

The Australian Christian.

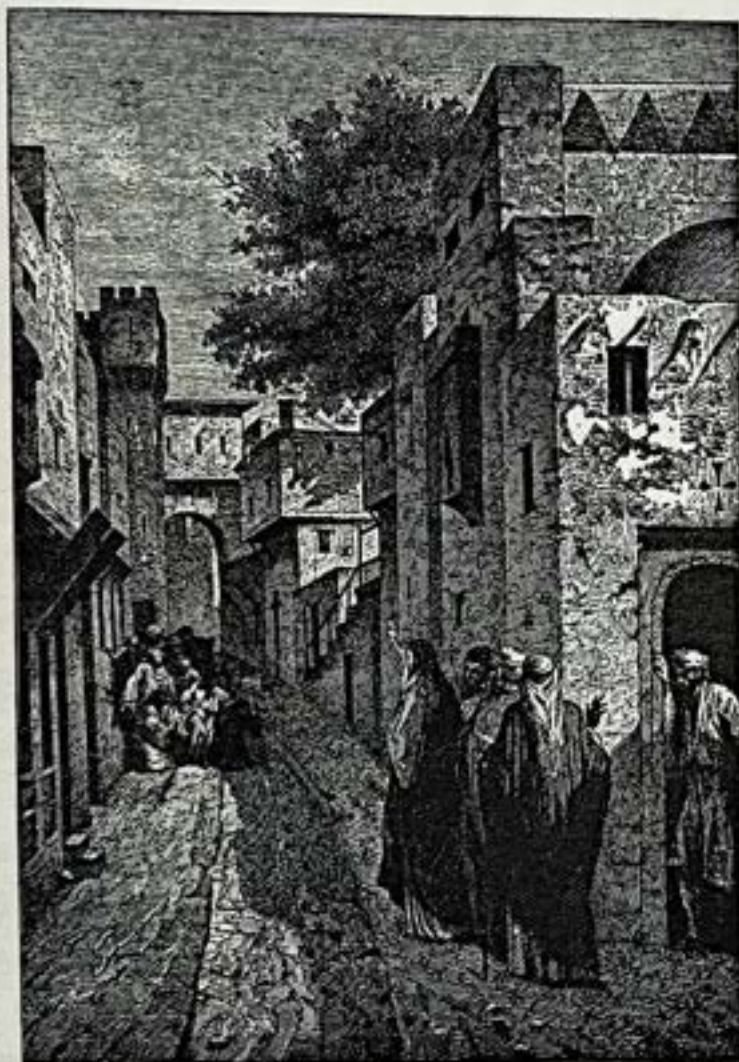
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VISIONS OF THE CHRIST.



The Ten Lepers.

F. PITTMAN.

Beasts fain would sing; birds ditty to their notes;
Trees would be tuning on their native lute
To thy renown: but all their hands and throats
Are brought to man, while they are lame and mute.
Man is the world's high priest: he does present
The sacrifice for all; while they below
Unto the service mutter an assent
Such as springs use that fall, and winds that blow.

He that to praise and laud thee doth refrain—
Doth not refrain unto himself alone,
But robs a thousand who would praise thee fain;
And doth commit a world of sin in one.

—GEORGE HERBERT.

When we see a man remarkably ungrateful, we
may assuredly infer from thence, that there is no true
sense of religion in that person.

—SOUTH.

"And one of them when he saw that he was healed,
turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God, and he

fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were not the ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Where there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger?—LUKE 17: 15-18.

Many biblical incidents pertaining to the cure of lepers furnish us with clear outlines of the character of the uncleansed soul, and also illustrate the conduct of many persons subsequent to their conversion. The story of Naaman, the leper, gives an exact delineation of the nature of the unregenerate man, while that of the ten lepers cured forcibly illustrates the character of many professing converts at all times. The latter incident, to which we now refer, introduces us to a congregation of ten lepers, who arrest the attention of Jesus as he enters a village between Samaria and Galilee, upon his last visit to Jerusalem. In that land leprosy was called "the stroke or wound of the Lord;" when thoroughly seated in the blood it became incurable. Sometimes it commenced internally, unnoticed for years, but all the while was secretly developing, until at last it broke out, and the poor victim became a loathsome, frightful spectacle. His body became covered with scales; his whole system became pervaded with the fearful disease; his limbs lost their power, and the poor victim became a deformed and loathsome object. Sometimes the leper clothed himself with robes of mourning, as if sorrowing for his own death; often, as with Job, his family became estranged; his wife no longer loved him; his children rose up against him. At times, as he walked along, he covered his mouth with his hands, and uttered the heartrending cry, "Tame! tame!" Unclean! unclean! Thus warning the people away. Lazaretto's were built, in which the poor creatures might endure in solitude the "living death," there being one other alternative, viz., "without the camp shall his habitation be" (Lev. 13: 46). For an accurate description of the disease and its cure the reader cannot do better than refer to Lev., chapters 13 and 14.

This disease, to which the scriptures so frequently refer, is used as a type of the leprosy of sin, which leaves its mark upon the soul, secretly but surely spreading, until the unregenerate soul finds itself in the clutches of that more awful disease, the wages of which is death, and the ultimate issue of which is eternal banishment from the more glorious society of heaven.

Here, then, are ten wretched, miserable lepers in forced seclusion from the civil and religious life of their fellowmen. They are *together*, perhaps endeavoring to find comfort in each other's sufferings, and *one* was a Samaritan. Jews and Samaritans were bitter antagonists; they had no dealings with each other; yet here we see the two hostile parties

joined into one company, and without complaint. The lesson is obvious. Nothing so binds together as distress; common danger ends disputes; dire calamities make men forget their differences. Our own times furnish us with abundant illustrations. Cable messages flash over every continent, telling us of teeming millions in India, at whose throats hunger is tearing, thousands of whom are perishing weekly; and witness the effect! No sooner is the news received than many hearts in almost every town and village are touched with sympathy, and differences of all kinds are forgotten, and people of all lands and tongues unite in sending relief to the famine-stricken. "Esau and Jacob, who quarrelled so bitterly in their prosperity, when their aged father died met over his body and mingled their tears together in mutual sympathy and mutual forgiveness. Thus God sometimes drives together by the scourge those who will not be drawn together by the attractions of his mercy." "Let a storm overtake the gallant ship, though the passengers have been at daggers-drawn in the cabin a few hours before, when the vessel bends, and her timbers creak, and a watery grave threatens to be the issue, they all forget their quarrels and try to co-operate for deliverance." A sense of common peril ends disputes.

Remarkable analogies between physical and spiritual leprosy are suggested by this incident.

1.—*These ten lepers stood afar off.*—The law forbade them to approach any but the "unclean." The unregenerate are "afar off." Sin has proved itself to be the great separating element; it has separated man from God, made a great gulf between heaven and earth which no human power can bridge over; yet we rejoice to know that no distance is too great for God to travel: no gulf is so wide that his love cannot cross it. Our Lord healed the lepers which were "afar off." The distance was spanned by the Saviour's love, and we, who were afar off, are made nigh through the blood of the covenant in Christ Jesus."

2.—*These lepers were conscious of their miserable condition.* They saw Jesus, and ventured to direct his attention. They had heard of his wonderful works, and that he had cured even the leper. They lifted up their voices with one accord, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us," and the voice of agony brought back the echo of compassion. The cry for mercy showed that they felt their misery: so the desire of the unregenerate for salvation must be evidenced by a deep sense of sin. "It is a strange contrast between sin in the soul (the moral disease) and the leprosy or any other disease of the body, that the worse the bodily disease the more one feels it, but the worse the spiritual disease the less one feels it. In the spiritual disease insensibility is evidence of the greatest peril. No man is so bad as he who says in his heart, 'I am rich, and increased in goods, and in need of nothing,' for it is of that very man that God utters or registers the verdict in heaven, 'Thou knowest not that thou art poor, and wretched, and blind and miserable and in need of all things.' When great misery is felt, and divine aid is sought, great mercy will surely be shown."

