

TEXTS from the Bible can be quoted on both sides; but is Christian teaching concerning the dead in Christ that they are in a state of "rleep" until the Day of Resurrection, or that they are now alive and in His presence? (Mr. E. G. Perkin, Gunnislake.)

Dr. Vincent Taylor : I should say that Christian teaching is, and ought to be, the latter. Our loved ones who fell asleep in Christ are alive, serving God, and growing in knowledge and understanding day by day. As the questioner observes, texts from the Bible can be quoted on both sides. That, I am afraid, is true of many subjects, and the only thing to do is to examine them carefully and to evaluate them in the light of the mind and teaching of Christ. The doctrine of an Intermediate State is derived from Judaism in dependence upon Old Testament teaching concerning Sheol-the abode, or state, of the dead. Sheol is described in Job ili. 17 as a state where, "the wicked cease from troubling" and the weary are at rest," and in x, 22 as "a land of thick darkness," "a land of the shadow of death." Similar ideas were held by the Greeks. It is not surprising that this feaching, developed in detail, colours parts of the New Testamentincluding, for example, the Parable of Dives and Lazarus. It may also lie behind 1 Thessalonians iv. 13-18. In our own thinking, inherited ideas become conventional, as when we say that the sun "sets" and "rises." Christian doctrine, however, must have surer foundations. It must rest upon the teaching of Christ and the mature thought of St. Paul. Now Christ said to the penitent thief: "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (Lote xxiii, 43), and He described God as " the God of the living " (Mark xii. 27), and when St. Paul had outgrown the Jewish Christian teaching of his early letter mentioned above, he looked forward to the day when he would depart and "be with Christ" (Philippians 1 23). For a thoughtful Christian this teaching is decisive.

1.4 8 **a** . WE have Biblical reference to the cause of the variation of tongues. Have we, in similar manner, any reference

concerning the pariation of colour? How did it come about? (Sgt. H. Gross, India Command.) Esther M. Waterhouse, M.D.: There is

very slight reference made in the Bible to the difference in colour of the various races. The nearest approach to the solution of the problem raised by the question is probably that of the book of Genesis in its account of the three sons of Noab-Shem, Ham and Japheth. These names are symbolic of races rather than of individuals, and among the sons of Ham are put some of the dark races. In fact, the name "Ham" means dark, and refers to the dark alluvial soil found round the Nile delta. The book of Genesiz, however, cannot be said to provide any "scientific" reason for differences in racial colour. These

differences are produced as specific | reactions to the climate in which a race has made its home for many hundreds of When the skin reacts to protect years, the body from the rays of the sun, extra pigment-cells are developed in its layers.

Scientifically, colour is not a factor of great significance, for it is true, as the Bible says, that all the nations of the earth are of one blood. This is borneout by the fact that inter-breeding is fertile, when it occurs between the various races of man. In the animal world, however, hybrids produced by breeding species as closely related as the horse and the ass, or the lion and tiger, are not fertile. All nations are fundamentally of one blood. The prejudice which assumes that certain races are inferior simply on account of colour is unwarrantable.

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Rev. Frank Baker, B.A., B.D.: At the 1849 Conference 'James Everett was singled out as the "almost certain" author of the Fly Sheets, being one of a number who had refused to sign a semiofficial circular denying authorship. He had previously written to the President, Dr. Robert Newton, "I object to answer any question as to authorship, until a searching inquiry is made into the truth or falsehood of the allegations made in athe Fly Sheets. At the Conference he objected to being challenged before anyone else, before even his senior colleague on the same circuit, who was also involved. The reason given for this procedure was, "You are called first procedure was. You are called first because you are the most suspected." to which Everett replied, "If I am the most suspected, you of course have the most evidence against me." No real evidence was forthcoming, however, and Conference did not expel him as the author of the offending publications, but because he " contumaciously fefused " to deny his authorship. The case against him rests on circumstantial evidence, and is not sufficient to prove the case, which is likely to remain one of Methodiam's literary mysteries.

