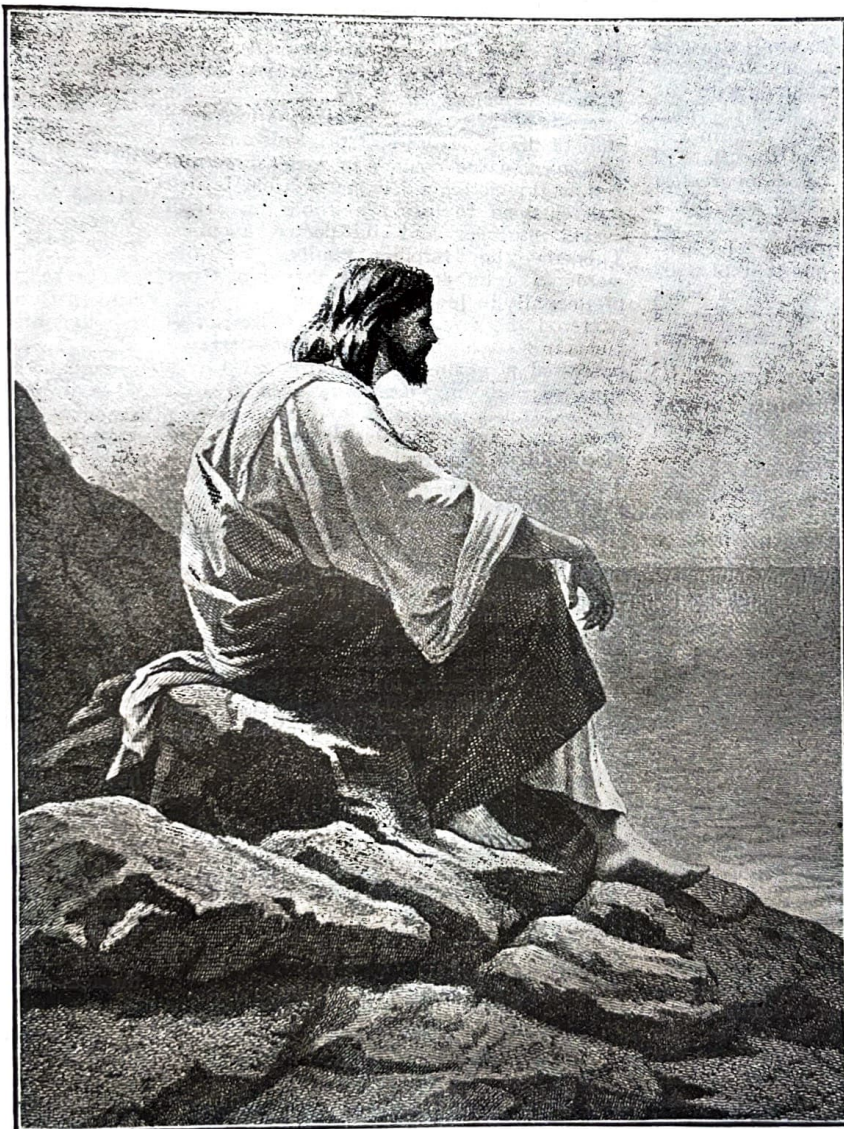


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JESUS AT THE SEA OF GALILEE.

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Palestine as Christ Found It.

HARRY G. MASTON.

Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

THE International Sunday School Lessons for the first six months of 1904 will be studies from the life of Christ. We present this short article to our readers, with the hope that it will prove a helpful introduction to this most interesting series of lessons.

It is always interesting to contrast those influences which have played such important parts in the history of mankind, with the centres from which they have sprung. Greece, the home of philosophy, culture and art, is not quite half the size of the State of Victoria; Rome, which founded the greatest empire the world has yet seen, was but a city of Italy; while Palestine, the preserver of true religion, and the birthplace of Christianity, has an area less than that of Tasmania. Dan and Beer-sheba, which mark the extreme northern and southern points of the Holy Land, are only 139 miles apart, while its width from the sea to the Mediterranean seaboard is but 12 miles; it gradually widens to 40 on the southern border, between the Mediterranean at Gaza, and the southern extremity of the Dead Sea.

It is the purpose of this article to deal briefly with the political, social and religious conditions of Palestine at the advent of the Messiah. But we feel that much would be lost unless we noted also the great changes that had come over the land and its people from the time that it had ceased to be an independent kingdom to that period we wish to deal with. Then, too, in doing this, we will be able to see with more advantage than we might otherwise do, the providential reasons for the coming of the Saviour at the time he did.

Israel reached in David's reign the most prosperous and vigorous era in its history. This was known as the "golden age of Israel." But the Jewish nation had long since lost its former power and glory. Idolatry and its attendant fruits may be summed up as the primary cause of the decline. Before the captivity one could not fail to notice the tendency the Jews had towards heathenism. The many lessons learnt in captivity had the effect of forever destroying idolatry, yet, on the other hand, as a result of the frequent mixing with heathen nations, the Jews had introduced elements which finally destroyed the spirituality of Judaism and gave place to formalism, the most awful curse that ever entered the sacred realm of true religion.

Between the Old Testament and the New there is a pause in sacred history. Many wonderful and complex changes come over the people. During this period of 400 years Israel's declining days are in turn spent under the Persian, Macedonian, Egyptian,

Syrian, Maccabæan and Roman rule. At this time circumstances were such that the Jews were brought more than ever under the influences, good and bad, mostly bad, of the pagan world. Their contamination with the nations that had conquered them destroyed much of the national distinctiveness and force. Great changes had also come over the language. Chaldean, Syrian and Persian were gradually introduced. Aramaic therefore superseded Hebrew, much in the same way that Italian has replaced Latin, or modern Greek the ancient Greek.

Palestine came under the Roman rule in B.C. 63, when Pompey captured Jerusalem. For a few years local rulers, subject to the Roman Governor of Syria, controlled the interests of the country. Palestine was in a state of chaos. Hordes of brigands and robbers infested the country in every direction. But at this period a new factor arose which was destined to turn the whole current of events into new and unexpected avenues. This was the Herodian family. For upwards of a hundred years they stood out prominently in Jewish history.

Herod the Great was made Governor of Judea in B.C. 40. Dean says of him—"Herod possessed a genius for government rarely equalled; but his vices were even greater. He was unscrupulous as to means, grossly licentious, and insanely suspicious; and victim after victim fell before his fatal jealousy; his mother-in-law, brother-in-law, two sons, and his own beautiful Mariamne. He incurred the hatred of the Jews by introducing races and other Greek customs into Jerusalem. To atone for this in their eyes he rebuilt the temple, making it far larger than Solomon's and vastly larger than Zerubabel's. He also rebuilt the old city of Samaria, naming it Sebaste, and founded the new city of Cæsarea, making it the political capital of Palestine. Despite the fact that 'his throne was bathed in the blood of his

Its peculiar and distinctive religion, its position, its physical features, brought Palestine, from the earliest ages, into contact with the widest range of peoples and empires. Such facts are of great significance in the religious education of the world.

relations,' he gave the kingdom the greatest external splendor it ever knew, save in the reigns of David and Solomon. Yet all this material splendor could not blind the Jews, proud of their lineage and their glorious past, to the fact that they were a subject race." Herod died in great agony, evidently soon after the birth of Christ. At his death his kingdom was divided between his three sons. Archelaus received Judea and Samaria. But ten years later he displeased the Roman Emperor, and his kingdom was placed under governors chosen from Rome. Pontius Pilate was one of these. Antipas, known also as Herod the Tetrarch, was allotted Galilee and Perea. Philip, the third son, became the ruler of Bashan.

The religious life of the Jews underwent some great changes. Dean, in writing of the religious life of the Jews at the coming of the Messiah, says—"There is no trace of the synagogue in the Old Testament. It is possible it arose during the captivity, in the absence of temple services. Ten men were enough to constitute a synagogue. There were hundreds of them in Jerusalem, and many in the great cities of the Roman Empire. The services consisted of daily prayers at the hours of daily sacrifice, Sabbath readings, and expositions of the Scriptures." The synagogue probably gave rise to the Jewish sects, the Pharisees and Sadducees. The former held that the oral law of Moses handed down by tradition and the written law were equal in authority. They believed in the resurrection and a life hereafter. Being very exclusive in their ideas, they did all they could to prevent the introduction of Gentile customs. The Sadducees held entirely the opposite of these views. They denied the oral law, the resurrection of the dead, and believed in keeping in favor with the Roman government. But the priesthood of the day were no leaders for the down-trodden and sin-cursed sons of Abraham. It was a case of the blind leading the blind. Society at Jerusalem had become corrupted as a result of the unbroken influences of long ages of wickedness.

Such were the conditions of Palestine as Christ found it. Historians all agree that the age just preceding the advent was the darkest in the world's history. Everywhere mankind was realising his utter helplessness. To him no new hope seemed to appear. But unconsciously, silently and unexpectedly, the long-promised Deliverer came. He came with a new power and a new force which would from that time forward move and keep pace with ever advancing civilisation, and which above all would bring to man his eternal salvation.



Preaching of John the Baptist.

The Evolution of the Religious Reformation

A Reply to the Reviews By Wren J. Grinstead.

No. 3.

