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The Blessing of Forgetfulness.

MEMORY is one of the most remarkable endowments of our human nature. The wonder of it impresses every thinker. "Mnemosyne, or Memory, was called by the ancients the mother of the Muses; because all the arts and the sciences depend on memory for their existence and progress." Consciousness of the self, the continuity of personality, and we may even say the enjoyment of immortal life, are all dependent upon memory.

When we say that a person has a good and retentive memory, we think we praise him. Most of us would gladly improve in this direction if we could. Prof. James, after referring to Charlemagne, Luther, Leibnitz and Scott as examples of men with amazing retentiveness, says: "Men without this retentiveness may excel in the quality of their work at this point or at that, but will never do such mighty sums of it, or be influential contemporaneously on such a scale."

Poets have sung of the delights of memory:

"Like a gale that sighs along
Beds of oriental flowers,
Is the grateful breath of song
That once was heard in happier hours;
Filled with balm, the gale sighs on,
Though the flowers are sunk in death;
So when pleasure's dream is gone,
Its memory lives in music's breath."

The duty of remembrance, as well as its pleasure or profit, is often brought before us. The Scriptures continually bid us "remember." The sacred memorial feast was given by him who knew our needs and the dangers of forgetfulness.

There are psychologists who tell us there is no such thing as utter forgetfulness. There may be a temporary failure to recall, but once an experience has been ours it may at any time be reproduced by the appropriate stimulus. Things we had forgotten for years do flash upon our minds; and it is true that much that we say is forgotten is not permanently lost.

A famous French writer, Prof. Ribot, gives us a thought on the other side. He puts the paradox that "one condition of remembering is that we forget." Similarly Prof. Wm. James said that "selection is the very keel on which our mental ship is built. . . . If we remembered everything, we should on most occasions be as ill off as if we remembered nothing. It would take as long for us to recall a space of time as it took the original time to lapse, and we should never get ahead of our thinking." So in that case, forgetfulness is as good as it is necessary.

When we speak of the pleasures of memory we are apt to forget that there are sorrows too. There are people haunted by remorse. In all our lives there have been poignant experiences—some of them sinful, some foolish, some neither foolish

nor sinful but simply over-weighted with sorrow—which have lingered with us, and at times unmanned us. Southey wrote:

"Man hath a weary pilgrimage,
As through the world he wends;
On every stage from youth to age
Still discontent attends;
With heaviness he casts his eye
Upon the road before,
And still remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more."

The backward look is by no means always joyful.

While in the Bible the need of remembrance is most frequently inculcated, yet there are some great passages which speak of or suggest the blessing of forgetfulness. The supreme text tells us of God's forgetfulness. Few verses of the Bible mean more to the redeemed soul than that containing the blessed promise:

"I will be merciful to their iniquities,
And their sins will I remember no more."

Oh, the blessed forgetfulness of God, who puts our sins behind his back, and removes them from us as far as the east is from the west!

Does not God want us to imitate him? To forgive is essential to forgiveness. When others sin against us, we must forgive and forget. Sometimes we say we can do the former but not the latter; but the statement often means a refusal to do either. As this year of grace closes, let us be willing to lay aside the thought of injuries done to us, of petty spite, meannesses, slights, innuendoes, nasty words. To carry a grudge across the threshold of a new year is to spoil our pleasure and our usefulness. Let us fully forgive and also enjoy the blessing of forgetfulness.

Another oft-quoted text contains the words "forgetting the things which are behind." The words warn against the dangers of memory, of dwelling in the past, of being too much content with its achievements and so developing a spirit of self-complacency. On the other hand, they

One Year to Live.

Mary Davis Reid was asked, "What would you do if you had only one more year to live?" Her answer was:

"If I had but one year to live;
One year to help; one year to give;
One year to love; one year to bless;
One year of better things to stress;
One year to sing; one year to smile;
To brighten earth a little while;
One year to sing my Maker's praise;
One year to fill with work my days;
One year to strive for a reward
When I should stand before my Lord,
I think that I would spend each day,
In just the very self-same way
That I do now. For from afar
The call may come to cross the bar
At any time, and I must be
Prepared to meet eternity.
So if I have a year to live,
Or just one day in which to give
A pleasant smile, a helping hand,
A mind that tries to understand
A fellow-creature when in need,
'Tis one with me,—I take no heed;
But try to live each day he sends
To serve my gracious Master's ends."

bid us beware lest the failures of days gone by should be allowed to cripple us for the future. The dead past must be buried. Whatever the sorrow, the discouragement, the defeat, it must not hinder our future service.

It is the forward rather than the backward look which we need. "Forgetting

the things which are behind," let us stretch forward to the things which are before, and press on towards the goal unto the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. So shall the New Year be worth while.

"Come, let us anew
Our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear."

Faith and the Far-off Things.

J. I. Mudford.

To the list of national heroes and heroines given in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, various appropriate designations have been given. Here, says one, we have the picture gallery of the ancient people of Israel; here, says another, with his thoughts colored by the recent years of war, we have the great honor-roll of the chosen race. To these may be added the words of the late Dr. J. H. Jowett, a man who adorned all that he touched: "When I turn to this great epistle to the Hebrews, I feel as though I were in the inspiring spaces of some great cathedral, as though I were moving about Westminster Abbey. In fact, I have ventured to call the epistle to the Hebrews the Westminster Abbey of the Bible. There are some beautiful little side chapels, where a weary soul can bend in quiet and reverent prayer and praise; some most winsome light breaks through quite unexpected windows as you move about in the august place; again and again you hear the sound of an anthem raising melodious songs of praise to the great God, and you are never allowed to get far away from Calvary and the cross. When I come to chapter II, I always feel as though I were turning into the nave of the great cathedral, and I find it is occupied by monuments which have been erected to commemorate saintly men and women who were distinguished by their faith." On the threshold of a New Year let us stroll for a few moments in this picture gallery; let us bare our heads before the honor-roll of the faithful; let us study these monuments of those who by faith bore their witness, both in life and death, to the reality of the hoped for and of the unseen.

Faith, hope, love—these are the three great abiding verities. Singular to say, there does not seem to be any chapter in the New Testament which may be called pre-eminently the chapter on hope. There is, as everyone knows, an almost incomparable chapter on love (see I Cor. 13). Here in the letter to the Hebrews we have a wonderful eulogy of faith, not unworthy, in its sustained eloquence, to be placed alongside that chapter that is fit for the tongues of men and of angels.

We do an injustice to the writer if we take the first words of the chapter as a

precise "definition" of faith. Such it does not appear to have been meant to be. What the writer emphasises—perhaps all that he means to emphasise—is that faith has reference to the things that are real; the things hoped for, the things not seen. "Faith is that by which the invisible becomes real, and the future becomes present." These men and women immortalised in this epistle of warning and encouragement—by what were they chiefly characterised? By a belief in, and a courage in facing, the "things not seen as yet." They took God at his word—did not their faith, like ours, "come by hearing"?—and stepped out on his promises and assurances. God, so far from "letting them down," held up their goings in his paths, so that their footsteps did not slip. In this they provided a great incentive to the early Hebrew Christians to be faithful to their God.

