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VISIONS OF THE CHRIST.



Dives and Lazarus.

Luke 16: 19-31.

R. G. CAMERON.

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God"—JESUS.—Mark 10: 23.

"Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God."—JESUS.—Luke 9: 20.

"We go our ways in life too much alone,
We hold ourselves too far from all our kind:
Too often we are dead to sigh and moan,

Too often to the weak and helpless blind,
Too often where distress and want abide
We turn and pass to the other side."

"If thou art rich, then show the greatness of thy fortune, or, what is better, the greatness of thy soul, in the meekness of thy conversation. Condescend to men of low estate, support the distressed, and patronize the neglected. Be great; but let it be in considering riches as they are, as talents committed to an earthly vessel; that thou art but the receiver, and that to be obliged and to be vain too, is but the old

solecism of pride and beggary, which, though they often meet, yet ever make but an absurd society."—STERNE.

In the first part of the chapter, our Lord in the parable of the Unjust Steward, had taught his disciples the lesson of the prudent use of money, so as to conduce to their interest in the life to come. "And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things; and they scoffed at him." They derided him and his teaching. It was diametrically opposed to all their ideas on the subject. They believed that the possession of riches was a manifest sign of divine favor, "that the man who was wealthy here would be wealthy in the world to come, and that God could not but esteem that which commanded the admiration of the well washed and decorous Pharisee," and that, on the other hand, poverty and disease were the results of sin, either in the sufferer or his parents. In reply to them Jesus said, "Ye are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God." And the parable which follows is an "exemplification and illustration of that utterance."

To make his meaning plain, Jesus takes an example of a man who belonged to the rich and respectable class, and depicts his life—a life of selfish luxury. "He was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day."

Let it be observed that this man was not an unscrupulous accumulator of money, who robbed and cheated his fellows, or oppressed and sweated his employes, making himself rich at the expense of others. Nor was he a miser who merely hoarded his gold that he might gloat over it; denying both to himself and others the comforts which money could buy. There is nothing in the parable to show that he was either of these. He was simply a rich man who lived his life of luxurious self-indulgence, and was selfishly indifferent to the needs and sufferings of others. In sharp contrast to this man and his life was "a certain beggar named Lazarus," poor, diseased, friendless and neglected; he is daily laid at the portal of the rich man's mansion, "desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from his table," while the pariah dogs which haunted the place, probably in quest of food also, "came and licked his sores."

Such is one side of the word picture so graphically portrayed by the Divine Artist. Jesus "then, for a brief season, lifts the impenetrable veil, which separates between time and eternity, and gives to his hearers, and all succeeding ages, a hasty, but unforgettable, glance into those things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." "And it came to pass, that the beggar died." Died of want and neglect,

under the very shadow of opulence and plenty. So ended his life of poverty and suffering. And "he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom." And so began his eternity of bliss and rest. "Abraham's bosom" was the most popular name for "Paradise," that part of Hades where rests the spirit of the departed just. "It rested on the idea of a great feast, in which Abraham was the host. To lie in his bosom, as John in that of our Lord (John 13: 23), was to be there as the most favoured guest" (Ellicott). "And the rich man also died, and was buried." No doubt he had a gorgeous funeral. "Wealthy neighbours as pall-bearers, doubtless bore the body of Dives to a splendid tomb." And great lamentation would be made over his death. The distinctions that had marked the lives of these two men would doubtless be kept up in their death. Lazarus, the beggar, died a beggar's death, and filled a beggar's grave." The rich man died as one of the rich, and was buried with all the pomp and show that money can secure. And, "so far as human eyes can see, the distinctions of rich and poor continue after death. "But Jesus draws aside the veil, and shows us that there is an instantaneous change in their states, and that this change is fixed and eternal."

And what a change it is! What a complete reversal of positions! Lazarus in Abraham's bosom "comforted," Dives in Hades (Tartarus or Gehenna) "in torments." The one beyond the reach of poverty and distress, the other beyond the help of wealth and position. He who was poor is now rich in the enjoyment of eternal felicity; while he who was rich is now so poor that he begs for a drop of water to cool his tongue. "He now begs of the beggar whom he was wont to refuse." But, alas! for him, he begged in vain. It was not in the power of even "Father Abraham" to grant his request. A rude shock this to those who were wont to boast, "We have Abraham to our Father," and who hoped for salvation because of their descent from him.

There were two reasons why his prayer could not avail.

1. He had been unfaithful in the stewardship of riches which had been committed to him—had used them solely in self-gratification. He had chosen the "good things" of this life to be his chief good, and had neglected to make any provision for his future, and, therefore, his present sufferings were the necessary result. He had chosen his good, and enjoyed and *exhausted* it. He must abide by the consequences of his own act.

2. But, "beside all this" betwixt him and them, there was "a great gulf fixed"—an impassable and unbridgeable gulf—so that, apart from the equities of the case, relief was impossible. Then he preferred another request. "I pray thee, therefore, Father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." A petition as unavailing as the first. It could not be. Nor was there any need of it; they had Moses and the prophets. He thought that if one went unto them from the dead they would surely repent. But the answer came

back, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead." A statement that was verified and illustrated in the case of the Jews of that very generation. They refused the testimony of Moses and the prophets concerning the Messianic claims of Jesus, and rejected him, and they still rejected him even after he rose from the dead.

Such was the parable. What are its lessons?

1. *That a man's condition in this world may be reversed in the next.* This is a most obvious lesson. Not that they must of necessity be reversed. "The parable is not a mere condemnation of wealth and defence of poverty." A man will not be shut out of heaven because he was rich here, nor will he be admitted there on the ground of his poverty here. Not position here, but character will determine our condition hereafter. Did men judge men on the same principles that God will judge us all, "if men were now grouped and ranked according to their spiritual and moral qualities, how often would rags take the precedence of purple, and the outcast from under the hedge be counted more valuable for eternal purposes than the well-housed and respectable citizen" (Dods).

But men do not so judge. And many of the decisions of this world will be reversed, by the infallibly righteous judgment of heaven.

2. *"Conscious existence after death,"* is the next lesson of the parable. By some this is questioned. Not indeed, that such an idea is in the parable, for it is so unmistakably and necessarily implied that denial is useless, but, it is claimed that our Lord merely made use of a prevailing idea to illustrate his point, and that he did not necessarily endorse the idea. But if our Lord did not intend to convey the idea of conscious existence after death, and if that is not a fact, what is the point of the parable? "If the future state revealed in this parable be untrue, then the teaching of the parable falls to the ground."

3. *"That men enter at death on a degree of their final state."* Lazarus was in a state of bliss, Dives in a state of torment. The one was not in heaven, nor was the other in hell. They were both in Hades though in different parts, Lazarus in "Abraham's bosom," Dives in "Tartarus." In anticipation of the final reward and punishment, the one was "comforted," the other "tormented." This seems to me to be the teaching of the parable on this point. I am aware that it involves a much controverted question, and I have no desire to dogmatise. What is clear, is, that immediately after death the poor man entered into a state of bliss, and the rich man into a state of torment, and to my mind the language indicates that neither had as yet received the full measure of the award due to him. Of course just as the term "Abraham's bosom" is figurative, so too the "flame" of fire is figurative. But the "comfort" of Lazarus, and the "anguish" of Dives were real and actual.

3. *That the condition after death is fixed.* The second reason given by Abraham, why relief could not be sent to Dives, expressed in the 26th v., "and beside all this be-

tween us and you there is a great gulf fixed," an impassable gulf—precluding the possibility of either escape or relief—excludes alike the Catholic idea of purgatory, and "the idea of a *post-mortem* gospel, such as is taught by some Protestants."

"The souls in hades await the judgment; but, as there is no crossing over from side to side in hades, they will come before the judge in the same relative positions as they occupied in his sight when they left the world. They will not be judged by deeds done in the spirit land of hades, but by 'the things done in the body' (2 Cor. 5: 10)."

Whatever other idea concerning the punishment of the wicked may be deducible from this parable, that of a *fixed* state of torment involving eternal separation from God and all that is good is most certainly taught.

The last great lesson of the parable is contained in what has been termed its "epilogue." The great and solemn lesson—

5. *That the divine revelation that God has given to men is sufficient to enlighten them in all matters of faith and duty in all things necessary to their present and eternal well-being.* "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead." And if the refusal or neglect to hear Moses and the prophets was attended with such fearful and fatal results to that generation, how shall we, to whom God has spoken "in these last days by his Son" (Heb. 1: 2), the word being "confirmed by them that heard him," "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb. 2: 3-4). We have no right to expect that any miracle will be wrought to startle us into a recognition of our duty. God has spoken, has revealed his will. Everyone to whom his word is accessible is responsible, both as to how he hears and how he heeds. "Take heed how ye hear" (Luke 8: 18). "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers" (Jas. 1: 22).

