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THE BIBLE AS AUTHORITY.

B. W. HUNTSMAN.

"Within this ample volume lies
The mystery of mysteries;
Happiest they of human race
To whom their God has given the grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, to force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born
That read to doubt, or read to scorn."

It is in the spirit of these words by Sir Walter Scott that we begin the consideration of the Bible's authority in man's religious life. Considerable confusion and harm have always resulted from a misunderstanding as to the real source of authority in religion. Broadly speaking, it has divided the Christian world into three great divisions—the Greek, with Constantinople as its centre of authority; the Roman, acknowledging Rome as its centre; and the Protestant, which exalts the Bible as the only standard of authority in religious faith and practice.

Authority is defined as "Power or admitted right to command or to act, whether original or delegated." It is "that to which, or one to whom an appeal or reference may be made in support of any opinion, action or course of conduct." That the Bible as an inspired revelation possesses this right and power, or standard of appeal in regard to religious truth and duties, will be readily admitted. It is the final court of appeal. Beyond this message of revelation we cannot go.

It is not my purpose to raise the question of inspiration, except in a small way. True, authority necessitates inspiration; anything uninspired possesses no absolute authority in religion, and inspiration implies authority; yet an utterance may be inspired, having authority over certain people, in a certain age, but afterwards ceasing to exercise that authority. I regard it as a self-evident fact that whatever was revealed by God is inspired, and it will be rather my purpose to confine the question of authority in its application to our own age.

It is well to state clearly in what the Bible is authoritative. The discussions on the Bible as related to science have caused needless strife through an effort to make it authoritative on matters in which it does not claim to be complete and final. It is true that it gives the most beautiful descriptions in prose and poetry of the origin and workings of nature. What can excel the opening chapters of Genesis as a description of the dawn of time and the origin of all physical life? And where human science acknowledges its inability to go any further, the Bible steps in and reveals that "In the begin-

ning God created the heavens and the earth." How wonderful in beauty and instruction are the words of the Almighty when he speaks out of the whirlwind to his servant Job, describing the course of nature, the customs of birds and beasts, and how all created things find their origin and support in him. Wordsworth cannot equal the Psalmist in describing the wonders of the firmament, and how the heavens declare the glory of God. From the birds of the air and the flowers of the field Jesus gathered lessons of providence and trust, and showed that nature has a message of good tidings for every anxious, troubled soul, if we will but hear it. But while it is true that the Bible contains lessons drawn from nature for our profit, and a correct understanding of its teaching will show that it nowhere contradicts nature's laws, yet it is not designed as a text book or an authority on science. It has a higher purpose. It is a revelation of the one true and living God, his eternal nature, his attributes, his will, his purpose and method in the redemption of man. To divert its authority is to injure its beauty, its purpose, its meaning and its supremacy. So my proposition is, that the Bible contains the supreme authority for man's religious life.

This authority of the sacred Scriptures is distinct from the correctness of its interpretation. Whether our understanding of its meaning be true or false, its authority remains unchanged. It is superior to the interpretations we have placed upon it, and it has survived the false conclusions men have drawn from its teaching. Its authority lies in the fact that it is the inspired revelation of God and his will, and our aim is to correctly understand and apply its message.

The revelation of the divine Word is supreme, and as such excels all other sources of authority. It is true that apart from the Bible there is a revelation of God, though necessarily incomplete. For example, God is revealed in history—in the story of the growth and development of the races of mankind, their elevation from savagery to civilization, their advancement from the use of rude instruments of toil to a knowledge of the arts and sciences. Their struggles and triumphs, their joys and sorrows, when rightly interpreted, show the hand of the Almighty leading men to fuller light and enjoyment of the Father of all men.

God is also revealed in nature. The brightness of the noontday sun speaks to us of the Father of Lights with whom there is no changing. "The heavens declare God's

glory," from which we may learn our own unworthiness. "Consider the lilies of the field," said the Master. Why consider them? Because they can teach us to have confidence in God. On the roadside grows a common yellow primrose: the heedless boy crushes it beneath his feet, but the poet of nature sees in it a revelation of God, and reads a message from the great Creator.

Paul recognised the fact that something of God is to be learned from nature, when he declared that the heathen were not free from blame because they did not possess the written Word, for they could have known God by the things which they saw around them. "The invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity: that they may be without excuse, because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks."

God is also revealed in conscience. We all recognise the danger of making conscience a guide, and the fact that it is only safe to follow its dictates when it is enlightened by the Word of Truth. But it seems that where there is no oral or written revelation of God and his will, conscience is authoritative, the standard of what is right and wrong. Paul so judges when he says that "when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them."

But after all, history, nature and conscience do not contain the full revelation of God, and are consequently limited in their authority. The Bible only is the safe guide in man's religious life. It contains the most complete revelation of divine truth. It is the full and final source of authority. But while all this is true, yet I would not say that every sentence and word in the sacred volume possesses authority for us who live in the Christian age. To make everything recorded therein binding upon us at the present time is something we are not prepared to admit. I am not doubting in the least the truthfulness of its record when I say that anything is not authoritative simply because it finds a place in the Bible. The Scriptures must not be made to endorse everything they tell, neither must a person be regarded as inspired simply because his utterances or deeds are reported therein. For

instance, the sacred volume records some things that are positively wicked. Cain, jealous of his brother, slays him, and adds to his crime the sin of lying. After leaving the ark, Noah plants a vineyard, and is found by his son in a drunken condition. Lot leaves Zoar and dwells in the mountains, and his daughters commit incest. The king of Egypt commands the midwives to kill the male children of the Israelites. King Saul plots to take the life of young David, and David commits adultery with Bathsheba and places her husband where he can be slain. Solomon has numerous wives. Herod slays the babes of Bethlehem. The Jews crucify Jesus and stone Stephen, and Saul of Tarsus casts innocent people into prison. How are these things to be understood? It will not do to say that they were committed in a past age, unenlightened by the gospel. Sin is always sin, wherever and by whom committed. True, these facts may be used as a warning to avoid like evils, but they were certainly not performed by divine inspiration. To properly understand these things, we must carefully distinguish between what is given simply as a record of facts, and what is done by inspiration of God.

Again, the Bible records some things that are untrue; not that I mean any inspired utterance is untrue, but the sayings of uninspired men and demons, and the words of men inspired at one time but not at another, find a place in the Scriptures. For example: Satan deceives our first parents with a lie. Aaron says of the golden calf "This is thy God, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." When Jehovah sums up the reasonings of Job and his friends, he declares that they had not spoken the right thing. The enemies of Jesus said he cast out demons by Beelzebub the prince of demons. The Jews charge Jesus with saying that he would destroy and rebuild their temple in three days. And Peter positively denies any acquaintance with the man of Galilee. Here again we have to distinguish a truthful narrative from what is spoken by inspiration.

Further, the Bible records some things which were authoritative in a past age, but have ceased to possess authority for the present. For example: The ritualistic commands of the law of Moses. The sacrifices, the special offerings, the sabbath days, the feast days, the wearing of special garments and abstinence from certain foods. Here again we must guard against a misapplication of the Scriptures, distinguishing what is to us simply a record, from what possesses authority for our own age.

The failure to note these distinctions has been the cause of some great wrongs in the past, and authority for their practice has been sought in the records of the Bible. Nations have endeavored to justify themselves in wars of extermination, because the children of Israel under Moses, Joshua, Barak, Gideon, and by the hand of Samson destroyed tribes, burned their cities and villages, cut in pieces innocent children, and kept the women for themselves. Because it says in Exodus 22: 18, "Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress (or witch) to live," many an innocent old woman and sometimes a pure maiden was dragged through the streets,

followed by a howling mob, and made to endure shameful indignities. Passive obedience was rendered to kings and their divine right accepted, because the Bible narrates the fact of kings being appointed by God, and teaches obedience to rulers. We are not so far removed from the days of slavery to forget that slaveholders justified themselves by the stories of the Bible which tell of the great and good men in the ancient times possessing slaves, and that Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon, besides elsewhere teaching that slaves should obey their masters. Because Jesus said "Go out into the highways and hedges and constrain (or compel) them to come in," the Church of Rome used that beautiful utterance as authority for much of their persecution of those who refused to come into the fold of the church. Even to-day certain people claim for polygamy the sanction of the Scriptures because they tell of some great and good men who possessed many wives. And in view of the fact that the law of Moses permitted divorce, many conclude that unrestrained liberty should be granted in reference to the most binding and sacred of human ties. Thus in various ways has the Bible's authority been misapplied and falsely used, even by many of its professed friends.

