

The Australian Christian.

Circulating amongst Churches of Christ in Australian Colonies, New Zealand and Tasmania.

Vol. IV.—No. 9.

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 1900.

Subscription, 5s. per annum.

VISIONS OF THE CHRIST.



The Syrophenician Woman.

JAS. JOHNSTON.

"We have certain work to do for our needs, and that is to be done strenuously; other work to do for our delight, and that to be done heartily; neither is it to be done by halves or shifts, but with a will; and what is not worth this effort is not to be done at all."—RUSKIN.

"Precious faith our God hath given: rich in faith is rich indeed!

Fire-tried gold from his own treasury, fully meeting every need;

Channel of his grace abounding; bringing peace, and joy and light;

Purifying, overcoming, linking weakness with his might."

—F.R.H.

"The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation, and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter."—JOHN MARK.

There is every reason to suppose that

Jesus withdrew with his disciples into the borders of Tyre and Sidon to make a break in the publicity of his works. The wild, popular outburst of enthusiasm, which threatened to seize Christ and make him King; the spread of disaffection incited by the scribes and Pharisees, whose hypocritical ceremonialism was denounced by Jesus; the powerful discourses of the Sabbath in Capernaum; the opposition, now becoming an organised effort to quench the ardor of the Nazarene's friends and disciples, which met the Messiah at every attempt at public ministry; the sacred rest which Saviour and disciples most surely required forced the despised band to seek quietude and secrecy by leaving the theatre of active service—the sphere of Christ's particular mission—for a missionary tour towards Phœnicia.

Like the great principles of conservation of energy—that the sum of all the energy in the universe is constant—Christ's activity could not remain at rest even in this retreat, for need is activity's escapement. Whether his fame had preceded him, or that there was something peculiarly attached to the Lord's appearance that when once seen, like the great events in life, is always remembered; or that he carried with him his own credentials of divinity, which proclaimed his Messiahship, have not been recorded. But certain it is, however obscure or private the house may have been into which he entered, seclusion was not to be found so easily.

Reticence and modest retirement have ever been the characteristics of woman. Frequently environment forces woman into prominence, but even there her womanhood is clothed with the rich folds of modest drapery. Rare are the cases of masculine females. To the former category belongs the Syrophenician woman. Though a heathen as compared with a Jew; though a Gentile in contradistinction to the Israelite; though a woman with no recognised rights; she does not fear to approach the Great Teacher with her petition.

It was her GREAT NEED that caused her to seek the Christ. From the cradle to the grave, man's needs cling round him like a well-fitting garment. Now and again men are to be found who set up an independency, but the throne soon becomes vacant. The aphorism that "no man liveth unto himself" has to be faced by rich and poor, high and low, black and white alike. Try as we may to get away from it, dependency claims us as a devotee. It is when disaster overtakes us; or affliction assails us; or sickness lays her pale cheek upon us; or death coldly snatches a loved one from our hearth that our need seems too loom up before us like some great mountain peak, which, the nearer we get to it, towers higher and higher until its bald head passes into cloud-land. It is in these

Selected Articles.

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

Five Minutes' Sermon.

BY PETER AINSLIE.

"I will arise and go to my father."—Luke 15: 11.

extremities that man involuntarily raises heart-throbs heaven-ward. No thought of God, heaven, or hell crosses the mind of him, who frivolously or carelessly passes his time away, until some stern reality in life or death brings him face to face with his great need. Then he flies for assistance. Then his heart craves for sympathy. His need creates an impulse to seek a responsive soul. This was the case with the Syrophenician woman. Her daughter was a hopeless demoniac. She loved her daughter. How could she help it? Inhuman the heart that can see suffering without yearning to help! For a mother to stand by helpless, and see the darling of her heart rent by evil possessions, is a suffering and anguish of soul akin to distraction. "Blessed news! Did you say Jesus, the sympathiser, the divine healer was in the vicinity? Hush my child, I go to seek this Jesus of Nazareth!" With anxious step and fluttering heart the mother paces the streets, gazing into every face, listening for a voice that must be laden with sweet strains of music. Who ever heard words of sympathy and comfort fall from human lips that were not charged with all the harmony to be found in the sweetest lullaby? Ah! Here he is. What, doth he not heed her cry? Why should he? Did he not come to "the lost sheep of Israel?" This woman—why she is a Gentile, an abomination to the Jew. See how the disciples add to her discomfort! They appeal to the Lord for him to send her away. Her persistence worries them. Breathlessly she waits the Master's reply.

His lips move, her GREAT PERSEVERANCE has gained the attention of him whom she seeks. Determination, in the right direction, will overcome almost any difficulty. Perseverance is the only royal road to success and honor in this life, and final salvation in the world to come." "He that endureth to the end shall be saved," was the sentiment of the Son of God. See how eagerly this woman presses through the band surrounding Jesus! What cares she for all the unsympathetic hearts in her way, he whom she came to seek has spoken. "Recognising the favor conferred upon her she reverently falls on her knees and worships her Lord and Master, again appealing for help. Surely the Lord does not mean to turn her away unanswered? Are these words now falling from his lips charged with poison? Why does she seem to recoil? 'Tis only for a moment. True, it is not charity to take the children's bread and give it to dogs, but it is charity to allow the dogs to feed on the crumbs or refuse. Her keen observation urged her to turn that saying to advantage.

It was her GREAT FAITH that drew the wonderful commendation from Jesus: "O woman great is thy faith." It would be well for us to remember that need is the mother of faith. That faith which holds on to the divine in face of opposition and persecution is a great faith. That faith which still shines on when clouds of doubt have obscured the night of heavenly things is a faith to be coveted. A faith that trusts when it cannot see or understand; a faith that confides even though the hand be raised to slay is a faith that brings its own recompence. Thousands of martyrs passed through the horrors of the

dungeon, the tortures of the rack, the cruelties of the arena, and the pangs of the stake with such a faith. Without it all would have been pitiable cowards—with it they became heroes and heroines. Strange that this sentiment, so called, could transform weak, sensual, and iniquitous men into strong, robust and pure characters. Strange that by the same process women—delicate, feeble, and "the weaker sex" should be developed into graceful, charming, and firm exponents of a new life—a life lived by faith in the Son of God. Christ lauded the Syrophenician woman for her great faith. It was probably the first time he extolled a Gentile woman; but there is a day coming when he will extol all who have held a simple persevering faith in him—that day when all kindred, and tongues, and people shall assemble at his bema.

Her GREAT DELIGHT was the realization of her great faith through Jesus. The estimate of her need was the measure of her faith. The measure of her faith is the measure of her blessing. How important it was that her faith should be strong. She expected much she received much. But her expectation was within the limits of the Master's will. How do we know? Jesus came to conquer the evil one and to release all who were made captive by him. This woman's daughter was under the control of an evil spirit, therefore to release her would be within the sphere of Christ's activity. However, her complete surrender to the Master and her anxiety to receive his help after the trial of her faith, brought the coveted desire. She received the very thing for which she came. Her faith was realised. It was no modification, it was complete, her daughter was made whole from that very hour. Who can depict "With what joy she went away?" There was sunshine in her soul. Her horizon had been cleared of every cloud of fear or doubt, and now her sky is beautifully blue, and quivering with a kind of life for all is new, old things have passed away.

Reader, the GREAT PRINCIPLES in this woman's life are applicable to all. Away from God man is a helpless creature. The more helpless he is the greater his need. Frequently it is the realisation of his need that drives man on to the mercy of a loving, heavenly Father. Perseverance in this course brings a consciousness of God's endeavor to reach man, and save him, through Jesus the Son. God will not do for man what he can do for himself. God's part is finished; man's part must be completed before the promise can be secured. God's provision is adequate to meet every need or desire of man, but faith must bridge the chasm of sin and open the line of communication between God and man. Nothing but delight can fill the soul thus reinstated. Faith has now become realisation. Realised faith is the cause of great rejoicing to the child of God. Christ told the woman that her faith had been rewarded, and that her child would be healed. But Christ cannot repeat the same nowadays, so he has destined that all who believe that he is the Christ the Son of the Living God, and their Saviour, and by keeping his commandments are assured of sins forgiven and of adoption into the heavenly family. Secure it!

Were you ever alone, so lonely that your very thoughts seem to be beings about you? I think the young man who uttered the words of my text was just so lonely that he began to think aloud. That was the time when reason begun to assert itself and at no time can the heart be so easily conquered as when left alone. If one is vexed, leave him alone and he will work out his problem best. If any are burdened, leave them alone and they will find God. I do not mean to be cold and rude, but let them know that in their loneliness, you, too, are alone with God asking for His blessing upon the heart that is vexed or burdened. It is the time of benediction. I heard a friend say to another, "Take this book to keep from being lonely," and as I looked over to see the title of the book I thought if my heart could only become lonely it would find no comfort whatever in the worthless book that had been loaned; but instead, God's Book would be sought after and fully possessed. Our lonely hours are the times when the heart is gathered to itself. It is the time when we never think so far and feel so deeply. Meditation is a part of the Christian's life. It is as necessary for the heart as water is for the plant, and we meditate best when we are alone—entirely alone. Then the great springs burst forth. Poetry, music, art and benevolence come out of the hours of loneliness.

