



Assembly Testimony



THOU STANDEST ON THE THRESHOLD

Thou standest on the threshold
Of days which are unknown;
Thou standest at the gateway
Of paths unmapped, unshewn;
But God Himself is with thee,
Thy Saviour, Keeper, Friend;
And He will not forsake thee,
Nor leave thee to life's end.

Thou waitest—and He waiteth:
He waiteth now to bless;
To link His sovereign greatness
To human helplessness;
To shew, through all life's journey,
His tireless care for thee;
To fill thy incompleteness
With His sufficiency.

Thou pausest on the threshold,
Enfolded lies the year;
But, with God's arms beneath thee,
There is no cause for fear:
Through shadowed days or sunlit,
Whate'er the year may bring,
This fact may be thy comfort—
God reigns in everything.

J. Danson Smith.

A-MILLENNIALISM

By Wm. Bunting.

THE EARLY FATHERS (Contd.).

THE third Father whose writings are reviewed in "The Momentous Event" is Ignatius of Antioch. On his long journey to Rome, where he was to be martyred, Ignatius wrote seven Epistles. These are deeply coloured by his approaching death, "but," claims the reviewer, "of events at the end he says nothing whatever". Now, it is true that Ignatius says but little regarding "events at the end". He does allude to one such event, however, as the following quotations illustrate: "Who (Christ) moreover was truly raised from the dead, His Father having raised Him, Who in like fashion will so raise us also who believe on Him—His Father, I say, will raise us—in Christ Jesus" ("To the Trallians", chap. 9); "I shall rise free in Him" ("To the Romans", chap. 4). In these quotations Ignatius speaks of the future resurrection, and that surely is an end-time event. In them also it is the resurrection of the saints of which he speaks. They will be raised "in like fashion" as God's Son was raised. They will be raised "in Christ Jesus", and "free in Him". No unsaved person will thus be resurrected. This is perfectly consistent with New Testament teaching.

Moreover, to be raised "in like fashion" as the Son of God, "in Christ Jesus", and "free in Him", implies a resurrection beyond all judgment, so far as the penal consequences of guilt are concerned. To suggest that a believer in Christ, who has been "forgiven all trespasses," who has been blessed not only with the dignity of Sonship, but "with all spiritual blessings in the heavens", who has been "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light", whose ransomed spirit has been perhaps centuries "with Christ which is far, far better", and whose body will be raised "in glory" and "in power" (1 Cor. 15. 43)—to suggest that that believer must yet stand with the ungodly throng—the innumerable wicked dead—in a "general judgment" before the Great White Throne of Rev. 20, "to be judged every man according to their works", betrays a strangely perverted conception of our gracious Father's ways. It is unscriptural, preposterous, and altogether unworthy of God, Whose own pledged word is that the believer "shall not come into judgment" (John 5. 24, R.V.).

Even if the statement, "I shall rise free in Him", be

made to refer to what would take place at the martyr's death, the longer quotation certainly alludes to "an event at the end". Moreover, if a believer is set "free" at death, much more will he be "free" in the resurrection. Where, however, would the freedom be if he knew that he still had to stand at the bar of judgment, to face the open books, even though at the end he would be given a judicial discharge?

Ignatius also said: "Mark the seasons. Await Him that is above every season, the Eternal . . ." ("To St. Polycarp", chap. 3). The Greek word here rendered "await" can be correctly translated "expect", and indeed, another rendering is: "Consider the time. Expect Him . . ." This emphasizes the spirit of expectancy, and like the earlier quotations, points to the end time. Finally, the martyr's last words to the Romans were these: "Fare ye well unto the end in the patient waiting for Jesus Christ". Like his other sayings which have been quoted, this is thoroughly pre-millennial in outlook.

