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# MISSION MESSENGER

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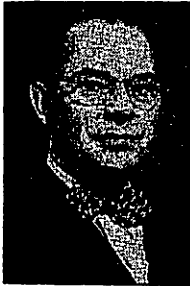
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NUMBER 3

## BACK TO THE BIBLE

RADIO SERMON BY THE EDITOR

The Churches of Christ are today engaged in a great restoration movement, a sincere effort to restore to this earth the pure and simple worship and work of the church as given us by Christ and set up by the apostles. We are not interested with reforming some particular church, but we desire to return to this earth, as it was in the beginning, the One Body, the church for which Jesus died. We enlist in this great effort all those of our listeners who are tired of the sectarian fighting and schism that exists on this earth today. We invite your investigation of our hopes, aims and plea!



You are interested naturally in what the results would be if the restoration movement of which we speak should be successful. Let us consider a few of the things which would be achieved if all of us would abandon our sectarian names, creeds and doctrines and all unite on the Bible as our only rule of faith and practice.

There are a great many small towns and villages where there are three or four churches. These spend their time fighting each other instead of overcoming the sin and degradation that is about them. The forces of righteousness are weakened by the attempts of those who profess to be children of God. Now if all would cease their divisive actions and come back to the Bible and the Bible alone and be guided thereby, we would eliminate all of the ill-feeling, hate and malice engendered by religious division in the past. There could be one church in the community serving its every need, looking after the temporal welfare of its members, and preaching the gospel to save the souls of all who would come and hear.

We are not divided over the things which the Bible teaches. We are divided over the things which it does not teach. Let us drop those things and begin a sincere search for what God requires of us, then let us follow after those things earnestly, diligently and profitably. Let us rise above the littleness of sectarian tendencies and be ready to restore the truth as laid down by Jesus. The pattern he gave us for the church was not one for just a century but for every age of the world until He comes again.

Communities have been rent in twain in time past; hearts have been broken, homes divided and many lives ruined simply because of the unscriptural divisions which have been foisted upon the world in the name of religion. All of this could be eliminated. There would need to be just one church in any locality to serve its every spiritual requirement and to save the souls of the listeners—and the Bible teaches that there is but ONE which can do that. It is not a sectarian denomination. How true it is in these days that a community may be keeping up a dozen rival sects, and none of them be the one for which Jesus shed His blood. Let's go back to the New Testament church.

This will mean that there will be no humanly arranged divisions among those who love the Lord. All can be Christians and Christians only. There will be no distinctions such as clergy and laity. There will be no distinctions of a denominational nature. There will be no distinctions as to color or race but all men will find a welcome in the Body of the Lord. Jesus intended that there be but one fold, and we should strive to effect that intention. All of the Lord's sheep are to be in one common group, wearing the Lord's name and not tagged with some label which isn't even found in the Bible.

There will be no fences built by men to separate the flock into little divisions over this creed or that. We will not say to one man, "You are colored and even though you are one of God's children and our brother, you cannot be welcome at our Lord's Table." We will take away the "Jim Crow" laws which affect even religion and worship of a common Father at His throne. All of God's family can be one in heart, in worship and in work for the Master. All Christians can have a common heritage and a common service even as they all have but One Father which is in heaven. No one has a copyright to the title "Our Father" and the color of a man's skin does not denote his fitness or unfitness to enter heaven. In the church men should be judged on the basis of the color of their hearts toward God.

One of the greatest sins in this present day is the fact that so many want to serve God, but they go beyond that which is written. They may be baptized into Christ and then they are not satisfied to be just in Christ and in the church to which God adds them, but they must go and join themselves

to some other institution, and wear a sectarian title and preach a sectarian doctrine. If the New Testament church can be restored, men will be Christians—just Christians—not some special brand, blend or kind of a Christian, but just that with nothing else added, tacked on behind, glued on in front, or usurping the rights of the Word of the Lord.

The Church Jesus died for is big enough for every Christian, just big enough. There's no reason for anyone who wants to be a Christian being in any other religious body, and if one does want to be a Christian but goes into something else religiously, he will lose His rights as a Christian. It is evident that such rights exist only in Christ—in His Body! All other organizations of a religious nature than the One Body are absolutely unnecessary. God doesn't want them, for if He had he would have said so in His Holy Word. He neither mentioned them, hinted at or suggested them. Instead Jesus prayed for his disciples that "They all may be one as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they all may be one in us that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

God has placed salvation, and other spiritual blessings, in the One Body, the church which Jesus established. There isn't anything that you need to get to heaven which is peculiar to any denomination. The things that are peculiar to, and go to make, sectarian bodies are the things that you don't need in order to get to heaven. There is not a thing of a distinctive nature required to please God that cannot be found in the church of the New Testament. If any other religious body has anything that is necessary to please God it was borrowed from the New Testament church. All things that pertain to life and godliness you can find in the church of Christ. Anything which you do not find there, does not pertain to life and godliness and you will be as well or better off without it.

Much of our time and effort today is spent in building up little divisive institutions which sap the life, spiritual and otherwise out of the community and religious worship. Special drives must be put on for money to build church buildings for rival institutions both of which claim to be taking people to heaven, and neither of which may be referred to in the Bible, certainly not recognized as a vehicle of salvation. What a vast amount of time, money and effort could be saved if all men were united in a common purpose, and sought only to build each other up in the most holy faith; following after the things which make for

peace and things wherewith one must edify another:

What a vast force for moral good the church could be in the world if all who professed faith fought under one banner and as members of the same company, recognizing but one Captain, the Lord Jesus. The divided state of so-called Christendom is one of the greatest negative factors which we must combat in these trying days. Small wonder that men are turned to doubt and skepticism when they consider all of the various fighting, warring, jarring religious bodies in the world! Let's stop all of this senseless combat and go back to the Bible and the New Testament church.

Again we remind you that the churches of Christ sponsoring this program are interested, gravely, seriously, earnestly inter-

ested in restoring once more the New Testament church in all of its beauty and glory. We are not interested and refuse to become concerned with building up some human party upon a human creed. We plead that men turn their faces from Rome to Jerusalem and let us go back to the early church for our pattern and rule. There we find it as God gave it and as he wants it. Will you join with us in this noble effort? Will you go with us upon our return to that city from a spiritual standpoint?

We invite your investigation of our plea and will appreciate your interest in the task which lies ahead. Certainly it will demand the best that all of us can give. We pray that you may be one who will help in this task! May God grant us all grace to see and do the right thing.

## THAWING OUT THE DEEP FREEZE

By ROY LONEY

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer for Israel is that they might be saved" (Rom. 10: 1). In this passage we learn that Paul saw a great need and his heart was moved with a fervent desire to remedy the condition. He was a Jew by birth, and all the accumulated prejudices of 1500 years of Hebrew nationalism permeated the very sinews of his soul; so when Christianity arose he saw in it the greatest danger to Jewish carnal nationalistic hopes and he hated it! There certainly was nothing passive about that hatred! It erupted into volcanic fury that scattered the Jerusalem church far and wide. But, when the Lord whom he persecuted, appeared to him as a loving Redeemer on the Damascus road, his proud and haughty heart underwent a most astonishing change. Soon he was preaching the faith which he once destroyed with all the intensity of a thoroughly consecrated soul.



The sword of hatred was sheathed for the gospel of love that can bring universal peace and break down the wall of prejudice between Jew and Gentile, making both one in Christ. He no longer regarded the Jews as a "superior" race. He did not regard God as a mere tribal deity, but the father of all mankind. He became a religious internationalist by accepting Christ's call to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Still, he never forgot his own nation. He was like Moses, who while reared in the luxurious home of Pharaoh's daughter was concerned for the well-being of his own people, toiling in sweat and tears under the lash of cruel taskmasters. Paul saw his own people en-

slaved by their prejudices and carnal hopes, wandering farther and farther from God. His heart burned with an intense desire to save them. There was nothing passive about that desire either, for it led him into the gravest dangers at home and abroad. On his last trip to Jerusalem he was repeatedly warned of awaiting danger, but undauntedly declared: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself that I might finish my course with joy." He went to Jerusalem, to his beloved but misguided people, and nearly lost his life at their hands. He did not save his nation, but he did save many individuals in it from their sin and folly.

No one who loves the Lord can view with complacency the spiritual condition of the church today. Contentions and divisions work havoc and hinder the progress of the gospel. Brother fights with brother, congregations are rent asunder, and we have lived to see men emphasize division as if it were a cardinal virtue of the plan of God, regardless of the prayer of the suffering Savior that they all may be one. I truly believe that one of the greatest hindrances to peace and unity is the indisputable and horrifying fact that in most cases estranged brethren simply do not desire peace and unity! To them, those who are on the opposite side, must be forever regarded as the "untouchables" of a heathen religion. Where is there a Paul who will arise in tears and say, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer for spiritual Israel is that it may attain to that degree of peace and unity that is pleasing unto God."