The young man of my text would never have come to such a decision if others had worked beside him during the day and slept beside him under the swine shed at night, but his loneliness brought thought back to its rightful throne and out of a wicked manhood came decision. God help the lamp by which he might see the way of right. "I will" is a master utterance. To be able to say "no" to sin is worth more than all the wealth of the world. I have heard of a mother who took her baby boy as soon as he could talk and would daily make him practice saying "no" and say it so loudly and continually until it became a chief part of his character. God can only use hearts of decision. Know that you are right and laugh at the world when it purposes otherwise, and be deaf to its second proposal. Make no compromise of truth. You have not that right. Opposition is nothing. If you lose friends, still that is nothing, for one strongly built character can defy the world, and will call around it the manifest part of man.

It is fatherhood that has saved this world. However we may think of God, in none of His attributes does He come so close to the heart as when He revealed Himself to us as our Father. A whole world swings in the beginning of that prayer which begins, "Our Father, Who art in heaven." Jesus came to teach us that God was our Father. Christianity is the human heart recognizing the Fatherhood. "I will arise and go to my father" is the simple recipe for the sinner in order to become a saint. The Father's love is the crown of all time.

GOD'S SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT'S WORK.

By W. C. MORRO, B.A.

I.—THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The words which in our English Bible are translated *spirit* have several meanings. In many passages the Hebrew word means *wind*, and in one passage the Greek word is so translated. "The wind bloweth where it listeth" (John 3 : 8). From this meaning it is an easy step to that of any invisible power. Passing over the border line of the inanimate into the realm of life, the words are here applied to a number of invisible agents. That highest part of man which survives after death is called spirit (Acts 7 : 59). Angels are spirits. "Are they not all ministering spirits?" God is a spirit (Jno. 4 : 24). And lastly—and most frequently—these words are used of a certain Being called the *Holy Spirit* or the *Spirit of the Lord*, which Jesus told his disciples he would send to them after he had departed to his Father. It must not be supposed that all the uses of the words will fall easily or naturally into one of these six divisions. It would be difficult to include some meanings in any one. These are generic words. Their first specific meaning is breath or wind. Step by step in easy gradations the meaning passes through all the divisions noted to the highest—the power of the Almighty in operation, the Holy Spirit. From the above summary of its meanings the word spirit is seen to be used in two distinct senses—(1) Of the wind, or some similar, invisible, inanimate power. (2) Of living beings, invisible, and otherwise like the wind, in that they are, to human senses and perception, immaterial. Yet they are persons. Manifestly the wind is not a person. Then the word *spirit* sometimes refers to objects possessing personality; sometimes to others lacking it. This double use of the word has opened up for discussion the question of the personality of the Holy Spirit. When the Bible speaks of the Spirit of God does it refer to a power merely, or to a person as well? Is it an invisible, powerful influence, or is it an intelligent, personal being? What saith the scriptures concerning this problem? The Holy Spirit is not a matter of occasional mention, as are the angels. In several passages where the word spirit occurs, it is uncertain whether the reference is to God, to another being or to a disposition of mind. But the spirit is mentioned in the Old Testament in eighty-six passages, in not one of which can there be any hesitation as to its import. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is specifically and directly mentioned two hundred and sixty-one times. Certainly in this multiplicity of mention some light should be afforded on the question of his personality. The question can not be decided from the evidence of the Old Testament. There but little is said of his nature. The term *Holy Spirit* occurs in the Old Testament but twice. His nature must be decided from subsequent revelation.

When people began to study the nature

and character of God from the page of sacred truth, before ever the question of the personality of the Holy Spirit became a subject for discussion, it was evident that God had been presented to the world under three aspects. All Israel knew of the Almighty God in his dealings with the world and man. This was the first aspect. It was the conception of a personal, centralised Deity, the Ruler, Governor and Controller of the affairs of earth and man. But in time there came another view of Divinity. This was the aspect of God on a mission of sacrifice for man. He became flesh and dwelt among men, and they beheld his glory. This was quite a different conception from that of the children of Israel. Since he became flesh he also partook of man's death. This aspect of God was limited to a brief time. The world will always have the conception of God which Israel had—that of one who rules and governs—but for the same to obtain in this second aspect it would be necessary for him to become flesh repeatedly, and repeatedly to visit earth. But even if this were done, he would be limited to one place, and the peoples of all other parts of earth would be compelled to journey to his earthly home. The Christian pilgrimages to the Holy City would then outnumber the Islamic ones to Mecca. Hence we needed another conception of God and this we have in the Holy Spirit. It is the idea of God as being always and everywhere. He fills all space and reaches to all time. He holds communication with men and in all ages exerts an influence over them. He is not localized. No man can flee from his presence. He knows every secret and his eye pierces every hidden spot. The sacrificial work of Christ, though it occurred eighteen hundred years ago, can, by the Holy Spirit, bless men now. The blessings for mankind originated with God, the Father. Jesus Christ was the medium through which they were brought to earth, and the Holy Spirit is the agent by which they are distributed among men. In this manner the three conceptions of God were unfolded to the minds of men. But after a time it dawned upon them that this was not merely three aspects of God, but that the New Testament actually taught that they were three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This doctrine began to ripen about the fourth century, and on till the present day it has been the belief of the vast majority of persons and churches. But its cordial and general acceptance is of no moment unless sustained by the teaching of God's word. The language of inspired men must decide the question, Is the Spirit of God possessed of personality?

What is meant by personality? There are three tests to personality. Every person has intelligence, will, and individuality. Without these there can be no personality.

Hence to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit, it must be proved that the Spirit possesses a will, an intelligence, and an individual identity.

Do the scriptures teach that the Spirit has intelligence? Do they represent him as possessing a will? Will and intelligence are so closely related that it is best not to attempt to present a separate proof for each. Most passages that prove the one, will also prove the other, and many seem to be quite relevant. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jno. 14 : 26). "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (John 16 : 13). "While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. But arise, and get thee down, and go with them, nothing doubting; for I have sent them" (Acts 10 : 19-20). The Holy Spirit said to the prophets and teachers of Antioch, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." In a later verse we read that they departed "being sent forth by the Holy Spirit" (Acts 13 : 2-4). The Holy Spirit alone has knowledge of the things of God (1 Cor. 2 : 11); the things spoken by the Apostles were taught them by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2 : 13); in the apostolic church there were various spiritual gifts bestowed upon men—it was the Spirit which bestowed these and to each man he gave even as he willed (1 Cor. 12 : 11). In all of these passages there is attributed to the Spirit acts of intelligence and volition. He taught, brought forgotten things to memory, acted as guide, spoke, gave commands, sent men forth on chosen missions, and exercised a will that was neither domineered nor controlled by any other.

Do the scriptures teach that the Spirit is an individual? When he speaks he says *I*; when addressed it is as *Thou* or *Thee*; when spoken of he is mentioned as *He* or *Him*. This use of the pronouns proves him to be a being of separate existence from the speakers. But they are the Father and the Son. Hence he has an individual identity apart from them. Since he possesses the three marks of personality, he is, we conclude, a person.

Another argument in favor of his personality is that Christians sustain to him relations which they could sustain to a person only. Along with that of the Father and the Son, believers are baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit. It seems evident that they are not baptized into the name of a power or influence merely, but into that of

a person. The Corinthians were not baptized in the name of Paul. The implication is that had they been, they would have been disciples of Paul. But, being baptized into the name of Christ, they became disciples of Christ. The children of Israel were baptized unto Moses: the clear implication is that they became disciples of Moses, or of that which Moses represented. So those baptized into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are disciples of these. Possessing disciples belongs not to powers, but to persons.

Conversely, he sustains to disciples relations which none but a person can sustain. He was the teacher and instructor of the apostles, and through them he yet teaches the people of God. Paul was sanctified by the Holy Spirit. He was the Comforter or Advocate of the apostles, and what other than a person can act the part of an Advocate? He helpeth our infirmities (Rom. 8: 26) and comforts the church of God (Acts 9: 31).

Personal acts are attributed to the Spirit. The Spirit searches. He searches the deep things of God. He reveals God's ways to man. He reproveth the world of sin. He gave commandments to Peter. He spoke to Philip. He strives with sinners. He can be tempted, for that was the sin of Ananias. Israel continually resisted him (Acts 7: 51). He possesses a power all his own, for we abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15: 13). The Holy Spirit forbade Paul going into Asia, and by the same agency he (Paul) was restrained from visiting Bithynia. Many other passages might be cited ascribing personal acts to the Holy Spirit.

Those who have denied the personality of the Holy Spirit have felt the necessity of breaking the force of these arguments so strongly arrayed against them. One method is an attempt to weaken the strength of the argument based on the use of the personal pronoun. In speaking of the Spirit, Jesus uses the pronoun *he* or *him* instead of *it*, and this tends to show that the Spirit is a person. This has been explained on the ground of attraction. Jesus speaks of the Spirit as the Comforter, and this naturally calls for a masculine pronoun. But it is seen on examination of the passage (Jno. 15: 26) that the word spirit intervenes between the word Comforter and the pronoun, and the latter would naturally agree with the substantive nearest it in the sentence. But the possibility of this explanation does not obtain in Jno. 16: 13. Here Jesus speaks of him directly as the Spirit, and not as the Comforter. The language is most explicit. "When *he*, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of *himself*; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come. *He* shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." The student of the language in these verses must decide that the use of the personal pronoun where italicized can be accounted for on no other ground than that of the personality of the Spirit.