What then is to be the true test and standard as to what is authoritative in the Bible? The answer is found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the true test, the divine standard, the final court of appeal in this and all succeeding ages. The authority for anything in man's religious life must be measured by the life, the character, the teaching, the example and the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true that Jesus did not give minute directions for the details of our modern life. Yet in the life, the character, and teachings of Jesus are to be found great principles of righteousness for the government of all people in all ages and under all conditions of society, and the wonderful thing is that we never need be in doubt very long as to what Jesus would have us do. Nature may teach me of God as Creator, Controller, and Provider of the universe, enforcing needful lessons therefrom, but Jesus reveals God as my loving Father. History may teach me something of providence, but Christ teaches me more of the gracious purposes of God for man. Conscience may reprove my wrong doing, and commend what is right; but through Jesus and his sacrifice I learn more of the awfulness of sin and the fulness of divine grace. It matters not what patriarchs, kings or prophets did in the past. The question for me is, What does Jesus teach? Do their actions harmonise with his teaching and example? Wars of extermination, burning of witches, assassination of kings, slavery, polygamy, unlimited divorce, and religious persecution can have no possible justification, because they find no endorsement by Jesus Christ. God is absolutely right and true, and Jesus is the revelation of God, and what is contrary to him is, and ever must be, wrong. We can place no limits to the moral and spiritual perfections of Jesus. He may have been capable of sinning, but I am unshaken in my belief that he did not sin. Neither do I believe that his knowledge of sacred truth was limited, ex-

cept in one thing, namely, the time of his second advent. I do not believe that Jesus made mistakes, nor if knowing what was true played upon the ignorance of the people to enforce moral lessons. If he erred in one thing, he was liable to be wrong in another, and when you have robbed me of a perfect Christ my confidence is gone, I have nothing to hold to, I am without an infallible guide. True, he withheld a larger vision of truth from his disciples until they were able to appreciate it, but that is different to casting doubts on the knowledge of Jesus concerning sacred truths. What he accepts I am to accept; what he rejects I am to reject. Everything is to be measured by the divine standard of the Son of God. He is our perfect spiritual guide, our divine authority in all phases of religious faith and practice.

But what is the proof that Jesus is the true test of that which is authoritative in the Bible? Consider the question first from its negative side. It is not in the antiquity of Christianity. While age adds weight, it is not absolute proof. The religions represented by Confucius and Buddha originated about 500 years before Christ. Furthermore, there was a time when Christianity was in its infancy, and it would have been unfair for men to have rejected the authority of Jesus because his cause was unsupported by years. Neither does the real proof lie in the number and intelligence of Christ's followers. Truly they give support, but there was a time when his disciples were only a few humble men. Neither does it consist in the extent of his influence to-day, though the ever-widening influence of Christ indicates strength, yet there was a time when it was confined to a very small part of Asia, and it would have been unjust to have rejected Jesus on that account. We must find the proofs of Christ's authority in himself. In the sinlessness of his life, though tempted in all points like as we are. In the fact that he rendered to God a perfect obedience, so was able to be man's Redeemer and Mediator. In the purity and sufficiency of his teaching. In his revelation of the Father and the Father's will, as no prophet had ever done. In the wonderful signs which he wrought, having the twofold purpose of revealing the sympathy and love of God for suffering humanity, and proving him to be the servant of Jehovah. In the Father's voice which spake from heaven, declaring the Sonship of Jesus. In the sacrificial nature of his death. And when the disciples lost hope and enemies triumphed over his apparent downfall and extinction, he gives the final proof of his authority in his triumphant and glorious resurrection, ascension and exaltation to the right hand of God, sending forth the Holy Spirit miraculously manifested, absolutely establishing for ever his divine authority. The test, then, of all things in the Bible is the endorsement of Jesus Christ. Whatever harmonises with him possesses authority. With this all-sufficient, all-supreme, and heavenly approved authority, we need no ecclesiastics, however exalted and honored, to dictate to us the message of God. Like ourselves they are liable to err, consequently they are imperfect guides where perfection is necessarily required. But following Christ we are safe. Our privilege and duty is to learn from him,

be guided by him in all matters pertaining to divine truth. Coming to him and learning from him, we shall find rest for our souls.

There is another portion of Scripture teaching which needs at least brief mention. It deals not so much with the practical side of Christianity, namely, acts of righteousness, but rather reveals to us the beauty, the nature and meaning of Christ and his kingdom; the divine side of Christ, his atonement and other deep mysteries of the kingdom of God. This is covered by the Messianic prophecies and the Christian epistles, more especially the latter. How are we to know that the conception of Christ herein revealed is infallibly true? Is there any possibility of the writers having been mistaken, and thus their teaching lose all authority for us? Divine inspiration present with these sacred writers silences our doubts. We believe that "men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit," not only in olden times before the Christ appeared, but at the dawn of Christian history and experience, revealing to us the deep and blessed truths connected with our Lord and his redemptive work.

Thus, beginning with the proposition that the Bible contains the supreme authority in religion, I have endeavored to show that while there is a certain revelation of God and his will in nature, history and conscience, yet not in these nor even in every sentence in the Bible can we find the supreme and complete authority for our religious life at the present time. Only in the Lord Jesus Christ is this fully revealed, and the proof of this is not merely in the age of Christianity, the number of its adherents, or the extent of its influence, but in the nature of Christ, his sinlessness, his teaching, and the things which God did through him fully attesting his authority, so that whatever does not possess his endorsement is to be rejected. And finally, that the revelation concerning the nature and work of Christ and his kingdom is to be received because men of God wrote as directed by the Holy Spirit. No greater privilege can we have than to increase our knowledge of these divine truths, led by him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, accepting nothing as authoritative except the truth, which will make us free.

vesting the fields below, while donkeys and camels were bearing the grain to the village threshing floors. On the neighboring hills were flocks of sheep and goats guarded by shepherd lads. I saw one sitting on a rock playing his flute in the true classic manner. I wondered if he was dreaming of some dark-eyed maiden of the village; but alas, this is not a land of love or lovers. It was on one of these slopes that the daughters of Shiloh danced in the vineyards and were captured by the Benjaminites (Judges 21: 19-23). A rude and sudden way of proposal truly, but the absence of love as a motive to marriage still prevails. Woman is still a slave, and not a companion.

The wheat harvest was in full swing in these valleys. It was cut with sickles by the men and older women, was bound into bundles by the maidens, and was put on the backs of donkeys and borne to the threshing floors. In Bible times the harvest was a time of festivity and of calling in one's friends, and so it is yet. In one field of not more than 10 acres I counted 83 women, men and boys, besides many donkeys. Occasionally I would see a Ruth gleaning among the sheaves, only I should regret to think that the sweet and noble girl from Moab was no cleaner than they. This was a matter that was continually thrusting itself on my mind. I would see an old man, venerable and with long white beard. Here is Jacob, I would think, when he said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years." But I could not help asking, Was Jacob no cleaner than he? I would wonder if the villages in which Christ spent some of his time were no cleaner, and had not fewer evil smells about them than the present ones. As to the women, downtrodden and oppressed, I could never identify them with the Hannahs and Rachels of the Bible, by even the freest flight of the imagination.

From Shiloh I rode through a long valley, over a hill into a level plain, the plain of Mokhua, framed by the mountains of Samaria. Gerazim was long in full view, but Ebal was eclipsed behind it. At the point where the road turns to pass between them is Jacob's Well. It is now enclosed by a high stone wall, built by the Greek Church. It has also repaired the stone building which had been built over it. I sat down on the kerb of the well to think of the conversation which Jesus had with the woman of Samaria at this very place, but some Russian girls gathered at the doorway and giggled, and this was not conducive to quiet meditation. The well is now perfectly dry, and is said to be about 68 feet deep. The enclosing building makes it so dark that one cannot see the interior wall.

From Nabalus I secured a young Samaritan to guide me to the top of Mt. Gerazim. The view from it is very fine, especially to the eastward. Here I got my first sight of Mt. Hermon. Half-way down the slope of the mountain is a fine spring that supplies the city with water. My escort conducted me to the Samaritan synagogue, a plain, whitewashed structure in the middle of Nabalus, and I was permitted to handle the ancient manuscript of the five books of Moses. The high priest said it was 3572 years old, and written by the great-grandson

From Jerusalem to Tabor.

W. C. Morro, B.A.

I will write two letters in the form of a journal, for they are to be the daily record of a trip on horseback from Jerusalem through central Palestine and Galilee and ending at Haifa. I was accompanied by a guide and dragoman named Gabriel Hobast, an Ottoman, but a Roman Catholic; and a muleteer who, as far as I know, had but one name and that Khalie. I took no tent, but was to rely on the monasteries and European houses for the best accommodation that could be found. My horse was generally reliable and sure but not fast. Thus I travelled for eight days.