3. Notice, also, that in this incident a law of Christ's mission is indicated. We see our Lord's self-restraint. He acts in a way which we should least have expected. He waits until he hears the cry for mercy. He must first hear the earnest appeal. The initiative must be taken by the lepers, ere even Jesus will be invoked into action. Unless the appeal for help had been uttered, it is questionable whether our Lord's pity would have been moved. Probably he passed by many of the blind or maimed who asked not for a healer, while one cry would have brought the great Physician, with the balm of healing, to their side. Hereby is indicated a law of Christ's mission, which has never been suspended. There are certain fixed conditions, upon which the cure of spiritual leprosy is dependent. Jesus said, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life;" "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest;" "he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." The initiative must be taken by man. A personal desire, a spiritual outlook, a movement of faith, an act of obedience, is imperative. Do we not read, "He could do no mighty deeds there because of their unbelief"? neither will the mighty work of salvation be performed where unbelief exists. This law is frequently overlooked by religious revivalists, whose preaching and prayers indicate their belief that the sinner must wait till God does his work and saves him by the direct operation of his Spirit. This law is frequently overlooked by those who say, "If God reigns in the heavens, why should he permit iniquity to abound and error to be rampant? Why not abolish them with a word? Why not awake men from slumber and compel them to obey him?" He cannot. Did he not tell the congregation in the synagogue of Nazareth of the many lepers in the time of Elisha the prophet who might have been healed, but none were cleansed, save Naaman the Syrian? Did he not remind them of the widows in Israel, who might have extended hospitality to the prophet Elijah and obtained the blessing, but all except one, the widow of Sarepta, missed their opportunity? As it was in the days of the prophets, so it is now. The will must surrender to be healed ere ever the sinner can be saved. Our Lord addressed the ten lepers thus: "Go and shew yourselves unto the priests." Immediately following we have these words: "It came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed." In the act of obedience they obtained the great blessing. Christ's command was given as a trial of their faith. He bade them do that which implied that a cure would certainly be effected. Such a journey would have been a waste of time and labor, had they not believed that, in being obedient, they would be cured. Unless healed they would not go to the priests for inspection, for they would simply repeat the cure before pronounced. In this act of obedience in which their faith was evidenced the blessing was obtained. So it ever has been, and will be. Jesus commands and waits for us to obey, ere the blessing of forgiveness is experienced.

4.—The group of cleansed men go on towards the city to submit themselves to the priests, no doubt rejoicing in their restored health, when one of their number, "when he

saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God, and he fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan." The nine Jews went on their way. They thought no more of Christ. "Out of sight, out of mind with them, but the Samaritan, who was a stranger to the Commonwealth of Israel, the last man whom we would have expected to do so, gave tender expressions of gratitude. How often is this repeated in our own day? The people who came to Christ, are frequently, the last we expect to come, while those whom we have every reason to expect, go on in their sinful way, and the latter class are in the vast majority. "It is 10 to 1 if any return to give thanks." We have heard a sample of what passes on every day. Even amongst those who, by Christ's touch of healing, have had their spiritual leprosy cleansed, there are to be found many who give no outward recognition; no visible sign of gratitude. They are certainly in debt to Jesus. Men looked for a Deliverer, and none came; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint." Christ came to bring immortal health and the tree of life was planted by his hand who leaves are for the healing of the nations. He calls his people from darkness into light, saves them from the penalty of sin, preserves them in temptation, sustaining them in sorrow and pain, sanctifies them by divine grace. One would think the recipients of such favors could never forget their benefactor, be dumb or mute, and withhold testimony. One would expect them in humble gratitude to say

"drop, drop slow tears,
And bathe those beauteous feet,
Which brought from heaven,
The news and prince of peace.

But no! Such is the inconstancy of men in righteousness, the rapidity with which blessings are forgotten, that many possess the spirit of the nine Jews, while but few evidence the heartfelt gratitude of the Samaritan.

The spirit of thankfulness is seen in creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." "Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Gratitude is a natural virtue, frequently seen in men who know not God. Seneca wrote to his benefactor: "I know that I cannot adequately thank you, but I shall not cease to say that I cannot." Plato thanked the gods that he was first a man, then a Greek, then an Athenian; and last that he had been born in the age of Socrates. Gratitude is sometimes seen even amongst the beasts of the field. We are informed in history of a lion which refused to touch a Christian in the amphitheatre, because he recognised him to be the "friend in need" who had once tended his wound in the cavern of the desert. And who will doubt that scripture teaches gratitude to be an essential element in religion? Moses said: "When ye have eaten and are full, ye shall bless the Lord thy God." Paul said: "In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of Christ Jesus concerning you." "In everything, by prayer, and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God." And Jesus thus spake to the Samaritan, "Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine? Were there none

found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger?

The Lord deliver us from the absorbing selfishness of the nine, "the worse leprosy in our hearts of infamous thanklessness," and help us, though the nine go on their way, to return with grateful hearts to our Divine Benefactor, prostrating ourselves at his feet, ready to be used of him, and exclaim, like the psalmist: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of his people."

Poets' Corner.

So will we sing and praise thy power.—Psalm 21: 13

Merry Christmas, Every One!

H. D.

In the rush of the merry morning,
When the red burns through the gray,
And the wintry world lies waiting
For the glory of the day;
Then we hear a fitful rushing
Just without upon the stair,
See the white-robed phantoms coming,
Catch the gleam of sunny hair.
Are they Christmas fairies stealing
Rows of little socks to fill?
Are they angels floating hither
With their message of good will?
What sweet spells are these close weaving,
As like larks they chirp and sing?
Are these psalms of peace from heaven
That these lovely spirits bring?
Rosy feet upon the threshold,
Eager faces peeping through,
With the first red ray of sunshine,
Chanting cherubs come in view;
Mistletoe and gleaming holly,
Symbols of a blessed day,
In their chubby hands they carry,
Streaming all along the way.
Well we know them, never weary
Of this innocent surprise;
Waiting, watching, listening always,
With full hearts and tender eyes;
While our little household angels,
White and golden in the sun,
Greet us with the sweet old welcome,
"Merry Christmas, every one!"

Original Contributions.

Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.
—1 Corinthians 14: 12.

The Communion or Lord's Supper.

P. J. POND.

Riots have taken place recently over the manner religious ceremonies are observed. All disputing can be prevented by looking to Christ, the Head of the Church, as authority in such matters. Acting on this principle, we need defend no ceremony or ordinance that mar has devised, but must in duty bound respect any wish or command of Christ. With reference to the Lord's Supper, we ask then—

(1) *Is its observance obligatory to Christians?* Many affirm that is not binding, but where do they receive authority to make such a statement? Is it not rather presumptuous, not to say blasphemous, to treat the wish of the Lord thus? A wish given, too, when

the tragic events of Calvary were so near, and already were casting gloomy, sombre shadows over him. Jesus in instituting it said:

"DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME" (1 Cor. 11: 24). Also the Apostle says: "Christ our passover was sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast" (1 Cor. 5: 8). These passages should convince that Christ wished it to be observed, and this conviction will be driven home in our minds when we remember that while his disciples were still around the table Jesus said: "IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS" (John 14: 15).

(2) *When and how often should it be observed?* We find plainly stated in the Divine Word that "The disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread" (Acts 20: 7), that is, on our Sunday. We also learn that "They continued steadfast in the Apostle's teaching and fellowship, and in breaking of bread" (Acts 2: 42). We find also that Christ, the Head of the church, met with his followers in the breaking of bread on the first day of the week, thus setting an example to keep up.

A WEEKLY CELEBRATION OF HIS DEATH.

We read that "when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene . . . after that he appeared in another form unto two of them" (Mark 16: 9-12). Of these latter two we read: "It came to pass as he sat at meat with them; he took bread, and blessed it, and brake and gave to them" (Luke 24: 30). On the following Sunday Christ again met with his disciples, for we read: "After eight days again his disciples were within . . . then came Jesus" (John 20: 26). The term eight days is used in accordance with the Jewish custom of counting the day they commenced on with the corresponding day of the next week. It is plain then that to follow Christ we must meet on the first day of the week to show forth his death. Ancient church historians expressly state that weekly communion was universal in the early church. The Greek church practised it for 700 years, and the Latin church for nearly 400 years. It is pleasing to note that there is a growing tendency among all denominations toward a more regular observance of the Lord's Supper. John Wesley, in a sermon on regular communion, says: "I say constantly receiving: for as to the phrase frequent communion, it is absurd to the last degree. . . . For if we are not obliged to communicate constantly, by what argument can it be proved that we are obliged to communicate frequently? Yea, or more than once in seven years, or once before we die? Every argument brought for this either proves that we ought to do it constantly, or proves nothing at all. . . . With respect to this or any other command, he that, when he may obey if he will, does not, will have no place in the kingdom of heaven" (vol. 3, p. 171-179).

(2) *The manner in which it should be observed.* We find that Christ in instituting it, "Took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you, this do in remembrance of me.' Likewise the cup after

supper" (Luke 22: 19-20). The ordinance therefore in its institution was

CHARACTERISED BY EXTREME SIMPLICITY.