10. REASONS FOR THE ABANDONMENT OF CLOSE COMMUNION.

The reviewers of the essay have all explicitly or implicitly challenged the writer to adduce additional reasons—and particularly Scriptural reasons—for the proposed abandonment of our present attitude, whereby all but immersed believers are practically excluded from participating with us in the Lord's Supper, and from addressing our congregations. This section is an attempt to advance the argument demanded. The reviewers and all others whom the question affects are urged to examine the arguments minutely; accepting nothing as valid without candid reflection, but giving every valid argument its full force; since an attempt will be made to confine the argument to what is strictly and directly pertinent to the present stage of the discussion.

For convenience of argument we will accept the current nomenclature by which the essayist's position is known as *open communion*; but, in order to obviate misconception, we will define the term negatively and positively, as we expect to use it. First, open communion does *not* mean that the unimmersed shall be explicitly *invited* to the Lord's table by the presiding brother; second, open communion *does* mean that the presiding brother shall *abstain from inviting anyone*, immersed or unimmersed, to the Lord's table—thus leaving the question, whether any given one shall or shall not partake, to his own individual conscience.

Close communion, as at present practised in our churches, means that the presiding brother shall say: "If there are any immersed believers present (in addition to the members of this congregation), we invite them to partake with us"—or words to that effect. We take the liberty of recasting A. R. Main's argument for close communion, as presented in his review, so as to make its form suitable for this discussion. It is somewhat as follows:

1. In apostolic practice, no unimmersed persons partook of the Lord's Supper.

2. We are bound to conform to apostolic practice.

Therefore we are bound to exclude the unimmersed, expressly or implicitly, from the Lord's Supper.

We believe Bro. Main would accept this as a fair syllogistic recasting of his argument, and we will proceed to examine it.

This argument is full of fallacies. Although it is *probable* that none but the immersed partook of the Lord's Supper in New Testament times, it is unproved and unprovable. (Here, too, it might be remarked that A. R. Main's remark, "Day by day the testimony on this point grows," is altogether fallacious and misleading. The statements which he adduces are merely opinions, and opinion is not testimony. There can be no

testimony on this point outside the Scriptures.) Then, too, while the premises assert only their *not* partaking, the conclusion asserts their being *excluded* from partaking—which does not follow. In order to be logically complete, the argument would have to be expanded as follows:

1. In apostolic practice the unimmersed did not partake. (Probably true, but not proved.)

2. Their not being immersed was the reason for their not partaking. (Very doubtful.)

3. Immersion occupies the same place to-day, as a distinguishing mark, that it did in the days of the apostles. (Not true.)

4. The modern congregation, as represented by the presiding brother, is authorised and bound to preserve this distinction. (Not true.)

It is plain that if, as asserted, the four statements premised are fallacious, the conclusion is false. That they are thus fallacious, we will first of all proceed to prove.

The first necessary proposition of the close-communicant is that none but immersed believers sat down to the Lord's table. This is a universal negative—the most difficult proposition in the world to prove. It is very customary to jump at such conclusions, and this is precisely what the close-communicants have done in this instance. The Scripture most commonly cited is Acts 2: 41, 42: "They then that received his word were baptised . . . and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." But this passage makes no negative statement whatever, and so no negative conclusion can be drawn from it. The only legitimate conclusion here is that those who *were* baptised *did* continue in the breaking of bread. It is only when we add the considerations that baptism was "into Christ" and "into his death" (Rom. 6: 3), and that the Lord's Supper is a participation in his blood and body (1 Cor. 10: 16), that we perceive the Lord's Supper to have its full propriety and meaning only when partaken of by those who have received Jesus Christ as their Saviour in sincerity and truth. But such conclusions are mere inferences, and cannot possibly stand upon the ground of historical facts, particularly in arguing such an important assumption as the universal exclusion of the unimmersed.

Let it not be understood or alleged that we are arguing *for* participation of the unimmersed during apostolic times. Our argument is a purely neutral one, and based (witness the plea) upon the *silence* of the Scriptures. There is no hint in the passage cited that Luke was contemplating any emphatic contrast between the immersed and the unimmersed, else he must have

expressed and emphasised the pronoun ("they continued"). Hence any inference from this passage that the unimmersed must not partake is an inference from a false contrast. If it be urged that the contrast supplied is a natural one, and the inference consequently necessary, we reply that this has nothing to do with the case. The contrast is *not* in the Scripture, and any attempts to show that it ought to be there is simply a more or less disguised reconstruction of the Scripture to support our own theory. We beg leave to protest against the contention of some advocates of our plea that a "necessary inference" from the Scriptures is alone an adequate warrant for concluding a divine requirement. "Necessary inferences" are too subject to the unavoidable uncertainties of interpretation to be placed alongside of inspired commands and precedents. And in the absence of any inspired commands to the unimmersed to *abstain* from the Lord's Supper, or of any inspired example of *discrimination* on the part of the presiding brother, we must say that the first proposition which lies at the basis of close communion is not well enough established to be a ground of argument.

But even admitting that in New Testament times the unimmersed did not partake of the Lord's Supper, it does not follow that they did not partake *because* they were unimmersed. The real relation of the Scriptural "obedience of faith" to participation in the Lord's Supper is concisely and directly stated in Heb. 10: 22, 23 (Am. R.V.): "Let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our bodies washed with pure water, let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised." The "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" and the "body washed with pure water" are both evidently allusions to the spiritual cleansing of baptism, under the figure of the ceremonial cleansings of the law (Num. 19: 14-19, cf. Ezek 36: 25). The "drawing near with a true heart in fulness of faith" is particularly exemplified in "the confession (profession or acknowledgment) of our hope," and the warning to "forsake not our own assembling together" (v. 25), coupled with the assurance that "he is faithful that promised," seems to identify this confession with the sacred feast by which the Lord has commanded us to show forth his death until he come (Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 25, 26). But this relation between baptism and the Lord's Supper is one of ground, not of condition—we *should* partake *because we have been* redeemed through the blood of Christ, as witness the language: "having our body washed . . . let us hold fast the confession of our hope." The emphasis is laid throughout upon the *faith* and *cleansing* of baptism as a reason why we should be steadfast and diligent in our attendance upon the Lord's table; and the more or less negative idea that the outward investiture of baptism is a test or condition of our partaking is nowhere in sight. Thus, even if baptism was the step which prepared one to partake of the Lord's Supper with propriety, it is its spiritual side (faith), and not its physical side (immersion) that con-

stituted the preparation. There is thus no adequate proof that immersion was the reason for the distinction, even if any distinction existed.

We wish to warn the readers here again that we are not contending for any separation between immersion and faith as two great elements of Scriptural baptism. In the contention which we are now discussing, the advocates of close communion are logically upon the affirmative side,* inasmuch as they must show a positive Scriptural support for discrimination on the part of the presiding brother at the Lord's table. In the case of this second proposition of theirs, this formal affirmative is also an actual one; and their sustaining it depends upon their adducing Scripture to prove that (granting baptism to have preceded participation) immersion was the element of baptism upon which emphasis was laid, and which constituted the criterion. As we have seen, this is not the case. The assumption that it is, like the assumption which underlies their first proposition, arises from reading a false and unintended contrast into the Scripture text.

The third necessary postulate of the close-communionist is that immersion occupies the same place to-day that it did in the days of the apostles. Here we can take still stronger ground. The first proposition was merely not *certainly* true. This third one is certainly *not* true. So far as the willingness of Christ to bestow pardon and adoption is concerned, we have indeed no ground for putting baptism in any different place from that which it occupied in the preaching of the apostles—in fact, we must put it there, and extend these blessings upon condition of baptism, just as the apostles did. But the mass of Christ's followers have not done this. Baptism has been completely wrested from its apostolic position. The English word "baptism" frequently (though not always) has a totally different meaning from its Greek original. It means a different act, performed upon a different subject for a different purpose. So we who use the word in its New Testament sense are constrained to employ another term (immersion) to describe the physical act of baptism. But immersion is not the whole of baptism. Leaving the physical act out of sight for the moment, baptism involves, on the part of the person baptised, two essential elements—an inward acceptance of Christ as Lord, and an outward and visible acknowledgment of that acceptance. Now in the case of the conscientious but unimmersed followers of Christ in the pædobaptist denominations, *both these acts have been performed* in their public union with the congregation of believers. The only thing lacking is that, not knowing (because of the bias of centuries of tradition) that Christ has prescribed the *form* which this visible acknowledgment is to take—namely, a burial in water and a resurrection from it—they have not submitted them-

selves to that form. This is not disobedience—it is simply non-obedience.

Now it is not our province to inquire or determine what attitude Christ will take toward those who have failed to obey through ignorance. Will he accept their sincerity in lieu of obedience? or will he hold them responsible for their ignorance? We do not know, because he has not told us. But we do know that the world is full of earnest, pious, godly men, who believe devoutly in the Lord Jesus Christ, who are striving with all their might to advance his kingdom, who unhesitatingly trust in him for salvation, and who would not willingly disobey anything that they know to be a requirement of his; yet who have never been immersed. This was not the case in the days of the apostles. Then, to believe in Christ was to be baptised into him. There was no large and permanent and recognisable class of "pious unimmersed"—at least, not within the limits of the willing servants of Jesus Christ. It is perfectly apparent that immersion is not, as in the days of the apostles, a badge of the believer, as distinguished from the unbeliever.