July 1.—Our first day's ride was a short one, so we did not start early. From the summit of Mt. Scopus I took my farewell look at the Holy City. I thanked God that I had been permitted to see it, and rode on. I got frequent views of the valley of the Jordan and the northern end of the Dead Sea. I never tired of gazing at this scene. I was now in the territory of Benjamin, and before long we passed sites of its ancient towns. It is now very stony and barren, but once there were many villages here. Ruins were all about us; in truth they were like the idolatrous shrines of Rehoboam, on every high hill and in every valley and under every green tree. On our right was a ruined mound that Robinson has identified with Gibeah of Benjamin (Judges 19: 12). Just beyond this is a place called Er Ram, which is probably the ancient Ramah. Through a gap between hills I saw Gibeon and the slopes of the valley of Ajalon, famous as the place where the sun stood still at the command of Joshua (Josh. 10: 12-13). Mizpah, on the summit of a high hill, was scarcely out of sight during the entire day. After lunch, which was eaten at Bireh, perhaps the ancient Bearoth (Josh. 9: 17), we left the main road and went to Bethel. Jacob "took

of the stones of that place." He had a great variety to choose from, for a stonier place I have never seen. Bethel is now a typical Arab village surrounded by gardens of fig and other fruit trees. A ride of two miles to the east gave us a view of the site of Ai. The valley in which Joshua concealed his thirty thousand mighty men of valor is easily identified. I spent this night at Jifna with a Roman Catholic priest. He was a kind host, but the language in which we conversed was an odd medley of English, French, Italian, Latin and gestures. I was somewhat surprised to hear Gabriel call me *Doctor*, something that he had not done before and never repeated, but was amazed when he explained to the priest that I was a Doctor of Divinity. I suspect that the crafty guide did this to secure for us more hospitable treatment. The priest inquired if I was also a Doctor of Medicine, for he wanted some medical advice for certain of his parishioners.

July 2.—Our road during the greater part of this day was exceedingly rough, for it led us through the mountains of Ephraim, a region of fatness and strength. We rode over hills and across valleys, the former covered with olive trees, the latter with gardens, and reached Shiloh, where the tabernacle was pitched so long, and where Samuel's childhood was spent. I scarcely think that I enjoyed my visit to any place more than to this. It is now entirely in ruins, but there was a charm in clambering among the stone walls and meditating on the men who lived here so many years ago. No spot could be better suited for a meeting place of the people. The town was built on the slope of a hill, while below is a broad valley where all Israel might have encamped, with room to spare. The view from the ruins was one of peaceful beauty. Men and women were har-

of Aaron. It is believed by scholars to be about as old as the Christian era. He said that they now number about 200 souls. Their appearance is rather pleasing, and everything about them is scrupulously clean.

The two places about Nabalus of greatest interest to the Bible student are the scene of the reading of the blessings and curses (Joshua 7: 33), and Jotham's rock (Judges 9: 7). Between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerazim there is one of the finest natural amphitheatres in the world. It seems strange that all the multitude of Israel could hear the voice of the reader, but the acoustic properties of this place are so remarkable as to make this most reasonable. I had no opportunity of testing it, but Henry R. Harper in his *Bible and Modern Discoveries* says that during the excavations of the Palestine Exploration Fund, those passing along the road would converse with the workmen who were far up on the slopes of the mountain. The rock on which Jotham stood is unmistakable. It is a flat table-like rock directly above the city. The pursuers could only reach it by a long circuitous route, and he would have ample time to escape.

July 3.—After a ride of about two hours from Nabalus, the ancient Shechem, I came to the modern Sebastiyeh or the city of Samaria. It stands on a hill that is isolated in a valley, and hence was a great stronghold in time of war. Herod the Great beautified the city with colonades of marble, and many of these columns still remain. Traces of the theatre and a temple also exist, but the modern village is very squalid. The glory of Samaria has departed. A long ride over a high mountain and across a valley brought us to Dotham, where the Syrians made their futile attempt to capture Elisha (2 Kings 6: 13-18), but noted principally as the place where Joseph was sold by his brethren. The modern village is at the foot of a slope in the midst of beautiful gardens, but there are ruins on the top of the hill. The large number of flocks about attest the value of the region as pasture land to the present day. Gabriel showed me a well full of water as the one in which Joseph was cast. I turned and read him that he was thrown into a pit that had no water in it (Gen. 37: 24). But he was no worse than the artists, for who ever saw a picture of Joseph being drawn out of the pit in which the pit was not a well with a high kerb-stone?

I spent that night in Jenin, a village of luxuriant gardens. I had to put up in an Arab hotel, and that is a unique experience. I was led to the flat top of the house, and a little chamber like that of the prophet's (2 Kings 4: 10) was pointed out as my room. It could not boast of so much furniture as the Shunammite woman provided, however, for it contained nothing but a mattress, a candle stand, and a generous supply of fleas. Nor is it the province of the hotelkeeper to provide his guests with food, but if they manage to purchase anything, both proprietor and porter are willing to help them dispose of it.

July 4.—I had now reached the interesting plain of Esdraelon, where so many great battles have been fought. It is more than 20 miles across, and is surrounded by mountains. Parts of it are below the level of the

sea, and its soil is remarkable for its fertility. Our road skirted the eastern side, and soon we reached the mountains of Gilboa, where Saul was slain. Their barren slopes seem to indicate that David's prayer that there might be no dew nor rain upon them had been favorably answered (2 Sam. 1: 21). A little farther on we came to Jezreel, where Israel's army was encamped in that sad conflict, and across the plain lies Shunem, the camping place of the Philistines (2 Sam. 28: 4; 29: 1). The course of Israel's disastrous retreat could be clearly seen. Jezreel is now a miserable village, and has lost all of its grandeur. Neither the vineyard of Naboth nor of any other man is to be seen in its environs, but about three miles east of it there is a bountiful spring of excellent water. This was probably the water where Gideon brought his men to drink (Judges 7: 4-7). Directly across the valley is the hill of Moreh, where the Midianites lay encamped like grasshoppers for multitude. On the gentle slope where their tents were pitched, I saw an encampment of Bedouins. These are the Midianites of the present, and had come for pillage also. Farming in this valley has been very uncertain for a long time, owing to the raids of these robber bands.

From Gideon's fountain I rode to Shunem. I was thinking of the Shunammite woman, and was tracing the course of her journey to Carmel to tell the prophet that her child was dead, when Gabriel aroused me by pointing out her house. I asked for the field in which the child took ill. It lies beside a certain lemon tree! I inquired why the room had been taken off the house, but he did not know. Have they preserved the bed, and table, and stool, and candlestick? But this was too much for even a Roman Catholic Turk, and he declined to answer my question.

I rode around the spurs of the Little Hermon to the village of Nain. I had read somewhere that there is only one road to the village, it being inaccessible from every other point, and that therefore one can feel sure that he is traversing the road over which our Lord walked. This is a mistake, for I counted no less than four entrances to the place.

A short afternoon's ride brought me to the summit of Mt. Tabor, where I spent the night in the Monastery of the Franciscan Monks. The atmosphere was clear and pure, and the night was passed in dreamless sleep. So passed the glorious 4th of July, a great day in the history of the United States. I had no American flag nor fire cracker with which to celebrate, and I could recall but a small part of the Declaration of Independence, so instead I read Deborah's song of rejoicing over the fall of Sisera (Judges 5).

Smyrna, Asia Minor.

July 22, 1902.

West Australian Letter.

D. A. EWERS.

I took a run up to Kalgoorlie last week. Kalgoorlie is only about 25 miles from Coolgardie, where I am spending my holiday. Bro. Campbell, from York, S.A., is the preacher in that important town, and he has rather a hard row to hoe there. The church

is small, and we are somewhat late in the field, but I believe bright times are ahead for the faithful little band. Kalgoorlie is an up-to-date town, and some of its shops and public buildings would be no discredit to Melbourne or Sydney. Boulder City is only three miles distant, and the two towns are now built into each other and connected both by train and electric tram. At Boulder we have a church of over 100 members, and here Bro. Banks has been and is still laboring with much success. In Kalgoorlie, which is (if the Boulder folk will pardon me for saying so) really the principal town, at least so far as commerce is concerned, we have only about 30 members. Bro. Campbell has been there nearly three months, and is gradually getting a grip of the people. He recently conducted a fortnight's mission, the immediate results being the addition of three adults and a largely increased attendance at the regular gospel meetings. A social was held last week for the purpose of making the acquaintance of those who generally attend the services, and from 50 to 60 were present. A nice time was spent with music, reciting, talking, etc. Bro. Campbell, Banks and the writer gave short addresses, and the brethren had an opportunity of chatting with those not in the church. I think the idea was a good one, and it ought to bear fruit.

But progress on these goldfields is not likely to be rapid. There is plenty of gold here, but the ore is refractory and needs special treatment. Sunday sport, drink and immorality are a trinity hard to fight against. Sunday on the fields is a great day for outdoor sports. To-day's *Coolgardie Miner* contains full reports of cricket and football matches held here yesterday (Sunday). I think Sunday games are not quite so popular as they were a few years ago, but there is not much indication of improvement in the near future, and it is really difficult for a young fellow fond of manly games to avoid taking an interest in what is going on every Sunday. Drink, too, is a great stumbling-block. People who were steady enough in the East have gone to the dogs through drink over here. I suppose the temperance sentiment is much weaker in W.A. than in any of the States, and weaker on the goldfields than in any other part of W.A. Houses of ill-fame are plentiful in all the large towns of the goldfields, but this evil is not so glaring as it was a few years ago. However, it has its influence, and makes the preacher's work harder than in the eastern towns.