Perhaps we shall the better appreciate the Biblical writer's ideal if we contrast it with that of other nations. To whom would the Greeks of olden time erect their monuments? To the men of intellect, such as Plato and Aristotle. Who would be honored in a Roman temple? The men of power and of military glory—Caesar or Titus. To ask a more pertinent question still: whose names would appear on an Australian roll of honor? Perhaps a Hume or a Hovell, possibly a Monash; certainly a Charlton and a Gregory. We may be courteous enough to show an amused toleration towards any who acted to-day as did those in olden time: Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and the rest. More probably those of whom the world was not worthy would be regarded as harmless, yet misguided visionaries. Yet were they not the far-seeing people of their generation? Probably Lot attended every land sale in the city of Sodom, while his neighbors thought him a keen, shrewd business man with an eye to the future. Abraham, on the other hand, was camped in his tent, yet looking for the city of eternal foundations, whose builder and maker was God. We know to-day who was the man of vision. No doubt Moses was considered a narrow-minded man when he made the great renunciation of the glories of the court of Egypt. Yet we to-day must thank God that by faith he left Egypt, not from any fear

of the king's wrath; that "like one who saw the King invisible, he never flinched."

The faith of these heroes appears to have been manifested in two ways. Having by faith caught a clear vision of the invisible, and having grasped the things hoped for, they passively submitted to the bitterest discipline of life. That heart is made of stone that is unmoved by the story of the sacred writer: "Women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance . . . they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented . . . they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." We do not wonder that the writer breaks the continuity of his discourse by a parenthetical comment on the world's unworthiness of such as they.

In another way, also, their faith was manifested: they "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions," and in countless other ways showed their faith by their works. No spurious faith was theirs. Of a faith of one that had not works, a New Testament writer asked with cutting emphasis, "Can that faith save him?" Without retracting a word from the first part of this article, one may say that the 11th chapter of the Hebrew epistle is a chapter on works. To put it better still, it is a chapter on the faith that is manifest in works. Apprehending the unseen and the hoped for, Enoch walked with God; Abel offered a sacrifice; Noah prepared an ark; Abram went out, not knowing whither; Moses chose to suffer affliction with God's people. Why is there so little adventure in the service of God to-day? Is it not for lack of that faith that enables men to do exploits in the service of God?

Much we see at the opening of this year of grace, 1925, that we fain would not see. Industrial unrest, international suspicion, and religious indifference are still with us, and all too apparent. The words of this same letter to the Hebrews are, alas! still too true: "We see not yet all things put under him." But one thing we still can see if we have faith in God: "We see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honor"; and our faith will give reality to this devoutly hoped for consummation.

Let us endeavor to start this New Year with faith in God. What our churches and Conference committees supremely need is not members of outstanding ability, of great financial resources, or of social standing. It is rather those who will accept the challenge of the hoped for, but as yet unrealised things of life, and by faith in God labor that his will may be done on earth, here and now, as it is done in heaven.

Do we feel our weakness in the face of the problems of the New Year? Let us remember the word written concerning these men and women of like passions with

ourselves: "out of weakness were made strong." John Brimblecombe, in Kingsley's "Westward Ho," cut a sorry figure when through cowardice he almost swooned from imaginary loss of blood after meeting with the Spaniards. Later on he retrieved the situation, slaying many of his enemies, and putting others to flight. Asked how he did it, he replied: "As it happened, I was reading under the tree, to fortify my spirits, the history of the ancient worthies, in St. Paul, his eleventh chapter to the Hebrews; and just as I came to that 'out of weakness were made strong' . . . arose the cry of the Spaniards; at which, gentlemen, thinking in myself that I fought in just so

good a cause as they; and, as I hoped, with like faith, I verily believed in myself that if there had been a ten thousand of them I should have taken no hurt."

We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses—these Old Testament worthies, and many another. Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs, urge us forward. Let us, then, run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus . . . who for the joy that was set before him—that joy that was hoped for, but not yet realised—endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Great Commission

And The Acts of Apostles.

An Introductory Study.

A. W. Connor.

"The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen."—Acts 1: 1, 2.

These two verses are full of suggestion for those who would read intelligently the record that follows. As the book of Acts is to be before us during 1925 in our suggested readings, a word or two by way of introduction may not be amiss. We ought to notice:

1. The reference to a previous volume of which the one about to be written was a sequel. That volume is our gospel by Luke, of which 1: 1-4 and 24: 46-53 should be re-read carefully. So we learn that the background of this book of church history is the story of the earth life of Jesus told in the gospels.

2. In the recognition of the ascension as the final act in the earth life of Christ, there is a clear recognition of the divinity of Christ as the settled belief of the writer. There is no antagonism between "Jesus" and "Christ" in his mind—he is Jesus, but he is the risen exalted Christ. The resurrection is the special point stressed in Acts.

3. Of special importance is the reference to certain "commandments" or orders given by Christ to his chosen apostles. The word apostle means one sent forth. Christ was the sender. "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you." The instructions under which they went forth constitute the "Divine marching orders." These orders, referred to here, and again in ver. 4-8, are the natural and logical starting point for a survey of the book which records their execution. While Matt. 28: 18-20 may be taken as the formal and official expression of them, yet Mark 16: 15, 16, and Luke 24: 45-49, must be taken as an integral part of them as well. What the Magna

Charta signed by King John in 1215 is to the British people—the basis of their personal and political liberties and privileges—this great charter, in which Christ confers powers, rights and duties on his chosen apostles, is in the New Testament. This great commission was not to the world, though it was for the world. It was the preachers' charter; and as Acts is the record of accomplishment under it, we may be helped by looking at in a little detail.

Let us notice: It is addressed to men chosen, trained, and responsible, in a word of definite command, a personal imperative. "Go ye." The task is one of great magnitude, and hence he fortifies them by the assurance of his own infinite power—"All authority has been given to me in heaven and upon the earth." This would make them an army of invincibles. He entrusts to them a sacred deposit, a divine message, "Preach the gospel." That gospel is seen to embrace the story of the passion and

resurrection of Jesus, the promise of remission of sins in his name. The purpose of their proclamation is expressed as to "make disciples," i.e., disciples of Christ. The field of operations is clearly indicated—"all nations," "every creature." Yet while the uttermost parts of the earth are within the scope of their missionary labors the starting place is divinely indicated—"Beginning at Jerusalem." It gives a token to the preacher, and entails upon the hearer a duty—"He that believeth." Not the nations as such are to be disciples but those out of the nations who believing the message repent of their errors and put trust in the Saviour proclaimed. The charter enjoins an act—"Baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." But this act can only be performed as men and women believingly commit themselves to the Saviour, and in the confessional act surrender to Christ's divine sovereignty. The charter contains a promise to the penitent of a rich blessing—"Remission of sins," and proclaims a new condition—"Shall be saved." It enjoins upon preacher and convert a further duty—"Teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded"—a duty which puts baptism in its true light as the pledge of a life-long devotion to the Master, a duty which makes the fellowship of the church a cardinal necessity.

Finally, this comprehensive charter completes the security of the messenger and gives promise of certain success—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." Thus this wonderful charter is bound by the golden clasps of the divine authority, and the divine presence. The Book of Acts must be studied as the divinely given record of the execution of this truly great commission.

4. The general outline of the book is fairly easy to follow. In general it follows the suggestion of 1: 8, "First in Jerusalem and Judea, then in Samaria, and unto uttermost parts of the earth." Prof. James Moffat suggests that here we have "The circle of sympathy" represented by their Jewish brethren, "the circle of antipathy" represented by their hereditary foes to whom they would feel no debt, and "the circle of apathy" represented by the distant parts of the earth whose condition did not stir any feeling at all. There is a lesson in this threefold division for us of to-day. Chapters 2-5 deal with the purely Jewish aspect of their work. It treats in detail with the establishment of the church at Jerusalem, and carries us on to the first persecution and the death of Stephen. In his dying speech he gave more than a hint of the wider ministry of the gospel.