In most places where divisions have occurred, each side will vociferously maintain that it is fighting for "purity" rather than peace, and anyone who presumes to question that position must hereafter be regarded as a spiritual outcast. I can and do

conceive of a purity that is most unacceptable unto God because it is not based on a sincere *desire* to save the impure among God's people. Paul knew his people were wrong, yet his desire for their salvation led him right into their midst to work and plead with them to turn back to God. If all who were alienated from each other in the church today would earnestly and actively seek to heal the wounds of war and repair the breaches in Zion's walls, we would see the dawning of a better day. With a strong desire for peace, the warmth and kindness of Christian love would soon dissipate the fogs of misunderstanding, and "we would know each other better when the mists have cleared away!"

The conditions of fellowship revealed in Christ's law are strict, it is true, but if a group of brethren do wrong, I see no need of going into a "deep freeze" as far as further contact with them is concerned. Even when they are disfellowshipped, the divine command is "Treat him not as an enemy but admonish him as a brother" (2 Thess. 3: 15). How can such an admonition be given if we shut ourselves atop a lofty "ivory tower" away from all contact with the erring ones? If they are as sinful as you claim, that is all the more reason why you should desire to save them. Such a situation might well be regarded as a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate our faith in the power of God's Word to accomplish His desires and purposes, and one of His greatest desires is "that they all may be one."

What will it avail us if we become eloquent in describing the malignity of sin, while we only stutter and stammer in our weak efforts to save the sinner? It is quite possible that the barren fig tree (Luke 13: 6-9) which the master of the vineyard regarded as but a cumberer of the ground, could be made fruitful through loving and tender care. The walls which separate brethren in Christ are built by man, not God, and the higher you build them, the less sun shines in your own yard, for high walls shut out sunshine. Let's tear them down and thereby benefit ourselves as well as the church. Our efforts in behalf of unity may not bring the result we desire, but one satisfying result *always* follows—such efforts bring peace and happiness to our own hearts, and draw us closer unto God!

A man visited a mental hospital and

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Dedicated to the task of arousing churches in this state and elsewhere to a greater zeal in mission work, and assist in developing the talents of all to be used to the glory of God.

noted but a few guards among hundreds of lunatics. He remarked to the guide: "If these lunatics would combine they could easily overthrow the few guards." The guide replied, "Lunatics never combine!" Are we, the Lord's people, so mentally de-

ficient spiritually, that we cannot combine into one glorious army of invincible power to fight the devil? Must we forever waste our strength in fighting among ourselves? *Shall the sword devour forever?* Let us seek peace and ensue it.

manner, he outlined the Scripture teaching—that only those who believed, repented, and were immersed had the right to partake. It was just what I would have heard in my home congregation!

### 3. A Disappointment

This experience led me to hope that such statements before the Supper were common. I was keenly disappointed to discover that this was not so. Only on a few occasions did I hear similar statements when the disciples met to break bread. None put it better than Brother Smith, elder, at Sullivan, Illinois. I believe I told him after the service that any non-member present must understand he could not partake after the definite but inoffensive way in which Brother Smith indicated to whom this ordinance was delivered. But in many churches little or nothing was said. Sometimes we were told that the feast was "for the Lord's people"—but is this adequate? Would a "pious unimmersed" person have any qualms about partaking after a statement like that? It is pointless to say that the Breaking of Bread is for the Lord's people unless all those present correctly understand who the Lord's people are! Ours is the responsibility for making sure that people know whether they have the right to partake or not.

I spoke to many brethren who were awake to the need for more teaching on this matter. Some admitted that too often it had been taken for granted that everyone knew who should partake. I urge all to give careful consideration to this matter. If by unconcern or carelessness we allow the unimmersed to break bread we destroy the force of the gospel appeal to the unsaved. Why preach baptism for the remission of sins if the unbaptized can have the blessings of the Christian life without it?

### 4. A Method

In this land the brother in charge of the Table almost invariably tells the people present who may scripturally partake. Usually too, members bringing friends tell them beforehand what to expect. In addition, some churches have doorkeepers, who welcome all comers as they enter the meeting-house. They discreetly enquire as to the identity of strangers. If the visitors are members of the Body information is passed to the brother in charge and he welcomes them on behalf of the church. If not, they are kindly informed of our position with regard to the Lord's Table. Some have suggested that this latter course might drive people away from the services. This is not our experience. Frequently it leads to useful (and fruitful) discussion. Incidentally, I have been devoting my life to gospel preaching for some twelve years. During that time I have never known or heard of a single instance of an unimmersed person breaking bread in a faithful Church of Christ here. Nor do I recall any who were offended because of this.

## "AS OTHERS SEE YOU"

By ALBERT E. WINSTANLEY

"What is your outstanding impression of the churches in America?" This question has been asked many times since my return to Britain. As I look back over those crowded months impressions galore crowd in on my mind. Outstanding in my book of memories is the "fellowship of kindred minds." Next comes the overwhelming hospitality of Christian homes, and third the wonderful



### I. Congregational Singing

Brethren, I commend you on the excellence of your song service. It was a delight to us.

Of course, there were exceptions—but the general level of singing was grand. This is as it should be. We oppose instrumental music in worship—but this is no excuse for poor singing! Unaccompanied singing in worship is not only *the right way—it's the best way too!* This was proved at the three day meeting in Speedway City, at Hammond's Labor Day services, and in many another place. On these occasions we felt like saying with Burns: ". . . compared w' these, Italian trills are tame. . ." The sweetest music heaven can hear is that offered when God's people sing His praises with all their heart.

Two things are immediately apparent in your congregational singing:

#### 1. Songbooks

A brother in Saint Louis questioned me about our "song books." Well, *We don't have any!—we use "hymn books!"* I had one with me and handed it to him. "Why," he said in amazement, "this is just like a book of poems!" He was right, too. Our hymn book contains 1036 hymns—and not a note of music! We sing the tunes from memory. Choice of tunes usually depends upon the one leading the singing. In your "song books" you have the music before you, and consequently more brethren sing their respective parts. A new hymn book is in preparation for use by the churches here. It will contain about five hundred hymns—both words and music. The brethren who are compiling this book are carefully reading and studying hundreds of hymns to guarantee a selection of scriptural songs.

#### 2. Song Leaders

We don't have any "song leaders" here either! We have "*precentors.*" I know only two loyal churches in this country where the precentor faces the congregation. Elsewhere he sits anywhere among the brethren. When a hymn is announced everyone stands and the precentor leads the tune. When you recognize it you join in. If you don't—you don't! Seriously though, this is not so difficult as it may sound. Most hymns become "wedded" to particular tunes, and members grow familiar with the range of tunes used in their home congregations. It seemed strange to us at first, to see the precentor (pardon me—song leader!) standing out in front keeping the assembly in time—or trying to!

Though so much was so different from what we knew, your singing was an inspiration to us. We shall never forget the way you sang the songs of Zion.

Last month I promised to say more about

### II. Close Communion

Please remember what I pointed out in my last article. This phrase (an unscriptural one, too) is often used in your country to mean something very different from what it means to us. Used of the practice of churches here it means simply that *the Lord's Supper is only for immersed believers.* That is obviously taught in Acts 2: 41-42. The Lord's Table is inside the Lord's house (the Church) on the Lord's Day, *for the Lord's people alone.*

#### 1. A Clear Statement

"No one but a baptized believer in good standing has the right to participate in the Lord's Supper." So said E. M. Zerr during the "Open Forum" at Speedway City on Sunday, July 3, 1949. He stated simply and accurately a New Testament truth. This is the "close communion" in which Churches of Christ in Britain believe.

#### 2. A Pleasant Surprise

My first Lord's Day in America was spent at Hartford, Illinois. What a wonderful day it was—though the heat was almost unbearable. During the morning service we couldn't help noticing how many things were different. But there was a surprise in store for us. Clarence Grover was in charge of the Supper. He spoke for a few minutes before thanks was given. How my heart warmed to his words! Plainly, but in kindly

## What Does That Mean? . . . by E. M. ZERR

### 1 Thessalonians 4: 16

The part of this passage that is misunderstood is the phrase "rise first." It is commonly interpreted to mean the same as "first resurrection" in Revelation 20: 5. Regardless of what may be said on the last reference, the verse at the heading of this article has nothing to do with it. The idea of a "first resurrection" in the sense of numerical order is foreign to the Bible. There is to be no second literal resurrection, hence there could be no reason for talking about the first. All of the scriptures on the subject of the literal resurrection of the body teach that only one will occur and that all classes of men will be raised from the dead at that time. "The hour is coming in which ALL that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth" (John 5: 28, 29). No matter how much figurative sense we give to "hour," the truth remains that it applies alike to both good and evil, and that all will be brought out of their graves as one event.