Poets' Corner.

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

What We Stand For.

For the Christ of Galilee,
For the truth which makes men free,
For the bond of unity
Which makes God's children one.
For the love which shines in deeds,
For the life which this world needs,
For the church whose triumph speaks
The prayer: "Thy will be done."
For the right against the wrong,
For the weak against the strong,
For the poor who've waited long
For the brighter age to be.
For the faith against tradition,
For the truth 'gainst superstition,
For the hope whose glad fruition
Our waiting eyes shall see.
For the city God is rearing,
For the New Earth now appearing,
For the heaven above us clearing
And the song of victory.

—J. H. Garrison, in *Christian Evangelist*

Selected Articles.

Wise men lay up knowledge.—Proverbs 10: 14.

The Importance of Keeping Converts.

B. F. MANIRE.

Samuel D. Hastings in a letter to the *New Voice* says of the manner in which prohibitionists have been working: "We make converts, but we lose thousands because we do not keep them under the influence of the truths that converted them." The *Voice* aptly characterizes this as "a masterly statement of a transcendently important truth" and then adds with reference to the converts that are made to the cause of prohibition: "Let us keep them under the influence of the truths that converted them." It is a fact that this "masterly statement" of Mr. Hastings is just as true of much of our evangelistic and church work as it is in his judgment of prohibition work. We make many converts to the cause of Christ; but we lose many because we do not keep them under the influence of the truths that converted them.

All preachers and churches ought to know, and certainly do know, that it is one thing to make converts, but quite a different thing to keep them; yet preachers and churches often act as if they did not know it. It is often more difficult to keep converts than it is to make them; yet the success of any cause depends as much on keeping the converts as it does on making them, if not more. Each of these departments of labour, however, is all important in its own place. Converts must be made or there will be none to keep; and converts must be kept or but little permanent good, if any, will result from making them. Indeed, to make converts and then to lose them may do more harm both to them and to the cause we wish to establish than not to have made them at all. "For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2Pet. 2:21).

It should be the aim of every evangelist and the work of every church to keep all converts under the influence of the truths that converted them. In the failure to do this we find the cause of so many sad losses to so many churches. Of the many converts made at our protracted meetings a large per cent. are lost simply because we fail to keep them under the influence of the truths that converted them. This is a most disastrous departure from the teaching of Jesus and the practice of the apostles and their co-laborers. The sooner we return to the primitive practice in this respect, the better will it be both for the prosperity of the local churches and the extension of the kingdom of God. The great fundamental truths that turn men to Christ are the truths that keep men in Christ and build them up in the Christian life; hence the transcendent importance of keeping them under the influence of these truths.

The great commission enjoins the keeping of converts as well as the making of them. "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you." *Teaching them*

to observe all things commanded—this is the way to keep them. This was exemplified in Jerusalem on and after the day of Pentecost. "They then that received his Word were baptized, and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." Thus converts were made, and thus they were kept under the influence of the truths that converted them in the city of Jerusalem where the work of the apostles began. They pursued the same course everywhere else; and we should follow their example.

Brethren, let us strive, in the love and by the help of God, to make as many converts to the cause of Christ as we can in this the last year of the nineteenth century; and at the same time let us use all the means which God has placed within our hands to keep these converts under the influence of the glorious truths that converted them. Thus will they and we enter the 20th century fully panoplied for the great conflict which before its close, we trust will win the world for Christ.—*Christian Evangelist*.

Correspondence.

I also will shew mine opinion.—Job. 32: 10.

The Open Membership Drift Among the American Churches.

In spite of rapid communication it takes a good long time to get a letter of inquiry to America and a reply thereto. But it comes at last to him who writes and waits. On November 30, I wrote for information on the above subject, and can at last, I think, disprove the existence of such a drift. In your leader of November 8 you state that "the largest of our churches in St. Louis divided on the question of membership—one section becoming an open membership church." This I denied, saying that the church divided on the question of the Divinity of our Lord. In answer to my inquiry the *Christian Evangelist*, of January 10 (this paper is published in St. Louis, and its editor was a member of the church in question), says: "There was never any division in a church in St. Louis on the question of 'open membership,' as it is termed. It was a difference on fundamental questions involving the deity and lordship of Christ, and therefore the value of all that Christ ordained and taught." Further, J. J. Haley writes: "No church of ours in St. Louis, either large or small, ever divided on the question of open membership. Many years ago there was a division over the organ question, and 12 years ago (I was living in St. Louis at the time) R. C. Cave, who denied the Divinity of Christ and nearly all of the other cardinal doctrines of Christianity, led off a small faction from the Central Christian Church, of which he was then pastor. This he constituted into a Rationalistic Unitarian Church, with no condition of membership but 'leave your name at the drug store.'" The testimony of others could be given, but these two are sufficient, I think, to show that

your statement was wholly erroneous.

You further add, "More recently still, one of our largest churches in Cleveland, Ohio, declared itself in favor of open membership and is now practising the same." This church is not the largest as you say, but the smallest in the city. I denied (1) that it ever declared itself in favor of open membership, and (2) that it is now practising the same. But it seems that I was at fault in the first point, and now frankly confess my error. Some unimmersed—I am informed that the exact number is two—were received into the church. Later I will state how this error came about. But on the second point in my denial I am more fortunate, and as that is the fact that would support your contention you are extremely unfortunate. Here is proof that the Cedar Avenue church, Cleveland, Ohio, does not now receive unimmersed persons into its membership. The *Christian Standard* of January 12 says: "There was some irregularity in one of the churches in Cleveland, but our understanding is that this condition no longer exists." J. Z. Tyler, another preacher of the city of Cleveland, and editor and manager of the Bethany Reading Courses, writes me that as soon as the action of the Cedar Avenue church became known, it was "very distinctly and definitely disapproved by our other churches in the city and vicinity, and by all our papers. I am told that none have been received without immersion since that time (four years ago)." The same statement is made by the Corresponding Secretary of the Ohio Christian Missionary Society, and the preacher's name, R. H. Cooley, is mentioned in the year book of this society as attending the annual convention and his name is given in the list of preachers and as a member of the S.S. Committee. A contribution from the church is also acknowledged. While the church was irregular, the Foreign Society refused a contribution from it, but Cooley's name is given in the list of preachers in the year book of 1900. I stated in my reply to you that Cooley had repented and repudiated his erroneous doctrine. My reason for this statement was that Bro. Jas. Johnston heard him so state in a talk to the students of Hiram College.

It is true that the *Standard* says, that it does not contend that "those who favour open membership have been convinced, but out of deference to the conviction of their brethren their personal views have not been pressed," but this surmise is not made regarding Cooley alone, but of the church as well. If it has ceased receiving unimmersed persons out of deference to the views of others, it shows how strong was the tide against its practice, instead of there being a drift towards open membership. In any event the statement of Bro. Johnston is evidence that would be received in any court. In the same talk, Cooley said, no persons unimmersed had been received into the membership of the church, and relying on this, I stated the same fact. It is an instance of one party saying, "we did not," and the other saying, "you did." The probable explanation is that the church had arranged some sort of quasi-membership whereby the unimmersed were fellowshiped, but not given full privileges of members. The dispute is

a case of tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum, and is not worth pursuing further, but it satisfactorily explains how the mistake came about.

The case stands thus: You at first asserted that there was an open membership drift among the American churches, and in proof cited the practice of two churches. One never divided on account of the practice you charge against it. The other did have this practice, but has quit. Where, then, is the drift? A drift means flowing towards a certain point. I have proved that the American churches—by the cases selected by yourself—are receding from that point! Perhaps you meant that they were drifting "from" open membership. If so, why didn't you say it? Your own cases prove that this is the true state of affairs.

Not content with these instances you support your case by the citation of the practice of the churches of New York and Brooklyn. As far as the former is concerned, it is not properly one of our churches. Its name indicates this. It has chosen as its name the Lenox Avenue Union Church. It is not a church of Christ, but a Union Church. Bro. Haley writes me that it has never been "regularly identified with the Disciples of Christ." S. T. Willis of New York, writes, that it differs from the New Testament church in various ways, both in teaching and practice.