The second division, chapters 6-11, covers a transitional period. The gospel preached to the Samaritans, and the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch, are steps in advance. But it is in the conversion of the Roman centurion, told in chapter 10, that we have the final preparation for the reception of



The Ascending Lord.

the Gentiles. This incident closes with the words, "God has granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life." Acts 11: 18.

The third division, from 11: 19 to the end of the book, records the wonderful missionary labors of Paul and his companions. Through Antioch in Syria to Antioch in Pisidia, through Philippi, Athens, Corinth, etc., until we leave Paul a prisoner in imperial Rome. Thus the gospel spread in circles of ever-increasing diameter.

5. In addition to their general outline in plan, the writer evidently looks on his book as a "book of beginnings," and to the first event in every new series he gives great attention, and provides a wealth of detail as to the message preached, and the manner of its reception, e.g., chapter 2 and the great Pentecostal sermon. Chapter 8, with its history of the conversion of Samaritans and the Ethiopian as Philip "preached Jesus." Chapters 10, 11, the conversion and baptism of Cornelius with the sequel. Chapter 13 and its message to the people of Antioch with its definite crisis, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Chapter 16 with its full account of the introduction of the gospel to Europe and the beginning of the conquering march to Rome. The conversion and baptism of Lydia and the jailer are told in detail, which still answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

6. While it is a book of apostolic history its very nature makes it a book of conversion, and as such it becomes a veritable *vade mecum* for those pointing men and women to the way of salvation through Christ, and to the way of entrance into the church of Christ. Here we see illustrated the truth that Christianity was not only personal allegiance to Christ, but also a common life in a community of brethren. That community is the church of God into which each entered by baptism. This book has very great messages for the church of to-day, and this word is written to emphasise its claim for a new and careful study, and for the application of the principles revealed in it to the problems of the church in the world of to-day. May its reading from week to week in our churches be richly blest, and from it may our preachers set forth anew the way of life.

Our Request.

O Master, we would ask of thee
Thy promise to fulfil
And give to us abundant life
To seek and find thy will.
O grant that we may follow thee
With loyal hearts and true
That we may love and loving, serve
And come to thee anew.

Give us thy vision, let us see
Clear-eyed the task God gave
And to our hands entrust thy light
For those Christ came to save.
This is that larger life we ask;
Put in our hearts thy flame,
That one with thee we may reach out
To service in thy name.

—Selected.

Religious Notes and News.

Mr. A. Holden, of the village of Kemsing in Kent, who has been sub-postmaster for 52 years, has been preaching for 65 years. He still takes preaching engagements.

Prohibition Competitions.

The Queensland Prohibition League is offering £20 in prizes for campaign competitions. Prizes of £3 and £1 are offered for the best prohibition slogans. Prizes of £2 and £1 are offered for the best prohibition songs set to a popular tune, and similar prizes are offered for a campaign chorus, giving the method of voting, i.e., "Put your cross in the top square."

A prize of £5 (donated by the Victorian Anti-Liquor League) is offered for the best drawing or cartoon for campaign purposes and prizes of £3 and £2 for a drawing showing how to vote, and utilising the emblem of the League, i.e., the two children in the map of Queensland.

All entries must be in by Feb. 15. Further particulars can be obtained from Arthur Toombes, State Superintendent, Temperance Hall, Brisbane, Queensland.

Dr. Clifford Remembered.

In a tiny cottage in the Trent-side village of Sawley, Derbyshire, where Dr. Clifford was born in 1836, there has been placed a modest memorial tablet recording the fact that this great prophet and leader of men was born there. As a boy, Dr. Clifford worked in a mill, beginning the day at eight o'clock, and working long hours for a few shillings a week. He was a studious boy, and early took an interest in religious work, and by perseverance, hard work, and sheer force of character, he became the famous leader of British Nonconformity. His noble life is a proud example to every British boy.

Sir Oliver Lodge and Conversion.

G. Gilbert Muir, of the Bradford Wesleyan Mission, related an interesting story recently at the Deptford Central Hall Twenty-first Anniversary. He told how he had bombarded Sir Oliver Lodge regularly each month with a request that he would address the Eastbrook Brotherhood—until Sir Oliver, simply to arrest the flow of letters, finally agreed to come. On arrival at Bradford the visitor asked, "Do you have conversions at your Hall?" An affirmative reply elicited a request for further definite information. The missionary related brief particulars of several outstanding cases, and then Sir Oliver said he would like to talk with the man who had consumed in drink a whole street of houses, the man who had been sentenced to death and afterwards reprieved, and several others. Mr. Muir went out into the Hall, called in half-a-dozen men, and said, "I want you to come in and talk to Sir Oliver." "Oh, we can't do anything like that," was the reply. "Yes, but he wants to hear about your conversion." That they were willing to do. One after another the men told in their own way to the learned professor the story of how their hearts and lives had been transformed. And Sir Oliver's own testimony to Mr. Muir after it was over was, "Thank you ever so much for this experience. This has been the greatest day in my life."

Preach—What?

In 1889 the Minister of the Methodist church in charge of the Lismore circuit preached a series of three sermons on three consecutive Sunday evenings, on the subject of "Giving."

The first of the series emphasised God's Proprietorship; the second, what the heathens did to support their religion; the third set forth the Christian's Duty in relation to Giving.

In connection with the delivery of the second of this series, there sat in the congregation a gentle-

man, Mr. C—, a man of culture, a B.A. of the Dublin University. He listened attentively. At the close of the service, as he and others were moving down the aisle towards the door, he stopped, turned round and, facing the minister who was at the other end of the church, called out "Preach Christ!" Then he moved on a few paces with the rest. Once more he turned round and called out, "Preach Christ!"

Reaching the door, he, for the third time, turned round and called out, "Preach Christ!"

The minister spoke to him later that night, and in course of conversation, Mr. C— said:

"I have been an Agnostic. There's nothing it. I have been an Atheist. There's nothing in it. I know that none but Jesus Christ can satisfy the human spirit. If I was converted and became a Christian, I would send a cablegram to my poor old mother in Dublin who has been praying for her son, William, for 42 years. Nothing would rejoice her heart more." That minister has never preached a sermon since in which Jesus Christ did not find a place.

He thinks it would be well if all preachers heard the voice of some hungry soul calling out "Preach Christ!"—G.A.R., in "Australian Christian World."

Baker-Brooker Mission, Bambra-rd., Vic.

The tent was pitched on Nov. 8 in a very central and convenient position near the junction of Glenhuntly and Hawthorn Rds. The mission was well advertised by tram and hoarding posters, supplemented by leaflets distributed from house to house. The church was well prepared. Large attendances had been the order for some time, and souls were being won. Prayer meetings at 6.30 a.m. proved a great blessing and inspiration. Everybody was ready and eager for the effort, and the interest increased as the mission proceeded. G. F. Nicholls, the local song-leader, handed over to Les. Brooker a well-prepared congregation of singers. These two song-leaders did a magnificent work, co-operating with and relieving each other throughout the campaign.

P. R. Baker made a splendid impression on the opening day, Nov. 9, and continued to win his way. His presentation of the gospel was instructive and convincing. His loyalty to and forceful declaration of the plea have been a great advertisement for the cause we love. Many and varied were the questions submitted to the missionary, who dealt with all in a courteous and helpful way. Attendances were exceptional, and on many occasions the tent was far too small. During the first week there were thirteen decisions, and the second week opened with 16 accepting Christ on the Sunday evening. Impressive baptismal services were conducted in the tent, and helped many to a clearer understanding of the Scriptures. During the currency of the mission, 82 accepted Christ—22 men, 31 women, and 29 young people (16 of the latter from the Bible school). The final night will live long in the memories of those who packed the tent—nine made the good confession, and an offering in cash and promises amounting to over £300 was received. At the time of writing half the amount, £150, is in hand.