When we consider the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper, the consideration established in the foregoing paragraph becomes a direct and unavoidable reason why the Lord's Supper should not be withheld from the "pious unimmersed." The Supper has a double aspect. Christward, it is a memorial, by which we call him to mind, and strengthen our hearts for his service by prayer to him and meditation upon his work of redemption (Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 29-31); worldward, it is a profession of our faith and hope in our redeeming Lord (1 Cor. 11: 26; Heb. 10: 23). Now there is no adequate ground for supposing that either of these acts is not proper for a sincere follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, even though unimmersed. The worship of the unimmersed believer through the Lord's Supper is surely just as acceptable as his worship through prayer. If one is wrong, the other is wrong; and immersed believers should then refuse to join in the attitude of prayer when the prayer is led by an unimmersed person. Indeed, if close communion, as based on Acts 2: 41, 42, were carried to its logical conclusion, it would necessitate the exclusion of the unimmersed from any meeting of the church, lest they should partake, not only of the bread and wine, but of the apostles' teaching and the prayers as well! We challenge any escape from this conclusion that does not involve a surrender of the very principle of close communion, in so far as that principle is induced from Acts 2: 41, 42—namely, that it is anti-scriptural for unimmersed persons to partake of the Lord's Supper. Moreover, the Lord's Supper, when observed in a pædobaptist assembly, is as truly a profession of their faith in Christ, a remembering of him, an appeal to the mercies of his propitiation, and a sincere act of worship, as when observed in an assembly of immersed believers only. The position established in this paragraph then would not only require us to abandon the exclusion of the pious unimmersed from the table in our own churches, but would make it entirely proper for us to enter in and par-

take with them in any other church.

The fourth necessary postulate of close communion is that it is the right and duty of the presiding brother to indicate who are to partake and who are not. If this discrimination on his part means anything more than that he is, in his remarks, to set forth the significance of the act which the congregation are about to perform, and warn whoever chooses to partake that he partake in a worthy manner, we emphatically deny his authority, and challenge proof. The close-communionist is again in the affirmative on this point, and must prove his authority, or abstain from inviting anyone. He is only a servant, and dare not invite in his own name; and the Lord has not told him to invite any particular class. He can only repeat the Lord's warnings (as in 1 Cor. 11: 20-34), and leave the responsibility of eating or not eating to the conscience of each individual. The Lord himself, in instituting the Supper, did not prohibit the unprepared from partaking, although one was present at the time (Luke 22: 17-22). Dare we assume a responsibility which the Lord himself did not assume?

This, concisely, is the argument against close communion. The four propositions which we have discussed are *all* necessary, if close communion is to be sustained at all. We challenge the close-communionist to show that these are not all essential to his position, and we challenge him to prove any one of them. Failing in a single point, his house of cards must totter into ruin.

It may be reiterated by the close-communionists that we have not advanced a single Scripture instance of the participation of an unimmersed person in the Lord's Supper. This is true; and it is equally true that we were not under the slightest obligation to do so. Our position is a negative one, and based upon the silence of the Scriptures. It is in this respecting of God's silence that our plea finds its unique strength. We repeat, the close-communionist is in the logical affirmative on this question, just as this pædobaptist is on infant sprinkling, or the ecclesiastic on episcopacy. He presupposes some Scriptural ground for inviting some to the Lord's table, and thereby implicitly excluding others. He is logically bound by the plea to show Scripture command or precedent for this practice, or abandon it. He cannot evade this obligation by trying to throw the burden of proof upon us. If he attempts to do it, it is a sign that he lacks the confidence of strength.

There are two strong objections to open communion which deserve to be considered in this connection. We would first warn the objector however that these difficulties might have their full force without in the least impairing our argument against the assumption of discriminating authority by the presiding brother. That argument must be demolished by an express Scripture command or precedent, or *it stands in spite of objections*.

The first objection is that under open communion some will partake of the Lord's Supper who are not prepared to do so, and will thereby "be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Cor. 11: 27). It

*This is evidently true of the position of the close-communionists, taken as a whole. There are two modifying considerations, however. One of these is, that they are obliged either to affirm or assume a negative as their first proposition; and the other is, that the essayist, in opposing close communion, is obliged to take the lead in the discussion, because of the fact that he is opposing an accepted practice.

should be noted however that the passage in question does not refer to an unworthy person, but to any person's partaking in an unworthy manner (Am. R.V. *in loco*). The paragraphic context shows that this means in such manner as to obscure or nullify the moral and spiritual aspects of the feast for either partaker or observer. This cannot be prevented even by close communion, since the most orthodox elder in the church might be tempted into an improper attitude of mind at the hour of the Supper. Moreover, v. 28 implies that the responsibility rests upon the person partaking, not upon the church; so that the church (or the presiding brother) is under no obligation to warn unprepared persons from partaking, but only to admonish all who intend to partake, as to how they shall do so.

The second objection to open communion is that it involves a recognition of the full Christian status of the pious unimmersed, and so stultifies our plea for the immersion of such, and logically necessitates our receiving them into our churches. This consequence would be more reasonable (though even then not necessary) if the congregation assumed authority to invite them to the Supper. But since this authority is denied by the close-communicant, the recognition does not at all follow. One does not recognise the Christian character of a person whom he knows to be a hypocrite, when he sits at the Lord's table with him. Hence, communion does not necessarily involve recognition. With due apologies to our pædobaptist brethren for introducing such an unworthy parallel on their behalf, we will point out that the principle applies to them with at least equal force. But even if recognition of the pædobaptist were involved in communing with him, it would be the recognition of only those elements of the Christian character which are exercised in the Lord's Supper. Those elements are a personal faith in Christ and a public profession of that faith. We can recognise these without in the least implying that the pædobaptist stands upon the ground of Scriptural assurance in regard to adoption, pardon, and the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

The status of the pious unimmersed is a question upon which it is very easy to err. As in most doubtful questions, there are two extremes; and they are equally erroneous, as being equally unwarranted by the Holy Scriptures. The one is to recognise their personal faith and public profession as a full substitute for the obedience of faith, and concede to them the full Christian status and blessings; the other is to consider their faith abortive without the investiture of immersion, and to deny that they are in possession of the Christian blessings, any more than the deliberately disobedient. The first attitude is latitudinarianism; the second is bigotry. Each is unwarrantable, because each presupposes a knowledge of the mind of Christ upon their case which is not and cannot be derived from the Scriptures. This will be apparent upon close and candid reflection. The crucial question involved is not the essentialness of baptism as a whole, but of the essentialness of immersion (the physical investiture of baptism), as distinguished from faith and profession (its spir-

itual and moral substance). Now upon the essentialness of immersion in itself the Scriptures make no explicit utterance. Unlike the European in mind, the Hebrew was not subtle, analytical, and philosophical. He was concrete and practical, and did not clearly distinguish between a significant act and the state of mind which prompted the act. So under his hand the subtle distinction which we are here discussing was never explicitly raised. The nearest approach to it is in Jas. 2: 14-26; and even that does not cover the ground, because one element of the pædobaptist's faith is consistent and active works; which is supposed to be absent in the abortive faith which James discusses.

In view then of the silence of the Scriptures on this point, we can only say of the pædobaptist's status before God as a whole, that it is unknown and unknowable. The particular application of this conclusion will depend upon the extent and nature of the recognition involved in any given act. If the question is one of his conscientiousness, his willingness to live the Christian life, his subjective faith and hope in Christ, his public profession of that faith, or his personal aptitude for comprehending and teaching the great fundamental truths of the Christian religion, there is no Scriptural reason why we should hesitate to have full fellowship with him. In evangelism we cannot go so far, for the terms of the gospel as laid down by the pædobaptist differ materially from the apostolic proclamation; beyond which or short of which we must not go. If a proposed act necessitates a recognition of his full Christian status (as, for example, admitting him to membership in the congregation), we cannot do it, because we do not know that he has the full Christian status. But as open communion does not involve any such recognition, any objection on this score falls to the ground.

The considerations elucidated in the two preceding paragraphs have an important bearing upon the usage and definition of some terms used in the essay, to which some of the reviewers have objected. It will be sufficient to comment upon three of these, as representative of all—"Christian," "congregation," and "church." If the New Testament view of baptism were still the view of the religious world, there would be no difficulty on these points, for each term would include baptised (immersed) believers in Jesus Christ, and no others by any possibility. But while it is true that the term "Christian," for example, together with its synonyms, as used in the New Testament, is never applied to any but immersed believers, it is not always true that the fact of their having been immersed is the characteristic in the writer's mind in using the term. It is usually either their belief or their public profession in life that is emphasised. To speak logically, the word denoted immersed believers; but it connoted a variety of qualities—belief, reformation of life, profession, immersion, pardon, adoption, and so on. Now we cannot use this term in its New Testament sense to-day, because of the divergence of the characteristics which it originally connoted. That is, not all followers of Christ are immersed, and not all

immersed persons are followers of Christ. Hence if we apply the term "Christian" to either class alone, we either exclude some who possess marked Christian characteristics, or include some who lack a prominent New Testament badge of discipleship. We cannot apply it at all with any close accuracy to those who are pardoned and adopted, for we do not know how many of the unimmersed are pardoned and adopted, or even whether any are at all. So we must use the term more or less loosely. Where the question of an express Scripture warrant for our adoption is not in view, there is no reason for avoiding the common usage which applies the term to all believers in Christ; or, in some other connections, to those who live under the influence of the Christian faith, exclusive of other religions. The term "congregation" would likewise be applied to an association of such believers conjointly worshipping, and the term "church," in its non-local sense, to the entire number of such believers. These usages are not fixtures—few usages are; but they are current and apt, and ought not to give any occasion for dispute.