The next method of destroying the force of these arguments is a more general one. Not content with assailing one single argument

it makes an attack on all. All the language used to show that the Spirit has will, intelligence, individuality, and which speaks of the Spirit as exercising personal prerogatives is so many examples of the rhetorical figure of personification, whereby to God's power is attributed the characteristics of personality. This is navigating a sea to avoid crossing a river. There are in the New Testament about two hundred and sixty-one passages containing statements about the Holy Spirit. Of these no less than one hundred and thirty-four must contain the figure of personification, if the personality of the Spirit be denied. It is not merely in poetic or excited discourse, where men drop naturally into personification, that he is introduced as a person, but even in simple narrative and didactic instruction. To explain such expressions as are found in Acts 13: 2; 8: 39; 10: 19-20; John 15: 26 as personification is to do violence to all rules of interpretation. Besides many of the collateral proofs would be left intact even were it admitted that all these passages were examples of personification.

Another way of avoiding the force of the argument for his personality is to say that God is meant, and that the personal acts attributed to the Holy Spirit are the acts of God the Father. In other words that the Holy Spirit is not a person separate and distinct from the Father. But in way of reply it may be observed that the Spirit intercedes for us (Rom. 8: 26), and this involve us in the absurdity of God interceding with himself. The Father sent the Son, but the Son did not send the Father; yet Christ sent the Spirit (Luke 24: 49). Moreover, Christ sent the Spirit from the Father, and he proceeded from the Father (John 15: 26.) When the Spirit came he was not to speak from himself, but at the dictation of another (John 16: 13). Surely the Father would not have refrained from speaking of himself. Subordination is never attributed to the Father. He is above all and in everything is supreme. The subordination attributed to the Spirit, is not in harmony with the supremacy of the Father.

Regarding the proof of the Spirit's personality as conclusive, there is but one other task left unfinished. What kind of person is he? Is he a creature or divine? The answer must be that he is divine. He is omnipresent (Psa. 139: 7), and omniscient (1 Cor. 2: 10). He is represented as being the Creator (Psa. 104: 30; Job. 33: 4). He is eternal (Heb. 9: 14). Hence he was not created but is divine. To him are given the appellations of deity. In Matthew 12: 28 Jesus is represented as saying, "I cast out devils by the Spirit of God." In Luke 11: 20 he says it was by the finger of God. What is called the Spirit of God in one passage is called God in another. Peter declared that Ananias had lied to the Holy Spirit, yet he concluded his remarks by saying, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." In 2 Cor. 3: 16, 17 he is called Lord. It is written in Is. 6: 9, Jehovah said, "Go tell this people, etc." Paul quotes the passage in Acts 28: 25, "Well spake the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the prophet, etc." Paul at one time says believers are an habitation of God through the Spirit and at another

declares their bodies to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. Other proof could be presented but it is scarcely necessary. The plain teaching of scripture is that the Holy Spirit is a person and not only a person but a divine person. He shares the work of Creation, Providence, and Salvation with the Father and Son. He is one of the Beings that compose the Godhead, and through him the power and presence of the Lord is felt on earth and among men.

Our Missions.

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

Kanaka.

The eighth year of our mission work among the Kanakas has closed. It has been a year of heavy losses to the church, the Kanakas and the sugar planters. We were in hopes that the dry season of 1899 would be over when the time for the wet set in for 1900, but in this we were sadly disappointed, for the year passed without having the usual wet season in the beginning of the year. This meant failure of the cane crops—no work for many of our Kanaka brethren. When there was no prospect of a crushing no one would employ them. Many of them returned to their islands; others went to the plantations in the North of Queensland seeking employment. It was a pleasure to hear from them that on the plantations where there was no missionary they were seeking to teach their countrymen the way of salvation. While we cannot but regard it as a year of disaster to the church here, yet it has been the cause of the gospel spreading through the islands. Each year some of Kanaka brethren have returned to the islands. They are continually appealing to their brethren here to come home and help them. During the year we had three farewell meetings to bid our Kanaka brethren Godspeed. The church here gave over £30 to assist our brethren, who have been laboring in the islands. Their poverty did not prevent them from showing their generosity. The number of our brethren returning to the islands has been the means of developing the missionary spirit in the church here. We miss them in our meetings, also the help they gave to the work here.

During the past year I have had permission from the Government to have a Kanaka brother for an assistant. Since he has been assisting in the work he has held six week-night meetings and three on Lord's days. He is studying with the object of returning to his island when his term of three years has expired. Toward the close of the year I was laid aside for two months with congestion of the brain. During my illness my assistant, Taby Nan Con, with the assistance Mrs. Thompson gave him, was able to carry on the work. On Thursday we had a baptism; nine Kanakas confessed Christ and were immersed. We also had our picnic on Boxing Day. Our losses by removal for the year have been 42. Additions 9. Present membership 40. In conclusion we desire to thank the kind friends in Adelaide who for-

warded the sum of £8 for benevolent purposes; also to the secretary of the F.M. Committee for £11 13s. 6d.; and our Bro. Low, of New Zealand, for £2.

JOHN THOMPSON.

Letters from Kanakas Returned to the Islands.

Oaba, Rio Loge.

Dear Mr. Thomson,—We get into our passage to-day (Thursday), and we write this letter to you to tell you we are going ashore. Tell all brothers and sisters that we are glad we are going ashore. We hear some country man are having school, and we are going ashore to help them. We believe that you all pray for us all the time. Bye and bye when we stop a little while, we write to you again. I not got any more time to say more to you, but I say good bye and God bless you.

I remain,

Your true friend in Christ,
JIMMY AND MARY OABA.

Bon Accord Lodge, Tongoa.

Dear Mr. Thompson,—I reached home safe and well, so now I am keeping my promise to write you, and let you know that I am already teaching in Mr. Michelsen's school, but I am sorry to say poor Mr. Michelsen is or was very sick, and had to go to see a doctor, but we had news this time to say he is very much better, and hopes to be home in October. I am sending him your letter. I have not forgotten to pray for you and for all the boys at your school, and I know you have not forgotten to pray for me.

Your loving friend,

SAMUEL KORA.

Sisters' Department.

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

Annual Conference.

The Victorian Sisters' Sixteenth Annual Conference will (D.V.) be held Wednesday, April 3rd, Lygon-street chapel. Afternoon, 2.30; evening, 7.30. Essay by Mrs. F. M. Ludbrook, "The New Life." Papers by Mrs. M. W. Green, senr., and Mrs. J. A. Davies. Every sister is cordially invited to be present.

The March meeting was presided over by Sister G. B. Moysey, who conducted the devotional services.

The programme for forthcoming Conference was submitted and approved.

Officers were nominated for election at Conference. It was resolved to hold a meeting Friday evening, March 15th, in Swanston-street lecture hall, to make final arrangements for Conference, at 7.45.

The usual monthly reports were given. The sisters took the opportunity to have a cup of tea to say good-bye to Sisters Collins (Assist-Secretary), who is leaving for Corowa, and Robinson. We also expected Sister Mrs. Hall, but for some reason she was unable to be present.

NORTH FITZROY. — The Sisters' prayer

meeting is still progressing. Average attendance, 14. The sisters are still working in their sewing classes. Visitors receive a very cordial welcome to the meetings.

E. GRACIE.

Prayer Meeting Report.

PRAHRAN SISTERS' PRAYER MEETING, 1901.

On the above date your Committee visited the Prahran Sisters. We had a very good meeting and a hearty welcome, 33 being present, and amongst those were a number of young sisters, which we were very pleased to see taking advantage of these means to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our sisters have a Dorcas Society in connection with the meeting, and are working now for the hospital, and showed us some material they intend to make up for the sufferers in the South African war.

We took for our lesson the familiar and beautiful chapter, the 14th John, and briefly considered the legacy of Peace that our Saviour has left to his children, and pray that love and peace may dwell richly in the hearts of all God's children.

Yours sincerely in the work,

A. C. C.

Dorcas.

DEAR SISTERS,

Your Committee during the past month have held their most successful "rally" for the "Burwood Boys." 22 sisters attended, and a large parcel of work was gone through. Sisters from many churches were there, and one and all felt grateful for the opportunity to help the helpless. Some sisters and two presidents took work away from a previous meeting and returned the same. This is new work for which in our rally we have no time, and our sisters have made the articles so well that we can but hope their good example will be followed.

We have also had three rallies for the "African Relief Fund." and have been greatly encouraged by the kind response made by willing workers. We have also had some gifts of money and clothing, and also material to make up, all of which will be acknowledged at the end of present month. We would be glad if any brethren or sisters would give us either money or material for this work. It is a fine opportunity for those brethren and sisters who are unable to give their time and will greatly help those willing workers who attend our meetings.

We have paid a visit to the Dorcas Society at "Ascot Vale." We were quite astonished at the grand meeting. For once the brethren were not afraid of Dorcas workers, and showed by their presence their interest in the sisters' work. The meeting was held in their pretty chapel and was ably presided over by the President, Sister Potts. It took the form of a social meeting. The chairwoman's address was followed by solos, two short papers by members of the Committee, praise, and prayer, a coffee supper, and a collection. It was over in good time. We trust that with such a happy start the Ascot Vale Society will be a great success in the ensuing year and do good work.

