt even now make us to be in process of beautification, that we may be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

We would fain, O Lord, thus please Thee, for we are sure it is of Thy love that Thou dost call us to Thyself, and the joy of the Lord is even intensified when we are enabled by Thy grace to come to Thee in a receptive mood, and to receive more grace, and to be anointed with fresh oil.

We thank Thee for Thy Holy Word. What a mine of wealth it is! What exhaustless treasures of wisdom, what reservoirs of power are resident within this word of inspiration! O Lord, may we come to it this evening reverently. May we come to it as little children, wondering at its magni-

tude, at its majesty, and yet rejoicing to receive of its fullness, and grace for grace.

Look upon this congregation this evening. How little we know of each other! Indeed, our most intimate friends know little of us, as we know little of them, for the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and the stranger doth not intermeddle with its joys. It may be some have dropped in here this evening scarcely knowing why, perhaps some who have come to the cross-roads, and some perhaps to the end of the street, and now do not know which way to turn. We pray Thee, Thou great Saviour, meet all Thy dear children. O give us a crumb of comfort this evening; give us something that will strengthen our faith, and fit us more perfectly for the warfare that lies ahead. And for those who do not know the joy of fellowship with Thee we pray, that Thou wilt remove every hindrance, and constrain them by Thy love to come penitently to the feet of Jesus. O take all our sins away. Wash us and make us whiter than snow. Restore unto us all the joy of Thy salvation, then will we teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.

So we pray that not one man or woman, boy or girl, within these walls this evening shall escape Thy benediction. Let it rest upon us all, and bless us all, and in the blessing of all of us glorify Thyself, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

WE HAVE read together this evening the story of Bethesda's pool, and of the legend, if legend it was—that at certain seasons an angel went down into the pool and troubled the water. The water had certain healing virtues, but they were applicable only to the one who should succeed in stepping down first after the troubling of the waters. I have no doubt whatever that we have an historically accurate description of Bethesda's pool. Yet, being history, like the story of Sarah and Isaac, and Hagar and Ishmael, it has also an allegorical significance. In human life generally Bethesda's pool does not belong to any particular locale; it is everywhere, wherever humans congregate. The world generally is as a place with five porches, which are full of impotent folk, physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually; the blind, the halt, and the withered, everywhere abound.

And like this aggregation of needy folk, *they are all waiting*, waiting for something, hoping against hope for some relief from all their ills. And the only ministering pool they know is one which reserves its healing for the person who is able to be the first. There was a legend of an angel who, at a certain season, troubled the waters of the pool. That was believed, and it may have been perfectly true, I do not know. But whether or not, only the person who was able to get into the pool first was made whole.

I said it has an allegorical significance. It is really a

parable of life, for this story reflected and still reflects the prevailing belief of the world that wholeness, the enjoyment of life, the good and the better things of life, are for the man who is able in some way or another to take the first place. So general is that assumption that it is cynically said that God is always on the side of the big battalions. I do not need to argue the prevalence of that assumption. In every game, which is only a game, the prize is for the one who is first. Our whole educational system is predicated upon the assumption of the superior worthiness of the one who manages somehow to take the first place. Every impatient motorist waiting for the stop light to turn, even though he is going nowhere in particular, seems to think there is a special virtue in getting away first. Have you ever noticed that? And even on the highway his passion for priority increases his madness, and he is determined to be first, even though sometimes such an insane ambition may carry one first to the cemetery.

But that is the rule of a selfish world. In business, in the professions, in politics, and even on the plane of a carnal religion, whosoever steppeth in first is accorded the prize.

But let us see how this almost universal law of a world that is really upside down is completely reversed by the Lord of light and of life. That is why His word and His teaching are so full of paradoxes. He seems to say the opposite of the things which we should say. You remember what they said of the disciples: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." I have heard of a quaint old preacher who preached from that text, and he had the regulation and orthodox three points. First, "This world is upside down." Secondly, "It needs to be turned right side up." And thirdly, "We are the chaps to do it." You know how strangely the Lord has spoken. He says that a man loses his life when he tries to save it. He says that whosoever would be exalted must humble himself. He says the way to become rich is to give everything away. And the way really to live is to fall into the ground and die. What a bundle of paradoxes and apparent contradictions that is!

But that is the doctrine of the verses of my text, that Divine grace flows to the man who has nothing; Divine power is given to the man who can do nothing; Divine friendship is for the one who has no friends; Divine help is for the helpless; and all the wealth of Deity is for the utterly and hopelessly bankrupt. Now can you read things upside down? Let us see what we can do.

I.

OUR LORD ANNOUNCES HIS PROGRAM, what He came into the world to do, when to the man of the long-standing infirmity He said, "Wilt thou be made whole?" That is what He came for. He came to make men whole. He is not merely a Repair-man; He refuses to attempt to sew a new patch on an old garment, or to put new wine in old bottles. He comes to restore the soul to its original wholeness. And oh, what urgent need we all have of the gracious fulfilment of that Divine program!

He comes to give us *moral wholeness*. There is a kinship between wholeness and holiness, where nothing is lacking. I am one of the fortunate ones who has a good car, a car with a good engine in it. Mr. Slade and I have often driven together, and we have come to some steep hill, and without any change of gear the car just slips to the top as though it did not know there were

a hill. And I said to Mr. Slade one day not so long ago, as we were going up a steep hill like that, "Do you remember how we used to puff and pant with the old cars, and how proud we were of ourselves if we could get to the top even "on low" without stopping?" But now because we have power within when we meet the hills we go right over the crest without reduction of speed. My dear friends, the Lord Jesus came to put a new engine in the car. He came to make it possible for impotent men to climb the steepest hills of life, indeed to make of us mountain climbers, to enable us to scale the lofty peaks and view the landscape o'er. As a Christian have you not found that so? Listen: "What the law could not do—why?—in that it was weak through the flesh . . ." It just could not make, as we say, the grade; the ideal, the standard, was too high for our debased and degenerate human nature. But "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and (by an offering) for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." That is how He makes people morally whole.

I have a letter—I shall publish it this week—from our good friend Canon Green, whose deliverances I mildly criticized. I shall publish it, and I shall publish at the same time my reply to him. It will appear in this week's WITNESS. But he said, "Were there not very many conversions?" I hope so; I would not say there were not by any means. But I am sometimes afraid of the mechanics of modern evangelism, and I am by no means convinced that a man is soundly saved, or as our Plymouth Brethren sometimes say, "well saved"—I am by no means convinced that a man is thoroughly saved because he lifts his hand in a big meeting, or walks up to the front.