Mr. Grier then examines The Epistle of Barnabas, thought to have been written at some time between 117 and 138 A.D. He quotes Prof. D. H. Kromminga as saying, "Barnabas was what we nowadays call an a-millennialist." According to the reviewer himself, however, this statement was a "presumption" on the Professor's part. We are satisfied after a careful reading of the Epistle that it was nothing more than that—a "presumption". What then did Barnabas believe? He believed in the imminent return of Christ—"At hand is the Lord and His recompense" (A.C.W., vol. 6, p. 64). He believed that the six days of Creation (Gen. 1) picture the six successive ages of human history, that the Lord will come, "put an end to the era of the Lawless One, judge the wicked, and change the sun, the moon, and the stars", and that "then on the seventh day, He will properly rest". Further, he believed that "the end of the world" will follow, when God will "usher in the eighth day, that is the dawn of another world" (A.C.W., p. 59). Is this consistent with a-millennial teaching? It certainly is not. So much for what our friend terms the learned Professor's "presumption"! The Editor of A.C.W. states plainly in his appended "Notes" that Barnabas held the doctrine of an earthly millennium (see vol. 6, p. 179, note 160).

In discussing the views of this Father, Mr. Grier asks, "What pre-millenarian is willing to admit that the millennium is ushered in by the judgment of the ungodly, as

Barnabas states?" One can express only amazement that such a question should be asked. How does he imagine that we believe it will be ushered in? It will be by Divine judgment upon the ungodly, of course. This is what many scriptures clearly teach. How can Mr. Grier be so ignorant of what pre-millennialists hold? "Barnabas", he again says, "shuts out the possibility of an earthly millennium in which unregenerate men will be under the reign of Christ". We reply that what the Father taught regarding the place of "unregenerate men" in that day is a very secondary consideration. We shall not argue about that. We do maintain, however, that Barnabas certainly does NOT "shut out the possibility of an earthly millennium", rather he establishes it. "His doctrine certainly leaves no room for a-millennial eschatology" (C. C. Ryrie). "Only Kromminga of all authors consulted seems to believe that Barnabas was an a-millenarian" (John Walvoord). Many a-millennialists concede that he is a pre-millennialist.

Space forbids that I should further extend this critique. To do so moreover might weary readers. Enough has been written to demonstrate whether or not Mr. Grier's arguments relative to the ancient Fathers' beliefs rest upon a sure foundation. He seems to be inadequately informed as to what pre-millennialists really believe. This is a surprising trait in many parts of his book. Another noticeable feature is that while he quotes what suits his purpose—and of course no one can blame him for that—he frequently passes in silence over much that would militate against a-millennial views. In several cases too his arguments rest mainly upon negative, uncertain, and inconclusive evidence—"Clement . . . has no hint of two resurrections", "it says not a word of any millennial kingdom", "Polycarp seems to look for a general judgment", "he would most likely have said so", "This looks like a general judgment", "all distinction seems to be done away", and "the presumption is". Positive statements of fact would substantiate his argument and carry conviction, but certainly not sentences so wanting of proof as these.

It is true that some of the early Fathers held serious error. Some had a very imperfect conception of prophetic truth. Some changed, and others modified their opinions, and a few employed extravagant language. All this is willingly conceded. Nevertheless—and this is what I underline—premillennialism was strong in the post-apostolic

period. Some of the Fathers made only a brief reference to their millennial concepts, but even this must be taken into account. A certain Island was believed by all to be uninhabited, but the belief vanished into thin air when a human footprint was found upon its shore. So even a "footprint" of pre-millennial eschatology is enough to indicate where certain Fathers stood. Eusebius, the Church historian (260-340, A.D.), though not a pre-millennialist himself, admits that "most of the ecclesiastical writers", including Papias and Irenaeus had "adopted such sentiments" ("Ecclesiastical History", p. 115). Many reliable commentators and authors of more modern times state that there is abundant and overwhelming evidence for this. Space allows us to cite only a few:

Dr. A. J. Bengel (1687-1751), author of the famous "Gnomon": "The early Church fully believed that the Second Coming of Christ could precede or usher in the thousand years of His reign".

Dr. Andrew Bonar, the saintly Scottish preacher: "Milleniarism prevailed universally during the first three centuries" ("Prophetic Landmarks").

Dr. Adolf Harnack: "This doctrine of Christ's second Advent and the kingdom, appears so early that it might be questioned whether it ought not to be regarded as an essential part of the Christian religion" ("Encyclopaedia Britannica", vol. 15, p. 495).

Dr. Philip Schaff, Church Historian: "The most striking point in the eschatology of the ante-Nicene age is the prominent Chiliasm, or Millenarianism" ("The Advent Witness").

