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ORGANISATION OF EFFORT.

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[Essay read at the Jubilee Conference of Churches of Christ, Victoria, April 11, 1903.]

Permit me to preface my present deliverance with a word of grateful acknowledgment of the honor which your Executive Committee has seen fit to confer upon me by its invitation, through which I have the honor and privilege of addressing you upon the present occasion, and thereby of directing the minds of the assembled brotherhood towards discussion of a topic which, I trust, will prove to be at once profitable and interesting.

The subject chosen for our present consideration is one peculiarly appropriate to the occasion—"The Organisation of Effort."

This is a season of great rejoicing, wherein we celebrate the Jubilee of the first beginnings of the cause of the restoration of the faith and practice of primitive and apostolic Christianity in this State of Victoria. To-day we, as a community, take a retrospect of all the way the Lord our God hath led us, as a people, these fifty years in the goodly heritage wherein, in his providence and mercy, he hath given us to dwell. To-day we recall to memory the earnest, faithful and untiring efforts of that noble little band of pioneers of the days gone by, into the fruits of whose labors we have entered, upon whose foundation courses we have been privileged to build. Gratefully and joyously we recall the efforts of the past, and prayerfully, resolutely and hopefully we have been devising greater and better things for the effort of the future. This is indeed the anniversary of a beginning of effort.

But this is not less a notable anniversary of organisation. To-day the churches of Christ in Victoria celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of their meeting in Conference for evangelistic work. May not this co-operation be regarded as the symbol of the organisation of that effort? Be this as it may, it is the conjunction of these two notable anniversaries that suggested the title of the present paper.

It forms no part of the obligation devolving upon the essayist to enter upon the historical review of the rise and progress of primitive Christianity in this community; nor has he disposition to attempt the task. There are others better qualified than he to speak with certainty and authority upon this subject, and to them the task is cheerfully resigned.

But as to the organisation of that effort during the last thirty years of the half-century just closed, as represented by this co-operation of the churches for missionary enterprise, it is within the power of the essayist to speak with full confidence, begotten of personal knowledge. There rises up before his mind at this time a vivid recollection of a meeting held in the old chapel in Chapel-st., Windsor, on April 2nd, 1872. At that meeting amongst other things it was resolved—

"To recommend to the churches the desirability of holding an annual meeting of delegates of the churches in Victoria to devise means for the collecting of statistics, as to numbers, additions, etc. . . . and for the propagation of the gospel throughout the Colony."

Of those who took part in that epoch-making meeting but few remain to-day to join with you in rejoicing over the fruition of their labors, the realisation of their anticipations and hopes, the abundant answer to their prayer for the peace and prosperity of Zion.

It is with grateful recognition of the divine favor that it is also recalled how that, in the April of the year following, in response to the invitation issued by the essayist of to-day (as secretary and convener appointed at the preliminary meeting) the first of the present series of Conferences assembled in the chapel in Lygon-street, Carlton. The chair was occupied by Bro. Thomas Bates, the evangelist of the church at Collingwood, and on that day, the 14th of April, 1873, the first step in the direction of formal organisation was taken. The resolution of incorporation was moved by Bro. H. S. Earl, evangelist of the church at Lygon-street, and was as follows:—

"That it is desirable that the churches here represented—viz., Prahran, Beaumaris, Berwick, Sandhurst, Lygon-st., Collingwood, Hotham, Brighton, Buninyong, Nunawading, Ballarat, Richmond, Cardigan, Creswick, Maryborough, Emerald Hill, Broadmeadows, Mount Clear and Durham—co-operate in the work of propagating the gospel in this colony, together with such other churches (with whom the above can co-operate) who may hereafter desire to participate in the scheme."

Thus began the co-operation—the organisation—and from that time to the present hour annual meetings of the churches have been held for the purposes set out in the constitution, in uninterrupted series, as recurring Easter-tide came round. The reorganisation of the movement and amendment of the constitution in the year 1881 only widened the scope, and to an extent liberalised and increased the efficiency of the organisation in directions which had already been indicated as leading to fields of wider enterprise, and opportunities for nobler and more notable achievements. This meeting can, therefore, claim to-day a heritage of honorable history extending in unbroken continuity over a period of 30 years. The essayist esteems it a privilege and a pleasure on this, the 30th anniversary of its birthday, of wishing it very many happy and prosperous returns of the day.

As one of those who were privileged to stand by the cradle of the movement in the earlier days of opposition, discouragement, difficulty and doubt, the essayist has every reason to rejoice with his brethren to-day over that which had been accomplished in the succeeding years—to recognise how much has been achieved in the providence and of the grace of God through the energy, wisdom, self-denial and devotion of those upon whose shoulders the burdens of the later years of management have devolved.

Looking over these assemblies, an unprejudiced observer cannot but be impressed with the magnitude of the results which have been achieved—results far beyond the modest

expectations of the pioneers of the movement in "the early seventies." Extending our survey across the wide domain of our State, noting the multitude of the churches, great and small, scattered broadcast throughout the land, noting the harmony and peace prevailing, catching something of the enthusiasm that pervades this gathering, we discern in the outlook for the future

"Portents, pregnant with greater good,"

inspiring to our courage and stimulant of true hopefulness.

And under circumstances such as these are we not as one when we lift our hearts above in adoration to that source from whence all our prosperity has been vouchsafed, and in reverent rejoicing raise our Ebenezer—for, truly, hitherto the Lord our God hath helped us.

But whilst we recognise how much of blessing is attending the organisation of our effort as represented by this Conference, and anticipate how much greater are the possibilities of the future which are unfolding to our view, we do not and ought not to regard the measure of organisation already adopted as the ultimate possible step in that direction. The present occasion seems a fitting opportunity to gravely consider wherein and to what extent we may complete and extend our system so as to perfect it in its application and enlarge it in its operation. The circumstances of our present celebration and the reasonable considerations of practical utility must restrict our present survey of the organisation of effort to effort as directed towards the upbuilding, consolidation and extension of our adorable Master's kingdom on earth. Of effort in this restricted sense this paper will speak.

In dealing with the phase of the subject adopted for consideration, it will be advantageous to further restrict our field of inquiry to human effort, in this sphere of religious activity. We are but humble and imperfect co-workers with God in this great co-operation, but still we are co-workers, and it is only upon our side of the co-operation that there is need for anxiety, and prudent forethought as to ways and means. Upon our side there is need for organisation to insure perfect agreement in purpose and harmony in action: on the divine side there is no similar need, for there is the expression of a single, perfect and almighty will. For this reason, then, let our attention be focused on the human side of the question entirely.

But in thus doing there is need to guard against possibility of misapprehension or misconception. There are those who, from sensitiveness for the divine honor, may be disposed to think that by placing the human so immediately in the foreground we are ignoring or subordinating the divine in effort. As a protective against such suspicion let it be said at the outset, once for all, that it is distinctly recognised and expressly and unequivocally avowed that all sufficiency to will and to do is of God, to whom, rightly, be all the glory and the praise; that whilst through Christ, who is our sufficiency, we can do all things, without him we can do nothing; that in the work itself a Paul may plant and an Apollos water, but it is God, alone, that can cause to grow; that we are

but humble instruments in his hands, vessels fitted for his use, co-workers together with him—workers who, at the best, will have need to confess that after they have done all they are but unprofitable servants. Having made this explicit avowal at the threshold of our inquiry, it will surely be unnecessary at every subsequent stage to repeat these acknowledgments in order to guard against the suggestion that we are leaning upon the arm of flesh. Wherever human effort, individual or collective, is spoken of there also is recognised in connection therewith all of the divine wisdom, power and goodness which is essential to originate, implement and bless that exercise of energy.

Effort—energy manifested in the direction of acquisition, achievement, or attainment—is indispensable to the existence and development of the individual as of the community. The living organism that ceases to put forth effort stagnates, deteriorates, and dies. The like condition prevails in every domain of existence or experience—in the physical, mental, social, and spiritual. Where energy has opportunity for exercise, neglect of that opportunity entails, as a natural penalty, paralysis and death. If from no higher motive than that of self-preservation, we must continue to put forth effort—or perish.

That effort should be organised. In the nature of things the manifestation of effort must precede the organisation thereof. Individual effort does not admit of organisation. To be effective, in the fullest measure, such effort must be systematised, but it is only when it comes in contact with other and similar effort that organisation becomes possible. So it comes that there is first the individual effort, self-centred and self-directed, then, in natural progression, the consolidation of the individual efforts through the more or less complex relationships of the community, and thence onward in further progression to the fullest and most absolute extent conceivable.

It is not required that it should be established by systematic argument that organisation is essential to the right and economical expenditure of power. The experience of this present organisation of ours bears eloquent testimony upon the question. That testimony is supported by the concurrent voice of universal experience. The world abounds with convincing object-lessons as to the advantage of efficient organisation in carrying onward to success the many enterprises and affairs of social life. All these examples bear their testimony to the one great truth that only where there is perfect organisation can the best possible results be obtained from the expenditure of energy put forth. Effort diffused is power wasted: effort in conflict is power annihilated.

Organisation, to be efficient, in the highest potency, must be based upon sound but simple principles, and be sufficiently far-reaching and all-embracing to include everything of effort necessary to be directed and controlled thereby. A failure in the first of these conditions is a source of confusion in the individual translation of the abstract theory into actual practice: a defect in the second of a "leakage" and consequent loss of power.

In the professing religious world two systems of organisation stand prominently in the foreground as examples of efficiency to meet the ends they are purposed to serve—the Roman Catholic Church and the Salvation Army. Whilst there is apparently little in common between these two bodies in the matter of doctrine or practice, the principles of their organisation are identical, and it is to the recognition of these that they owe their power and success. These institutions viewed as existing facts are magnificent examples of what may be achieved by efficient, far-reaching organisation. But whilst frankly admitting this, it is well to remember that our approbation in no way approves the practices adopted, nor endorses the doctrine held. Whatever else may be said of these institutions let it be admitted that they are notable examples of efficient organisation.