I remember when I was very young as a preacher I went to conduct some services for the neighbouring Methodist minister in his church in the same little town where I was minister. It was not hard to get people to go to church in those days, and the little church was always crowded. I saw two men walk down the aisle with another man between them, and it looked for all the world as though they were plain-clothes policemen, and they had the middle man under arrest. They came to a pew, and one went in first, they pushed the middle man in, and the other went in after him. I preached as well as I could, and then my Methodist ministerial friend took over the meeting, and he gave all sorts of invitations. At last he managed to give an invitation that, unless one were determined to go to perdition, one would have to accept. I saw one man come out, and the other man push the middle man, and the three of them came out, and came up to the front. The minister said, "Now praying brethren you come up here and pray." There were others of course, and they came up to the front and prayed. "Now then, my brethren," he said, "we'll pray them into the Kingdom." So they prayed, but not one of them took the Bible to show them how to be saved. Then they announced a hymn—"Now we'll sing them into the Kingdom." That was before they had invented that idiotic word, "Singspiration." I do not know what that means, unless it means a sort of religious debauch, a religious drunk. But however, what with praying him into the Kingdom, and singing him into the Kingdom, they got him in. But I was interested to know what happened, and I found that the next morning he was

just as far away from the Kingdom as he ever was.

No such performances characterized Canon Bryan Green's meetings; I am merely saying that profession under the stress of great meetings is not an infallible sign of genuine conversion.

Men are not made whole after that fashion. It is by the word of the truth of the gospel, the very dynamic of God: that takes possession of the soul; and makes a poor broken human into a whole man by the power of the Divine Spirit. "Wilt thou be made whole?" That is the question of the gospel.

I believe it means *an intellectual wholeness too*. You know there are some very clever people who stupidly, as I think, try to tell us that when we receive the gospel we do despite to our intellect, we check our reason, so to speak. What nonsense! A man is not whole intellectually until he knows Christ. How can he be? He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He, if I may so say, is the intellectual norm, He is the standard, He is at once the power of God and the wisdom of God. I would say to any young student here that you have not learned the alphabet of real thinking until you have received Him Who is the Alpha and Omega of all truth. "Wilt thou be made whole?" I like to quote it. Saul of Tarsus was a very erudite man. His enemies said of him in later life, "Much learning hath made thee mad." The critics called Peter and John "unlearned and ignorant," but no one ever said that of the apostle Paul. They were amazed at his massive intellect. And let me tell you, such intellect, augmented by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, as is expressed in Paul's epistles, are the standards by which any man who would learn to think may begin thinking.

I have a little book on my shelves somewhere entitled "The Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation." There was a very eminent lawyer who had never met Christ; he was a secularist, and he did not believe in Him; he did not even believe God. And so he resolved that he would shut himself up with the Bible, and read it, and master it, and then he would write a book on the fallacy of believing it. But he never mastered the Bible; the Bible mastered him, and brought him as a humble penitent to the feet of Christ. And he had to confess, he never knew such wisdom as he found here. And instead of writing against the Bible he wrote that striking book, "The Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation."

Some years ago I gave an invitation one Sunday morning, and among those who responded was a tall young man, who said, "I am a student at Varsity." I said, "In what year?" He said, "I am doing graduate work." He said, "But I am a Modernist; I am an evolutionist." I said, "You are?" "Yes." I had announced the verse:

"Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come."

I said, "You may have a good many intellectual problems, you are tossed to and fro, and you do not know how to solve them. Do not wait until you have solved them; bring them all to the Lord Jesus Christ." And I made an appointment with him to come to see me, but he did not come. Some time later I met him, and I said, "I thought we had an appointment, and you were coming to see me." "I was, sir," he said, "but in the meantime I met Christ, and all my problems were solved, and I did not need to come to see you."

"Wilt thou be made whole?" I say, speaking of the apostle Paul, he said, "I verily thought with myself . . ." You can think many strange things if you think with yourself, — "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." That was his plan, that was his objective — to fight Jesus. You know the story of how the Lord met him. Then in later life he said, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations (or reasonings) and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The man who verily thought he ought to do many things contrary to Christ, after he had met Him was made to see that it was folly to entertain even a thought that was contrary to Christ.

And *spiritual wholeness*, also may be ours. We are not here forever, dear friends. "The living know that they shall die." We are here for only a little while. What then? Where are we going? There is not one of us who does not know that we have an immortal spirit that has to go somewhere. No man is whole until he has come to Christ. Then he is able to relate this life to the life to come, and the values of this life to the values of the upper world. "Wilt thou be made whole?"

II.

NOW LOOK AT WHAT THIS MAN SAID; IT IS JUST A VERY COMMON REPLY. He makes His proposal to one whose *impotence was of long standing*. He had had an infirmity for thirty and eight years, "and when Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case," — it was a hard case, but to him He made this proposal: "Wilt thou be made whole?" I know that our Lord Jesus is the children's Saviour. My heart was thrilled this morning — it always is on Sunday mornings — when a little crowd of boys came around me, all holding up their hands, and saying, "Hello, Pastor." And the Superintendent came along, and he looked at the smallest, and said, "I was smaller than you when I met the Pastor first, but not as good looking as you are." But these children were supremely happy in the house of the Lord. And one little boy came to me, and said, "Pastor I am eight, and I'll soon be nine, and I can read music, and I can play the piano. Don't you think I ought to be in the Junior Choir?" I said, "I think you ought," and I put him in charge of somebody to go and find Uncle Hutch. That little boy is a member of the church; he has been baptized, and he loves the Lord. O yes, we have hosts of them here. Our Saviour is the children's Saviour.

And there is *an undoubted advantage in coming to know Christ in early life*. Some of us were converted when we were quite young, but I do not think any of us were converted so young that we haven't wished we were converted still younger. It is a great thing when a boy or a girl comes to know Christ with the greater part of life naturally before him or before her, before their plans are made, and while they are going to school. What a great advantage it is to have that life shaped by the principles of this Book! But I have a quarrel with some of my Sunday School enthusiasts when they try to limit the Lord Jesus to the salvation of the young. O yes, He loves to save the children. But I have heard them ask, "How many of you were saved before you were ten? How

many were saved before you were twenty? How many were saved before you were thirty?" Then they say, "You see not many are saved late in life." I am not so sure of that. I am sure of this, that *no one is too old to receive the grace of God.*