As regards the Sterling Place Church, Brooklyn, New York, the *Christian Evangelist* says, "Whatever may have been the facts in the case at one time in the history of the Brooklyn church, with the history of which we are not familiar, that church is as regular in its teaching and practice now as any other in the brotherhood." The *Christian Standard* says, "The church is now under the leadership of a minister who would not consent to labour with a church that received unbaptised people into its membership." I was once called upon to preach for J. J. Haley at Cynthiana, Ky., who was absent holding a meeting for this Brooklyn Church. I wrote to him for the facts, and he writes, "These are the facts as I received them from the board of officers in a written statement. When Talmage's Church in Brooklyn broke up his Sunday School, came over to us, and a number of its leading workers desired membership in the Stirling Place Christian Church. The official board after canvassing the matter declined to receive them into the church without baptism, but invited them to attend, and offered them the privilege of membership if they desired it. Nearly all of them had been immersed and received into membership when I was there. There are no unimmersed people in the membership of the Brooklyn Church."

This is the end of the catalogue. Of the four churches which you charge with irregularity, one did not divide over that question; one is not identified with our people; one never admitted an unbaptised person to membership; the fourth did, but quit more than four years ago. When it is known that the American churches number 10,528, and the membership 1,149,982, I exclaim, What a drift! About as big as a wave on the Australian coast would be

which was caused by dropping a pea into the mid Pacific!

I will rest my case with the presentation of these facts, though others could be adduced. There is no drift among the American churches towards open membership. J. Z. Tyler confesses himself greatly surprised to hear such a statement. J. J. Haley says, "There is no such drift." The *Christian Standard* says the same, and adds, "If there had ever been any tendency, it does not exist now. If all that is charged concerning the three congregations specified were true, it would not follow that there was any such tendency as that referred to." The *Christian Evangelist* says, "There is no such 'drift' as the Australian brother mentions. On the contrary, we believe there never was greater unanimity among our churches as to the wisdom of adhering steadfastly to what they believe to be the New Testament faith and practice than at the present time." The papers and letters from which I quote are in my study in the Christian Chapel, Lygon-street, and may be inspected by anyone interested.

W. C. MORRO, B.A.

Reply.

The case of the church in St. Louis we admitted in reply to Bro. Morro's first letter, so nothing more need be said about that matter now. The case of Cleveland Bro. Morro admits, but says they have repented long ago in sack cloth and ashes. The evidence however does not seem to us very conclusive. "Our understanding is," and "I am told" strikes us just a little on the weak side. J. Z. Tyler lives in Cleveland; why did he not go and see, and the *Standard* might have verified its "understanding," seeing that it devoted many columns to exposing the departure at the time.

If Bro. Morro wants to hang us on that kind of testimony we object. R. Moffett, who lives in Cleveland, writes us under date of Jan. 17, 1901, "I will say that the officary of the Cedar Avenue church, Cleveland, adopted a resolution to accept members of pedo-baptist churches without inquiring as to their baptism and afterward received several such persons, knowing that they had not been immersed." Farther on Bro. Moffett says:—"I do not think that the officary has expunged the resolution." Bro. Moffett also says: "A pastor of a church not far away from this city informed me a few days ago that a lady presented him a letter from the Cedar Avenue church and requested to be immersed."

In the face of this it strikes us that Bro. Morro's evidence lacks conclusiveness. Bro. Johnston says that he heard Bro. Cooley make his speech in which he "repudiated his erroneous doctrine," and that during "the same talk Cooley said no person unimmersed had ever been received into the membership of the church." We can't see according to this that the dear man had anything special to repent of. If according to the *Standard*, "those who favour open membership," amongst whom is Bro. Cooley, according to Bro. Morro, "have not been convinced," and there was no law violated we fail to see what he had to repudiate, or what all the fuss was about. It may be like Bro. Morro who

frankly confesses his error about the matter mentioned above, and then vehemently tries to prove that he was not in error at all. Bro. Morro thinks the probable explanation is that the church had arranged "some sort quasi-membership." After advocating this matter for more than a year, and receiving the sanction of the officers and the church, on a Sunday morning. Bro. Cooley said:

"The change in this church, about which there seems to be some misunderstanding, has been, not so much a change in personal religious convictions as a change in our attitude towards other Christians who differ from us. We recognise unimmersed persons as Christians in Endeavor conventions and union meetings, and we now also frankly, freely, and fully recognise them as such when they desire to come into the church here. They are welcome to the communion table and to all the fellowship and service of the church. Some of these people are living lives more devoted and consecrated than we are, and we expect to meet them in heaven if we get there ourselves. Then why should we hesitate to treat them in all places as Christ's disciples? It is only treating them with their religious convictions, as we would have them treat us with our religious convictions. The question really seems to be, Shall we apply the Golden Rule to the religion of Jesus? Shall we treat them as we desire to be treated by them?"

This does not look much like "some sort of quasi-membership." If they were not received into full membership then Bro. Cooley and the church in Cleveland have been sadly slandered by the *Standard* and many of the American brethren, and it is they who ought to wear the sackcloth instead of Bro. Cooley.

You say that the statement of Bro. Johnston would be received in any court. Neither Bro. Johnston's statement nor any other man's would be received in any court without some corroborating evidence, which in this case is lacking, in fact it is all on the other side.

About the church in New York. The only point Bro. Morro makes is that it has never been "regularly identified with the Disciples of Christ." B. B. Tyler says that the congregation on 119th-st. is "called 'The Lenox Avenue Union (Disciple) Church.' I have written the name just as it appears in the papers of the city."

The pastor, J. M. Philputt, in the *Standard* of February 22, 1896, speaks of the church on 119th-street as "among us," and as a part of the "brotherhood." For years it has been recognised and spoken of as one of the New York churches. If this does not regularly identify it with us, then we do not know what constitutes identification. It might differ, according to Bro. Willis, "from the New Testament church in various ways, and and yet be very much like other of our churches in New York. For years it has been stated in the public press of America that the Brooklyn church received the unimmersed into its fellowship, and it seems to us passing strange that it has never been contradicted. Both the *Standard* and *Evangelist* practically admit it.

Now in conclusion. From our standpoint the whole of the American churches are practically and logically open membership, and how they can avoid the actual thing eventually is more than we can tell. The pages of

church history prove conclusively that they can not nor will not. You can go into them, sing, pray, give, have fellowship at the Lord's table, and if you have the ability preach or teach at their worship meetings. What more than this can a member of the church have? Admit that a man is a Christian, and allow him all the rights and privileges of such and what more can you give him by placing his name on a church roll? Our American brethren are thinking and writing of these things.

One of these writers says that one has "Christian fellowship," and the other "church fellowship." There may be a difference, but it is small, and if anything in favour of "Christian fellowship." One writer in the discussion of the case of the Cleveland Church says:

What is *Christian fellowship*?

What is *church fellowship*?

Do we recognize a *Christian fellowship* with any to whom we should refuse *church fellowship*? If so are we, who claim to be simply Christians and nothing more, consistent in doing so?

If those persons in Cleveland had been content to just work with the church for which Bro. Cooley preaches—attending regularly the appointed services, partaking of the Lord's Supper with the members of the Cedar Avenue Church every Lord's day, contributing of their means to the support of the church, and joining with them in the missionary offering of the church, would the Cedar Avenue Church have been censured for permitting them to do so?

Would they not have been in *actual fellowship* with the members of that church?

What privilege is accorded them when they formally "received into the fellowship of the church," that they did not already enjoy?

What has the church done in this formal action except to openly and publicly admit what was already virtually implied in their attitude and relation to these members?

Mr. Cooley simply followed out the logic of his position, and acted the part of a consistent man.

Bro. Morro can smooth this matter over as he likes, and the American papers can use all their broad generalities, but brethren everywhere are thinking along the lines indicated above, and they are logical, reasonable lines, and the questions involved cannot be settled by a wave of the hand. In justice to Bro. Morro, and in the interest of the truth, we publish Bro. Morro's letter to the *American Standard* and its reply. Bro. Morro's letter to the *Evangelist* is similar to that of the *Standard*, only he adds that our statements have a tendency to "nullify any effort towards a better feeling between the two brotherhoods." We are not aware of anything but a good feeling between the two brotherhoods, and do not see the need of any effort being made to improve it. There are some things they do over there which we do not quite like, and there are some of our practices which they do not quite appreciate, but we love one another all right. Below we give the reply of the *American Standard*, which is very strong corroborative evidence of the general broadening tendency of things in the American churches.—E.D.

AN IMAGINARY DRIFT.

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, Nov. 30, 1901.