In both the cases cited the system of organisation has stood the test of experience, and the temporal evidences of power and achievement are at once too patent and numerous to be gainsaid, and it is a reasonable and profitable inquiry to make—Wherein lies the germ of that efficiency?

Passing by all inconsequential details, a critical analysis to the two systems serves to reveal the fact that underlying all their differences and contradictions they depend primarily upon three principles of organisation for their success—

1. Singleness of object—the organisation above, before, and even to the exclusion of all else beside.
2. Directness of aim and tenacity of purpose—a certain well considered, comprehensive plan of operation common to all the units of the organisation—resulting in a constant, unremitting progression towards a definite and common object.
3. A loyal, unconditional, and unswerving fidelity and discipline upon the part of the adherents of these movements.

The fact is not disregarded that other organisations than those named are founded upon like principles, but in none other have these principles been so fully recognised and so successfully brought into operation. For this reason, and for none other, our choice of examples has been made.

If the recognition of the three ideas just mentioned is the germ of the efficiency of the systems whose temporal success we cannot but admire, the question naturally arises as to how far these three ideas may legitimately and with advantage be given practical recognition in our present scheme of extended organisation. Effort upon our part for the extension, consolidation and upbuilding of the Master's kingdom is demanded by every consideration that gratitude and love can impose upon our rational natures. The directions in which that effort is to be expended, for the good of humanity and to the glory of God, has been abundantly indicated in the Scriptures by the unerring wisdom of the Infinite Will. Only in the matter of organisation for the prosecution of our effort have we margin for the exercise of our discretion—and herein we have need for wisdom.

The question raised in the preceding para-

graph may be conveniently considered under two distinct heads, viz.—

1. Is the adoption of these principles in our organisation legitimate? and
2. Will an adoption of these be to the advantage of the prosecution of the work which the churches in this State have in hand?

The first inquiry involves the fundamental question, Is it right? To this challenge the reply must be distinct and unequivocal. Let us state the question. Is it right in the organisation of our effort that there should be before us a single object—the extension, consolidation and upbuilding of Christ's church on earth—above, before and to the exclusion of all else besides? Our answer to this question will be conditioned by our conception of what is involved in this singleness of object. So long as we remember that we are speaking of an organisation of effort we shall not suppose that by thus exclusively centring our minds upon the church and her interests we are giving her supreme place in our affections to the exclusion of God and his Christ. On the contrary, we shall the more clearly recognise that it is our faith in, devotion to, and love for the great Author of our salvation and adorable Head of the church that moves us to the all absorbing interest in the welfare of that church for which he gave himself. And surely if he so loved the church that he gave himself for her there can be no reasonable question as to the righteousness of our conduct in sanctifying our supreme energies to her advancement and glory. In such a view of the subject the church will be the all and be all, in the matter of the expenditure of effort. There will be no room for external subsidiary organisations however excellently well intentioned or efficiently controlled. These will be relegated to their proper place so far as the church is concerned—that of excrescences or parasite growths. The organisation—the church—will occupy its proper place, as pillar and support of the truth, above, before and even to the exclusion of all else besides. It is neither necessary nor expedient to particularise just here where a broad generalisation is at once possible and proper. Comprehensively understood the adoption of the principle means that everything of effort—time, means and influence—brought into our organisation shall be centred upon the extension, consolidation and upbuilding of the church. The question is, Is it right that this should be so? And the answer of every loyal heart is, Aye.

Nor will there be less of unanimity in our agreement as to the lawfulness of adopting the second principle into our organisation. Directness of aim and tenacity of purpose are essentials to success in every organised movement, and a comprehensive plan of operation common to all the units of the organisation is the perfection of system. There is no room for discussion as to the fixed lines along which the constant and unremitting progression must be made, nor yet as to the fixed object towards which all progress should aim. The lines are those of the divine ordination as given in the commission of our supreme Master, and as taught by the words of his holy apostles; and the object—the winning

of the world to Christ, in sincerity and truth. Only let the world be brought to seek the Christ and his righteousness, and all other things will indeed be added to it. The social problems of to-day, the sins of the communities, the sorrows of humanity, will fade away before the rays of the rising Sun of Righteousness, as the mists from the mountains at dawn of day.

As to the lawfulness of adopting the third of the principles under consideration there can be no possible doubt—a loyal, unconditional and unswerving fidelity and discipline cannot be otherwise than right where the standard of obligation is of divine appointment. Nor can it be justly urged that such a requirement of fidelity and discipline derogates from the freedom of exercise of individual conscience and the independence of conduct consequent thereon. In so far as the Scriptures speak authoritatively, there is no room for freedom in the common acceptance of the word, for there the only course of right is implicit obedience. It is true that where there is no such explicit direction the personal conception of duty must prevail, but even here fidelity to a common cause and discipline to a common organisation will not fail to discern means whereby conflicts in judgment and diversities in practice may be avoided or reconciled, by a spirit of mutual forbearance and the cultivation of an all-absorbing interest in the general good.

From what has thus far been advanced it is inferred that there are no good and valid reasons why all three principles of organisation, which have proved so effective in other organisations, should not be adopted by ourselves, with the clearest conscience, in the freest spirit, and to the fullest measure of their letter and intent.

It remains to be considered as to how far these principles can be adopted with advantage. Admitting that the adoption is right, is it expedient to adopt them, and in adopting them where the advantage?

It is reasonable to infer that principles which applied under given circumstances result in advantage to the organisation will if the circumstances be more favorable produce still more advantageous results. What has been accomplished for others are matters patent to all who approach the subject with inquiring minds; then, at least, in our case the results should be not less advantageous. But, if it be claimed that we have a worthier, nobler, more distinctly divine object than any other religious organisation upon this fair world of ours; a plea better, by so much as the human is superceded by the divine, than any other addressed to the need of the age; and our motives to fidelity and discipline are the highest, noblest, and most exacting that can appeal to the human heart and reason, where can there be reason for doubt as a consequence? Indeed, it seems as though we were shut up to the conclusion that we both can and ought to adopt the principles in the highest, truest, and most comprehensive conception of the ideas.

If it be allowed that there is no reasonable ground for challenging the adoption of any of the principles we have had under our consideration, and that there is no doubt

that their adoption will prove to the advantage of our organisation, as in the case of others, then there remains only the question to be considered, How can we best adopt these principles in our scheme of organisation?

To this question the response rises in prompt reply, By doing so upon the divine apostolic plan by beginning with the individual. Let each disciple of the Master here present ask himself or herself, Am I prepared to adopt these principles, and to abide by the consequences? Men and women are saved by the gospel, one by one, and in the same manner must they sanctify themselves to the Master's service. Just in proportion, and no further, as men and women adopt these far-reaching principles as a basis upon which to systematise their own efforts, so will they be prepared to organise with others upon like principles.

If there be but this whole-hearted devotion upon the part of the individuals, then the adoption of the like principles in the congregation, the true unit or organised effort, will follow as a natural and inevitable consequence. In the congregation itself each individual will feel that the church above, and to the exclusion of all else besides, has supreme claim upon all of his or her personality, powers and possessions. It will be recognised that before all else, above all else, to the exclusion of all else he or she is a Christian, and a member of this congregation in particular. When this is recognised, then, as a consequence identification with external subsidiary organisations will cease. The work these organisations essayed to do will be more efficiently achieved on the lines marked out by Infinite Wisdom; and as the excrescent organisations fall away from mere inanity the church will stand out before a startled world more clearly defined in her native beauty and inherent power, "the pillar and support of the truth."

Let no faint heart fear that in this supreme concentration of effort means and agencies for good will be lost or weakened. There is no good work, religious, social, political, educational—in a word conceivable—which the church cannot and ought not to undertake. There is no good service to man, spirit, soul or body, that the disciple of the Master ought not to undertake as he has opportunity, and to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. But, brethren, "whether ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do," do it in the name of Christ, and to the glory of his church. If only this be the condition of our individual congregations scattered throughout the world, then the saving light will shine out more clearly from the hill tops, and "men seeing our good works will glorify our Father who is in heaven."

What is to be desired in the congregation is to be sought in the organisation of the several congregations in the various districts of the State. There are many local enterprises too large and far-reaching in extent and too exacting in their demands upon means and energies to be undertaken by the individual congregations. These enterprises, to be essayed with any reasonable prospect of success, demand co-operation. Here, again, the singleness of object will prove a

bond of union, and a certain preventive of friction and consequent loss of power. Rightly apprehended, the principle will prove a true and all-sufficient protective against any selfish spirit of localism, which is at all times inimical to true and lasting progress. It will place the general good above mere local advantage—the welfare of the cause above the interests of the congregation.

In a larger measure, and to a fuller degree, in the organisation of the local centres, into the general organisation of the churches in the State, as represented by this Conference, or some similar co-operation, for local evangelisation or over-sea effort, the same singleness of aim will be the means of ensuring true community of interest and of counteracting any tendency to diffusion of effort with attendant waste of power in carrying forward to successful issues those enterprises which in their nature are beyond the powers of the local centres.

But is the limit of reasonable organisation reached in a meeting such as we hold to-day? May we not aspire to so widen our borders as to embrace an organisation of all the churches in all the States of our Commonwealth, aye, and of our "Sister of the Isles," New Zealand, too, for works more ambitious than can wisely be essayed by any single State?

Beyond all this, is it visionary to hope that, in years to come, there will be one general confederation of all the churches of "common faith" the wide world over—of those that invoke the name of the one dear Lord, their Lord as ours; an organisation, with one single object, wherein to centre all its powers, the church, above, before and to the exclusion of all besides, the sign of its perfect unity, and the well-spring of its irresistible power?