In the text of our heading Paul was not writing about the unrighteous dead at all,



but only of the "dead in Christ" and of those in Christ who will be "alive and remain." This last phrase means the same as 1 Corinthians 15: 51 and 1 Thessalonians 5: 10. When Jesus comes there will be faithful servants of Christ living on the earth. They will be in their fleshly bodies and hence not in the form that can enter heaven, although their true service will entitle them to such a place. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15: 50 that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. We know this means the everlasting kingdom after this world has passed, since men in the flesh do enter the kingdom on earth. These living Christians, then, must be changed "in a moment" from a fleshly to a spiritual body to be fit for the everlasting kingdom. But the Lord wishes to have all the faithful ascend in a body ("together"), hence the living in Christ must wait until the "dead in Christ" are raised with immortal bodies. It is this waiting for the resurrection of the righteous dead that is meant by the heading text. The idea of "first" as a reference to the numerical order of the resurrection is not in the text. Thayer defines this word "first" with the phrase "before anything else is done," and that explains why the living saints will not "prevent" (go before) the dead in Christ.

obey wickedness, there will be wrath and fury; tribulation and distress." (Revised Standard rendering.) In 1 Corinthians 15: 50-54 these two original words are rendered "incorruption" three times and "immortality" twice. That Paul is referring only to the resurrection of the righteous is evident from his concluding statements, "Death is swallowed up in *victory*," and that this victory comes through our Lord Jesus Christ. This entire chapter considers only the resurrection of the righteous. (Notice verses 18, 20 and 24.)

It is not uncommon for New Testament writers when referring to "the resurrection of the dead" to apply only to the righteous. Christ says (Luke 20: 35-38), "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead . . . are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." While those living under the law had a hazy and uncertain idea of the resurrection as contrasted with those of the gospel age, yet they labored "that they might obtain a *better* resurrection" (Heb. 11: 35). It was the resurrection of the righteous that Paul had in mind when he mentioned living so that "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3: 11). The resurrection to immortality that Paul sought was that his "vile body may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3: 21 and 1 Cor. 15: 49).

One meaning of "immortality" is, "not subject to death." Death is separation. Of the wicked it is said, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20: 14-15). "Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9: 44). This is existence, but in separation "from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1: 9), which is in sharp contrast to the happy existence in purity that shall be the lot of the righteous described in the next verse, "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." "And so shall we (the righteous) ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4: 17).

Yes, the wicked will be resurrected, but not to immortality, "For all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and those that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5: 28-29 and Dan. 12: 2). Immortality is an attribute of God and belongs solely to Him. "Who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6: 13-16; 1: 17). That is, immortality is essentially and inherently God's and has been given to the Son (John 5: 26) and will be given to all those that are obedient to His will. (See 1 John 5: 11; 2 Tim. 4: 8.)

## WILL THE WICKED POSSESS IMMORTALITY?

By L. C. ROBERTS

Immortality is usually considered as synonymous with everlasting existence; but do the scriptures confirm this idea? There are two Greek words that appear eleven times in the New Testament that are rendered: "immortality" 5 times, "incorruption" 4 times, and "sincerity" 2 times. These two words are used to refer to the future state of man, and translators render either word by "immortality" or "incorruption." A combined definition based on the lexicons might be given as, "deathlessness,



incorruption, perpetuity, purity." This definition suggests that "immortality" is: perpetual existence in purity, not subject to death or corruption.

Let us examine some of these passages. 2 Timothy 1: 10 declares, "Life and immortality has been brought to light through the gospel." "Life," here refers to eternal life and teaches that eternal life and immortality can be obtained only by obedience to the gospel. These are not only a result of obedience to the gospel of Christ, but they must be sought. "To those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life" (Rom. 2: 7). The wicked do not seek for these, and verses 8 and 9 state, "But for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHARITY

By W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

One of the greatest constant threats to the church is institutionalism, which by its very nature "corrupts from the simplicity that is in Christ." There is no field of religious activity which has not felt its blighting touch in the past; none which is safe from it in the future. The work of the church may be classified as evangelistic, educational and charitable. The first of these has to do with gospel proclamation for the conversion of sinners; the second with their training and development into activated spiritual soldiers; the third with the relief of their physical needs and discomforts. For all of these the church was perfectly equipped by its Divine Founder. Anything which comes within the realm of spiritual responsibility can be done in, by and through the church. Whether it be the conversion of sinners or the sanctification of saints, all that God wants done may be done by the church. If done acceptably to Him it must be done that way. If it cannot be done that way, it is something which He does not want done.

In spite of all this, men have established other organizations to carry out the evangelistic responsibility of the church. Whether supported by money from the church treasury, or by money withheld from it and given individually, we have concluded that a missionary society is wrong. It has no right to exist. Nevertheless, our digressive brethren do not concern themselves with this feature. They spend their time and energies in seeking means and methods of support for that which has no scriptural right of existence. They brand as "antis" and "hobbyists" those who lift up their voices in protest against the organization as an innovation.

This is a characteristic of all extra-institutionalism. After it is inaugurated and like a leech begins to feed upon the financial prosperity of God's people, those who are guilty of foisting it upon the brotherhood, shut their hearts against any further investigation as to whether this humanism has any inherent right to exist, but concern themselves wholly with the question of how it can be perpetuated. If the voice of one crying in the wilderness is lifted up in protest, it is silenced by that age-old stigma of prejudice, "He is an anti," or "He is a hobbyist." The uninformed take up the chant and stop their ears. This is not the way of TRUTH, which ever welcomes investigation and re-examination.

What has been said about missionary societies to make disciples, can also be affirmed of educational societies (parochial schools) to train disciples, and aid societies (organized chartered homes) to relieve the needs of disciples and others. A few months ago when a considerable controversy was being waged in the pages of *Firm Founda-*

*tion*, I wrote a personal letter to the editor. I pointed out that there were really three sides to the question about Bible colleges. They were questioning whether the human organization should be supported by the church, or by individual Christians. I questioned the right of the organization to exist in the first place. I enclosed a brief article in which I suggested that if one had an animal tied up to his house, and that animal was the type that might wreck the house, he should not spend his time arguing whether his wife should feed it from food placed upon the table, or whether the children should feed it with food filched from the pantry. Why not just get rid of the thing altogether, and thus stop the fuss and make everybody happy? I never heard from my article. Apparently you dare not question the right of anything to exist which some of "our greatest minds" in the brotherhood have devised.

I do not expect that what I say herein will be given any serious consideration by our brethren who are enthusiasts for auxiliary institutions. I am not a graduate of one of "our" schools, my college work having been done in one of the "infidel" state schools where practically all of the teachers of "our schools" go to get their special degrees. I am branded a "Sommerite" (whatever that is) and I am an "anti." The truth is that I am called the same names by our new digressive brethren which they in turn are called by the "Old Digressives." But I have earnestly prayed over the condition of spiritual Zion ever since I left the Lutheran church, and I cannot but lift up my voice, feeble though it may appear amidst the clamor and din of the "big business" in the church, and protest what I sincerely believe will result in another apostasy. I write these things charitably, with no malice against any person, not even those who have heaped opprobrium upon my name because of my stand. My words are carefully weighed for I must meet them before the eternal bar of justice.

## Orphan Home Organizations

Because our opposition to orphan home organizations set up by members of the church is most difficult for the average brother to understand, I set forth thereon my convictions in this first article which is the forerunner of others scheduled for this year. I believe it is the duty of every child of God to relieve the needs of others less fortunate than himself. It is not enough to heed the age-old injunction "Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child" (Exodus 22: 22). That is negative, but positive action is also required. "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. 1: 17). These great humanitarian principles

of the Old Covenant are likewise binding under the New Economy, where "Pure and undefiled religion . . . is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" (James 1: 27). No one can be a Christian who closes his ears, heart, or pocketbook against the needy. The observance of formal rites of public worship services becomes an abomination unto God upon the part of those who forget that He has said, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

I do *not* oppose caring for orphans. To do so would be ridiculous and absurd for any professed Christian. Yet, no charge is more commonly made against us by advocates of organized homes. Missionary society promoters charge that we do not believe in mission work if we do not endorse the human society. Bible college apologists charge that we do not believe in education because we cannot, from a heart filled with conviction, endorse their human society. Must one endorse every human organization originated by man's ingenuity in order to believe in the Lord's work? Has it come to pass that we cannot believe in preaching the Word, developing Christians, and caring for the needy, through the One Body? Was the early church faithful when it spread the gospel, trained men for Christian service and cared for the destitute without special institutions with presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, superintendents, matrons and a dozen other humanly-ordained officers? If so, can we not be faithful today on the same basis?

## Our Responsibility to the Needy

The church is not directly responsible for relieving all the needy of the world. This is admitted by those who support orphan home organizations. If they argue otherwise, they certainly are not living up to their responsibility, nor could they do so. Responsibility is limited by the "ability to respond" and the church does not have the ability to relieve all the suffering on earth. And though it may bring about angry denial, I affirm that the relief of bodily needs is not the prime purpose of the church at all. It is secondary and an outgrowth of the principles involved in the fundamental reason for the existence of the church.

The church is first and foremost a spiritual institution, and its major task is the saving of souls. The tenor of the New Testament which is its charter is in favor of this. When the first conflict arose in the church over the care of the destitute, the apostles told the entire congregation "It is not desirable that we should give up preaching the Word of God to distribute food. . . . Pick out seven men of good standing . . . and we will put them in charge of this matter, while we devote ourselves to prayer and to delivering the message" (Acts 6: 2-4). Wielding the sword of the Spirit was more important than handling a carving knife; breaking the bread of life took precedence over the baking of biscuits.

