

*Fraser*

# The Australian Christian

National Weekly Representing Churches of Christ

## *This Land of Hope - Australia*



*A*USTRALIA is a young nation in a land old in geological history. By great sacrifices pioneers have won from unpromising regions great wealth for the building up of noble cities. Fifty years ago the Commonwealth Government was established to unite the States into one family. Great social gains have been made possible by this common bond. Only vision like that of our fathers can save Australia from narrow nationalism and lift her into the ranks of people with a world outlook. In this Jubilee Year we should plan to be among the leaders in tolerance and world brotherhood.



# THE CHURCH'S FIELD IS THE WORLD

## SWITZERLAND

### Catholics Enable Protestants Build a Chapel

IN the predominantly Catholic parish of Grelingen, in the Swiss Jura, the hundred-odd Protestants settled there were formerly unable, by reason of financial difficulties, to build their own little church as they wished to do. The indigenous congregation has now decided unanimously to enable the Protestant church to be built by means of a donation of 10,000 francs.

## INDIA

### Church of South India

IMPRESSIVE ceremonies were witnessed in Erode, when Dr. Ayyadurai Jesudasen Appasamy was solemnly consecrated as bishop of the new Coimbatore diocese of the church of South India. The creation of this diocese has added 30,000 members—23,000 Congregationalists and 7000 Anglicans and Methodists—to the church of South India.

Ceremonies began when Bishop Frank Whitaker, of Medak, acting moderator of the South India church, pronounced the call to worship. Present were delegates representing the entire membership of the church, many of them women dressed in multi-colored saris.

Dr. Appasamy, who has studied both in Europe and America, and is a D.Phil. of Oxford University, is regarded as one of the most distinguished scholars of the Indian church. His best-known book is the study of the Indian saint, Sadhu Sundar Singh, which he published in collaboration with Dr. B. H. Streeter. Dr. Appasamy's father, a distinguished convert from a high caste Hindu family, was for many years regarded as the doyen of South Indian Christians.

## KOREA

### Bible House Badly Hit

WE are informed from Seoul that the Bible House there, the headquarters of the Korean Bible Society, has been completely wrecked in consequence of the military action taken against the city. All stocks were destroyed, with the exception of one manuscript of the Bible in the new Hankul characters. The general secretary of the Bible Society, Y. B. Im, escaped with his life. The Bible societies of London and New York, which since the recent world war had been printing the scriptures in Korean in considerable quantities, are now sending all available stocks to Korea. The Japan Bible Society has just embarked on the publication of 40,000 copies of John's Gospel and 20,000 of Mark's in Korean, for the use of North Korean prisoners of war and refugees.

The British and Foreign Bible Society is preparing to publish, in Japan, 20,000 Bibles and 10,000 New Testaments in Korean.

## U.S.S.R.

### Protestant Appeal for Peace

THE head of the "Association of Baptists and Gospel Christians," Jakob Zhidkov, its vice-president, Golyaev, and its general secretary, Karev, have together called on "Baptists all over the world to support the Stockholm Peace Appeal and to protest against the aggression of the United States in Korea." The text of this appeal was given on Oct. 30 by the English service of Moscow radio.

The commentator closed his report by saying that the appeal "calls all Baptists all over the world, all Disciples of Christ, all Methodists

brethren and other to protest against the United States attack in Korea and the inhuman destruction of the Korean civilian population by the Americans; they should at the same time demand of the American Government the immediate ending of the war against the people of Korea."

## GERMANY

### Conference of Evangelicals

THE church conference convened in Berlin by Bishop Dibelius on Nov. 17, at which all 28 member-churches of the Evangelical church in Germany were represented by their bishops and spiritual heads, concluded its discussions, held in the Johannesstift institution in Spandau with a night session. The findings of the deliberations on the questions raised by the utterances of Kirchenpräsident Niemöller were issued in the form of the following statement by the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, whose members attended the conference.



Dr. Niemöller.

"I. After a long discussion with the leading office-holders of the component churches, the Council of E.K.D. (Evangelical Church in Germany) gratefully established the fact that the unity of our Evangelical church is, despite tensions, beyond all doubt. The council knows that community in faith does not include uniformity in political judgment. The question whether a rearmament, in whatever form it might take, is inevitable, can be differently answered within the faith. We exhort all those who bear responsibility, whether in the West or in the East, to treat this question with the utmost conscientiousness and not to decide against the will of the nation. The church speaks peace and means it. The church is resolved to serve peace in the world and does not cease to exhort peace and to pray for peace.

"II. Church-president, Dr. Niemöller, has frequently expressed himself regarding rearmament in Germany. The council recognises the seriousness and the gravity of the questions which he has put. The council regrets, however, the sharpness of many of his utterances, but it regrets also the form of criticism adopted by the Federal Chancellor. The Council of the German Evangelical Church respects the decision of Dr. Heinemann, in accordance with his conscience, to resign from the Federal Government, and the grounds which led him to this step.

"III. The Council of the German Evangelical Church repeats its call to members of congrega-

tions everywhere to observe their responsibility in public life. The council renews its plea to all office-holders of the church to exercise the utmost possible restraint in their political utterances because of their service to the gospel which concerns everybody."

## UNITED STATES

### Religious Statistics

TWENTY-NINE different churches with a total membership of 31,183,227 Christians are to join in the end of November to form the new National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Twenty-five of these churches are Protestant bodies and four are Orthodox. If we add in with the total figure for church members that of all those baptised, we have a total of 32,563,168. The figures for individual churches taking part are as follow:

Baptist: (American Baptist Convention; National Baptist Convention of America; National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.; Seventh Day Baptist General Conference)—8,569,549. Church of the Brethren—185,088. Congregational Christian Churches—1,184,661. Disciples of Christ—1,738,605. Evangelical and Reformed Church—714,583. Evangelical United Brethren Church—711,537. Society of Friends—74,810. Lutheran: (Augustana Lutheran Church, Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, United Lutheran Church of America)—1,675,920. Methodist: (African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Church)—10,760,045. Moravian: (Evangelical Unity of Czech Moravian Brethren in N.A., Moravian Church in America)—38,923. Orthodox: (Roumanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, Russian Orthodox Church in America, Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America)—409,800. Presbyterian: (Presbyterian Church in the U.S., Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., United Church of N.A.)—3,269,253. Protestant Episcopal Church—1,671,366. Reformed Church in America—179,085.

## KOREA

### Y.M.C.A. Helps War-sufferers

THE Korean Y.M.C.A.'s are organising a three-fold programme of relief for "war sufferers" in Korea, it has been announced in Geneva by Dr. Tracy Strong, general secretary of the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s.

First aspect of the Y.M.C.A. programme is that of providing spiritual ministry services by means of mobile teams of Y.M.C.A. workers, in order to promote a spiritual revival movement among the people of Korea. Secondly, the Y.M.C.A. plans to establish 24 community centres for "war sufferers" in camps in twelve Korean cities. Third element of the Y.M.C.A.'s activities will include a service to prisoners-of-war, which will provide religious, recreational, educational and cultural facilities for former "enemies."

Dr. Strong has also made public a letter from Chun-hae Kim, secretary of the Korea national committee of the Y.M.C.A., in which Chun wrote to his fellow Koreans:

"The hot war between two worlds has changed our land of the fresh morning into ruins. Our Korea is laid on the operation table and is the test case of world peace. For the first time in our history, Koreans are killing Koreans, even of the same family, for ideological reasons.

"All Koreans are war sufferers. Thousands are war prisoners in their homeland. All but three cities are destroyed. Orphans, widows and homeless folks increase daily."

## THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

January 30, 1951

Page 38



# An Editor's Closing Word

TO serve the church as the editor of a journal like "The Australian Christian" is a duty full of pleasure even if heavy with responsibility.

## EDITORIAL

### I.

Week by week it has been a joy to have had contacts with writers, correspondents and readers throughout the Commonwealth and in places beyond. By making use of the constant stream of information reaching us, we have sought to present a picture of the brotherhood's activities at home and abroad. Whatever the news, whatever the church department reporting, we have sought to give encouragement and guidance. Because we have believed that God moves in many mysterious ways, his wonders to perform, we have opened the pages to all of good work on the overseas mission field, in tent evangelism, among the Australian aborigines, youth activities, building programmes, social services and the training of preachers and missionaries. It was not for us, we felt, to write a word to discourage those who undertook tasks which they felt were laid upon them by God. To some it might have seemed that the brotherhood was spreading itself over too many fields, but it has been amazing how God has raised up workers and provided finances for expanding overseas missions, growing home fields, aboriginal and social programmes, all within the last ten years. Whether the future may judge this growth to be over optimistic remains to be seen; we have felt that God has been in such development and we have rejoiced in making the effort to encourage it.