A happy meeting in the form of a reunion of members was held in the chapel on Dec. 17, when about 200 were present. A debt of gratitude is owed to a host of sacrificing servants of the Lord, special appreciation being recorded of services rendered by the organist, pianiste, instrumentalists, assistants at baptisms. The writer wishes to place on record the church's appreciation of the magnificent services rendered by C. Schwab, the resident preacher. Great blessings have come upon the church, and a splendid spirit prevails.—Geo. F. Nicholls.

Rest Houses.

G. P. Pittman.

All over India, along the main roads, there are Government buildings called Dak-bungalows. Dak means post, and a post-stage used to be about fifteen miles. The Dak-bungalows were built at the end of each of these stages. Travellers may rest there for the payment of one rupee per day. No bedding is provided, so you must have your own with you. As some of these houses are not too clean, it is advisable to have your own camp-beds as well. Travellers generally take an Indian servant with them to prepare their meals and draw water, but in an emergency the "chowkidar" or caretaker will cook some rice and curry, and boil the kettle. In a tropical climate these Dak-bungalows, though mostly rough and ready, are havens of rest to the weary wanderer, and after a hot journey in a bullock-cart, on bicycle, or on foot, it is sweet to reach the end of a Dak and take refuge under the cool roof of the bungalow. As you rest there, and stretch your limbs on the broad verandah, the doves are cooing in the mango trees, and peacocks call from the jungle. When the stars come out in the purple sky, you look back in your thoughts upon the road by which you have come, and forward to that which you will take to-morrow.

Life has its stages or Daks, and the end of the year is like a Dak-bungalow on the road. We look back on the way we have come, and forward to another year. We rest awhile, if at all possible, during the holiday season, to recuperate for future efforts. Our Lord and his disciples came to the end of such a Dak on one occasion, and the Master said, "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile." Sweet is the rest, and helpful are the thoughts, when Jesus shares them with us, even though, like him, we may have only a desert for our resting place. We shall not be able to "serve God without ceasing day and night" till we reach heaven, and our tired bodies need some rest here. Jesus sympathetically recognises this, and invites us to take holiday with him, then go forth once more to the varied experiences of another year.

The patriarchs had their Daks or stages, for they were tent-dwellers, and moved with their flocks and herds from place to place. They were sojourners in a land not their own, and looked for a city that hath foundations, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. We, too, have no abiding city here, but we seek after the city which is to come, and often in golden sunsets we seem almost to catch a glimpse of its shining towers. How lightly we should hold all that is of this world, being ready to depart at any moment, like those of whom Longfellow sings, who

"Fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

The young fugitive Jacob, at the end of his first Dak away from home, lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set, and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. That spot became a heavenly Rest-house to him, and he said concerning it, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Francis Thompson says:

"The angels keep their ancient places;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces
That miss the many-splendoured thing.
But (when so sad thou can'st not sadder)
Cry; and upon thy sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder,
Pitched between Heaven and Charing
Cross."

Or, as we would say in Melbourne, between heaven and Princes Bridge. The ministry of angels would be a profitable meditation for the changing year. Heaven is near us in every time of "sore loss." Robinson Crusoe, wrecked on the desolate island, remembered the text, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." It was a solace to him, as it has been to many spiritual Crusoes since. We betake ourselves naturally to prayer, when sorrow and adversity come upon us.

Those old wilderness-wanderers came to the end of a Dak when they were on the borders of the promised land, and Moses bade them "remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live." The book of Deuteronomy is a good one to read as the old year goes out and the new comes in. It looks back on forty years, and forward to forty centuries. And we, upon whom the ends of the world are come, are in much the same case as those wanderers, and need to be humbled and proven, and to learn that man doth not live by bread alone. Let us, too, remember all the way which the Lord has led us, all the mercies, all the guidance, all the long-suffering. Let us not lust after evil things, as they also lusted, nor tempt Christ, nor murmur, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Many of the Psalms breathe the spirit of the Dak or pilgrim way. Take, for instance, the ninetyeth Psalm. This has been called "the funeral hymn of the world," but it might almost better be termed "the pilgrim hymn of the church." Its theme is the transitoriness and vanity of human life. All is vanity, but for the believer there is a refuge, an abiding place, a Rest-house—the Lord himself. Human life, says the writer, flows on from generation to generation. One passes away and another comes. But those who trust in the living God, though they be but the creatures of an hour, feel secure and at home in him. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all genera-

tions. A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. We spend our years as a tale that is told. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of our hands." Whatever you leave unread, read this Psalm on New Year's eve.

Paul, the tent-maker, was one who was always on the move, going from city to city, from Dak to Dak, with the gospel, and he naturally grew to look on life itself in this way. He says, "We know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." Life, to him, was just a journey to heaven. He knew that "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight)," and he was "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord." And out of this grew an ambition. "We are ambitious, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him." Not ambitious to be great or famous, successful or wealthy, but to be well-pleasing to the Lord. May this kind of ambition, and no other, grow in us all with the process of the years.

"Fear not," said God to Jacob, when he was a hundred and twenty years old, and when he was about to set out on his last Dak, to a strange land—"Fear not to go down into Egypt. I will go down with thee into Egypt." And the old man was content to go. As we look forward into the New Year, there may be fear and foreboding, for we know not what a day may bring forth, and we have not passed this way before. But God will go down with us into Egypt. Luther's favorite Psalm was, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea." He paraphrased it in his famous "battle-hymn of the Reformation."

"A mighty fortress is our God,

A bulwark never failing:

Our helper he amid the flood

Of mortal ills prevailing.

Did we in our own strength confide

Our striving would be losing,

Were not the right Man on our side,

The Man of God's own choosing."

The right Man is always on our side, if we are on his. He is our refuge, our divine Rest-house, our mighty fortress and never-failing bulwark. Let us not fear, though the solid earth be removed, and the mighty mountains be cast into the midst of the sea.

OBEDIENCE.



SAID: "Let me walk in the fields."

He said: "No, walk in the town."

I said: "There are no flowers there."

He said: "No flowers, but a crown."

I said: "But the skies are black;
There is nothing but noise and din."

And He wept as He sent me back—
"There is more," He said, "there is sin."

I said: "But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun."
He answered: "Yet souls are sick,
And souls in the dark undone!"

I said: "I shall miss the light,

And friends will miss me, they say."

He answered: "Choose to-night

If I am to miss you or they."

I pleaded for time to be given.

He said: "Is it hard to decide?

It will not seem so hard in heaven

To have followed the steps of your Guide."

I cast one look at the fields,

Then set my face to the town;

He said: "My child, do you yield?

Will you yield the flowers for the crown?"

Then into His hand went mine;

And into my heart came He;

And I walk in a light divine,

The path I had feared to see.

—George MacDonald

The Home Circle.

Conducted by J. C. F. PITTMAN

The Christmas song was in the air,
Its subtle charm felt everywhere:
From Rome and Athens in their pride,
To every little countryside,
When o'er Judea's little town
The angel hosts came singing down.
The Christmas song is in the air,
One hears it ringing everywhere:
He hears it on the busy streets
From lips of everyone he meets;
And knows that still o'er every town
The angel hosts are singing down.

—W. L. Stidger.

Lest We Forget.

It was Christmas Day. Ruth sang cheerily as she laid the table for dinner. It was not going to be a very elaborate dinner—not as Christmas dinners go. Father's long illness and attendant expenses made even the smallest luxury practically impossible. But the roast would be juicy and tender—almost as good as chicken or turkey—and there would be enough of what they had; and, besides—but that was deep in Ruth's heart.