When the apostles at Jerusalem saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was entrusted to Paul they gave to him and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship that they should take that gospel to the heathen. Paul says "Only they would that we remember the poor, the same which I was forward to do" (Gal. 2: 10). Roy E. Cogdill, in *Gospel Guardian*, January 5, 1950, page 2, writes, "It must be obvious that the very nature of this 'work of ministering' subordinates it to the preaching of the gospel and the saving of the souls of men. This work of ministering has to do with physical necessities and physical sufferings; preaching the gospel has to do with eternal salvation and the forgiveness of sins." I agree!

Our charity toward others is a necessary by-product of our relationship to Christ. "We know what love means from the fact that he laid down his life for us; so we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if someone who is rich sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how can he have any love for God in his heart?" (1 John 3: 16, 17). The full and complete surrender to Christ crucifies the old man of sin. A changed character with a different attitude toward others is the result. Selfishness is put to death, and self-denial takes its place. The indwelling Spirit assists us to produce the fruits of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness," etc. (Gal. 5: 22). Every department of life, every relationship, is affected by this alteration of attitude. We must manifest it by "love in deed and in truth" (1 John 3: 18). We "love one another, for love comes from God, and everyone who loves is a child of God, and knows God" (1 John 4: 7). The primary purpose of the church is to declare the truth which makes men free. The acceptance of that truth frees men from selfishness, and all who accept are thus bound together in a common brotherhood. Out of this relationship stems a secondary obligation as a very part of the transformed life, a willingness to share cheerfully with others less fortunate, as opportunity affords. "So then whenever we have an opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially to those who belong to the family of the faith" (Gal. 6: 10).

The charitable obligation of the Christian begins at home in his care for distressed relatives. "Whoever fails to provide for his own relatives, and particularly for members of his own family, has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Tim. 5: 8). While this was written specifically with regard to widows we are certain that it applies in principle to the fatherless also. If my brother dies and leaves his little children, it is my duty to the extent of ability to provide for them and their widowed mother. If I refuse to do this I have denied the faith! My other relatives who are Christians are obligated to the extent of their ability as well. By such means the

mother and children can generally be kept together as they should be.

Nothing is more clearly taught than the doctrine that dependent Christians who have living relatives should be cared for by those relatives. "If a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety in the treatment of their own families, and to return the care of those who brought them up, for that is what God approves" (1 Tim. 5: 4). If that is what God approves, it is evident that many dependents today are being taken care of in a way which He does not approve.

What is the positive obligation of the church toward the needy? It is expressed by the term "Look after widows who are really dependent." The term "really dependent" is the opposite of a condition expressed by "has children or grandchildren." Does this imply that a Christian brother or sister with dependent relatives should not expect the church to care for them? "If any man or woman that believeth hath widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" i. e., "really dependent, or without living relatives." What should be the attitude of the elders toward a man in their congregation who refused or neglected to assist needy relatives to extent of his ability? They certainly should go to him and exhort and admonish him to do his duty. If he refuses after due admonition, he should be excluded from the fellowship as a disorderly member. Would it be right to retain in our fellowship one who has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel?

The expression "that it (the church) may relieve them that are widows indeed" shows that the congregation has an obligation to care for widowed saints. This obligation also must extend to include the destitute or bereft children of the saints. That the early church, as such, did relieve the needy widows is attested in Acts 6: 1-3. But there is no intimation that organizations asking for state charters, subject to state inspection, or governed by boards of trustees, were set up. Instead it would appear that "the tables were served" by the church without an extra organization.

It is not too far-fetched to state that there is no intimation that the apostles created a "Jerusalem Christian Home for the Aged." Stephen was not president, Philip was not treasurer, nor were Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas a board of trustees for such an institution. There is no indication of the elders at Jerusalem making application to Caesar for a charter to perpetuate such an organization under the board of trustees and their successors in office. We do not read of Governor Pontius Pilate making a special visit and giving a commendatory political harangue, nor is there an inference that Santa Claus visited the organization to cheer the inmates on Christmas. No trucks made the rounds to

gather up materials from members and non-members alike. There were apparently no "Fifth Sunday Drives."

Of the early church, Alexander Campbell said, "In their church capacity alone they moved. They neither transformed themselves into any other kind of association, nor did they fracture and sever themselves into divers societies. They viewed the church of Jesus Christ as the scheme of heaven to ameliorate the world; as members of it, they considered themselves bound to do all they could for the glory of God and the good of men." This witness is true!

### *Justification for Other Organizations*

Upon what grounds do our brethren seek to justify such organizations as orphan homes established by Christians? The reasoning generally given is based upon James 1: 27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." It is suggested that the word "visit" is a generic command, and since the method is not specified, that is left up to us, and we have decided upon the organized home as the method.

This is identical with the reasoning of the missionary society apologist. He reads the command, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature," and says, "The word 'go' is a generic term, but no method is specified, so the mode of doing it is left up to us, and we've chosen the missionary society as the best way to accomplish it." It is true that anyone who can find a human organization in the word "visit" in James 1: 27 can also find one in the word "Go" in Mark 16: 15. That kind of reasoning will justify the missionary society as well as the orphan home, which is merely a relief society. But is there justification for another organization in James 1: 27?

Does not the context show that James is talking about an individual Christian and not an organization? Let us notice, beginning with verse 25. "But whoso [individual—not organization] looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he [individual] being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man [not organization] shall be blessed in his [individual] deed. If any man [not organization] among you seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his [individual] tongue, but deceiveth his [individual] own heart, this man's [not organization's] religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself [individual] unspotted from the world." Since pure religion consists of a dual responsibility, if a man can hire someone to take care of the needy for him, why could he not hire someone to keep unspotted from the world for him?

The two-fold obligation is expressed by the terms "to visit" and "to keep." Is it not

true that the term "himself" shows the subject of the action in both cases? Is the one who is to keep himself unspotted, the same as the one who is to visit the fatherless and widows? If so, does not the word "himself" show it is a personal and individual duty? If the first responsibility can be shifted to another, cannot the second as well? Does the orphan home provide a scriptural way of fulfilling the command "to visit"?

The word "visit" is from *episkeptomai*, which is defined by Thayer, "to look upon, or after, to inspect, examine with the eyes." With regard to this passage under consideration, he says "in order to see how he is, i. e., to visit, go to see one." Green's Lexicon says, "To visit for the purpose of comfort and relief." It is apparent from the very nature of the definition that the term "visit" implies personal inspection or examination to determine needs of the afflicted, by the one who practices "pure and undefiled religion." It is used in Matthew 25: 36, by the Lord, who says to the righteous, "I was sick and ye visited me," and again in verse 43, when he says to the wicked, "I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me not." Could these last have been justified by pleading, "True, Lord, I never visited a sick person nor an imprisoned one personally during my whole life, but we paid a minister to do that for us." Would this have fulfilled the requirement?

In Acts 7: 23, it is said of Moses, "When he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel." That this was a personal inspection of their needs with a view to relieving them is found in the fact that Moses relieved one of his brethren from oppression by killing the oppressor. Again, "Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord and see how they do" (Acts 15: 36). Here was a personal examination to determine conditions. In each of these instances the word "visit" is the same as in James 1: 27.

That the orphan home organization does not fulfill the requirement of James 1: 27, but may actually militate against the spirit of it, is brought out in this quotation from W. A. Ethridge in *Apostolic Times*, Nashville, Tennessee, May, 1936, page 6: ". . . Is the Orphan Home God's way or man's way? Do you believe that God would tell you to do a certain thing and not tell you how to do it? There are preachers in the Church of Christ who say that; and they are Bible College adherents, too. Do you believe in a God of that kind? 'Visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions' (James 1: 27). How many visit the Orphan Home? Ninety-five per cent never go about them; the other five per cent go maybe once or twice in a lifetime, more through curiosity than anything else. They give a paper of pins, a few spools of thread, some paper napkins, some old clothes and shoes, and some congrega-

tion will give five or ten dollars; all at the general round-up once a year, and exult in the self-satisfaction of having done their duty. And they call that visiting the fatherless. You know these things are true."

### God's Plan for the Needy

Recently a brother who believes in human organizations to care for those in need declared that nowhere in God's Word is there the slightest intimation as to how or where the command to visit the fatherless and widows should be carried out. This statement was unthought and incorrect. In the Old Testament, God declared that pure religion consisted of bringing the afflicted into one's own house. Contrasting the formal fasting as a program of ritual, with the true spirit of his law, he asks, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? . . . Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?" (Isa. 58: 6, 7). The marginal reading for "cast out" is *afflicted*. So the afflicted poor were not to be sent to a home, but *brought* to thy house. This agrees with God's design for the needy, for we read, "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families" (Psa. 68: 5, 6).