### II.

FROM the beginning of our ministry with the paper we have sought to encourage readers to hold fast to the truth in God's word. We do not want to state that we have stood for the defence of the Bible, for God does not need our help to do that; he is strong enough to do that himself. However, we have taken great delight in showing how the word of God has been able to withstand the attacks of the doubters. Such discoveries as the Dead Sea Scrolls and their confirmation of God's word have been brought to the notice of readers. We have reported on the new trend of Biblical scholarship which is moving away from the liberalism of twenty years ago toward a new conservatism; not a blind holding to scripture, but a new enlightened appreciation of the traditions of the fathers. We might add how a book ("The Work and Words of Jesus"), published last year by Professor A. M. Hunter, of Aberdeen University, gathers up the results of much Biblical research, and encourages belief in the virgin birth, miracles, the penal theory of the atonement, the resurrection and the ascension of Christ. This statement is very different from that which was once published by recognised scholars, and is another proof that the church has no need to apologise for the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to all those who believe.

### III.

WHEN we became editor we promised to give prominence to evangelism. It seems that the zeal of the brotherhood for evangelism over the early period of history has been on the wane. We have entered a period when institutions have claimed our attention. While we do not want to hinder the growth of homes, mission schools, camp sites, etc., we should like to make a final plea for the continuance of every type of evangelistic programme. We must never let our small country, or even suburban, fields fail because of lack of zeal to preach the gospel in ways likely to attract and hold people. Brethren, we must remain evangelistic or fail to be a vital force.

Behind all our activity we have kept the vision which called the brotherhood into being.

The call to Christian unity on the basis of New Testament ideals has been raised again and again. We have rejoiced to show how modern church scholars have shown how sound were the words and activity of the pioneers of this movement. By setting Christ above creeds, the surrender of life in baptism above the teaching of infant sprinkling and the ministry of the whole church above that of the clergy alone, churches of Christ have been in the vanguard of a religious reformation, now bearing fruit in a new desire for Christian union. Only if we give up our ideals will we fall behind and fail to make a worthy contribution to the growth of movements now seeking to unite a divided church.

### IV.

ONE of our most difficult tasks has been the maintaining a policy that would also provide for liberty of expression for those who differed from us. We have resisted efforts to abolish the "Open Forum." Even though there were those who were ready to abuse the privilege offered, we have felt that an opportunity ought to be provided for readers to express their viewpoint. We hope the rights of minorities to express themselves will always be tolerated. The danger of only an official, or authorised, statement by executive committees being published is not to be treated lightly; it can rob the church of freedom of expression.

Throughout our associations with the Austral Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd. we have enjoyed the happiest of experiences. While we had the opportunity to confer with the directors on difficult points of policy, at no time was any policy dictated to the editor; he was left free to maintain what he considered to be a wise course. The policy of the paper was really dictated by the readers, whose interests were always considered. The view of no one State was allowed to govern the policy: at all times what was in the best interests of the churches throughout the Commonwealth was kept uppermost.

There is no doubt that we have failed to realise our own aims, and have fallen short of what was expected of us. However, for the opportunity of serving the brotherhood in this way, we now, as we lay aside the editorial pen, say "thank you."

## COMMONWEALTH JUBILEE

UNLESS a nation builds on spiritual foundations it is doomed. The ideal to unite in a Commonwealth to serve the interests of the whole nation was a move away from State jealousy and self-interest. By uniting into one fellowship, we have contributed to the spirit of co-operation. This has been a blessing to Australia.

This same ideal of co-operation must be carried into every sphere of the nation if we are to be saved from disaster. The trend to build up sectional interests in Trade Unions and in Employers' Federations, with each group fighting for self interest, can bring this nation to the brink of ruin, economically and morally. The present threat to peace in industry will only bring suffering to all sections, if it grows. If we can continue the spirit of co-operation that moved the "Fathers of Federation" to rise above pettiness and urged them to serve all, we shall be celebrating the present Commonwealth Jubilee in a very practical manner.

The vision that makes a people great is not one about which we only sing in hymns at church services, but is one we put into practice in daily life and in our common relationship. Without such a vision we shall perish.



# Passion Play of Oberammergau

By Mrs. C. M. Verco, of Blackwood, S.A.

A BREAK in the journey to Oberammergau is often made at the picturesque town of Innsbruck (a bridge over the River Inn) in Austria, for one is permitted to stay only two or three days in the village of the Passion Play. On an Australian spring-like day we were among the many who set out by coach to the renowned village of Oberammergau.

When one asked how long the journey took (it is about 50 miles), no one gave a satisfactory answer. We soon found out the reason for this; it depends entirely on the officials en route as to when the arrival will take place. Frequently the coach travellers were fumbling in their pockets or bags for passports and papers. Inquisitive questions were often asked, as "How many Belgian or Swiss francs, Italian lira, U.S.A. dollars or English pounds have you?" The many stoppages and queues at wayside official buildings prevented progress. At any moment one's innocent looking suitcases were liable to inspection. Even the magnificence of the snow-covered Bavarian Alps, as we saw them in Spring's most attractive robes, making trees, grass and flowers look their gayest, did not prevent a certain gloom from descending at times in the vicinity of the travellers, for they were having an overdose of officialism, because they were passing over the frontier between Austria and Germany.

This certainly was a strange journey to a religious ceremony. However, even the most pessimistic had to admit that we did eventually arrive at our destination. There we became a small group of the many thousands who were waiting to be allocated to their various homes—this, too, takes time! One little American lady became almost hysterical at 11 p.m., for she feared she would have nowhere to go. However she did very well in the end. During this waiting period, we had time to see some of the unusual features of the village. Biblical-looking men, bearded and with long hair, were plentiful (hundreds of men take part in the play, and let their beards and hair grow for nearly a year).

The modes of travel were primitive; many basket-like carts were used by the village children for conveying the luggage, and a few light horse-drawn vehicles were available for people who did not want to use shanks' ponies. Motors and taxis were conspicuous by their absence; one might possibly be conveyed to their destination in a luxurious motor, to find that their accommodation was not all they would desire. Our experience was just the reverse. We were happily lodged with village folk who, if possessing a rather scanty English vocabulary, showered us with kindness and simple comforts. The next morning (Sunday) the village was astir early, and a little after 8 a.m. we were among the 6000 people who had assembled in the huge hall. In front of us was an out-of-door beige colored semi-circular structure. It was imposing and classical looking, with its central stage, Corinthian column arches, streets, steps and side-rooms; the morning sun gave it a very Eastern setting. Through one of the arches could be seen, in the distance, a lovely Bavarian mountain.

The play is divided into many acts, each one being an incident in the story of our Lord, from the cleansing of the temple to the resurrection. It is told simply and scripturally; each act is preceded by a prologue and chorus, which introduces it, and is followed by an Old Testament tableau; thus in the part referring to the Lord's Supper, after the message in song, there was a tableau depicting the Manna in the Wilderness. These tableaux were exquisite and the arrangement gave breadth and variety to the play. The choir (60 men and women) was most impressive as it sang opening verses. Choir members were clad in cream robes and long

grey capes (which were changed to black during the saddest parts of the play), and wore sandals, girdles and a golden band round their long hair. From the moment they descended the steps on either side and walked with quiet, dignified bearing along the long front platform and met in the centre and throughout the eight hours of the play, everything was done in the same way—simply, sincerely and reverently. There



were soloists and some who played outstanding parts, but their personalities seemed to merge inconspicuously into the whole. Throughout it was the main theme that impressed one, never a separate part. No ostentatious effort or artificiality could be observed anywhere. It was a triumph from every angle. A spell was cast over the huge audience, the most reverent assembly, I think, of my experience. They realised afresh (perhaps some for the first time) something of the meaning and cost of Calvary. The many contrasts of those days were made strangely plain—Mary's pathetic tones and the intensity of the quiet courage in the voice of the suffering Lord, the refreshing sweetness of the children's voices as they sang their hosannas, and the cruel harshness of the tones of the mob as they cried, "Crucify him, crucify him!" the splendour of the Sanhedrim, the gorgeous robes of the Jewish rulers, and the pathetic looking little band of the Lord's followers, the officiousness of the Roman guard, and the tender care of the anxious women who never missed an opportunity of showing their devotion to the Saviour. Hour after hour passed, and we saw the clouds becoming thicker and thicker around our blessed Lord, until it became so dark that even nature voiced her protestations and darkness came over all the land," then came a ray of light—"It is finished," he said. The ray of light grew, until, on the resurrection morn, one heard a song of victory to the Saviour, and Light of the world. The great Hallelujah Chorus from hundreds of voices, those of the children adding to its sweetness, was heard as people rose from their seats in rever-

ence and homage to the great Redeemer of mankind.