If there be the singleness of object pleaded for, there will be to a degree directness in the aim and tenacity of purpose in the efforts put forth. The "certain, well-considered, comprehensive plan of operation, common to all the units of the organisation," will be those set out by the divine appointment, which are alike obligatory upon all. There are, happily, but few dangers to be apprehended from actual perversions of the divine plan, but more from innovations, well-intentioned in their origin, perplexing in their development, and disastrous to the peace and unity of the body in their ultimate consequences. But so long as the watchword of our organisations remain, as in the past, "The divine plan, the whole plan, and, God helping us, nothing but the divine plan," all will continue well.

The details of our operations, along the lines of divine appointment, in so far as they depend upon the exercise of our judgments to meet the local circumstances of the place or the varying conditions of the times, will be at all times imperfect. About these no more need be said than this: they will be at best experimental, they will change as our experience increases, as our knowledge of the divine will enlarges and our apprehension of the requirements of the circumstances we are called to provide for grows upon us. As we learn more, we shall do better. But even so, underlying all that is mutable and im-

perfect there will remain unchangeable those eternal principles of divine appointment which will ensure, not alone fixity of purpose, but a constant progression along the defined lines of the eternal purpose, towards the attainment of the ultimate object of our endeavor, by means of a certain and well-considered plan, not of human origin, but of divine ordination.

As to loyal, unconditional and unswerving fidelity and discipline, it is no more than is rightly demanded in every aggressive organisation. It is the very foundation of all effective service, and, excepting where the conscience is affected, should be cheerfully rendered as a reasonable and natural obligation to the organisation. It is true that there are times when personal inclinations, however strong these may be, have to bow to the expressed will of the organisation, and a right appreciation of this obligation of discipline lies at the very foundation of all truly loyal service. It will be well that we should be prompt to recognise our obligations in this direction, and immediate and exact in the discharge of our duty. If there be loyal, unconditional and unswerving fidelity to the organisation and a true measure of discipline the organised body will move by a common impulse towards a common object and for the common good. But that this may be at all times possible let there be in the organisation itself such perfect and unswerving loyalty to Christ its Head, submission to his will, and reverence for and obedience to his laws that through it may be at once manifested the wisdom of God and the power of the gospel.

Brethren, is the opening future which this Jubilee has ushered in to be faced with loyal, brave, devoted hearts? Are its opportunities to be greeted with well considered and liberal plans? Is its work and effort to be so organised as to manifest to the fullest measure the piety, devotion and wisdom of those engaged therein? Then, add hereunto your contribution of counsel and advice, and eke out that which has been imperfectly begun. And who shall say when another Jubilee comes round, but perchance generations yet unborn may rise to bless the eternal Giver of every good for the more perfect organisation of the church's effort, in which it has been our privilege to bear a part.

To this end may the eternal Source of all wisdom, power and grace so over-rule, guide and direct us in all our ways that all our undertakings being begun, continued and ended in him may be accepted and abundantly blessed to the salvation of men and the glory of his holy name.

New Zealand Southern Conference.

The eighteenth Annual Conference commenced its sitting in the Tabernacle, Great King-st., on Good Friday morning. F. L. Hadfield presided, and the following delegates answered the roll-call:—Christchurch, Thos. Manifold, A. Brockett, James Clark; Oamaru, James Gebbie, W. Kilgour, and Bro. Renwick; Dunedin, J. Stokes, J. Routledge, A. Thompson, J. Inglis Wright, and J. M. Innes; Hampden, T. H. Mathison; South Dunedin, Bro. Hadfield and S. J. Mathison;

Mornington, W. Glaister and H. Wood; North East Valley, Bros. Arnold, Hilliard, and Holmes; Kaitangata, F. Anderson, William Duncan, and J. Greenhill; Invercargill, Bros. Perkins and Alcorn.

After devotional exercises, Bro. Hadfield explained that the President of the Conference (George Manifold, evangelist at Christchurch), who was to have been present, had telegraphed that owing to a family bereavement he would be unable to attend and fill the position. M. Wood Green had agreed to accept the position of President, but was unable to be present until the afternoon; therefore the duty devolved upon him (Bro. Hadfield), as Vice-President, of filling the position meanwhile.

The secretary was requested to send a telegram to Thomas Manifold, expressing the sympathy of the Conference with him and his wife in their bereavement.

A motion was passed that Christian greetings be telegraphed from the Conference to the Conferences at Wellington and Auckland, and a telegram was read from the Auckland Conference conveying greetings. It was also decided to cable greetings to the Jubilee Conference meeting in Melbourne.

The President, in his opening address, impressed upon the brethren assembled that what was needed was the combined effort of individuals. Every individual should work, but all with a common object and purpose. Much could be done in this way, even though the individual effort alone might be small. Peter the Great, with an army of 12,000 men, sat down before a town fortified with a wall and moat. Not a shovel or a wheelbarrow was there, much less an ingenious corps, but with 12,000 pairs of hands they gathered earth, filled the moat, and crossing over, stormed and took the city. The strongholds of sin must be torn down by the combined efforts of individuals, by whom, weak in isolation, but powerful in combination, great conquests might be achieved.

The minutes of the previous Conference, held in Christchurch, were read and adopted.

The report of the Executive for the past year and the balance sheet were read and received on the motion of William Duncan, seconded by Bro. Perkins.

COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Your Committee beg to submit a report of the work during the past year.

Immediately after the Conference last Easter at Christchurch, a tent mission was held in that place for three weeks, and as a result of the efforts of Bren. Watt, Greenhill, A. F. Turner and Manifold, well supported by the Christchurch brethren, there were eight additions during the mission, while a greater interest was aroused in church work. It is matter for regret that, except for this effort, the tent has been lying idle for the past twelve months. The churches often considered the advisability of holding a tent mission, but nothing came of the considerations. No doubt if the Executive had taken the initiative, missions could have been held, but the Committee was so hampered by lack of funds that it could not see its way to assist financially in the conduct of a mission. We earnestly hope that the tent may be much

used during the present year as a means of making known the glorious gospel of Christ. It may here be stated that an application has been made by the Auckland church for the use of the tent in that place, and it was decided to leave the matter for your consideration.

Bro. McCrackett commenced his labors under the Committee at Oamaru in the beginning of May, and continued there until early in January of this year, when owing to ill-health he was compelled to take an extended holiday; but, as shown in the balance sheet, he materially assisted with funds in supplying his place. He returned early in March, and has since continued his work at Oamaru. The church report shows that though there have not been many additions by faith and obedience, yet a large number have been restored, and so satisfied are the brethren that they are requesting Conference to allow them the services of Bro. McCrackett for a further term. For particulars of the work done by him we refer you to his report.

A. F. Turner continued at Kaitangata till the end of June, when his engagement ended. He had then already decided, much to your Committee's regret, to return to the North Island, and an engagement was entered into with James Greenhill. He commenced his labors at Kaitangata in July, and has continued there ever since, except for five weeks spent at Oamaru during Bro. McCrackett's absence. The work at Kaitangata was checked for some time by the advent of the Mormons, but for the past two or three months the meetings have greatly improved. For full particulars of Bro. Greenhill's work we would refer you to his report.

As much as possible has been done to assist the Hampden church with speakers. G. Cunningham and W. Kilgour willingly made fortnightly visits for some time, but owing to their services being urgently needed in their own Lord's day School these visits had to be discontinued. It was found difficult to get speakers who were able to go from Dunedin, most of the brethren having their time fully occupied in preaching in the suburban churches; the inability to get back to town early enough on Monday morning being also a bar in some cases. T. H. Mathison has, however, been able to make a number of visits during the year, and Bro. Hadfield managed to go up two or three times.

It should also be mentioned that T. H. Mathison conducted the meetings one Lord's day at Oamaru during Bro. McCrackett's holiday.

As the Treasurer's report will show, the income this year has exceeded that of past years. Oamaru church, besides contributing £3 per week towards Bro. McCrackett's salary, have contributed through their Home Mission Committee £28/10/9. Kaitangata church contributed £37/10/- towards Bro. Greenhill's salary. Several isolated brethren have assisted liberally towards the support of the work, the amount contributed by them being about £15.

In the report there will be noticed among receipts an item, £14/13/8, received from the Middle District Executive. It will be remembered that at last Conference a letter

was read from that body suggesting that as the money, some £40 odd, collected at the United Conference at Wellington in January, 1901, was lying idle it should be divided among the three District Executives, and it was resolved that as the money was, in the opinion of the Conference, the property of the Foreign Mission Board, that body be urged to take steps to use it for Foreign Mission work. This resolution was communicated to the Middle District Committee, but after some correspondence had passed on the subject it was agreed that the Middle and Southern District Committees should take a third each of the money and give a guarantee to the trustees to refund it with 3% compound interest, should the next United Conference consider their action wrong. The remaining one-third share was handed to the Northern Executive, that body undertaking to use it exclusively for Maori Missions. Your Committee obtained the views of most of the Southern brethren who attended the United Conference, and it is safe to assume that the next Conference will not condemn the action of the District Committees in dealing as they have done with the money.

Your Committee have to express regret at the loss sustained in the removal to the North Island of the Treasurer, Bro. Phillips. He was unable, through illness, to attend the Committee meetings after July, and acting on medical advice he left Dunedin some time ago. Bro. Routledge was elected Treasurer *pro tem*. S. J. Mathison also has been in the country for the past three months owing to ill-health, but we are pleased to have him with us at Conference.

In conclusion your Committee have to express their thanks to the churches and isolated brethren for the assistance and encouragement that have been given during the past year, and express the hope that the Committee of future years may always receive the same hearty support.

The Treasurer's report showed an expenditure greater than that of past years, and credit balance of £9/12/-.

The church and Sunday School reports, showing a substantial increase, were read, received, and freely discussed. It was agreed by all that though the reports were good, yet the churches should do much more than they were doing to spread the gospel.

The reports of the evangelists were then read and received.