We also visited Collingwood. There were present eight sisters and four of the committee. Work for the "Rescue Home" was in progress, a pleasing feature of the meeting being the presence of so many young sisters.

We also paid a visit to the North Melbourne Society, which delighted us very much for two reasons. First, the number who attended there was 18 and 6 of the committee; and secondly, it was a real object lesson in this way. We found that the Endeavor Society in the church gave one evening a month to Dorcas work, and provided the funds for material or other help given to the poor. Their work is purely Dorcas, and at the meeting the workers were nearly all young people. We trust the elder sisters in this church will show their appreciation of these good "endeavor" workers, and help them by their presence and means. We have not seen a more lively Dorcas meeting in our year of service. Our hearts were gladdened, and we went away cheered and strengthened, and pray that God will abundantly bless the good workers in North Melbourne.

In this, our last report of our year in office, we desire to place on record our grateful thanks to all the societies we have visited for their kind welcome and unflinching kindness. We have very pleasant memories of many faithful workers, and we pray that our Father will bless them for their works' sake.

E. DAVIES.

Poets' Corner.

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

The Shrinking World.

This shrinking world in which we live grows smaller day by day,

Till now there isn't any place so very far away;

And lands so sundered in the past that months would intervene,

Have crept so near together there is scarce a week between.

It used to be a great long while from Boston-on-the-Bay

To where the broad Pacific laves the pebbles with its spray,

But now those shores are neighbors in their nearness so to speak,

And half a year of travel has been squeezed to half a week,

To speak with far-off India once took us full a year.

While now we simply shout "Hello!" and whisper in her ear;

And islands lost in distant seas, when history commenced,

Are chatting with us daily now since space has been condensed.

With steamship lines and railway trains and telegraph and all,

We have compressed this globe until it's just a little ball;

The land is but a step across, the sea is but a pond, We've got this world encompassed and we sigh for worlds beyond.

We're looking toward the sky the while we fashion, year by year,

Some new and wondrous instrument to draw the planets near;

And scientists, so we are told, perchance may very soon,

So do away with distance we can visit with the moon.

Nixon Waterman, in Saturday Evening Post.

THE Australian Christian.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

At 528 Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

A. B. Maston - - - Managing Editor.

All Communications should be addressed to The Austral Publishing Co., 528 Elizabeth-st., Carlton. Articles, etc., of any length intended for next issue should be in hand not later than first post on Monday. Short News Items, Coming Events, Wanted, etc., received as late as Wednesday morning. Births, Marriages and Deaths, 6d. each. Coming Events, 45 words, 6d.; each additional 45 words or fraction thereof, 6d. Wanted Advt., 1/- To insure insertion this must be paid in advance.

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The Leader.

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

From Darkness to Light.

One of the most remarkable men of modern times is Leo Tolstoy. The world generally knows something about him, but that something is so superficial that most people regard him as one of those eccentric men whose peculiar views of life are the result of a disordered brain, rather than the outcome of calm enquiry and clear reasoning. Even the few who have taken the trouble to discover the reasons which induced him to renounce what the world calls a brilliant career, in favour of a life of toil, are disposed to sum up the whole business in the one word—Quixotic. It is the way of the world, and more particularly that portion of it that regards itself as eminently respectable, to deprecate any action that seems to go outside the beaten track. It has marked out for itself a line of conduct which it believes preserves all the proprieties, and any deflec-

tion from this is regarded as little else than an outrage against society. That this unwritten law has its advantages need not be questioned. It is of advantage to society, that it should be safeguarded by a set of ideas which experience has proved are in the direction of righteousness. It is only when these ideas are superficial and conventional that the working out of them ends in disaster. The Pharisees, who lived in the days of our Saviour, had ideas of righteousness, which in the main were correct enough, but which in their practical application worked out badly so far as the general interests of society were concerned. The mistake they made was in regarding any infringement of their rules as wrong, simply because they were an infringement—a mistake arising from a failure to apprehend the distinction between principles and methods; the distinction between the two being, that a principle never alters, but methods frequently do. It was because Jesus, in his inculcation of righteousness, adopted methods at variance with Pharisaic ideals, that he incurred their displeasure, and sowed the seeds of that enmity which finally brought him to the Cross. In like manner in our own day, Count Tolstoy is regarded by the Russian Church as a dangerous member of society, because, in the application of the principles of Christianity he has chosen to adopt methods which are not in conformity with the received ideas of his orthodox fellow-countrymen. The real difference between the two being, that whereas Tolstoy has given a literal application to the teachings of Jesus, the Russian Church has contented itself with a very indifferent theoretical one.

At present, however, it is not our intention to enter into a consideration of Tolstoy's views of Christianity. We content ourselves by expressing our high appreciation of his noble character. A character so noble in its self-surrender, that we can only stand afar off and admire, and pray for the time to come when Russian orthodoxy will soon give place to Tolstoy's heterodoxy. Just now it seems to us both interesting and instructive that an enquiry should be made into the causes which led this brilliant Russian nobleman to renounce a career which had the promise of all the good things of the earth, in favour of a life that seemed to promise nothing but drudgery and toil. In this enquiry, the main point of interest will be centred in that supreme crisis in his life, when doubt gave place to faith, and despair to hope. This period of his life is unfolded to us by himself, in his book "How I Came to Believe." Here he tells us of his early education in the principles of the Greek Church. How these principles were tacitly

received by him, but giving no motive or impelling power to his life. That in the men of his own class, he found religion was a thin veneer—a mere covering which scarcely hid the irreligion and practical atheism beneath. "With such men of our class, he says, the knowledge and experience of active life has shattered the artificially constructed building within, and they have either observed this and cleared away the ruins or remained unconscious of the destruction caused within. The belief instilled from childhood gradually disappeared in me, as in many others, but with this difference, that I was conscious of my unbelief." To such a nature as Tolstoy's it could not be expected that the Greek Church would afford much spiritual help. Such Christianity as it has, is covered over by thick layers of superstition and idolatry. Its Paganism is more in evidence than its Christianity. Such as it is, however, it formed a disturbing element in that period of his life when unbelief seemed to have gained the mastery. The element of truth in it would ever and anon assert itself, and compelled him in the long run to find out where truth had her abiding place. The time came when to his thoughtful mind, there was one question which imperatively demanded an answer, viz: What is the meaning of my life? At this stage, he says, "my life had come to a sudden stop. I was able to breathe, to eat, to drink, to sleep. I could not, indeed, help doing so; but there was no real life in me. I had not a single wish to strive for, the fulfilment of what I could feel to be reasonable. If I wished for anything, I knew beforehand that, were I to satisfy the wish, nothing could come of it, I should still be dissatisfied. . . . The truth lay in this, that life had no meaning for me." Let it be borne in mind that when he spoke in this way his mental and physical faculties were at their best, and his domestic and social surroundings were all that could be desired. The truth is, that the words he uttered are simply expressive of the void which his earnest and noble nature felt because the spiritual part of him had not found rest in God.

This unrest caused him to seek an answer to the question, "What is the meaning of my life?" He sought an answer to this question in every branch of human knowledge. He says: "I sought it as a perishing man seeks safety, and I found nothing. My search not only failed, but I convinced myself that all those who had searched like myself had failed also, and come like me to the despairing conviction that the only absolute knowledge man can possess is this, that life is without meaning." In knocking

at the door of the exact sciences, the answer he got was, "we cannot tell you what you are and why you live; such questions we do not study?" Experimental science and philosophy could do no better, for they asked the same question without being able to get an answer. Human wisdom he found summed up in the words of Solomon, "behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit." Having failed to get an answer from knowledge, he sought for it in life itself, hoping to get one from the men who surrounded him. He began to watch men like himself, to observe how they lived, and how they practically treated the question which had brought him to despair. First he observed men of the same position and culture as himself, and found there were four means of escape from the terrible state in which they were. The first means of escape was ignorance. The ignorance that ignores, that is content to breathe and move without asking, what is the meaning of my life? The second was epicurianism. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." The meaning of life was to get the best out of it. Seize all its pleasures and avoid all its miseries. The third was strength and energy of character. That is, that kind of strength and energy of character which decides to put an end to life when the decision is reached that there is nothing in it. Among his own class, Tolstoy found the number of these to be on the increase. The fourth means of escape was found through weakness. Men who saw nothing in life, and who believing that death is better than life were too weak to put the matter to the test.

That which kept him from adopting any of these means of escape was the lingering idea that a mistake existed somewhere. That a solution of the enigma might be found elsewhere. From the study of men in his own rank in life, he turned to the study of the workers and toilers in the earth, and there, after many days discovered the secret of life. He learned that besides that knowledge which he had regarded as the only true knowledge, there was in every living man another kind of knowledge which gives the possibility of living, viz, faith. He began to understand that in the answers given by faith was to be found the deepest source of human wisdom, that he had no reasonable right to reject them, and that they alone solved the problem of life. With this idea, came the thought of God, and the consciousness that God is. He says, "a voice seemed to cry within me, this is he, without whom there is no life! To know God and to live are one. God is life! Live to seek God, and life will not be without him." And stronger than ever rose up life within and

around me, and the light that then shone never left me again."