She had not been at all happy in the early morning. There had been nothing but hardship and disappointment, it seemed, for weeks previous. Ruth had enumerated them all to herself as she dressed hurriedly in the morning.

After breakfast, mother had asked her to do an errand, and, as she passed the Scribners' cottage on her way, Bessie came out, drawing her shabby coat closer about her. There were four younger than Bessie in the Scribner family, and there was no father, just a mother, who took in washings. Bessie was out now to carry one of the washings home, and she was to use the money she would receive for it to buy potatoes for the Christmas dinner.

"They'll be the first we've had for a long time," she confided to Ruth, as they walked along together, "and we're all so glad. Mother sprained her wrist, you know, and hasn't been able to do washings until this last one."

And this was the secret of Ruth's changed attitude since the early morning reflections; she had had a glimpse of conditions in life less fortunate than her own. She had come straight home, and sought out the text for the day in her little book of daily Bible readings: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." How could she have forgotten her benefits, even for a time?—Selected.

Christmas All the Year.

Several young men in New York City had Christmas all the year not long ago. They were junior partners in a big business house, and on Christmas eve the senior partner made a remarkable statement to them. "I have been thinking," said the senior partner. "I do not think it is right that I should get two-thirds of the profits of the business, while you get only one-third among you. Hereafter you men will draw two-thirds, and I shall have one-third."

And the young men went home to a joyous Christmas. All the following year they had Christmas every day.

But it was not only the magnificent Christmas present that gave them Christmas all the year. In time they might have got used to it, and might have forgotten it. But they had Christmas all the year because this fine gift was only a working out of the real Christmas spirit of the senior partner. Always he was treating his associates in ways as generous as this; and all the year they lived cheerily, contentedly, and with genuine in-

spiration, because they were working all the year with a man who had the Christmas spirit all the year.

As a matter of fact, these men would have had Christmas all the year even if their senior partner had not made them the expensive Christmas present. For that generous, helpful Christmas spirit of his still would have been with them. "Christmas all the year" is simply "Christ all the year." If the spirit of Man born on the first Christmas is ours, we have all that we need to give us and other people every day the best that even Christmas can offer.—Paul Patten Faris.

The World and Jesus.

"The world knew him not." John 1: 10.

"Christ was unrecognised by his own people in his own world. Mary E. Coleridge, the great-niece of the famous Samuel Taylor Coleridge, reminds us of the loneliness of Jesus in the very hour of his birth:

'I saw a stable, low and very bare,
A little child in a manger.
The oxen knew him, had him in their care,
To men he was a stranger.
The safety of the world was lying there,
And the world's danger.'

A Prayer.

Abide with me,
And make my faith to be a living flame to
guide my erring feet
Along the paths that Doubt hath fashioned, and
fear made rough and steep.
Be thou my guide,
That I may live from day to day, and know that
in the eventide
Thy loving hand hath brought me nearer to
the other side.
I pray thee, Lord,
For strength to serve, and courage give to men
who are by sin oppressed,
That I may lead some soul, as I was led, re-
pentant to the feet of Christ.

—W. A. Bradford.

Nipped in the Bud.

A gentleman, travelling from London to South-end, stepped on to the platform and made his way to where a ticket collector stood rubbing his hands.

"Very cold this evening," said the gentleman.
"Yes, sir; yes, sir; very cold indeed."
"Would you like a nip of something, old boy?"
"Thank you very much, sir; I would."
"Well, here you are then. Just take a nip out of this ticket."

School Examiner: "What is the meaning of false doctrine?"

School-boy: "Please, sir, it's when the doctor gives the wrong kind of stuff to people who are ill."

"The minister was preaching a long sermon from the text, 'Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting.' After an hour the congregation became impatient, and one by one began to move, leaving the place, much to the annoyance of the preacher. At length, as another was about to leave, he stopped his sermon, remarking: 'That's right, gentlemen, as fast as you are weighed, pass out.'"

The Family Altar.

J. C. F. P.

SUNDAY.

In those days came John the Baptist.—Matthew 3: 1.

"The last, the greatest, herald of heaven's King,

Girt with rough skins, hies to the desert wild;
There burst he forth—"All ye whose hopes rely

On God! with me amidst these deserts mourn;
Repent! repent! and from old errors turn."

Reading—Matthew 3: 1-4.

MONDAY.

Flee from the wrath to come.—Matthew 3: 7.

John Bunyan pictures Evangelist asking Christian, when they first met: "If this be thy condition, why standest thou still?" He answered: "Because I know not whither to go." Then he gave him a parchment-roll, and there was written within, "Flee from the wrath to come."

Reading—Matthew 3: 5-12.

TUESDAY.

Then came Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptised of him.—Matthew 3: 13.

"To Jordan's stream the Saviour goes
To do his Father's will;
His breast with sacred ardor glows,
Each precept to fulfil.

"Behold him buried in the flood,
(The emblem of his grave),
Who, from the bosom of his God,
Came down a world to save."

Reading—Matthew 3: 13-17.

WEDNESDAY.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.—Matthew 4: 1.

J. H. Jowett wrote, "Whatever else my Lord shall be to me, he shall not be a counterfeit man, exposed to counterfeit fire, a mere stage fire, a man played upon by harmless sheet-lightning, and never moving amid the dreaded bolts and forked flame. His shall not be the sham fight, and mine the actual struggle, or he can be no Leader for me. He himself 'suffered being tempted.' He felt the real heat of the fire, he felt the fascination of the real seduction. . . . Jesus of Nazareth had the real devil to meet and the real devil to wage, and the garlands on his brow were nobly won."

Reading—Matthew 4: 1-4.

THURSDAY.

Then the devil leaveth him; and behold angels came and ministered unto him.—Matthew 4: 11.

One has expressed the view that "angels are actually, though invisibly, in the midst of our worshipping assemblies, witnesses of our deportment, and hearers of that gospel to which, too often, we give so languid an attention." The apostle writes of "ministering spirits," whilst a modern author says that if in heaven we shall see the angels who ministered to Jesus, surely the whole church will be interested in them.

Reading—Matthew 4: 5-11.

FRIDAY.

And he saith unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men.—Matthew 4: 19.

"Jesus calls us: o'er the tumult
Of our life's wild restless sea,
Day by day his sweet voice soundeth,
Saying, Christian, follow me.

As of old, apostles heard it
By the Galilean lake,
Turned from home, and toil, and kindred,
Leaving all for his dear sake."

Reading—Matthew 4: 12-20.

SATURDAY

And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.—Matthew 4: 20.

"'Straightway!' True obedience knows no delays."—Jerome.

Reading—Matthew 4: 21-25.

Prayer Meeting Topic

January 7.

The Opening Year.

(Proverbs 3: 1-6.)

Horace Kingsbury.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." There is no better prescription than that for a happy New Year.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." Past experience of his goodness fully justifies present trustfulness. "The Lord is full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

"Lean not upon thine own understanding." "The positive duty has its corresponding negation in the admonition against self-confidence." "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him." "Be not wise in your own conceits."

"In all thy ways acknowledge him." "In all thy ways. In thy worship. In thy study of his word. In thy intercourse with his people. In thy traffic with the world. In thy business and in thy recreation. At thy meals. In thy correspondence. In thy reading. In thy dress. What! In all these petty matters? Yes! in all thy ways! Thinkest thou that God will have no word for thee on such topics? Be undeceived. Thou shalt find a revelation of the will of God for every one of thy paths. There is no need for thee to ever let go his hand." (Bowen.)