The question of evangelisation was next introduced. The Oamaru delegates informed the Conference that they had been instructed to apply for the services of Bro. McCrackett for another twelve months, the church contributing to his salary in the same way as formerly. In order to obtain an idea of the amount which the Executive would probably have to work on, the delegates of the various churches notified what their churches would likely be able to contribute to Home Missions, and promises were obtained from the individuals present. As a result, it was found that the Executive would be safe in assuming that at least £330 would be collected. Working on this basis, it was decided to recommend to the incoming Executive that D. M.

McCrackett should continue at Oamaru in accordance with that church's request; that Bro. Greenhill be engaged at Kaitangata for an additional six months, and for the other six months among the suburban churches of Dunedin.

J. Inglis Wright introduced the question of opening new fields of labor. He saw no reason why a mission, either tent mission or otherwise, should not be held for three months or so in this year at Timaru. They ought to have some definite rule on which to work. They ought to make up their minds that a new church should be established every year in some part of the country. If they worked with some such definite object, they could then do something. After considerable discussion as to the best place in which to conduct a mission, it was resolved: "That it be a recommendation to the incoming Committee to take steps to hold a mission this year at Gore or Ashburton."

SATURDAY.

The chair was taken by M. W. Green, and after devotional exercises miscellaneous items were introduced.

The application of the church at Auckland for the use of the mission tent was dealt with. It was decided to recommend to the Executive to lend the tent to Auckland church if not immediately required by any of the southern churches.

The date of the ending of year for the church and Sunday School reports was altered from January 31st to December 31st.

"The education of our young men" was introduced by J. Inglis Wright, the Secretary of the Education Committee, who read a report of that Committee showing that more interest had been aroused than formerly, but that there was room for great improvement. The Committee had drawn up rules and regulations for their guidance, and these were read to the Conference for the information of the delegates. The rules provided that any young man intending to qualify himself for an evangelist, and desiring financial assistance for a university education, may be able to obtain a loan from the Committee, repayable by instalments after he has completed his course and is placed in such a position as to be able to make the repayments. Bro. Wright explained that at the present time their young men had gone to the United States for their education, and had not returned. They found that they could obtain university education there much more cheaply than in New Zealand. What was wanted was to be able to keep these young men in their own country.

T. Arnold spoke on the importance of this question, and of the excellence of the constitution drawn up by the Committee. He moved: "That the report as read be received and heartily commended to the churches."

Bro. Perkins seconded the motion.

M. W. Green thought that the constitution drawn up by the Committee aimed too high. It placed too much importance on secular education for young men desiring to become evangelists. It was certainly necessary to have a fair secular education, and particularly a good knowledge of our native tongue, but

Continued on page 266.

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The Leader.

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

Christ in the Universities.

It is quite possible that the recent discussions relating to the decline of church-going both in the Old Country and this have led many people to conclude that the religious outlook at the beginning of the Twentieth Century is not as hopeful as it might be. It unfortunately happens that a considerable number of persons are easily induced to take a pessimistic view of things without troubling themselves to ascertain if there is any reasonable ground for indulging in gloomy forecasts. It is one of the tendencies in human nature that ought to be resisted, and the way to resist it is to cultivate the habit of taking the best and brightest view of things. We do not say that we should shut our eyes to facts, if those facts happen

to be of a gloomy character, but we do say that the best way to dispel the gloom is to meet adverse circumstances with a brave and hopeful spirit. No great work has ever been accomplished by men who had no hope and no faith. No confirmed pessimist ever lifted the world higher or helped to fill it with joy and peace. Annie S. Swan, in her bright and cheerful magazine, *The Woman at Home*, in referring to the discussion of the "decline of church-going," says: "We hear more about that as about everything in these days of much writing to the newspapers, and there are always scares got up for the benefit chiefly of those who are never happier than when they are bemoaning the state of things in general, and predicting the final extinction of all we hold dear. I do not think men and women who respect the traditions of the past, and who have hope for the future, ought to give these groaning pessimists the slightest encouragement. They should not be taken any notice of. They should be allowed to sink into the oblivion they deserve. They are disloyal to human nature; not from such does progress spring, or anything that makes for righteousness." For our part we should be very glad to let them sink into oblivion, but unfortunately they are ever present with us, and it is difficult to escape either from their voice or pen. One of the penalties we have to pay for the daily penny newspaper is that the pessimist gets as good a show as the optimist and even better, for the latter is too busy doing things to find time to grumble about them.

In these discussions about the "decline of church-going" we have noticed that the "croakers," as a rule, have a good opinion of themselves. To judge by what some of them say it might be inferred that the churches were hopelessly out of it in regard to the higher walks of learning—that wisdom was to be found out of the church and not in it—that the sort of pabulum provided by the churches might suit the working classes right enough, but not the superior sort of people who stay at home and read their Herbert Spencer. It is the misfortune of critics of this class that their reading is not wide enough in its range and that they do not know what is really taking place in the religious world. If their reading had been wider, or if they had paid any attention to things going on around them, they might have known that one of the most wonderful movements in the religious world for the last fifty years has been the development of religious life and work in the great seats of learning all over the world. It is this movement, without any further reference to critics, that we now propose to look at.

The history of what is being done in the Universities and Colleges of the world is itself the best answer to pessimistic and self-satisfied critics that can be given. This movement has been quite recently brought under our notice by Mr. J. R. Mott, general secretary of the World's Student Federation. The object of this Union is to unite all right-thinking students in the work of Christ, and to get the greatest amount of work done by combining forces. It is, in fine, a great evangelising force, and the largest Students' Union in the world, religious or secular. Mr. Mott, speaking of its progress, says: "This Union to which we belong is a growing thing. It is past the experimental stage, and has proved itself no failure. Seven years ago I told you that there were 45,000 students in its ranks, now there are 80,000. Then there were spiritual awakenings in three or four countries; now there are signs in all countries, and fifty are linked together by this Students' Christian Union movement." There are 1500 of these Unions scattered abroad throughout fifty nations. They are to be found in America, Europe and Asia, and they give every indication of becoming mighty forces in the uplifting of the world.

To give some faint idea of the progress of this movement, we will briefly look at what it is doing in various parts of the world. In America this movement is finding its way into all the seats of learning, including such Universities as Yale and Harvard. In reference to the latter we are told that seven years ago the Students' Union numbered less than 60 members; now it embraces over 400. In those days, Mr. Mott says, it was the most unpopular organisation at Harvard—the butt of a good share of the jokes, the target of a great deal of criticism—and now it is the strongest, most healthy, and most popular of the many societies in that University. . . . They sent 40 delegates to the great Missionary Convention at Toronto, and since then 10 of these have volunteered for the foreign field. This one instance from America will help to show what a mighty power for good the movement is in that part of the world. In Great Britain the work commenced 10 years ago with 17 Universities and Colleges. Now the movement has 137 centres, and includes nearly every University and almost every prominent College. Ten years ago only 300 students in British Universities expected to become missionaries; now the roll of the volunteer part includes over 2,000 names. The Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking of this movement, said, "Few things inspire me with such hope as this uprising of University men and women." In German Universities, which are still the

centres of rationalism, this movement is making fair headway. In 17 of the 25 Universities there are now these Christian Unions as well as in 45 of the leading Gymnasias. One significant fact may be noted, namely, that more University men have offered themselves to foreign missions in the last 10 years than in the preceding 25. Mr. Mott's comment upon the German work is this, "This movement, which is going from strength to strength, fills me with large expectations, not only for Germany, but through Germany for the Universities of the world." In India, which has a splendid educational system, there are 42 organisations, with over 2,000 students. In only one other country in the world is there such a spirit of inquiry as exists among the students of India. As indicating the outlook there, Mr. Mott says: "I know of hundreds of Indian students, including some of the keenest men I met in India, who are secret disciples of Jesus Christ, and when that break comes, which is sure to come in India, within, I think, in the near future, there will be a great influx into the kingdom of Jesus Christ of the brainiest men of the Indian Empire." Japan is the other country referred to in which the spirit of inquiry is of the most earnest character. Here there are 50 Christian Unions, and Mr. Mott's testimony is that Christianity is taking a strong hold upon the educated men right throughout Japan.

Here are some of the conclusions reached by Mr. Mott:—

1. That students to-day more than any other class of people are becoming Christians.
2. That students are being attracted to the Christian religion to-day in larger numbers and in greater proportion than by any other religion.
3. That there is a movement that is nothing less than remarkable, away from other religions towards the religion of Jesus Christ.
4. That the religion which is laying hold of the students to-day in the name of Christ is doing so in the pathway of, and in harmony with, the best modern intellectual methods and spirit characterised by the word scientific.
5. That the faith of Christian students to-day, in greater measure than the past, is characterised by reality and attended by practical spiritual results, even leading into martyrdom itself.

Now, if it be true as asserted, and we think it is, that the Universities and Colleges teach the teachers, preach to the preachers, and govern the governors—that they are the most important centres in civilisation and that as the Universities go so go the nations—then the importance of this movement cannot be over-rated. It is one of the most hopeful signs of the times, and if, as we understand,

these Unions have adopted as their battle-cry, "The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation," we have in motion a splendid host fighting the battles of the Lord. It is a movement which strengthens the view we have long held, that the religion of Jesus Christ has immense unused forces at its command, and all that is required to win the day is for the church to rise in its strength and use the power that God has given it. There is every reason for the church to be strong and of good courage, for the outlook was never so bright and hopeful as it is to-day.

Editorial Notes.

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

Missionary Conference in India.