Years ago Brother Bunyan brought a man to me whose acquaintance he had made in Muskoka. If I am not mistaken that man was about eighty-five years of age. He had preached Christ to him, and the old man had expressed an interest, and so Mr. Bunyan brought him down more than a hundred miles to see me. He had a shock of white hair and a white beard. He came into my vestry and I talked with him. He said, "I am ashamed to come. I have spent all these years, and I have never recognized God at all, and I am ashamed to come to Him now at the end of life." I told him that, while it would have been better if he had come earlier, still the Lord would save him at any age. So then I asked him if he would kneel down with me and pray, and we knelt down at a chair. I prayed for him, and then I said to him, "Now Mr. So and So, I want you to pray." There was silence. He knelt there with bowed head, at last he looked up and said, "I can't pray." I said, "Why can't you?" "I told you; I am ashamed. I never did pray in my life, for eighty-five years, and now right at the end to come and pray doesn't seem right to me, it doesn't seem fair. I can't pray, Mister." I talked with him, and I said, "I think you can." "But I don't know what to say." I said, "Here is a ready made prayer. The Bible tells about two men who went to the temple to pray, and one of them prayed this prayer; just a very short prayer: 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.'" I said, "Now you can pray that prayer. You are a sinner?" "O yes." "Well I want you to pray that prayer now." At last he stammered it out: "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Then I showed him the Scripture: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." I said, "Did you call on the name of the Lord?" "Yes; it was hard, but I did, I know I did." "Well his word says that whosoever" — "But I am so old." "But whosoever includes you, and whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." To shorten my story, he rose with beaming face, and said, "I cannot understand it, but I really believe He has received me, and has forgiven my sins." He went back to Muskoka, and several months later he came down again, and came to see me. He had been reading his Bible, and he said, "It is all right, I am saved, and I came all the way down here to be baptized. Could I be baptized on Sunday?" When Sunday came I baptized that old man of eighty-five years. I suppose he has long since gone to be with his Lord. "When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case," — but not too long for the Ancient of Days, not too long for the Lord of life. He can save anyone, no matter how long we have tarried in the paths of sin.

III.

Now I want to say another thing. THIS PROPOSAL WAS MADE TO ONE WHOSE LIFE THUS FAR HAD BEEN BUT A CHAIN OF DISAPPOINTMENTS. "Poor man! How long have you been waiting there?" "I do not know." But he had been there a long time, and he said, "The reason I have not been made whole is because I have no man, when the waters are troubled, to put me into the pool, but while I am coming another steppeth down before me, and I have always been too late. I have tried it again and again and again, but I never did manage to get in first." What

should we do dear friends if we had a salvation that required somebody to help us into the pool? And to help us to get in first? This man had been disappointed repeatedly, and yet *he had done everything he could to save himself.* I suppose he had got just as near to the water's edge as possible, and as he was trying perhaps with his poor lame legs somebody went down before him. It was like a woman I saw this morning. But she was not lame, but she will make some other people lame if she does not mend her ways. I was coming through the subway at Davenport and Dupont, and I had the right of way. I was very near to the subway, and she came down from the other way, and taking it for granted that I would stop my car, or retard its progress, she came down from the other direction and dashed just between the support of the bridge and my car like a shot. O yes, she was a woman. Women like to be first. They are almost as bad as the men!

But thus far every effort had been in vain. I may be speaking to someone this evening who has heard the gospel a thousand times. You say, "I know it is all true sir. I wish I were a Christian. I have tried, but somehow or another I have never managed it, and I am still as poorly off as ever."

IV.

NOW HERE WAS ONE WHO OFFERED A GIFT WITHOUT A "MEANS TEST". That is grace. When He told this story our Lord imposed no condition whatever. He did not hold an argument with him, and say, "If you promise this, and that, and the other thing, I will do what I can for you." No. That is not the way the Lord, of grace does. I will tell you what He did — *He commanded the impossible.* The gospel always does. It is one of the paradoxes. "Take up thy bed, and walk." That was the one thing he could not do. He could speak, perhaps he could sing, I do not know; he could hear, but he could not walk. He had tried to, and failed, but when Jesus stepped in, He interposed you see. I love that principle in the gospel; that He comes to the help of men when everything else in the universe has failed. Oh, what condescension of our Lord to save, to be willing to take the last place!

I remember some years ago being invited to a certain place. A man came to me and said, "Now the people are determined they want you to come and lecture, and they want you and no one else." He was fulsome in his praises. He said, "Now look here, you had better get Dr. So and So. You can change your date, or he can change his." "What do you mean?" I said, "You asked him did you not? and when he would not come you asked me." I said, "I do not mind taking the second place, only I want you to be straightforward. You come making believe that you want me. You want me only because you could not get somebody else. Now go and speak to him." That man was greatly offended, and he said to the man who was then my associate, "Dr. Shields wouldn't come because he wouldn't take second place." "No," my friend said, "that is not it. I know him well enough, and he will take the last place any time if it is the Lord's work. But he would not go because you were not straightforward." He said, "He is easy to deal with if you tell him the truth, but I never met a man that would find you out more quickly if you don't."

We do not need any hearsay evidence. The Lord knows we have tried everything and everybody, especially ourselves, and it is when everything and everybody has failed in all the universe that the Lord Jesus comes, and He

says, "I know I am the last, but I will save you, and then you will make me the first." That is the gospel.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

So I offer you this evening in His name healing, wholeness, forgiveness of sin, to be robed in His righteousness, to be bejewelled with all the ornaments of grace, at last to be made a prince of the blood, with angels for your ministers. And all by doing — what? The impossible. Because *when you attempt to obey the commands of Deity the impossible becomes possible*; He breathes strength upon you by His mandate. When He says, "Come," the lamest man, as lame as Mephibosheth on both feet, may come, and all will be well.

May God lead some to come to Him this evening, for His Name's sake. Let us pray.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for Thine immeasurable grace. We bless Thee that Thou art ready to receive the poorest, and the weakest, and the most obdurate, of sinners. May someone come tonight, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

WHEN THE LORD JESUS PRESCRIBES THE MENU

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Sunday Morning, January 18th, 1953

(Electrically Recorded)

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."—John 2:11.

IT IS not at all surprising men should have asked questions concerning the Man of Nazareth as He moved among His fellows in the days of His flesh. In some respects He was like all other men, and in some respects He differed from all other men. His words were different from the words of any other; those who heard Him said, "Never man spake like this Man." And His works were different from the works performed by any other man. He Himself was content to rest His claim for recognition as the Messiah, and the Son of God, upon His works. He said, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father." Again on one occasion He said, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." And the miracles which our Lord wrought in the days of His flesh were literally "signs", designed to show something of His power, that following such manifestations of His Divine quality His disciples and those about Him might believe on Him.

It is significant that our Lord should have chosen the place and the time which He did choose for the first of all His signs. And the power which He exercised in turning the water into wine was a manifestation of His glory, that is, of that peculiar and distinctive quality or essence which belonged to His Divine nature.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE ELEMENTS OF THIS GLORY THUS MANIFESTED? There is a lesson here which I think we very urgently need to learn and well remember. Our Lord showed *His power over all natural laws*. He accelerated the processes of nature. He did what only the Lord of nature could do; He converted the water at Cana's marriage feast into wine. There has been a good deal of discussion as to whether this particular wine was fermented, or whether it was a perfectly harmless beverage? We may be sure, I think, that on that occasion our Lord did nothing that would mar the perfection of the feast. They had no wine, and by the exercise of His

power He supplied that lack, and showed that all the resources of nature were really at His command.

That is a truth which is quite generally in our day denied — that Jesus Christ was God, and that He exercised in the days of His flesh the powers of Deity. But here He did it in a very simple way. Somewhere I read in the long ago that a young boy was asked to write a brief essay on this incident, and he put it all in a brief sentence: "The conscious water saw its Lord and blushed." Certainly an element of nature recognized its Lord, and was transmuted from its natural quality into another quality. So we do well, as we come to our Lord Jesus, and offer our petitions at the Throne of grace in His Name, to remember that we are praying to One Who has the key to all storehouses. And if there be, in any of the experiences of life through which we pass, some great lack which it is beyond our power immediately to supply, we can invoke His blessing, with the certainty that He will come to our aid.