Dr. Henry Alford, the noted commentator: "That the Lord will come in person to this earth, that His elect will reign with Him . . . that the power of evil will be bound . . . this is my firm persuasion . . . as it was that of His primitive Church, before controversy blinded the eyes of the Fathers to the light of prophecy" ("The Greek Testament," Proleg. to Rev. p. 259).

Even Oswald T. Allis, a leading a-millennialist admits that Chiliasm "was extensively held in the early Church"; and Daniel Whitby, the "father of post-millennialism" (1638-1726), also states that "the doctrine of the Millennium . . . passed among the best Christians for two hundred and fifty years as a tradition apostolic".

In view of this evidence, all so unequivocal, and all from men in the front rank of scholarship, what is to be gained by trying to give the impression that the early Church was not predominantly pre-millennial? Yet Philip Mauro in "The

Gospel of the Kingdom", Archdeacon Lee in "The Speaker's Commentary", W. H. Rutgers in "Premillennialism in America", and others as well as Mr. Grier, strive hard to establish this. All their arguments, however, are weak and unsatisfactory. Ryrie attributes Mauro's assertions to plain "ignorance of the facts". Lee's great refuge is the silence of certain Fathers on the subject. Rutgers's plea is that "the prevalence of millenarian views has been unduly exaggerated". "But when he (Rutger) comes to pronounce on the chiliasm of the early American settlers, his remarks are so unfounded and wide of the mark, that Smith gives him the coup de grace on the whole historical argument" ("Premillennialism or Amillennialism?" C. L. Feinberg, p. 245).

In his work, "The Basis of the Premillennial Faith", C. C. Ryrie traces the evidence of pre-millennialism throughout the first three Christian centuries. He substantiates this by quotations from: 1. The Didache; 2. Clement of Rome; 3. The Shepherd of Hermas; 4. Barnabas; 5. Ignatius; 6. Papias; 7. Justin Martyr; 8. Irenaeus; 9. Tertullian; 10. Cyprian; 11. Commodianus; 12. Nepos; 13. Lactantius. He also includes the names of: 14. Coracion; and 15. Methodius, who for reasons stated are to be considered Chiliasts. To this list, of course, other names could be added. Some of these had more light than others. Some emphasise one facet of pre-millennial belief, some another. G. N. H. Peters, however, furnishes a more extensive list of exponents of chiliasm for this period. He gives the names of fifteen advocates of it in the first century (seven of these are Apostles, and are listed by Papias, who is believed to have known the Apostle John); nine in the second; and seven in the third (see "Things to Come", pages 374, 375). Even if the evidence of some of these thirty one advocates be disputed, the testimony for pre-millennialism remains strong and immovable. It fully substantiates the earlier statements quoted as to the almost universal prevalence of this faith in the post-apostolic period, in which there were men still alive who had known and heard the beloved Disciple, and therefore had the best right to tell us what he meant in Revelation 20.

(Concluded).

The series will be published (D.V.) in booklet form with extra chapters.

THE GLORIES OF CHRIST IN COLOSSIANS CHAPTER 1

By F. E. Stallan, Glasgow.

THERE was no fanfare of trumpets, no blaze of glory when Christ rose from the dead. One of the most outstanding happenings in the unfolding of God's eternal purposes had taken place and yet the world knew nothing of it. A new creation had come into being with the emergence of the firstfruits from the dead. The moment awaited by the faithful in death had arrived and at the same time the foundation of the Gospel was laid. This should have been the high noon of man's experience, but faith sagged, as with the two on the road to Emmaus, and mankind in general carried on as before with no thought of resurrection.

Nevertheless, while there was no pomp and splendour to accompany such a hallowed occasion, grace and beauty befitting the Person were very much in evidence. The Son of God, out from the dead and about to leave earth for the triumphal passage through the heavens as the Forerunner, would not depart before He had placed His mark of approval on what pleased Him down here. So for Mary, bowed down with sorrow at the grave, He would not leave for glory without asking, "Why weepest thou, whom seekest thou?" A world-wide declaration was not the means used by God to announce the resurrection of His Son and the beginning of a new creation, but a quiet re-assurance of the faith of the few. This it may be said is the principle still applying and it will continue to apply until the Lord comes. The world is not aware of anything but faith sees in His quiet dignity after the resurrection ample testimony to the glory of the One who is First-born from the dead.