We, I suppose, were among many who had gone with somewhat mixed feelings, wondering whether such a play should be acted. Under ordinary conditions I would personally answer in the negative, but the conditions here are extraordinary. One puzzling question probably came to the minds of many in that vast audience, "How is it that the village folk of Oberammergau could reach such artistic attainments and religious expression? Well, these people are artists; for centuries wood carving has been their special craft, and the situation of the town has no doubt helped—it is both secluded and open. It nestles peacefully in a green valley away from the hubbub of the world, surrounded by those majestic mountains. But one finds there are three roads leading from it to North, South and West, giving contact with the outside world and its liberal education. But the most important factor is that this play is the outcome of an ancient religious vow. Three hundred years ago the plague visited this town. The villagers met and prayed, asking God to help them in their sore need. They vowed that they would give this particular witness to the world every tenth year. Their prayer was heard and answered; the plague was stayed and the vow has been kept whenever humanly possible. It has become their special missionary effort, and the villagers are born and bred in this religious atmosphere. Even the children who wheeled the visitors' luggage in their picturesque basket carts feel that it is their contribution to a great cause. Does not this explain why this religious effort is so outstanding?

It is an unique play, for in the occupied countries where political tension is so strained, the call goes out from this little mountain village to the outside world to come apart for a while and hear the old, old story of Jesus and his love. The simple and profound message of the cross of Calvary is not popular in the world to-day, but it is cheering to know that, wherever one goes, there are those—little groups often—who are pointing others to the cross of Calvary—the only hope for a bewildered and lost world.



## Life's Mirror

THERE are loyal hearts, there are spirits brave,  
There are souls that are pure and true;  
Then give to the world the best you have,  
And the best will come back to you.

Give truth, and your gifts will be paid in kind,  
And honor will honor meet;  
And a smile that is sweet will surely find  
A smile that is just as sweet.

Give pity and sorrow to those who mourn;  
You will gather in flowers again  
The scattered seeds from your thought out-borne,  
Though the sowing seemed but vain.

For life is a mirror of king and slave,  
'Tis just what we are and do;  
Then give to the world the best you have  
And the best will come back to you.

—Selected.

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

January 30, 1951

Page 40



# IS THERE NO ROOM FOR CLERGYMEN?

Howard Anderson, writing in "The Christian Evangelist," gives a point of view that is interesting.

I HAVE a friend who has no use for clergymen; he claims to like me personally, but he wishes fervently that I would change jobs! He often says, "There isn't any room for clergymen in our modern day; they are the remnants of the culture of the Middle Ages."

Now it isn't often that I agree with my friend in his criticism of religion, but (and this may come as quite a shock to you) I am in perfect accord with his condemnation of clericalism. I agree with him on both points; first, there should not be any clergymen in the modern church, and secondly, the professionalised clergy is a throwback to the Middle Ages. In fact, my friend does not know how right he is! He is opposed to all ministers of religion on purely personal grounds; he has little use for anything or anybody connected with organised religion. He little suspects that his general statements of personal dislike have good Biblical and historical ground.

If you will make a thorough study of the New Testament, you will discover that there was no pattern of clericalism in the church of the first century. One of the main breaks between the early Christian movement and Judaism was the fact that Jesus and his disciples had very little use for the highly professionalised Jewish priesthood and its temple satellites. Jesus, himself, never posed as a specialised leader of religion; he was a carpenter by trade who must be recognised as a lay teacher according to all the standards of ecclesiasticism. Peter, James and John were fishermen, and Matthew was a tax collector. Paul, the first great missionary of the church, was a weaver. Although we don't know the vocations of all the early leaders of Christianity, there is absolutely no indication that any of them considered themselves clergymen in the accepted sense of that term. One of the main characteristics of the early church was the absence of a professionalised ministry. The word, clergyman, cannot be found in the New Testament.

As the church took on concrete form, and organisation became necessary, certain members were assigned specific tasks according to their abilities, but these particular tasks were never given to a single person as a specific professional leader of the congregation. Rather, they were divided up among the members of the group, and these members assumed certain responsibilities as their part in the ongoing programme of the Christian fellowship.

At first the only leaders of the congregation at Jerusalem were the apostles, those who had been closely associated with Jesus. A little later, as the group grew in numbers, it was necessary to choose seven men to be in charge of the charitable work among the members (Acts 6) so that the apostles could devote themselves to prayer and preaching.

There is evidence also that these early Christians adopted the plan of the synagogues whereby the older men were called on to give guidance in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the individual congregations (Acts 11 and 14). Thus quite early in Christian history we have the twin offices, elders and deacons, indicated. The Greek words used to describe these offices were "presbuteros" and "diakonos" . . . presbuteros translated literally means "elder," while diakonos means "a servant." These were not ecclesiastical terms but descriptive words used to denote the tasks which had been assigned to these men. Near the end of the first century A.D., the elders (now called "episcopos" or overseers) and deacons were recognised as utilitarian officers of local congregations (1 Tim. 3). However, there is no indication that they were ever considered professional clergymen.

The New Testament tells us plainly that the

Are clergymen really necessary? This article says not necessarily. "My job really is to work myself out of a job; your task, as Christians, is to make my job unnecessary," says this minister. Are our churches only "audiences" gathered once a week to listen to "a religious lecture delivered by a paid professional"? There is food for thought here, even if there is another side to the question.

work which is now considered the peculiar province of the "minister" was carried on by the members of the church of that day. In the fourth chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus, he describes this arrangement in rather complete detail:

"But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. . . . And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers for the equipment of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (See also 1 Cor. 12.)

From all New Testament evidence we are sure that the kind of work which I do, as a modern minister, was carried on then by the members of the churches "without benefit of clergy"!

As a matter of historical fact, the idea of "lumping" these several tasks into one was a rather late development. The necessity for a specialised group of church leaders arose only as the people of the church made Christianity something less than their main interest. You get a good illustration of this process in the development of the Jewish synagogue. During one period of Hebrew history, when the sacred law required a quorum of ten persons before synagogue services could begin, a congregation would frequently hire ten men to be present each Sabbath in order to insure the required number! (Nowadays we hire one man to do the work of ten!) The idea of a paid ministry within the Christian church probably came into being in just this way. When the first hearty zeal of discipleship began to wear off, some of the men said, "This religion is taking too much of our time away from our businesses; let's pay Timothy to do some of the work in the church for us. He likes church work anyway . . . and this will release us from some of the responsibility of evangelism and visiting the sick." Thus the seeds of clericalism were planted as the mercenaries in the army of the Lord were brought into being.

The next steps in the evolution of ecclesiasticism were natural and easy. The rise of sacramental theology and the growth of the priesthood went hand in hand. A separate group of religious leaders soon turned the simple symbolic rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper into sacraments which only this specialised group could administer. By the beginning of the middle ages the priesthood was strongly entrenched in the life of the church to such an extent that the original New Testament idea of the priesthood of all believers was lost. This group of professional religious leaders were so far set apart from the rest of the Christian

group that they were identified by special garb, special titles, and special tasks. It was during this period of history that the name "clergymen" came into being. The root meaning of "clergy" is "clerk," from the Low Latin word meaning "scholar." Because the priest was often the only man in the village who could read and write, he was called a "clericus" or scholar. So the word "clergy" and the idea of a specialised group of religious leaders became synonymous.