In the New Testament we have an example of how a bereft mother was taken care of. Jesus was especially interested in this case, for he made provision for it on the cross, when he said, concerning his own mother, to John, "Behold thy mother!" The record says, "And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (John 19: 27). The answer of W. L. Totty to this when it was introduced in debate was "No one can prove that Mary was a widow!" Then, if Joseph was still living, Jesus either made arrangements to separate his parents (Luke 2: 41), or else John took them both. Surely the first is unthinkable, and if the other be true, it would prove that John took two older persons rather than one into his family circle. In view of the fact that Joseph is not mentioned in connection with the closing scenes of Jesus' earthly life, is it not reasonable to suppose that he was deceased? But why quibble? A son in his final moments requested his beloved disciple to adopt his mother. The disciple did so, and took her into his own home. We have Biblical precedent for the care of the suffering needy in what soon became a "Christian" home.

There are two organizations which God has established to carry out his work with regard to charity. These are the individual home and the church. Being of the same author, they should work together in absolute harmony. Both are mentioned in a chapter which specifically deals with caring for the needy—1 Timothy 5. In verse 4 the "home" (household or family circle) is mentioned; in verse 16 "the church" is referred to. The context shows that these two

institutions are empowered by heaven's fiat to relieve the destitute. There is no other organization scripturally authorized to do so, insofar as Christians are concerned.

It will be asked if the church may not do this in any way that it sees fit? Not any more so than it can preach the gospel anyway it sees fit. Every command is both inclusive and exclusive. What is included in the command to visit the fatherless? My reply is that it includes *everything necessary* to the fulfillment of the command, and *anything helpful* which does not violate another scripture, nor go contrary to the general tenor of the New Covenant as a whole. Then what is excluded by the command? Whatever else may be, certainly a human organization established by members of the church to do the Lord's work is excluded. If it is not, then we may as well cease to oppose extra organizations altogether. The Bible declares "There is one body" (Eph. 4: 4). We believe that body is capable of doing all that God wants done in our relationship to Him.

Is an organized orphans home another body? The Tipton Orphans' Home is, for immediately under its name is the word "Incorporated." That word is from the Latin *corpus* which means "a body." Thus the disciples who started that home formed another body to do the Lord's work, unless that home is the church at Tipton. Is it? To answer that question, let us present some queries from G. C. Brewer, as found in *Gospel Advocate*, October 13, 1949, page 645:

"1. Is it true that the institutions at Wichita, Kans., at Tipton, Okla., and at San Benito, Texas, are nothing more than the church at these points? If the institution is the church, then why was it chartered? Why is it subject to state inspection?"

"2. Do elders of the church, by virtue of their appointment, become members of such a board without any further legislating, designating, or recording? If so, of how many other, and what other institutions do elders become rulers of by virtue of their appointment to the eldership? Could it be possible that elders may be governors of their state and don't know it?"

"3. If elders, by virtue of their appointment as elders, constitute a board of such institutions, are all elders of all churches also members of boards governing something that is chartered and named and organized and advertised? If not, why not?"

"4. Do these institutions have such officials, or such appointed servants, as 'superintendents,' 'matrons,' 'nurses,' 'cooks,' 'teachers,' 'dairymen' and such like? If they do not have persons occupying such positions, how are they operated, and why do we read of a 'new superintendent'?"

"5. Does 'the New Testament church' or 'a New Testament church' contain such officers as 'superintendents,' 'matrons,' 'nurses,' 'cooks,' etc.? If so, is any church scriptural that does not have all these?"

These are sufficient to show that the orphans' home is not the church. It is an institution tied to the church, but it is a human institution established to do the work of the church. Brother Brewer is in favor of colleges and orphans' homes, and of supporting them from the church treasuries. He is a "Doctor" but it is our prediction that his article in the *Gospel Advocate* will make his "patient" sicker than ever, and no doubt there will be a clamor for a new doctor. He says with regard to his reasoning, "If this contention is wrong, let somebody show wherein it is wrong, and when he does so, he will have to take the Ketcherside position and oppose such work done by a local church or done by Christians in general. There is no middle ground; at least, according to our view this is true." It is our belief that what the "Doctor" calls the Ketcherside position might also be referred to as "The Apostle Paul position." The idea of doing the work of the church through the one body was not original with Ketcherside, and I shall have to disclaim any credit for its origin, seeing that the Holy Spirit anticipated me by some 1900 years.

#### Why Have These Organizations?

There must be some reason for these institutions existing. What reasons can justify their continuance. Let us ask a few questions, and permit them to be answered by those who are familiar with the organizations. They are best qualified to know why the homes should exist, and it is fair to hear from them.

1. Is the chartered orphans' home the best way to care for the children? G. W. Butler, in *Tipton Orphans' Home Messenger*, December, 1936, page 2, says, "It is true we cannot furnish all the elements that must be present to make a home the 'HOME' a real father and mother could make it, but as foster parents, we try to provide them with food, shelter, clothing and above all else, prepare them for service in the Kingdom of the Lord. We know this is a pitiful excuse for 'home' at the best, but we strive to make it as near the ideal as we possibly can." It may be remarked that God's plan provides for the ideal of home life. No institution can duplicate it.

2. Is institutionalism as beneficial as family influence? John L. Fry, president of Tennessee Orphans' Home, *Gospel Advocate*, June 7, 1928, page 542, says, "We realize that the best treatment any institution gives to children does not benefit the child to the extent it is benefited in a good Christian family home. . . . It is best for the child to go into a good foster home rather than stay too great a length of time in an institution, it matters not how well conducted."

3. Have these institutions been established as a visible demonstration of the spirit of Christ? W. A. Ethridge, in *Apostolic Times*, May, 1936, page 8, says, "If

Christ had a home here on earth today, would he refuse to take an orphan child into his home and care for it? Would he, really? Did he tell his disciples to refuse them? Is such a thing mentioned, spoken of, authorized or even remotely hinted at in the word of God or by the word of God? My dear brother, you know, and you know that I know that you know, the reason that people endorse the orphan home is because they do not want an outside child to come into their home and live with them. That is the whole truth. Is that the spirit of Christ?"

4. Is the institutional method the cheapest way of getting the job done? Raymond Copening, writing in *Firm Foundation*, January 10, 1950, page 5, says, "I believe our orphan homes have developed into just plain rackets, yes, I believe the church is spending \$100 to buy fine cars, nice homes, too fine clothes for the employees (superintendent on down), where \$1.00 really gets to the orphan. In other words, I believe 99 per cent of each dollar contributed to the orphan homes is used wrong. You know and I know that Christians should not try to profit from the Lord's work. Now, I am not against orphan homes. I have always encouraged the congregations that I have preached for to contribute to them. But they are just second best. Best would be the godly way, each Christian family that can at all, adopt an orphan. If the family needs help to support the child, let the congregation help, and watch the development of the child, both spiritually and physically. . . . Yes, the orphan homes have become a racket. The superintendent doesn't want to adopt one of those children out, he might lose his fat salary." (The editor of *Firm Foundation* says, "Brother Copening is a good man and undoubtedly the friend of these homes, and for this reason is entitled to be heard.")

Orphan home advocates have always contended that these organizations were living testimonials of their devotion to the spirit of Jesus Christ. They have ridiculed, sneered at and laughed those of us to scorn, who have refused to lend our influence to the establishment of such institutions. Now it appears that the very friends of the homes are forced to admit that they are not the best way, not the most beneficial to the subjects of charity, and not the godly way. It would appear that the homes, instead of being an outgrowth of deep devotion to God, are the escape mechanisms which have been devised by men to salve over the consciences of those who know they must visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and yet are too selfish or unconcerned "to want an outside child to come into their home and live with them."

#### What Are We Doing?

The ultimate question put to us who oppose the institutionalism about which we write is always, "What are you doing about the orphans?" It is sometimes put with a

scornful smirk of countenance or a sneer! I happen to be a member of a place where there are six elders. One of them has an aged relative in his small home and is rearing an orphan; another has two orphan children who are being raised in the faith; three others have fulfilled the requirement of 1 Timothy 5: 4 by taking aged relatives into their own homes. There is nothing about this which is a source of boasting. In addition to the bishops of the church there are several others who have orphans in their homes. I have personally travelled many miles and written many letters to assist ten homes to secure orphan children in the past two years. But we are not doing enough, by any means! We have failed to set forth God's system as fully as we ought. Too many times, brethren have merely opposed what we believe is the wrong way of doing the thing, without doing anything positive about it. We admit freely that we fall below the expectations of our God upon this matter.

It makes no difference how much one does to assist in carrying out the program of God, the advocate of other institutions will say, "Yes, but what about your own home? How many orphans have you reared?" It is our conviction that we are obligated to care for the destitute of the saints. To the best of our ability we are doing that. Our position does not force us to conclude that every individual Christian home, or every house, *must* have an orphan in it, in order to fulfill the Scriptures. This was not true in apostolic times when God's plan was under the immediate guidance of these inspired men. Often the worst thing that could be done would be to break up a home, by taking the fatherless children away from their mother. It has ever been our plan to try and keep them together. Sometimes we have failed in this. Often congregations have failed to do their duty.

But suppose that not a single orphan child was taken into the home of a one of us who oppose institutionalism? Would that make another organization justifiable? It certainly would bring about our damnation for such a condition to exist but would it justify the setting up of human organizations to do God's work? The missionary society promoter offered as his original argument that the church was not doing mission work as it should; the Bible college promoter argues that the church is not developing preachers as it should. The aid society advocate argues that the church does not lend the assistance that it should. If this were true in every case, does that argue the right to establish other institutions to do these things? Is the existence of the lodge justifiable on the basis that the church does not do its duty?