The main facts on which the "strong and generally prevalent suspicion " of Everett's authorship was based were as follows: (a) Like the anonymous author. he was thoroughly acquainted with the inner workings of Methodist official circles. (b) His views on Methodist officialdom were undoubtedly those expressed in the Fly Sheets. (c) His experience as a prolific author, and as publisher and bookseller, would give him a unique opportunity to secure anonymous publication. (d) The anonymous method was characteristic of him. Besides scores of minor anonymous pieces, he was the author of the most important work in the Warrenite controversy. The Disputants, acknowledging its

authorship four years later, and of the clever caricatures of ministerial personalities, Wesleyan Takinigs, acknowledging authorship many years later, though when challenged at the time he had takens up an almost identical attitude to that he adopted over the Fly Sheets inquisition. (e) The style of the Fly Sheets un-doubtedly resembled Everett's. (f) It cannot be denied that personal invective in the Fly Sheets manner was common in Everett's words and writings-sarcas-tic, clever, but sometimes unfair (g) A manuscript had been discovered on the desk of one of his close friends in York. which seemed to be the original of a section of one of the Fly Sheets, (h) His refusal to deny authorship obviously told against him.

None of this evidence was conclusive, though the cumulative effect was strong. Careful inquiries continued to be made long after the expulsion, but no more evidence was found. It seems obvious that the tracks had been carefully covered-again a characteristic of Everett's literary procedure. Nor could a real liternative to Everett's authorship be suggested-the next most likely author. Samuel Dunn, appears to have denied a hand in the Fly Sheets.

Those who know of Everett's manuscript diary will immediately ask if there is any new evidence there. The first available reference in the diary, under the date April 18, 1847, must in fairness be quoted in full :--

"There are printed circulars, going "There are printed circulars, going under the name of Fig Sheets, which are making a noise in the Methodist world, assailing the Excessive, in non measured learn, chiefly, if not scul-sively, among the Preachers-amony-mons, exposing to be from a Com-mons, exposing to be from a com-demonstraine, exposing abuses, and means and and a science of the scalars. mittee, exposing variant noises, and demanding reform. I received a copy with the London postmark, so also did Messra, Burdsall, Walton, and others, in other quarters. Some of the preachers have been heard to state that the greatest evil attending these mis-siles, is, their truthfulness. They are evidently by different hands, but the complaint is, that they are too personal.

This evidence, however, must be largely discounted, for the Diary was written partly with a view to publication, and such a controversial issue was likely to be "doctored." More important still. this entry comes a year later than the first stir caused by the Fly Sheets, and long after Dr. Bunting had waxed indignant about them in the 1846 Conference Is it likely that Everett, unless he knew their origin, would have omitted any previous mention of them in his voluminous diary? Add to this the fact that the actual diary entry follows two pages of manuscript which Everett has first heavily scored through, and then completely obscured by glueing sheets of paper over them, and one can hardly resist the conclusion that here was some tangible clue to the origin of the Fly Sheets which must be hidden away, the more innocuous paragraph quoted being

appended in the blank space t the foot of the page. .

WE are constantly coming across the expression " a voice crying in the wilderness" as a quotation from Isatuh xl. 3. But is not the correct rendering of this verse: "The voice of him that crieth: In the wilderness prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God "?. In this form it is a perfect example of Hebrew parallelism. (Mr. C. Harris, Knottinglev.)

Prof. C. R. North, M.A.: That is so. . A voice crying in the wilderpess" is a quotation, not strictly accurate, either from Matt. iii. 3 (and its parallels in Mark and Luke) or the Authorised Version of Isa. xl. 3. The Matthew passage is, of course, a quotation from Isaiah, but it was taken, not from the Hebrew direct, but from the Septuagint Greek translation of the Hebrew. The Septuagint had got the punctuation wrong, and, as it happened, the words "The voice of one crying in the wilderness " admirably suited John the Baptist. The correct rendering of the Hebrew ? Isa x1.3 is as the questioner quotes it, and, as he remarks, it is a perfect example of Hebrew parallelism. Has he noticed that, except for a slight difference in the order of the words, it is the Revised Version rendering? -

In conclusion, I may perhaps remark that "a voice crying in the wilderness." however incorrect it may be, very well fits any champion of unpopular causes, and, whatever we purists may say, there is little doubt that the expression has come into the language to stay. There are such things as inspired mistranslations, and even, very occasionally, inspired misquotations!



"What's Puzzling You? [author of the Fly Sheets]." Methodist Recorder (Aug. 16, 1945): 3.

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measured terms; circulated, from all that I can learn, chiefly, if not exclusively, among the Preachers—*anonymous*, professing to be from a *Committee*, exposing various *abuses*, and demanding *reform*. I received a copy with the London postmark, so also did Messrs. Burdsall, Walton, and others, in other quarters. Some of the preachers have been heard to state that the greatest evil attending these missiles, is, their *truthfulness*. They are evidently by different hands, but the complaint is, that they are too personal."

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