All of this, of course, and much more besides was understood by Paul when he made known the seventh glory of Christ to the Colossians. He did not turn to Leviticus 23 as he might have done to speak of the Feast of Firstfruits, an indication of the mighty harvest to follow, neither did he reason it out as he did when writing to the Corinthians. No, the six glories he had stated were ample introduction to the seventh, and he knew that the two to follow would properly crown it. So he made his statement: "The firstborn from among the dead", Head of a new creation and forerunner of a mighty host, one day to be led in triumph through the heavens, past wondering

angelic eyes into the presence of His Father, there to present them with exceeding great joy.

Pre-eminence follows. Above everything and in front of everyone is the Christ of God. Surrounded by wealth on every hand, not only possessions from eternal ages past, but riches acquired by conquests in time, the spoil of His glorious victories. His pre-eminence will be gladly acknowledged by all His redeemed, with the Church close by His side, a constant and eternal proof of His love, as the Scripture records: "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it," and again, "That He might present it to Himself in stainless glory".

There is another in Scripture associated with the thought of pre-eminence. Diotrephes had a love for it but from the details of John's third Epistle he had nothing to support him as a pre-eminent one. What utter folly in striving for first place and casting some out of the church to obtain it. Contrast this with the ministry of Another, "He leaveth the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and goeth after that which is lost, until He find it; and when He hath found it He layeth it on His shoulders rejoicing". In this there is true greatness. A whole life of such ministry points to a Man marked out for God; He alone is worthy of homage and of praise.

History is studded with monarchs who returned from conquests in triumph, laden with the spoil of victory. Some were brilliant, others were fortunate. Some were brutal, others were fickle. One thing was common to all, none was perfect. It was never said of any earthly monarch, "A man approved of God by signs and miracles and wonders which He did". This was reserved for the incomparable Christ. It is little wonder that the hymn-writer penned the words from a full heart:

"All worlds His glorious power confess,
His wisdom all His works express:
But O, His love what tongue can tell!
My Jesus hath done all things well."

The eighth glory gives place to the ninth: "In Him all the fulness (of the Godhead) was pleased to dwell". It does not say that a partial fulness was pleased to dwell in Him. If that had been true, His deity would have been assailed. But Scripture points to all three members of the Trinity in glorious harmony and claims all the fulness, the pleasure of the Godhead to dwell in Him. Such is the high note struck by Paul in closing his unfolding of the

nine-fold glories of Christ to the Colossians; words which have drawn from saints ever since adoration and praise.

"Grateful incense, this, ascending
Ever to the Father's throne;
Every knee to Jesus bending;
All the mind in heaven is one."

OLD PATHS AND NEW WAYS

By Andrew Borland, M.A.

STUDENTS of Church History cannot but have observed that there are usually three stages in every religious movement. First, there is the period of miraculous inception. God graciously works through divinely prepared instruments who are passive in the divine hands. That is followed by a longer or shorter period of vigorous growth, when progress is made, and the position becomes consolidated. Then there comes the longest period of all, the years of steady decline with intervals of revival in places where God in His sovereign will works out His own purpose. Can we not discern stages like that during the movement associated with the last hundred years? Has there not been a period of vigorous growth, when men and women of splendid moral fibre, spiritual insight and godly character were attracted to companies of simple believers whose only concern was the performance of the will of God by a consistent interpretation of the teaching of the Apostolic writings? But has there not also been a longish period of decline, not so much in numbers as in quality and morality? If there was at the inception of the movement a willing discarding of human institutions and customs, and a reverting to the plain words of the New Testament, is it not evident that we may now be in a period when man-made conditions and worldly institutions are exerting an undue and unhealthy influence over those who have less concern for the former days and more concern for the practices prevalent in the ecclesiastical world of our generation? And are we not being faced with the question, insistent as it is ubiquitous, "What do we stand for?" Hesitation to answer almost impels us to conclude that there is no clear-cut apprehension of the truths for which we are acknowledged to stand. A younger generation is growing up in a time of uncertainty when unformed suggestions are usurping the place of well informed ideas drawn from a careful reading of the Scriptures.

And because of that, with what conditions are we confronted to-day? We are confronted with a growing indifference for certain principles for which the witness stands.