Thanks were given for the bread—emblem of the body broken for us; and in like manner the cup—emblem of Christ's blood shed for us. For this reason the Greek church early styled it the *Eucharist*, which word signifies *thanksgiving*. Praise also is appropriate, for we read: "They sung a hymn" (Mark 14: 26). The disciples were also addressed when thus assembled, which we learn from Acts 20: 7, where "Paul preached unto them," and other passages. We gather also that the contribution was then attended to, for we are told: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him" (1 Cor. 16: 2).

(4) *What it stands for, or the meaning of the ordinance.*

(a) *THE SEAL OF A MOMENTOUS COVENANT.* The Oriental custom is to seal a compact with blood. Christ, knowing his blood was soon to be shed, and pointing to the blood of the grape as an emblem of his seal of the covenant, said: "This is the New Testament in my blood" (1 Cor. 11: 25). In this new agreement God in Christ covenants to save mankind from sin, and Christ's blood is the ratification thereof—the seal of the testator.

(b) *IT IS A MEMORIAL OF CHRIST'S DEATH* for our transgressions. Great events in the history of nations are commemorated by appropriate celebrations, as for instance the inauguration of our Australian Commonwealth. The Jews observed the passover to remind them of the great deliverance in and from Egypt. In the same way we by this publish Christ's death. Apostle Paul tells us: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death" (1 Cor. 11: 26).

(c) *IT POINTS TO CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.* The scriptures teach that Christ will come again, and that in partaking of this feast "ye do show forth the Lord's death until he come" (1 Cor. 11: 26). This thought is beautifully expressed by the poet, thus—

"See, the feast of love is spread,
Drink the wine and break the bread—
Sweet memorials—till the Lord
Calls us round his heavenly board;
Some from earth, from glory some,
Severed only 'till He come!"

(d) *A COMMUNION WITH CHRIST AND EACH OTHER.* Apostle Paul writes: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10: 16). The Greek word here translated "communion" means "a sharing together," therefore the verse means—the cup of blessing is a sharing or joint participation in Christ. We share with Christ in all the blessings of eternal redemption. We partake of the divine nature, of the everlasting life that is in him, and appropriate the mercy and salvation he has procured for us. Besides which, this act is a communion one with another, for "We, being many, are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. 10: 17).

(c) IT IS A SACRAMENT OR FLEDGE. It is plainly apparent that by partaking we involve ourselves with Christ. The Apostle says: "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of the devils" (1 Cor. 10 : 21). To partake of one was to renounce the other, thus in this feast allegiance is shown to Christ. The Latin church early styled it the sacrament, after the name of the Roman soldiers' oath of allegiance, *i.e.*, sacramentum, but this gives only *one phase* of its meaning, and it is unwise to fix on a term not used in scripture, which exalts one particular phase to the losing sight of the remainder. We must partake with self-examination (1 Cor. 11 : 27-28), for if we are violating our duty to Christ we are perjurers of the soul. NOT THAT ABSTAINING WILL ABSOLVE. The judgment—translated damnation in verse 29—would fall upon you if unworthy, whether you partake or not, but by examination you can escape that judgment. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged (of the Lord), but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we should NOT BE CONDEMNED with the world" (1 Cor. 11 : 31-32).

(5) *How we are benefitted in partaking.* "Do this in remembrance of me" is the pathetic request of a Saviour soon to die. We look with hearts reverential, our thoughts directed to the great sacrifice—Christ, who of himself knew no sin, but was counted sin for us, and we see his great love. Didst thou, the pure, holy Christ so love us insignificant rebels, who had spurned God and were lost in the wilderness of sin and danger, that thou wert willing to bear the shame and reproaches of a cold, cruel world, and suffer as an outcast with nowhere to lay thy head? We notice the bitter loneliness of thy struggle in Gethsemane, and see thy bruised, broken body, with thy life's blood streaming, as it is uplifted upon the cross on that green hill outside the city wall, and as we gaze our hearts swell with gratitude. Didst thou do this for me? Then help me to pledge faithfully to thee. Thus we receive deep, thrilling inspiration by partaking. Christ also says: "The flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life" (John 6 : 63), and if we partake without discerning the material will not benefit us. But if we partake with the words and teachings of Christ controlling us and revealing God to us, then in partaking we are indeed drawn very nigh to him, and commune with him, drinking of his nature and spirit.

To sum up, it is clear that benefit is derived not from receiving the bread and wine into our system, nor by mechanically going through the process, but only by eating obediently with prayer and self-examination, understanding that in this act we show anew our allegiance to the Lord.

Kind reader, consider well. To slight this ordinance is to slight its author, Christ Jesus. That religious body numbering a million and a quarter communicants, known simply as Christians and churches of Christ, practice it weekly in humble obedience. Do you? If not, why not?

January 6th.—Home Mission Sunday in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.

Don'ts for Christmas.

Don't pay more for the Christmas tree than you can pay for the fruit.

Don't send any gentleman adorer a gold toothpick. He may have false teeth.

Don't send your pastor embroidered slippers. To travel the straight and narrow path requires hobnail shoes.

Don't buy your daughter a piano and your wife a washtub. If you reverse the order you will do justice to both.

Don't make your friend a present and be disappointed because he doesn't give something. Perhaps you have surprised him.

Don't place your expectations of a Christmas gift too high. You may have to put your foot in your stocking to find anything in it.

Don't give presents to people not quite so prosperous as yourself, and tell them not to reciprocate because they can't afford to make presents.

Don't give a boy a drum and forbid him beating it, nor your daughter a horse and order her not to take it out of the stable without your permission.

Above all things, don't have the bad taste to be for ever harping on what you would like to have for a Christmas gift. Your friends may be attacked with nausea and you will get nothing.

Don't make your wife a gift of something she has needed for an entire year; for then it looks as if you made a necessity and cheated your wife out of a real Christmas present.

There is generally a fine field for the exercise of charity within a block of your own home.

The beauty of making Christmas presents is to leave the recipient convinced that the present is an expression of friendship or love. Don't make it appear as a formality, an obligation, or because it was expected. Make the gift a heart offering or don't make it at all.—*Exchange.*

The Querist.

Avoid foolish questions . . . for they are unprofitable and vain.—Titus 3 : 9.

1. *What are the duties of elders and deacons respectively?*

REPLY.—The elders are the rulers of the church (1 Tim. 5 : 17), and as such they should have control or provide for the control and direction of all its meetings and organizations. They are the *pastors* or *shepherds* of the spiritual flock (Eph. 4 : 11), and as such should guard, guide and feed it (1 Pet. 5 : 2), and, like the good shepherd, should seek the wanderer and bring him back. They are the *bishops* of the church, and as such should *oversee* and *superintend* the spiritual interests of the members, individually and collectively (Acts 20 : 28; Titus 1 : 5-7). They are authorised *teachers* of the church, and hence one of his qualifications is "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3 : 2), hence they are to either teach themselves or see that it is done by other competent persons, that the church

may grow in knowledge as well as grace; like Timothy they are to be *examples* to the church; as shepherds going before, leading rather than going behind to drive.

Deacons, on the other hand, as their name implies, are the *servants* of the church, not rulers. Their duties are nowhere formally laid down, nor do their qualifications clearly indicate them. From Acts 6 : 1-6, where their appointment is first mentioned, we learn that their primary duty was to attend to the necessities of the poor in the church, and as this requires money, the control of finance for the meeting of current expenses and general provision for the temporal requirements of the church naturally belongs to them. It is not their duty or right to either teach or rule, any more than it is that of any private member, and if they take spiritual oversight of the church, as they so often do, it can only be rightfully done by the *special request* of the church, and as a temporary expedient pending the appointment of duly qualified elders. *Government by deacons as such is an unscriptural absurdity.*

2. *At the Lord's Supper should we have a slice of bread or a loaf, and should it be cut or broken?*

REPLY.—The inspired account says: "And as they were eating Jesus took the loaf (so it is in the Greek), and blessed and brake it" (Matt. 26 : 26). If we follow this example we cannot go wrong, and certainly a whole loaf or cake more fitly symbolises the perfect and unmarred body of Jesus, broken for us, than does a fragment or piece of bread.

3. *As to where contributions should be placed the circumstances of each case and a little common sense must decide. No other rule is required.*

Sisters' Department.

The Lord gave the word; the women that publish it are a great host.—Psalms 68 : 11 (N.V.)

Victorian Sisters' Executive.

The December meeting, held on the 7th inst., was under the presidency of Mrs. Moysey, who also conducted the devotional exercises. Minutes and correspondence were dealt with; the latter included letters from Mrs. P. Ludbrook, Miss Thompson and Mrs. C. L. Thurgood.

Resolved that we donate £1 10s. to Rescue Home.

Resolved that our first meeting in new year take the form of prayer and praise meeting. Sisters B. J. Kemp and J. A. Davies were requested to write papers for same.