The further story of Tolstoy's life cannot now be entered into. How he again entered the Greek Church and left it, to live, literally, the life set forth by Jesus in the Gospels, will be found elsewhere. The picture we have seen so far, is that of a man who went about seeking to discover what life is without the idea of God in it, and failing utterly, but, succeeding triumphantly, when with the eye of faith he discovered God, and found in him the explanation of life. To many of us, the tale of struggle and doubt unfolded in the life of Tolstoy, will find no answer in our experience. That faith has always seemed to be part of our being. Nevertheless, it cannot be without help to us, that we should learn from the deep and troubled experiences of others, that the earth yields no explanation of the mystery of life—it is only found in the idea of God. God, as revealed to us in the life and teaching of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Editorial Notes.

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

Early Closing.

In several of the Australasian States we have early closing of shops, so that storekeepers and their employes can have more leisure. But strange to say the hotels are open as late as ever! Why should not the publicans and bar-tenders receive consideration from the government as well as those who labor in other establishments? It is a singular thing that while some honest, struggling tradesmen, whose goods are a necessity to the community, are compelled by law to close early, that trade which is admittedly a curse to the country is allowed to continue its business up to a late hour. Employes with their spare evenings find the drinking saloons invitingly open, and it is a question whether they and their families are really much benefited by their standing in front of a counter buying drink instead of being behind one selling sugar or lace. The fact that politicians are afraid to shorten the hours of drink selling, while they so readily compel other businesses to close early, is one of the clearest indications of the wonderful power wielded by brewers and publicans.

Dr. Dorchesters Statistics.

Dr. Dorchester, as is well known, is the great authority on American religious statistics and he has recently given us some figures that will bear thinking about. According to him, there were at the close of 1800 in the United States 172,406 churches,

126,046 ministers and nearly 18,000,000 communicants. In 1890 there were 151,172 churches, 98,185 ministers and 13,823,618 communicants. In 1880 there were 97,000 churches, 69,870 ministers and 10,065,963 communicants. Going back to 1850, we find there were then 43,072 churches with 25,555 ministers and 3,529,988 church members. In 1800 there was one communicant for every 14.50 inhabitants; in 1850, one to every 6.57; in 1880, one to every five; and in 1900, one to every 4.28. It is therefore evident that, fast as the populations is growing, the churches are growing faster. We cannot compare the Roman Catholic with the Protestant communicants, but Dr. Dorchester compares the two populations. In 1850 Protestants numbered 12,354,958 and Romanists 1,614,000; in 1890 the figures were 8,579,966 and 48,382,693; and in 1900 the Roman Catholics had increased to 10,129,667 and the Protestants to 62,245,662. At this rate of progress it will be a good while before America is Romanised. Dr. Dorchester's conclusion is that: "No intelligent person standing in the light of the nineteenth century, and beholding the great religious movements of the age, can doubt that Christianity is advancing."

Sunday Closing of Shops.

In Sydney and suburbs the fruit shops, which are largely in the hands of Italians, do a good trade on Sunday. The majority of them are open all day. Immense public meetings have been held and resolutions passed in favor of closing as the law demands. Deputations have waited on the Premier and received promises again and again that the police should be instructed to enforce the law. But still they remain open. Only a week or two ago Sir Wm. Lyne assured a large and influential deputation that he could not tell why his instructions had been neglected, but that he would again issue strict directions that the law should be enforced. So far there has been no visible result. The community is puzzled to know how it comes that Sir William's instructions are so persistently and openly disobeyed. It would appear that the Premier is absolutely powerless, and the police authorities seem to simply snap their fingers at the government. It is surely time that there was an alteration somewhere. In the meanwhile many Australian and English shopkeepers who wish to close keep open to retain the trade, which would otherwise fall wholly into the hands of foreigners, and the moral sentiment is outraged by the large and increasing business conducted on the Lord's day.

The Future of the Commonwealth.

Australia enters upon her Commonwealth career with a population slightly larger than

that of the United States when they claimed their independence. The area of the Commonwealth is a trifle larger than that of the States, excluding Alaska. A few years later, 1790, the population of the States was 3,929,214. At the census last year the number was 76,366,066, the increase for the past decade being 13,315,454. America is better watered and more fertile than Australia, and we might reasonably expect her growth to be more rapid, but on the other hand the pressure of increased population in the old world is now so much greater that the exodus therefrom will be correspondingly larger. Science and enterprise will overcome many of the difficulties of settlement in the interior, and it requires no stretch of imagination to suppose that before the century closes, our population will be at least fifty or sixty millions. With such a future before us, the question arises as to the position to be taken by those who are simply disciples of Christ. Shall we be content to remain a small and comparatively unimportant people, or shall we forge ahead and take a position among the religious forces of the land commensurate with the importance of the plea we present?

The Future of the Church.

If we are to grow into a prominent position in the distant future, we must take decided steps in that direction in the near future. It is inconceivable that we should be content with the slow steady progress of the past. Among other essentials to rapid and substantial growth is a greater supply of able and consecrated preachers. Until lately we have allowed our young men to go to America for training, and there dozens of them have remained. The time has gone past in which to send the cream of our youthful talent to assist the cause in the United States. *We must train our own preachers.* Our Canadian brethren, with a smaller membership than ours, have found it necessary to establish a College of the Bible. How much more necessary it is that we, so far from England and America, should educate our own evangelists! Something is being done along this line in Melbourne and Adelaide, and for this we may well be thankful, if only because it has stayed to some extent the exodus of our young men to the United States. The work done is good as far as it possibly can be under the circumstances, but at the best these movements can only be regarded as stepping stones toward the establishment of a College in which able educationalists shall devote their whole time to the development of the talents of young men who desire to devote their lives to gospel work. Surely the time has come for a forward movement. Are there no brethren

willing to devote a portion of their wealth to this much needed enterprise? Are not the rank and file of the brotherhood ready to assist? We have our Home Mission Sunday and Foreign Mission Sunday; is it not time to have an "Education Sunday," in which the claims of such an institution could be placed before the churches, and a contribution taken up? It must be evident to even the most dense of our readers, that if we are to occupy a position by the side of the large bodies of the land we must have leaders who are abreast of the times; men of culture and ability whose presentations of the truth shall command the hearing and respect of the thoughtful. We need not merely one or two of these in our large cities, but scores of them scattered throughout the Commonwealth. Until we are thus equipped we cannot expect to take the place which the importance of our plea demands we should. One of the most essential requirements of the opening years of the new century is an efficient College of the Bible.

From The Field.

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

Queensland.

VERNOR.—At the close of an impressive address by Bro. Paradine, on the evening of the 12th inst., and after the usual invitation, we were cheered to see two more young men make the noble confession, and they were baptised on Monday afternoon last. These two together with one restored, were received into fellowship this morning.

Feb. 24th.

O. ADERMANN.

Victoria.

MARYBOROUGH.—Since last report one more has been added to our number. The husband of Sister Boyle responded to the invitation last Sunday fortnight, and was baptised the following Thursday.

F. B. E.

GEELONG.—A Band of Hope meeting was held on Feb. 28th, when a very enjoyable evening was spent, C. Hale in the chair. Choruses were given by Sunday School children, under Bro. Hester's conductorship, also recitations, dialogues, and violin duets were given by the Sunday School children and others. This is the first meeting of the kind for some time, but we have decided to hold these meetings once a month.

VICTOR HESTER.

South Australia.

HINDMARSH.—In conjunction with sister churches we have had the great pleasure of listening to Bro. Newham, from Victoria. Our brother, accompanied by his sister wife, paid us a visit yesterday morning and addressed the church. His subject, "Personal Responsibility," was splendidly handled, and was in sweet harmony with our own thoughts for days past, as well as in touch with our harvest thanksgiving, which was held yesterday. Our brother based his address on the well-known historical incident of the lepers recorded in 2 Kings, chap. 7; especially in

verses 8, 9 and 10. May God the Holy Spirit impress all our hearts with these thoughts through the remainder of our days to his glory. We heartily thank our brother, and shall be pleased to hear of him again. The afternoon service was taken by Pastor Clark, of Carrondown Baptist Church, who also was much appreciated. The evening subject was by Bro. Campbell, Gal. 6 : 7, "Whatever a man soweth that shall he also reap." There was an overcrowded congregation. Indeed, it was so at each of the services. Bro. Campbell was faithful with his message, and we pray God will follow with his blessing. The display of the products of the harvest was magnificent, and the decorations prettily carried out. The services will be continued this evening, after which the whole collection of fruits, vegetables and other eatables will be distributed amongst the poor of the church and district.

March 4.

CAREW.—Sunday, 24th inst., was our first Sunday School anniversary; meeting for worship at 11 a.m., children's service at 3 p.m. Singing, recitations and part songs highly appreciated. Gospel service at 7.30, by Mr. Leng, 90 present. Two young girls made the good confession, and were immersed on Monday morning. Picnic at 11 a.m., followed by a lantern exhibition by Mr. V. Smith, of Port Adelaide, to which the admission was sixpence. At 9.15 the "affair" was over, and every one appeared thoroughly satisfied and pleased. Number of scholars, 37, and 3 teachers. We thank God for his showers of blessings, and ascribe to him all the honor and glory.

Feb. 26th.

A.G.

