

BRITISH ADVENT MESSENGER

If I Were Dictator for 1943

By H. W. Lowe

I SOMETIMES wish, I were a dictator able to put right with a sweep of the hand many things that are at present not as they should be in our churches. I wonder what things would go and what remain? I should, of course, be that greatest of all contradictions, a benevolent dictator, but my convictions are none the less strong about a number of matters that call for immediate action.

First of all, I should like to provide every church with some sort of machine that would guarantee clean and orderly places of worship before the Sabbath services commence. Even rented halls can be cleaned and arranged so that "to the humble, believing soul, the house of God on earth is the gate of heaven,"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, page 491. Frankly, I do not feel near the gate of heaven when I go to some of our meeting places, but I might feel closer to heaven if those responsible would make it an invariable rule to be there at least half-an-hour before each service to see that everything was clean, orderly, and as worshipful as man could make it. Perhaps then we should all come to some other desirable things, such as these: "When the worshippers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. . . . Common talking, whispering, and laughing, should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshippers."—*Id.*, page 492.

A lot more may be read on this

subject under these references.

Music may be a power for good (*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, page 71,) but even good music can be the cause of wrong in the church. Good music in the hands of godly, humble-minded people is what we should aim at, and we should not encourage people whose lives are not in harmony with God's Word to make too much of whatever musical gifts they may have.

Here we should think of the

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Special Days for 1943

Jan. 2nd	New Officers' Day
Feb. 6th	Church Standards
Feb. 27th	Messenger Offering
March 6th-13th	Missionary Volunteer Week
March 27th	Thirteenth Sabbath
April 3rd	Missions, Extension
April 10th	Missions Extension Offering
May 1st	Home Missions' Day
June 5th	Ingathering Rally
June 26th	Thirteenth Sabbath
July 3rd	Ingathering Follow-up
Aug. 7th	Education Day
Aug. 14th	Education Offering
Sept. 4th	Week of Sacrifice
Sept. 11th	Week of Sacrifice Offering
Sept. 25th	Thirteenth Sabbath
Oct. 2nd	Evangelism
Nov. 6th	Literature Ministry
Dec. 4th-11th	Week of Prayer
Dec. 11th	Annual Offering
Dec. 25th	Thirteenth Sabbath

right type of hymn for particular kinds of service. All the pieces in our hymnary were not written for any and every occasion, so careful pre-selection is necessary.

Secondly, I should like to make a series of records of all the long and tedious prayers offered in church. Then I should like to take those who offered them (and I may have to take my own medicine here!) and listen to their own prayers (I nearly said misdeeds) much in the same way that Dickens treated Scrooge. This might be supplemented by the observations of youth and children who are compelled to listen, and thereby come to dislike church attendance, and sometimes religion altogether.

Nothing kills worship so much as long and dull prayers, and ill-prepared, monotonous discourses. When, on top of this, we take our hymn singing so lackadaisically, it is no wonder stagnation descends upon us.

"When men sing the praises of their Creator lustily a service can hardly become unendurably dull, it will tend quite in an opposite direction. Some non-churchgoers will be attracted by the happier atmosphere, perhaps many. If you want a crowded church preach the old truths straightforwardly and sing the old hymns heartily."—P. W. Thompson, in *Thine Increase*, page 29. (See also *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, page 201, Vol. 2, page 583.)

Thirdly, I see a lot of children and youth in churches where little or no provision is made for them. A competent, godly person

who could run services for the younger part of the flock would be worth as much to the church as a successful evangelist. If we were to note *Testimonies* Vol. 1, page 412 and Vol. 2, page 420, we should find valuable counsel on how to conduct such meetings, and on how to make them profitable.

The wishes of a would-be dictator include a meeting with the whole body of church officers now elected for 1943. What a fine thing it would be if during the coming year we could determine to co-operate in conducting attractive, inspiring, practical services in every department of the church! (See *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, page 190; Vol. 2, page 577; *Fundamentals of Education*, page 116.)

My greatest wish baffles even a benevolent dictator, since it involves some matters that are only partly in the hands of man—though much more within man's power than we realize.