"Acknowledge him," says Dr. Jowett, "but not with a passing nod of recognition. I must not merely glance at him now and again, admitting his existence on the field. To acknowledge him is to acknowledge him as King, with the right to control, and as predominant partner in all the affairs of my life, even the right to give the determining voice in all my decisions. No, it is not the recognition paid to an acquaintance, it is the homage paid to a King."

"And he shall direct thy paths." "And if I thus acknowledge him," continues Dr. Jowett, "he will direct my paths. Life shall always be moving on to its purposed end and glory. The path chosen will not always be the most alluring one, but it will be the right one, and therefore the safe one, and there will be wonderful discoveries on the uninviting track. How will he let me know which path to take? I cannot say. We can never anticipate God's ways of dealing with us. But if my life is bent to the loving acknowledgment of his will, he will assuredly find a way to make his will known. The light will always reach the willing mind."

"Take time to be holy, let him be thy Guide; And run not before him, whatever betide; In joy or in sorrow still follow thy Lord And, looking to Jesus, still trust in his Word."

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

"The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

"Still will we trust, though earth be dark and dreary,

And the heart faint beneath his chastening rod,

Though steep and rough the pathway, worn and weary,

Still will we trust in God."

REFERENCES.—Genesis 24: 27; Proverbs 16: 9; Psalm 37: 3-5, 23; Psalm 27: 11; Job 23: 10; John 14: 6.

TOPIC FOR JANUARY 14.—OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.—Psalm 103: 1-14.

Our Young People.

Conducted by W. CALE

Why do bells for Christmas ring?
Why do little children sing?

Once a lovely shining star
Seen by shepherds from afar
Gently moved until its light
Made a manger cradle bright.

There a tiny baby lay,
Pillowed soft upon the hay,
And its mother said and smiled,
This is Christ, the Holy Child.

Therefore bells for Christmas ring.
Therefore little children sing.

—Eugene Field.

How the Christmas Chimes Rang in the Belfry.

An old legend tells us that there was once an old church in whose belfry were the most beautiful chimes in the world. No man or woman living had ever heard them ring, but each one had heard his father or grandfather tell of their wonderful beauty.

There was a belief among the people that the chimes would sing on Christmas Day if they brought the most precious gift and laid it on the altar of the church. The king appointed the next Christmas for every man, woman and child in the city to bring him his gift.

First came the king and laid his crown upon the altar. The people gazed in wonder and sat waiting expectantly; for surely no gift could be more precious than the king's crown. But the chimes did not ring. Then a soldier came and laid his sword upon the altar, but still the chimes did not ring.

A woman brought a beautiful dress of her own weaving, and laid it by the soldier's sword, but there was no sound from the old belfry. A maiden brought flowers, planted and watered by her own hand, but still the chimes did not ring.

Now there was in a distant part of the city a little boy named Peter, who for weeks had been saving a few small coins for his gift. It had been very hard to save them. But at last he was on his way with these, his most precious gift, to lay on the altar. He had nearly reached the steps of the church when a whine made him look down on the sidewalk.

There in a narrow doorway crouched a little dog with a broken leg. What should Peter do? It was getting late. If he waited to take the dog home and bind up his leg, the church would be closed and he would lose his chance to make the beautiful chimes ring. But another whine came from the dog. Peter took his hand from the pocket where the hard-earned money lay, picked up the dog in his arms and ran home as swiftly as he could. As he came to the door he called to his brother Hans, "Hans, come, take the money and run back to the church. Quickly, Hans! It may be closed and the beautiful chimes have not yet been rung."

Then he set to work binding up the dog's leg. His little brother ran to the church. The western sunlight was throwing long shadows down the aisles as the people sat waiting, discouraged, as one gift after another was laid upon the altar and still the chimes were silent. Just as a few left their places to pass out, giving up hope, a tiny boy came panting, breathless, up the steps, down the long aisle, straight to the altar where he laid a few small coins.

Suddenly from out the long silent belfry broke the most wonderful music, filling the church, the air, the city, with glorious harmony. People fell upon their knees in joy and thankfulness, men who had not prayed in years praised God, mothers

held their little children more closely to their hearts. The whole city seemed caught up in heavenly melody and held close to the heart of God.

And from a window in a distant part of the city little Peter's face looked out, its great longing changed into great peace. His own small gift had made the chimes ring out at last.

Queensland Bible School Notes.

The annual distribution of prizes won at the recent examination took place in the Ann St. chapel on Dec. 5. Mr. F. E. Alcorn, the president of the Bible School Union, presided over a crowded meeting. In the course of his remarks, Mr. Alcorn said that a larger work was now being done by the Union than ever before, because of the larger finance made possible by the generous support of the churches and schools. A splendid programme was presented by the scholars of the various suburban schools.

The Bible Schools' Organiser, Mr. A. J. Fisher, announced the results of the recent tournament, which has been participated in by 22 schools in town and country, competing for a shield of honor presented to the Union by Mrs. W. A. C. Wendorf. The scores were given for attendance, increase and Union members, based upon percentage. The highest score was made by the Croydon Bible school, gaining 1,179 marks in the last three months, and doubling its enrolment in the same time. In addition, the following certificates were awarded:—For highest possible attendance: Sixteen Mile School, 88 per cent; for highest score, any one week: Tannymoral School, 121 marks; for highest number Union members: Albion School; and for highest per cent. Union members: Ma Ma Creek School. During the three months of the tournament the united schools increased 16 per cent., every school securing new scholars. The average weekly attendance was 80 per cent.

Mr. L. Larsen, State President of the Queensland Churches of Christ, presented the prizes to those who in Queensland won Australian honors. They were Dorothy Roberts, of Drillham; Olive Enchelmaier, of Albion; Thomas Martin, of Brisbane; and Mrs. Dack, of E. Ipswich.

Of the State prizes, those won in the country schools had already been sent to the schools. Those won in the suburbs were presented by the President, Mr. F. E. Alcorn, as follows:—Gold medal, Roderick O'Connell; silver medal, Olive Enchelmaier; first prizes, Mrs. Dack, Thomas Martin, Dorothy Clapham, Dorothy Judge. Second prizes, Frank Cane, Len Wyeth, Bonnie Woff, Arnold Risson. Third prizes, Eric Enchelmaier, Walter Mills, Victor Gager, Robert Wyeth, Mervyn Feemy, Ida Black, Nellie Dack. In addition to the prizes, about fifty merit and pass certificates were also given to successful scholars. —A.J.F.

Vacation.

Vacation-time ought to be the one of all others when we take time to think and to cultivate the spiritual side of our natures. We all know, though, that it isn't, usually. A week or two of staying away from church, a week or two of neglect of daily Bible reading and prayer, and the whole trend of life is changed. Let us start out this year with the determination to let nothing have a place in our vacation programmes which will not refresh us spiritually as well as physically.—"Look-out."

Foreign Missions.

Conducted by G. T. WALDEN, M.A.

Christmas Greetings.

The F.M. Board sends hearty Christmas greetings to the Australian Brotherhood, and on behalf of the missionaries and native workers and orphans on the foreign fields thanks them for the generous support of the work. It will make our own Christmas with all its wonderful happiness happier still when we remember that on December 25 at all our stations in the foreign countries they will be having one of the happiest days of their year provided for them by the generous gifts of the Australian brotherhood.

When the famine came to many of them, it was our Australian brotherhood's money that saved them from starvation. The little orphans whose lives have been made brighter know that their help comes from the unselfish contributions of those who live in Australia, and the many thousands who have received medical treatment and comfort and the message of salvation from our evangelists have gratitude in their hearts for the Australian Churches of Christ who have made all this blessing to them possible.

In the name of all these we wish you a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Good News from Shanghai.



Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Cameron.
In charge of our work at
Shanghai, China.

Our Union Movement.