The way is now cleared for a presentation of the argument in favor of an exchange of pulpits and platforms with discreet and representative speakers of other religious bodies. The principles controlling this question are fully discussed in 1 Cor., chapters 1 to 4. The apostle here rebukes the divisions that existed in the Corinthian church, points out the insufficiency and unessentialness of their points of division, and emphasises the person and work of Christ as a ground of deep-laid union. He concludes the third chapter with this impressive injunction: "Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." In view of the fact that the divisions were over the merits and abilities of their respective religious teachers, and that the adherents of the several parties were disposed to exclude and reject the utterances of teachers of the other parties, this passage is seen to be both explicit and pertinent to the question we are now discussing. If "all things are ours," we should be as willing to secure light on the Scriptures from Knox or Wesley as from Milligan or Campbell; and from the followers of one as much as of the other. The tenor of the whole fourth chapter, with its argument that no party has any truth which it did not receive from the one inspired source (v. 7), and the plea "that no one of you be puffed up for the one (public teacher) against the other," make it clear that the practical end of the exhortation is a free and mutual exchange of helplessness in spite of differences, to the end that those differences may be removed, and all may be one in Christ.

The question may be raised, "Where are we to stop in this exchange? what religious bodies are we to include, and what to exclude?" This would be largely a personal matter, not to be settled by denominational lines. The Scriptures give us two classes of persons to avoid in seeking public teachers—

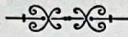
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The Leader.

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

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 The

Evolution of the Religious Reformation.

In our two previous issues Wren. J. Grinstead replied to the reviews of his Conference Essay, and, in this, advances a stage further by giving "reasons for the abandonment of close communion." In his replies he makes it a grievance that he has been misunderstood by his critics. To some extent this may be true, but in so far as it is true, he himself is very largely to blame. It is the first duty of a public teacher to write or speak in such a way that the points he wishes to make shall be clearly apprehended by the ordinary reader or hearer. It is not sufficient that the writer himself shall have a clear understanding of the line of argument he is advancing, but he must also have the

capacity of conveying it to the mind of the average individual in such a way that it will not be susceptible of being misunderstood. However, speaking for ourselves, we do not admit having misunderstood him in any particular. The essayist himself admits that our summary of his position was correct with certain modifications. These modifications are two in number, and relate to environment and "peculiarities of congregations and individuals." We fail, however, to see that modifications are called for in these particulars. It was not disputed that the *general* environment included "the entire religious and non-religious world; it was merely stated that the *special* environment in the case under consideration was made up of the various denominations by which we are surrounded. That is to say that our relations to our religious neighbors were specially or more particularly dealt with by the essayist. If this was not so, we confess our inability to understand the English language. In regard to our "seeming to exaggerate the extent to which the essayist would be willing to see the peculiarities of individuals and congregations preserved in thus coming to our position," we are unable, after a careful reading of our remarks, to find a single trace of such exaggeration. Under ordinary circumstances we should have paid no attention to the essayist's criticism of our summary of his position, but in view of the capital he makes out of alleged misunderstandings it seemed needful to do so. We regret the assumption of superiority and infallibility displayed by the essayist when he says, "If, then, we find his utterances so misinterpreted by the reviewers, chiefly through this blunder of false contrast, need we be surprised to find their interpretation of the Scriptures fallacious in the same respect? and should we not be rather cautious about following their lead in inferences from the Scriptures, without first carefully examining the contrasts from which their inferences are drawn?" A more impartial tribunal than the essayist must first of all decide who has misunderstood and who has blundered, before remarks of this kind are in order. And, even when such decision is given, they would be very much out of place, no matter whom they came from.

In the next place, the essayist expresses the opinion that in our review we labored "under two handicaps." First, in contending against scientific facts for an imaginary third alternative, and second, in seeming to put "conformity" into the essayist's mouth instead of "adaptation." In what way the third alternative is imaginary, the essayist does not tell us, so we need not stop to consider it further. In regard to the second

handicap, we are told that if we had consulted a dictionary, in reference to "adaptation" and "conformity," we would have been spared the utterance of a pointless and misleading sentence. The pointless and misleading sentence reads as follows:—"Adaptation to environment or to the times seems a strange argument to use in connection with a reformation movement." Well, we have looked at a dictionary, but have not discovered any reason for altering this sentence or any of its context. Might we suggest that our friend the essayist would do well to have a look at a dictionary also? To save him the trouble we will give him the meaning of the word "adapt," as taken from *The Standard Dictionary of the English Language*:—"To adjust to situation, environment or the like; make suitable; conform; as to adapt oneself to changed conditions." As a general rule, "adaptation" has in it, more or less, the idea of conformity. How much, or how little, will depend upon the context in which the word is found. In the essay itself, the word "adaptation" does not lose the idea of conformity. It is found there very conspicuously. The churches of Christ, which, in these States, have maintained what is known as "close communion," are urged to adapt themselves to their religious environment by conforming to the practice of "open communion."

Exception is also taken to our statement that "if Jesus Christ had adapted himself to the times, he would not have been crucified." Now, it should be clearly understood that we used the word "adapted" in precisely the same sense as did the essayist in his illustration from nature in regard to adaptation to environment. Adaptation to environment means taking color from one's surroundings; being influenced by them so as to become like them. In the chapter on Environment, in his "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," Professor Drummond says:—"Even the popular mind has been struck with the curious adaptation of nearly all animals to their *habitat*, for example in the matter of color. The sandy hue of the sole and flounder, the white of the Polar bear, with its suggestions of Arctic snows, the stripes of the Bengal tiger—as if the actual reeds of its native jungle had nature-printed themselves on its hide;—these, and a hundred others which will occur to everyone, are marked instances of adaptation to environment induced, by natural selection or otherwise, for the purpose, obviously in these cases at least, of protection." This adaptation to environment is what the essayist sets before us as the stern law of nature expressed in the short, but pregnant words, "Adapt or perish." This law of the natural world he

takes into the religious world and stoutly maintains that it legitimately reigns there as well. Whether it does or not we will not now stop to discuss. It is sufficient for our purpose that he himself has defined adaptation as conformity to one's surroundings. He has thus given a meaning to adaptation from which he cannot escape. When, therefore, we said that "if Jesus Christ had adapted himself to the times, he would not have been crucified," we used the word adapted in the sense conveyed by the essayist himself. In effect we said that if Jesus had conformed to the times in which he lived he would not have been crucified. That he did not so conform is a matter of history. His attitude to the times in which he lived is well expressed by Pressense:—"He (Jesus) pandered to none of the passions of his age; he made no concessions to current errors. On the contrary, he never ceased for a day to combat the favorite ideas of the men of his generation, and to trample underfoot the national prejudices of the Jews, commencing with their infatuated pride. He in no way accommodated himself to their false conceptions; and when he is either accused or commended for having clothed immortal truths in the coarse garb of vulgar superstition, in order to bring them within the compass of his contemporaries, the judgment is contradicted by the best authenticated facts, and most of all by that noble and manly candor which characterises all his discourses."

The next exception taken by the essayist to our review has reference to the following statement we made:—"If he (Jesus) had sought to please the religious teachers of his day the whole course of history would have been turned into a different channel. As it was, the mandate came to him, 'Adapt or perish' He elected to perish. But it was a perishing that saved the world." The comment upon this is as follows: "Again: 'He (Jesus) elected to perish.' This is news. The essayist has always been under the impression that Jesus did not perish—that he still lives and reigns." This is not criticism, but hypercriticism. The essayist ought to know that the word "perish" is frequently used as an equivalent for "to die." The dictionary gives that as one of its meanings, and so does common usage. When lives are lost in shipwrecks, it is not unusual to say that they perished at sea. It would have been just as easy for us to have said, "Adapt or die," but as our essayist had used the word "perish," we did so likewise. That Jesus died is one great truth that we rejoice in, as well as that other one—"that he still lives and reigns."

The remainder of the essayist's criticism we will deal with in our next issue, when we are considering his position and arguments relating to the communion question.

Editorial Notes.

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

Let Us Return Thanks.

The year shortly to close has been one of progress, a year crowned with the goodness of the Lord. The heavy rains have fallen on the parched ground, and with David we can say, "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn when thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness." The great drought which for years has rested upon so many of our States like a funeral pall has at last broken up, and we have entered upon a period of prosperity. Our fertile fields are waving with golden corn, and our pastures are luxuriant with sustenance for our flocks and herds. Surely as the year closes it is fitting that we should praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Let us "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name."

Our Spiritual Prosperity.

It has, too, been a year of great spiritual prosperity. It is probable that in no one year in the history of the cause we plead have so many in Australia accepted Christ and decided to be Christians only. While showers of rain have fallen upon the land, showers of blessing have fallen upon the churches. Our pages every week have been crowded with reports of progress all along the line. Dozens of new churches have been organised; thousands have been baptised into Christ; new chapels in all directions have been erected, and old ones enlarged. Our Sunday Schools are being crowded out, and our audiences were never so large and interested. All the indications point to grander successes in the near future. Among these not the least is the spirit of optimism and enthusiasm so prevalent in our churches. Then, too, there is manifested a keener interest in the development of the spiritual life. A few weak-kneed brethren here and there may possibly still

engage in dram-drinking, card-playing, dancing and theatre-going, but their number is decreasing, and the immense majority have no sympathy with such practices everywhere regarded as discreditable to the professing Christian. For all the spiritual blessings of the closing year we should "praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in the firmament of his power."

How Shall We Give Thanks?