A growing church! Evangelism that brings constant baptisms and new births in the church of God! How can these things be? People, even Christians, do not always like evangelism. Recently an experienced writer in a religious weekly asked, "Are we ever rather pleased if we can evade the urgent challenge of evangelism?" We are! The slothful and the sinful are always glad to evade this challenge. It calls for a high-standard living; large hearts, calm spirits, strong characters, completely consecrated beings. A church may win souls on the basis of human energy, but not permanently. It demands energy, sacrifice, consecrated zeal. Given these things in the church, what of God's part? Was there ever a time in history when the church was ready for evangelism and God was not?

Surely the last great evangelistic appeal of the ages is on us and God is ready if we are ready. God does not wait for every man in the church to get ready. He marches forward with His ready instruments and leaves the unready behind!

Every hall-marked Christian is to become a soul-winner. (*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, page 381), every other interest is to be subordin-

ated to soul-winning (*Testimonies*, Vol. 7, pages 9, 30). It is to be the "spur of our ambition" (*Prophets and Kings*, page 172), and it will be the outstanding characteristic of God's last efforts to save mankind through the church. I wish we could all study carefully the essentials to this kind of service set out in *Gospel Workers*, pages 140-146: sympathy for the lost, integrity in the use of money, vital union of life with the Saviour, humility of mind as con-

trasted with boastful self-sufficiency, spiritual earnestness, consistency of daily life.

Should some things in this "dictatorial" survey arouse some uneasiness, some questioning, some shocked awakening, some discussion that may lead to action, we have but one word in reply—So be it!

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

Notes from the Union President

CHURCH UNION

DURING recent years the idea of a united Christendom has become a fixed determination in the minds of large numbers of Christian leaders. In this country strong-minded men like the Archbishop of Canterbury, and certain free church leaders have been working assiduously to accomplish what they feel is the only hope of the world—a united Christian witness that shall save the world for Christ. In the British Isles a movement is forging ahead and seems at the moment to have crystallized in a Council of Churches composed of the main institutional bodies outside of which are found most of the smaller sects. There is no doubt of the tremendous impetus behind this movement which needs constantly to be watched.

In America great strides have also been made, but recently a severe check came in that quarter to the hopes of ardent believers in the Œcumenical Movement. The American section of the Faith and Order Continuation Committee issued its final report in October, 1941, and it gave details of a questionnaire which was sent to the churches represented in the commission on inter-communion. The following report is taken from the *International Christian Press and Information Service Bulletin*, No. 36:

"From a perusal of these comments received from this carefully worded questionnaire," writes Hugh Thompson Kerr in *Christendom* (Summer, 1942), "it is evident that, while there is a close bond of unity centring in

the Holy Communion, there is also a very sharp division which is not personal but is rooted in the faith and order of the churches represented. Some churches consider the sacrament as a memorial symbol only, others hold that there is in the sacrament the very spiritual presence of Christ, while others hold a sacrificial and sacramental view. . . . The conclusions reached by the commission in answer to the mandate of the Continuation Committee 'to consider the principles which should govern the practice of the Œcumenical movement in regard to intercommunion and open communion' are unanimous: they are not reassuring. There are some who hold that intercommunion is a prerequisite to union, a means of promoting Christian unity, and an expression of an already existing spiritual unity. On the other hand, there are those who are opposed to intercommunion in any form as a means of unity. They hold that intercommunion is the final goal to which all our efforts are directed. Even so, there are those who would restrict the Holy Communion to baptized members of other churches, while others would require baptism and confirmation in conformity with the order of their own church. There are those, too, who would confine the Holy Communion to those holding the faith of the church under whose auspices the Sacrament is celebrated.

"What, then, are the conclusions reached by this deliberative body after careful study and continued prayer? Certainly there

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should be a note of contrition on the part of all communions as this statement is given circulation: 'Our studies, therefore,' says the commission, 'make it evident that both intercommunion and full reciprocal open communion are at present unattainable even within the bounds of the Œcumenical Movement.'

MISSION APPOINTEES

THE British Union Committee acting on behalf of the General Conference extended an invitation to Dr. C. F. Cumings to take over the superintendency of our new hospital in Ife, Nigeria. The doctor has gladly accepted the invitation, subject to the successful negotiation of release from employment and permits, in the light of emergency restrictions.