Perhaps the growth of that indifference has been all the more unconscious because there may be a comparatively widespread neglect of these very truths. Assemblies have been recruited from the families of believers amongst whom there may have been a merely nominal assent to principles, adherence to which cost their fathers dear. And perhaps converts brought into the assemblies from organised Christianity or from no church connection at all have not been instructed in the way that they should go. Add to that the fact that some Christians are content with a general community witness without a corresponding individual testimony.

Is it far from the truth then to assert that there has been a decline in personal piety? Compare the standard of individual living with that of earlier days. Is there the same tone about it? Is it as robust as that we associate with two generations ago? Is there the same personality about it? Has it the same distinctive quality, the outstanding unworldliness, the positive spirituality about it? Are there not lacking from it the characteristics we associate with New Testament Christianity? Where is the massiveness that made men marked in their day and generation? Where is that depth of conviction that would not allow men to pass through the world without giving voice thereto? Where is that sweet persuasiveness that attracted men of social standing and intellectual ability to companies of ordinary men and women whose whole lives emitted the fragrance of character acquired in the closet alone with God? The most casual observer cannot but be impressed with the fact that the devotional spirit that is the product of meditative study of the Scriptures is conspicuous by its absence, and that the spiritual sensibility that springs from frequent communion with the Unseen is almost an unknown quality. Ability to discern between good and evil, between the expedient and the non-expedient, between the natural and the spiritual, between the worldly and the heavenly, seems not to be developed in many who call themselves Christian.

Is there not evidence of this decline in more spheres than one? Think of the general tone of the literature of to-day, and compare it with what came from the pens of a former generation. Pick up a magazine of the present and read its articles along with the articles of the magazines of forty years ago, and what does the discerning critic discover? Perhaps this, that while there is greater variety and a bigger number of younger men contributing

to our monthly output of literature, the depth, the strength, the conciseness are plainly lacking. The pungent application of the Scripture to the practice of Christianity in everyday affairs, in the home, in the business, in the profession, and in the assembly, is not nearly so evident as in our older magazines. Is not such a state of affairs to be lamented, not because it reflects upon the writers chiefly, but because it reflects upon the readers in general? The cry to-day is for variety, for something spicy, for lighter reading; and editors are inundated with articles that pander to the popular taste, and, if a magazine is to be a paying proposition, space must be found for such. Is not that an indication that personal piety is on the decline?

Again, think of the hymns that are being written and sung to-day. Even from a literary point of view the majority of them are not in the same class as those that we associate with the men and women of a hundred years ago. The language of many of them is often ridiculous if not altogether grotesque. Some of them contain sentiments that, to say the least about them, are silly. A sensitive and well-informed Christian mind revolts against the sickening puerilities that pass muster for a poetical expression of gospel theology. And the people love to have it so! Compare such vapourings with the hymns that came from the pens of Kelly and Darby, of Dennet and Chapman, of Bonar and Deck. How empty they seem, how void of reality, how shallow in experience! That there is but a minority that raises its voice against the habit of singing such travesties of divine truth is an evidence that there is a sad decline in personal piety. Are not these facts too patent to be denied? And are they not a reflection of the anaemic condition of the majority of our assemblies? The protestor is dubbed a crank, old-fashioned, out of touch with the popular taste, a reactionary incapable of moving with the times. In many places the gospel meeting is not complete unless there has been the so-called assistance of the trained soloist. That God has used and blessed consecrated singing is too evident to be contested, but that it is so is no reason why assemblies should tolerate the misappropriation of time on a gospel platform by some, at least, who have not the spiritual discernment to know what is fitting or otherwise. That leaders permit it and that people enjoy it is a sad comment on the standard of judgment in things divine.

(To be continued).

THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS

By Harold Butcher, London.

THE primary object of this article is to induce those young in the faith to turn to the Holy Scriptures in order to learn the mind of God respecting the ordinance of believers' baptism. With this end in view, the following references are set down and the reader is urged to read them prayerfully.

Matthew 28. 18-20; Mark 16. 15, 16; Acts 2. 37-42; 8. 5-13, 35-38; 9. 17, 18; 10. 43-48; 16. 13-15, 29-34; 18. 8; 19. 4, 5; Romans 6; 1 Cor. 1. 12-15; Galatians 3. 27; Colossians 2. 12; 1 Peter 3. 21, 22.