Miners, as a rule, are an intelligent class. In their clubs and labor unions they discuss matters freely, and so get into the habit of thinking and expressing their thoughts. Working only eight hours, they have time for reading, and the studiously inclined have the opportunity of becoming familiar with the thoughts of the world's great thinkers. They are generally speaking keen politicians, and are able and willing at all times to give a reason for the way they vote. In short they are anything but fools, and the preacher who would influence them must himself be intellectual. Once gained they become a power for good. I have no doubt that in years to come, when many of the members now here are scattered through the land,

their influence will be felt in places where at present we have no churches.
 There is a common impression that life here is almost unbearable owing to the want of rain. So far this year the downfall at Coolgardie is just under ten inches, and there are yet three months to run. This is really better than in many of the agricultural districts of the eastern States this year.
 Sept. 22.

Sunday School.

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

LESSON FOR OCTOBER 26TH.

Joshua and Caleb.

Joshua 14: 5-15

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He wholly followed the Lord."
 Josh 14: 14.



Seven years of war intervene between last lesson and this, during which 31 kings have been overthrown, and 267 cities taken. The greater part of the land has now been conquered, and Joshua leaves the rest for each tribe to do for itself.

A PROMISE.

Years before God had promised through Moses that Caleb should have possession of the land whereon his feet had trodden. Possibly some unrecorded facts, could we know them, would tell us of Caleb going to Hebron and making an inspection at the time when the spies entered the land.

A PETITION.

Caleb now comes to ask that he may receive that which had been promised. Hebron was inhabited by a fierce and powerful people, but he trusted in the Lord, who had preserved his life and given him vigor up to that time, to enable him to overcome them.

AN INHERITANCE.

Joshua granted that which was asked, and Hebron became Caleb's possession. This inheritance was received as a reward for wholeheartedness in following the Lord. Here is a lesson for Christians, many of whom are half-hearted professors. If we are to obtain the "inheritance incorruptible,

undefiled, and that fadeth not away," must there not be a wholehearted following of, and service rendered to Jesus? Let there be no divided heart; no divided love; but perfect loyalty to our King and to the Word which he has given as our one and only infallible guide.

THOS. HAGGER.

Sisters' Department.

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

"I will go forward in the strength of the Lord."

BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

Beautiful faces are those that wear—
 It matters little if dark or fair—
 Whole-souled honesty printed there.
 Beautiful eyes are those that show,
 Like crystal panes where earth fires glow,
 Beautiful thoughts that burn below.
 Beautiful lips are those whose words
 Leap from the heart like songs of birds,
 Yet whose utterance prudence girds.
 Beautiful hands are those that do
 Work that is earnest and brave and true
 Moment by moment the long day through.
 Beautiful lives are those that bless—
 Silent rivers of happiness,
 Whose hidden fountains but few may guess.

EXECUTIVE.

The meeting held on 3rd inst. was presided over by Mrs. G. B. Moysey, who welcomed Mrs. C. L. Thurgood to the Executive. Correspondence included letter from American C.W.B.M., thanking Executive for their sympathy on loss of their late president. Greetings were received from the English sisterhood; also per Mrs. Thurgood from American C.W.B.M.

The following additions were reported from schools—Malvern, 15; North Richmond, 4; Prahran, 2; Swanston-street, 3.

Next Executive meeting, Nov. 7th.

SISTERS' PRAYER MEETINGS.

The Executive Meeting adjourned upstairs, when a Sisters' Praise and Prayer Meeting was held. Mrs. Maston presided, Mrs. Huntsman reading the Scripture lesson. A paper was prepared and read by Mrs. Zelius; Mrs. Gow sang a solo; Mrs. Thurgood gave a little talk, expressing her pleasure at being once more in "sunny Australia." One Sisters' Prayer Meeting had been visited during the month, viz., Footscray. The meeting was greatly enjoyed, every sister present taking part. Sister Kelson read a short paper, which was much appreciated.
 M. TRINNICK, Supt.

HOME MISSIONS.

One meeting was held during the month at Newmarket. Mrs. Pittman presided. Mrs. Maston gave a short paper; J. Pittman an address, and M. McLellan explained the needs of the Home Mission Work. The Committee are now without funds, and are depending upon the Jubilee offering. The Conference Evangelists report 211 baptisms since Conference.

L. P., Supt.

HOSPITAL VISITATION.

The Melbourne has been visited 5 times, Homœopathic 6, Women's and Children's 3 times. 28 books and 28 tracts distributed. Eggs and cakes have also been given. 4 persons have been visited every week. A gentleman wrote, thanking the Committee for their kindness to his sister.

M. D., Supt.

DORCAS.

The usual monthly rally was held in Swanston-st. lecture-hall on the 18th ult. There were 13 sisters present, and 26 garments were cut and finished. Mrs. Varcoc gave a donation to the Dorcas committee, which is in need of monetary help and will be grateful for even small donations. Mrs. W. C. Craigie is treasurer.

Visits.—Prahran and Collingwood Societies were visited during the month. The sisters at these churches work faithfully, and are the means of cheering and helping those in distress.—E. McL., Supt.

The Lord of the Harvest.

F. W. GREENWOOD.

At the fall of man God declared his intention of sending a Saviour to redeem mankind, saying to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." God has never changed in his purpose, and so when the fulness of time was come, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Christ became a partaker of flesh and blood "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," and thus he has opened up "a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil: that is to say, his flesh." And this new and living way stands open wide to-day to kindreds and tribes of every tongue. From the giving of the Great Commission until now, faithful men have proclaimed the joyful tidings of salvation. The good seed of the kingdom has been scattered in all lands. In our own State the work has been carried on faithfully for many years, and already the harvest is being gathered in. The Lord of the Harvest is directing the operations, and he knows just what each laborer is doing. He hears our prayers, and he sees our efforts, and he estimates our prayers by our efforts. What are you doing in this great work of saving the lost, of gathering in the golden sheaves? By-and-bye the Lord of the Harvest will reward the laborers. What account will you render to your Lord? Join with us now and bear the heat and burden of the day, and by-and-bye you will join the glad shout of victory, and cry, "Harvest Home."

Treasurer's address—259 Little Collins-st.

New Testament Commentaries!

We have now in stock the following Commentaries on the New Testament:—Matthew and Mark, J. W. McGarvey; Luke, J. S. Lamar; John, B. W. Johnson; Acts, J. W. McGarvey; Hebrews, Robert Milligan. Per vol., 6/-; by post, 6/6.

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We do not hold ourselves responsible for any views or opinions expressed in the communications of our correspondents.

The Leader.

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

The Vision of the Ages.

In a great number of our churches the Book of Revelation will form the New Testament morning lesson for some weeks to come; and as there is no book in the whole of the Bible more unsuitable for reading in chapters with a view to getting a grip of its contents, it seems advisable that we should say a word or two that may be a help to those who desire to follow the reading of it with some degree of intelligent apprehension. For in order to understand it at all it is essential that first of all we should be familiar with its main outlines and have some idea of its general design. The mistake that most people make when they do attempt to grapple with the Book of Revelation is that they come to the study of it without any preparation, and commence to decipher its details without having any conception of its plan. For it must be borne in mind that the book has a plan, and that to regard it as a jumble of unintelligent imagery is to do it an injustice—an injustice which, we are afraid, has been too often done to it, and for which a host of incompetent expounders are mainly responsible. It fortunately happens, however, that under the guidance of suitable instructors, who are more numerous to-day than perhaps at any other time, it is possible for the ordinary reader to do justice to the most wonderful book in the whole of the Bible. Under proper guidance, we no longer conclude that we have to deal with a mere jumble of words, but become conscious that we have before us the greatest drama that was ever written. True, we will be frequently baffled by some detail, but if we have got any inkling of the general scope or design, we will feel that we can afford to wait until the obscure detail has had further light thrown upon it. For ourselves, we may say that we have found Dr. W. Boyd Carpenter's work on the Book

of Revelation and J. Munro Gibson's Apocalyptic Sketches very helpful, and have ventured to use both of their books pretty freely in the present article.