Our thankfulness should take tangible form, and while we "offer the sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of our lips giving thanks unto his name," we should, at the same time, "do good and communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." For years past the churches of Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales have made special offerings for Home Missions on the first Lord's day in January. This year the "Golden West" wheels into line, and at the request of the W.A. Conference, the brethren there are invited to make a golden offering in every church for the Home Mission Fund. Perhaps in time Queensland, Tasmania and New Zealand may adopt the same date, that we may have one great rallying day for Home Missions throughout Australasia. The fields are white, but the laborers are few. The temporal and spiritual blessings of 1903 are great; shall our thankoffering be small? In every State our Conference Committees have appeals for help from promising fields, and in every State they are hampered for want of funds. How much do we care for the salvation of those around us? How much shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits? How much has he done for us? "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

The Coming Elections.

The electors of the Commonwealth are being appealed to by numerous candidates for Parliamentary honors, most of whom range themselves under the leadership of the Premier, Mr. Deakin, or the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Reid. This paper expresses no preference for either, nor have we anything to say on the questions of freetrade, protection, or preferential trade. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, and (since the women have votes) every woman too. But we strongly urge electors to vote for no candidate, whether ministerial or opposition, who is not of clean moral and commercial life. Men of shady reputation are not to be trusted in Parliament. Bad men cannot be expected to make good laws. Gamblers, horse racers and publicans are not likely to use their influence for righteousness. Let us vote as we pray, and if we pray for the increase of Roman Catholic or

infidel influence let us vote for Roman Catholic or infidel candidates. If we pray for the increase of gambling, impurity and dishonesty let us vote for men of the turf and for men with besmirched records. But if we want to see righteousness exalted, let us select clean men, men of upright life and straight principles. The advocates of womanhood suffrage urged that women would not be likely to vote for bad men. It remains to be seen whether the women's vote will affect the character of the next Parliament. It is urged by many that the influence of the R.C. priesthood will be brought to bear upon the women of that faith to vote solidly. It therefore behoves every Protestant woman to exercise her privilege to counteract any such undue pressure. While we are not unmindful of the importance of the political issues before the country, we believe the moral issues should occupy the first place in the mind of every Christian voter, and these can only be advanced by the return of moral and reliable men. Under no circumstances should a Christian vote for a bad man.

The Evolution of the Religious Reformation.

(Continued from page 711.)

those who reject the supreme claims of Jesus Christ (1 John 4: 1-3), and those who provoke strife (Titus 3: 10). Of course there is always a difficulty in the practical application of these principles, since in our zeal to close our doors against unworthy teachers we may shut out worthy ones, and so become schismatic and sectarian ourselves. But, generally speaking, the injunction against factious teachers would shut out the proclaimers of "fad" religions, such as Seventh Day Adventists, Christian Catholics ("Dowieites"), Christian Scientists, *et id omne genus*, since they exalt unessential and doubtful doctrines into denominational tests, and so cause division; while the interdict against all who would divide or minimise the supreme authority of Jesus Christ would shut out Latter-day Saints and Roman Catholics, and, we think, all consistent Unitarians. We repeat however that a personal attention to such matters by the overseers of the churches would effect a wise selection in accordance with the Scriptures, without drawing the denominational line.

Our plea is for unity first and union afterward. A union without unity would be of no value; and a real unity would soon eventuate in union. But a real unity must be deeply founded, and upon the Foundation than which no other can be laid. This fundamental unity has a dormant but vigorous germ in the common recognition by all parties of the supreme authority of Jesus Christ our Lord. But this germ must be nurtured by the genial sun of sympathy and the melting rains of brotherly association. If hard words and malicious accusations

have been showered upon us in the past, that is all the more reason why we should greet the tardy return of the fraternal spring with a quick and eager welcome. Our opportunity is the larger because we have waited and endured so long for it. It is an opportunity that makes large demands upon our self-denial, our intellect, and our spiritual vision. It calls first of all for humility and self-distrust, lest our own immature conceptions should be so magnified as to exclude the ideals and ambitions of our King. A catholic love for all mankind must follow, and an absolute faith in their ultimate triumph over sin and hatred and prejudice through the Spirit of the gospel. Filled with this Spirit, and living close to the Sender, all our present errors will be outgrown, and we will be drawn together in the bonds of a generous, faithful love, achieving our destiny, and accomplishing the triumph of the cross of Jesus Christ.

West Australian Letter.

—* D. A. EWERS. —*

Bro. Payne, who has been one of the backbones, if not the backbone, of the Subiaco church, has received notice of transfer to Bulong, a rich mining centre some twenty miles east from Kalgoorlie and about the same distance from Kanowna, these being the nearest railway points. He has been postmaster at Subiaco for several years, and identified with the church from its birth. He is a most acceptable speaker, and a painstaking member of the students' class. It is not easy to say how much he will be missed, but we shall hear of him and his doings at Bulong.

We have had two good nights in the Lake-st. Mutual Improvement Society lately. A week ago the writer gave an address to a nice meeting explaining why he opposed the State control clause of the proposed liquor reform legislation. Several short speeches followed on both sides, among them being one from Bro. Banks, who is also opposed to State control. The opener then replied. Although no vote was taken, it was very evident that the meeting generally endorsed the writer's position. He has recently addressed a meeting of the W.C.T.U., and a public temperance meeting at Leederville, on the same lines. The latter was held in the Baptist chapel, kindly lent to our Conference Temperance Committee, and was well attended. Bro. Hagger made a telling speech in favor of the direct veto, but did not endorse or oppose the writer's position on the State control clauses. Bro. Banks was in the chair.

Then we had a lively discussion last night on the proposition "It is advisable that our young men should go to America for their theological training." Bro. Beck presided. I must mention the names of the speakers that they may be immortalised. D. M. Wilson led in the affirmative, followed by R. Ewers, L. Gordon and H. P. Manning in the order named. Albany Bell led in the nega-

tive, supported by J. Silvester, J. Rhodes, and E. J. Hart. There was a good audience. The judges were H. J. Banks, A. A. Lightfoot and the writer. The arguments were ably presented and warmly contested on both sides. At times the debating was fast and furious. It would have been deeply interesting to some of our prominent evangelists who have been educated in America if they could only have heard themselves held up as the shocking examples of departure from the old paths on the one hand, or presented as bright and shining examples of scholastic ability and unwavering faithfulness to the truth on the other. It was hugely amusing to me, but then I have not been to America. One of the young men on the affirmative fairly captured the audience by the magniloquence of his language, which rolled out in sonorous and carefully composed sentences to the accompaniment of most expressive, if not always most graceful gesture. No, it was not Bro. Manning, and it was not R. Ewers; but on no consideration will I say who it was. Some of these young fellows are going to be heard of in the future. Kumor has it that at least one or two of them contemplate a pilgrimage to that Mecca of our Australian youth — Lexington, Kentucky, U.S. America. The affirmative were awarded 85, and the negative 75 points. I think it was the most enjoyable debate of any kind I ever attended, and I've been to several.

Some of my readers will think I've gone into details too fully about local matters in this letter. Perhaps so; but there is something to be said on the other side. There always are two sides to everything, as the boy realised when he defined a lie as "an abomination unto the Lord and a very present help in time of trouble."

"Bethany," Palmerston-st., Perth, Nov. 11.

From The Field.

The field is the world.—Matt. 13: 38.

South Australia.

GROTE STREET.—Our Sunday School held their annual picnic on Wednesday last, at Hyde Park. A good programme of sports had been arranged and was well carried out by Mr. John Gard. Swings were erected, and games of cricket, football, quoits, etc., were indulged in. Justice was done by young and old to the good things which had been provided by the lady teachers, the tarts, buns, etc., disappearing as if by magic. We were pleased to see a good number of visiting friends on the ground, although doubtless some were kept away by the disagreeable weather.

The meetings to-day have been well attended. Bro. Grinstead spoke morning and evening. His subject to-night was, "The Sin against the Holy Spirit." At the close of the discourse, one young lady made the good confession, and was baptised into Christ. We trust that more will soon follow.

Nov. 29.

E. R. M.

YORK.—There have been five added to the church by faith and obedience since last report; two were received into fellowship last Lord's day, and three this morning. 196 scholars were present this afternoon, being a record attendance. Good meeting at night; Bro. Horsell preaching.

Dec. 6.

H. H.

HENLEY BEACH.—"God Stooping to Reason with Man" was the subject of Bro. Colbourne's discourse this evening. At the close the brethren were again cheered by hearing the good confession from Bro. Thoble's eldest son.
Dec. 6.

G. A. H.

NORWOOD.—On Lord's day, November 22nd, two elderly persons—husband and wife—were received into fellowship, having put on Christ in baptism the Thursday previous. At the gospel service in the evening a young woman from Kangaroo Island confessed Christ. Several months ago her aunt from the same place united with the church at Norwood. By all accounts there is a splendid field for gospel work on the island. The church here has again to mourn the loss of another beloved brother in the person of A. T. Greenshields, who passed away last night after a short illness. An obituary notice will appear in due course.
Nov. 30.

A. C. RANKINE.

NORWOOD.—We had splendid meetings yesterday. In the morning three were received into fellowship—one by letter, one by obedience, and one formerly belonging to the Baptist Church. The Tabernacle was uncomfortably crowded last night, at an "In Memoriam" service to our late Bro. Greenshields. Three responded to the gospel invitation.
Dec. 6.

A. C. RANKINE.

BROMPTON PARK.—Very pleased to report two further confessions last night—a man about 35 years, the other a lad from Hindmarsh Sunday School.
Dec. 7.