I think He manifested too *the glory of His word and will*. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "The Word, it is said, "was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." He did not on this occasion speak to the element whose nature was changed; He simply willed it, and called upon the attendants at the feast to draw from the water pots, and as they did so they discovered the miracle. God does not always work His miracles ostentatiously. I think He has always been economic in the exercise of miraculous power. But when He has exercised it, He has exercised it for a definite purpose. In this case there is a sense in which the miracle did not immediately appear. It was something which He willed, about which He did not say a word, until He instructed the governor of the feast to tell the attendants to draw the water.

So, my dear friends, the Lord Jesus is present in the life of all believers, and there is a sense in which He works miracles every day. He does wonders for us in ways that we cannot understand, just as Peter came out of the prison when the angel opened the door for him, and it is said, "He wist not that it was true which was done by the angel." Afterwards when he came into the city, when he came to himself it is said he said, "Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." I am sure that we ourselves have passed through such experiences, when iron doors have opened to us of their own accord, when the shackles have fallen from our ankles, and the manacles from our wrists, and we have found ourselves in a large place, in the full exercise of our freedom, such as we had not before. And we have to meditate upon it, and say, "What happened back there in that strange experience, which, as we passed through it I could not understand?" And you have to say, as you draw the water from the water pots, "A miracle was in process of being wrought when I did not know it." And coming to yourself, and viewing life retrospectively, you will find I think that it is studded with gracious Divine interventions that have made it possible, having obtained help of God, to continue to this day.

Then there is another suggestion here, that *our Lord showed His Sovereignty over the ordinary instrumentalities of life*. At that wedding feast there were water pots of water, "six waterpots of stone, after the manner of

the purifying of the Jews." They were simply natural necessities, there for use according to the Jewish practice. And it was of these our Lord graciously laid hold in working His miracle. I think we have had some experience like that with water pots of different sorts; I am sure you have. One of them was perhaps filled from the deep dark well of pain, another from the turbulent stream of persecution, another from the brackish waters of bereavement; perhaps another filled from waters which have occasioned pecuniary loss, springs of betrayal and disappointment — from all these elements which enter into every human life, and which at the time make it very difficult perhaps for us to see the hand of God: out of these water pots, filled from these varied and strange springs, God in His goodness ordains that the sweetest wine of life shall be drawn. Thus we come to glory even in tribulation also, and sometimes to say, as did the Psalmist, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word . . . It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

It is a very homely and simple scene, this wedding occasion, is it not? There were many things entering into the necessities of the feast, and of the enjoyment thereof, and our Lord was there as a guest, and yet proved Himself to be the Lord. Sometimes you have difficulty in understanding how all things can work together for good to them that love God. That is a tremendous passage. The sweep of it is quite immeasurable, for within the category of "all things" there are not only the early experiences of life through which you pass, but events which antedated your birth, which prepared for your advent to this world, occurrences which, taking place before you came, yet played their part in molding and making your character. And the little things that come to you from day to day, some of them insignificant, so trifling as to pass without notice, and others perhaps temporarily very irritating, thorns in the flesh, assaults by creatures from without, like the sting of a mosquito, make life temporarily to become very uncomfortable. And yet out of all these events God, in His sovereign grace, is able to bring good. And He does bring good, and manifests His glory by showing you, and showing me, that all things work together for good to them that love God.

Then there is another, I think, very comforting suggestion — that our Lord here exercises His power to minister to the enjoyment of life, and perhaps too to the mitigation of mistakes. I wonder if there is any housewife here who, having invited certain guests to share her hospitality, discovered that some very important factor in the feast has been forgotten? It was not wine, but it was something. And then how in the world to manage that without exposing yourself to a very great embarrassment. I remember when I was first married, and I hadn't learned a great many things that I learned afterwards, without saying a word to my wife I took a guest home to dinner, or to luncheon I suppose it was, a midday meal. I introduced this gentleman, and presently the meal was called. Grace was said, and it was left to me to serve. And as I had been accustomed to serve only two, I served only two, my wife and my guest, and the plate was quite empty afterwards. He said, "I am afraid you have served me too liberally." I do not know what I did, but I somehow managed to screen my embarrassment. I can assure you that I never found myself in that fix afterwards; I was very careful to avoid that. But there are omissions which occasion embarrassments in life, and they diminish the enjoyment of the day and

the feast. But our Lord Jesus knew that this wine was a necessity for the occasion, and therefore He provided it.

There are people who would tell you that the religion of Christ spoils life, it robs us of our joy. And they call religious professors "killjoys", and all that sort of thing. My dear friends, if you are going to have a real feast, without any embarrassment, and without any unfortunate and regrettable reactions, you had better invite the Lord Jesus, and submit the menu to his inspection. And if anything is lacking you will find that He will supply it, and that all will be well.

Then there is another suggestion, I think a very significant one, that our Lord should have chosen a marriage occasion in which to manifest His glory. I do not like to hear people speak lightly of marriage. I do not think it is a matter about which people should joke so much. Marriage is either paradise or purgatory, one or the other. I hope it is usually paradise. But certainly our Lord comes to add to the joys of life, and this is His institution. Marriage is the earliest of all Divine institutions, and our Lord graced it with His presence at the beginning of His public ministry. He put His imprimatur upon it, and showed His favour toward it, and allowed Himself to become an all-important factor in the enjoyment of it. Blessed are they of whose marriage it can be said, as of this marriage feast: "And both Jesus was called, and his disciples." I have been at marriages, and have had sometimes the melancholy duty to celebrate a marriage — do not misunderstand me; I have seen many a marriage that opened the gate almost into Heaven, but I have been at marriages where I would have preferred the conduct of a funeral, because I knew the Lord Jesus was not in it, I knew that He had not been invited. And so let me say to you, young people, that in that matter, above all other human considerations, make sure that you have the favour of God, make sure that He is with you. For if He is, then in spite of all the afflictions of life, the dark days that are inseparable from our earthly existence, yet it will be, in spirit at least, a touch of Heaven here below. But I am sure the feast must needs be sanctified by the presence and power of the manifested glory of Jesus Himself, so that you make that a *sine qua non*, the one indispensable provision of your marriage, that it shall be one where Jesus will be, and upon which He will smile, and to which He will show His favour.

Then one other thing. I will venture to say that His presence reversed the rule of life. The ruler of the feast was surprised because the ordinary procedure had been reversed. He said, "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now." Where Jesus is the purveyor, when He is the real Ruler of the feast, you will always find the better things are on before. We have many things for which we have reason to thank God I am sure. Your heart was in that Psalm as we read it this morning, calling upon all that was within you to bless His holy Name; but my dear friends, there are better things in store.