It will be materially helpful to the study of the book if we have before us some general principles of interpretation by which we are to be guided, for if we start without these we will find ourselves lost in a fog of endless conjecture, or become false prophets like the late Dr. Cumming and the modern Mr. Baxter. The latter gentleman, we notice, has got up another elaborate deduction from the figures and signs of the Books of Daniel and Revelation, and now tells us that wonderful things are to happen between the years 1906 and 1917. And though we should not be surprised if wonderful things did happen in that period of time, of one thing we are quite certain, and that is that he will be about as successful in this prophetic venture as he was when he declared that Napoleon III. was the "Destined Monarch of the World." It may be always taken as a sure sign that when a man says, as Mr. Baxter does, that the year 1929 will witness the coming of Christ and the beginning of the Millennium, his understanding of the principles of interpretation is of the very poorest, and that he belongs to that class of sensationalists who trade upon the credulity of the religious public and who thereby bring the Book of Revelation into disrepute. It will save us from following these "wandering fires" if the principles of interpretation which are now generally accepted as essential to the right understanding of the book are kept before us and acted upon. Of these principles the chief seem to be the following: 1. The root passages in the Old Testament prophecies must be considered; 2. The historical surroundings of the writer are to be remembered; 3. The fact that the book is symbolical must never be forgotten; 4. The obvious aim of the book to be a witness to the triumph and coming (*parousia*) of Jesus Christ must be remembered. These principles are simple enough and easily understood, the only difficulty about them being their intelligent application. It must be obvious to everyone who has read the Book of Revelation with any care that its symbolism is the symbolism of the Old Testament, and that in order to understand it we must find the key to unlock it by acquainting ourselves with the meaning of Old Testament symbolism. Very helpful in this direction would be the study of fulfilled prophecy. Here we would learn to appreciate the value of symbols. We would learn that nature in convulsions did not mean, as a rule, like catastrophes in the physical world, but symbolised times of storm and stress in

national life. In fine our imagination would have to lose its occidental character and become oriental. A preparation of this kind would be of immense service to any desiring to intelligently study the Book of Revelation, but in itself would not be sufficient to enable them to grasp its meaning.

Something more than this must be done. Having got some idea of the meaning of symbols, our next step should be the finding out of the plan or structure of the book. This in itself alone considered would be an immense gain, and once obtained would place the book before us so that we could regard it with intelligent consideration. At first we may be content with a rough outline of the general structure, as it is unwise to burden ourselves with one that has too many details. That which has proved most helpful to ourselves is the following:—

I.—THE PRELIMINARY CHAPTERS.—CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

- (1) The Vision of the Christ (chap. 1).
- (2) The Messages to the Churches (chaps. 2, 3).

II.—THE VISIONS.

- (1) The Vision of the Throned One (chap. 4).
- (2) The Visions of the Conflict, seen in two main sections—

(a) *The Conflict Seen from the World Side* (chaps. 6-11).

- (1) The Seven Seals (chaps. 6-8: 1).
- (2) The Seven Trumpets (chap. 8: 2-11).

(b) *The Conflict Seen from the Heavenly Side* (chaps. 12-20).

- (1) The Spiritual Foes (chaps. 12-14).
- (2) The Seven Vials of Retribution (chaps. 15, 16).
- (3) The Fall of Foes (chaps. 17-20).
- (3) The Visions of Peace (chaps. 21-22: 1-6).

III.—THE EPILOGUE (chap. 22: 6-21).

With this outline before us, we may now proceed to ask, What does it all mean? Simply this—the great conflict between good and evil which has been waging ever since the church of Christ came into being, and which will continue to be waged with varying fortune on either side until the final eclipse of evil is made certain by the glorious appearance of the conquering Christ. And these visions which are brought before us are not to be regarded as views of history arranged in chronological order, so that we are enabled to identify each detail with some particular event. It seems impossible to regard it as a continuous line of history, following, for instance, first the line of the seals and then the line of the trumpets. It is true that history repeats itself, but not in such a fashion that it can be blocked off into cycles of seven, so very closely corresponding to each other. It seems much more natural to suppose that each vision is another general view of the march of events by which the great Head of the Church "sends forth judgment unto victory." To adopt an illus-

tration which is familiar to all students of Revelation, the Seven Trumpets are not a different stretch of history to the Seven Seals brought into the field of John's telescope; rather have we the same elements thrown into fresh combinations by the turning of John's kaleidoscope.

For ourselves, we are satisfied that Dr. W. Boyd Carpenter's view is correct when he says of the Book of Revelation:—"It is not a manual of tiresome details; it is not meant to be a treasure house of marvels for the prophetic archæologist; it is a book of living principles. It exhibits the force and fortune of truth as it acts upon the great mass of human society; it shows the revolutions which are the result. It shows the decay of the outward form, the release of the true germ, which will spring up in better harvests. It shows us how the corn of wheat will fall and die, and so bring forth much fruit. It shows how evermore, from first to last, Christ is with us—encouraging, consoling, warning, helping and leading us onward through conflict to rest." The visions of the Apocalypse show us that "there is a moving onward from the more external to the deeper and more spiritual aspects of earth's story. The earlier visions (the seals for example) show the ordinary phenomena of the world's story—war, famine, death, revolution. The next series (the trumpets) show us that there is another, even a spiritual war, going forward in the world, and that changes and revolutions are often tokens of the inner spiritual battle in life. These visions, however, are, so to speak, all in the sphere of earth: in the next series we are shown that the war carried on here is one which has its heavenly counterpart. The conflict is not simply between good men and bad, but between principalities and powers." This dual conflict is depicted in imagery which brings vividly before us the real horror of sin. These dread forces of evil have their manifestation in every age in greater or lesser degree. In one age it is the great world power of Rome, the persecutor of the saints. In another it is Mahomet, and yet in another it is the apostate and persecuting church. Every age has its antichrist. And yet in every age these manifestations of evil are all present in some form and degree, and behind them are the forces of evil in the unseen world. It is war on a terrific scale, and the powers of evil and their fruits find fitting representation in the symbolic figures of the Apocalypse. But we should miss the point altogether if the book spoke to us only of these things. Throughout the dreadful war, the great white throne of God remains steadfast and immovable. It may be obscured for a time

by the smoke of battle, but ever and anon the atmosphere is cleared, and again we see it, and we know that it has been there all the time. And our ears are deaf indeed if, above the din of battle, we do not hear the shouts of victory from the hosts of God—shouts of victory which finally swell into the great hallelujah chorus—"the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth."

Editorial Notes.

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

A Grand Example.

A well-to-do gentleman in N.S.W., who has done much for religious and philanthropic purposes, conceived the idea, while the Simultaneous Mission was being conducted in Sydney, that it would be a good thing to have tent mission meetings held all through the States. He accordingly purchased a tent, engaged a missionary and a tent manager, and started them to work on the South Coast. Soon a second tent was procured, then a third, and the success of the movement has been so great, he now has a fourth and fifth. The work for the winter has been in the north and north-western districts, and as a direct result, thousands have professed conversion. The five missionaries are well-known preachers, and are doing a great work. Other rich men might well follow this excellent example.

Jerkily Good.

"Jerkily good" is the heading of a little story in a contemporary. It set us thinking. How appropriately the words describe some people we all know. They are good by jerks, good in patches. How many of our church workers, too, are "jerkily good." We were commenting recently to a friend on the zeal of a church worker, but were informed that his usefulness was largely discounted by the fact that he could not be depended on. For a while he would throw himself heartily into the work and could hardly be restrained from doing more than his share, but if anything went a little wrong, he was apt to throw up the work as heartily and as hastily as he took it up. They never felt sure of him. He was only jerkily good. Perhaps the apostle was thinking of such men when he wrote, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

A New Departure.

What is called "a new departure in pulpit supply" is reported in the *Christian Evangelist*.

Churches in America have so often been imposed upon by glib but worthless men as preachers that at the State Convention in Ohio last May steps were taken to secure an "advisory committee, whose sole duty shall be to advise with the churches as to suitable pastors, and with unemployed pastors as to suitable churches." Three well-known brethren, who will be likely to command the confidence of the churches, have been appointed, with whom preachers and churches are urged to communicate, and it is hoped that by this means unfit men will find it difficult to secure representative positions as preachers to the detriment of the churches. The committee is *advisory* only, and will usurp no authority. In Australia some of our churches have suffered owing to bad men "creeping in unawares" as preachers of the gospel, and it would be well if some method could be devised by which this evil could be minimised. In the case of any new man offering himself, and especially if he comes from another religious body, we would strongly urge churches before engaging such to seek the advice of the Conference Committee of their State. This Committee could examine the credentials, make enquiries, and advise accordingly. No *honest* preacher would be likely to object to such a course, and much unpleasantness and evil might be avoided by the adoption of this commonsense method. An evangelist occupies a representative position, and an incompetent or bad man injures not only the church engaging him, but the cause as a whole. Hence it is but just that the Committee elected to represent the whole of the churches should have the right to advise in such cases.

"God Did Not (?) Open Up the Way."

Unless "Reader," writing on "Young Preachers" in your issue of September 11th, gives the above sentence some other than the absolute significance it naturally bears, he has surely made an amazing statement. In fact, does he not practically contradict his own words a few sentences before, where he says, "Work—work and wait; and when you are ready, God will find you a place to go to, never fear"?—which is only another way of saying that God will open up the way. And yet right on top of this he illustrates his contention by citing an instance in which he emphatically declares, "God did not open up the way." Anyway, how does he know that in the case referred to God did *not* open up the way? We may give the poet's words a wrong application, doubtless, but nevertheless does it not remain largely and eternally true—"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will"? Finally, let me say that, in my opinion, the preacher

for whom God does not open up the way has mistaken his calling. Perhaps, however, "Reader" did not say what he meant.