Editor *Christian Standard*:—Recently an Aus-

tralian brother stated in our church paper that there is an "evident drift" among our American churches towards open membership; i.e., admission of persons not baptised to the full privileges of membership. In proof, he made the following statement: "A short while ago, the largest of our churches in St. Louis divided on the question of membership, one section becoming an open-membership church. More recently still, one of our largest churches in Cleveland, O., declared itself in favor of open membership and is now practising the same." Later he cited a church in Brooklyn as admitting unbaptised persons to membership. These statements have the tendency to prejudice the Australian brethren against the American churches, and trusting you can give me satisfactory information on this subject, will you please state in the *CHRISTIAN STANDARD* whether the above facts are true? Is there any tendency among the American churches to admit persons not baptised to membership? Thanking you in advance,

W. C. MORRO,

Evangelist, Lygon Street Church.

"In making a general reply to the foregoing communication, the *Standard* will say that there is no 'evident drift' among the American churches toward the admission of persons not baptised to the 'full privilege of membership.' If there ever had been any tendency, it does not exist now. If all that is charged concerning the three congregations specified were true, it would not follow that there was any such tendency as that referred to. The uncompromising attitude of the great majority of preachers and churches toward the occasional man or congregation who becomes dissatisfied with the New Testament conditions of church membership is proof that there is not, and has not been, any general tendency in the direction of 'open membership.' The facts in the three cases named are about as follows: In St. Louis a gifted preacher (not in the largest church), went off into what is practically called Unitarianism, and carried some of his personal friends with him. These people built a house of worship, and made no claims to fellowship with the churches devoted to the New Testament plea. The body of the church remained faithful, and the membership is much larger at present than ever before. There was some irregularity in one of the churches in Cleveland, but our understanding is that this condition no longer exists. It is not contended that those who favor 'open membership' have been convinced, but, out of deference to the convictions of their brethren, their personal views have not been pressed. Whatever was irregular in Brooklyn is a matter of the past. The church is now under the leadership of a minister who would not consent to labour with a church that received unbaptised people into its membership. Here and there might be found a preacher and a few members who think it expedient to admit to membership those who have submitted to sprinkling or pouring for baptism, but we know of not a single man of this little group disposed to make an active propaganda of his views. Even those who favored the admission of persons who had been sprinkled or poured did so under distinct limitations. Their intention was about as follows: Present conditions are anomalous; people who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all their heart and give evidence of Christian character, believing they have been baptised, and being in full sympathy with the plea for the union of God's people on the New Testament foundation are ready to become members of the congregations devoted to this plea. To meet their case, certain brethren have believed it would be wise to receive them into membership, with the distinct understanding that immersion would be the uniform observance for all who came by primary confession.

The provision proposed was simply in behalf of the people who wish to renounce denominational relationships, but who are not yet convinced that their sprinkling or pouring was not baptism. There has never been any indication of a desire for unlimited "open membership." But even this qualified and closely guarded proposition to receive certain affusionists into membership of the churches has met with no favour among the brethren, and there exists no tendency towards its adoption. At no previous period have the American churches been more unanimous in insisting on the New Testament conditions of church membership than now."

Our Missions.

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.—Mark 16: 15 (R.V.).

Victorian.

W. BURGESS reports continued interest in the district. One addition by faith and obedience at Kyabram. T. Hagger had been visiting the district, conducting special meetings at time of writing. In-gathering expected.

E. GRIFFITHS had visited all the churches in his circuit. At Mystic Park one young man confessed the Saviour, and was baptised. The prospects in the district very encouraging.

A. W. CONNOR reports having visited all parts of his circuit during the month, having good meetings, but no additions to report.

H. LENG has visited all the churches in his district. Good meetings, especially at Wampony and South Lillimur. At the former place three made the good confession, and were immersed. All these are fine earnest young people. Bro. Jas. Johnston is expected to be with them at their local Annual Conference.

R. G. CAMERON also very kindly sent a report of his 16 days visit to Meredith and district. Altogether he conducted 14 gospel meetings, and was cheered by four additions by faith and baptism.

Read This Slowly And Think.

- Does my life please God?
 Am I studying my Bible daily?
 Am I enjoying my Christian life?
 Have I ever won a soul for Christ?
 Is there anyone I cannot forgive?
 How much time do I spend in prayer?
 Have I ever had a direct answer to prayer?
 Am I trying to bring my friends to Christ?
 Just where I am making my greatest mistake?
 Is there anything I cannot give up for Christ?
 How does my life look to those who are not Christians?
 How many things do I put before my religious duties?
 Have I ever tried to give one-tenth of my income to the Lord?
 Is the world being made better or worse by my living in it?
 Am I doing anything I would condemn in others?

—Selected.

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The Leader.

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

The Great Humiliation.

The greatest event in the history of the world was the advent of Jesus. That which makes it the greatest event is the fact that then, and only then, the divine assumed the garb of humanity. That which makes the stories of the life of Jesus told by the evangelists so powerful and touching is the fact that they tell us of the life of one whose abiding upon earth was, for the time being, a renunciation or giving up of a former glory. If we are to assume that the history of Jesus began with his birth—that Bethlehem marks the first stage of his career—then we have a Jesus whose history is wonderful enough, but out of which has gone the one great thought that touches it with divine glory. Such a Jesus might have furnished the world with a great philosopher, but never with a Saviour. The world has had its philosophers in ample number—one more added to the list would

not have counted for much. A gain it might be, but not a mighty moving force in the world's redemption. It is even impossible to think of the Jesus of the Gospels as a mere philosopher, because we want to know where his philosophy came from? If we take the picture given us of Jesus by the more reasonable and intelligent of sceptics, we are surprised that they can give such a portrait of him without realising that it is eloquent of his divinity. Take, for instance, the following declaration of John Stuart Mill, the ablest of English sceptics: "It is no use," he says, "to say that Christ, as exhibited in the Gospels, is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of his followers. Who among his disciples, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee; as certainly not Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies were of a totally different sort; still less the early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good which was in them was all derived from a higher source." This declaration, if it is to mean anything at all, must mean that Jesus was not the natural product of his age. That he was not what he was because of his environment, but in spite of it. It is equal to saying that it takes a Jesus to invent a Jesus. It means that if his earthly surroundings do not account for his wondrous personality, it is eminently reasonable to conclude that they were of heavenly origin.

The latter is the position which Jesus himself assumed. And, if he, the wisest and best that ever lived, could claim for himself and his teaching a heavenly origin, on what grounds can we refuse to accept his testimony? We cannot on the one hand ascribe to Jesus superlative wisdom and goodness, and on the other, make a statement which imperils the very existence of these qualities. If Jesus made a claim, which, from its character is so stupendous that we are led to dispute its validity, we can only do so at the expense of either his wisdom or goodness, but, as no one, whose opinion is worth taking into account, presumes to do this, it seems fair to assume to his own explanation of his personality is the correct one. In this explanation or declaration, there is no question but that Jesus claimed kinship with the Father. Not a kinship that had its origin on earth, but one that existed before the beginning of time. The consciousness of this pre-existence was present with him when he declared "Before Abraham was, I am." In this declaration, as Meyer says, there is a

glance backward of the consciousness of Jesus upon his personal pre-existence. It was so understood by the Jews to whom the words were addressed, for in their anger that any living man should claim to have lived before their great father Abraham, they took up stones to stone him. Again at the Supper table, after stating that "he came forth from the Father" (John 16: 28), he prays "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world began" (John 17: 5). From these and kindred passages, it is clear that Jesus looked back to a time, anterior to his earthly life, in which he shared with the Father the glories of the unseen universe. That this existence was not merely an ideal one, but personal and active, is further demonstrated by the Apostle John. In the first chapter of his gospel he tells us of Jesus as the divine Word being actively engaged in the work of creation. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." And that we should not be in any doubt about whom he is speaking, he further declares, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

It was the thought of this amazing condescension of Jesus that filled the heart of the Apostle Paul with love and wonder. The pre-existence of Jesus in glory with the Father was clearly apprehended by him. His glory was as real as his humiliation. How beautifully Paul expresses the idea in his epistle to the Philippians. "Being in the form of God, he did not consider that he was plundering when he claimed equality with God. He did not therefore look upon his divine prerogatives as a booty of which he feared to be deprived, and which therefore it was necessary to guard jealously. He reigned not as a tyrant but as a lawful sovereign. He could therefore divest himself of the outward splendours of his rank without fear."* There can be no humility in being a man, if that is our state in the nature of things. It is no humility for the inferior not to set himself up against his superior. If being a man, Jesus washed the feet of men, he did not empty, did not humble himself; if being a man, he did not grasp at equality with God, he deserves no praise. Paul, however, was not in the habit of writing thus loosely. The "humbling" of Jesus was to him a great reality. "For, he says, 'ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