I wonder if I may tell the boys and girls something. When I was a little boy, and I had a little money to spend, I did like other boys did, and went to what you call in this country a candy store, and bought some sweets of some sort. I had a rule I made. After I had bought them I looked them over and I selected the best and the largest, and I said, "That is going to be the last." Do you know why? Because I wanted to have the best to look forward to! That is just exactly what the Lord does.

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And if you take Him into partnership, and submit all your concerns to Him, you will find that He will have something better on Monday than He had on Sunday, and better on Tuesday than He had on Monday. And so the feast will progress, until by and by when the end of the journey is reached, and we all sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb, then I am sure with one voice we shall exclaim: "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

May the Lord put our feet in the path of the just, so that we may be sure of the better things in days to come. Let us pray.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for the infinitude of Thy supplies. Thy storehouses are like the storehouses of Joseph that were so filled that at last they left numbering. So Thou art able always to supply all our needs according to Thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus. We pray that Thou wilt help us ever to walk with Thee, and to receive from Thy hand those things which Thou dost choose for us. We ask it in Jesus' Name, Amen.

THE GREAT CONTENTION

Chapter Ten in the History of the Battle for the Bible Among Baptists of Ontario and Quebec

By Dr. T. T. Shields

IN LAST week's chapter I submitted Dr. Robert McCaul's analysis of the teaching of Professor Ernest W. Parsons. We have not finished with their teachings yet, but when we have submitted the teachings of Foster, Parsons, Cross, Mathews, and Marshall, we shall try to give a brief analytical summary of all of them, in answering the question whether or not we were justified in protesting against McMaster University's false teaching. In the meantime we have much other ground to cover.

And before analyzing the works of Cross, Mathews, and others, we desire to pay tribute to one who, in respect to these matters, has done for me what Dr. McCaul did respecting the teaching of Foster and Parsons.

Feeling it was impossible for me to find time to go through the books of these men personally, although I had gone through them years ago, I sought the aid of Dr. Olive L. Clark, who writes the Sunday School lesson for this paper, and who is Professor of Greek in Toronto Baptist Seminary. The story I am about to relate will stretch forward to a date between 1926 and 1930.

Olive L. Clark, M.A., Ph.D.

The resolution declaring that Jarvis Street was no longer eligible to send delegates to the Convention, was passed at the Convention of 1927. At that time I had never met Miss Olive Clark. I had heard of her, but knew very little about her. Years before, I had known her father, a conspicuous singer and choral leader in Hamilton, Ontario. I knew him to be a great friend of the principles for which we were standing, and that his daughter, Miss Olive, was an assistant in the Classics Department of McMaster University. I was informed that Miss Olive was anything but friendly toward us, and that when she was going home, THE GOSPEL WITNESS was put out of sight, so as to avoid discussion. That is all I knew about Miss Clark.

The following is what I later learned about her: She was evidently an unusually brilliant scholar, and won thirteen scholarships in her collegiate work in Hamilton. But all these scholarships were for Toronto University. Miss Clark had long entertained an ambition to be a professor of Classics on the staff of McMaster University. Therefore, she sacrificed all scholarships, and took her university work in McMaster, obtaining a Bachelor's degree, and later a Master's degree. Some time after, we do not know how long, she was appointed an assistant in

Classics at McMaster University. And that position she held at the time of the Convention of 1927.

While Miss Clark was a fine scholar, she was first of all a devoted Christian, and she had conceived of a professorship in McMaster University as an opportunity for larger Christian service.

I print again the resolution which was passed at the morning session of Friday, October 14th, 1927, which was as follows:

"Rev. W. C. Smalley, B.A., Ottawa, moved the following: "In view of the resolution dealing with the conduct and attitude of churches in the Convention, passed on October 13th, 1927,

"Be it resolved that in the opinion of this Convention the conduct and attitude of the Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, are not in harmony and cooperation with the work and objects of this Convention, and that the said church shall cease to be entitled to send any delegates to the said Convention."

"Mr. Harry L. Stark, Toronto, seconded the motion.

"Both Mr. Smalley and Mr. Stark spoke in support of the resolution."

This resolution was carried by 532 for and 217 against. With the passage of that resolution the Jarvis Street delegates ceased to have any place in the Convention.

(Because of the unsatisfactory conditions obtaining in the Convention due to the teaching of McMaster University; Jarvis Street Church contributions that year were less than formerly because part of our mission funds were diverted to definitely Evangelical channels. Notwithstanding, the year Jarvis Street Church was reckoned to be "not in harmony and co-operation with the work and objects of this Convention" Jarvis Street Church contributed more to Convention funds (over \$10,000) than any church in the Convention, but two.)

Spontaneously that afternoon, the delegates and a very large number of people, gathered at Jarvis Street Church.

At this point we return to the story of Miss Olive Clark. She had been engaged with her University duties in the morning, but planned to attend the Convention in the afternoon. She was standing at the intersection of Bloor and Church Streets waiting for a car to go east to Temple Church. At the same spot a group of women were gathered, waiting for a car going south, that would take them to Jarvis Street Church. They freely talked among themselves of the exclusion of Jarvis Street Church from the Convention at the morning session. She

was not eavesdropping: but she could not help hearing the conversation, and it seemed to her that the report they were discussing could not possibly be true. She therefore decided to go down to Jarvis Street instead of going to Temple Church. She was not known to any of the women *en route* to Jarvis Street, nor were they known to her. She went into the large Lecture Hall where the meeting was to be held, found a seat somewhere among a crowd that filled the place. Everybody was happy. Nobody complained. No one seemed to be sorry. Miss Clark listened to everything, and was tremendously impressed.

As she left the building a great inward struggle began. It was as though the Lord Himself came to her, and said, "Now, Olive, you must make your choice. Which shall it be? Your Lord, or McMaster University?" That inward struggle continued for several days. She asked no one's advice, but did speak to one minister of the battle that was going on within. The issue of that struggle was that within three or four days of Jarvis Street Church's exclusion from the Convention, Miss Clark resigned her connection with McMaster University.

In the Autumn of that year, 1928, Miss Clark responded to our invitation to join the Seminary staff as a full-time Professor. It was her plan to pursue her studies in Toronto University, and to matriculate into the course for Ph.D. But she found she had to pursue her studies for two years because the academic standing of Toronto University was much higher than that of McMaster. After two years' further study, she was offered the Master's degree in Toronto University. But having received it from McMaster, she did not want to take the M.A. degree a second time. However, she was credited with her standing, and began her work for the doctorate. She pursued that to a successful completion. During that time she took a summer course in Chicago University under the leading classical scholars of the Continent.

The course for Ph.D. in Toronto was very difficult. Many had begun the course, but at the time Dr. Clark began, not one had ever completed it in the more than one hundred years of the history of Toronto University. Candidates for the degree had found it so difficult that before completing their course, they had gone off to Yale, or Harvard, or Johns Hopkins, or Chicago, where they found the requirements less exacting.