The additions from Sunday Schools were reported as follows:—North Richmond, 3; Tabernacle, Swanston-street, 2; Prahran, 1.

Superintendents of Hospital visitation and Temperance gave verbal reports. Sister Pittman was welcomed to the meeting. Next meeting, January 4th, 1901.

Home Mission.

Two meetings were reported. A most successful one at Hawthorn, when Bros. Cameron and Johnston gave earnest and practical addresses. Some arithmetic showed if all did their duty on January 6th £500

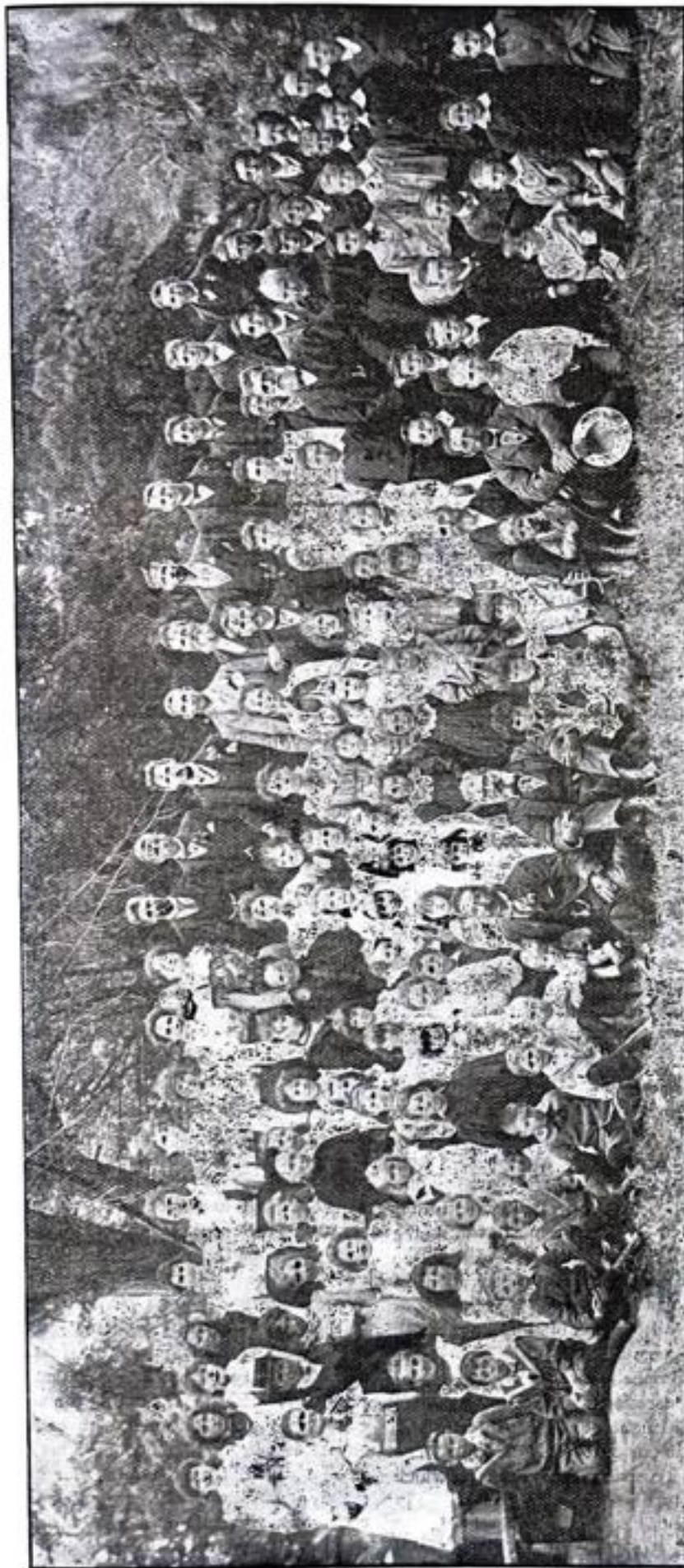


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LORD'S DAY SCHOOL AND FRIENDS AT BARKER'S CREEK.

could be easily raised. The meeting at Swanston-street was not so well attended as we would have liked, owing to various circumstances. Bros. Harward and Pittman were the speakers. Bro. R. Lyall, in the absence of Mr. Johnston, sang a solo, and kindly led the singing. To these brethren the committee express sincere thanks. A meeting has been arranged at Lygon-street on Thursday, 20th inst., when we hope to see a large meeting.

DEAR SISTERS,—

On Wednesday, the 7th of November we held our usual "rally" for the "Burwood Boys." There were present seven of your committee, and seven visitors. The meeting was most encouraging, not because of the number who attended, but we had among our visitors, the Presidents of the Prahran and South Yarra Societies, and they each took away material to make up. The mending is so badly needed that a whole day soon passes and there is no time for new articles. Our Sister Zelius brought in ten shirts which she had taken home to make.

On the 21st of November, eight of your committee visited the Dorcas Society at Cheltenham. We found eight sisters working for the Burwood Boys. They gave us a most kindly welcome, and have sent in a parcel of 21 shirts for the Burwood Boys' Home.

On the 26th inst., eight of your committee visited the South Yarra Dorcas Society, found two members present engaged in Dorcas work for Burwood Boys and Hospital.

On Wednesday, December 5th, we held our rally for the month. Eight of your committee were present, and seventeen visitors: the best rally, as regards numbers, we have had. We finished all our mending in good time. Your committee desire to thank most heartily the following societies and individuals for taking away material to make before our next rally:—Sister Zelius took a dozen yards; Sister Byran, of Prahran Dorcas Society, the same. She also brought in work taken from previous rally and eighteen garments for a family in North Richmond church. Sister Lee, of South Yarra Dorcas, brought work—finished a parcel of shirts, also parcel for same family at North Richmond. Sister B. J. Kemp, president of the Swanston Street Dorcas, took a parcel to make up, and Sisters A. Kemp, Webster, Moysey, Gladish and Sherward, of Swanston Street, took work to make up. Sister McCourtrie, of Hawthorn, also took the same. Such kindly interest is most cheering to your committee, and we hope our work will grow, and to God be all the praise.

ELIZABETH DAVIES.

A few Sundays ago a visitor was to have preached at a chapel in a country town not 100 miles from London, but was prevented from so doing by illness.

When it came to the time for the sermon, a very nervous curate got up and said: "We regret that owing to illness Mr. —, who was to have preached here to-night, is unable to do so, and I am sure the congregation will join with me in hoping that he will soon be better." He followed this by saying, almost in the same breath: "My text this evening is from Psalm 109: 8, 'Let his days be few; and let another take his office.'"

Mamma:—"Now, Freddy, remember what I say. I don't want you to go into the next garden to play with that Binks' boy; he's very rude."

Freddy:—(beard a few minutes afterwards calling over the fence)—"I say, Binks, Ma says I'm not to go in your garden because your rude, but you come into my garden—I ain't rude."

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beautiful or grander than the story of the nativity. Not only in regard to the events themselves, but in reference to those also of which they were prophetic. For the circumstances attending the advent of Jesus not only indicate a present good, but were also omens of better things to come. Thus a writer says:—"Unto those who had eyes to see and a soul to understand, the nativity was attended by favourable omens in heaven above and on earth beneath. The story is told in Luke's gospel with a very delicate touch, and the atmosphere is one of great joy. The coming of Jesus was heralded by songs which have passed into the praise of the Christian church. They all sang, who had to do with the Holy Child—the angels who escorted him from the heavenly places and bore the message of the divine good-will; Elizabeth, as she received her young kinswoman, and did honor to the mother of the Lord; Zacharias, whose son was to run before his face clothed in camel's hair and girt with a leathern girdle; Simeon, who was to hold the infant Messiah in his arms and be ready to die in peace; and chiefly Mary, on whom the very crown of motherhood rested. The heavens shed forth their light on earth, and a star rested above Bethlehem. Wise men from afar—the ambassadors of the great, and shepherds from the flocks—the ambassadors of the poor, came and knelt by the cradle, when the Hope of Ages had been fulfilled, and God himself had entered into human life." It was the beginning of a new era—the ringing out of the old, the bringing in of the new.