We of the Christian churches have always stood for a return to New Testament Christianity, but in spite of the fact that there is no evidence of a professional clergy in the church of the first century, we have kept the pattern of a professional ministry in all our congregations. Why is it that we have been so insistent on other New Testament practices but have refused to recognise that all Christians should shoulder the tasks usually assigned to the minister of the church? Well, we won't have to look far for an answer to that one! The fact is that we have found it easier to pay a mercenary than to join the army ourselves! If we were to adopt the practice which Paul recommends to the Corinthian and Ephesian congregations, we would have all to assume added responsibilities for the programme of the church to which we belong. It is much easier to hire one man as a paid servant of the church and make him responsible for evangelism, preaching, visiting the sick, and all the other tasks of service and helpfulness. Of course we rationalise our position by claiming that it is more efficient to pay one well-trained minister to do the work in this day of specialisation. But is it?

Let us take one field of work and examine it for a bit. Take the work of evangelism for example. How do we evangelise to-day? Well, the process goes something like this. Some member of the congregation locates someone who might be persuaded to become a Christian. What does he do about it? Usually he waits until he catches the minister on the street and then he tells him about the "prospect" and promptly forgets all about the matter. This is supposed to be a very efficient procedure on the ground that the minister will know exactly what to do.

But is this so? Well, in the first place, if every member of the church turned in a single "prospect's" name each month, it would be physically impossible for one man to interview every potential Christian thus listed. Secondly, it is a fact that no minister can ever be as convincing in his "sales talk" as the ordinary but thoroughly consecrated Christian who bears witness to the faith that is in him. To use modern language, there is no advertising quite so effective as a satisfied customer. In the practice of the New Testament church, "some" (not one to a congregation!) were called to be evangelists. Actually, if we are to be a New Testament people we must not only witness concerning the true form of baptism, but we must also witness for Christ. This should not be the special job of the minister; it should be a job for every Christian! The most efficient form of evangelism is that which uses every Christian as an evangelist.

Yes, I know what I am saying! If this New Testament ideal should be followed in practice it would mean that I would be out of a job. Well, I don't know of any more wonderful way to join the ranks of the unemployed. Yes, a truly consecrated congregation would have no need for a paid ministry. All the work which I do could be done by the members of the congregation . . . and done better, for that matter . . . if we really meant business about our faith. The best preaching in the world

(continued on page 42.)



# There is no East or West

By Florence Gordon.

A WOMAN in an African village sat penning a letter to one of the great Bible societies. Translated, it reads:

"Our Friends Overseas: We send you greetings and ask if you are well. We are happy because we have the Bible here, and thank you for helping to give the Bible to us. Every day we can read the Bible to our children. We are sending you a small gift because we want to help people in other countries to have Bibles, too. That is all. Good-bye. We are the women here in Dondi, Angola, Africa.

"Treasurer of the women, Ilda Mbaka."

It was a portion of the World Day of Prayer offering in Angola last year that Ilda Mbaka was sending "to help people in other countries to have Bibles, too." Another portion of it was given for a baby bed in the new maternity ward of the Dondi hospital.

There are people in Christian communities all around the world who come together in prayer on that first Friday in Lent each year, and in their praying and in their giving embrace God's creatures in all the other communities. From dawn to dark they gather. A New Zealand woman writes happily, "We are thrilled that with our sisters on Fiji we began the Day." As corollary she adds, "A liberal response was made to the appeal for the woman and children of Europe." The pastor of the Community Baptist church of Kodiak, Alaska, says, "Kodiak was among the very last fellowships to observe the day. Sessions began at two and ended at nine, with services for all ages. Members of the Russian Orthodox church joined in the worship, and the Roman Catholic church at our invitation included the World Day of Prayer in its regular Friday holy hour. Truly it was a community-wide observance which promoted goodwill."

"I ran out of printed copies," reports a chairman in Bengal, East Pakistan, "but that was good in one way." In a little village in South India, one hundred were expected, but 183 attended, "plus children and babies and a few men." Some had walked eight miles to attend.

In Bahrain, on the Persian Gulf in Arabia, they followed the same service as we, but used both Arabic and English languages, as there were representatives of many lands present. The presence of women in *abbas* (black cape-like cloaks) indicated that many Moslem friends came to join in prayer. From the nearby oil-company city came American and British friends. Says a missionary, "It was a stirring experience to sing hymns together. The words sounded different but the melodies and meaning were identical. Language barriers do not exist in Christian music. It was even more wonderful to join in prayers of confession, thanksgiving and self-dedication. Each language expressed the thoughts and inner feelings of all present. We felt a bond of fellowship and love with Christians all around the world."

Despite civil war and disruption in Burma, Rangoon observed the World Day of Prayer. Services were held in several of the refugee camps in the three national languages, and there was a union English service. A Y.W.C.A. worker writes, "These services were much appreciated this year when there is so much suffering, and bitterness and suspicion between the two communities. Never before have we Christians been so conscious of our world-wide unity, and we pray for peace with all the depths of our being. We would especially thank the women of China (who prepared the 1949 service) for sharing with the rest of the world their spiritual experiences."

There were observances in Keisen girls' school, in Tokyo, Japan, of which Miss Michi

Kawai is principal, and this year the girls there will have the joy of using a service prepared by their own headmistress.

From Wiesbaden, Germany, came this wistful note: "Thank you so much that you did not forget us and sent us all the helps for the World Day of Prayer. We were together in a little circle of women who were very thankful for the meeting, and took part with all their hearts in the prayers for the world. All of us had such blessing from the little meeting that we decided to try a greater meeting next year. As we were women from various circles in our town, we hope that each of us can reach more women, and we can have more women together next year to enjoy the blessing of the World Day of Prayer. Please don't forget us next year!"

In Baghdad, Iraq, Rajiha Khalis Al Rafiq, an eighth-grade pupil in the American School for Girls, tells how they gave the programme as a choral reading: "The class was divided into leaders and chorus. The chorus was divided by two rows, the first row containing the girls with light voices and the two rows in the back containing the girls with the dark voices. Every leader said what was expected from her. The chorus answered her what they were expected to say. Between each leader there were some hymns and the school hymn, 'Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee.' Our assembly was very beautiful, so all the school wonder at it. I pray that this description may please you. Please accept the regards and estimations."

In Monieka, Belgian Congo, the church was filled with men, women and children. The world programme, translated into Lonkundo, was read responsively by two pastors, grey-haired, dignified Lianza John, and Joseph Inganda, a zealous young Institute graduate. The high point was the prayer of one of the students:

"O God, in times past our fathers didn't know you. But now our people know and worship you in many villages here as elsewhere in other lands. To-day as your followers in all villages around the world come together for prayer, may we all be united and made one in Christ, the Saviour."

"We left the church to go to our usual tasks at school, hospital and workshop," concludes our correspondent, "but the day was somehow different because we had joined the world in prayer."

When we gather on the first Friday of Lent each year, let us be conscious that an innumerable company will be worshipping with us.

Last March, on that first Friday in Lent, Mrs. Virgil Sly, of Indianapolis, was on her way from Belgium to Africa. She had to leave Brussels before the service there. But Mrs. Sly says, "We were flying from fifteen to twenty thousand feet above World Day of Prayer services all afternoon and evening! We read all of the material, and had our prayers individually and quietly as we flew across Belgium, France, the rest of Europe, the Mediterranean Sea and on to Tripoli, where we stopped for forty-five minutes that night. At 4 a.m. next day, which would be about the time any night services may have been in session in California, we were in Kano, Nigeria."

"As we flew through clouds and then emerged and could look down upon the earth below, I could not help but think that when a person is that high above the earth, political boundaries cannot be seen, the color of the skins of the

people is not noticeable, and the different languages cannot be heard. How important it is for all of us to get a right perspective as we look at the problems we face and have dealings with God's people across the face of the earth."

## Is There No Room for Clergymen?

(continued from page 41.)

would be the sincere testimony of a member of this church who would stand up and tell what Christ means to him in his daily living. That would be convincing. The best ministry to the sick is that thoughtful call made by a fellow Christian who sacrifices some of his own time to help someone else. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a person in trouble could seek the advice of a mature Christian who has met this particular problem and conquered it with the help of Christ? The theory of Christian discipleship is that each person contributes to the welfare of the congregation by giving his particular talents in consecrated service. Whenever we hire someone to do some task for the church we are admitting either that no one in the group has the talent required or that the members of the group are not willing to consecrate their talents to the Lord.