S.

KADINA.—We had a good meeting here to-night, but no confessions. At Moonta two were received into fellowship. In the afternoon the hall was filled. There was one confession and several earnest inquirers, with whom we have arranged to meet through the week.

We gave another visit to Wallaroo last week, and it is intended to hold a public meeting in a hall next Lord's day.
Dec. 6.

W. MOFFIT.

DALKEY.—On Friday, November 20th, a goodly number of brethren and sisters of the churches at Alma, Dalkey, Long Plain and Mallala met in the Dalkey chapel to bid farewell to Alfred Marshman, on the occasion of his leaving for the Bible College, Kentucky, U.S.A. Shortly after 4 p.m. the meeting commenced with prayer and praise. Brief addresses were delivered by Bro. McLachlan (chairman), R. D. Lawrie, J. Harkness, B. Marshman, R. Woolcock, W. Marshman, and Alfred Marshman in reply. A purse was presented from the church at Alma, and another from Dalkey, J. Harkness and D. Finlayson making the presentations. A Bible was presented from the superintendent of Dalkey Sunday School. At the close of the meeting refreshments were passed round.
D.F.

GROTE-STREET.—The Dorcas Society closed their year's work by holding a picnic in the Botanic Gardens on Thursday last, the 3rd inst. The weather was all that could be desired, and between 20 and 30 members assembled at the appointed time, and availed themselves of the opportunity of enjoying each other's company in such a delightful spot. This is the first time that the Society has held an outing of this kind, but the success that attended it assures us it will not be the last. The Girls' Dorcas Class is still doing good work by making up clothing for those who are in need; we believe it is a good thing to get the young people interested in a work of this kind. The band of affliction has been laid upon our Sister Belle and family, who have been called upon to part with a beloved husband and father. We extend our heart-

felt Christian sympathy in this their time of trouble, and trust that though the clouds seem dark they may see beyond the silver light of God's love.
Dec. 6.

E. R. M.

Victoria.

BAYSWATER.—The brethren had a season of refreshing on Lord's day last, when J. T. T. Harding visited us. Three were received in at the morning meeting. An appreciative audience listened to our brother's gospel address in the evening
Dec. 7.

T. C.

BENDIGO.—In the absence of our evangelist, Dr. Cook, who with Sister Cook is taking a much needed rest at Mount Martha, we had the pleasure of a visit from T. J. Cook, of North Melbourne, also Bro. Morris, from Brighton, who very acceptably addressed the church in the morning, and as a visitor from the Sunday School Union, gave a little talk to the school. Bro. Cook preached in the evening to a large audience, when at the close one lady made the good confession. Our brother is remaining over this week, and hence will be with us on the coming Lord's day, when all are looking forward again to a good time, especially in the afternoon, when he has promised to deliver his address on "Baloons" to the school.
Dec. 7.

J. S.

MELBOURNE (Swanston-st.).—Very good meetings last Lord's day morning and evening. Sister Gould and daughter, from Subiaco, W.A., were present at the morning meeting, just arriving in time. In the evening Bro. Meldrum took as his text "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Excellent attendance and interest.

RICHMOND (Balmain Street).—Two more men and wife—confessed Christ last week. Preparatory meetings for the great tent mission were addressed by Bren. R. C. Edwards, Griffiths and F. M. Ludbrook. 10,500 notices in bills, cards and papers were delivered at houses re tent mission. Last night, being the start of mission, found the tent full and a number congregated outside. One—a young lady from Newmarket—came forward. We pray that God's blessing may richly rest upon the labors of Bren. Harward and Pittman here
Dec. 7.

P. J. P.

CROYDON.—Yesterday 38 broke bread. This is a record. The story of "In His Steps" was told with the aid of the magic lantern in the evening, the chapel being packed. Three confessions for the day, all young married ladies.
Dec. 7.

J. W. P.

BERWICK.—We had splendid meetings last Lord's day. Bro. and Sister Greenhill were with us. Bro. Greenhill gave an excellent address to the church from 2 Cor. 5: 17. In the evening we were cheered with two confessions.
A. J. S.

West Australia.

KALGOORLIE.—We desire to express our appreciation of Bro. Ewers' visit to the fields in the absence of the writer. Since our return the meetings have been most gratifying. Some of the largest in the church's history have been seen during the past week or two. Since our last three have been added—two by faith and baptism, and one from the Baptists. The latter is a young man who has been weighing the questions of the design of baptism and Christian unity for the last twelve months. He is a promising

speaker, and already has used his voice for our platform. His example, too, must have a good effect. There were about 40 present at the midweek service last night; about 12 were strangers.
Nov. 26.

LAWSON CAMPBELL.

NORTH FREMANTLE.—Since last report the church has engaged the services of H. Manning for six months. On Thursday, November 13th, a welcome social was tendered to our brother, fully 200 being present, of which a large number were from sister churches. The platform was occupied by Bren. Hagger (chairman), Ewers, Banks, Lucraft, Carrington and Manning. During the evening H. Wright contributed two solos, which were highly appreciated. The speakers all spoke of the stirring worth of our new evangelist, and wished him much success in his labors, this being his first engagement. The church is on the increase, and much interest is manifested in all the meetings. Since the mission closed there have been six confessions.
Dec. 2.

A. E. L.

South Africa.

CAPE TOWN.—That Australia is much interested in South Africa and the work of planting New Testament churches here I know. I am, therefore, anxious to put, by your kind permission and help, before our Australian brethren, through the pages of the CHRISTIAN, a statement of our needs here in Cape Town. We must have a meeting place of our own, and that in a residential quarter. To this end we have secured a plot of ground, and virtually paid for it ourselves. A rough estimate for our building is £1,000 or £1,250. Our British Committee, in response to our appeal, are lending us £300, free of interest. May we now appeal to our Australian brethren to help us all they can? We have faith enough to believe you will. Plans are being got out, and we hope to commence operations immediately. I am anxious for the thing to go forward at once, so that Bro. Cowin, who is coming from England to take up my work here at the end of this year, may work to the greatest possible advantage. Donations may be sent to me, Braeside, Kenilworth, Cape Town, or to the treasurers (both Australians), W. J. Chalmers, 15 York Street, Woodstock, Cape Town, and J. Olley, 69 Regent Street, Woodstock, Cape Town.
Nov. 2.

R. K. FRANCIS.

New South Wales.

PETERSHAM.—A delightful day was spent by a large gathering of scholars, parents and friends on Saturday last at that pretty resort, The Avenue, Lane Cove River, the trysting-place for the celebration of the annual picnic of our Lord's day school. Though the accommodation of the boat on its various trips was tested to its utmost, not a single serious mishap occurred to mar the enjoyment.
Nov. 30.

C. J. L.

BUNGAWALBYN.—At the church meeting held on November 16th, L. H. Robinson, who has held the office of secretary for the term of 17 years, resigned. T. Patch was elected secretary. The church here has 27 members, most of whom are youthful. Bren. Stewart and Robinson, who lead the morning meetings on the Lord's day, have proved themselves untiring workers. We receive monthly week-night visits from Bro. Browne, evangelist, of Lismore, under whose preaching we are hopeful of additions to our number. On the proposition of Sister M. Robinson and Sister Stewart, our first cottage prayer

meeting was held last week at Bro. Stewart's house, and this week at Bro. Kirkland's, with a very fair attendance.

Nov. 27th.

L. P.

CANLEY VALE.—The lecture on the "Queen City of the North" was delivered here on Saturday night, before an appreciative audience that filled the hall. To add additional interest and variety to the evening, Bro. and Sister Lavender brought their powerful gramophone, and a very enjoyable time was spent.

Dec. 6.

THEO. B. FISCHER.

ROOKWOOD—Splendid meetings at the anniversary services yesterday. Since last report Miss Lucy White and Miss E. Hole have been immersed on confession of their faith. Last night Miss Nellie Murray, from Canley Vale, was immersed here. To God be the glory.

Dec. 6.

THEO. B. FISCHER.

Here and There.

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

—O—

**New South Wales wants £100,
Victoria £350, Sth. Australia
and West Australia
all the churches can give.**

One confession at B. unswick, Sunday night.

One confession at South Yarra on Sunday evening.

One confession and baptism at Prahran last Thursday night.

We have received 20/- from "E.W." for the W. W. Davey fund.

One confession at Cheltenham last Sunday night before a large audience.

If you have not yet ordered a supply of almanacs, you had better do so now.

In the First Principle Leaflets this year there will only be the one grade—the senior.

Mrs. Knapp (*nee* Miss Mary Dickens), of Nelson, N. Z., is now on a visit to her mother in Melbourne.

There was a very fine meeting at Newmarket on Sunday night, and at the close one confessed Christ.

The Melbourne sisters are cordially invited to a prayer meeting at North Fitzroy on Tuesday, 15th, at 8 p.m.

Jas. Vinicombe, the new secretary of the church at Fremantle, W.A., reports two confessions there on November 29th.

Three confessions at Northcote on November 29th, and one on December 6th, W. Jarvis preaching. Splendid meetings.

There will be no meeting of General Dorcas this month on the 17th, but the meeting will be resumed on January 21st, 1904.

John Thompson writes from Pentecost that he expected sixty natives to be baptised. He thought of leaving for home shortly.

We hear a number talking of attending the Conference in Sydney on January 26th. We can promise them a royal time if they go.