A remarkable conference of missionary workers of all Protestant bodies in India, Burmah and Ceylon was held in the city of Madras at the close of last year. This was the regular Decennial Conference. A spirit of hopefulness pervaded the meetings, and we are told that "all seemed as sure of the ultimate victory of Christ as though they were gathered to celebrate its actual achievement." Dr. Murdock, who has been in the field since 1844, stated that the number of Indian Christians could not then have exceeded 100,000. In 1861 they numbered 213,000. Thirty years later, at the Bombay Decennial Conference, they were reported as 671,000. In 1900, 1,012,000. According to the Government census, Protestants have during the decade increased 50.87 per cent., Mohammedans 8.96 per cent., while the Hindu community suffered a decrease of 0.28 per cent. This is very encouraging, and a triumphant answer to those who say that missions are a failure. But the Conference is not satisfied. While thankfully acknowledging progress, they appeal for a fourfold increase of workers, deploring the fact that still nine-tenths of India's millions are ignorant of the way of life. The Home churches are urged to send one missionary for every 25,000 of the population, which would mean 9,000 new missionaries in India.

Mormonism Against Itself.

If any of our readers want ammunition to fight the Mormons we would advise them to write to R. B. Neal, Grayson, Kentucky, U.S.A. Bro. Neal makes a speciality of this subject, and has published several Anti-Mormon tracts or pamphlets. It is amusing to notice how readily the various branches of this modern delusion assist him to expose each other. There are several divisions of Mormons in the United States, the principal

being the Utah body, the "Reorganised Church" and those of the "Hedrickite" persuasion. The latter publishes a paper, *The Evening and Morning Star*, which antagonises the "monstrosities" taught by the other branches. The Mormons are not doing much in Australasia, and so far as we know only two varieties of them are represented here, but some of these are very active, and unless their sophistries are exposed a few may be deluded by them. Neal's tracts are a splendid and effectual antidote.

Religion and Tobacco.

In Coghlan's "Seven Colonies of Australasia," recently published by the authority of the Government of the Commonwealth, are figures which should provide food for thought. Among other things, we are told that in 1900 the sum of £3,121,000 was spent on "religion, charities, and education (not including State expenditure)." That is an average of 16/8 for every man, woman and child in Australia. In the same year the cost of tobacco was £3,275,000, or 17/6 per head. Man has been defined as "a religious animal"; would it not be more correct to call him "a smoking animal," seeing he spends more on smoke than religion? We speak of this as "the age of literature," and publish within the Commonwealth over 800 newspapers, employing quite an army of editors, reporters, correspondents, pressmen, news-agents, etc., to say nothing of the books, magazines, papers, etc., which we import. But our total expenditure for this intellectual pabulum only averages 10/6 per head, compared with 17/6 for tobacco! We spend 70 per cent. more on puffing smoke from our mouths than on feeding our brains. Is not this rather the age of nicotine?

Drink and Crime.

That there is an intimate connection between drink and crime no thoughtful man can doubt. The evidences are absolutely indisputable. Where there is most drink, there we find the most crime. In Australasia the average quantity of proof gallons of alcohol consumed per head of the population for the three years ending 1900 was 2.48. In West Australia it was 4.98, or just double. Offenders of all kinds against the law in Australasia numbered 35.47 per every 1000 people; in West Australia they numbered 84.65. Serious offenders numbered 5.98 per 1000 in Australasia, and 15.97 in West Australia. This is conclusive. The preponderance of males in W.A. and the greater prosperity of the State attracting criminals from the East may be urged, but after every allowance is made the evil influence of drink as demonstrated in these figures must still be acknowledged. The same conclusion is arrived at from another source. In New

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN QUEENSLAND, 1903.

CHURCHES.	CHURCH ADDITIONS.					CHURCH LOSSES.				MEMBERSHIP.				SCHOOL STATISTICS.				Added from Bible School	Seating Capacity Place of Meeting.	
	Membership 1902.	Faith and Obedience.	Letter.	Formerly Immersed.	Restoration.	Total Additions.	Letter.	Death.	Removal and Discipline.	Total Losses.	Present Membership.	Nett Gain.	Nett Decrease.	Non-Resident Members.	Scholars 1902.	Teachers 1902.	Scholars 1903.			Teachers 1903.
Boonah	25	1				1	2			24										90
Brisbane	154	36				49	4	3	1	195	41		1		95	10	116	12	13	500
Bundamba	6			2	2	2				7	1									100
Cairns	6			2		4				10	4						14	2		
Charters Towers	28	3			1	4			2	30	2			90	9	99	9			200
Eel Creek	16								4	12		4								
Childers	42	24		10		34			23	53	11									350
Flagstone Creek	6	2				2	2			6										
Greenmount	7									7										
Gympie	63	1		2	1	4	1	1	3	62		1	3	63	8	58	9			250
Ma Ma Creek	43	3				3	1		1	44	1			44	4	72	10	3		100
Mount Walker	29						2		2	25		4		15	1	12	1			40
Milbong	5									5										
Mount Whitestone	22									22				17	1	17	1			
Maryborough	50	18	2			20		1	4	65	15		3	69	10	69	8	8		150
Mooloolah	6									6										
Marburg	9	3		3	2	8				17	8			15	2					100
Rosewood	29	2	1		3	6		1		34	5					14	2			100
Rosevale	20	4			1	5			4	21	1					15	2	2		100
Roma	64	2				2		1	4	61			3	85	8	86	9			150
Thornton	7								1	6		1								
Tannymorel	7									7										
Toowoomba	36	4	2	2		8	2	1		41	5									
Vernor	30	10	1		4	15			1	44	14		2	38	4	43	5	4		90
West Haldon	12								2	10		2				12	2			
Wallumbilla	17		1			1				18	1			38	5	38	5			80
Yingerbay	11									11										
Zillmere	60	1				1		2	1	58		2	18	60	5	76	5	1		180
Totals	810	114	20	21	14	169	14	11	53	78	901	109	18	31	629	69	741	82	31	2580

Zealand, where the amount of proof alcohol consumed is 1.86 gallons per head, only 1 policeman is required to keep 1,301 persons in order. In the Commonwealth, with a consumption of 2.60 gallons per head, 1 policeman manages 668 persons. In West Australia, where the people drink 4.98 gallons per head, each policeman can control only 354 people. The consequence is that while in New Zealand the cost for police protection is 3/1 per head, and in the Commonwealth 5/8, the people of West Australia are taxed 13/- each. In 1900 £14,249,000 was spent in drink in Australia, more than the value of all the gold raised in the country, and as a result we have a luxuriant crop of degradation and crime. The above figures are from Coghlan's Statistics. Surely in time to come people will look back with astonishment that such a state of affairs could ever have been tolerated.

New Zealand Southern Conference

Continued from page 262.

it was not necessary that we should have men with university degrees. What our young men most wanted to fit them for evangelistic work was a theological training. If they had this, together with a fair secular education, they would be eminently fitted

for the work. Bro. Green gave an account of his experience of the comparative success of evangelists who had and who had not obtained degrees. The comparison did not favor those men who had had a university training, but showed that those who had given attention to gaining a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures had been, on the whole, the most successful. Bros. McCrackett, Holmes, Stewart, and others also spoke, after which the motion was carried unanimously.

F. L. Hadfield then moved, and it was resolved: "That the Educational Committee be recommended to have a representative appointed in each church to collect funds and watch the interests of the Committee in the church."

The question of having a representative on the Bible-in-schools Committee was introduced by M. W. Green, who explained the object for which the Committee was being formed, and read extracts from correspondence with the Chairman of the Council of Christian Churches in connection with the matter.

After considerable discussion as to the advisability of having the Bible introduced into the public schools, the motion "That the Conference heartily support the efforts to introduce the Bible into the schools, and that M. W. Green be appointed delegate of this Conference at Wellington next month" was carried.

It was decided to hold the next Conference at Oamaru.

The Conference Essay, on "The Drawing Power in our Gospel Meetings," was read by T. H. Mathison.

The Sunday School Essay, on "Systematic Teaching in our Lord's Day Schools," was read by Theodore Arnold.

On the motion of Bro. Routledge it was resolved: "That this Conference view with extreme pleasure the results obtained at the recent licensing polls, and urge upon all members of the associated churches of Christ the importance of supporting the movement for the suppression of the liquor traffic."

A vote of thanks was given to the outgoing Executive for their attention during the past year.

Walks About

Jerusalem.

BY

ISAAC ERRETT.

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NEW ZEALAND SOUTHERN CONFERENCE STATISTICS, 1903.

NAME.	Members, 1902.	ADDITIONS.				LOSSES.			Members, 1903.	Increase.	Decrease.	S.S. STATISTICS.				Church Additions from S.S.	Bible Class Members.	Average Attendance of Members at Worship.	Average Attendance at Gospel Services.	Average Attendance at Prayer Meeting.
		Faith and Obedience.	Letter.	Baptised Believers.	Restoration.	Death.	Letter.	Removal & Roll Revision.				Scholars, 1902.	Scholars, 1903.	Teachers, 1902.	Teachers, 1903.					
Christchurch	125	14	9			1	2	1	144	19		70	92	9	14	4	9	60	130	20
Dunedin	312	32	11	7		4	12		346	34		100	87	15	10	10	15	170	400	30
Hampden	25	2							20		5	18	20	1	1			15	20	
Invercargill	85	19	7	1	3		3	7	105	20		77	85	13	8	5	21	53	80	30
Kaitangata	66	5	1		2			6	68	2		77	75	6	6	1	15	29	45	12
Mornington	47	21		1	2	1		7	68	2		77	75	6	6	1	15	29	45	12
North East Valley ..	49	18	2	5			6	4	66	19		50	60	6	8	2	16	50	63	35
Oamaru	67	8		1	6	1		5	63	14		78	89	11	11	8	30	40	80	12
South Dunedin	71	14	4	2	1			2	79	12		42	41	11	11	2	10	50	120	35
Totals.....	847	133	34	18	14	7	23	41	974	132	5	612	665	81	78	34	126	517	1008	194

From The Field.

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

South Africa.