It is tragically true that modern churches (with the exception of certain groups like the Christian Scientists and the Mormons) have lost the idea of the Christian fellowship. We have departed from the New Testament norm. Instead of being a vital redemptive fellowship, we have become an audience that gathers once a week to listen to a religious lecture delivered by a paid professional. We judge the effectiveness of our church by the eloquence of "our" preacher. If we "enjoyed the sermon," the service of worship was successful. And all you have to do to belong to this lectureship is to pay your dues: one dollar a lecture (when you attend!).

Small wonder that our congregations lack vitality. If I talk myself out of a job I will do the kingdom of God my greatest service. If I could convince the members of my church to become the ministers of this congregation, I would resign right now and rejoice! My job really is to work myself out of a job; your task, as Christians, is to make my job unnecessary.

The most creative period of Christian history was the first century of our era. During that time the church was a redemptive fellowship whose members were dedicated to the task of witnessing concerning their faith. Slaves and businessmen, housewives and humble workmen, even "the saints in the household of Caesar," and a Greek physician by the name of Luke made Christianity their main business. The phenomenal growth of the early church can only be explained by the fact that all Christians were:

"... the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God ... appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues. ..."

And "just as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one spirit we were all baptised into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit." (1 Cor. 12.)

This is what made the early church a redemptive fellowship, and only this concept of the church will make it effective in our world!

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

January 30, 1951

Page 42



# Commonwealth Round-Up

## HERE AND THERE

Owing to the Australia Day holiday, the paper went to press on Jan. 26. All news items reaching us before that date have been included in this issue.

Lionel Dudley, a former missionary who, until recently, was preacher at Doncaster, Vic., has not regained strength after recent illness. Two weeks ago he had another setback.

Churches are reminded of their opportunity to provide funds for the work of evangelism amongst the Australian aborigines. The annual offering will be received in churches of Christ throughout the Commonwealth on February 4.

R. Banks, who is taking up a new ministry at Swan Hill, Vic., conducted farewell services on Jan. 21 at Castlemaine and Harcourt. Worship services were held at Harcourt at 10.45 a.m., and at Castlemaine at 11.35. Gospel service was largest for some time, 90 to 100 being present. At conclusion, a social half-hour was spent to farewell Mr. and Mrs. Banks and family. Mrs. Taylor spoke on behalf of ladies; Reg. Broad, secretary of Harcourt, spoke. Secretary of Castlemaine church presented Mr. Banks with a suitable gift, and also wished family God's blessing in new field. Miss Symes, who is taking a position with the Social Service Department of the brotherhood, received a gift, and messages of goodwill from her many friends of church. Mr. and Mrs. Smith, of West Preston, were received into fellowship by Mr. Banks on Jan. 21. Mr. Methven, sen., conducted first prayer and Bible study meeting for 1951. In absence of minister, these meetings will be carried on by individuals of prayer and study group.

At Burwood, N.S.W., church experienced splendid meetings over holiday season. The annual Christmas social and distribution of Christmas mail was a happy experience. Articles of mail numbered 1057. An innovation was planned for New Year's Eve. Much planning and prayer was put into effort, and this was signally rewarded. Instead of usual Sunday night meeting, the meetings did not start till 8.30. From 8.30 to 9 o'clock community hymn singing, with solos interspersed, led people into spirit of worship. At 9 o'clock gospel service was held, when Ethelbert Davis spoke on subject, "Into the Unknown Future." That was followed, from 10-11, by a religious talkie film, "A Voice in the Wilderness." At 11 o'clock supper was served, and at 11.30 a watch-night service began. New Year greetings were given by Burwood preacher, and by B. G. Corlett, of Belmore; Arthur Baker, of Lidcombe; and Pastor Rodgers, of Burwood Baptist church. Enthusiasm kept rising as groups arrived and chapel began to fill. Church thanks God for blessing experienced by all present.



## The Northern State

AT present record rains are falling in North Queensland. The tropical districts of that State, though sparsely populated are not unsuited to white civilisation. The north abounds in wealth and tropical beauty. However, the greatest riches of any country consist of the souls of men and women. Churches in the far north are valiantly upholding the cause of truth. Conditions are difficult and the battle is hard; but there are ample supplies of spiritual resources.

Charters Towers is still without the services of a full-time preacher, and the work is maintained by local brethren. Townsville and Mackay are endeavoring to improve the conditions of their preachers, and are seeking the assistance of the Queensland Home Mission Committee. Even with proposed increases salaries will still be far from adequate. Churches should make every effort to enable preachers to share a little of present-day prosperity. One young man recently baptised at Armstrong has removed to a country centre and will endeavor to conduct a Bible school.—"The Echo."



Missionary Group, New Hebrides.

Back Row.—R. McLean, Miss Daisy Henderson, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Smith, Mr. H. Finger.

Front.—Mrs. R. McLean and Baby Ian, Mrs. H. Finger and Stephen.

John Finger and Miss A. F. Kennedy not in group.

## Missionary Education

AT Federal Conference in Hobart, Tas., last October, the Missionary Education Department ceased to function as a committee. The missionary education programme then became the responsibility of the Women's Federal Executive.

The new syllabus will be ready soon, and will follow the theme, "Am I My Brother's Keeper?" for the topic papers, and "Christ and Human Relationships" for the devotional meditations. Instead of the syllabus being prepared for eleven months as hitherto, it will be for nine months (March to November). Costs for printing and duplicating have risen so much over past few years, it has been found necessary to curtail expenses in this way. The change will not affect all societies, as some do not commence the New Year's work until March, and December meeting is usually in form of a "break-up" party.



## Evangelism in California, U.S.A.

SEVEN more churches have enrolled in our Simultaneous Evangelistic Crusade, to be conducted February 4-18, 1951. These churches are Bell, Brea, Fullerton, Holtville, Monrovia, North Long Beach, and Redondo Beach. Orange Avenue, in Santa Ana, will conduct a visitation

evangelism programme only. This makes 39 churches enrolled in the crusade, and there is yet time for others to decide to have a special evangelistic programme next February.

Nearly half of the churches, which have invited preachers from other States, have received favorable replies from their guest ministers. We expect to secure a guest leader for every church desiring one.

Most of the churches participating in this evangelistic crusade will put on a visitation programme immediately prior to their preaching missions. Such churches are wise, for a thoroughly prepared visitation evangelism programme will reach many untouched by preaching services, and will make the evangelistic services much more effective.—F. Purnell, "United Informer."



## Rural Church

SPLENDID GAINS AT EMERALD, VIC.

SIX members have been added recently; two by faith and baptism, and four—Pearl, Bill, Garry and Clive Massey—by transfer from Northcote. Full chapel on New Year's Eve morning brought to a close the stewardship campaign. December attendances averaged 42 in morning and 59 in evening. North Fitzroy campers and visitors substantially raised average. 90 Monbulk campers led open air evening service on New Year's eve, when 160 were present. Enjoyable singing and a good message by F. T. Morgan were appreciated. Church commenced full-time ministry in January, R. V. Holmes being preacher. On Christmas eve, church united with Church of England in a carols by candlelight service at the lake, when hundreds were present. A happy Christmas party raised £70 for manse fund. In twelve months manse debt has been reduced from £733/6/4 to £100. Electric urn has been donated to chapel. Youth Fellowship resumed mid January.



## Women's Activities

BRIEF NEWS ITEMS FROM STATES.

IN Western Australia there have been two resignations from the Executive Committee of the Women's Conference: Mrs. Greenwood, from position of assistant secretary, as she will be leaving for Kalgoorlie early in the new year, and the president, Mrs. A. G. Elliott, who left for Eastern States. Mrs. Humphrys reported on the need for sisters to stand behind committee handling Prohibition Poll.

Mrs. Manning, of Carnegie, led the devotional meditation at the Victorian December meeting. There were 75 ladies present. The president, Mrs. Washfold, welcomed Mrs. H. Williams, from Kaniva. Sister Scoble, from Bethesda Hospital, was speaker. She gave interesting talk on work of The Salvation Army Hospital. The president reported on visits from Yarrawonga, Warrnambool, Port Fairy, Colac and Hamilton.