The advent of Jesus is the central point of all history—all the lines of true development are seen converging to it. Not only in Jewish history, is it seen that Christ is the culminating point, but dimly, as in a glass darkly, in Gentile history as well. The hopes and aspirations of Jew and Gentile seemed to be centred in a Coming Deliverer, who should inaugurate the Golden Age. That Hebrew bards and seers should have visions of a Coming One seems natural enough, but it comes upon us as a surprise to find a Pagan poet continuing the song of the Hebrew bards. Virgil, the prince of the Latin poets, who died about 20 years before Christ, seems to have been impressed with the coming of the new dispensation. The poem in which Virgil seems to be filled with prophetic fire, is worthy of our earnest consideration, as indicating how near the highest thought of the Pagan world approximated to our conception of truth. The following is a version of the poem in which mythological names are left out:

"Now comes the age of which the Sibyl told,
When ancient justice shall return to earth,
And Time's great book its final page unfold,
Since Time is ripe and hails the heavenly birth.

"The Iron Race shall cease, and soon elate
A Golden Race its happy course begin;
The nations dwell together without hate,
Man being born anew and cleansed of sin.

"Whom do Immortal Presences surround
Where light of life immortal grows not dim,
A happy world shall rule in peace profound
His Father's virtue manifest in Him.

"O Child! Earth brings thee all her first green things,
Ivy and Holly, winter's little store,
Undriven the she-goat her sweet burden brings,
And mighty lions afright the herds no more.

"Dead lies the poisonous snake among the grass,
And dead the nightshade and the hemlock dead,
Only sweet herbs spring up where thou shalt pass
And flowering branches o'er thy cradle spread.

"Dear Child! Begotten of the Eternal Sire,
The heavens to tell thee near with gladness rang;
O could I see the world's fulfilled desire,
Then would I sing as poet never sang."

For centuries after, the Christian church regarded this poem as prophetic of the advent of Christ, and it may be, that Virgil prophesied better than he knew. On the other hand, able and accomplished critics regard it as a reflection of the vague unsettlement and expectancy prevailing in the Roman world during the last half century before Christ. Which ever view is taken, it is none the less a remarkable production for the time, and would seem to emphasise the thought of Paul, that in their seeking after God, he was not far from any one of them.

But the Golden Age has not come yet, say some. In one sense it has not, but in another it has. It has not come in the sense of its perfect development, but it has come in its initial and progressive stage. The note of gladness which was sounded at Messiah's birth has not been sounded in vain. Men have done what they could to destroy the gladdening influence of the Christ, but they have not been able to destroy, only to check. The most joyous and freest lands to-day, are those in which the people rejoice in and celebrate the advent of Christ. Comparatively speaking our day is a Golden Age when compared with pre-Christian times. Anyone living in the time of Augustus Cæsar, having had vouchsafed to him a vision of our own days would have no hesitation in speaking of them as golden, on the mere grounds of contrast. True, that in these days we can find the same evils in existence as then, but with this difference, they are recognised as evils and not virtues. The evils of to-day were virtues of that far-off yesterday. If it be urged that the forces of evil are so rampant now as to make men almost despair of better things, may it not also be urged, that the forces for good arrayed against the evil, are becoming increasingly powerful and more numerous. If, within the last half of the nineteenth century, there has been a revival of spiritual forces,

The Leader.

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths.—Jeremiah 6: 16.

The Christmas Spirit.

It would have been strange indeed if the advent of Jesus had not been attended with some external signs, indicating that an event of more than ordinary importance had taken place. It could hardly be expected that heaven and earth would remain dumb when the most momentous event in the world's history was transpiring. As a matter of fact, both were eloquent. Eloquent, however, in a way that was not of man's conception or planning. Worldly wisdom would have arranged a pageantry—striking enough for the time, but as unreal and as evanescent as a dream. As it was, the circumstances attending the birth of Jesus had about their simple grandeur the quality of immortality. The passing of the centuries has not dimmed their lustre nor taken from their beauty. After a lapse of nearly two milleniums, history fails to furnish us with anything more

such as never was seen, for at least thirteen centuries back, then it seems only right that we should look hopefully into the future, and expect a time when the Golden Age should be fully come. In the meantime, the Christian can rejoice that the Old Old Story of the Nativity of Jesus has not lost its ancient charm. It stands to-day as the symbol of love and charity. East and West, North and South, the day observed as the birthday of Jesus, is the most joyous and glad day of all the year. Not a joyousness and gladness which are self-centred, but which are diffusive. A joy which must be shared, a gladness which must be scattered, finding their completeness in the joy and gladness of others. This is the true Christmas spirit which Christ has called into existence, and which is well expressed in the following words from Whittier:—

Send over all waters, reach out from all lands,
The chorus of voices, the clasping of hands;
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born!
With glad jubilation
Bring hope to the nations!
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun;
Rise hope of the nations, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!"

Editorial Notes.

In fundamentals, Unity; in incidentals, Liberty;
in all things, Love.

Disciples and Drink.

The *Christian Evangelist*, referring to the position taken by our preachers in America on the Prohibition Question, says: "It is doubtful if a larger per cent. of Prohibitionists are to be found among the preachers of any other religious body than can be found among those of the disciples of Christ. They are characteristically at the forefront in every essential reform movement, especially those involving the moral interests of the country." This is also true of Australasia. In the New Zealand Prohibition campaign our preachers were at the very front, while in Australia they are not behind in the Temperance movement. And in this respect they but reflect the sentiments of the motherland as a whole. It is doubtful if any of the churches would long support a preacher who was not a total abstainer. Of course in America, where the disciples are relatively more numerous than in Australasia, and where in some places, the State of Missouri for example, they are the strongest body numerically, their influence is much greater than in this country. But all the world over, we believe, they are in the forefront in this unqualified condemnation of the iniquitous liquor traffic.

"Ring Out the Bells for Christmas."

It is the festive time, the time for home gatherings and Christmas presents. "Peace on earth, and good will toward men." Let the children's stockings be hung up and well filled. Let the Rescue Home and the Burwood Boys' Home be generously remembered. Cheer up the hearts and homes of some of the poor of this world, and thus bring rays of sunshine into darkened souls. There are cynics who will prove to us that Christ was not born on 25th December. What matter that? He was born some time, and the date matters but little, while the fact is everything. His birth as a babe has brightened child life wherever his name is known, while in other lands the life of children is darkened with all the gloom of heathenism. He labored as a poor artisan, and ennobled human toil. He alleviated suffering and distress, and left the poor to the care of his church. He went about doing good, and left us an example that we should follow in his steps. Christ has come, and there is no better time to practically remember this than at this season of the year. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

"Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King:
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and man are reconciled."

The Home.

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,
—Joshua 24: 15.

At The Church.

Jesus, merciful and mild,
Lead me as a helpless child;
On no other arm but Thine
Would my weary soul recline;
Thou art ready to forgive,
Guide the wand'rer, day by day,
In the strait and narrow way.

—Thos. Hastings.

"A man was dying not long ago, and told his little daughter how dreadful he felt because he must die. She said to him: Why, Papa you have a beautiful home in the city; and a beautiful home in the mountains; and a beautiful home in Florida; and a beautiful home by the sea. Haven't you a beautiful home in heaven, papa? He was obliged to shake his head sadly and say he did not know.

Strength in Weakness.

In a home for incurables in Cleveland died Katie Powers. The papers of that city and of the village where she had formerly lived gave considerable space to an account of her life. These accounts were supplemented by many personal testimonies on the part of those whose lives had been

brightened and helped by her example. The case is the more remarkable because Katie Powers was herself so helpless.

Katie had been a bright, happy girl. One who had not known her before her misfortune did not obtain from her old friends any definite impression of her earlier years beyond this simple statement, that hers was a sunny, happy life.

In the dawn of young womanhood came the loss of bodily power, a loss which was the occasion of her subsequent strength of character. Inflammatory rheumatism left her unable to walk, and she lay for months a helpless sufferer. "But think," said she "how much I have left!"

Then the arms stiffened, and the fingers drew up like claws, and the jaw grew rigid till it would have been impossible for her to eat but that her front teeth were extracted to permit the introduction of food. Her vision failed, too, and only a little sight remained in one eye.

Then for years she lay huddled up in a wheeled chair, a helpless, suffering woman. She could see a little; she could move her arms a little, and that was all. Even this slight power diminished, and only by great care was it made to last until she died.

So she lay and painted sunny bits of water-color. There was in them no suggestion of the suffering, shut-in life; no reflection of pain; no reminder of the stiff, painful muscles that held the brush. They were all sunshine and hope.

Somehow people did not pity her. They would have done so, but she seemed not to need pity; so they simply loved her. Her deformities never made her repulsive—her life was so beautiful. Her sweet spirit shone through the features disfigured by pain. She not only bore her own burdens, but became a burden-bearer of others. "Whenever I feel blue," said a neighbor, "I go in and see Katie; she always cheers me up." No one ever spoke of cheering Katie; she was always cheering others.