The first of these portions is printed here.

“And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach (or make disciples of) all nations, baptising them in (or to) the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (or age).”

All believers in our Lord Jesus Christ should be vitally interested in the subject of baptism. Those who have not been baptised should be concerned as to this step of obedience to their Saviour. Those who have been baptised should be concerned as to living lives in keeping with their baptism.

Let us consider our subject under the following three headings:—

1. The UNDERgoing of believers.
 2. The UNDERlying meaning of baptism.
 3. The UNDERstanding of that meaning.
1. The UNDERgoing of believers.

This heading embraces two ideas, namely (a) who should be baptised, that is, believers, and (b) how they should be baptised, that is, by undergoing, or going under, water. Let us consider these two thoughts.

(a) Believers should be baptised.

When we speak of “believers' baptism”, we name those qualified to be baptised, that is, believers. The Lord Jesus, after His resurrection from among the dead, said to the eleven disciples, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16. 15, 16). Thus the Saviour links baptism with belief, and indicates by the order of His words

that baptism is to follow belief, which follows hearing the preaching of the gospel. We know from other passages of Scripture that salvation is upon faith. We know that it is true to say that "he that believeth, even if he is not baptised, shall be saved", but God has not put such a statement in His Word; for He has said nothing that could be interpreted as justifying the existence of such a thing as an unbaptised believer. In God's order of things, he that believeth should be baptised.

The last two verses of Matthew reveal that the Lord Jesus told the eleven disciples to go, to make disciples, to baptise such, and to teach such. The apostles were quick to obey this commandment of the Lord. On the day of Pentecost, Peter, who spoke for the rest of the apostles, said to those who, on hearing his address had been pricked in heart, "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2. 38). Peter, full of the Holy Spirit, in effect echoes the Saviour's words, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved".

From Mark 16 we sought to show the divine order as (1) Preaching the gospel; (2) Belief; (3) Baptism.

According to the word order of Acts 2. 38, remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit follow baptism. The true sequence of these events is shown by the same preacher (Peter) in Acts 10. In verse 43 we may read how Peter taught that, in accordance with the witness of the prophets, remission of sins is through the Name of the Lord Jesus to everyone believing in HIM. Moreover it is recorded in verses 47 and 48 of the same chapter that Peter commanded baptism for those who had received the Holy Spirit. Immediately a person believes in our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, that person receives forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit. That person should be baptised. In the early days baptism followed so closely upon obedience to the gospel that the two things, one visible, the other invisible, could be regarded as one event, and Acts 2. 38, quoted above, provides an example of this. Baptism is not essential to salvation, but salvation is essential to baptism. Baptism is the answer of a good conscience towards God.

Those responsible for interviewing applicants for baptism should seek, as before God, to ensure that only those who are truly believers are accepted.

Of many Corinthians it is recorded (Acts 18. 8) that they "hearing, believed, and were baptised". How simple

and how blessed is this. They heard the gospel; they believed, and they were baptised.

(b) **Baptism signifies undergoing, or going under, water.**

That baptism necessitates immersion in water is indicated by

- (1) the meaning of the word "baptise";
- (2) passages of Scripture referring to the practice of baptism;
- (3) passages of Scripture referring to pictures of baptism.

(1) The basic meaning of the Greek word carried into the English language as "baptise", is "to dip".

(2) In John 3. 23, we read that John was baptising in Aenon, because there was much water there. Some depth of water was required for the process of immersion.

In Acts 8. 38, 39, we read that Philip and the eunuch went down into and came up out of the water.

(3) As the Saviour anticipated the sufferings of the cross, He spoke of them as "a baptism" (Luke 12. 50). In Psalm 69. 2, we read words belonging to the same lips at the time of the same sufferings, "I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow Me". In the baptism of the cross all God's waves and billows of judgment went over Him. That was **complete** immersion.

Immersion in water affords an apt picture of burial. (Please read Rom. 6. 3, 4; Col. 2. 12).

(To be continued).

NOTES BY THE TREASURER

Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love.
We may trust Him fully, all for us to do,
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."

(1 Peter 5. 7).

Throughout another year the Lord has been pleased to sustain us by His grace, and in many ways to encourage us in the sending forth of this little magazine. We praise Him for all His care and kindness to us, and for His blessing upon the issues of the paper throughout the year.