*Paraphrase of Phil. 2: 6-11, by Bishop Lightfoot.

that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." To him, the first step in the humiliation of Jesus was his being born a man, and the last, his death upon the Cross of Calvary. The writer to the Hebrews also emphasises the fact of Christ's pre-incarnate existence. Whitelaw, in his "Divinity of Jesus," sets forth some of the points expressed in this Epistle. "(1.) 'It depicts Jesus, in contrast with the prophets of the Old Dispensation, as the Son of God, the Heir of the Universe, the Creator of the worlds, the Brightness of God's glory, and the express Image of his Person. (2) It styles him the First Begotten, whom his Father introduced upon the stage of time amid a chorus of angelic worshippers. (3) It describes him as the Divine Occupant of an ever-enduring throne, the phrase 'for ever and ever' reaching as far into the past as it does into the future. (4) It represents him as the Unchanging Architect of the earth and the heavens, and referring to the epoch of his world-building activity as 'in the beginning.' (5) Finally, it characterises him as Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, viz., from everlasting to everlasting. Equivalent to the apocalyptic formula, 'who is, and who was, and who is to come.'" There is no need to cite any further. The New Testament is full of testimony such as we have already given. That which we have given is merely to remind us of the infinite love of God manifested through his Son. We are apt to forget the regal state which the Son of Man laid by when he came forth from the Father to redeem mankind. We may never, this side of time, understand the mystery of the duality of Christ's nature; if we did, we should be Christs ourselves. But our not understanding the mystery need be no hindrance to our acceptance of the fact. J. Pulsford, one of the finest thinkers of the last century, says, "All after humiliations of our Lord were nothing to the first, namely, that of his incarnation. The great humiliation was to make himself flesh. That being done, the manger and the cross, and all that lay between, were, comparatively small considerations. 'Being formed in fashion as a man,' it is not half so surprising that he should surrender himself to be despised and crucified, as that, being Lord of all, he should be willing to put on our mortal flesh. Self-intelligent men find difficulty in conceiving Jesus Christ to be the Lord our God, but simple hearts never did, and never will. The law is well-known in heaven by which the sweet mystery is "hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes,"

Editorial Notes.

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

A Medical Declaration.

A number of medical men in Sydney have signed a document as follows:—"We, the undersigned, recognising the widespread ignorance prevailing with regard to the nature and effects of alcoholic liquors, and believing that much disease, insanity, pauperism and crime in this community results from an indiscriminate consumption of these as beverages, feel called upon to make known the following facts: 1. That perfect health is compatible with abstinence from all alcoholic beverages. 2. That alcoholic liquors instead of increasing, as is popularly assumed, rather decreases capacity for work, and should be expressly abstained from, when extremes of heat or cold have to be borne. 3. That the natural use of alcoholic liquors in quantities, conveniently deemed moderate, is often productive of serious disease. 4. That alcoholic drinks should never be given to persons suffering from ill health or disease, except by the advice of a medical man. 5. That no medical man should prescribe alcohol without a grave sense of responsibility, and that the quantity and duration of time for taking it should be definitely fixed." This declaration is not the concoction of fanatical teetotalers, but the sober conclusions of seven medical men, and it is expected the document will be signed by the great bulk of the doctors. It is encouraging to note that such an influential paper as the *Sydney Morning Herald* commends it as "moderate" in tone, and correct in substance.

Our Home Fields.

The great object of our Conference is the extension of Christianity at home and abroad. The home fields are broad and remunerative, but our hands are tied. All over the Commonwealth States are numbers of large towns where, as yet, the banner of primitive Christianity has not been unfurled. We cannot enter them for want of funds. In some cases we are spending money freely in small places and passing by the large. In the South African campaign Lord Roberts aimed at once to capture such large towns as Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, Pretoria, and other strategic points. Is it wise for us to expend much labor and cash in comparatively unimportant localities? There are, of course, new towns or districts which from their very position are destined to become large centres and it is well to occupy them early, but there are others, which, in the very nature of the case, can never become very populous. Our point is not that these are unimportant but that

central and growing localities have the greater claim. The opening up of at least one new and promising field should be the aim of each Conference every year. But this cannot be done unless the mission fields already occupied make a decided step towards financial self-support. There may be, and sometimes are, exceptional circumstances, which have to be taken into account, but as a rule, every field should show a pronounced advance in this direction in its Conference report. If after a number of years there is no indication of reaching this desirable goal it becomes a grave question whether the money spent there should not be diverted into a more profitable channel. Brethren cannot be expected to contribute largely for the support of work that continues stationary. Our motto is "Forward," and where a forward movement is being made the churches will rally to the aid of the Missionary Committee. Mission churches, like babies, should grow and the church that after several years Conference nursing is still unable to stand alone is rather an affliction than a credit to the family with which it is connected.

An Age of Credulity.

We live in an enlightened age, a scientific and progressive age, and we look back upon the absurd beliefs of the past with a wondering pity for the benighted folk who lived in those dark times. We no longer believe that epilepsy or St. Vitus dance can be cured by the king's touch, and as for witches and fairies we cannot understand how intelligent men and women ever believed in such manifest absurdities. Our grandfathers lived in an age when the silly and blasphemous claims of Joanna South-Cott were accepted by tens of thousands of fanatical followers but we have outlived all such humbug and rejoice now in the full blaze of scientific light which have dispelled for ever the mists of ignorance and superstition. But is it really so? As a matter of fact was there even such an age of credulity as this—the dawn of the twentieth century? We are not alluding to the fetich worship of Africa, the idolatry of India and China, or the false teachings of Mahometanism, but to the credulity of educated ladies and gentlemen in Christian lands. J. A. Dowie claims to have 50,000 followers who believe him to be a prophet of God. Tens of thousands of pious people regard Mrs. White, the leader of the Seventh Day Adventists, as an inspired prophetess and accept her "Testimonies" and "Revelations," however ridiculous, as absolutely authoritative. Three hundred and fifty thousand followers of Joseph Smith the "Revelator," actually believe that their prophet received from the Angel Moroni the golden plates covered with "reformed Egyptian" characters, which

he was enabled to translate by the aid of special spectacles, also miraculously provided, and thus the dreary "Book of Mormon" was written. The golden plates and spectacles then conveniently disappear. Boston, the "Hub of America," if not of the universe, is the home of the "Christian scientists," who deny the existence of matter and of pain, and who claim to have in their ranks many of the cultured of the land. Besides all these, there is a church boasting of 240,000,000 of members, a cardinal point of whose teaching is that on the pronouncement of three words by a priest a wafer is changed into the actual body and blood of Jesus—the very same body with its bones, nerves, sinews and muscles, which hung upon the cross at Calvary. There is no visible change, and to the sense the wafer remains the same, but the pious Catholic must believe that it has become the very body and blood, soul and divinity of the Saviour. Unless he, in defiance of his senses, believes this enormous lie he is guilty of mortal sin and consigned to everlasting damnation. As Caskey says: "Do you ask for more superstition than this? Do you call for greater gullibility, for profounder ignorance? Is there in all the annals of time anything that can compare with it? Perhaps the length and breadth, the chaos of darkness brooding over its depths of superstition, is shown in this more than in any absurd dogma. It enables a man to accept what he knows is false. The person who can accept as true that a wafer of naked flour is flesh would have no difficulty in accepting it as true that a rock is soft, that rain is dry; or that a man is a ray of moonshine." Barnum explained his success as a showman by the affirmation that "people love to be humbugged," and it would also appear that some such explanation is necessary to enable us to understand the amazing credulity of this enlightened century.

Biographical.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.
—Proverbs 22: 1.

Life of Elder John Smith.

CHAPTER XXIII.

John Smith kept no journal; but, for awhile in 1828, he noted down the results of his labors each week; and now, after he had sat one evening at home, reviewing the work of the past for months, he announced the results to his wife.

"Nancy," said he, "I have baptised seven hundred sinners, and capsized fifteen hundred Baptists; so we have made two great mistakes."