So for a dozen years lived this shut-in, suffering Christian woman, and every year her life broadened and sweetened. "It makes you believe in God," said one. "No life ever seemed to me so truly Christian," said another.

When at length she passed away, hundreds remembered her with gratitude, and the little water-colors in many homes now remind those who knew her of the Christian sweetness and unselfishness of a life made strong in weakness.

Graves: "You remember that very handsome watch I lost five or six years ago?"

Smiler: "Yes; I recall the occurrence."

"You remember how I looked high and low for it, and could not find it anywhere?"

"I remember your diligent and exhaustive search."

"Well, yesterday I put on an old waistcoat that I hadn't worn for years, and what do you think I found in the pocket?"

"Your watch. Let me congratulate you!"

"No; I found the hole that I must have lost it through."

Communion With God.

Begin the day with God.

Kneel down to him in prayer;
Lift up thy heart to his abode,
And seek his love to share.

Open the book of God,
And read a portion there;
That it may hallow all my thoughts
And sweeten all thy care.

Go through the day with God—
Whate'er thy work may be;
Where'er thou art—at home, abroad,
He still is near to thee.

Converse in mind with God—
The spirit heavenward raise;
Acknowledge every good bestowed,
And offer grateful praise.

Conclude the day with God,
Thy sins to Him confess;
Trust in the Lord's atoning blood,
And plead his righteousness.

Lie down at night with God,
Who gives his servants sleep;
And when thou tread'st the vale of death
He will **THEE** guard and keep.

Sunday School.

Then were there brought unto him little children.
—Matthew 19: 13.

LESSON FOR JANUARY 6TH.

Matt. 26: 1-16.

Jesus Anointed at Bethany.

Golden Text.—*She hath done what she could.*—
Mark 14: 8.



BEYOND the Southern slope of Mt. Olivet from Jerusalem, and on the eastern side lay the village of Bethany—the home of Mary, Martha, Lazarus, and Simon the leper, at whose house

Jesus is being entertained. This happened in April, A.D. 30. The woman who came to Simon's house bringing such precious gifts brought

ALL FOR THE LORD.

With an alabaster box of very precious ointment Mary, Martha's sister, comes to Simon's house, and breaking the alabaster cruse, which is a soft, white stony substance, pours its contents—a precious perfume, made by bruising the leaves and spikes of the spikenard plant and mixing with oil and aromatics—upon the head of Jesus while he reclines at the table. Her action brought an objection from Judas, whose avaricious eye glistened when he beheld such wanton waste. The other disciples seemed to have been led by Judas, for they, too, were indignant. But Mary's action was all for the Lord, and to be had

IN EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE.

After a secret upbraiding from the disciples, Mary is defended by the Master of heaven and earth. His defence shows that she has done a good work, and that upon himself.

The excuse that the poor needed assistance was of no value, for the poor were always present, but the opportunity for honoring Christ would soon be gone. This anointing was in preparation for his burial, for he received no anointing at his burial. This incident at Simon's house is joined to the gospel for all time. Jesus declared that "whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." But how different the case of him who did

ALL FOR MAMMON.

Whether Judas purposed to betray his Master because he resented the Lord's open reproof, or that having just lost 300 pence (about £10 10s. according to Abbott) and desired to make good that loss, is immaterial. It is safe to concede that Judas was a bad man, for he was a thief. The climax of his badness is reached when he makes a contract to sell his Lord for 30 pieces of silver—the price of a slave. So popular had Jesus now become, that to attempt to take him openly would have created a riot. To avoid this, Judas agrees to seek an opportune moment for the betrayal, when Jesus would be less likely to be surrounded by a multitude. This occasion Jesus found for them on the night of the Passover, when Jesus was alone with his disciples in the quiet and lonely garden of Gethsemane. In the character of Judas Iscariot we see the results of serving mammon rather than God. Choice determines destiny.

JAS. JOHNSTON.

First Principles.

LESSON FOR JANUARY 6TH.

THE BIBLE—Its Authority and Covenants.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

Spurgeon speaking of the Bible said:—"Everywhere I find God speaking; it is God's voice, not man's; the words are God's words; the words of the eternal, the Invisible, the Almighty, the Jehovah of Ages. The Bible is God's Bible; and when I see it I seem to hear a voice springing up from it, saying, "I am the Book of God; study my page, for I was penned by God; love me, for he is my author, and you will see him visible and manifest everywhere."

There are three R's in the Bible—Ruin by sin, Redemption by Christ, and Regeneration by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word.

When some one said to Carlyle that there was nothing remarkable in the Book of Proverbs, he simply replied, "Make a few." 1,406,801 copies of the Bible have been distributed by the American Bible Society for this year alone.

Prof. W. G. Moorhead brought home a dissected map for his two children as a present. Giving it to them he said: "Now if you can put this together you will know more about Geography than if you studied a book." They set to work but the task was harder than they thought. They got it totally mixed up and finally concluded to let it alone. The older of the two girls, however, turned one of the blocks over and found part of a man upon it, and with this clue she built the man, then turned the whole

over and there was the completed map. The professor, who is in one of the Bible Colleges in America, adds that to study the Bible in its phases one must build the man Christ first, then everything else will fall into its own place. The fact is that there is but one name that binds the Book together. The Old and the New meet in Christ.

JAS. JOHNSTON.

From The Field.

The field is the world.—Matthew 13: 38.

Queensland.

WEST MORETON NOTES.—I omitted to mention in the half-yearly report recently held at Marburg, that the three outstanding churches, Rosewood, Ma Ma Creek, and Boonah had been unanimously received into the West Moreton combination. Rosewood promised £20 to Evangelistic Fund to first of May, 1901, and paid down £10. Ma Ma Creek promised £16 for same period, and paid down £8. Boonah promised £8 for same period.

Mt. Walker, 5th Dec.

WM. BAILLIE.

GYMPSIE.—Two out of one household made the good confession yesterday. To God be the glory.

December 3rd.

A.H.

The two who came out on the Lord's side the previous week were baptised and received into fellowship last Lord's Day.

December 12th.

A.H.

West Australia.

PERTH.—There was a social gathering of Sunday School Teachers and others on Thursday evening, 22nd inst., to say good-bye to Sister Jenkinson, who, through ill health, is compelled to leave for England. Musical items were rendered and refreshments partaken of, after which Sister Jenkinson was presented with some tokens of esteem. Sister Jenkinson has been a consistent worker in the church and Sunday School for some time, and we regret that she found it necessary to leave us.

Bro. Hawkins preached on Sunday evening, 25th inst., when one confessed his faith in the Saviour and was immersed with one who had confessed previously.

J.H.

New South Wales.

WOOLLAHRA.—The Sisters Aid Society held a sale of work on Oct. 12 and 13. It being our first sale, it was quite a success. We will be able to hand to the church the sum of £80 towards our building fund. It reflects great credit on our class, and also on the brothers and sisters of Woollahra who helped to make it the success it was. We thank you all, and our Bros. Walden, Dickson, Colbourne, and Cliff Colbourne. We also thank sisters from Enmore and Sydney, not forgetting our Sister Elliot, who helped us considerably, and sisters from Petersham, Marrickville, Rookwood, and Croydon. We heartily thank you all for your kindness, and last but not least our kind Bros. Stimson, Grocock, Payne, and a Chinese brother in Sydney, and Bros. W. Hunter, Taylor, R. C. Edwards, and many others I have omitted to mention. We are greatly indebted to you all.

MRS. E. SHEARSTON.

Tasmania.

KELLEVIS.—We have had Bro. Gordon labouring with us for the past six months with great success, so additions when he left last Thursday, and one more baptised on Sunday morning before breaking of bread at the ripe age of 81 years, and quite able to walk 3 miles to the meeting, and sound in intellect. Our Bro. has left quite an impression behind him on the whole neighbourhood, and we expect more will soon be added to the church in Bream Creek. We pray that his labours will be blessed on Tasmania Peninsula, where he has gone. The church has also been edified to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Master.

Dec. 3.

JOHN WOOLLEY.

Victoria.

LILLIMUR.—Christmas would seem to have started with us as we had a large meeting yesterday in the morning (19) when C. W. Milne, from Border Town, presided, and D. McCallum gave us a word of exhortation, and in the evening, at 7.30, a gospel service was held at Lillimur South, at which there were about 60 in number, when D. McCallum took the service for Bro. Leng, allowing him to become a listener instead of preacher.

Dec. 17.

B. J. L.

S.S.U. REPORT.—Visited Doncaster on the 22d ult. and found them in good order. Bro. Tully, superintendent. Bro. Greenwood conducts the Bible Class. The audible reading of the lesson was very good, and with expression. The boys and girls also answered freely any questions from the platform. Average attendance, 71. They have also a good morning class. In connection with the school they have a Total Abstinence Society. Every member signs his or her own name, and receives a neatly framed pledge card, which is much prized.