R. H. S.

REPORT OF CONFERENCE CHURCHES OF CHRIST, SOUTHERN DISTRICT, S.A.—The first Conference in connection with the above churches was held in Milang, March 26th, beginning at 11.30 a.m., with 15 minutes devotional service led by Bro. A. W. Pearce.

Bro. Thomas was chairman throughout the day, and very ably conducted the meeting; Willunga church being represented by brethren Wheaton and Jacobs; Stirling East and Aldgate Valley, E. Taylor; Strathalbyn, A. J. Harris, J. Taylor, and J. Gordon; besides a number of Sisters; Milang and Pt. Sturt, by quite a number of brethren and also sisters. After a few suitable remarks from the chairman, reports from the various churches were read, which occupied the time until adjournment for luncheon at 12.30. The afternoon session began at 1.30 p.m., and the programme in the following order was carried out:—First consideration of reports, and the total membership of the six churches is 221, with an increase of 19 for the last 12 months. The same number of S.Ss. in the aggregate have 205 scholars, and during the year several of these have been received into the church.

Evangelisation was discussed as to how we may extend our field of labour, also assist Willunga, which gives promise of a good work to be done there. But as there are only two evangelists in the field—Bro. A. J. Harris, at Strathalbyn (and he is just on the eve of leaving), and Bro. J. E. Thomas, stationed at Milang, and is working Stirling East, Milang and Pt. Sturt, besides visiting other places where we have a few isolated members—suggestions for the general Conference were made.

Two very excellent papers were read during the afternoon, although both essayists were through illness prevented from meeting with us. Resolutions were passed expressing the heartiest thanks of Conference to both writers; also sympathising with them in their illness. Bro. T. B. Verco, the writer of one, took for his subject "Christ our Example," and Bro. A. T. Magarey, who wrote the other subject, "Our Modern Apoloses." It was unanimously carried that we ask

permission to have both essays printed in the CHRISTIAN. The nomination and election of officers is as follows: President, Bro. J. H. Yelland; Vice-president, Bro. James Gordon; Secretary, Bro. A. W. Pearce; Committee, D. Goldsworthy, E. Taylor, J. E. Thomas and J. Taylor. Conference meeting next year, Milang. A public tea at 5 p.m., which was the anniversary tea of church in Milang, and a public meeting in the evening commencing at 7.30, presided over by our Bro. Hon. K. W. Duncan M.L.C. The chapel was packed, and some unable to gain admittance. Addresses were given by the chairman, Messrs. Burchett, T. J. Gore, W. Campbell, A. J. Harris and J. E. Thomas, who thanked all who were in any way connected to make the meetings so successful. It being the first meeting of its kind held in Milang is certainly the most enjoyable, and we trust profitable both by extending the kingdom of our Lord and strengthening in spiritual strength of his followers in this portion of his great harvest field. During the evening the choir sang several selections, and Bro. A. J. Harris a solo, which added very much to the enjoyment of all.

STRATHALBYN.—Last Thursday evening a social was given to Bro. A. J. Harris, who is leaving us and going back again to England. There was a goodly number present to join in a friendly cup of tea and bid farewell to our esteemed brother, whom we will greatly miss. This evening our brother preached his farewell sermon, to hear which, there was a large number present. He leaves Strathalbyn by first train to-morrow, for Melbourne. Thence he proceeds by boat to New Zealand, and from there across to America, and then to his own native land.

March 3rd. J. M. GORDON.
NORWOOD.—Last Tuesday evening the Band of Hope gave a special concert in aid of the funds of the "South Australian Temperance Alliance"

Yesterday our meetings were very good. One was received from the Flinders-street Baptist Church, and in the evening a young man and woman made the good confession.
A. C. RANKINE.

March 4th.

—————:O:—————
New Zealand.

SOUTH DUNEDIN.—On Sunday evening, Feb. 24th, Bro. T. H. Mathison preached on the third of the series of subjects on First Principles, when a young girl made the good confession.
T. H. M.

AUCKLAND.—Last night in the presence of a large meeting, another believer made the good confession, and was buried with Christ in baptism, and we trust also was "raised with him through faith in the working of God."
THOS. J. BULL.

Feb. 25th.

MATAURA.—Last Friday evening, the Bible Band in connection with the Church of Christ, Mataura, held its first social, partly by way of welcome to J. J. Franklyn, evangelist. There was a fair attendance. The programme, which was sufficiently varied and not too lengthy, was as follows:—Songs by Misses B. M'Leod, M'Gillivray, and F. M'Leod, duet by Miss M'Leod, and Mr. H. Steward, Quartettes by members of the choir, recitations by Misses Gertie Anderson and Pryde, and Messrs M. Galt, J. J. Franklyn, and M. Perkins, and an essay by Mr. M. Galt. Every item was creditably rendered, and judging from the amount of applause accorded, was fully appreciated.

During the interval, refreshments were handed round; and after satisfying the needs of the inner man, enough good things remained for a treat for the children on Saturday.

Mr. Anderson, in a neat speech, complimented the

Band on the success of the meeting, and wished them continued success.

J. J. Franklyn thanked the young people and the church for the cordial welcome accorded to him. He gave an address on "The Object of Church Organisation," pointing out that, next to the spirit of mutual happiness, came the duty of Christian effort for the salvation of others.

The Chairman (Mr. M. Galt) moved a vote of thanks to all those who had contributed to the evening enjoyment.

A closing hymn and the Benediction concluded a very helpful meeting.—*Gore Standard.*

On Feb. 24 at the close of J. J. Franklyn's address two confessed Christ.

Feb. 26

J. T.

—————:O:—————
West Australia.

COOLGARDIE.—We are pleased to report two confessions on Sunday, Feb. 17th, Bro. Banks speaking to a good house on "The Syrian Captive."

Feb. 20th.

G. O. BURCHILL.

SUBIACO.—We had a real good social gathering in honor of our preacher, A. E. Illingworth, on Wednesday evening, about 150 present. The writer in the chair. Solos by Sisters Hewlett (senior and junior), and Schofield, a duet by Sisters E. Gould and E. Saunders, and a recitation by Sister Taylor. Half-an-hour's talk and refreshments for the inner man, brought us to the time when the chairman on behalf of the church, with a few simple words, presented our preacher with a purse of sovereigns, not as a reward or payment for work done, but altogether and only as an expression of our deep love for him. The recipient feelingly replied. He recognised the spirit in which presentation was made. He accepted the token, and added quite characteristically, "it shall be used for the Master."

On the night of the following Lord's Day two Sunday School lads witnessed for Christ.

18/2/01.

G. PAYNE.

—————:O:—————
New South Wales.

MOREE.—Two, a young girl from the Sunday School and a married woman, confessed Christ on Sunday evening.

Feb. 24th.

D. C. MCCALLUM.

—————:O:—————
Here and There.

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

N.S.W. Sisters' Conference Secretary—Miss Smith, 179 Oxford-st., Sydney.

A. Gillespie writes, that on January 24th they had one baptism at Mystic Park.

Y.P.S.C.E., City Temple, Monday, March 11th, Dorcas 6 p.m., Endeavor 8 p.m.

Bro. Mulvogue is now located at Geelong. He spoke for the church there last Sunday morning.

One young woman confessed Christ at Corowa on Sunday night, 3rd inst., making two added since last report.

A. M. Ludbrook's address for the present will be care of Mr. Jno. Crockett, Spencer-place, Leeds, England.

Secretaries of Dorcas classes be in time with your reports, and send them to Mrs. James Hunter, "Normanhurst," View-street, Marrickville, N.S.W.

The Fourth Annual Conference of the Associated Churches of Christ in W.A. will be held in the Church of Christ, Lake-street, on Good Friday, 5th April.

City Temple S.S. annual picnic held at Clontarf on Saturday, March 2nd, was a huge success. The trip down "our" beautiful was most enjoyable, the day being perfect.

One young man confessed Christ last Sunday night at Woollahra, the eldest son of Bro. and Sister Shearston. He has been chosen as bugler for the Imperial Contingent shortly to leave for South Africa.

Mrs. George Bagley, Treasurer of the Sisters' Conference Committee, retires from the position for the present. She anticipates a trip to her parents, Bro. and Sister Chapman, in New Zealand.

Home Mission superintendent would be glad to receive any donation from the country churches for mission work. Send along the amount whether large or small to Mrs. Morrison, 47 Pitt Street, Redfern, Sydney.

Since our editorial note on Sunday closing was written we hear that the instructions of the Premier of N.S.W. are taking effect. The majority of the fruit shops in Sydney and suburbs were closed last Lord's day.

Sisters of country churches, New South Wales, please forward reports of all departments of work to Conference Secretary, at their earliest convenience. A good conference is expected this year. Let the reports be up-to-date.

A good meeting was held in the City Temple, on Thursday, February 28th. Nominations for the ensuing conference year were received. Arrangements for conference are well in hand, also for the luncheon and tea on Good Friday.

Singers from the surrounding city and suburban churches, meet in the City Temple every Friday evening at 7.45 preparing for Easter. Rally up and help the organist, A. J. Hutchison, and conductor, T. C. Walker. Unity is strength, and makes work much easier and lighter. TRY IT.

A. M. Ludbrook writes:—"Don't you think it would be a good thing for our Australian brotherhood to celebrate the new century inauguration of the Commonwealth by starting at once a "Federal Capital Church Building Fund," so as to be able to secure site at first possible opportunity?"