He had said to her, at the beginning of the year, that the Reformation would not prevail in his lifetime; yet six months only had

passed by, and it was already established in the hearts of the people. He had counted up the sacrifices, too, that he would have to make, and had talked of the persecutions that he would have to endure; but now he felt that the struggle was over, and that he would henceforth be called to labor only in pleasant fields. He ascribed all this success to the Truth itself; for, in the very hour of his triumph, he seemed to be unconscious of his power. He thanked God, and his wife, for what he had accomplished, and, with strong hope and unabated zeal, he resolved to work on in the good cause as before.

About this time he received a letter from Walter Warder, of Mason County, urging him to be present at the meeting of the Bracken Association, which would soon convene at Wilson's Run, in Fleming County. He learned at the same time that there would probably be some sharp contention in that Association, growing out of the attempt of certain religious leaders to impose some grievous ecclesiastical yoke upon the people.

Smith was chosen by the Association to address the people on Sunday; and he did not fail to improve the opportunity to enlarge upon the freedom of the Gospel, and to urge the people to throw off every ecclesiastical yoke. They were all charmed by his manner; many were convinced by his reasonings, and he at once became the master spirit of the Association. In the words of a prominent actor in the scenes of that day, "It was John Smith that gave impulse and tone to the Reformation in Bracken, as he had already done in North District, Boone's Creek, and other Associations."

On Monday, Bracken resolved to recommend no creed or confession of faith to the churches, save the New Testament.

When the Association adjourned, Smith took a short tour through Mason and Bracken Counties before he returned home. He went from Wilson's Run to Mayslick, followed by many from the Association, who, it seems, could not be satisfied with hearing him. From Mayslick he passed on to Washington, and then to Ohio Locust, a meeting house near Germantown—the people following him from place to place.

At Ohio Locust, the first discourse of the day was delivered by Buckner H. Payne, who was already preaching the *New Gospel* with much success. The people wondered that one so young could preach with so much power, for they looked upon him as a novice, and all knew, besides, that he had never been specially called to the ministry. During his discourse, he occasionally spoke of the *Holy Ghost*; but his father in the Gospel, who sat behind him, promptly corrected him before the people. "Say the *Holy Spirit*, my brother!" Smith exclaimed more than once, as the young speaker blundered against the *New Translation*.

When Payne had concluded, a man came to Smith, as he was about to rise, and, in a whisper, directed his attention to a stranger, of good appearance, standing in a remote part of the congregation.

"That man," said he, "is John P. Thompson: he has come all the way from the White River country, in Indiana, to destroy *Campbellism*, and to lead back the people to the old paths again."

"Are you acquainted with him?" inquired Smith.

"Yes," said the brother; "he used to preach here some years ago."

"Then, when I am done, I want you to introduce me," said Smith, "for I must know the man that has come all the way from Indiana to oppose what he believes to be an error."

Smith arose, and, in his artless manner, introduced the subject of his address.

"While my brother was speaking," said he, "I was thinking, as I have no doubt you all were, of that passage of scripture which saith: 'The natural-man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them: for they are spiritually discerned.' Now, I am going to speak to you from that very passage, just three-quarters of an hour."

Sunday School.

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

LESSON FOR MARCH 17TH.

Jesus and Pilate.

Luke 23: 13-26.

GOLDEN TEXT—"I find no fault in this man.—Luke 23: 4.



AFTER the shameful treatment that Jesus receives at the hands of the Sanhedrin, he is taken early in the morning, April 7, A. D. 30, to Pilate, the Roman Governor over Judea. The

death of Jesus, for which the Jews were working, could not become legal until the Governor had given his consent. To accomplish this the scribes, and Pharisees and priests left no stone unturned. Having failed to find witnesses from among themselves upon whose evidence they might put Christ to death, they think fit to condemn Christ upon his own statement. He thus contributes to his own death. But now

TWO ROYAL WITNESSES

appear in the persons of Herod, Governor of Galilee (who was staying in Jerusalem at this time, and to whose province Jesus belonged) and Pilate. Both these witnesses declared Jesus to be innocent of the charges brought against him. In these formal trials Jesus is found "not guilty." What must be the feeling of the soul which knows its innocence, and yet has to face an opposition that defies all justice and clamors for a death sentence? Pilate's offer to chastise Jesus after having declared him innocent is the part of a weakling—a policy hunter. At this stage a robber and a murderer, named Barabbas, now in prison for his crimes, is requested to be re-

leased by the Jews, when Pilate holds up Jesus before them as an innocent man and worthy of freedom. But in the

CHOICE OF THE TWO

Barabbas gets his liberty and Jesus is sent to his doom. It was a custom to release a convict at the feast. This was another effort Pilate made to set Jesus free, but the clamor of the multitude grows more vehement, and the resistance of Pilate more weakly. Then the third time Pilate, desiring to free Jesus, appeals once more to the throng, attesting the innocence of Jesus, but, alas, it was of no avail. Gradually he had been losing hold of that rabble, and now his hold has gone for

THE FATAL VOICES

prevail. The longer the consent was withheld the more furious and persistent became the demand of the Jews for Christ's death. Crucifixion was the only thing that seemed to appease the anger of the blood-thirsty priests and Pharisees. No doubt Pilate realised that his power had gone, and that the more he defended the Christ the greater likelihood there was for the excited crowd to degenerate into a tumult or riot, and if this could be prevented by consenting to the death of Jesus, surely it was worth the cost.

JAS. JOHNSTON.

From The Field.

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

Tasmania.

IMPRESSION BAY.—We are preaching to good audiences in this district. Notwithstanding the frequency of our meetings, they are all well attended. Our gospel meeting at Nubeena every Sunday evening is especially encouraging, the hall generally being packed, and sometimes unable to accommodate all the people that come. One young lady confessed her faith in Jesus last night, and this afternoon she was "buried with him in baptism." Others we are assured, will anon follow her good example.

Feb. 17.

C.M.G.

Victoria.

HAWTHORN.—A most enjoyable and successful demonstration was given by the Sunday School scholars last Tuesday evening, the 19th inst. The superintendent, Bro. Jos. Collings, occupied the chair, and the chapel was well filled by scholars, parents, and friends interested in S.S. work. A very interesting and well rendered programme consisting of choruses, solos, duets, recitations and dialogues, etc., contributed by the scholars, was gone through. The distribution of prizes to the scholars formed part of the evening's programme. Two of the prizes were "specials," awarded to scholars for bringing children into the school; the first was presented to Miss Ruby Staggard, who introduced no less than 14 children into the school during last year. The most gratifying result of the year's work was the pleasure of knowing that out of the Sunday School 17 scholars had made the good confession, and bid fair to stability and usefulness.

L. CLARKE.

ECHUCA.—Through the missionary spirit manifested by the Nth. Richmond church, we have had the valued services of their evangelist, Bro. Hagger. His visit extended from February 4th to the 16th. Meet-

ings were held on the way to Echuca at Runnymede, Ballendella, and Wharparilla.

On February 7th a protracted meeting of eleven days was started in Echuca. From the first the meetings increased in attendance and in interest, the concluding one being the best of the series. Bro. Hagger preached the gospel lovingly, earnestly, and boldly. Our hearts were cheered by three confessions, others being much impressed by the message, and many are near to the kingdom. The members of the church here have been encouraged, and much blessing has been the result of our brother's visit. Returning homewards, Bro. Hagger preached at Kyabram, Merrigum, Cosgrove (two nights), and concluded his mission at Shepparton.

Our thanks are due to the Nth. Richmond church; also to Bro. Hagger for his interesting labors while in our midst.

February 25th.

W.B.

COSGROVE.—After Bro. Hagger's visit to Echuca, he came over to Cosgrove with Bro. Burgess, via Kyabram and Merrigum, preaching at those places. Wednesday and Thursday nights, February 20 and 21st, he preached here, but owing to the weather being threatening the first night only a few came. The second night there were about double as many. These meetings seem to be very much appreciated, the meeting house being nearly always full, and we feel sure that if one took the step more would soon follow. Some we know have made up their mind, but have not the needed courage to confess Christ.

S. FROST.

New South Wales.

LISMORE.—Between Bro. Way and Lismore brethren fortnightly services have been held at Bungawalbyn for some time. They have been much cheered by the addition of six by faith and obedience last Lord's day week (30th ult.) Four of these were from the Sunday School.

J. P. F. W.

MOREE.—Moree is the centre of an extensive and fairly prosperous grazing area. At present, however, drought is laying a heavy hand on the country. Last week within a distance of 16 miles, on one stock route, the writer passed 10 large flocks of sheep travelling eastward to New England, in search of grass and water. These flocks numbered in the aggregate, I am told, 40,000 sheep.