M. R. H.

BAKER'S CREEK.—On Lord's Day, December 3rd, Bro. Griffiths brought his work here to a close. We had splendid meetings both morning and evening. On Monday evening the church tendered him a farewell social, which was well attended and enjoyed by everybody. Bro. W. Symes filled the chair, and in a few words explained the object of the meeting and his appreciation of Bro. Griffiths and his work. A good and various programme was gone through, including coffee and plenty of eatables provided by the sisters. The musical part was under the direction of Bro. and Sister Owens, who with the choir rendered some good selections during the meeting. Duets were sung by Sisters Michell and Schier and Sisters Ada Symes and Schier, and a quartet was rendered by Bro. and Sister Hogarth and Bro. and Sister Upstill. A song by Sister Olive Symes brought down the house. Recitations by Bro. F. Pritchard and Willie Symes and a mouth organ selection by Bro. Hogarth took well.

Addresses were given by Brethren Leversha, Mornington, and Hogarth. Bro. Hogarth had the pleasing duty, on behalf of the church, to present Bro. Griffiths with a pair of gold and opal sleeve links, and collar and breast studs to match, as a token of their esteem towards him. Bro. Griffiths suitably replied. Refreshments and games of various kinds brought a very happy evening to a close.

December 7th.

H. LEVERSHA.

S.S.U. REPORT.—Visited Lygon Street School on the 16th, and found all going on well. A nice infant class of about 40, still cared for by Miss McColl. The reading of the lessons was very good, as was also the singing. Each class recites a verse to Bro. Thurgood at the close, selected from the day's lesson. The classes pay great attention, and answer promptly to the bell. Average attendance about 20 over my last visit; number present, 140; on roll, 210, exclusive of a number of boys who come from the Gordon Institute, and whose names are not inserted on roll. A good library and Bible Class.

Dec. 17.

M. R. H.

New Zealand.

TABERNACLE (Dunedin).—Yesterday completed our fifth year here, when three more were received into fellowship; two restored and one by letter. During our five years we have had a pleasant and happy period of service in this field. The brethren and sisters have treated us with uniform kindness and consideration, and have worked well in every depart-

ment. While nothing phenomenal has transpired, there has been a marked advance "all along the line," to use a common militarism. We have had by faith and obedience, 118; by letter, 79; restored, 41; making a total of 238. Many of these have removed from us by letter, a few have "gone back, and walk no more with us" (though happily very few), and some have "fallen asleep." So that I do not know what the net gain would be. The secretary could supply this information. However, the meetings, both for worship and gospel proclamation are good, and the prospects cheering. We therefore thank God and take courage.

C. W.

SOUTH WELLINGTON.—Another splendid meeting Sunday evening, November 25th, Bro. McCrackett preaching on "The Last Will and Testament." At the close a man with a history came out and made the good confession. The Sunday School also scored a record attendance of 158. "Yet there is room."

November 26th.

D. M.

South Australia.

STRATHALBYN.—Last night our hearts were again gladdened by seeing one come forward at the close of the service and make the good confession. We sincerely trust that more will soon follow. Bro. Harris is faithfully sowing the good seed, which we feel sure (as our meetings are exceedingly well attended) will in God's own good time bring forth the desired fruit; for he has said that his word will not return unto him void but will accomplish that whereto it has been sent.

December 17th.

J. M. GORDON.

STRATHALBYN.—Since last report we have been called upon to mourn the loss of our late and highly esteemed Bro. Isaac Cross, who fell asleep in Christ on Tuesday evening last, 27th inst. Bro. Harris committed the remains to the grave last Thursday afternoon, in the presence of many sorrowing friends, and last evening conducted a memorial service in the chapel, which was crowded. Our late brother was well known in this town and neighborhood, and was respected by all. May the God of all comfort console the widow and fatherless in this their affliction, and may they be kept by his sustaining power until they too are called up higher to meet their loved one in heaven, and be for ever with the Lord.

December 3rd.

J. M. GORDON.

HINDMARSH.—Since last report was sent, Sister Susan Edwards has been received by letter from the church at York, and one young lady has made the confession.

A. G.

UNLEY.—Large meeting to-night. P. A. Dickson, from Sydney, preached an excellent sermon, after which three were baptised, two of these from Cottonville. The brethren at Cottonville feel encouraged and are looking for more to come out on the Master's side.

P. S.

Dec. 16.

YORK.—The anniversary services of the Sunday School were held on Sunday, Nov. 11th. In the afternoon a service of song entitled, "Peter, the fisherman," was rendered by the scholars. The singing, which was conducted by Bro. F. Charlick, in his wonted excellent manner, was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience, which considering many counter attractions was a good one. There was a crowded congregation at the evening gospel service, the latter being interspersed with musical selections by the scholars. On Nov. 12th the annual S.S. Picnic was held. The scholars and friends were taken in several conveyances to the ground, a picturesque spot near the Grange, one of our watering places. The scholars and friends thoroughly enjoyed themselves, the former being especially interested in the food (of which

there was abundance), games, racing, and (last but not least, fishing in the river. There was no mishaps or accidents of any kind, and the picnic was one of the most enjoyable yet held. On Thursday evening, Nov. 22nd the service of song was repeated; although the night was warm, there was a fair audience and good singing.

Dec. 3rd.

W. G. L. CAMPBELL.

UNLEY.—Attendance in the morning only fair owing to the unbearable state of heat. Two were received into the church. In the evening it turned cooler, and we had a good meeting. Bro. T. J. Gore preached, and at the close three were immersed, one being from Cottonville.

Nov. 28.

FRANCY STOKER.

CARW.—Sunday, Nov. 25, Bro. Leng was with us afternoon and evening, preaching to good meetings. During the week held several services, also on following Sunday conducted meetings morning and afternoon. One young man made the good confession, and was immersed on Friday evening. Wednesday evening held a very pleasant temperance meeting.

Dec. 10, 1900.

R. K. S.

Here and There.

Here a little and there a little.—Isaiah 28: 10.

Good meeting and one confession at Brunswick.

Prahran awakening! Another confession last Thursday evening.

Another confession at Bendigo and two baptisms were reported last week.

On his last visit to Colac G. B. Moysey had the joy of hearing the confession of two sisters.

H. G. Picton is on a visit to Sydney, and preached to a good audience at Petersham last Sunday night.

W. Burgess wishes us to say that the number of miles around his circuit is 180, not 100 as stated last week.

Remember that there are 1400 towns in Victoria alone where we have no churches. On January 6th you will be invited to help send the gospel to some of these places.

The few brethren in Terang now meet each Lord's day in R. C. Neilsen's house. Bro. Neilsen is secretary. They would be pleased to have any of the brethren give them a call who might pass that way.

All orders for FIRST PRINCIPLES have now been filled. We have still a supply of the books, which we would be glad to send out. We have also a few of the Senior and Junior Leaflets, which we can supply to those requiring them.

Please will all our readers remember that it is intended to make one great thankoffering for Home Missions at the Twentieth Century Demonstration in the Lygon-st. chapel on January 9th. Please lay by in store for this great occasion.

If any of our readers in or about Melbourne fail to attend the Twentieth Century Demonstration in the Lygon-st. chapel on January 9th, they will miss the occasion of a life-time. Set apart the afternoon and evening for this great occasion. Many of our country brethren might very profitably attend this great Conference. The afternoon meeting is deeply important.

George Manifold of Christchurch, N.Z., informs us that the New Zealand churches are sending to the U.S.A. for R. W. Stevenson to work as evangelist in that colony. Bro. Manifold knew Bro. Stevenson in Prince Edward Island and represents him as a splendid preacher. Bro. Stevenson is a graduate of Bethany College.

On December 11th the church in North Melbourne tendered a social to Thos. Hagger, in recognition of his services there in the protracted meeting recently held. There was a large gathering of the younger portion of the church, the older ones being conspicuously absent. Bro. Hagger was presented with a Bible, Sankey's hymn book, and a Farrar's Life of Christ and Life of Paul.

Percy Storer writes from Unley: "Pleased to report that on November 25th one young man came forward at Cottonville; he was baptised at Park-st., and was received at Cottonville last Lord's Day morning. Good meetings all day December 9th. In the evening, after a splendid discourse by Bro. T. J. Gore, one who last Sunday made the good confession was baptised, and one came forward and confessed his faith in Christ.