In the year in which Dr. Clark received her Doctorate, there was one other from Halifax, who was unable to be present, and his degree was conferred *in absentia*, so that Dr. Clark was the first person in its more than one hundred years of history to have the degree conferred actually by Toronto University.

We have written all this in order that our readers may know something of the academic qualifications of the Professors of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

For many years Dr. Clark has contributed the Exposition of the Sunday School Lesson in THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and we have received numerous expressions of appreciation from ministers, some of them quite prominent, and others, who have said that her exposition is among the very best things they find in the paper. The fact is, Dr. Clark is, as a great many ministers are not, a real theologian.

This was the scholar to whom I submitted the volume, "The Theology of Schleiermacher", by GEORGE CROSS, Ph.D., D.D., University of Chicago Press, 1911, for analysis; and also the book, "What Is Christianity?" by GEORGE CROSS, published in Rochester in 1917; also

the volume "Creative Christianity" with the sub-title, "A Study of the Genius of the Christian Faith" by DR. GEORGE CROSS, published by MacMillan, 1922; and a further work, "The Attitude of the Modern Theologian Toward Jesus Christ," by DR. GEORGE CROSS, Professor of Systematic Theology, Rochester Seminary, reprinted from *The Biblical World*, Vol. 47 No. 1, January, 1916.

We shall later submit analyses of the teaching of PROFESSOR I. G. MATHEWS, and of the teaching of PROFESSOR L. H. MARSHALL, none of which will be based upon what students have reported hearing, but upon their own published works.

We feel sure that what we have written of Dr. Olive L. Clark's scholastic standing will command respect for that which she has selected from the books of these Professors.

In all his works Professor George Cross assumes that he and all who believe with him are intellectually superior to the common man. Such pride of intellect as breathes through everything Professor Cross has written, suggests that he is a complete stranger to the humble mind.

Before setting out the quotations from his works, which Dr. Clark has selected, or our comments upon those quotations, we would like to call our readers' attention to the Luciferian pride which shows in almost every sentence contained in the selections following.

We set out a quotation from pages ten and eleven of the foreword of *Creative Christianity*:

From "Creative Christianity"

"Ecclesiastical and doctrinal reconstruction are particularly imperative if the multitudes of *educated young people* issuing from our schools and colleges are to find a congenial home in our Christian churches. Owing to the character of the training to which they have been subject *all the way from the kindergarten to the university graduate school*, the native cast of mind in which their religious life is to receive its moulding is so vastly different from that in which we and our fathers approached religious questions that, cost what it may to our feelings, we must make up our mind that their interpretation of the Christian faith, as of life in general, will be very different from that which was given to us by the fathers. The possibility of *winning and holding these young people for the Christian faith* depends very much on the frankness and courage with which those of us who are familiar and sympathetic with their training and perceive clearly the character of the questions they must face shortly, make up our minds to tell the whole truth, as we see it, plainly and kindly, leaving the outcome to the God of truth. For, be it remembered, these young people are to be the guides of the great masses of humanity in many lands in the days that are now coming so swiftly upon us, when all the peoples of the earth will mingle and seek a common leadership."

In the foregoing quotation we have set some lines in italics.

The assumption here is that the schools to-day train young people to reject the scriptures and the Christian gospel. Dr. Cross speaks of the possibility of holding these young people "for the Christian faith". If he had said "for the professing church" there might have been some sense in it. But he is not holding them for the Christian faith by absolutely destroying the faith. And in this brief paragraph Professor Cross assumes that it is "the young people" who are demanding the denial of everything which he proceeds to deny in order to hold them for "the Christian faith". As a matter of fact, the leaders of present-day heresies are not young people. Our hope of revival and of the continuance of the Christian

faith is in our young people. The outstanding heretics, like Cross, are anything but young, and were anything but young when they began their nefarious propaganda of unbelief. We have observed it in a long experience as a Pastor. It is when men become professionalized, become ecclesiastics, mere denominational, or college, officials, when they fail to maintain their walk with God, and, separating themselves from the actualities of life, make excursions, as Douglas McIntosh says of Foster, into the realms of doubt: it is the older men who are out of fellowship with God, "soulish (or sensuous) having not the Spirit"; who are the leaders in the propagation of unbelief.

We have met no heretics among the younger men, except such as were made heretics in college by such men as Cross and Foster. But men who have gone into the Christian ministry, and have walked with God, and been partakers of the power of the Holy Ghost, and have faithfully preached the gospel of God's grace, and have seen people by the hundreds, and perhaps in some cases by the thousands, converted to God, and their lives completely transformed — men who are exercising a ministry of that sort are never tempted to adopt the tenets of Modernism.

Cross Does Not Believe in Jesus as "Christ"

But it will be seen in the quotations which we print from Dr. Cross, that he not only did not believe in the divine inspiration of the scripture, he did not believe in Christ as the Messiah, or the Son of God, and is even doubtful whether Christ ever lived at all. And this sort of thing he passes out in the name of scholarship; and a lot of people overawed by the high-sounding word are afraid to answer, and are, themselves, swept off their feet.

But an analysis of Cross' works will show that he has not reached these outrageous conclusions by the fresh discovery of some ancient and hitherto unknown manuscript: all these things are his own philosophisings, his own attempted interpretations of what is written. They are, indeed, the wild imaginings of an evil heart of unbelief. These men put Tom Paine, and Voltaire, once notorious infidels, in the shade by their blatant and blasphemous unbelief.

And let it be remembered that while they were writing these books, and delivering these lectures, their salaries were being paid out of funds dedicated to the propagation of the Christian faith.

It Is Time For Plain Speaking

We must speak plainly and honestly. In the paragraph above quoted, Professor Cross says for the sake of these young people we must "make up our minds to tell the whole truth," as though the telling of the truth would be sure to destroy Christian faith. Such an assumption is an infamous lie. Thousands of men of scholarship superior to that of Professor George Cross, men of far greater intellect, have believed the truth. One cannot deal with such purveyors of infidelity without frankly saying that they are not gentlemen. They are not even honest men. They derive their support from a supposedly Christian institution, and then exercise themselves to the utmost to destroy the very foundations upon which the institution rests.

We make no apology for thus speaking of these men: We cannot regard them as merely amiable and mistaken gentlemen. They are outrageous sinners, who by nearly

every word they write, call God a liar, and do their utmost to destroy human faith in Him. To us they are as heathen men and publicans. They are indeed reprobate, for they "crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." For this is the record of their downward course, "even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." And again: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." Once more:

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" "Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

QUOTATIONS FROM "WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?"

(By George Cross, Rochester, 1917)

Selected by Olive L. Clark, M.A., Ph.D.