All who are interested in our young men should attend the annual demonstration of the College of the Bible next Tuesday night. See Coming Events

The ninth annual Speech Night of the Prahran College, conducted by the Misses Laing, will be held in the New Town Hall, Prahran, on Thursday evening, December 17th.

F. W. Johnson, of Lygon-st. church (son of Bro. Johnson of Corowa), has received his first year

Diploma of Education at Melbourne University, also Honors in Theory and Practice of Education and Natural Science.

The Baccalaureate Sermon in connection with the College of the Bible will be delivered in the Lygon-street chap l, on Sunday evening, Dec. 20th, at 7 p.m. Students and their friends specially invited.

T. J. Gore says:—"I like the idea of the page about Endeavor in the CHRISTIAN. I congratulate Bro. Main on his page. I would like our Endeavor to fall in with your Endeavorers and have the same programme for 1904."

E. L. Batchelor, who is standing for the Boothby Division of South Australia in the Federal Parliament, is a member of the church in Grote-st. We have a large number of brethren in that electorate, and they can help a lot by casting their vote for Bro. Batchelor.

The issue of next week will be a Home Mission number, with special cover. By direction of the Victorian Home Mission Committee a number of extra copies will be sent out to our Victorian agents. Will they please see that they are properly divided amongst non-subscribers.

In the State of Indiana disciples of Christ have 940 churches, 702 preachers, 124,000 church members, and 808 Sunday Schools, with 120,000 teachers and scholars. In Illinois there are 805 churches, with 84,668 members. In Missouri the disciples are the strongest religious body in the State, numbering 175,000 church members.

We are glad to know that our Christian Endeavor page is giving such general satisfaction amongst the younger portion of our readers, and in many cases our older readers are pleased. It will grow in usefulness as time goes on. If all our Australasian societies will adopt the topics published on the Endeavor page this week it will be much more useful.

**Victoria, South Australia,
New South Wales and
West Australia
Home Mission Collections,
January 3, 1904.**

We are doing what we can for Endeavor work and workers, and we trust that when the societies can put any printing in our way they will not forget us. We can send 50 nicely printed copies of your syllabus to any address for 10/-. Send good plain copy, and you can have work at once. We can send 50 copies of the first half-year's topics, as printed on the Endeavor page, for 2/6.

I.O.U.—On behalf of the Evangelistic Committee of South Australia, I beg to thank those who have already paid, and others who are regularly paying, the promises made by them at the Conference meetings of 1903. I have besides these a number of promises made by others which are waiting redemption, and which I shall be glad to receive as soon as convenient. —WILLIAM CHARLICK, Treasurer.

The church at Ascot Vale are expecting Percy Pittman to commence work with them on December 20th. Not only the church at Ascot Vale, but the Melbourne brethren generally, are looking forward to a great work being done in that neighborhood. Ascot Vale is a fine district, with an enthusiastic, intelligent church, good school, and nice neat building well located. We are expecting great things.

This week we publish the last of Bro. Grinstead's replies to his critics, with a few editorial observations which will be found in the Leader. After the New Year some space will be allowed for brief replies,

then Bro. Grinstead will be allowed a brief summing-up, and the discussion will close. In fairness to Bro. Grinstead we have allowed him great liberty of space, but we now give notice that brethren must be brief.

The church which for some 17 years has been meeting in the Tabernacle, Johnston-street, Fitzroy, has purchased a chapel from the Methodist Church at the corner of Gore and Greeve-sts., Fitzroy, and are to take possession in a few weeks' time. On Dec. 17 they propose to hold a grand farewell tea meeting in the old Tabernacle, and all the brethren and sisters who can possibly attend are invited to be present.

We have now our cheap edition of **ON THE ROCK** ready for sending out. The price is 3d., by post 4d. Anyone buying 50 copies and over we will send them for 3d. post or carriage paid. Anyone taking 500 copies we will place them on board steamer carriage paid to nearest seaport for 2d. each. Just imagine a book of 194 pages for 2d. It is neatly gotten-up, so that you need not be ashamed to give a copy to the Governor-General.

A Home Mission rally (under the auspices of the Sisters' Executive) was held last Monday evening in the Swanston-st. chapel, the Conference President, A. Millis, presiding. Stirring addresses were given by Sister J. Pittman, J. Pittman, J. Baker and J. Johnston. The Lygon-st. Quartette Party and a choir under the leadership of R. Lyall also assisted. The result will no doubt prove a great help to the approaching annual collections.

The Adelaide preachers and their wives held a picnic last Friday, Dec. 4th, in honor of Bro. and Sister Percy Pittman. A drag conveyed the party, numbering about 24, females included, to Norton's Summit, in the hills, where a very enjoyable time was spent. After dinner Percy Pittman was tried by a judge and jury for contemplating running away from the State. Bro. Burford, who with his wife was amongst the party, acted as judge. Bro. Gore was senior counsel for the prosecution, and F. Pittman junior counsel. Bro. Grinstead and Bro. Rankine defended the prisoner. Bro. Colbourne was foreman of the jury, and Bro. Horsell was sheriff of the court, whilst Bro. Finlayson was called as chief witness. After some argument and a vigorous cross-examination by the counsel, the judge summed up and reserved decision.

"I have just written a notice of your 'Jubilee Pictorial History' for next week's *Christian Evangelist*. I have been deeply interested in looking through the book, and I wish to personally congratulate you on the excellent style in which you have accomplished the work. It must have been no small task, but I am sure you have rendered a distinct service to the cause of Christ in Australasia. I have long cherished the hope of visiting our brethren in Australia, and if I succeed in a year or two in carrying out my plans of a trip around the work, taking in our mission stations, I may also visit some of our churches in Australia, but that is in the future and in the hands of God. Allow me to extend my sincere regards and brotherly love together with my best wishes and prayers for the success of your labors. —J. H. GARRISON."

Mr. Moran, who carries on the business of a Cardinal in Sydney, has just returned from a visit to the Pope at Rome. As is usual with our secular papers, they report his every word. We can always be sure of a good report of a dog-fight, prize-fight, horse-race, or the least movement in the Roman Catholic Church. Mr. Moran had not landed in Adelaide when the reporters rushed him, and we had columns of the interview. Amongst other things

reported in the Adelaide Register we have the following:—"The Pontiff spoke of Australia and of the British race, and said that he was much consoled by the accounts coming from the Commonwealth, which showed that the Catholic religion was making great progress in that country, where the Government gave full liberty to the church. That, His Holiness remarked, seemed to be a characteristic of the English speaking world. Wherever British influence extended it promoted liberty of religion." We notice, not only in the present, but in the light of history, that the Roman Catholic church is mighty fond of liberty as long as she has it all herself, but she is absolutely unwilling that the other fellow should have any. Wherever the English rule there is liberty, but it is in spite of Roman Catholicism; wherever the Roman Church holds power there is darkness and degeneration. There is not a country in the world where the Pope has his way in which a respectable English Christian can live in peace. It would be a good thing for the world if all those pleading for religious liberty would think a little along these lines.

son, Edward Hart, who lives in Perth, W.A., arrived a few days before he died. Our sympathy, in this affliction, is with Sister Hart in the loss of a kind and loving husband, and with Edward Hart and Sisters Mrs. P. Anderson and Mrs. F. Henderson in the loss of an affectionate and good father. How blessed is the hope of the Christian! To be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord. In the midst of sympathising friends we laid the body of our brother to rest in the West Terrace Cemetery. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works do follow with them." T.J.G.

WHELAN.—Bro. and Sister F. Whelan, of the church at Fremantle, W.A., have been called upon to part with their only child, Lillian, aged nine months. We are glad that they can look up and amid their tears say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." T.H.

Nov. 24.

T.H.

Coming Events.

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

DECEMBER 15.—FAREWELL to H. MAHON, in Temperance Hall, Russell-st., Dec. 15th, at 8 p.m. Chairman, J. Pittman. Speakers: Senator Barrett, J. Hunt, Wm. Wilson and F. W. Greenwood. Selections by Lygon-street Quartette Party and others. Free. Collection.

DECEMBER 15.—COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE. The Annual Demonstration and Presentation of First Diploma will take place at Lygon-st. Chapel, Carlton, on Tuesday, December 15th, at 8 p.m. Representative Student speakers.

DECEMBER 17.—**JOHNSTON STREET.**—A Tea and Public Meeting will be held on Thursday, December 17th, at the Fitzroy Tabernacle, Johnston-street, to terminate the work in the above place, and to celebrate the purchase of New Buildings in Gore Street, Fitzroy. Tea on tables at 6.45 p.m. Public meeting at 8 p.m., Dr. J. Cook in the chair. Addresses by Bren. Johnston, Harward and Smith. Tickets for Tea, 1/-; Children, 9d.; to be obtained at the doors. Musical Items will be rendered by the choir.

JANUARY 3, 1904.—Home Mission Sunday. Annual Collection.

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Home Mission Sunday.

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Obituary.

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

HART.—On November 24th, T. J. Hart, of Unley, fell asleep in Christ. He was 77 years of age, and had been in S.A. about 48 years. He united with the church in Park-st. in February, 1895. He was a good man. In disposition he was quiet and trustful, and when his last illness came he was fully trusting in the Lord. He suffered a good deal, but bore his pain with much Christian fortitude and patience. His

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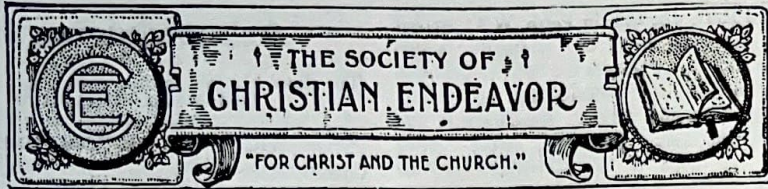
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Looking Backward.