We desire to call special attention to the series of articles commencing this week on "God's Spirit and the Spirit's Work" by Bro. W. C. Morro. They will appear fortnightly till finished, being seven in all. Will not our regular subscribers call the attention of those members not taking the paper to this matter.

We are requested to announce that the VICTORIAN MISSION FUND accounts will close for audit on Thursday, 14th March. All monies intended to be included in this year's accounts should therefore reach the Treasurer or Secretary on or before that date. Will those who made promises please note this!

Mrs. Hall and her two daughters left Melbourne last Saturday for Auckland, via Sydney. Mrs. Hall has made herself very useful in Melbourne for many years, especially in work among the young as teacher, and for some years as visitor for the Sunday School Union. Both she and her daughters will be greatly missed. We wish for them happy and useful lives in Auckland.

On Monday evening last there was a great audience at the Swanston-street Chapel to listen to a lecture by Jas. Johnston on the Paris Exhibition. The pictures, 70 in number, were kindly supplied by Bro. Thos. Mitchell. The pictures were very beautiful, and a pleasant evening was spent. A collection for the Burwood Boys' Home, amounting to £6/14/-, was taken up.

James Johnston left Melbourne on Tuesday morning for two weeks' work in the Wimmera Circuit in connection with H. Leng, the evangelist in the employ of the Victorian Home Mission Committee. Yesterday he was at the local conference at Kaniva. The rest of this week and over Sunday next he will be at Carew. All next week he will be preaching at South Lillimur, and on Sunday, March 17, he will be at Kaniva.

Bro. J. A. Davies wishes us again to say that he desires the presence of every member of the church in Victoria at the reception in the Town Hall, on April 4. The poor and rich alike are invited, and if they do not come it is their own fault. It is not a dress parade, but a meeting for the interchange of common thought and for the common good. If you can possibly attend hand your name to your secretary, and a card of admission will be sent.

The class of W. C. Morro will resume work on Monday next, March 11, at 4 o'clock p.m. It will meet as before on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of each week, unless otherwise decided by the class. The work will be resumed where left off (at the beginning of the 13th Chapter of Acts). A thorough study will be made of Paul's missionary tours and all the historical matters of his Epistles. Anyone caring to begin this work will please be present on the day stated.

A very pleasant preachers' meeting was held on last Monday, the topic for discussion being "Faith Healing." There has been but little growth during the last month, the additions reported being few. It was decided to hold the next meeting on Tuesday, April 2nd, instead of Monday, and to invite all the country preachers who are attending Conference, to be present. The subject for that meeting will be Church Government with respect to the wisdom of consulting all the members of the church, as is usually done in the business meetings of the church.

On Lord's Day last the meetings at Swanston-street were specially interesting, the occasion being harvest thanksgiving services. The building was appropriately decorated with sheaves of wheat and oats, and various descriptions of fruit and vegetables. The morning meeting was very hearty. Bro. J. A. Davies presided, and alluded to the customs of the Jewish people in celebrating their gathering in of their harvest. Bro. T. J. Cook spoke on "Silver Baskets," and his address was much appreciated. In the evening, Bro. Johnston delivered an excellent discourse on the text, "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness." The attendance was large, and we hope for good results.

The public meeting to be held in the Town Hall, Melbourne, on April 4, in connection with the President's "At Home," promises to be a great gathering. We hope that every member of the church in Victoria will do their best to bring to the after-meeting as many as they possibly can, so that the crowd may be assured. The Town Hall takes a lot of filling, and as this is our first effort on so large a scale, we trust that every member will do their very best to make it a marked success. A lot is depending on individual effort in this matter. Small cards of invitation are being sent out to secretaries, and it is to be hoped that the brethren and sisters will ask for these and make good use of them. The programme is a first-class one. Let us have a large crowd.

In a private conversation Bro. W. C. Morro pointed out to us that we have misunderstood him in one part of his letter which appeared in our columns last week. We said that Bro. Morro confessed his error about the Cleveland Church, and then tried to show he was not in error at all. Bro. Morro points out that he was simply trying to show how the conflicting evi-

dence given by Bro. Johnston and the American papers might be explained, and that he had no intention in the direction intimated by us. We regret that we misunderstood Bro. Morro, and correct the matter as far as we can. It may appear also that we have placed Bro. Johnston in a false position. We have not intentionally done so. We do not doubt Bro. Johnston's word for a moment, and it is possible that the explanation Bro. Morro gives is the correct one. At all events we had no intention of casting any reflection on Bro. Johnston. Many of our readers do not like discussions of any kind in our paper. Personally we rather like it, but in deference to the expressed wish of many of our subscribers, as far as possible we have tried to keep it out. In this case we made a statement which Bro. Morro thought was untrue, and stated his case frankly, to which we replied in as kindly a manner as we know how. The case is now before the brethren, and they can form their own conclusions.

We commend the following to our Australian churches. The *Standard* heartily approves the action of the Western Pennsylvania Preachers' Association with respect to a preacher who dishonored his calling and fell out by the way. The offender F. F. Fuller, expressed the sincerest repentance for the sin of adultery which he had committed, and desired the forgiveness of the church. In response, the Association, that through a committee had been investigating the case, adopted the following recommendation:

"We therefore recommend to the Association that a most fraternal letter be sent to Bro. Fuller, expressing deep sympathy with him in his sorrow, of joy in his penitence, and of prayers for his continuance hereafter in pure and Christly ways of living; that the same letter should convey to Bro. Fuller the urgent recommendation of the Association that he should abandon the Christian ministry entirely, and that he should not attempt to do either pulpit or pastoral work in any congregation of the Disciples of Christ."

This recommendation is eminently wise. No preacher whose character has been tarnished should think of resuming the work of a Christian minister again. He can serve Christ in a modest way in the church and prove the genuineness of his repentance much more effectually than if he were permitted to return to the pulpit again. The churches cannot be too insistent in demanding that their ministers in life and character shall be above suspicion and criticism.

Obituary.

To live is Christ: and to die is gain.—Phil. 1: 21.

WOODS.—Bro. and Sister Woods were bereaved last month at the loss of one of their family, a girl of eight years, who was a scholar in our Sunday School. "Not lost but gone before." C McD.

CARTWRIGHT.—Sister Ann Cartwright passed away on the 26th inst, at the advanced age of 79 years. She held membership here for the past 18 years, although not having met with us through infirmity for some time. She has gone to the rest which remains for the people of God. "Goodnight, not farewell." C. McD.

EASTON.—On 24th February, at Moreland-street, Footscray, George, beloved husband of Ester A. Easton (nee Woodbridge), and eldest son of Thomas Easton, West Melbourne.

In Memory of Samuel Lee, who died at Shepparton, March 11, 1898. "Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power."

By a sorrowing family.

—Rev. 20: 6.

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!

A Special Meeting of the Sisters will (p.v.) be held in Swanston Street Lecture Hall on Friday evening, March 15th, at 7.45, to make final Conference Arrangements. ALL Sisters invited to be present.

MARCH 24-26.—SPECIAL MEETINGS at FITZROY TABERNACLE to inaugurate H. G. HARWARD'S SECOND Year's Engagement with the Church. **MARCH 24:**—Afternoon at 3. Evening at 7. **MARCH 26:**—MONSTER PUBLIC MEETING AT EIGHT P.M. Speakers: W. C. MORRO, H. G. HARWARD, and JAS. JOHNSTON. **SPECIAL SINGING.**

Acknowledgments.

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

VICTORIAN MISSION FUND.

Church, Kerang East, per Bro. Milne	£5 0 0
" South Yarra, per Sister Craig	.. 0 2 6
" Fitzroy, per Sister Clydesdale	.. 4 4 0
" Warracknabeal, per Bro. Harman	0 15 0
" Runnymede East, per Sister Dickens	1 0 0
Sister Walsh, Prahran	.. 0 1 0
Bro. John Gilmour	.. 0 12 6
	£11 15 0

ANNUAL COLLECTION.

Church, Takaka, Nelson, New Zealand 0 12 0
CORRECTION.—The sum of £2, acknowledged on Jan. 24th as from Kyabram, should have been Tootamba.

M. McLELLAN, Sec., J. A. DAVIES, Treas.,
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Carlton. Hawthorn.

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VICTORIA.

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W. Burgess, Echuca	.. 2 12 0
Church, South Yarra (collected by Mrs. Clarey)	.. 1 10 0

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Mrs. C. H. Howard, Carnsdale, N.S.W. (per J. Pittman)	.. 1 0 0
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QUEENSLAND.

Mission Band, Ma Ma Creek	.. 1 0 0
" " (B. Fund)	.. 0 7 0
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March 1907											
SUN. MON. TUE. WED. THU. FRI. SAT.											
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23					
24	25	26	27	28	29	30					

Biographical.

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

Life of Elder John Smith.

He labored to show that, by a fair exposition of the context, the declaration of the Apostle could not be made to support Calvinism. While he spoke, the stranger stood in an attitude of fixed attention; but, when the discourse was concluded, and the speaker came down to seek him, he could not be found. They searched for him through the scattered congregation, but in vain. Next day they heard that he had gone back to Indiana with a suspicion, if not a conviction, that Calvinism had no foundation in the Word of God!