Since last writing you we have had quite a development in this matter. There are now four churches in Shanghai, namely, Kwenming Road, one at Loong Ching Lee, one at Djun Fung Ka, and one at Lu Ka Shai. Kwenming Road church needs no special remark, except to say that it stands for the work started by the late Mr. James Ware and shows no break in its history. Loong Chin Lee church is a break-off from the former Miller Road church, and has been on its own for a number of years. It has been strong for independence, but recently joined in a general movement of a loose kind of union with the other churches in Shanghai, involving open membership and monthly communion. It has now given up all this, and declared itself loyal to the movement we represent. The church at Djun Fung Ka has had for a leader a very earnest Christian man, well known to me for many years. The members speak a different dialect from Shanghai, and so have been more by themselves. Mr. Ting Pay (the leader mentioned) now declares himself and the little church one with us. The fourth cause is a small one and is located in French-town. All these persons have been for long connected with our movement, but for years have been scattered and isolated, and working sometimes on peculiar lines, yet they are all fundamentally our people. It is an impressive sight to find the drawing together taking place now after so long.

A practical union has been effected. The Kwenming Road church is now recognised as the "mother" church. Union services for worship are held, three successive Sundays at Kwenming Road and each fourth Sunday at Loong Ching Lee. Apart from these communion services, each church carries on preaching meetings for the general public. By the three churches in the east the northern districts union evangelistic work is carried out during the week, and workers (including our evangelist Ning) go out to the small French-town meeting place each Wednesday afternoon.

On October 10 we had a united baptismal service when 21 were baptised, 17 being from Loong Ching Lee, two from our place and the other two from the other churches. It was a great day at Kwenming Road, where the meeting took place. All sat down to the Lord's table in happy, yet solemn mood.

This records a step forward. I have been careful to press for definite statements (at our deacons' meeting) as to the present attitude of the churches uniting to our plea, and it appears to be a satisfactory one. The hope of permanent success in this movement is in the fact that all the leaders have been for years in close touch with our position and do, in truth, belong to our group.

Mr. Ning's reports show that he and his fellow-helpers really get a lot of work done. His report for October tells of a social meeting held on October 10 by members and friends of the Christian Endeavor Society. Some 80 persons were present, and they enjoyed pictures dealing with astronomy and addresses on the prophets of the Old Testament, and the subject of redemption through Christ as shown in the New Testament. They also discussed some questions about the best way to carry on the Endeavor work. Six new members enrolled at the meeting.

Mr. Ning goes out to the French-town place of meeting every Wednesday afternoon, and he often preaches in the shelters for refugees (erected on account of the provincial war, now finished in this part). Mr. Ning and his helpers change their methods constantly as circumstances demand.

Our work will now move steadily along towards Christmas, when the children come in for their special treat; after that, the Chinese new year will be on us, during the latter part of January.

So far I have not heard of any sickness among the children this term.

News from Chefoo, Shantung province, goes to show that the two deaf and dumb girls from the Kwenming Road church are doing well. The strong northern air will do them good. Those especially who are interested in our orphan fund will be glad to know that the way was opened for these two girls. The Christian mother is deeply grateful. One girl is supported by outside funds, and one partly by our Australian funds and partly by the Kwenming Road members, the church paying one-third of the cost.

The members are thus gaining experience in this kind of work. Wishing you and all working with you all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) W. M. Cameron.

Notes and News.

The Victorian F.M. Secretary, J. E. Allan, gives a good report of the Children's Day offering. To date he has heard from 50 schools, with a total of £154. The leading schools are Box Hill, £8/1/-; Oakleigh, £8; Surrey Hills, £7/12/3.

We are glad to announce the birth of a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Waterman. Mother and daughter are both doing well. May this dear

little child one day be enrolled as a missionary to the great land of China. We are sure all the Australian children will join us in wishing her and her parents a very happy Christmas.

Bro. W. Morrow, M.L.C., President of the F.M. Board, is leaving with his wife on Jan. 3 on a visit to the United States. He carries with him the best wishes of all who know him for a happy and prosperous visit. He has been in labors abundant in connection with our Australian churches, especially with those in South Australia. He is held in high esteem as one of our local members of Parliament, and he is one of the strong men of the Legislative Council. We shall miss him very much from the F.M. Board, but we know that he will come back enriched in experience to give us even better service in the future. On Jan. 2 the various committees with which Bro. Morrow has been associated will entertain him and Mrs. Morrow at a farewell social. We are sure that all will join with us in wishing Bro. and Sister Morrow *bon voyage*, a pleasant trip from us, and a speedy return to us.

State Foreign Mission Secretaries.

Please send offerings to the following:—

Victoria—J. E. Allan, 51 Watts-st., Box Hill.
N.S.W.—J. Clydesdale, 9 Grand-par., Brighton-le Sands.
S.A.—L. R. Fisher, 74 O'Connell-st., Nth. Adelaide.
W.A.—W. Clay, 393 Bagot-rd., Subiaco.
Qld.—H. W. Hermann, Francis-st., Eagle Junction, Brisbane.
Tas.—J. Foot, jr., 14 Balfour Pl., Launceston.
Federal Secretary—G. T. Walden, M.A., 74 Edmund-av., Unley, S.A.

ADDRESSES.

Arthur Botting (secretary South Dunedin church, N.Z.)—117 Macandrew-rd., South Dunedin.

J. L. Wheeler (secretary Warracknabeal church, Vic.)—Warracknabeal.

W. Edwards (secretary Nailsworth church, S.A.)—First Av., Sefton Park, S.A.

BIRTH.

CUMMISKEY (nee Irene Mason).—On Nov. 19, at Nanango, Queensland, to Mr. and Mrs. George Cummiskey—a daughter (Verna Irene).

IN MEMORIAM.

PAYNE.—In loving memory of mother, who was called home, Dec. 23, 1920.

Deep in our hearts there's a memory

Of one we will never forget.

—Inserted by her loving daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Perry, Kensington, Vic.

WANTED.

The preacher of the church at Chelsea, Bro. W. J. Thomson, would be pleased to know of any members or clubs that will be visiting between Mordialloc and Frankston during the holiday or summer season. Please address any communications "Edithvale House," Chelsea.

Any young lady connected with a country church desiring home near the city and used to children, please write to Mrs. B. W. Manning, 2 Danby St., Torrensville, S.A. Remuneration for helping in the home.

Wanted, preacher—young man's man—for Long Plains District, South Aus. Good salary suitable man. Particulars from F. J. Goodwin, Bayswater, Victoria.

The church at East Kew, Vic., requires the services of a full-time preacher. Fine healthy and growing district, great possibilities. Reply by letter, stating salary, to D. F. Henderson, secretary, 133 Eglington St., Kew.

COMING EVENTS.

JANUARY 19.—Bay Excursion of the Bible Schools and Young People's Department will be held on Monday, January 19. The great social event of the year. Better than ever before.

At Anley, S.A., good meetings were held on Dec. 14. Bro. F. Garnett spoke in the morning, and Bro. Webb delivered the gospel message. An offering to provide Christmas cheer for the inmates of the Home for Incurables realised £4/18/- On Dec. 16 the primary department was given a delightful Christmas tea-party. The superintendent and teachers provided a splendid spread, and Father Christmas gave a toy to each child. Attendances at Sunday school are on the up-grade. Last Thursday evening the Endeavorers conducted the service at the homes, and presented to each of the 130 inmates a parcel of Christmas cheer. The ladies' Foreign Mission band has forwarded to the Federal Secretary £60, proceeds from recent fete. This is an advance on previous amounts. Dec. 21 was a great day. A feature of the morning service was the anthem by the choir. Bro. R. Harkness addressed the church, and 209 observed the Lord's Supper. On Sunday evening a special Christmas service was greatly enjoyed by a large congregation. The church choir rendered two beautiful anthems. Bro. P. R. Baker led in prayer. Bro. J. E. Webb spoke on "The First Christmas Service." Four confessed Jesus as Lord.