W. A. Ethridge, in *Apostolic Times*, May, 1936, page 8, says, "Are you not begging the question when you ask, 'Do you find very many of those who object to orphan homes



doing very much for the orphans?" What has that got to do with the question at issue? I am doing all I possibly can for the widows and orphans and that is all that I can do. I have no luxuries, and do without some of the necessities of life to do so. Come straight. More later."

Orphans' homes are other organizations. They are chartered institutions set up by man to do what God requires the church to do. It makes no difference how supported, how much good is being done through them, or what influence they may have. It remains that it is either right to organize charitable organizations or it is not. It is our contention that it is wrong for Christians to do so. God has a plan and he has furnished the organizational structure for carrying out the plan. His plan will work if we work it.

Let every preacher of the gospel emphasize that plan until brethren practice it. Let each congregation be responsible for the orphans in its own community. Let relatives be taught their duty toward their own, that the church be not charged. Let the church make arrangements for children of the saints to be placed in individual homes. If the individual Christians, through some stroke of misfortune, cannot support those whom they have taken, let the church bear the burden. If the task becomes too great in a community, by reason of disaster, let the brotherhood send to the needs of these poor, and direct it to the elders of that locality so it may be properly administered. Let little children have a daddy and mother, not a superintendent and matron. Let them be reared in a family, not in an institution.

Many homes today would solve their problems of discontent and maladjustment if they would take a little child, or children, to rear. God has arranged in nature what is known as a balance, for the purpose of perpetuating all living things. It appears that he knew there would be homeless children, so he provided there would be childless homes. If the two are brought together the maximum in happiness is achieved. In some places, there are enough childless couples in one congregation to take every orphan from an institution, so that the doors of that place could be closed. There are homes where the cold nose of a poodle licks the face of a woman, who ought rather to be lavishing her kisses on a baby. True, babies are messy, and they restrict your gadding around, but if your mother had taken that attitude you might not have been here today!

The institutional orphans' homes are not testimonials to the spirit of Jesus. They are monuments to our selfishness! They do not indicate the depth of our conversion, but the shallowness of our religion. They could every one be closed in one day, and would be, if the church was fully converted to Jesus Christ. Our mothers reared five and six children in a two-room cabin. With all

of our modern conveniences, we cannot find room for an orphan in a six-room house. It is not that there is no room for a child in the house though, there is no room for one in our heart! It is not the first time in history that a child was born to find "no room in the inn." If we cannot find room for an orphan in our home, will you tell me how Jesus can find room for us in His eternal home, seeing that our entrance is to be conditioned upon our attitude toward the least of these?

You cannot live this life for gold  
Or selfish joys. As you grow old  
You'll find that comfort only springs  
From living for the living things.  
And home must be a barren place  
That never knows a baby's face.  
Take in a child that needs your care,  
Give him your name and let him share  
Your happiness and you will own  
More joy than you have ever known,  
And what is more, you'll come to feel  
That you are doing something real.

## Ragman's Religion

By J. ED ULAND

The majority of us can remember the rag man of our early childhood days, who came through the neighborhood crying, "Rags, rags, rags, for the raggedy man!" All of us would hurriedly look for some old clothes and cast-off articles which could be given to him. It was such a pleasure to donate to him, and yet we only gave what we did not need or want. Things which had laid about for months were donated, and all felt that in giving such we were doing good deeds.



Today religion has been given a secondary place in the lives of most of us. Only that which is left over or will serve no other purpose, do we give to God. Yet Christ said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, and all of these other things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6: 33). Paul admonishes us to "Set your affection on things above and not on things on the earth." We are to use our temporal possessions as stepping-stones to a better life, and as part payments on the eternal pleasures of heaven. Are we faithful as stewards of God's vineyard, or have we wasted our substance on riotous living, and the cares of this life? Let us take time to analyze our status in the eyes of God, and complete the inventory of the stock on hand. Have we run low on spiritual treasures? The philosophy of Christ is applicable today, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye

fall, they may receive you into everlasting habitations" (Luke 16: 9).

A very outstanding Protestant preacher recently said: "If the average business man would demonstrate as much enthusiasm for his religion as he does for corraling wealth, this world would be a much better place to live in. Too many put material gains before their duty to the church, with the result that the 'Almighty Dollar' has become their god. It is the same today as in our childhood, we give God the residue. We put very little into religion, and consequently receive very little from its benefits. Ever since the day of Adam, man has been inclined to make material gains the all-powerful motive of existence, and religion is only secondary as a solace in time of need, distress or death. The 'fox-hole religion' is the bane of our everyday existence. In emergencies and desperation we can turn to the church, but when we are all well and happy, enjoying the benefits of a fine democratic way of life, we shun the responsibilities to our God and religion."

We all need to give more time, energy, money and love to the Cause of our Redeemer. Let us not be guilty of the besetting sin of materialism, but let our lives be filled with spiritual things. Let us place our investments in the bank of heaven. When the last of all statements have been uttered in our behalf, and the record says, "And he died," let's be sure that we are going to our reward, and not leaving it. Is Christ just the rag man to you, or is the King of Kings?

## "I SAW ADOLF HITLER"

Did you know there were churches of Christ in Russia before the Communistic Five Year plan made it difficult for religion to survive? In our June issue we are going to present the story of a sister in Christ who is now a faithful member of a congregation in this country. Born in the land of the Soviets, her mother fled with her to Poland after the Communists sent the father to Siberia as an exile in a frozen land of death and despair. The mother, who was a competent and practicing physician, smuggled a Bible out at great risk, and held daily Bible sessions in her own home and in family groups, with a threat hanging over her head. Once that mother converted a fanatic atheist whose feet she was forced to amputate because of disease. The daughter who tells the story was placed in a Nazi concentration camp which was visited by Hitler. She tells her reaction at seeing him. We cannot tell the whole story, because of danger to friends still behind the Iron Curtain, but we will give you enough of it to make you appreciate America and its freedom. Be sure and remember the June issue. It will be worth a year's subscription! And please do not forget your friends and brethren who would like to read this interesting, gripping story.

## Views of the News . . . By ROBERT T. HARTMANN

### Are All Pearls Alike?

Often I have heard it said by decent, if disillusioned, men and women, that "All churches are like. They're only interested in money, and squabbling among themselves. I believe in God, all right, but I've got no use for any church." What do you say to such a person?

Well, one might start by saying that to the inexperienced eye all pearls look alike. My six year old daughter has a necklace of simulated pearls and she is just as proud of them as if they had cost \$1000. The natives of the South Pacific islands would trade a week's work for a dime store pin set with artificial pearls.

Of course, anyone who takes the trouble to study pearls can tell the fake pearl from the real one. For one thing, the simulated pearl is much smoother. There is a vast difference in weight. But there are different kinds of *real* pearls, also.

The Japanese are again exporting their "cultured" pearls, which were quite common before the war. It really takes an expert, one who has studied the subject long and carefully, to distinguish between the real pearl and its cultured counterpart.

The pearl, as you know, grows inside an oyster. A grain of sand or some other irritant gets inside the shell, and the oyster in self-defense covers it with layer after layer of pearl. I have bitten into a small, imper-



fect pearl while eating oyster stew. But large and perfectly formed pearls are quite rare in nature, and from the earliest times have been highly valued.

The Japanese developed a method of making cultured pearls by deliberately introducing a grain of sand into an oyster, then putting the oyster back on the bottom of the bay to work on it, but inside a cage so it could easily be found. After several years the oyster is hoisted to the surface and the cultured pearl removed. These sell for much less than genuine pearls but considerably more than the artificial ones of dime-store variety.

The cultured pearls look exactly like genuine pearls and are composed of almost identical materials. Very often they are more beautiful to behold, more symmetrical than natural pearls. It takes years of study and practice to tell them apart. But there is a difference. God made the natural pearl but the cultured pearl was made by man for his profit.

Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven—the church—to "a pearl of great price" (Matthew 13: 45, 46), which a merchant, having found, sold all that he had in order to acquire. The church that Christ established was a "goodly pearl," genuine and God-made. It takes study as well as skill to distinguish it, sometimes from nearly-exact copies men have made to compete with it. To the unwary, even smooth and shiny substitutes of little or no value seem, for a time at least, satisfactory.

Are all churches alike? As much alike as all pearls!

### BOOKS FOR STUDY

Lard's Commentary on Romans; Milligan on Hebrews; McGarvey on Acts; all for \$3 each. Send for yours at once. Order from MISSION MESSENGER.

### DICTIONARY AND CONCORDANCE

Smith's Bible Dictionary (Deluxe), \$3; Peloubet's Bible Dictionary, \$3; and Cruden's Concordance, \$3. Order from MISSION MESSENGER today.