We take the opportunity of thanking the many who have assisted in the work of distributing the magazine. We desire also to express our gratitude to those saints, and assemblies of the Lord's dear people, through whose generous fellowship we have been enabled to continue to supply copies to all who requested them. We have also appreciated criticism and suggestions made by many throughout the year. For all these helpers we thank the Lord.

Most of our readers know the magazine is issued post-free, but for the sake of new readers we repeat our remarks of previous years. The magazine is issued bi-monthly. It will be posted freely to any address, but, where possible, in order to effect economy, please endeavour to obtain copies through assembly parcel. The bulk posting reduces labour and postal charges. Anyone desirous of obtaining back numbers, can have same by applying. They also are post-free. To minimise waste, kindly advise us promptly of change of address, or reduction in quantity. BLOCK CAPITALS are necessary when supplying names and address for our mailing list. Since the magazine is made possible by the free-will offerings of the Lord's people, we desire that all should be exercised to avoid waste in any form. Gifts are acknowledged by official printed receipt. Accounts are independently audited. All monies received are expended on the costs of publishing and mailing. No contributor receives any monetary consideration for any paper published.

We trust the Lord shall be pleased to graciously bless future issues of "Assembly Testimony" to His dear saints in many lands, and to the preservation and up-building of the assemblies of His saints, which are so dear to His heart, and to ours. To this end we earnestly request the fervent prayers of the Lord's people for the guidance and help of the Lord, during the coming year, which we so much need.

JOHN HOGG.

1966

A new calendar hangs upon the wall to-day. Its date is Jan. 1, 1966. Thus not only a new morning, but a new year, has dawned. We therefore extend hearty greetings to all our readers. The old year, with its many changes, strange happenings, and continued mercies from the Lord, has now passed into history. How rapidly its months glided away! What 1966 holds in store we know not. We have not gone this way before. For the poor world, time's skies grow darker. We fear not, however, for One has promised to hold our hand and bring us safely to our desired rest. He who knows each star by name, knows each sheep by name, and counts all our steps. Yea, "the very hairs of our head are all numbered", and it is His "good pleasure to give us the kingdom". Who knows, but that this may be the Rapture year!

We are glad to report a substantial increase in circulation. This, of course, casts us more upon God, especially as costs of printing, publishing, and posting have greatly increased over the years. THIS MAGAZINE IS SUPPORTED ENTIRELY BY THE GIFTS OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE. We never make appeals for financial help, but friends will appreciate that without their practical fellowship this service could not continue.

We return warm thanks to all who have sent papers for publication, free-will offerings, and letters of encouragement. The kind co-operation of brethren Hogg and Glenville, and of our printers—Messrs John Ritchie Ltd.—is gratefully acknowledged. My absence from home in 1965 was much longer than had been anticipated. One result was that two series of papers, by Mr. Wm. Gibson and Dr. R. C. Edwards, respectively, were interrupted, and have not yet been completed. We regret this and tender apologies to our brethren and readers. We hope now to continue each series as early as possible.

Papers upon practical, profitable, and Christ-exalting subjects will be welcomed for our pages. Perils old and new threaten assemblies, and never was it more incumbent upon us "earnestly to contend for the faith", than to-day. It was because it was felt to be our bounden duty to do so, that the papers upon A-Millennialism were undertaken. These have been much blessed of God. They conclude with this issue, and will be followed, D.V., by a series upon GOD'S ASSEMBLY.

We sincerely ask the continued prayers of the Lord's dear people that grace, strength, and godly wisdom may be granted for our editorial work, for frequently what pleases one does not appeal to another.

One request made by Mr. Hogg I feel I must repeat. "KINDLY ADVISE US PROMPTLY OF CHANGE OF ADDRESS". This will "minimise waste" of our time and of the Lord's money. Will YOU try to remember this? So many do not, though we renew the request year by year. Thank you, beloved. And please make "ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY" known to others.

With warm Christian love and good wishes,

WM. BUNTING.

This magazine is supported solely by the freewill offerings of the Lord's people.

Friends residing in England, Scotland and Wales might kindly forward their donations to:

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Correspondence and papers for publication to:
Wm. BUNTING, 14 Somerton Park, Lansdowne Road,
Belfast, 15., N.I.