Preface, page vii.—"The aim of this work is to assist the intelligent Christian layman and the minister who have felt the need of *revising their doctrinal inheritance* to reach a more satisfactory interpretation of the Christian faith."

p. 4—"The root of the controversy (between Judaism and Christianity) lay in the question whether the faith in Jesus did not represent the true Judaism. And now, after the lapse of all the intervening centuries, it is still an open question whether, after all, it was not misleading to call Jesus the Christ. (p. 5) Did not Peter's confession introduce into the minds of Jesus' followers a misconception of the character and purpose of Jesus? In assigning to him the character and purpose of the Jewish Messiah did it not pervert his true aim and theirs? And has not the Christian faith been burdened with beliefs in consequence from which it still seeks relief?"

This surely is an astounding statement. The Christian Church from the apostolic era until now has been uniformly wrong, and it is misleading to call Jesus "Christ". Peter's confession gave a false conception to the followers of Jesus, and thus it has been a burden to Christian faith ever since! One really wonders if this Professor is mad. Only let it be remembered that until nineteen hundred and ten he was a Professor in McMaster University, and even during the time of our great controversy he was welcomed as a lecturer, and as a preacher in at least one of our churches. Against this we must set the scripture: "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

In his sermon at Pentecost, speaking of David, Peter said: "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resur-

rection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

According to Cross, Peter was all wrong! The world had to wait for George Cross to put it right! And again, "And straightway he (Saul, or Paul) preached Christ in the synagogue, that he is the Son of God." And so all the way through the New Testament. We may well wonder what sort of preachers of the gospel such teaching as this would or could produce. Did such outrageous unbelief justify our protest? We answer with the word of Scripture: "What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"

p. 27—*Re accounts of miraculous, angelic messengers, voices from the sky etc.* These accounts are taken as examples of Apocalypticism, and not to be taken as true records. "Or again, if we take the accounts of his ministry, they are studded with occurrences of intervention from another world. A notable instance is the transfiguration. We quote from Mark: And after six days . . . Jesus only with themselves.

This manner of narration is quite generally characteristic of the whole of the accounts of Jesus' career. They are cast in the mold of a belief in heavenly apocalypses. Everything is conceived miraculously."

The accounts of the ministry of Christ "are studded with occurrences of intervention from another world". This is Dr. Cross' objection. He does not believe in the supernatural either in the quality of scripture itself, or of the events it records. And yet is it not true that the entire Bible was written to teach the very opposite of what Professor Cross believes and teaches, namely that the Maker of all worlds can, and does, intervene in the affairs of men from another world? Is not the Bible a revelation of a personally transcendent sovereign God Who is still the Ruler and Preserver of the worlds He made? If there be no such "intervention" why pray? Why ask for divine help in any sphere or activity of human life? The granting of such help would involve an "intervention from another world", in which possibility, and indeed, historical and experiential actuality, however, thank God most of us believe.

pp. 32, 33—*Re plenary inspiration of the Scriptures:* "In one other respect Apocalypticism persists among Protestants. Their repudiation of an immanent authority in the church in favor of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures tended to establish in the Protestant churches the view that the saving truth of religion is communicated to men through supernatural channels of transmission which are not subject to the canons of our ordinary thinking. It is only in recent times that this feature of Apocalypticism has been giving way."

Dr. Cross does not believe saving truth to be communicated through supernatural channels of transmission "which are not subject to the canons of our ordinary thinking". What canons? Whose canons? Who is to be the judge? According to Cross the Scripture is not divinely inspired. He admits, however, that the prin-

ciple he repudiates has been the common Christian belief until "recent times".

p. 36—*Re Incarnation and Coming of Christ to this earth:* "Fourthly, Christian Apocalypticism has the merit of standing for the supreme worth of the personality of Jesus Christ as interpretative of the worth of our human personality and as the divine ideal which is to conquer the world. But by regarding him as coming into our world in unnatural ways from without, us accepting our earthly condition only for an interval and as now occupying a realm altogether different from ours, it is open to the charge of making him appear like an accident in human history, and in the end as having only a partial kinship with us. The outcome must be a loss of confidence in the value of the hope of being like him here."

THE INCARNATION: To regard Christ "as coming into our world in unnatural ways from without" partially destroys His kinship with us. This, of course, is an implicit denial of the Virgin Birth, of His Deity, and of the whole truth of the Incarnation"

p. 115—*Re Rationalism:* "That there have been forms of rationalism that, to the minds of their advocates, were synonymous with religious unbelief is not to be disputed. . . . But in history there has appeared also another type of rationalism that has sought to be friendly to religion, and particularly to Christianity, a rationalism that professes, not to destroy, but to fulfil faith by freeing it from the influence of ideas that seemed to confuse and corrupt it. There has been and there is a rationalism that seeks to minister to faith by insisting that the utterances of religion shall harmonize with the canons of thought."

RATIONALISM: The Christian faith is to be rationalized "by insisting that the utterances of religion shall harmonize with the canons of thought". Once more: what canons? What thought? Whose thought? The great scholar, Saul of Tarsus, said: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth". Later he declared that such spiritual weapons as were employed brought "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ". He is the Canon. His word must be the Norm by which our thoughts are to be regulated and appraised. Said the Psalmist: "I hate thoughts: but thy law do I love."

QUOTATIONS FROM "CREATIVE CHRISTIANITY"

A Study of the Genius of the Christian Faith

(By Dr. George Cross, published by Macmillan, 1922)

Selected by Olive L. Clark, M.A., Ph.D.

Professor of Greek in Toronto Baptist Seminary

pp. 10, 11—In the Foreword Dr. Cross indicates his purpose in the writing of the book:

"It is not to be successfully disputed that we are at the present in the midst of a powerful movement, nurtured by a variety of spiritual tendencies current among intelligent people, looking to the remaking of the forms in which our Protestantism has traditionally expressed its inner life. Ecclesiastical and doctrinal reconstruction are particularly imperative if the multitudes of educated young people issuing from our schools and colleges are to find a congenial home in our Christian churches."

Here is a quotation which I have made elsewhere, in which our author insists that the Christian faith must be accommodated to the multitudes of young people issuing from our schools and colleges. And all this to meet "a variety of spiritual tendencies current among intelligent people." Observe the use of the weapons of ridicule and contempt implied in the continual exaltation of a supposed intelligentsia: a contemptuous sneer is directed against all who are simple enough to believe the Bible.

God pity us—for according to Cross He cannot help us—if the colleges of which Cross is so proud monopolize the knowledge of the way to Heaven! If indeed there be a Heaven! What utter nonsense this is! Will educated young people be content with mere negations? Will they find a congenial home in any "Christian" church, which is chiefly employed in shouting from the housetops what it does not believe?

p. 11—The native cast of mind in which their religious life is to receive its moulding is so vastly different from that in which we and our fathers approached religious questions that, cost what it may to our feelings, we must make up our mind that their interpretation of the Christian faith, as of life in general, will be very different from that which was given to us by the fathers: *The possibility of winning and holding these young people for the Christian faith depends very much on the frankness and courage with which those of us who are familiar and sympathetic with their training and perceive clearly the character of the questions they must face shortly, make up our minds to tell the whole truth, as we see it, plainly and kindly, leaving the outcome to the God of truth.*

p. 24—Discussing *modern trends* he says: Secondly, there is the fundamental scientific and philosophic contention that there can be no genuine knowledge of this universe in which we must live our life, except on the presupposition of the immanency, permanency and integrated unity of the forces and laws of the universe. (Here Dr. Cross shows the influence of Schleiermacher). This is now becoming a common maxim of the schools. In consequence, every one so trained must place a note of interrogation after all the biblical accounts of miracles."