THOS. J. BULL.

From The Field.

The field is the world.—Matthew 13: 38

Victoria.

The Golden Offering.

ST. KILDA.—We are having good attendances at our gospel meetings, and during the past two months eight confessions have been made, the last being the aged mother of Sister Perkins (Mrs. Harper). She made the good confession last Sunday, was immersed last Wednesday, and received the right hand of fellowship this morning; the tender chords of sympathy and love were keenly touched on seeing one in her declining years boldly coming out on the Lord's side. Our anniversary services will be held in a few weeks. The Sunday School is also growing. So with these showers of blessings we take courage, praise God, and go on our way rejoicing.

Oct. 5.

F.W.C.

"1000 Souls for Christ, and £2000 for Home Missions" in Victoria during the present year. The first will likely be more than realised. What about the second? The result of the Golden Offering will tell.

BALMAIN-ST., RICHMOND.—Increased interest the second week of mission and 7 more confessions, making 11 decisions for 12 nights. We continue another week, the prospects being promising.

Oct. 6.

P. J. POND.

The Jubilee Offering.

POLKEMMET.—We had splendid meetings on Lord's day, both morning and afternoon. Bro. Harward was with us at the morning meeting, and gave a very interesting and impressive address. Bro. Burgess spoke in the afternoon. At the close of his address, we had the joy of seeing two come out on the Lord's side.

Sept. 29.

H.O.

Every disciple in the State of Victoria is asked to send a special Jubilee Offering for Home Missions to W. C. Cragle, 239 Little Collins-st., and thus help to make our Jubilee Year the grandest and greatest in our history.

COLLINGWOOD.—Our S.S. anniversary services were a great success. The building, which was most beautifully and artistically decorated, was packed to overflowing at all the meetings. F. M. Ludbrook addressed a large and attentive audience of children and friends on the Sunday afternoon, taking for his subject "Puffing Billy." On Sunday evening a digression was made from the ordinary anniversary service. A beautifully rendered "sermon" on "Christ the Door" was given by a number of the scholars. Verses of Scripture were recited illustrative of the fact that Christ was the only means of entrance into the kingdom of heaven; also giving the Bible way of salvation. The whole was rendered more effective by a representation on the platform of a door, which when opened revealed a cross, and the steps Faith, Repentance and Baptism. Again on Tuesday night a most enjoyable time was spent. The various items on the part of the scholars were well and appreciatively rendered, and notwithstanding a lengthy programme we were able to close at a very reasonable hour. The secretary's report stated that the school was in a

very prosperous state both numerically and financially, and possessed both an ample and competent staff of teachers. During the year 17 scholars had decided to take their stand on the side of Christ.

If you cannot send the cash for Golden Offering for Home Missions, send in the promise slip.

DONCASTER.—There was a large gathering of brethren at the chapel on Sept. 24th, to do honor to our Bro. and Sister Frank Smedley, on the occasion of their silver wedding. Bro. Greenwood was chairman, and a varied programme of songs and recitations was rendered. Supper was served in the school room, which was crowded, and a second sitting had to be provided. During the course of supper Sister Greenwood, on behalf of the sisters of the church, presented Sister Smedley with a silver cake basket. In making the presentation, Sister Greenwood in a neat and concise speech expressed the high esteem of the brethren for our brother and sister, and their excellent family, and wished them many more years of happy service together for the Master, and at last a place at the great marriage supper of the Lamb. Brethren Wilson, Petty, Crouch, Tully, McDowell, Hudson, and Greenwood also spoke, endorsing what had been expressed in the presentation speech. The doxology and benediction brought a happy meeting to a close.

"The year of Jubilee has come." Let all Victorian disciples "rejoice and be glad," and while rejoicing yourselves, help to make others rejoice by sending a Golden Offering to the Home Missionary Treasurer.

NORTH RICHMOND.—During the writer's absence at Bordertown the interest on the whole has been well sustained. The Thursday evening meetings were conducted by Bros. Salisbury, Shirt, Payne, and Knott, all of whom are local members. Allan Stewart had charge of the Lord's Day Afternoon Bible Class, and F. M. Ludbrook efficiently filled the platform on Lord's day evenings. 3 confessions under Bro. Ludbrook's preaching.

THOS. HAGGER.

Have you received an envelope for Jubilee Offering? If not, ask your secretary about it.

New Zealand.

TABERNACLE, DUNEDIN.—After an earnest address from M. W. Green, on "The Father's House and the Many Mansions," 11 persons came out (3 young men and 8 young women), and confessed Jesus as their Saviour, and their desire to live a new and better life. The hearts of the brethren were made glad by this evidence of God's blessing.

JAS. LOWE.

SOUTH WELLINGTON.—We are having very good meetings here, and success has lately crowned our efforts. At the weekly prayer meeting, two girls who had made the good confession were immersed, and on the following Sunday evening another confessed her Saviour.

Sept. 23.

R McL.

CHRISTCHURCH.—The Sunday School here has lately been celebrating its anniversary. Special services were held on Lord's day afternoon and evening, Sept. 21st, the chapel being tastefully decorated for the occasion, and on the following Thursday evening a very successful tea and entertainment was held. On each occasion the programme consisted of choruses by the children, led by Bro. A. Brockett, recitations, solos, etc., all of the items being much appreciated. On Thursday evening the prizes were distributed by Bro. Judd, who performed that duty as only a veteran prize distributor can do it. We are fully confident that the earnest efforts of the teachers

and others who labored in connection with this anniversary, will be crowned with permanent blessing to the Sunday School.

We are glad also to report the addition to our numbers of two sisters, who on Wednesday evening last were buried with their Lord in baptism, and were received into fellowship this morning. The Lord is with us, and we are going forward.

Sept. 28.

G.P.P.

Queensland.

CHILDERS.—I regret to have to report that there is no change in the weather. The drought is still unbroken. Our water supply is getting very low. Most of the sugar planters here have requested the Government to cancel the agreements of all the Kanakas they had under engagement. They could not find work for them on the plantations. The Kanakas, finding they cannot obtain employment, are returning home to their islands. We are losing many of our members, and others we were in hopes of baptising soon. Everything in the way of provisions and fodder is increasing in price daily, and many of our Kanaka brethren with families whose crops have failed are having a hard time to try and get two meals a day of dry bread, at present their principal food.

Sept. 22.

JOHN THOMPSON.

South Australia.

CAREW.—Yesterday Bro. Hagger paid Wamponny a visit, preaching at 3 o'clock. At the close of the service four women and one man were immersed. The sisters take membership at Bordertown, and the brother at Wamponny. House crowded. Intense opposition in some quarters to the truth. Unanimous thanks to the Richmond brethren for services of Bro. Hagger in this district.

Oct. 2.

R.K.S.

QUEENSTOWN.—We are pleased to report that by a unanimous vote the church has retained the services of W. Moffit for another year. He is doing great work for the church in this place, and the Lord is blessing his work with great success. Since his arrival we have witnessed 81 confessions and one restored.

Sept. 29.

R.H.

PORT PIRIE.—Bro. Marshman, of the Long Plain church, has paid us a visit. He addressed the church in the morning and preached in the evening. The chapel was fairly well filled at the latter service.

Oct. 3.

W.C.O.

GLENELG.—Good meetings yesterday. One immersed at evening service and another one made the good confession. Prospects bright.

Oct. 6.

J. COLBOURNE.

QUEENSTOWN.—On Sunday morning six more were received into fellowship. In the afternoon we addressed the Sunday School. In the evening the chapel was uncomfortably packed. At the close the six who came out last week obeyed, and four others made the good confession, two of whom were from the Sunday School, and a man and his wife who have been attending the gospel services for some time. The Sunday School is largely increasing by the children of those who are constantly coming into the church. The cottage prayer meetings are well attended, and so far are a success in the intended purpose.

Oct. 6.

W. MOFFIT.

YORK.—On Thursday last we had the pleasure of the company of Miss Abgan, who has been accepted by the Foreign Missionary Committee to labor in its interest in China. Miss Abgan gave a short, chatty, and interesting address. On Sunday we had another

good time together as a church. The attendance at the morning service was good. The right hand of the Christian fellowship was then extended to two of our Sunday School scholars. The Sunday School still keeps up its average, and we are now busy practising for the anniversary, which will be held on Nov. 2. In the evening the ordinance of Christian baptism took place at the close, when another of our scholars was buried with Christ.

E. E. W.

BORDER TOWN.—Our tent mission is over and Bro. Hagger has gone home. We have had a good time, and rejoice over souls saved. Meetings were held every evening until Friday, when we concluded with thanksgiving service. Splendid attendance. Bro. Oram spoke to the church, Bro. Leng to young converts, and Bro. Hagger to everybody.