BULAWAYO.—On behalf of the little band of brethren in this distant land, I take my pen again to write you, believing that you, with many more, are interested in our welfare. We are still having good spiritual times at the banqueting board every Lord's day, at the house of our dear Bro. Sherriff. Our numbers have increased to seven good standing brethren, every one alive to his privileges and responsibilities. Our experiences are foretastes of heaven, everything in perfect harmony; using the words of Bro. Sherriff, every meeting is the best. I am glad to tell you that as a little band of Christians we are not satisfied to sit down and enjoy the blessing ourselves and have no consideration for our fellows. What little we can do we put to practice, and the results are encouraging. Bro. Sherriff has started a native school in a large room that he has set apart for that purpose, where we have the privilege of talking to them (natives) about Jesus and his love. Up to the present we have met with encouraging results. Yesterday (Sunday) we drove out to the spruit, where Bro. Sherriff baptised Bro. George, the native scholar of whom you have heard before. We had a grand little meeting, after which Bro. Sherriff took the confession of two more, who there and then put on Christ in his own appointed way, walking down into that spruit with a fearless step, realising what they were doing. After being baptised by Bro. Sherriff, they came up like that negro of old, and went on their way rejoicing, determined to tell their fellow natives what a Saviour they have found. I believe a commencement in the right direction is begun for God's glory among the natives. Two of those who have come to Jesus are very prominent boys among their race, known as preachers, and they now resolve to preach the truth as they understand it in Jesus, let the consequences be what they may. I commenced this letter before we held our school to-night, and am now finishing it with more joyful news—another native decided for Christ and wants to be baptised next Lord's day, making four altogether. I believe I am speaking for the brethren

when I say that since coming here we have greater evidence that the gospel is God's power to salvation than ever we had in the State from which we came. The names of our coloured brethren are as follows:—Brethren George, Agrippa, Jeremiah, Charles, and I can assure you, brother, that we are not ashamed to call them brethren. We would have to search a long way to find four more intelligent boys (natives). Again I appeal through your valuable paper, the CHRISTIAN, on behalf of the little band of soldiers for King Jesus in this distant land, that all who are interested in us will ask God's best blessing to rest upon our humble effort in spreading the glad tidings of our Saviour's love. We hope, dear brother, in the near future to gladden the hearts of Australian brethren with the news of more surrendering themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. The brethren join me in Christian love to you and all Australian brethren. Yours in the one glorious hope,

A. J. STREADER.

Victoria.

WILLIAMSTOWN.—Last Wednesday two Sunday School scholars were immersed into Christ, having made the good confession the previous Sunday. On Thursday night the Band of Hope held its first public meeting, over 150 being present. Last night, building crowded, Bro. Peacock preaching, 2 Sunday School scholars made the good confession. 22 brethren and sisters attended prayer meeting before service.

J. H. OCCO.

May 4.

CROYDON.—We are pleased to report four confessions during the last month, and others on the verge of decision, under the preaching of Bro. Parslow. One was baptised last Thursday night, and three are to be immersed to-morrow night. Bro. Parslow is a man of deep thought, and has the ability to convey his thoughts to the understanding of his hearers. During the short time he has been with us he has been the instrument in doubling the attendance at the meetings.

L. GRAHAMS.

May 4.

SWANSTON-ST.—Good meetings last Lord's day. Four were received by letter. In the evening, Bro. Meldrum preached on the theme, The Cross—the World's Only Cure. Excellent attendance; one confession.

R.L.

DONCASTER.—The Sunday School celebrated the anniversary on April 19th and 20th. G. T. Walden spoke morning, afternoon and evening on the Sunday to well attended meeting, and all felt benefited by the excellent addresses. On Monday evening the entertainment took place. The chapel, which was nicely decorated for the occasion, was filled by a large and attentive audience. A programme, consisting of solos, recitations, two actions songs and a dialogue, was given by the scholars. Miss Kingsbury and G. T. Walden sang. A. M. Ludbrook was chairman, and gave a very instructive address to the scholars. Andrew Meldrum gave a short and interesting account of his adventures among the Indians of Northern Canada. Bro. Walden spoke to the parents, advising them to send their children to Sunday School regularly, and urging them to encourage the teachers by a word of praise. J. Tully, superintendent, distributed the prizes to the children, also making a few remarks, thanking the parents for their kindness in the past. A vote of thanks to all who had assisted in the meeting was carried, and the meeting closed.

April 27.

THOS. PETTY.

NEWMARKET.—Bro. Greenwood commenced our Jubilee Mission on April 19, and purposes continuing same for another week. The meetings have been well attended during each week, but on Sunday evenings the chapel is crowded to the doors. On Sunday evening last two obeyed Christ in baptism and one more confessed the Saviour, which makes a total of six since commencement of mission. Briefly, the work is in a very healthy condition, and the prospects for the future development of our cause here are very bright.

A.W.S.

Queensland.

BRISBANE.—On Lord's day, April 26th, one was restored to the fellowship of the church, and at the morning meeting special reference was made by the presiding brother to the good work being done by G. S. Skerman, of Mooloolah, despite the many difficulties that beset him. On April 16th he was privileged to immerse his sister (Lucy Skerman), she having learnt the way of the Lord more perfectly. He also reports one brother restored. We pray that God will still further bless his efforts and keep these two faithful to the end.

April 28.

A.S.W.

West Australia.

SUBIACO.—Since the tent mission terminated we have been having good meetings and splendid results, 11 having accepted Christ as their Saviour since then. Bro. Hagger has been helping us very much by coming from Fremantle to conduct our midweek services and to assist with the baptisms. These services have been splendidly attended, the chapel being just about full. Bro. Quick is preaching the gospel on Sunday evenings, and we have had confessions each Sunday night. The Sunday morning meetings are just now well attended, there being about 150 present to break bread the last two Sunday mornings.

April 29.

A.W.M.

PERTH.—It is some time since we sent a report of progress. According to the figures prepared for our Conference returns, we had at the end of Feb., 1902, 214 members. The additions for the year ending Feb 28, 1903, were—by faith and baptism, 75; letter, 45; formerly immersed, 7; total, 127. The roll had not been revised for some years, and so 43 names were removed by revision, 22 by letter, and 1 died; total losses 66, leaving a net increase of 61 and a membership of 275. The Sunday School increased from 16 teachers and 169 scholars to 20 teachers with 205 scholars. The church raised £110 for Home Missions, and £27/15/- for Foreign Missions during the year. During March and April the additions to the church have been:—By faith and baptism, 14; by letter, 8; total, 22. Of those baptised, 9 confessed Christ at Subiaco during the recent Tent Mission. Our regular meetings, in addition to those on Lord's day, are as follows:—Monday, C.E.; Tuesday afternoon, Sewing Meeting; evening, Mutual Improvement Society; Wednesday, Band of Hope (monthly); Thursday, Church Prayer Meeting; Friday, Singing Practice; Saturday, Open-air Meeting (conducted by Bro. Quick and others). All these departments of work are flourishing. The Lord's day attendances are large, and a movement is on foot for extending the building. There are in the Lake-street church a number of excellent workers, including several promising young men.

E.

FREMANTLE.—Bro. Leach has done the public preaching here since Bro. Lucraft left for the East, during which time two have obeyed the Lord in baptism. Commenced my work here yesterday; spoke to the church in the morning from Acts 6: 7, and preached the gospel in the evening to a full house. Two confessions at the close, both of whom are mothers of converts made during the Fremantle mission.

April 20.

THOS. HAGGER.

South Australia.

HENLEY BEACH.—On Thursday evening we were favored with addresses from Bro. and Sister Strutton on "The Hindoo Home" and "The Religions of India" respectively. A good number were present, and we were pleased to listen to the addresses, which we are confident will enlist true sympathy and prayer for the missionaries in their arduous work in foreign lands.

May 4.

G.A.H.

QUEENSTOWN.—Meetings yesterday were not so good as usual. The man who obeyed the week before received a hearty welcome by the church. The annual report showed 178 on the roll, but many of this number have left the district long ago, and should be named isolated. About 140 meet in fellowship, and the average at the table has been about 100 for the

last six months, the largest number for that period being 130.

April 27.

W. MOFFIT.

WILLUNGA.—We commenced our Tent Mission here on the 15th inst. with a small number of hearers, only having about 40 present, but on that day week about 140 came; and we are thankful to say that some came not only to hear, but to obey the call of Christ. We have had six confessions to date, and we believe that others are near the kingdom. F. Pittman has told the story of the cross very faithfully. We ask for the prayers of the brethren for the success of our mission.

April 23.

J.J.W.

New South Wales.

MARRICKVILLE.—The tenth anniversary of this church was celebrated on Friday, April 24th. We were favored with a large attendance of members and friends. Never before in the history of this church has there been so large an attendance. R. Miller was chairman, and addresses were given by J Kingsbury, A. E. Illingworth, P. A. Dickson, Theo. B. Fischer and R. C. Gilmour. Several anthems were rendered by the choir, under the leadership of Sister Mrs. H. J. Lee.

The secretary's report showed that we began the year with 57 members. Additions: by faith and obedience, 17; by letter, 9. Losses: by transfer, 3; by death, 1. Nett gain, 22. The attendance of members at the worship on Lord's day morning is good. The gospel service attendance has risen nearly 200 per cent. on the previous year. We have a fine praise and prayer rally before the gospel service. The week-night meeting has also greatly improved. The Lord's day School is prospering, and 8 of those added to the church are from the school. The choir has done good work. The C.E. Society is already making its power for good felt. The total income of the church for the year was £141/15/10. Of this the church contributed £52/4/8, Enmore gave £63/10/-, and the balance was made up by various brethren.

April 28.

ROBERT C. GILMOUR.

ROOKWOOD.—Record attendance at the meeting for worship and breaking of bread, 39 partaking, including 4 visitors, the balance being our own members. Good service, conducted by Bro. Chappel, last evening. At the close one of the Sunday School boys came forward in response to the invitation. Bro. Fischer preached at the Tabernacle, Enmore.