Brother and Sister Louis W. Normington have also accepted an invitation to connect with our mission work in the large Nigerian Union which has recently been deprived of the services of two missionary families for health reasons. Brother and Sister T. L. Gillett are, we understand, likely to remain in South Africa, and another family is also likely to go to that field. In addition Brother and Sister J. J. Hyde have remained in Sierra Leone instead of going back to Nigeria.

A second appointment from the British Union is likely to be made in the near future. All these cases involve complicated difficulties before it can be definitely stated that these mission families are on the way.

AT THE END OF THE YEAR

EVERY indication is that higher wages under war conditions will be favourably reflected in the income of our churches and in our gifts to missions. We should not take that matter for granted, and we take this another opportunity of expressing our thanks to our members and to the Lord for this continued faithfulness.

There are a number of cases of great difficulty confronting our men in civilian employment as well as in the services owing to their religious beliefs.

There is also the very large question of evangelism which calls for the intervention of the Lord

in overcoming the many problems which face us at the present time.

Above all else there is the question of our own relationship to God, to His truth, and His church. After a Week of Prayer that has brought a great blessing to many we need to retain the spirit of prayer and to let it flow into every activity and department of life during the year that will soon dawn.

We do not wish any conventional happiness for the new year, but we ardently desire that 1943 shall find us nearer to Christ, more zealous in His service, more fruitful in our activities, and therefore much more happy than we have ever been before.

H. W. LOWE.

North England Conference

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A Little Child Shall Lead Them

"It's full, won't stop," Albert was telling Peter rather disconsolately. They had been waiting for a long time, but every trolley-bus was too loaded to take them on. They were wanting to get to Bradford and that was three miles away. If Albert, who is thirteen, had been alone he would not have hesitated to have walked the distance, but there was five-year-old Peter to think of.

But there was no chance of getting on the trolley-bus and it was getting late. "I do want to go," said Albert. "You will take me, won't you?" pleaded Peter. There was nothing else for it but to walk. The first mile passed—and the second, and those little feet grew very tired. But if they rested it would make them later still. Then Albert had an idea. "Jump up here, Peter!" Peter soon found a comfortable seat on his brother's back. Right along the busy city thoroughfare among the jostling crowds they made their way. They arrived at their destination all right, tired but very happy to be there.

By the way, what do you think

called for such effort? Where do you think they were going? Well, it was to the Bradford Young People's society. No, it was not to any special meeting, just the usual weekly programme of the society. They did so want to be there. And the money saved because they had to walk, they put into the collection as well as the money given them for this purpose.

Is this not a rebuke to some older folk who allow so little to keep them away from services? "A little child shall lead them," God's Word says. Albert and Peter are just learning their way into the truth; they are new to us, but God is calling these young ones to follow Him.

BRADFORD J.M.V.

Irish Mission

Superintendent: Pastor E. E. Craven

Office Address: 16 Knockbreda Gardens, Ormeau Road, Belfast

Belfast

VERY often, anticipation exceeds realization, but here in Belfast, we found the opposite to be the case.

For some little time, preparatory announcements had led us to expect a "miniature Harvest Festival," but, when Sabbath, October 17th arrived, the appearance of our Florenceville church showed indications to the contrary.

The abundance of good things filled the air with fragrance. Willing hands had tastefully arranged the profusion of God's bounties against a background of autumn flowers and leaves.

Each service of the day had its special appeal. Pastor Craven's was from Jeremiah 8:20: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

In the evening, more than eighty were present at the Young People's society meeting when Brother Murray admonished all to work to-day, for in the time of reaping, only those who have had part in producing the harvest will be justified in rejoicing.

The children, too, made their contribution in song, exhorting

us to scatter sunshine everywhere, while two beautiful solos were rendered by Miss Kirby and Mrs. Warnock respectively.

The concluding item was the

rendering of Maunder's anthem, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," by the senior young people. So ended a happy and edifying Sabbath. EDWARD BELL.

come from the Adventist presses, for instance, aim to teach:

1. Loyalty and obedience to governments.
2. Respect for law and order.
3. Helpfulness to those in need.
4. Truthfulness, faithfulness to contracts, purity, unselfishness.
5. Respect for parents and care for one's family and home.
6. Industry and energy in one's employment.
7. Respect for God's law.
8. General hygiene and rules of health.
9. Care of the sick.
10. Temperance and abstinence.
11. Trust in God for comfort in trouble and bereavement.
12. Courage in danger.