Yesterday we held two meetings in the tent. In the morning the disciples met as usual, when the right hand of fellowship was given to five young converts. In the evening Bro. Leng spoke to a good meeting. The accessions through the mission are 13 by confession, and 3 restored. One or two more have intimated their decision. A good deal of opposition was manifested towards the end of the mission, but we hope the light of the glorious gospel will prevail and that God's people will be united for the conversion of the world.

E. W. M.

NOARWOOD.—Yesterday week one was restored to fellowship, after being away for a number of years. F. Pittman addressed the church yesterday morning. Two were received—one by letter and one by obedience to Christ. Last night we had a good gospel service, and one made the good confession.

Our Foreign Missionary Society held their annual meeting last Monday evening. There was a large attendance, and Sister Mary Abgan addressed the meeting, as also did Mr. Brown, a returned missionary from Poona, India. Sister Mary Abgan visited a number of churches since Conference, and all have been pleased to see and hear her. We bade her good-bye on Friday last. May the Lord abundantly bless her.

A. C. RANKINE.

New South Wales.

PADDINGTON.—The meetings for the past few months have been used as a sowing time. We are now working and praying for a special harvest, and last Sunday we had the joy of seeing seven respond to the invitation and confess Christ, and we believe there are many to follow. During the past few weeks nine others have been received, seven by letter, one restored, one by faith and baptism. The meetings are large, and a deep interest is felt. Alexander's songs are used. The choir, under the leadership of R. Whately, is doing an excellent work. A splendid spirit of love and unity prevails, and with the help and blessing of God we look forward to continued glorious results.

THOS. BAGLEY.

Here and There.

Here a little and there a little.—Isaiah 58: 10

W. C. Craigie is anxious!

Two confessions at Collingwood Sunday night. Still splendid meetings at Hawthorn. One confession on Sunday night last.

A. Winter, P.O., Kew, is now secretary of the church at North Richmond.

Canley Vale (N.S.W.) is making arrangements for a week's mission early in November.

What is W. C. Craigie anxious about? See page 495.

Seven confessions at Paddington, Sydney, last Sunday. Splendid meeting.

Read the Leader this week; it might help you in your reading of the Book of Revelation.

There was a fine meeting at South Melbourne on Sunday night, and at the close one confession.

Splendid meeting at Wedderburn on Sunday night last and one confession, R. G. Cameron preaching.

Large meeting at Rookwood, N.S.W., on Sunday night, at the close of which a young woman was baptised.

The sewing rally for general Dorcas work will meet in the lecture hall, Swanston-st., on Thursday, October 16th.

W. C. CRAIGIE IS ANXIOUS ABOUT THE GOLDEN OFFERING!

The secretary of the Meredith church informs us that the opening of their new chapel has been postponed, but does not tell us to what date.

The following telegram reached us as we were going to press:—"Enmore, Sunday, one immersion before evening service; nine confessions after—E. J. HILDER."

None of our Schools should fail to order the Austral Uniform Mark Register for 1903. This book is recommended by the Victorian S.S. Union. Price 4d., post or carriage paid.

"Twelve Months Afterward." See next week's "Christian."

Bro. Griffiths, who for many years has been laboring as a preacher for the Home Mission Committee of Victoria, has resigned, and is now open to engagement from some church. Some church in need of a preacher would do well to write at once to care of Austral Co.

A. J. Saunders writes:—"Grand meetings at Berwick last Lord's day. We were pleased with a visit from our old friend Bro. Collis, of Emerald, who presided in the morning service. There was a large gathering at the gospel service, and we were cheered by seeing three confessions from the Sunday School."

S.S.U., Vic.—Will teachers, church members and others remember and be present at the Quarterly Conference on Tuesday, 14th inst. We want the Swanston-street chapel to be filled. Subjects for discussion:—"The Superintendent" and "The Secretary: his duties and responsibilities," to be introduced by B. J. Kemp and D. A. Lewis respectively.

W. J. Williams, M.L.A., writes:—"I admire and gather much comfort from Bro. Morro's fine book on the Holy Spirit, especially the last chapter. His courage in treating that phase with such simple, lucid truthfulness should teach many of our evangelists and speaking brethren to pause before laboring so hard to harness the Holy Spirit in his operations and trying to distinguish between an influence and the operation of a spiritual and divine Person. Such a lesson has come none to soon to prevent the cramping of our minds with such useless efforts to dictate how the Holy Spirit must work."

"The Lord hath done great things for us" during the past 50 years; but greater things are in store. God wants the help of every one of his children to bring about the realisation of the greater things. You can help by forwarding not later than November 10th a Golden Offering for Victorian Home Missions.

Bro. and Sister C. L. Thurgood were welcomed to Melbourne on the 1st inst. The Executive of the Sisters' Conference arranged a luncheon party in the Swanston street Lecture Hall, A. L. Crichton catering in his best style. There was a large representative gathering of brethren and sisters present. Mrs. Maston welcomed the guests on behalf of the Executive, J. Johnston on behalf of the "cloth," and A. Mills for the Temperance workers. Mrs. Thurgood

was presented with a lovely bouquet from Mrs. J. A. Davies, who was unable to be present. Bro and Sister Thurgood having expressed their thanks, the meeting terminated.

There was a large meeting at Lygon-street last Thursday evening, the occasion being a welcome to Jas. Johnston as the new preacher at Lygon-street church, and a welcome home to Bro and Sister C. L. Thurgood. There was a good attendance at the tea, the chapel at the after meeting being well filled. W. C. Craigie presided. F. M. Ludbrook livened up the preliminary meeting with a song service. Messages of love and congratulation were received from P. A. Dickson, G. T. Walden and H. G. Harward. In his opening remarks the chairman made a public acknowledgment of the services which had been rendered the church as Sunday evening preachers by Thos. Bagley, P. A. Dickson, F. M. Ludbrook, A. B. Maston and W. Wilson. Short addresses were delivered by W. Wilson, A. Millis, F. G. Dunn, J. Pittman, F. M. Ludbrook, H. D. Smith, M. McLellan, A. L. Crichton, Mrs. Thurgood, C. L. Thurgood and Jas. Johnston. Mrs. Nellie McLellan on two occasions sang, and the Lygon-street Quartette Party sang two selections, while the Lygon-street choir rendered some suitable pieces. The meeting closed shortly after ten o'clock.



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W. C. CRAIGIE, Treas.

AUSTRAL PRINT.

S.S.U., VICTORIA.—The monthly meeting of the General Committee was held on the 29th ult., F. W. Martin presiding. Present—5 officers and 25 delegates, representing 20 schools. The Williamstown school was added to the Union roll on the application of its teachers. The president, secretary, and J. Woodgate were appointed as the Union members on the combined committee to carry out the temperance competitions. The secretary reported having obtained official list of through trains from traffic manager, and arranged for special train to Darling on day of annual picnic. The Visitors' reports on visits paid to the Melbourne, Stb. Melbourne, Prahran, Ascot Vale, and Malvern schools were read and adopted. The following resolutions were carried as to the examination of 1903.—That there be two divisions for junior

teachers, the one for those under 25 years; the other, that age and over, the provisions for senior teachers being as hitherto—any previous prize taker not to be entitled to a prize unless of a higher grade than that previously gained. Scholars' divisions to be, under 11; 11 and under 13; 13 and under 15; 15 and under 18; over 18. Special provisions were also made limiting time for entries. It was also decided that test questions on practical teaching be included in the paper set for teachers' divisions. On the motion of Bro Alford, it was resolved that a recognition of the past services to the Union of Bro Hatty, who had removed to West Australia, be placed on the minute book; and that the secretary procure letters from the brethren here to others in that State, and forward same to Bro. Hatty, with a view of rendering him assistance in procuring employment if necessary.

SIX SHORT RULES FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

1. Never Neglect Daily Private Prayer.

And when you pray, remember that God is present, and that He hears your prayers (Heb. 11 : 6).

2. Never Neglect Daily Private Bible Reading.

And when you read remember that God is speaking to you, and you are to believe and act upon what He says (John 5 : 39).

3. Never let a Day go by Without Trying to do Something for Christ.

Every night reflect on what Jesus has done for you, and then ask yourself, "What am I doing for Him (Matt. 5 : 13-16).

4. If ever you are in Doubt as to a Thing being Right or Wrong,

Go to your room, and ask God's blessing upon it (Col. 3 : 17). If you cannot do this, it is wrong (Rom. 14 : 14).

5. Never take Your Christianity from Christians,

Or argue that because such and such people do so and so, therefore you may (2 Cor. 10 : 12). You are to ask God, "Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?" and strive to follow Him (John 10 : 27; Rom. 14 : 16, 22, 23).

6. Never trust your own opinion, if it contradicts God's Word,

Ask yourself, "Can what I think be true if God's Word is true?" and if both cannot be true, believe God, and make your own heart the liar (Rom. 3 : 4; 1 John 5 : 10, 11).