I have now been about six weeks in Moree. Spiritually, the town is much impoverished. On the other hand, the drink trade is very flourishing, with the usual consequences.

We have started a Sunday School which now has 29 scholars. None have so far accepted Christ in Moree, but on February 15th, I had the pleasure of immersing a young woman at Gravesend, 31 miles east of Moree. This is the fruit of faithful sowing by Bro. Cook and family.

Feb. 18th.

D. C. MCCALLUM.

N.S.W. CONFERENCE NOTES.—To the brethren in Christ in N.S.W. The Annual Conference is fast approaching, and we want you to make this, our 16th annual meeting a success. 1st, We want all the members of the church to be present whether you are a delegate or not; we want all members to understand that our Conference Meetings are open to any brother or sister who like to attend. It is very cheering to see large attendances at all sessions. You can help us then by your presence, and we will get you more interested in our General Home and Foreign Mission work. 2nd, We want all the churches to be fully represented by delegates, and we want the delegates to take a live interest in meetings, and to be especially punctual in attendance. We are great believers in

enthusiasm; it is sometimes a problem how this can be done. We have seen the effect on Commonwealth Day, and will see it when the Duke of York arrives. Can we not manage to be enthused in the service of the King of Kings. Let the electric current of love to God bring us together at our Easter Conference, to unite together in providing ways and means of preaching the word, and then let us do with our might what our hands find to do—toiling on. Make up your mind to be present at the Annual Conference, in City Temple, Sydney. A programme of meetings will be issued in a few weeks.

R. STEER.

South Australia.

HINDMARSH.—Yesterday was one of the most trying days we have experienced for many months. The heat all day was terrific, consequently our assemblies suffered very much in the attendance. Nevertheless it was a time of much blessing to those present, especially so in the morning when the ten new members who were baptised on Wednesday evening last were all present and received a hearty welcome into the fellowship of the church. These were Sisters Hoskings, Gilbert, Nias, Booker, Maggs, Eve Rose and Eliza Houston, and Brn. Clarence Rainsford and Percy Combs. Many of these are the children of beloved co-believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are following in the footsteps of their parents. What a joy and comfort to parents and church alike! May they every one prove a blessing indeed, bringing forth much fruit, cleaving to Jesus their Lord to the end.

24th Feb.

A. G.

GROTE STREET.—We rejoice in being able to record further triumph of the blessed Master. Yesterday morning, a son and four daughters of our esteemed Bro. and Sister R. McWhittington were immersed in a profession of their faith in Christ, and received the right hand of fellowship at the Breaking of Bread. Our earnest prayer is that they may adorn the doctrines of God our Saviour in all things and at last receive the crowns of life, of joy, and of glory at his right hand. We also had the pleasure of a visit from Bro. Newham from Victoria, who addressed the church. Our esteemed Bro. Smith, by the blessing of God is able to resume his duties. We pray he may have all the strength he needs to continue his good work.

Feb. 25.

M.

UNLEY.—Since last report two have been received into the church, one by letter, and the wife of one of our Elders, by faith and baptism. On Wednesday Feb. 13th, Bro. Gore gave a lecture on the Inauguration of the Commonwealth. Bro. Gore, it will be remembered, was the invited guest of the N.S.W. Government, and consequently had ample provision made for his seeing this great event. He graphically described the celebration from the starting of procession to the swearing in at the pavilion and gave his hearers a vivid account of the splendid illumination of the city in day and night. At suitable intervals the choir rendered "The Song of Australia" and "Hail Australia." Sunday the 17th, in the morning Bro. Newham from Victoria spoke, and the evening to a large congregation, Bro. Gore preached.

Feb. 19th.

PERCY STORER.

POINT STURT.—We were much cheered last night at the invitation given by Bro. Thomas, to see and hear one of our Sunday School scholars, Miss Nellie Yolland, come forward and make the good confession. May she be kept steadfast. This is the first addition here since Bro. Thomas came to labor with us, and we pray that others may soon follow the good example set by our sister.

Feb. 18th.

A.N.P.

OWEN.—On Sunday there was a decided improve-

ment in our meeting, most of the members being present with quite a number of visitors, when Bro. Finlayson had an opportunity of wishing the brethren and friends good bye before he left for his native shore. Bro. McLachlan and Finlayson, who are going together, intends staying some time in Scotland, and will be greatly missed in the work here. Bro. Finlayson, in the course of his address, said that his chief motive in returning home was to carry with him the glorious news of salvation, which he did not think had much been spoken of in and around his native home, and he fervently asked the brethren that they would pray for him in this great work. May the Lord assist our dear brother in his noble work, and may he rest assured that he will reap if he faints not. Feb. 19.

NORWOOD.—Last Thursday evening Bro. Newham from Melbourne addressed the meeting. Yesterday morning a family of five—father, mother and three daughters were received into fellowship by letter, four from the George-st. Christian church, and also one by letter from the church at Glenelg. One was received by faith and obedience, and one by letter also from the Williamstown church. At the gospel service last night one made the good confession. Feb. 25. A. C. RANKINE.

New Zealand.

NELSON.—Since our last we have to report that on Thursday last, one made the good confession and was baptised the same hour. Last Sunday evening another came forward (both from the school).

We have sustained rather severe losses of late by removals, no less than 11 members having removed during the last few weeks. W. T. C. Feb. 12th.

SOUTH DUNEDIN.—At our gospel meetings we have commenced the series of addresses on First Principles. On February 10th, F. L. Hadfield, of Oamaru, who has come to reside at Dunedin, delivered an able address on "The Bible." There was a splendid audience. On the following Sunday, S. J. Mathison spoke on "The Holy Spirit," and after the address a young man decided for Christ." S.T.M.

Here and There.

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

On Jan. 24 there was one confession and baptism at Mystic Park.

Thos. Hagger's address is now 256 Bridge-road, Richmond.

One confession Sunday night, City Temple, Campbell-street, Sydney.

One confession at the close of F. Collins' address at North Carlton—the husband of a sister who was baptised a fortnight ago.

Harvest Thanksgiving Service at North Richmond on Lord's Day evening last. An overflowing house and one confession.

Will the church secretaries in N.S.W. forward reports, statistics, etc., to R. Steer, 25 Perry-st., Murrumbidgee, Sydney, at once.

We are pleased to note from a correspondent's letter, that the school in Geelong is progressing very nicely, increasing slowly and surely.

At North Fitzroy church last Lord's day morning a young sister was received into fellowship who had been baptised on the previous Wednesday evening.

On our second back advertising page will be found matters of great importance to our Victorian S.S.,

especially to those in the S.S. Union. It is of some interest to all our Australian schools.

The Presidents of Dorcas Societies are requested to send in their reports for the year, to the Superintendent Dorcas Committee, on or before the 20th of March.

The *Argus* of last week, says that:—"The distillers are as much advantage to the farmers of Victoria, as is the purchaser of a pound of apples to a man owning an orchard."

At Petersham, last Lord's day, two baptised believers who have been worshipping there some time, were received into membership, and in the evening a lady confessed her faith in Christ.

Bro. McLaughlan, M.L.A., and Bro. D. Finlayson, of Owen, S.A., are leaving for a visit to their native land, Scotland. We wish them a pleasant time and safe return.

The rally for the Burwood Boys' Home will be held in the lecture hall, Swanston-street, on Wednesday, the 6th of March, from 10 o'clock, a.m. All sisters are kindly invited.

Our readers are reminded of the lantern lecture on the Paris Exhibition, next Monday, at eight p.m. All invited. Collection in aid of the Burwood Boys' Home.

During the stay of Bro. G. B. Moysey at Barker's Creek, two became obedient to the faith. On Feb. 17th, an old brother was restored. T. H. Scambler is at Barker's Creek for a few weeks.

Information has just been received that Hugh McLellan, M.A., after six years service at Sheebyville, Kentucky, has now removed to Richmond, Madison C., Kentucky. He enters upon his work there in response to a unanimous call from the church, which numbers 500 members.

Mr. Nat Haddow wishes us to notify the Conductors and Singers of the different Choirs taking part in the Choruses for the "At Home" in the Melbourne Town Hall, that a full rehearsal is requested on Wednesday Evening, March 6th, at 8 o'clock in the School Room at the rear of the Chapel, Lygon Street. Singers please bring Music with them.

We know of a young man who has had considerable experience as a preacher, who is anxious to come to Melbourne to place himself under Bros. Morro and Johnston, that he may better fit himself for preaching Christ. We want if possible to assist him in his efforts. We would be glad to hear from any of our city churches wanting help in this way. We can heartily recommend him.