Bro. John A. Ewers, the youngest son of D. A. Ewers, received a suitably inscribed gold medal at the break-up of the Stanmore public school last week. This was presented by the member for the district to the scholar from the school who passed highest in the recent junior University exam. He has also recently passed a P.T. exam. in the Public Instruction Department, and will probably, like his eldest brother in Victoria, become a school teacher.

J. Colbourne writes:—"The new Almanac and also Sample of Eight New Tracts are at hand. I am very pleased with both. I think the Almanac is well gotten up and the passages of Scripture and verses of Hymn most appropriate for the commencement of the new century. I should be on the wall of every home where there are disciples, and indeed every disciple should secure extra copies to distribute among their friends who as yet are not with us in the family of God. It can but do good wherever it is seen."

It was our pleasure on the evening of December 12th to attend a social meeting at the church in Prahran. The schoolroom was crowded. It is wonderful what a drawing power a bun and a cup of coffee has. One brother spoke of the young members, and he had a splendid chance because they were there in force. The old members were not entirely absent, but they were scarce like Bro. Percy Pittman gave a good address, but it was spoiled for want of time. This is a fine field, and Bro. J. Pittman is making a great effort to revive the cause there.

"The Song of Creation" drew a large crowd to Lygon-st. last Friday night. W. C. Morro, B.A., presided, Jas. Johnston, Litt.B., gave the connective scripture readings, and Nat Haddow conducted. We do not pose as a musical critic, but from start to finish we enjoyed it much. What surprises us is that a great audience like that will gather and enjoy such a musical treat and then give next to nothing in the collection. The service represented a great amount of work and expense, and the collection was that paltry that those who did most of the work will have to make up the deficiency. We ought to make up our minds to give to this sort of thing, or stay at home.

The Sunday School Union of the church of Christ in New South Wales have decided to celebrate the inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth by holding a Grand Demonstration in the City Temple, Sydney, on Friday, January 11th, 1902. The whole of the schools associated with the Union will participate. Besides other items Choruses will be sung by a combined choir of about 300 voices now being specially trained for the occasion. A strong working committee has the matter in hand and are endeavouring by every means to make the demonstration a success in every particular. It is feared that the City Temple with its fine gallery will not be sufficiently large to accommodate the audience which is expected. Remember the date Jan. 11th, 1902.

A brother from Wellington, N.Z., writes us very severely about what we said of John A. Dowie. He says: "Whatever strange ideas and errors he may hold, I am convinced that he is honest." While we are not convinced that he is honest, we are convinced that he is a crank. Allow us to say that we are not an entire stranger to Mr. Dowie. We are convinced

that Mr. Dowie's pretensions as a healer are as false as can be. Our brother no doubt intended his letter for publication, but it is too long; besides, as the secular press says, much of it is "unfit for publication." We do not propose to allow our pages to be used to advertise John Alexander Dowie and his vagaries.

A good brother thinks that our Almanacs for "the last few years do not come up to former productions, when they were embellished with several of our notable men." Both last year and the year before the Almanac had pictures of "notable men" on them. This good brother then bought "a dozen or two and sent them around." He is much afraid that if we go on our downward course that such sheets as the "Salvation Army" and "Christian Herald" send out will be likely to chase us out of Australia, as he has "seen them hanging in the houses of disciples even; and theirs is a penny and yours twopence." You see a lot of things in the houses of disciples, but that does not show that we will have to go out of the Almanac business. To still our brother's feverish fears let us say that the sales of our Almanac is increasing every year. We do not attempt to compete with the Salvation Army, and if we did such help as the above writer gives is not likely to assist us much. This same brother objects to paying a trifle to keep the Church Directory going on the score that we ought to supply such information without extra pay, and then shows his liberality by sending us 5/- in advance for the CHRISTIAN next year, saying that it is in advance, and that the 5/- will do instead of 7/-. What a lot of encouragement we get from some people!

It is to be hoped that all the churches throughout Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales are preparing for a UNITED EFFORT on

COMMONWEALTH SUNDAY for a GRAND MISSIONARY RALLY. A New Century and a New Nation are an Exceptional Combination that should mark EXCEPTIONAL EFFORT. Shall we rise to the occasion? and on January 8th manifest our liberality. "As ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye ABOUND IN THIS GRACE ALSO."

Coming Events.

Observe the time of their coming.—Jeremiah 8: 7.

DECEMBER 31.—A United Watch Night Service by the Suburban and City churches, to commemorate the closing of the old century, and the opening of the new with prayer and praise, will be held at the Tabernacle, Johnstone Street, Fitzroy, from 10.30 to 12 p.m. Addresses by Bros. Green, Harward, Morro, Johnston, and others. Singing, prayers and praise. The brethren are earnestly invited to help to make this service a success.

DEC 31.—A watch-night service to commemorate the closing of the old century and the opening of the new one will be held at Doncaster from 11 to 12 p.m. An address will be given by Bro. Greenwood.

JAN. 1.—Lygon-street Lord's Day School Annual Picnic at Ivanhoe, New Year's Day, Jan. 1, 1902. All are invited. A welcome extended to all old members of Lygon-street. Trains run frequently. Refreshments 6d. Conveyance, 1/-.

JAN. 1.—A picnic will be held in the grounds of the Doncaster State School, opposite the church, commencing at 2 p.m. All old members and friends of the Doncaster church are invited. Hot water will be provided.

Acknowledgments.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.—Haggai 2: 8.

FOREIGN MISSION FUND.

VICTORIA.	
F. W. Greenwood, Doncaster	£ 10 0
T. Hagger, North Richmond	.. 0 10 0
Mrs. Black, Macorna	.. 0 10 0
Bro. Somerville, Glenferrie (2nd half)	.. 0 5 0
Church, Collingwood, per Sr. Knowles	.. 0 9 6
Church, North Fitzroy, Quarterly Coll.	.. 1 8 9
Church, N. Richmond, per Misses Corsons and Ward	.. 0 14 7

QUEENSLAND.	
Mrs. A. Main, Brisbane	.. 1 0 0

INDIAN FAMINE FUND.

VICTORIA.	
School, Brunswick (final)	.. 0 5 6
Sympathiser, Dandenong	.. 0 3 0
School, North Fitzroy (final)	.. 0 3 7
Col. Card, Minnie Philip	.. 0 5 8
"Children's Pennies," per Miss Hill	.. 0 0 5
Coll. Church, Footscray	.. 3 4 0
Coll. Card, Mrs. Hutchinson, Baringbup	.. 0 8 10
Coll. Card, Mrs. Hutchinson, Newbridge	.. 0 7 2

QUEENSLAND.	
Coll. Mrs. John Thompson	.. 0 5 6
H. Drainey, Toowoomba	.. 0 14 6
Mrs. A. F. Lloyd, Toowoomba	.. 0 15 6

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W. T. Clapham, Nelson	.. 0 3 0

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.	
E. Smith, Coolgardie	.. 0 10 0
Coll. School, Kalgoorlie	.. 1 0 0

TASMANIA.	
Coll. Miss J. Stevens, Tasmania	.. 0 10 0
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Mrs. Wilson, 1/-; B. Hill, J. Jones, 2/6; Miss Jackson, Jno. Robertson, T. G. Merrett, F. G. Lowen, Jas. Wilson, R. Oliver, H. Cox (W. Crowe), A. J. Ogilvy, D. A. Lewis, 5/-; R. K. Spotswood, 6/-; P. J. Latter, Mrs. H. Hopkins, J. Walker, A. M. Simpson, Wm. McArthur, W. H. Crosthwaite, Mrs. Wiseman, W. Beer, R. Sandilands, 7/-; Mr. Knights, D. Purvis, Mrs. Marlett, E. Bone, Arthur Wilson, Chas. Nunn, R. Begbie, H. LePage, J. Rainbow, J. Sharp, 10/-; T. B. Hunter, 13/-; W. Aitken, J. Woolcock, 14/-; Jas. Thomson, H. G. Maston, W. Murray, 15/-; A. Archdeacon, 18/-; R. J. Clow, Geo. Dickens, T. Darley, J. Townshend, 20/-; A. Hutchinson, 21/3; D. Parker, 23/-; F. Pocknall, 23/3; J. Dunning, 25/-; W. H. Bardwell, 30/-; E. A. Riches, 37/9; W. H. Keam, 69/-; Thos. Todd, 100/-; L. Broad, 105/-; H. E. Theobald, 120/-.

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New South Wales Conference.—R. Steer, Secretary, 25 Perry-st., Marrickville, Sydney. Geo. Annot, Treasurer, 30 Point Piper Road, Paddington.

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Cottage by the Sea.

A sister, highly recommended, has two furnished rooms to let at Port Fairy from December 22nd, or would Board a couple of friends. Charges reasonable. Apply at Austral.