A certain view, which he quotes from Schleiermacher, "is now becoming a common maxim of the schools. In consequence, every one so trained must place a note of interrogation after all the biblical accounts of miracles." Whoever goes to school, therefore, will be sure to deny the miracles in the Christian revelation! That means, of course, to deny the possibility of the new birth. That means that we cannot tell a poor sinner that the record of his guilt can be blotted out; that we may not promise him that he may become a new creation in Christ Jesus. That would be a miracle, and it is "a common maxim of the schools" that there are no miracles.

Quotations from Chapter I—The Method of Study

p. 30—*Re Christian doctrine*: "The history of Christian doctrine and practice has made it clear that both the formulations of Christian dogmas and confessions of faith and the establishment of sacraments were called forth by special circumstances and were meant to serve special purposes that no longer obtain among multitudes of Christian people.

Here we are told Christian doctrine, the formulation of Christian dogmas, and confessions of faith, and the establishment of sacraments, were called forth by special circumstances of the past, but they have now become obsolete. At what fountain has this infallible teacher been drinking? He appears to be perfectly sure that the Bible, and all that it stands for, is not true. He has reached this conclusion, not by any scientific examination of new objective records, or standards, but just by the thinking of his own conceited brain. Such men ought to be laughed out of Court.

p. 31—*Re Authority of Scripture*: "Accompanying the growing dissatisfaction with the creeds of the churches as standards of Christian faith and with the view that the Bible in its entirety constitutes the final authority, there has come a regressive search for the Christian originals.

p. 32—So that it is quite likely to turn out that the orderly and systematic arrangements of the so-called teachings of Jesus might issue in giving to them a meaning which they did not have and could not have when they

were first uttered. *It is even possible—and we can say it with the very deepest reverence for him in our hearts—that if all the teachings of Jesus were brought together in the exact form in which he gave them, there might be found among them some that would not commend themselves as fixed and final to the faith of the most intelligent and devout Christians of the present day.*"

On the authority of scripture it is plainly implied that the so-called teachings of Jesus are utterly unreliable. It is even possible that if we had all the teachings of Jesus brought together, they could not find acceptance! Once more, note the qualification for understanding, "of the most intelligent and devout Christians of the present day"! People like George Cross!

Please remember when this writer became Pastor of Jarvis Street Church, Dr. Cross was still a Professor in McMaster University. Was there, is there still, any justifiable ground of protest against such virulent unbelief as this being taught in a supposedly "Christian" institution, even though such PROTEST MIGHT PRECIPITATE "THE TRAGEDY OF SCHISM"? SURELY EVEN THAT WERE TO BE PREFERRED TO SPIRITUAL DEATH!

p. 39—*Re Historicity of Gospels and Miracles*: "When the question of the historicity of the Gospels is now raised among us it is meant to ask whether certain purported events of those days, which are quite unparalleled in our times and would certainly not be accepted as plain accounts of real occurrences by many intelligent people if the events were represented as contemporary with our own times, can be accepted as accounts of matters of fact of that time (p. 40) or of any time. Here is the plain question: Can we believe, as these writings seem to affirm, that the natural order and connection of events which are universally accepted among educated people of our day were non-existent in those days or that this system, if it did exist in those days, was broken into from without for a special purpose, even if that purpose was the highest conceivable? The traditional apologetic answer to this latter question has been in the affirmative, but the answer by scientifically trained college men of today is as distinctly in the negative.

THE HISTORICITY OF THE GOSPELS AND MIRACLES: "They would certainly not be accepted as plain accounts of real occurrences by many — please note — INTELLIGENT people"! They would not be accepted as "accounts of matters of fact of that time, or of any time." One grows weary of this sort of thing, but here it is. Dr. Cross thinks it is difficult to believe what scripture seems to affirm "that the natural order and connection of events which are universally accepted among — please observe — EDUCATED PEOPLE of our day were non-existent in those days, or that this system, if it did exist in those days, was broken into from without for a special purpose. Cross is intolerant of the idea of divine intervention. "The traditional apologetic answer to this latter question has been in the affirmative, but the answer by scientifically trained college men of to-day is distinctly in the negative". Here it is again: "Scientifically trained college men"! Among whom we have found some of the greatest duffers we have ever known.

p. 44—*Re New Testament*: "What the Gospels and other New Testament writings disclose to us is the impression which the career of Jesus made upon the minds of men at the time of the writing and before."

All the gospels give us is "the impression" made upon men of New Testament times by "the career of Jesus"!

p. 45—*Re Facts and the writers of the New Testament*: "Not only so, but even if we could settle upon a reliable record of the observable external facts of which New Testament records are a representation, it is by no means certain that much would be gained thereby for our religious

purposes." . . . When this point in our reflection on the genius of the Christian faith is reached, it becomes evident (p. 46) that we are confronted at the outset with the demand that we undertake a critical estimate of the worth of what is found in the New Testament."

We are confronted with the demand that we undertake "a critical estimate of the worth of what is found in the New Testament." Even if the New Testament is true and could be proved to be so "it is by no means certain that much would be gained thereby for our religious purposes."

Who is competent to form such an estimate? What do these purblind men know about the things of God? But we suppose that would be Dr. Cross' idea of his particular duty: to get his students to form a critical estimate of the worth of the gospel. What sort of preachers would they then be?

p. 49—"It may be that what we call the Christian religion is just the native inner power of the human spirit coming into action in a distinctive way. It may be that the coming of Jesus among men released hidden energies of their spirits and that their action is so constantly creative that, so to say, the Christianity of today will be less than true Christianity tomorrow."

(Here Christianity is conceived as being merely a natural process).

What we call "the Christian religion" is just "the native inner power of the human spirit". In other words it is mere humanism. Here is the grossest idolatry. It matters little whether the idol be an objective figure of wood, or stone or silver, or gold, or whether it be merely an image of the mind — a mere idea. The Word of God complains, "These men have set up their idols in their heart"; and of the mental as of the material idol it is equally true their votaries become like unto them.

(To Be Continued)

Not a "Glimpse" But a "Full Look"

"Have you a glimpse of Christ now that you are dying?" was the question asked of an old Scottish saint, who, raising himself, made the emphatic reply, "I'll none o' your glimpses now that I am dying, since that I have had a full look at Christ these forty years gane."

A SIX-MONTHS' STORY CONTINUED IN THIS ISSUE

The story of **THE GREAT CONTENTION FOR THE FAITH** by Bible-believing Baptists of Canada, which began in the front-page article of Nov. 20, will continue in instalments week by week for probably four to six months.

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