We have received a number of church reports and other correspondence lately, without any name attached. We have made use of them in our columns, but do not care to do so. Will brethren please put their names on their communications. They need not necessarily be published, but we want to know who is writing.

On Friday evening, February 22nd, the choir at the City Temple, Campbell-street, Sydney, held a very enjoyable social at the home of Bro. and Sister Gole. About 40 were present, and during the evening games were engaged in, and short speeches were delivered on the best way of increasing the interest and of utilising to greater advantage the power of song. But the principal item of the evening was a presentation to the choir conductor, Bro. T. C. Walker, of a nicely morocco bound Sankey, and a handsome silver-mounted baton. This was a complete surprise to Bro. Walker, but he most suitably expressed his high appreciation of the mark of esteem and good will which had found expression in this appropriate presentation.

The brethren in the Echuca Circuit wish us to call

special attention to their Second Annual Conference, to be held at Merrigum on Wednesday, March 6, at 1 p.m. The following is the programme:—1 p.m., devotional service; 1.30, chairman's address; 1.50, secretary's report; 2 p.m., essay, "Country Evangelisation," W. Burgess; 2.15, reports from churches; 3.30, essay, "Systematic Giving," P. Bryce; 3.45, discussion of essays; 4.15, conference address, "What Hast Thou in the House," H. G. Harward; 5, election of officers and general business; 7.30, conference sermon, "Our Triple Plea," H. G. Harward. Gospel meetings in connection with the conference will be held at the following places, conducted by H. G. Harward:—Merrigum Mechanics' Institute: Thursday, March 7, at 2.30 and 7.30 p.m.; Friday, March 8, at 7.30 p.m. Shepparton Public Hall: Saturday, March 9, at 7.30 p.m.; Sunday, March 10, at 3 and 7.30 p.m.; Monday, March 11, at 7.30 p.m.; Tuesday, March 12, at 7.30 p.m. Cosgrove Union Church: Wednesday, March 13, at 7.30 p.m.; Thursday, March 14, at 7.30 p.m.; Friday, March 15, at 7.30 p.m.

Coming Events.

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

A SIXTEEN DAYS' PROTRACTED MEETING begins at Hawthorn, Tuesday, March 19th. J. Johnston preacher. Churches please note!

MARCH 4.—An interesting lecture on "The Great Parisian Exhibition," illustrated by 70 most excellent views brought from the scene by Thos. Mitchell, will be given at the Swanston-street Chapel by Jas. Johnston, on Monday March 4th, at 8 p.m. Collection in aid of Burwood Boys' Home.

VICTORIAN MISSION FUND.

Church, Lillimur	6 5 0
" Raniva	2 0 0
" Meredith (Conference Fee)	0 10 0
W. Burgess, Echuca	0 10 0
A Sister, Prahran, per Sister Bryan	0 5 0
Church, Yando	5 10 0
" Nth. Melbourne per Bro. Wright	0 5 0
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Notice of Removal.

A Hagger wishes to notify that he has removed his business of Pastry Cook from Punt Road, South Yarra, to 256 Bridge Road, Richmond.

.. Annual Competitive Examination. ..

Sunday School Union of the Churches of Christ IN VICTORIA.

Scholars' and Teachers' Examination takes place on
MONDAY EVENING, 15th APRIL, 1901,

The EXAMINATION will be held upon the Lessons on **FIRST PRINCIPLES.**

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. THE BIBLE , its Authority and Covenants—
J. COLBOURNE. | 7. BAPTISM , Subjects, Action and Design.—W. S.
HOUCHINS. |
| 2. THE HOLY SPIRIT , in Conversion, Inspiration
Sanctification.—JOS. PITTMAN. | 8. THE CHURCH , its Unity.—M. W. GREEN. |
| 3. JESUS CHRIST , His Nature and Office—
W. C. MORRO, B.A. | 9. THE CHURCH , its Worship.—CHAS. WATT. |
| 4. THE GOSPEL OF OUR SALVATION —GEO. T.
WALDEN. | 10. THE CHURCH , its Ministry.—A. C. RANKINE. |
| 5. FAITH .—G. B. MOYSEY. | 11. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE & CHARACTER —
H. D. SMITH. |
| 6. REPENTANCE & CONFESSION —D. A. EWERS. | 12. THE ONE HOPE —R. G. CAMERON. |
| | 13. REVIEW. |

There will 5 Divisions of Scholars, divided by age as follows:—

1	Division under 10 years of age	To be awarded 4 prizes.
2	Division from 10 to 12 years of age	" " 4 "
3	Division from 12 to 15 years of age	" " 4 "
4	Division from 15 to 18 years of age	" " 4 "
5	Division over 18 years of age	" " 4 "

And 2 Divisions of Teachers, divided as follows:

1	Junior Teachers	To be awarded 3 prizes.
2	Senior Teachers	" " 2 "

RULES CONCERNING EXAMINATIONS.

- 1.—All competitors gaining over 60%, and under 75%, shall be awarded a CERTIFICATE; and all gaining over 75%, a CERTIFICATE of MERIT.
- 2.—First Prize takers in any division, and Second Prize takers in the "Junior Teachers" division, shall not thereafter be eligible to compete in the same division, excepting only, in the "Senior Scholars" and "Senior Teachers" divisions, in which cases a SPECIAL PRIZE will be awarded in the event of any previous winner again obtaining the highest award.
- 3.—The Union will only present those prizes in the selection of which the money value has been adhered to as nearly as possible.
- 4.—Neither Teachers or Scholars will be allowed the use of Bibles or Notes of any kind during the Examination.
- 5.—Any school having 10 or more competitors may have the Examination held locally by making application to the Secretary.
- 6.—Secretaries of Schools must make clear and distinct lists, showing the ages and divisions in which the competitors are entering.
- 7.—All ages to count at the date of Examination.
- 8.—No school will be permitted to compete at the above Examination, unless contributions to Union are paid up to date.

All lists of competitors must be in the hands of the Secretary, not later than 1st April, 1901; and all papers from examinations must be returned within a week after the examinations. Secretaries are requested to particularly note this.

JOHN S. McINTOSH, Hon. Sec.,
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The Home.

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

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Come unto Me, and rest:
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast.'
I came to Jesus as I was—
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold, I freely give
The living water—thirsty one
Stoop down, and drink and live.'
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in him.

Thou God, Seeth Me.

God might, if he pleased, wrap himself with night as with a garment; he might put the stars around his wrist for bracelets, and bind the suns around his brow for a coronet; he might dwell alone, far, far above this world up in the seventh heaven, and look down with calm and silent indifference upon all the doings of his creatures; he might do as the heathens supposed their Jove did, sit in perpetual silence, sometimes nodding his awful head to make the Fates move as he

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pleased, but never taking thought of the little things of earth, disposing of them as beneath his notice, engrossed within his own being, swallowed up within herself, living alone and retired; and I, as one of his creatures might stand by night upon a mountain-top, and look upon the silent stars, and say, "Ye are the eyes of God, but ye look not down on me; your light is the gift of his omnipotence, but your rays are not smiles of love to me. God the mighty Creator, has forgotten me; I am a despicable drop in the ocean of creation, a sear leaf in the forest of beings; an atom in the mountain of existence. He knows me not; I am alone, alone, alone." But it is not so, beloved. Our God is of another order. He notices every one of us. There is not a sparrow or a worm, but is found in his decrees. There is not a person upon whom his eye is not fixed. Our most secret acts are known to him. Whatsoever we do, or bear, or suffer, the eye of God still rests upon us, and we are beneath his smile,—for we are his people; or beneath his frown;—for we have erred from him.

Making God's Law a Strange Thing.

Oh! how ten-thousand-fold merciful is God, that, looking down upon the race of man, he does not smite it out of existence. We see from our text that God looks upon man, for he says of Ephriam, "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." But see how when he observes the sin of man he does not dash him away and spurn him with his foot; he does not shake him by the neck over the gulf of hell, until his brain doth reel, and then drop him for ever; but rather he comes down from heaven to plead with his creatures; he argues with them; he puts himself, as it were, upon the level with the sinner, states his grievances, and pleads his claim. O Ephriam I have written unto Thee the great things of my law, but they have been unto thee as a strange thing! I come here to-night to charge many of you with a sin; to lay it to your hearts by the power of the Spirit, so that you may be convinced of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come. The crime I charge you with is the sin of the text. God has written to you the great things of his law, but they have been unto you as a strange thing.—SPURGEON.

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