In Queensland the Home Mission report showed the work at Warwick and Nambour to be progressing well. The Foreign Mission work is in great spirit, parcels being received from city and country churches. Thirty parcels have also been sent to Britain. Christmas social service work done in home at Gregory terrace.

In South Australia Mrs. R. McLean spoke to women on work in islands. Overseas superintendent reported that farewells were said to Mr. and Mrs. Colin Thomas in home of Mr. Kentish by members of Federal and State Boards. Dorcas superintendent told of goods, etc., received at special aborigine afternoon.



# News of the Churches



## Tasmania

**Devonport.**—On Dec. 31 R. Pitt gave morning message, and at night T. Burt, of Invermay, preached; Mrs. Alderton sang a solo. On Jan. 14 F. Burt was morning speaker and E. Stevens at night, and Miss Higgs helped with solo. On Jan. 21 church had fellowship with Mr. and Mrs. Reeve, of Ipswich, Qld. Mr. Reeve was speaker at both services. Mrs. R. Evans, of Balwyn, Vic., has been on holidays with her brother, J. Webb, and has had fellowship with church. Mr. Reeve gave a splendid gospel message at night and E. Stevens sang a solo.

## New South Wales

**Earlwood.**—On Dec. 2 Doreen Smith, who has been with church from kindergarten days, was married to H. Poidevin. Both will continue to serve in Gunning district. During preacher's vacation, messages were given by Messrs. Paddon and Sparks. On Jan. 20 Shirley Gabb (Canberra Hospital) was married to R. Weidner, of Canberra. Shirley is the daughter of Bible school superintendent. Congratulations also go to his son Ronald, successful final year dentistry student.

**Bexley North.**—Christmas services were well attended as was meeting on Christmas Day at 9 a.m., 50 attending. Special gift of £3 was received from Junior Endeavorers, and other donations were given to manse fund. Many visitors were present over holiday period, when a helpful message was given by Ethelbert Davis. R. Saunders continues to preach the Word at gospel meetings. Col. Portch made good confession on Dec. 17. Average attendances for 1950 were: 57 breaking bread and 55 at gospel. Membership is 91 active, 17 isolated and 30 supplementary roll. Sympathy of church is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Portch in sudden death of three-year-old son.

## South Australia

**Fullarton.**—On Jan. 20 there was a good meeting in morning. Miss L. Doutty, missionary-elect Central Japan Pioneer Mission) gave a splendid message. In evening song service was conducted by Peter Mau. B. W. Manning preached the gospel. Choir supported service with an item in song. Church extends sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Ron. Barnes in passing of his mother.

**Forestville.**—Church enjoyed fellowship with several interstate and country visitors during holiday season. W. A. Russell's faithful ministry is being blessed. Prayer meetings are growing. Morning and evening meetings on Jan. 14 were an inspiration, W. A. Russell preaching. After evening service church spent an enjoyable fellowship hour to farewell Heather Gready, Lester Russell, Ray Stephens and Janet Allan who leave shortly to reside at Port Lincoln, Port Pirie, and Sydney respectively. All have given faithful service in church and Bible school. Endeavor societies have resumed activities enthusiastically. Peter Fopp has taken over leadership of Intermediate Society from Miss Gready, who gave message at combined meeting on Jan. 14. Attendances at Bible school steadily increase with passing of holidays. Services on Jan. 21 were well attended and W. A. Russell delivered helpful messages.

**Murray Bridge.**—On Dec. 29 a farewell social to N. Kingston was held. M. Swincer was able chairman. Items of song by Miss B. Orchard and Mesdames B. Watts and G. Davis were well received. Expressions of appreciation for ministry of Mr. Kingston were expressed by youth groups, Mr. Dix; Men's Fellowship, N. Page; Ladies' Guild, Mrs. Sharp; Church, W. Harper. Mr. Kingston responded. On Dec. 31 Mr. Kingston preached farewell addresses, all services being well attended. At conclusion of gospel service four young people made good confession. Brian Dix, Beryl Lehman, Shirley Allen and Robin Dix. Church has enjoyed three years of service given by Mr. Kingston and believes that Kilburn and Enfield Heights will be richly blessed by his ministry.

**Unley.**—Christmas camp for young people proved a wonderful experience for all. During Christmas season church secretary (C. L. Johnston) painted the three vestries of church—a much-appreciated contribution. House committee and C.Y.F. members spent an evening repairing kindergarten chairs, etc., and young people made a start on painting and kalsomining young men's classroom. Sunday school has continued sessions throughout holiday month, with good response from scholars. A most helpful after-school session was one in which Miss Joy Turner demonstrated a lesson as outlined in new Austral graded books. She replied to questions and made several worthwhile suggestions. Mr. and Mrs. Norris and family spent a fortnight at Goolwa, and services were taken by F. A. Messent, Trevor Turner, H. E. Paddick and H. R. Taylor. After 21 years of faithful service as caretaker, J. H. Smith has resigned as from end of February. Misses D. and N. Walden left on Jan. 19 for a holiday trip to England and the Continent.

## Victoria

**Geelong.**—Many visitors have been present during holiday season. There has been a wonderful spiritual uplift felt amongst the members, many rededicating their lives to the Master's service. On Jan. 14, D. R. Stirling exhorted church in morning. The midweek prayer services continued during holidays and were well attended.

**Drumcondra.**—In absence of Mr. Pigdon, who is on holiday, Mr. McDonald, from Latrobe Terrace church, spoke at morning service on Jan. 14 and 21. Mr. Baker, from Wangaratta, gave morning address while Mr. Tattersall conducted evening meeting. Mrs. Hill, from N.S.W., has been meeting with church.

**Maryborough.**—Mr. Coombs, of College of the Bible, commenced a short ministry with church on Jan. 7. His messages are much appreciated. On 14th Mr. Withers, conference president, addressed large congregations morning and evening. At evening service he baptised a Bible school scholar, who was received into church on 21st. Auxiliaries have been in recess until February.

**Morwell.**—At a special meeting held in January, John Blucher resigned as treasurer owing to departure to Fairfield to take duties with Paper Mills in that district. James Blucher was appointed to fill vacancy. Mr. Quayle

visited many homes in district on Jan. 10, and addressed morning service on Jan. 14. A prayer meeting was held in evening service. On 21st Mr. Hilbrick introduced Sister Day, a missionary from the China Inland Independent Mission, who told of difficulties facing Christians in China.

**Ballarat (York-st.).**—R. Fraser's visit, representing Gospel Film Ministry, was appreciated by all on Sunday afternoon and evening of Dec. 31, when he screened modern religious films. Three decisions for Christ have been made in past month. A. Johnson was set apart on Jan. 21 before his departure for Norseman as a full-time missionary carpenter. He will be accompanied as far as Carnarvon by his brother, Bruce, and R. Veal, who are giving a fortnight's service in a working bee at mission station.

**Reservoir.**—The annual Christmas service by candlelight was conducted by R. E. Burns, ably assisted by Mrs. Plummer in charge of choir and Mrs. Hartley, who contributed several elocutionary items of a seasonal nature. During vacation of Mr. Burns and family, Messrs Plummer, Garth, Hing and Gowans (of Sydney) gave valued help. Miss Faye Doran succeeds Mrs. House as kindergarten superintendent. Sunday school appreciates sterling work of Mrs. House over last year. Mr. Burns resumed services on Jan. 14, having now commenced his fifth year of ministry.

**Brighton.**—The annual choral service was rendered by the choir on Sunday evening, Dec. 17, at which over 160 were present. Auxiliaries have recommenced activities this week for new year. Jan. 14 was a memorable day in history of church. Mr. and Mrs. Skillicorn and family were farewelled prior for departure for India to take up missionary duties with British brotherhood. Mr. Skillicorn spoke challengingly at morning service and after evening service, at which 164 were present; a presentation was made to couple and their family. During gathering the preacher, C. G. Taylor, presented E. B. Hilbig with a gift in appreciation of his services as an officer for a period of 21 years. Miss Jean Waugh, who will be leaving to visit relations in England in the near future, was farewelled also.