Great are the practical blessings resulting from the reading of our literature. A.W.

Advertisements

PRINTING.—C. Russell, Newton Street, Macclesfield.

WANTED, few copies January 1942, issue of *Good Health*. Write stating copies available to Editor, The Stanborough Press, Ltd., Watford, Herts.

REQUIRED, several trained and maternity nurses, also assistant nurses, for busy Nursing Home. Apply, stating experience and salary required to: Matron, King's Lea Nursing Home, Woodford Green, Essex.

WANTED by healthy elderly couple, efficient help (35-50). Permanent post. Every consideration. Write: Mrs. E. Walton, "The Homestead," Blind Lane, Tanworth-in-Arden, Warwicks. (Phone: Tanworth-in-Arden 349.)

Acknowledgments

THE South England Conference acknowledges with thanks the receipt of the Lord's tithe, £14. 10s. 3d., from Anon.

THE Editor acknowledges with thanks the receipt of the Lord's tithe, £2, from "X.Y.Z."

SUNSET CALENDAR

Reproduced from the *Nautical Almanac* by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

Lon'n Not'm Car'ff Edin Bel't
Jan. 8th 5.09 5.06 5.22 4.58 5.16
Jan. 15th 5.19 5.17 5.32 5.09 5.27

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The Ministry of Literature

Wonderful Literature Successes in Southampton

OUR veteran colporteur, Brother John Benefield, has just visited the Publishing House, and gave a very, very encouraging report of his work in "blitzed" Southampton.

The day before visiting Watford, our good brother had spent the morning obtaining orders for *The Bible Speaks* in Sholing, Southampton, an area that has been very badly damaged by aerial attack. Work was commenced at five minutes past nine and by ten o'clock £10 worth of orders had been taken, and by 10.45 a.m. £18 worth of orders had been listed in his prospectus.

I inquired of Brother Benefield as to his most successful day. He pulled out his diary and, after examining it for a minute or two, said: "Well, the Lord blessed me with orders to the value of £30 on November 11th, and during that week He blessed me altogether with orders to the value of £101."

In many cases two and three copies of *The Bible Speaks* have been placed in the same home. Here are just five consecutive calls one morning—the information for which was again obtained from that wonderful little diary:

First call	£2 15 0
Second call	3 0 0
Third call	4 10 0
Fourth call	3 10 0
Fifth call	5 5 0

Congratulations, Brother Benefield! We rejoice with you in the wonderful way in which the Lord is blessing your work in the wide circulation of truth-filled literature.

But this is not the end of the story! Already the following colporteur-evangelists have sold between £1,000 and £1,450 worth of literature this year:

J. Benefield	£1432 0 0
C. L. Kelly	1368 0 0
H. G. Hardy	1183 0 0
W. McLeod	1019 0 0
E. J. Whiting	1000 0 0

Surely this wonderful evidence of God's guidance is of great encouragement to us all and indicates that, despite paper rationing and all the problems created by the conflict which is raging, we can look forward with confidence to the future, knowing that the Creator of the universe is guiding and directing the affairs of His church. J. C. CRAVEN.

True Lay Evangelists

CONSECRATED colporteurs are true lay-evangelists. While often they take services in churches in mid-week and week-end, yet these workers do not wait for the people to come to church; they visit the people in their own homes. They place in the people's hands whole volumes of spiritual inspiration, counsel and comfort.

IS CHRISTIAN LITERATURE NECESSARY IN THESE DAYS?

TRUE Christian literature is of the highest value in these stirring times. The publications which



REID.—Brother Reid of Bath passed away on Monday, November 23, 1942. We laid him to rest on Friday, November 27th, in the Lockbrook Cemetery in the sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life. Our hearts go out in sympathy to Sister Reid and her two daughters and other near relatives who are left to mourn their great loss. In face of great opposition Brother Reid took his stand for the truth through reading *Great Controversy* and receiving visits from our late Brother McAvoy. His shop in Antrim was closed on the Sabbath for twenty-seven years. Some six years ago he removed to Bath, and has showed his love for the Master in circulating *Present Truth*, which has resulted in several members being added to the Advent movement. The services were conducted by the writer. O. M. DORLAND.