### ANNIVERSARY MEETING

The church at Pomona, California, will conduct its seventh anniversary meeting on March 12. Morning and afternoon services will be at the church building, with a basket dinner and afternoon song fest at Washington Park Clubhouse. Speakers will be furnished by Exeter, National City, Compton,

Perris, Riverside and West Riverside. The meeting house is located at 1006 South Garey Avenue.

### FOUR-DAY MEETING

Ellis Crum authorizes announcement of a four-day meeting centered about the Memorial Day holiday, May 27-30. It will be held at Stockton, California, with all brethren invited. Bro. Crum concluded a work at San Jose, California, on Feb. 12, and informs the brotherhood that the congregation there meets at 43 Third Street Hall. Our brother is now at Carmichael, but will begin at Oakland, March 6.

We congratulate Henry Boren who has just received his Master's degree at Illinois University, and is continuing on his Doctor's degree. He is a faithful workman.

## Jesus Leads Me

By JOHN H. PATRICK

To me, one of the sweetest songs ever written is the one which begins with the words, "All the way my Savior leads me."

In the same hymn are found the beautiful words, "For I know whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well." There are times when intervening clouds seem to shut out this transcendent truth from our vision. It is no wonder, for it is the business of Satan to darken the air with discouragements and disappointments. He is the prince of this world, and we need not doubt that he invades the environs of our spiritual nature and seeks to shut Christ out. But no matter how dark life becomes for the Christian, Jesus is there to lead.

Sometimes when we are on the mountain top of hope and joy, high above the clouds and storms of life, we do not feel that conscious need of the Savior's leading that is felt at such times as we are hedged in by pain and darkness. But we need it just the same. I believe that Christians who are prosperous, happy and healthy need to be led more than those upon whom are laid the burden of bereavement and affliction. The suffering Christian leans on Jesus because all else on which to lean is blotted out. The obstacles intervening between a soul and God are gone!

Sweetest of all thoughts to me is the fact that no matter whether the child of God is living a prosperous life, or one enshrouded in gloom, the Savior leads on. When He said, "I will be with you always, even unto the end," He meant it every word. If we will only anchor fast to those blessed words today we will find soul rest. Amidst the hurtling storms and tempestuous billows which hedge us in, let us press that promise close to our aching hearts. Why should we be discouraged in His service when we know that Jesus will lead all the way?

### AN URGENT NEED

Vernon W. Hurst, Box 287, Howard, Penn., wants to contact an evangelist willing to do extended work with an older congregation in the east which is the center of an all out fight by innovationists on institutionalism. If you are willing to meet this opposition at close quarters and aid in saving a church be sure and write him at once.

Illinois brethren are urged to attend and assist in the meeting at Champaign, Illinois to be held by Arthur Freeman.

We recommend BIBLE COMMENTARY by E. M. Zerr. Two volumes ready. \$4. each.



## OUR SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE

Just 396 more to go! That was the good news on February 10, in our drive for 1000 new names for 1950. With more than ten months remaining, it appears that we will be assured of staying with a 12-page issue all year! Friends of the pure gospel who appreciate a paper dedicated to peace and unity of the Spirit rather than to selfish ends, have rallied to aid in this drive to place the paper in the homes of others. During the month prior to February 10, we received exactly 195 new subscriptions. Renewals are pouring in for those who have been regular readers. We urge all who love the truth to send in as many names as you can accompanied with one dollar for each, so we can finish the program in a hurry!

Here are the names of those who have sent in five or more the last month: Ella Murray 5, Bessie McLaffin 8, William Utt 5, Frank Dunbar 10, Bertha Oaks 12, Fred Stracke 7, L. C. Roberts 5, Marion Van Degrift 8, W. R. Hughes 5, Lee Nolte 5, Lamont Crist 5, Alonzo Bailey 10, Nell Anderson 5, Edna Shearer 5, Louis Martin 5, Charles Powell 5, John O'Neil 5.

We're also deeply indebted to Hazel and Dot Moyer, of Fredericktown, Missouri, and Vida Anderson, St. Louis, who are contributing names regularly. It is friends like these who lift the burden and make it easier to carry. Thanks to everyone!

More than ever we feel that the paper is worth more than a dollar per year, but the price will remain the same. We're not offering bargains to get subscribers because it is not necessary, but if you know of those who need the paper and cannot subscribe, just let us know and we'll send it to them a year without obligation. Let's sound out the Word! Will you help us get that 1000 new readers as soon as possible?

## ANNUAL MEETING

Announcement has been made that the annual all-day meeting of the church at Warrensburg, Missouri, will be held on June 4. Brethren from other congregations are urged to attend this day and help this little group of faithful disciples. Write Virgil Atwell, La Monte, Missouri, for particulars.

## OUR HELPERS

We are sincerely thankful for the help given in mailing out the last issue by Bert and Lois Carter, of Webster Groves, and Iva Ball, of Flat River, Missouri. The task is made much lighter by such willing hands.

## FROM BROTHER ROBERTS

Dear Brother Carl: I want to thank you for the interest which you have taken in the old preachers. Since you have classed me with the *old* ones, I wish to let you know I am very appreciative and thank you kindly for all. One year and 5 months ago my wife died, about five months ago my youngest

sister died, last week my brother Ralph died, and this morning I received word that my brother Curtis is at the point of death, and may be in heaven by now. Carl, it is taking them rather fast from me. I am the oldest of 9 children; all are gone but 4, and the 4th may not be alive by now. I am all broken up. Remember me in your prayers. In His name, W. G. Roberts.

(Editor's Note: May we solicit the earnest prayers of all the faithful for this good brother who fought so many battles for us in the days of yore. His address is Hammond, Illinois.)

## MABERY AT FREDERICKTOWN

Jim Mabery announces that the church at Fredericktown conducts a development class for men on Sunday evenings; a young people's class on Mondays; song instruction and Bible study on Thursdays; and a sick visitation program on Sunday afternoon. Brother Mabery spoke at the high school on February 10. He reports interest and attention at all of the meetings as being good.

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEETING

Young people from the Saint Louis area will be together in a devotional and edifying all-day meeting, March 19, at the Webster Groves church building. The afternoon service will consist of short talks and singing. There will be four speakers in the morning session. All brethren are invited to attend, but the work will be conducted by younger brethren on that occasion, under direction of the oversight of the church.

## BOGARD CONTRIBUTIONS

In conformity with the promise made to the brotherhood, the following list of contributions has been sent to us over the signatures of Clyde Bingham and James Van Degrift. The amounts below represent donations to the building fund of the little congregation at Bogard, Missouri. Any error in reporting will be gladly corrected. The purchase of materials is beginning, and the work will be pushed with all speed as weather permits. The labor is being given by the brethren.

CONGREGATIONS: Warrensburg, Mo., \$50; Cowgill, Mo., \$10; Barnard, Mo., \$25; Galatin, Mo., \$25; Antioch, Mo., \$25; Topeka, Kans., \$10; Section (Lebo), Kans., \$50; St. Louis (5344 Lillian), Mo., \$50; Wakenda, Mo., \$25; Kansas City (26th and Spruce), Mo., \$25; Mount View (Iberia), Mo., \$50; Des Moines (2907 Dean), Iowa, \$25; Carrollton, Mo., \$100; anonymous congregation, \$10; Kansas City (5906 Kenwood), Mo., \$25; Liberty (Norborne), Mo., \$25; Bernie, Mo., \$10; Ellington, Mo., \$10; Lewis, Kansas, \$10; Bethel (Milan), Mo., \$10; Iberia, Mo., \$25; Stull, Kansas, \$25.

INDIVIDUALS: A. W. Bailey, \$15; F. R. Bailey, \$50; P. H. Bailey, \$25; Grace Bailey, \$10; Kenneth Kirby, \$5; Roy Isom, \$25; Lee I. Nolte, \$25; Charles L. Anderson, \$25;

V. M. Foltz, \$25; Opal Austin, \$15; W. R. Hughes, \$10; Harley Wagaman, \$50; Mabel Bell, \$5; Mattie Smith, \$25; M. B. Van Degrift, \$25; Roy Bingham, \$100; Orby Bingham, \$100; Clyde Bingham, \$100; M. M. Green, \$100; Earl Baggs, \$50; James Van Degrift, \$50; Louise Owens, \$10; Frances Wilson, \$10; Sherman Wilson, \$10; Harry Barrier, \$5; Raymond Stephens, \$10; Fred Johnson, \$20; Dale Suddeth, \$10; Chad Freeman, \$10; Chas. Fleener, \$10; Imogene Crowley, \$5; brother from Decatur, Ill., \$1.

The Bogard brethren were also given the Mandeville meeting house which was sold for \$300. Additional contributions will be reported in subsequent issues of this paper. They should be mailed either to Clyde Bingham or James Van Degrift, Bogard, Missouri. We earnestly request you to give attention to this plea for a little group of courageous and willing workers.