"I went to Kentucky," says Elder Thompson, speaking of this incident, "to learn by what means so many of my old neighbors and friends had been turned from the old paths. I heard Elder Abernethy, a leading Reformer in Bracken, defend the new heresy, but I saw no reason to distrust the soundness of my own faith. I was about to return home, when I learned that John Smith, already renowned throughout the land, would preach next day at Ohio Locust. I determined to hear him, assured that, if I was wrong, he could make it so appear. I listened to the introductory remarks of Buckner H. Payne, but when he sat down my armor was still sound. I rebuffed his arguments with the text, which came frequently into my mind, '*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.*' When John Smith arose and cited that very text, I said to myself: Now, my brother, if you can do anything for me, so be it. He began, and, with the skill of a master workman, in forty-five minutes stripped me bare of my armor, under which I had long fought the battles of moderate Calvinism! I saw that, if his view of the Scripture was correct, I might say, as Napoleon said at Waterloo—'All is gone!' I shall ever believe that God caused John Smith to meet me that day at Ohio Locust."

When Elder Thompson reached his home in Rush County, Indiana, he entered upon his investigations of the Scriptures with fear and trembling. He resolved to open his understanding to every ray of light, and to follow the truth of God at any sacrifice of property, friends or reputation.

Within a few miles of Lower Bethel, or North Middletown, there was at that time an influential body of Particular Baptists, belonging to the Licking community, known as the Stony Point church. They had long enjoyed the pastoral care of Lewis Corbin, and, occasionally, the able ministrations of Ambrose Dudley, and other prominent Baptists of the old Regular Order. It was a stronghold of Hyper Calvinism, whose adverse influence had often been felt by Smith when preaching among the churches of the Boone's Creek Association. So he resolved to try the power of Ancient Gospel on the firm-hearted Calvinists of that region. A few had already softened under his preaching at North Middletown, and they now invited him to come and preach the same

Gospel to their neighbors also. He went; and Gurdon Gates, the pastor of the church at Paris, went with him, with many others from that congregation. The young and zealous reformers of North Middletown met them there. As they rode along towards the place Gates expressed his fear that the house would be closed against them; but Smith felt no concern about it, for, though the day was chilly, he was sure the groves would receive the people. But they found the house open, and already filled with people. Groups of men stood in the yard waiting for the man whose word, it seemed, could move churches from their foundations, and who now had the boldness to come and preach a strange Gospel among the orthodox at Stony Point. He went in and took his seat at a table near the pulpit. The strong and cheerful voices of his young brethren greeted his entrance with the fine old song, from manuscripts:

"How firm a foundation you, saints of the Lord,
Have laid for your faith in his excellent Word."

While they were singing an old man came in, and approaching Smith, said something to him which he could not understand, for the whole multitude had caught up the strain, and were singing with enthusiasm. Smith rapped on the floor with his cane, and the song ceased.

"This gentleman," said he, "wishes to say something that I cannot well hear."

The man now informed them that the trustees of the meeting-house had directed him to come and say that John Smith could not preach in that house, but that Elder Gates might do so if he chose.

Smith arose, and repeating the order of the trustees, said:

"I came here, friends, by special request, and I am perfectly willing to preach wherever the people may choose to assemble."

Several at once proposed their own houses; some said one thing and some another, for there was much confusion. He met the crisis, however, in his own peculiar way. When order was restored he took up his hat, and while every eye was on him, walked toward the door.

"Though we are not apostles, nor even successors of the apostles," said he, turning to the messenger, and speaking through him to the trustees, "yet we come to you bringing the apostles' doctrine, and since you will not receive us into your house, nor hear the Word that we bring, we shake off the dust from under our feet as a testimony against you," and the dust of his shoes was left on their inhospitable threshold. Two Christian women, who loved the Word that he preached, now arose and followed him, and, imitating his example, their lighter footfalls were distinctly heard as they, too, shook off the dust from their feet at the door. The whole congregation followed, and gathered around him in a grove near by. There he stood in their midst, at the root of an old maple, and while heaps of brush blazed near by, he preached the Gospel that he loved to a multitude that were willing to endure cold, and fatigue and ridicule to hear him.

In the assembly that day there stood a man much respected for his strong, natural sense, and his firm and honest heart. He listened with intense interest; for he, too,

was prayerfully investigating the scriptures and suspiciously examining the foundations of his Calvinism. That discourse gave to his mind new light, and helped him to a more perfect understanding of the plan of salvation. Hiram M. Bledsoe soon afterward modestly, but firmly, embraced the principles of the Reformation, becoming at length one of the most solid of the pillars of the church.

That night John Smith preached at a farmhouse a few miles off, and many that had gone to Stony Point followed him thither also. And thus they continued with him some days, as he went preaching from house to house among the people.

He returned home, and for the year 1828 confined his labors within the bounds of North District—preaching regularly at Spencer, Mount Sterling and Grassy Lick—and giving what time he could to the new churches that he had planted.

On one occasion during that year, as he was preaching to the young disciples at Sharpsburg, the Methodists and Presbyterians held meetings also, and divided the attention of the people. At the close of his discourse one evening a young man of very plain appearance, but of fine sense, came forward and demanded baptism forthwith. Lights were procured, for the night was dark. The entire congregation turned out with one accord to escort him to the water. The crowd shaped itself into something like a procession, and, with uplifted torches and waving lanterns, they moved on through the streets, singing with fervor—

"In all my Lord's appointed ways,
My journey I'll pursue."

It chanced that their way to the water led by the Presbyterian and Methodist meeting-houses, at both of which places there was preaching that night. As the procession passed by the congregations poured out of the doors from both houses, and, leaving their ministers behind them, moved on with the throng to the water. Even the solemnity of a baptism at night could not hush the irreverent titter of the people, as they thought of the two preachers standing there in their pulpits, indignant and alone.

The Home.

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

COLERIDGE writes: "If men could learn from history, what lessons it might teach us. But passion and party blind our eyes, and the light which experience gives is a lantern on the stern, which shines only on the waves behind us."

"We cannot compromise between good and evil, between truth and falsehood, between progress and retrogression."—MAZZINI.

"One reads to know other people's thoughts, but if we take them upon trust, without examining and comparing them with our own, it is really living upon other people's scraps."—CHESTERFIELD.

The Science of Prayer.

So much to pray for, and so little sense
Of what is due to God's Omnipotence;
So soon thou tirest, while he never tires
Of granting, when 'tis good, thy strong desires.
Think of the mighty power the Christian wields,
How is it that to sin he ever yields?
How is it that we ever in despair
Sink down, while still the Master heareth prayer?
Prayer is not just the morning and the night
Set forms of prayer, which yet we know are right—
Prayer is far more. As sweet Æolian strings
Vibrate at lightest touch the soft wind brings,
So should our hearts responsive turn to prayer
When glad or sorry, filled with joy or care.
Prayer is not only asking, 'tis far more,
'Tis praying when we worship and adore,
When we confess our sins in grief and shame,
And when in thankfulness we bless his name;
Yea, oftentimes a worldless attitude
Is with the essence of true prayer endued.
If we could only live a life of prayer
True heavenly joy we while on earth should share:
Prayer is communion with our God most blest—
Who looks to him, and loves his will, prays best.
"Prayer is a mighty science," may his love
Teach us by prayer to live the life above,
That when death's shadow falls upon our place
It may reveal the shining of his face.

—:0:—

This amusing story from the *Herald of Mercy* may serve as a question to many who read it. Could parts of your Bible be torn out without you finding it out for a long time?
"Father, are you sure that Jonah is in all modern editions of the Bible? Is it in yours?" asked a college boy.

"Is it in mine? I want a whole Bible, or none at all."

"But father, let me see the book of Jonah. Your earnest words have aroused my interest."

The bible was procured—the old father had been reading for many years, every page in the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Epistles soiled with frequent handling. But in vain they searched for Jonah. After turning the leaves of the Old Testament a number of times, the old gentleman repeated in order the names of the prophetic books, but still Jonah could not be found.

"Father," said the young man, "do not get angry, but come here."

As he spoke he held the Book under the light, and it was evident that the two leaves containing Jonah had been cut out with a sharp knife.

"Father, pardon me, but I cut out those leaves three years ago, and yet you did not miss them. Now, father, was Jonah in your Bible?"

The father's face revealed a peculiar struggle; but he answered:

"I see it, my son; I am as bad as the higher critics. There has been no Jonah in my Bible for three years."



On March 31, the decennial census of Australasia will be taken. Papers will be left at every house to be filled up, and from these the statistics of our country will be collated. These papers will be ruled off into columns like the pages of a newspaper. At the head of each column you are told what to write in it. The first is for your name. One of these columns is headed

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION.

At the last census, and previous ones also, our brethren wrote various answers in this column. Some said they were members of the *Church of Christ*. Others wrote *Christians*, and others still *Disciples*. The result was that we were divided up in the statistical report into two or three small and insignificant bodies. Now we are one in Christ, and let us be also one in the statistical report. To be this we must agree on a uniform answer. Then we shall be represented as one body, and there will be no confusion, and we shall receive our just deserts. Now we all claim to be members of the Church of Christ. Let all, therefore, give this answer on the census paper. Opposite your name, in the column headed Religious Denomination, write

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