TOPIC FOR DEC. 28.

One year ago—what loves, what schemes
Far into life!
What joyous hopes, what high resolves,
What generous strife!

The silent picture on the wall,
The burial stone,—
Of all that beauty, life and joy,
Remain alone.

One year—one year—one little year,
And so much gone!
And yet the even flow of life
Moves calmly on.

This is stock-taking season. It is a healthy exercise to quietly review the weeks that have gone, with all their sorrows and joys, their failures and successes alike, in order to the better use of the new year. Let it be a solemn time of retrospection and introspection.

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS.

What have you to be thankful for?

1. *Material blessings.*—Bring now your tribute of thanksgiving to the Giver of every good gift and perfect boon. For the rich gifts to our land let every Christian give thanks—the splendid rains bringing seed to the sower and bread to the eater. Remember that to whomsoever much is given of him will much be required.

2. *Church blessings.*—See how God has blessed in our own land the efforts put forth for the spread of the gospel. Special missions in different States have resulted in great gatherings. Thank God for one soul won for Christ.

3. *Individual spiritual blessings.*—How many have you had? In counting, do not forget that God was willing to grant many more and greater ones; but you were either not fit to receive, or did not take the trouble to ask.

4. *Thank God for his mercy.*—He has spared us for happy service; the neglect of the past has not been punished in the withdrawal of opportunity; he allows us to atone by present activity. Think, again, of his mercy in granting yet more time to the unconverted, when he might have cut them off in their sin.

MY SUCCESSES.

How many have you tried to influence for good and right? Have you spoken to one person about his soul and his Saviour? Count success not altogether by achievement, by what we term "visible results," but by the effort. Are you conscious of a deeper desire for communion with and service for God than you had a year ago? If so, the year has not been lost. What progress have you made in the knowledge of the Word? If success, then you know more now than then. Do not be afraid to have a season of heart-searching; the exercise is good and healthy.

MY FAILURES.

Suppose you had the year to live over, what would you wish altered? Note the things, and profit in the coming year. The only regret I can

imagine getting into heaven will be that we did not do more for the Master. Recollect the resolves you made at the dawn of 1903 and compare them with the achievement. You may have this consolation, only One Person could say "I have glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do" (John 17: 4). The test of your success and failure is this: How far have you followed the example of him who went about doing good?

FORGET THE THINGS BEHIND.

Take Paul's words (Phil. 3: 13-14) as a warning against trading on past attainment, or despondency over past failure. Catch inspiration from the success which has attended your previous effort, take warning and shun the things which have led to failure, and go on in the new year to accomplish great things for God. Remember: "I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness I can show, to any fellow-creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer, or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

"Every day is a fresh beginning,

Every morn is the world made new.
You who are weary of sorrow and sinning,
Here is a beautiful hope for you.
All the past things are past and over,
The tasks are done and the tears are shed;
Yesterday's errors but yesterday cover;
Yesterday's wounds, which smarted and bled,
Are healed with the healing that God has shed.
Let them go, for we cannot relieve them,
Cannot undo them, and cannot atone,
God in his mercy receive and forgive them.
Only the new days are own own;
To-day is ours, and to-day alone."

What the Old Year Says to the New.

"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way; walk ye in it."—Isa. 30: 21.

The new year is vocal with the voices of the year gone by. The paths of the future are plainer by the light that shines from the past. Providence, as it unfolds, points out the way of our duty.

I. Mistakes of the past warn us against their repetition.

II. Successes of the past call to us to follow them up, and secure their good.

III. Changes of the past have opened to us new opportunities.

IV. God's goodness in the past calls not only for our intelligent gratitude, but for practical acknowledgment in larger thought and plans which depend on his goodness yet to come.

V. The central lesson of the past is that God is in our life; and that he alone can guide us away from mistakes, through successes and changes, towards real fruition.—*Selected.*

"What is Your Life?"

JAS. 4: 14.

Some Bible Answers.—A shadow (Psa. 102: 11); a handbreadth (Psa. 39: 5); a weaver's shuttle (Job. 7: 6); a tale that is told (Psa. 90: 9); a pilgrimage (Gen. 47: 9); a swift post (Job. 9: 25); a

shepherd's tent removed (Isa. 38: 12); a dream (Job. 20: 8); a swift ship (Job. 9: 26); a vapor (Jas. 4: 14); a sleep (Psa. 90: 5); a flower (Psa. 103: 15); wind (Job 7: 7); nothing (Psa. 39: 5); grass (Psa. 102: 11); water spilt on the ground (2 Sam. 14: 14).

These and other metaphors give the answer. Classify them under appropriate headings:—

1. Life is a *little* thing—as "shadow," "nothing," etc.
2. Life is a *short* thing—as "handbreadth."
3. Life is *transitory*—as "pilgrimage," "dream."
4. Life is *irrevocable*—as "water spilt."
5. Life is an *uncertain* thing—as "cut off from the loom."

Syllabus: January—June, 1904.

JANUARY.

4. Consecration. The growth I need for 1904. Eph. 4: 11-16.
11. Tests of repentance. Luke 3: 8-14; Psa. 51: 1-17.
18. Overcoming temptations. 1 Cor. 10: 12, 13; Heb. 4: 14-16.
25. What can I do for my country? Matt. 4: 23-25; 23: 37.

FEBRUARY.

1. Cons. Decision. John. 3: 14-21.
8. If Christ should come to our town. John 4: 28-30, 39-42.
15. What will real friendship do? 1 Sam. 20: 1-23.
22. Using the Lord's day. Mark 1: 21-34.
29. Heroism and other lessons from China. Acts 14: 19-23.

MARCH.

7. Cons. How Christ stills the storms of life. Psa. 107: 23-31.
14. Appetites that unmake men. Dan. 5: 1-5, 25-28.
21. Little things that Christ makes great. 1 Cor. 1: 25-29.
28. Every Christian a missionary. Luke 24: 44-49.

APRIL.

4. Conference Rally. Cons. Our victories through Christ. 1 Cor. 15: 50-58.
11. Two Standards. Matt. 5: 43-48; 1 Jn. 2: 15-17.
18. How Christ transforms lives. Rom. 12: 1, 2; Phil. 3: 20, 21.
25. What Christ can do for Darkest Africa. Isa. 45: 11-19.

MAY.

2. Cons. Answered prayers. Acts 4: 23-31.
9. Crowns trodden under foot. Isa. 28: 1-7; Rev. 3: 11. Temperance.
16. Brotherly care. Gen. 43: 29-31, 34; 45: 14-22. Suggested united meeting with Juniors.
23. False and true ambition. Matt. 20: 20-28.
30. What C.E. is doing in mission lands. Lk. 1: 49-55.

JUNE.

6. Cons. Unchristian silence. Matt. 12: 30; Lk. 17: 12-19.
13. What I must do to become a disciple of Christ. Matt. 16: 24-26; Jno. 13: 33-35.
20. Rising above discouragement. 2 Cor. 4: 7-18.
27. Signs that India is becoming Christ's. Ps. 22: 22-31.

(These topics will be outlined weekly on this page. All societies are invited to adopt them.)

Notes and News.

It is expected that F. E. Clark will be in Victoria on the following dates: Feb. 24 to 26; Mar. 5 to 10.

Croydon is the newest arrival. About 19 have enrolled, with Miss Berry as secretary. They wish to be added to the Union.

Geelong society wants to be affiliated. Bro. Brownbill (sec.) writes that they have 16 actives on the roll, meeting on alternate Thursdays. We strongly recommend meeting weekly, if it is possible.

OUR BIBLE DATING PLAN.

Date.	O.T.	N.T.
December 22 ...	Micah 6,7	... Revelation 13
" 23 ...	Nahum 1,2,3	" 14
" 24 ...	Habakkuk 1,2,3	" 15
" 25 ...	Zephaniah 1,2,3	" 16
" 26 ...	Haggai 1,2	" 17
" 27 ...	Zechariah 1,2,3,4	" 18
" 28 ...	" 5,6,7,8	"

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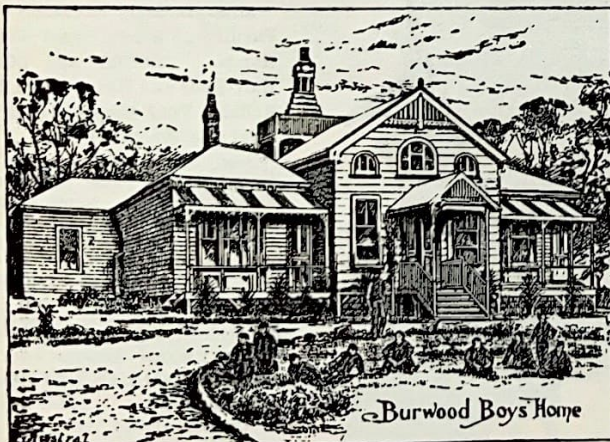
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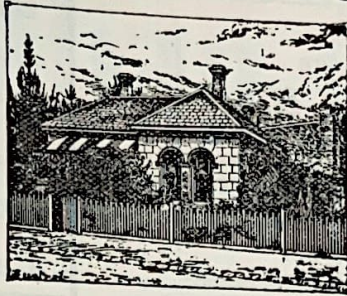
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