## EDITOR IN INDIANA

On February 26, the editor concluded a two weeks stay with Indiana churches with a fine meeting at New Castle. Lengthy discussions with regard to the work looming up in the rest of the world were held with brethren from many congregations. Two public messages were delivered at Bicknell, where one was restored. Three sermons on "The Royal Priesthood" were delivered at Martinsville, where the church appears in excellent shape to go forward. A conference was held with William Carrell, minister of the local college church, for a discussion of differences. At Speedway City, four meetings produced excellent attendance and interest. In company with Bro. Hensley a visit was made to the American Christian Review office, and points of difference discussed with no personal animosity. Excellent contacts were made at Butler College, large Christian church school, where some manifested interest in our position. At Anderson a goodly number was present each night. At New Castle, a visit was made to the Bible study conducted by Brother Zerr. Interest and attendance were far ahead of any former year. Four public messages were given, and a forum discussion held. A very enjoyable and profitable visit was made in the home of A. W. Harvey at Bloomington. The spirit of the brethren in Indiana is excellent and the Cause is growing, for which we thank God and take courage.

## IN APPRECIATION

Brother Harold Baines, Morley, Yorkshire, England, writes: "I am glad I know to whom I am indebted for the additional MISSION MESSENGERS. They are always readily received and widely read. I find everything in it most helpful. I enjoy Roy Loney's series very much and was pleased to see his photo in last issue. Other writers whom I enjoy are E. M. Zerr, Harold Shasteen and Robert T. Hartmann...."

# THIS and THAT from HERE and THERE

Two immersed at Chicago (Ill.) when Darrell Bolin preached in January. . . . One baptized, 2 restored at Bonne Terre (Mo.) during Fred Killebrew's Bible study. . . . One restored at Bogard (Mo.) during the meeting with W. Carl Ketcherside. . . . One added at Webster Groves, Jan. 29. . . . An aged brother at Fredericktown (Mo.) restored on Feb. 1. . . . Roy Loney spoke twice at Topeka (Kans.) Jan. 29. . . . We are indebted to V. M. Foltz, Hale (Mo.), for aid in sending the paper to brethren across the ocean. . . . Thanks to Sister Nannie Samuell, Anderson (Ind.), for assistance in mailing out the book *A Clean Church*. . . . Clifford Collinge spoke at Kansas City (63rd and Blue Ridge Blvd.) Feb. 5, with Bob Marshall speaking at Independence (Mo.) on the same date. . . . Elmer Crocker, who is on maneuvers with the armed forces in the north, reports that it was 65 below zero on New Year's Day. The crowd at meeting would have been small on that date in a lot of places in the states. . . . We regret to chronicle the death of Sister Annie Cramer, a sister-in-law of Bro. C. J. Beidel. She had suffered with cancer for 7 months. . . . Albert Winstanley is now working with a small group of brethren at Tunbridge Wells, England. . . . Send us your change of address as soon as you move to a new location. . . . Art Freeman is seeking to arrange a series of panel discussions with the Christian church at Mexico (Mo.). . . . Paul Meeske sent us five renewals from Fairbury (Neb.) and deserves our thanks. . . . One added by immersion at St. Louis (7121 Manchester) February 8. . . . Hershel Ottwell conducted an excellent Bible study at Hartford (Ill.) closing Feb. 10. . . . W. Carl Ketcherside began a series of instructive talks with the church at Hartford (Ill.) March 5. He is scheduled for a group of lessons with those who are new members of the church in St. Louis, starting March 12. . . . Wilbur Storm spoke at Claypool (Ariz.) January 22. . . . Majoria Lee Shetler reports increasing attendance at Phoenix (Ariz.) where Wilbur Storm started a meeting on February 12. . . . One was immersed at El Mirage (Ariz.) as a result of afternoon meetings on Lord's Day. Susie Miller, Carrollton (Mo.) says she enjoys the paper very much. . . . J. H. Mabery reports that the Bible study conducted by Fred Killebrew at Bonne Terre was productive of much spiritual good. He sends in three subscriptions. . . . Clarence Grover spoke to the young people in Saint Louis on February 12. . . . Ronald Perryman immersed 1 at Canalou (Mo.) Jan. 29. . . . Fred Stone, Cowgill (Mo.) says that the paper is excellent and they are reading it from cover to cover. . . .

Arvel Watts spoke at Festus (Mo.) Feb. 12, with 60 present. . . . Gilbert O. Nations, who died at the age of 83, was buried in Farmington (Mo.). . . . Hershel Ottwell began extended work at Springfield (Mo.) Feb. 26. . . . The congregation at 6305 Blue Ridge Blvd., Kansas City (Mo.) reports a full house for all 3 services conducted by Winford Lee on Feb. 12. Clifford Collinge spoke there Feb. 5. . . . Fred Killebrew immersed one at Canalou (Mo.) Feb. 12. . . . One was restored at Bicknell (Ind.) when W. Carl Ketcherside spoke there Feb. 12. . . . Bill Benham immersed one at Bloomfield (Ind.) Feb. 12. . . . Russell Potter, Chillicothe (Mo.) enjoys the paper very much. . . . Hubert Long, Gallatin (Mo.) says the February issue was one of the best and most timely issues. Thanks! . . . Brother Long sent 5 subscriptions which we appreciate. . . . Vernon Hurst reports Pennsylvania work shaping up and asks everyone to remember the Memorial Day meeting to be held in that area. . . . All communications to Vernon Hurst should be addressed to him at Box 287, Howard, Pennsylvania. Borden Higginbotham spoke at Hagerstown (Ind.) on Feb. 19. . . . The churches in northern Oklahoma launched the work of Paul Ketcherside in that area with a basket dinner at Bartlesville, at the church building which is located at 1402 South Oak Street. . . . O. V. Baker, Santa Maria (Cal.) enjoys the paper. . . . Dellamay White, Alton (Ill.), is sending in a new subscription each month, and says the paper has been wonderful the last few months. . . . Henry Deister, Denver (Colo.), says to let the good work continue. . . . H. C. Wyatt, Leachville (Ark.) says the paper is food for the soul. . . . Nell Maynard writes us that her husband left for Guam on February 3, and with the many things to think about she was delayed in writing her article. . . . The church at Pomona (Calif.) held its seventh anniversary meeting, March 12. . . . We rejoice to hear of the effort at San Jose (Calif.) carried forward by Ellis Crum. . . . J. A. Freed commends the article "America's Greatest Threat." . . . Ed Uland reports that Bob Duncan was at La Junta (Colo.) on Feb. 5. . . . Our hearts are saddened by the recent death of our beloved sister, Mrs. Mont Burton, of Chillicothe, Missouri. She was the mother of Melvin Burton, an elder in Saint Louis. . . . Ellis Crum has time for two meetings in the midwest this fall. Address him at 5425 Shattuck Ave., Oakland, Calif. . . . Bob Duncan will work in California until May. . . . We are saddened beyond words at the death of Eleanor Webb, who was killed in an automobile accident while

enroute to services at Pomona (Calif.) Feb. 15. Our hearts go out to the bereaved. . . . We appreciate the good letter recently received from our aged sister, Maud Hill, Blackwater (Mo.). . . . Charles Asberry of Saint Louis is transferring to Ellington (Mo.). . . . Iva Ball, Flat River (Mo.) is recovering satisfactorily from a very serious operation. . . . Borden Higginbotham will start a development program at Martinsville (Ind.) in the very near future. . . . Bob Brumback will assist the congregation at Martinsville, in a vacation study and special work in the summer. . . . J. Ed Uland is returning to Bloomington (Ind.) in 1951 to do special work in the nearby area. . . . The brethren at Bloomfield (Ind.) are meeting in their new meeting house, reported to be a very nice one indeed. . . . A. W. Harvey was with the Middletown (Ind.) congregation on February 12. . . . E. M. Zerr spoke on the subject "Armageddon" at New Castle (Ind.) on February 12, with the largest evening crowd in years present to hear. . . . William J. Hensley announces that his present supply of tracts has been exhausted, and he is having reprints made of some of the most outstanding ones. . . . L. C. Roberts has just concluded short visits to Red Cloud (Neb.) and Concordia (Kans.). . . . Jim Mabery has been booked to assist in the Vacation Bible Study at New Castle (Ind.) this year. . . . We suggest that you keep this issue on file for future reference on the Orphan Home question. We are having a supply of extras printed. We will mail a sample to any friend or brother, if you will send the correct name and address. There will be no charge. . . . Again we must request that those changing addresses notify us at once. It costs us money every time you move and do not send the address change. . . . Millard A. Van Deusen says the paper is filling a distinct need among the churches. . . . Gerald Noffke, Sullivan (Ill.) remarks that articles of recent date were exceptionally good. . . . Brethren at Bethel near Milan (Mo.) have been negotiating for a meeting house in Milan. . . . Roy Harris preached at Dentonia (Kans.) Feb. 19, and at Agra, Feb. 20-23. . . . There were 130 present at New Castle (Ind.) Feb. 26. . . . Bert Fritz writes that the little group at Bevington (Iowa) are now meeting in their completed basement. . . . Fred Killebrew and J. H. Mabery immersed 2 at Bloomfield (Mo.) as a result of the work of Bob Arnes. . . . Percy Faenger reports 9 added at Bonne Terre since January 1. . . . Rose Phillian tells us there has been a great deal of sickness at West Riverside (Calif.). . . . Russell Phelps, Nevada (Mo.) says he is going to trp and get subscriptions. Good!