## Obituary

### Horace Tomkins

**H**INDMARSH lost a citizen of no mean worth in passing of Horace Tomkins on Thursday, Jan. 18. For many years Mr. Tomkins had been a member and officer in the Hindmarsh church, as well as worker in Sunday school. About three years ago, because of advancing age, he resigned as treasurer of school. It was always a joy to pay a pastoral visit to their house, and it was on an occasion such as this, as we talked together, he was suddenly called from his life here. He had occupied many public positions in the community during his lifetime. He was a councillor for many years and was called to the honor of the Mayoralty. He was interested in sporting activities, and often went away as manager of teams in cricket and football. He was a strong temperance advocate, and for many years secretary of local Rechabite Lodge. For many years he was chief electoral officer for both State and Federal elections. His life's work was honored at its close by a great concourse of men and women who gathered at his funeral. Even those who did not agree with the policy of his life, came to pay homage to his memory, as a citizen whom they had admired. He now rests from his labors, but his works follow him. To Mrs. Tomkins and the family we offer our sincere sympathy, and we know the God of all comfort will be their constant companion and strength.—J. E. Shipway.



# Christmas Activities

A. Anderson.

OUR Christmas season and new year activities have come and gone once again. The year has flown, and it seems impossible that the world has lived another 365 days. But in our own little world on Aoba, "Father Time" reveals such facts.

The women had their day of Christmas fellowship on December 6, and the school children on the 15th. Both functions naturally cater mainly for the folk living close by, say within three hours' walk from the mission. Other villages beyond would certainly like to join in the fellowship but that would be impossible.

Churches in isolation have their own celebrations, and usually we are able to give them a few things to make them feel that we have not forgotten them. Some had a few toys, others a few lollies, but what are they amongst so many? You could help to make a Christmas tie with the homeland for these isolated folk if you wished. It would not cost much more than the effort.

Since we commenced the ball rolling, almost every village has had some form of Christmas festivity. For most churches it is an occasion for presenting a small sum of money to the leaders who have carried on the work of the church during the year. It should be noted that no teacher receives any weekly allowance for his services, hence the reason for giving a gift of money at Christmas. It may be £5 or £10 only, but it is an expression of thanks from the church. More than one leader of the church would receive some such gift, and sometimes a leader from another church receives a gift for what he has done for that particular church. We have attended a number of church festivities, and enjoyed doing so. We endeavor to contribute something which will make them feel that we are one with them in the spirit of Christmas. We have received some presents of fresh meat which have been most enjoyable and acceptable.

We held our Christmas services on Sunday, 24th, this year, because it was so close to Christmas Day, and it allowed each village to have a Christmas service independently on the 25th. Our first gathering was by the seaside where the baptismal service was conducted. An hour's service was held as all gathered around in the shade of the large banyan tree growing on the beach. Three addresses were given, after which Abel Barney baptised the 20 candidates who had made their stand. Eight converts were from Lolongwalakesa, a village into which the church has but recently entered. The old leader, Joseph, died last year, having been converted about two years previously. We are happy to see the response, but we know how difficult it will be for them to go on to perfection and the fulness of the Christian life. Previous environments make their marks for life and the new life is difficult to grasp, even though the simple truth of repentance for sin and salvation is understood. There are heathen remaining who may be won eventually.

The afternoon service commenced at 3.15 and finished two hours later. The baptised were received into fellowship because, being Sunday, it was suitable. The Lord's Table was spread, after which addresses were given. Solomon from Lovutilou church was one who addressed the gathering. He was in Queensland during the Kanaka days, and was later returned to Aoba when the Kanakas were sent back to their own islands. Monday we all attended the Ndui Ndui service.

## Hariba at Indapur

AFTER much planning for the housing of Hariba and Shalini, they have moved in and already made friends. Dr. Michael tells something of this new move.

"We went to Indapur after our last committee meeting and helped establish Hariba and Shalini in their new home. Mr. Bairagi has done a magnificent piece of work, and the local people say that the building, which had begun to allow water into portions of its upper walls, is now good for a hundred years. Mr. Bairagi and some of his teachers and a number of the boarding boys camped out there and rendered quite a lot of voluntary assistance. It was nice to be able to see Hariba and Shalini bundled into their new home, and to join in a little word of prayer together for God's richest blessing on the new venture."

## Special for Reporters

YOUR work is greatly appreciated. You are the creators of brotherhood bonds; news of the churches helps to maintain a sense of unity. The news columns indicate progress on all fronts and the strategy being used in local congregations.

Commencing with the first issue in February, an effort will be made to itemise some of the news under Discipleship (public decisions), Membership, Marriages and Deaths. Reporters are asked to commence with names of those that come under these headings and omit them from body of report.

Little and often is the Golden Rule of the reporter. News two weeks old is too old and should be omitted. Ideal reports should not exceed 20 lines. Long reports are read by the few only, short, terse, factual reports by the many. Readers are interested in events and facts rather than dates and embellishments.

### SECRETARIES!

Consult the . . .

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### ACCOMMODATION

Congregational church member wishes to rent unfurnished or furnished room with Christian family. Reply A.K., c/o Austral Publishing Co., 524-530 Elizabeth-st., Melbourne.

Young couple require S.C. flat or half house, furnished or unfurnished. Please help. Apply A. Haddow, 3 Story-st., Parkville, Melb., N.2.

### IN MEMORIAM.

FISHER.—In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Frank Hugh, who passed on at Darwin, Jan. 28, 1945. Treasured memories.—Inserted by loved ones, Mundalla, S.A.

### DEATHS.

BREWER.—On Jan. 2, in Bendigo Hospital, Harriet, beloved wife of the late Edward, devoted mother of Edward and Harry (Golden Square), loving sister-in-law of Elsie (Pendle-st.; Box Hill), Florence (Camperdown) and loved aunt of Hilton and Fred.

Behind all shadows standeth God.

## THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

January 30, 1951

Page 45

### TO LET

Furnished holiday cottage in hills (Kalorama). Accommodate five. Close to bus, store and post office.—W. Fordham, Montrose Post Office. Tel. 55.

Furnished holiday house, Marysville, accom. six, H.W.S., sew., ice chest, cent. position, available Feb. 20.—J. Chadler, Canterbury-rd., Blackburn, Vic. WX1254.

### BACK TO NEWMARKET.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25.

11 a.m., B. J. Combridge.

3 p.m., P.S.A., W. T. Atkin. Musical items.

7 p.m., R. McKenzie.

If you intend coming please notify Mrs. A. Parker, 34 McCracken-st (FF1677) to assist with catering.

### DAWSON ST., BALLARAT, VIC.

### SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY and HOME-COMING SERVICES

will be held on

SUNDAY, MARCH 18,

at which G. T. Fitzgerald will speak.

Make your "Back to Ballarat" visit on that day.

### BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, VICTORIA.

### 111th ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING, MELBOURNE TOWN HALL,

Thursday, Feb. 22, 1951, at 8 p.m.

Speaker, H. M. Arrowsmith, Th.L.

Chairman, W. H. Rainey, B.A., F.R.G.S.

Pageant by New Australians.

Musical programme by the Presbyterian Oratorio Society and Emmanuel Quartette. Musical director and organist, Mr. Lawrence Warner.

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# Meditation for the New Year . . .

"ETERNAL God, who makest all things new, and abidest for ever the same: grant us to begin this year in thy faith, and to continue it in thy favor; that, being guided in all our doings, and guarded all our days, we may spend our lives in thy service, and finally by thy grace, attain the glory of everlasting life."—W. E. Orchard.

Hymn.—No. 830, "Great God, we sing that mighty hand."

Leader.—A New Year of service begins, and with it comes opportunities for us to serve God with greater fidelity than ever before. Although there is much in the world to-day to cause us to fear, may we lay it aside and show our faith in God, giving strength for anything or any task which he calls us to face.

"Charge not thyself with the weight of a year,  
Child of the Master, faithful and dear;  
Choose not the cross for the coming week,  
For that us more than he bids thee seek.  
Bend not thine arms for to-morrow's load;  
Thou mayest leave that to thy gracious God.  
'Daily' only, he saith to thee,  
'Take up thy cross and follow me.'"

Bible Reading.—Psalm 31.

First Reader.—A New Year of opportunity comes to us in service of the home.