April 27.

MARRICKVILLE.—Last evening a C.E. Home Missionary Rally was held in the church building here. Our societies from Paddington and Enmore came en masse, the former occupying a 'bus. Miss Lulie Lucas, from Paddington, treated us to a splendid five minutes' talk—this young lady is one of our workers in the Chinese Mission—and Mr. Geo. Verco also spoke on behalf of the Enmore society. The building was crowded, a number being obliged to stand. Robert C. Gilmour was chairman, Miss Coralie Porter organist, and when Thomas Bagley brought the meeting to a close by pronouncing the benediction, everyone left rejoicing that they had come.

April 28.

L. D. GILMOUR.

Here and There.

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

Subiaco talk of enlarging their building.

Subiaco is a great field for evangelistic work.

One confession at Brunswick last Sunday night.

Splendid meeting and one confession at Hawthorn last Sunday.

There were two confessions at St. Kilda on Sunday evening last.

H. J. Banks takes up the work at Subiaco on Sunday next.

Fine meeting and one confession at Fremantle, W.A., on April 26th.

B. J. Ball, of Lygon-street, met with the church at Hobart on the 26th April.

At the close of G. S. Bennett's address at Surrey Hills last Lord's day, one young lady made the good confession.

Allen Legget was received into the church at Broken Hill, by letter from the church at Kadina, S.A., on April 26.

Please look in "Coming Events" for announcement of meeting to welcome H. H. Strutton and wife, missionaries from India.

During the absence of Bro. Williams from Merewether attending the Jubilee Conference, Bro. Price occupied the platform.

Wren J. Grinstead starts a Tent Mission on East King William-street, Adelaide, on May 12. We shall watch anxiously for results.

There was a great meeting at North Richmond on Sunday evening, when F. M. Ludbrook spoke. They have commenced a special meeting there.

The prospects at Pakenham are looking brighter. Preaching services are being held every alternate Sunday. A Sunday School was organised on May 3rd.

Will all kindly remember that we have no more 12/6 or 17/6 copies of the Jubilee History for sale, only the 15/-, 20/- and a few copies of the 30/- editions.

The churches at North Adelaide and Prospect have purchased a block of land at the corner of Myrtle St. and Prospect Road, Prospect, with a view of erecting a meeting house.

Brethren in N.S.W. are asked to assist Sunday School Union by giving their names as hon. members, with 1/- as annual subscription, to secretary, R. Steer, or Sunday School workers.

Since Conference a letter of congratulation has been received from G. L. Surber, U.S.A. This will be added to the list of those previously received and read at the late Jubilee Conference.

Newmarket had a very pleasant surprise on last Monday evening. They found that in engaging the services of F. W. Greenwood they had not only secured one good speaker, but two—the other in his sister wife.

FOUND.—The following unclaimed articles, lost during Conference, have been left with the Lygon-street caretaker, viz:—A book from the lending library, table bell, bangle with name inscribed, and a small purse.

By the time this reaches our readers we expect to have dispatched all our orders for the Jubilee History. We will have a few copies left at 15/- and 20/-. Will not our agents in the various churches assist us all they can to dispose of these copies. Any help will be appreciated.

A correspondent complains that most of the paper for the last month has been taken up with Conference matter. This is quite true, and it cannot be helped; indeed from our standpoint it is a good thing we have such meetings to report. The paper exists to do a certain amount of this work. For a few weeks to come the CHRISTIAN will be partly taken up with Conference matter.

Good meetings at Lygon-street during Mission; 7 confessions.

We have received on behalf of Mrs. Fleming:—J. T. Coles, 19/3; a Friend, 5/-.

Attention is called to the notice in "Coming Events" of the first lecture of the series on Thursday, May 14.

The tent mission at Willunga, S. A., conducted by F. Pittman, up till Sunday night had resulted in 12 confessions.

We regret to hear that Mrs. Dickens senior, of the Lygon-street church, has met with a very serious and painful accident. While walking in Elgin-street, Carlton, near her home, a young fellow who did not know how to ride a bicycle ran against Mrs. Dickens, knocking her down, by which she sustained serious injury to one of her legs. We hope that she may be restored to health again.

THANKS.—The Hospitality Committee of the Victorian Sisters' Executive wish to give their warmest thanks to the sisters who entertained the visitors attending the Jubilee Conference. The Committee are sure a large measure of the success of the meetings resulted from the generous hospitality shown to our guests.—ELIZABETH DAVIES, President; L. PITTMAN, Secretary, Hospitality Committee.

Prahran tent mission is now in its third week. Crowded meetings are the rule, and up to Tuesday night 37 had professed a desire to follow Christ. Much enquiry is being aroused in the neighborhood by H. G. Harward's telling addresses. Next Sunday afternoon a temperance meeting will be held, and members of the local Total Abstinence Society have signified their intention of being present.

The Conference Executive Committee sent a letter of thanks to the *Herald* and to the *Weekly Times* for the reports they gave of the Jubilee Conference, and (in the latter case) for the illustrations. In acknowledging the letter the editor of the *Weekly Times* says: "It is both a pleasure and a duty to do justice to an organisation of high character and noble principle," and concludes with congratulations on the success of the meetings.

On May 4th, a lecture was given in the Newmarket church by Mrs. Wilson, of Sydney, to an audience of over 200 ladies only. At the close of the lecture, Sister F. W. Greenwood also spoke a few well chosen words, urging the sisters and all present to use their influence for good to help to purify the lives of those about us, and thus raise the standard of womanhood. On the motion of Sister Greenwood, seconded by Sister Alford, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mrs. Wilson for her able and instructive lecture.

"The specimen sheets of the Jubilee Pictorial History give indication that the book will be worthy of the important movement that has been so successfully carried on by those who desire to have the gospel preached in its primitive purity and simplicity. The illustrations are excellent, the portraits particularly being remarkably striking—so good that a glance is sufficient to recognise the original. The architectural pictures are good in regard to detail, and the reading matter is beautifully clear. The work in its various branches reflects credit upon the publishers."—W. T. FORBES.

The following resolution was passed by the Middle District Conference held at N.Z. on April 10th:— "That this Conference desires to record its appreciation of the labors of Bro. Maston as preacher, as editor of the AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN, and also for the painstaking manner in which he has edited the 'Jubilee History of the Churches.'" We are thankful to these good brethren for their expression of appreciation for our efforts. We are simply trying to work

for the general good of our great cause, and while not pleasing all, we are glad to know that some appreciate our labors. We have it in our programme to visit again the New Zealand churches, but its realisation depends on the developments of the near future.

The following figures are probably the most reliable as indicating the growth of Christianity:

End of the first century	500,000
End of the second century	2,000,000
End of the third century	5,000,000
End of the fourth century	10,000,000
End of the fifth century	15,000,000
End of the tenth century	50,000,000
End of the fifteenth century	100,000,000
End of the eighteenth century	200,000,000
In the year 1877	400,000,000
In the year 1894	500,000,000

In 1500 years it gained 100,000,000; then in 300 years it gained 100,000,000 more; then in seventy-seven years it gained another 100,000,000; while it took but seventeen years, from 1847 to 1894, to add another 100,000,000. Large as has been this growth, giving great ground for thanksgiving and encouragement, the population of the world is about 1,500,000,000, so there is a vast work still ahead of us. It is a source of cheer, however, to know that about two-thirds of the world are under Christian governments, and considerably more than half of this two-thirds is the Protestant type of Christianity.—*Young People's Weekly*.

As our readers are aware, much distress has been caused amongst many of our brethren in the country by the drought. Some of this distress has been relieved, but a lot of it still remains. Our attention was called last week to a farmer who had 200 acres of land ploughed ready for sowing, but could not get the grain as seed. We inquired into the matter from brethren living in the neighborhood, and were assured it was a worthy case. They simply desired a loan. We could not wait to make an appeal, as the grain was badly wanted for sowing, so we procured £30 and forwarded to them. We now ask our readers to help us in assisting this worthy case. They promise to repay the same if they get a crop, and when it is returned we will use it for Home Mission work or other worthy objects. We mentioned this matter at Swanston-street church on Sunday morning last, and received the following amounts:—P. B. McMaster, 10/6; Mrs. J. A. Davies, 30/-; Andrew Melldrum, 10/-; Bro. Barrett, 2/-; R. Lyall, 20/-; Alf Kemp, 10/-; A. R. Lyall, 20/-; W. T. Lawson, 5/-; A. Friend, 2/6; F. G. Dunn, 5/-; "Nemis," 20/-; Henry Lyall, 20/-; Chas. Lawson, 20/-; R. B. and Mrs. Davis, 5/-; Walter Lawson, 4/-; in all, £9/8/-. We received a grateful letter from the sister, on behalf of herself and husband, in which she says, among other things, "I am so thankful to you for your kindness in helping us; we just received the telegram in time, as Mr. _____ would not keep the wheat any longer than Thursday, as he said he would lose the sale of it altogether, keeping it so long." Any money received will be thankfully acknowledged.

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Sister Allen, Cheltenham	£2 0 0
A Brother, Swanston-street, Melbourne	5 0 0
Church, South Yarra, per Mrs. D. A. Lewis	1 12 0
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Sunday School F.M. Band, Wanganui and Warkworth, per H. J. Vine (for Bro. Stubbin's Orphanage)	5 0 0
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Coming Events.

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

WEDNESDAY EVENING NEXT (probably), at 8 o'clock, Swanston-street Chapel, Meeting to welcome Henry H. Strutton and Mrs. Strutton, Missionaries from India, who are passing through Melbourne on way to New Zealand. Bro. Strutton left Hindmarsh, S.A., about 8 years ago for India, where he has labored as a missionary ever since. He and his wife are now in Australia on furlough. This meeting is called for Wednesday, as it is expected steamer will arrive on that day. Definite announcement will be made in the churches on Lord's day next.