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The meeting for the purpose of re-organising the C.E. Union was held on October 3rd in the lecture hall, Swanston-st., Jas. Johnston in the chair. Nine societies were represented, eight of which notified their intention of joining. The constitution, as follows, was then drawn up:—1. The name shall be the Church of Christ Christian Endeavor Union. 2. The objects of this Union shall be: to deepen the spiritual life of the youth of the church, promote co-operative effort, render more efficient the service of the young people, and to increase the number of societies among the churches of Christ in Victoria. 3. This Union shall consist of all C.E. Societies in the churches of Christ who desire, on a majority vote being recorded, to affiliate with the Union. A semi-annual fee of 1d. per active member is levied on all societies in the Union. 4. The officers shall consist of president, vice-presidents, secretary, and treasurer. 5. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers and two delegates appointed from and by each society in the Union. 6. Meetings of the Executive of Union shall be held monthly, the first Friday in the month

whenever convenient. A constitutional quorum of the Executive shall consist of nine members. 7. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members at any regular meeting of the Executive, provided that notice of motion in writing be submitted at least one month previously. The following officers were then elected:—President, Jas. Johnston, M.A.; vice-presidents, T. J. Cook and H. Peacock; secretary, G. S. Bennett; treasurer, W. A. Kemp; representatives on Victorian C. E. Union, the president and secretary. It was decided to hold the meetings in the lecture hall, Swanston-st., with the consent of the officers of the Swanston-st. church. Societies wishing to affiliate will please send two delegates to the next meeting. Information will be supplied by the secretary, "Hobartville," Madeline-st., Carlton, who will also be glad to help in the formation of societies.

Obituary.

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

TRIVETT.—On Sunday morning, September 14th, one of the old and valued members of the Lygon-st. church fell asleep in Jesus after a few days' illness, at the age of 66. Richard Trivett had been a faithful and consistent member for over 33 years. For several years he was an active Sunday School worker and officer in the church. In him the church has lost one of its peerless landmarks. He leaves a widow, who had been his loving companion for 33 years of his life, and two sons and a daughter, to mourn their loss. He will be held in loving memory by his associates in church work as one of those lovingly conscientious men who was always at his post trying to do the best for the Master whom he loved and the cause he had espoused. Having crossed that river, over which all must pass, we know he is safe, for his life was hid with Christ in God. Into our Heavenly Father's care we commit our dear sister and her children with the assurance that all things work together for good to those who love God. The sympathy, condolence, and prayers of the church have been expressed, tendered and offered as a token of the esteem in which Bro. Trivett was held. J. J.

JOHNSTON.—Our dear young Sister Agnes Johnston passed quietly away to her Saviour on Lord's day morning, September 8th, and her body was laid to rest on the Wednesday following. She was about twenty-three years of age, but had suffered a good deal. Consumption had laid hold of her, and all the medical skill could not avert the fatal result. She loved her Saviour, and longed to be gone to meet him whom her soul loved. To the young her death speaks with no uncertain sound—Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Master may call for thee.
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Acknowledgments.

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CHAPTER XII.

When I arrived at the conclusion that the Calvinistic theory of election was not taught in the Scriptures, my mind experienced an immense relief. The love of God to humanity enlarged infinitely, and my desire to preach to men of that love was intensified.

One evening I was passing an open space where a man was preaching to a crowd of people. I stopped and listened. His theme was "Grace," and he was trying his hardest to show that God has an elect people, chosen before the foundation of the world, and that in his own good time he calls them by his Spirit and saves them eternally. He seemed to glory in the fact that "few are chosen." When he had finished I asked permission to put a question or two to him. He was quite willing.

"My first question is: What is the meaning of the word 'gospel'?"

"Oh, that question is easily answered," he replied. "It means good news or glad tidings."

"So I thought," I said. "Now please explain to this people how it can be that only a portion of the human race can be saved, according to your theory, and yet Christ said to his apostles, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' How could they preach good tidings to the non-elect?"

He made some sort of a reply, but nobody knew what; and the crowd dispersed, highly amused.

Although I had abandoned the idea of seeking ordination in the Church of England, I still set my mind upon entering the regular ministry. I began to feel a little uneasy as a missionary. The Society professed to be undenominational, and one of its aims was to keep friends with all. Its agents were not allowed to preach or teach anything that seemed to favor one denomination before another. But now that my mind was enlightened on the Scriptural character of baptism, I felt a strong desire to be at liberty to expound it to others, and that it was not according to the mind of Christ to maintain silence on that question. I therefore resolved that I would try to enter Mr. Spurgeon's Pastors' College, with a view to becoming a Baptist minister. So I lost no time in seeking an interview with the great preacher. I found him in a large room at the back of the tabernacle giving a lecture to his students—one of those lectures which afterwards became so famous. I sat and listened with great pleasure to his lucid and witty talk. After the lecture he beckoned to me to approach. He held out his hand, and with a smile asked me what I wanted. His kind, brotherly manner made me feel perfectly easy, as I stated my case.

In reply he said, "Now let me give you a bit of advice. You just stay where you are. It seems to me you are where God would have you be. You have a fine field and many opportunities of serving the Master.

I really think you would be wrong to quit it." "But," I said, "I do not feel free. I must preach the whole truth." So I pressed my case.

"Well, if you really wish it I will not oppose you further. You will need to fill up this form"—which he handed me. "Answer the questions as explicitly and fully as you can; and then we'll see."

I took my leave of him and hastened home, full of my new-formed purpose. About a week after I was somewhat surprised to find a Baptist minister whom I knew to have been a collegian of Mr. Spurgeon, among my audience at one of my week-night services. He came in just as I began preaching. Of course I could see through it. He had been asked to do so by Mr. Spurgeon, and to report his impression. What that report was I never knew; for I had already given up the idea of entering the Baptist ministry. On reading down the list of questions on the form that had been given me, I found so much about the doctrine of election that it set me thinking. How foolish of me not to have thought of it before! The Baptists are strong Calvinists, and of course my views would be repugnant to them.

So that scheme was also demolished, and I settled down to my work in the mission, deeming that the wisest thing to do in the circumstances.

My missionary labors were among the poorest of the poor. Poverty in the great metropolis was also attended with other evils, such as foul, filthy dwellings, drunkenness, fighting and quarrelling, immorality and crime. Of course poverty itself is no crime, but it is often induced by neglect, want of thrift, and intemperance. Hence it is accelerated and intensified by the before-mentioned evils. Such was the general condition of the people in my district. They were often lost to all sense of honor, and would lie and deceive to any extent to get the charitably disposed to give them a few pence, which in too many cases were spent in strong drink.

It so happened—a thing by no means uncommon in London—that in close proximity with this mass of corrupting humanity were numerous mansions of the lordly rich, as though intended for mutual irritation. But this was not the universal feeling on the part of the rich at any rate. Among these were earls and countesses, lords and ladies, and a host of the smaller fry of the "upper ten thousand." Some of these people had a conscience, and feelings of sympathy for the poor under the shadow of their mansions. One gentleman took a lively interest in my work, and built me a large hall capable of seating about 500 persons. The opening ceremony was performed by the great costers' friend, the noble Earl of Shaftesbury. I conducted religious services in it for the poor, and there was also a school for the destitute children during the day. Another, a rich banker, took delight in gathering 800 or 1000 people together, by giving them a substantial meal, and thus securing their attendance at a gospel service. It was a sight not soon to be forgotten—thin and hungry faces of hundreds of men and women made bright for a brief space at the sight of a good meal.



Many ladies also took a lively interest in the poor. They not only provided free teas, but sometimes came themselves to help wait on the people. On one occasion Lady — and her two daughters gave a tea to about 600 people. The ladies came in their carriage and ordered their maids, the butler and a footman to attend also. The ladies were dressed very plainly, with no jewellery to speak of, but the maids were dressed in their best, and but for their manners might have been mistaken for the ladies. During the tea the ladies made themselves busy pouring out tea, etc., while the maids stood away from the people, looking on contemptuously.

After the tea, speeches were given. Lady — had asked the rector of her church and his two curates to come and address the poor folk. They read, for the most part, what they had to say, and spoke with that peculiar tone of voice cultivated by high church parsons. The people fidgeted, yawned, and looked as if mentally wondering how they could make their escape. In the end I spoke in a simple, earnest way, and they were all attention. It was not because of any power or depth in what was said, but I knew the people, and would speak in a way that they could understand and appreciate. I saw that the clerical gentlemen noticed the difference. They came to me after the meeting closed, and were gracious enough to compliment me on the power I had to hold the attention of such an audience. I was careful not to wound their feelings by telling them that their method might suit the rich and learned (though how anyone could be pleased or profited by it I could not understand), but would never reach the poor, to whom the gospel should be preached; but I said it was not to be wondered at, as I was always among them and knew their wants.

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