Home is a beautiful word with its depth of meaning of love, devotion and sacrifice. Yet there are millions in the world to-day who are homeless or are living under conditions where it is impossible to lead a normal home-life. There are many new people who have come to Australia to make their homes here, and this is an opportunity for the Christian home to show hospitality and friendship to those who are strangers in a strange land. Then, too, the Federal Government is offering 150 scholarships to Asian students to study in Australia. How will the Christian home act in the face of such opportunities to extend friendship to these scholars? The great prestige that England and the United States of America had in some foreign countries was due in a very large measure to the friendships that many students made when attending Universities in those countries. We need the friendship of the people of these Asiatic countries and they need ours. Jesus said, "I was a stranger and ye took me in," and "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

Prayer.—For all Christian homes that those who are blessed with such may use them as opportunities for service to God.

Second Reader.—A New Year of opportunity comes to us to serve God in the service of the church.

From earliest Christianity women have helped the onward sweep of the gospel by consecrated service. This century has not lacked in courageous Christian living and the persecuted church in parts of Europe during the last decade has numbered many women among those who would suffer rather than renounce their faith.

In this New Year the international situation is strained to breaking point. It is a challenge to the living church that each member, not a few, be a cell which will act as leaven in making a Christian world. Miss Jorgelina Lozada, a pastor of a church in Buenos Aires, Argentina, has recently been on a visit to Spain. In an interview she told of members of the Christian church there who had been imprisoned for their faith, one woman being imprisoned for a term of three years. She told, too, of the opportunities that women of Latin American countries have of extending Christ's kingdom. She said, "In places where

there is death to-day, spiritual death, Christian womanhood must tell that Jesus lives." What Miss Lozada says about the opportunities these women have is true of Christian women everywhere.

We cannot serve Christ or his church in any way other than by witnessing for him in whatever situation we are placed.

Prayer.—For the church that she may be strong in facing world situations and that women in the church may grasp all opportunities for service.

Third Reader.—A New Year of opportunity comes to us in service in the community.

The Christian home and the church have been too prone at times to live too much within themselves. But it is only by the Christian home and church being a force in the community, whether it be a small or a world community, that any Christian influence will be felt.

Women with small children have a special place in the community life through the school, junior library organisations, etc., but the women with no family or with a grown family can also make a distinct contribution to community life.

Many make the excuse that un-Christian practices in some things keep them out of participating in them, or that their own particular church has so many meetings that it is impossible to devote any time to community affairs. What would Christ's attitude be to the community life around us? Long ago he said, "Let your light shine before men" and unless we are willing to do our share in community life, have we any right to criticise what is done?

Prayer.—For our own community and the wide community of nations, "The United Nations."

Leader.—Our hope is that 1951 may be through the mercy of God—

"Another year of progress,  
Another year of praise,  
Another year of proving  
Thy presence all the days.  
"Another year of service,  
Of witness of thy love,  
Another year of training  
For holier work above."

Hymn.—No. 508, "Take my life, and let it be." Business.

Programme.

Hymn.—No. 173, "Gracious Spirit dwell with me."

Prayer.—"Come into our hearts and remain with us. We have need of greater moral strength in dealing with the daily problems that come to us, so thy creatures may attain the stature of spiritual growth thou desirest for them. Let us learn thy will, and heed thy commands in our dealings with others. Give us true penitence, so we may profit for the errors we have already made, and avoid them in the days ahead. Let thy love shine upon us and cause us to desire a perfect understanding with thee. Amen."

Hymns are from the Churches of Christ Hymnal. There is no topic paper for this month, and if more material is required the first reader could also tell the story of Monica and Augustine or of Suzannah Wesley. In section 2, that of Mrs. Judson, of Burma, or Mary Slessor, of Africa, or a discussion could be held on "The Responsibility of Christian Women to the Community."

## PROGRAMME FOR MARCH.

Theme for devotional meditations:  
"Christ and Human Relationships."

Call to Worship.—"Let thy work appear unto thy servants and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." (Psalm 90.)

Hymn.—No. 90, "Hail to the Lord's Anointed."

Prayer.—"Grant us the privilege of accepting as our desire that which is in thy heart for us. Help us to real repentance for the sins and selfishness of our natures, so that we may understand thy message of love and forgiveness. Make us worthy of the great gift of thy love, the salvation of mankind, and help us to see in thy commandments the only road toward fuller life here and in eternity. Help us to see in every man and woman a likeness to thee, so we may lose no opportunity of service toward those whom thou lovest. Teach us to dwell on thy message of salvation, rather than on the things of the flesh. Thy message is a gospel of love, and we beseech thee for grace to understand its import and effectiveness in healing the ills of the world. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen."

Bible Reading.—Matt. 4: 18-25.

Meditation.—"A Call to Discipleship."

The Jewish people were conversant with the life and work of the prophets and another one coming would not surprise them. There were many people who looked upon Jesus as a new prophet; however, it was not until he gathered his disciples around him that the difference between the more individualistic prophets and the all-embracing love of the Messiah was apparent.

The Christ was a much discussed person and his name called forth controversy, yet there were those who immediately answered his call to follow him and left their all to become his disciples.

Jesus called Andrew, Simon, James and John from their busy occupations to a different way of life. When the rich young ruler came to him enquiring about the Way, he asked of him to give of his wealth. Then, as now, man's feverish desire for material things proved too much, and he left the call unanswered.

The Master places some in the prominent positions of life, and others in less spectacular but just as needed avenues of service. The world is all the richer to-day because of those who have wholeheartedly responded to the call of Christ to become his followers; whether it has meant for them a change in occupation or a changed life within their vocation.

Sir Wilfred Grenfell decided to become a doctor, long before he became an active disciple; he did not change his calling, but the place of his labors from England to the ice-bound regions of Labrador where he saved and enriched many lives. Robert Raikes did not go to a foreign land, but started the Sunday school movement in the slums, just where he saw the need was greatest.

Discipleship demands a close companionship with the teacher. These early disciples had a lot to learn and they made many mistakes, but they grew in wisdom, love and sacrificial living.

When Christ gives the call he never promises an easy life, but those who experience his close companionship know it is the only satisfying way of living, though it also means a cross.

Discipleship cannot terminate with the acceptance of the call. It influences other lives, and the test of true discipleship is in what we can impart to others of the joy, the beauty and the love of being a follower of the One who came to show the way to the Father.



"As we meet and touch each day,  
The many travellers on our way,  
Let every such contact be  
A glorious, helpful ministry;  
The contact of the soil and seed,  
Each giving to the other's need,  
Each helping on the other's best,  
And blessing, each, as well as blest."

Hymn.—No. 601, "Lord speak to me, that I may speak."

Prayer.—"Heavenly Father, help us to grasp the meaning of thy love, so we may depart from the iniquities that cling to us; forgive us our hesitations, our stumblings, our hates and our sinfulness. Raise us to the level of spiritual understanding of thy great gift of salvation and eternal life. Thou art the guide and protector of those who will but cling to thee, and we implore thee to help us in our reachings after thee. Bring us back to thee when we stray, grant us light to discern that which is thy will. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen."

Business—

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Hymn.—No. 363, "Lord, from whom all blessings flow."

Prayer.—"O Lord, let thy light shine into our hearts so that we may realise the need for making this world a place where brotherhood among men is possible. Thou art our one great hope of advancement, thou art revealed to us in Christ Jesus, thou art constantly with us in the name of the Holy Spirit. Make us to see the privilege of communion with thee. Grow in us the grace which underlies understanding of thy will. Help us to see thee and thy Spirit in those who dwell among us, for those who come to us for help. Cause our hearts to glow with desire toward thee. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen."

Benediction.—"Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. Grace be with you. Amen."

Remember Women's World Day of Prayer, Friday, February 9.

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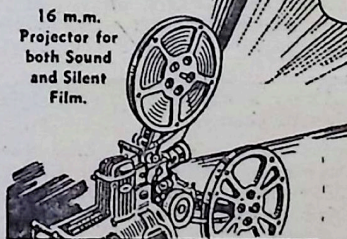
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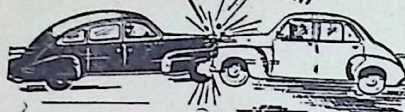
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524-530 Elizabeth-st., Melbourne, C.I.  
Phone, FJ2524.

Editor: A. W. Stephenson, M.A.

Manager: W. R. Hibburt.

Subscription.—Through Church Agent,  
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