MAY 10 & 12.—Sunday and Tuesday. Croyden Sunday School Anniversary. Preachers from Melbourne, with Bro. Parslow, will conduct the services. All interested members cordially welcomed.

MAY 11.—Grand Anniversary RALLY, Fitzroy Y.P.S.C.E., Tabernacle, Johnston-st., 7.45. Rally up, Endeavorers. Come early and secure seats.

MAY 14.—F. G. Dunn will deliver his lecture to the students of the College of the Bible at Lygon-st. chapel on Thursday, 14th inst. All friends and those interested invited. Subject of lecture, "Biblical Criticism."

JULY 5 & 7.—North Melbourne Sunday School anniversary will be held on Sunday and Tuesday, July 5th and 7th, being postponed from usual date on account of mission, etc.

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Obituary.

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

McDONALD.—Our young Sister Hanna McDonald, after a lingering illness, fell asleep in Jesus on March 17th at her mother's residence, Bell-st., Preston. Though for some two or three years Hanna had been ailing, yet her end was not anticipated so soon. Up till within a day of her death she was able to be about, and had great hopes for her recovery. As the end drew near she was still hopeful, and spoke cheerfully to her dear ones around her. She was one of those quiet, unostentatious Christians, one whose light burns brightly without making any noise in burning—one who loved to be of service for her King. Her quiet influence was widely felt in her home and social circles. She has left her mother, sisters and brother, with a host of friends, to mourn their loss. To all these the heartfelt sympathy of the church at Lygon-st. goes out; and in doing so commends them to the care and tender mercies of our loving Father above, who has need for her in heaven. J.J.

REID.—After several months gradual failing, David Reid, another of Lygon-street's old and valued members, fell asleep in Jesus on 14th March, at the ripe age of 79. He was a native of Dundee, Scotland, but came to Victoria in the early days. Though not a public man in any way, yet, through his positive Christian character and loyalty to his Lord and his Lord's church, he spoke more eloquently for his Master than if he were a preacher. He was a "dear old man," loved by many, and highly esteemed and respected by all his co-workers. The church has lost one of its pillars and worthiest of its members, yet we do not mourn as those who have no hope, for he was longing to "go home," and was delighted to speak of his departure from this world with all of its cares, worries, sins and sorrows. He leaves a sorrowing widow and grieving children and grandchildren, yet their grief is crowned with brightness, for they all hope to meet again "in that bright home above." The church sympathises with them and commends them to the All-wise Father's care and love. J.J.

MRS. NASH,

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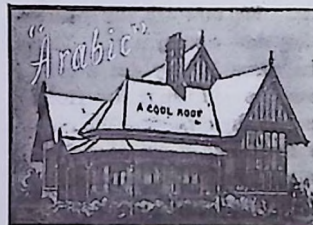
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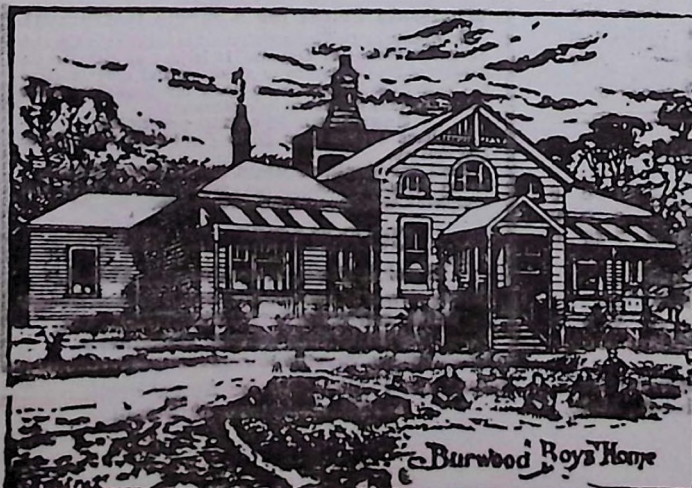
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By HATTIE A. COOLEY.

PART I.

CHAPTER IX.

THE END AND THE BEGINNING.

(Continued.)

The morning of the great day dawned in its double beauty; double, because it held both the freshness of the spring and the fullness of the summer. In accordance with the time honored custom of the college, the gay procession marched from the lower college building to the church, through the dewy freshness of the bright June morning, winding down the shady streets, beneath the grand old trees, past the soft, green lawns set with their gem-like beds of blooming flowers.

Witching Nellie made the salutatory. Very petite and graceful she looked in that daintiest of all pale colors, lavender. And what she read was like herself, as bright and merry, and yet, withal, having in it the tender touches of sweet womanliness, the development of which had been so large a part of her college life.

Grayson came next. Rapid, brilliant and earnest, he fairly swept the audience through the blazing patriotism of his oration.

"Did you ever see the like of him?" Denham whispered to his mother. "He always was like a whole box of Fourth of July fireworks going off in a bunch together."

The applause was quick and hearty. Always interested in their college and its students, the townspeople had found out some way that the hunchback had no friends coming to see him graduate. And, if the ministry of flowers could have made up to him for the lack, he would have felt no pang of loneliness. Among other tokens, there was a little silver vase of moss rosebuds and maiden-hair ferns, bearing a card which said, "From Mother, May and Me." This was Denham's own idea. He said that Grayson was such a fellow to have flowers standing around somewhere; and breakable vases were a nuisance to carry in a man's trunk.

Then came May in her pale blue dress, which was the exact counterpart of Nellie's, even to the frills of frosty lace and pure white roses. While she was dark-haired and dark-eyed, she had the peculiar fairness of complexion which occasionally accompanies that type; and never did May Denham look fairer than on that day in June; moreover, she looked, as she was, the embodiment of the high ideal of womanhood which she was advocating with so much earnestness.

Roy closed with the valedictory, dwelling tenderly upon the strong ties of college life, and the eternal impressions there received.

Probably there was not a person in the crowded church but knew more or less of the story of his temptation and the heroic effort which he had been making to retrieve himself before the world. And the applause was tumultuous. In the midst of it one of the ushers who had been handing up the flowers

stepped upon the edge of the platform and held aloft a card.

In an instant everyone was hushed and eager.

"A set of Encyclopædia Britannica as a token of love and respect, from John Hunter!" rang out the usher's clear, strong voice. And he passed the card to Roy.

If the applause was tumultuous before, it was doubly so now. In their excitement the students rose in a body, the girls waving their dainty handkerchiefs, the boys clapping with a frantic enthusiasm that threatened utter destruction to their new kid gloves.

For a moment the faces before Roy glimmered through the rush of tears that filled his eyes. He caught a single glimpse of the rising students, then his face was hidden behind his handkerchief.

That day in June was a wonderful day. Rarely, indeed, does a day hold in it so much of compensation—rarely, because the way leading up to it is such a rough way of heart pangs and patient struggle; rarely, because such compensation can come only when victory has been brought out of just such sore defeat.

Through it all, Roy Hastings' heart throbbled out its overwhelming sense of grateful love in one uplifting thought—"My dear, dear Father in heaven, I thank thee!" This was the keynote of gladness in his joy—a joy so great that the remembrance of it would thrill him like an inspiration for many days—days of seemingly fruitless endeavor, days of self-distrust, days such as try men's souls.

From the church they went to the alumni banquet, where toasts and compliments vied with the other bill of fare in the liberal art of surfeiting, where laughter bubbled over at the slightest provocation, and where appreciation was sure to wait on each and every impromptu, whose brilliancy was none the less acceptable because, instead of a chance flash of wit, it happened to be the labored result of secret hours spent in desperately hard polishing.

Last of all, the reception—and with it the great day ended, a fitting climax of the week. And what a week it had been!

Grayson sat alone by the window in the room which he and Roy had shared together so long. And, as he sat there waiting for his room-mate to come, he was thinking over the events of the day, then of the preceding days, and so backward through the years.

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"Care and trial seem at last,
Through memory's sunset air,
Like mountain ranges overpast,
In purple distance fair."

He did not repeat the lines aloud; but they rose involuntarily to his mind. He thought of Roy, smiling a little as he surmised why he was so slow in coming—it was the last few hours that they too would have together; the morrow would bring only hasty partings; no wonder they lingered. But even as Grayson smiled, there was a mournful look in the brown eyes turned toward the stars, which gleamed and vanished fitfully between the waving branches of the trees.

Grayson had surmised truly. At the very time when he was thinking of them, Roy and May were sitting on one of the rustic seats in Mr. Hunter's yard. As people often do, they had been speaking of almost everything except what was uppermost in both their hearts.

"It is time to say good-night; and to-morrow it will be good-bye," Roy said. There was a moment or two of silence. Then he added, "May, there is the cosiest little parsonage over at Oldham—will you go there with me?"

"Yes, Roy," was the softly spoken answer.

At last there was the echo of hasty footsteps through the hall. Roy's face was radiant, and he came straight to the watcher by the window. With characteristic impulsiveness he dropped down and laid his head on the deformed shoulder, while his hand closed affectionately over Grayson's.

"Congratulate me!" he exclaimed; "such a glorious day! and now to-night May told me she would go to Oldham with me!"

"Of course—every congratulation I have left; Denham had the first choice. He came in for his this morning."

Roy laughed. "Away go 'The Four Invincibles';—it'll be your turn next!"

"Hastings," said the hunchback, "do you suppose that any woman could love me well enough to forget the house I live in?"

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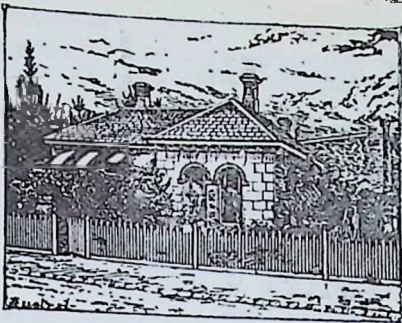
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