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To whom their God has given grace
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To lift the latch, to force the way;
But better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

—Sir Walter Scott.

In an altogether exclusive sense this is *The "Holy Bible, Book Divine."* There are others that profess to be Holy and Divine, but they all have this defect: they do not set man's feet in, they do not even reveal, "the Way of Holiness"; and even by that alone they may be judged, and their proper place be assigned. Further, there are many thousands of good books fitted to help us upward and onward, to encourage us to live a higher and better life, but not all of them together can take the place of the Holy Bible. We should be infinitely better without any of them if we had the Bible, than we should be with the whole of them without the Bible.

When Christ said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," he was speaking of persons, but the same thing may be said of systems and of things. Apply this to the Bible, and how does it stand the test?

Its fruits—national and social.

The more any country has been guided by the principles of the Bible, the more has that country prospered, in every sense of the word. One has just to look at the difference between Bible-reading countries and those where it is a closed and unknown Book, to see what it has done. It is in Bible-reading countries that the greatest measure of freedom has been reached and the highest moral culture has been attained.

The influence of the Bible on social life has been very remarkable. Take, e.g., the Factory Acts, which removed some of the worst blots on our wretched and cruel factory system of those days. They were the work of Lord Shaftesbury, and he was a man of one book, and that book the Bible. The Ragged School system was instituted by John Pounds, a poor Plymouth cobbler, who found his inspiration in the Bible. Here philanthropy has found her inspiring influence. Infirmarys, hospitals, Red Cross organisations, asylums, and all institutions and agencies that exist for the relief of human needs or the amelioration of human suffering, are in being just because of the Bible. It has been the spring of gracious charities wherever it has been known. It has taught men the value of human life, taught them to care for infancy and age, to relieve the poor, to tend the sick and the feeble, to raise the fallen, to reclaim the outcast, and to vindicate the rights of the oppressed.

The Bible and the individual.

What has it done for the individual? Professor Huxley, the great scientist, though he was not a Christian believer, yet acknowledged that he knew no way in which the religious feeling in man, which he called the essential basis of conduct, could be secured without the use of the Bible. He knew no book like it in its humanising influence, no book which showed so clearly the meaning of life, or which taught so plainly how to do good and to hate evil.

In cases innumerable the Bible has delivered men and women from the power of evil habit, has changed their hearts, has reversed the current of their life. How is it that the Book has such power as this? Because it comes to us from One who knows the heart through and through—wherein it has gone wrong and how it may be put right; who knows man's needs from top to bottom and how they may be satisfied; who is both able and willing to put man's heart right (by giving him a new one—the only way) and so to

supply all his needs. Thus the Bible holds up before man not only one mirror but two. In the one he sees himself as he is; in the other he looks at himself as he may become, if only he will use in the right spirit the means the Bible sets before him for working so wonderful a change. In countless instances that change has been experienced, and no better and stronger testimony to its Divine origin can the Holy Bible receive. These glorious results its enemies cannot explain away. They afford the best proof that it is "marked with the seal of high divinity."

From David, that great lover of the Word (and his Bible was small), down to "the faithful" of these days, there has been continuous, grateful testimony to its value and power, its unique and blessed influence in the making of character and the elevating of life, in the salving of human wrecks and their rebuilding and reftment.

The Bible in the Christian life.

What place in their lives have eminent Christians given to the Bible? Take, e.g., some well-known soldiers, for I think that a soldier, when he is a genuine Christian, is one of the best. He is beset by so many temptations, he is so severely tested, that, if he is to stand, he must be an out-and-outer. When Hedley Vicars was converted, he knew that he would meet with ridicule and persecution, and he made ready. The very next morning he laid his open Bible on the table. Presently a fellow-officer came in, and, on seeing the open Bible, he exclaimed, "Hullo! Vicars, turned Methodist?" "That is my flag," replied Vicars, "and by the grace of God I hope to be true to it as long as I live." How true he was to it, was shown by his consecrated life.

The Bible was the daily companion and friend of General Gordon. He studied it with the same energy and thoroughness which he brought to his work as a soldier. He said: "Bibles abound in our land, but are they read and studied as they ought to be, considering who is the Writer? How few forget to take their daily meals! Yet they starve their souls, though they too require their portion, which is the Word of God."

General Roberts was a diligent reader of the Scriptures. Speaking of the New Testament, he said: "You will find in this little book—guidance when you are in health, comfort when you are in sickness, and strength when you are in adversity."

Field-Marshal Earl Haig, when on a visit to South Africa, said: "What an encouragement and support it was, especially in times of anxiety (and when were we ever free from anxiety?), to read over a few verses of the Bible."

The Bible and yourself.

It is all very well to know something of what the Bible has done for nations, for communities, and for individuals, but what most of all concerns us is this—what has it done, and what is it doing

for ourselves? It can do little for us directly, unless we give it opportunities, and these come through reading it. Nothing good will help us unless we make use of it. No good book will benefit us unless we read it. But, wherever the Bible has been read honestly and prayerfully, it has not failed of its Divine purpose. And what is that? "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his Name."

On the fly-leaf of his Bible, Michael Bruce, the poet, had written:

'Tis very vain of me to boast
How small a price this Bible cost;
The Day of Judgment will make clear
'Twas very cheap or very dear.

—J. Young Brown, M.A., in "The Christian."

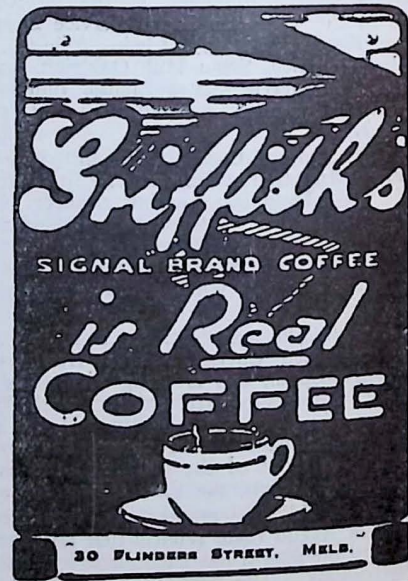
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Making Life Too Easy.

You remember how Jeroboam tried to do it, in the old story in the book of Kings. "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem," he told the revolting ten tribes, as he sets up his strange shrines in Bethel and in Dan. And undoubtedly it seemed quite a reasonable argument to them. But the sequel to the story indicates that the effort to make Israel's religion easy very decidedly spoiled it. And, if we mistake not, that is nearly always the result of such an effort. Of all things in the world a religion without any iron and strength and courage in it is the most insipid and the most hopeless. And is the lackadaisical, soft-spirited life any better? The folk who run away from things, who insist on taking the easy and the pleasant path, who refuse to set up high ideals in anything because they make such demands of one—what shall we say of them? Seeking to save life do they not utterly spoil it? The strange thing seems to be that running away from hard things does not in reality help to make life easy at all. But facing up to them, resolutely and stout-heartedly, does. Setting one's face to the hard thing that one ought to do somehow puts strength and fibre into the soul, and after that hard things become easy. And in a similar way the cowardly habit of running away from duty makes the soul soft and flabby and then everything becomes hard. Indeed the only way to make life easy is to grasp its obligations with a firm, resolute and courageous hand. Try it for yourself and see!—"Toronto Christian Guardian."

A Principle to Live By.

One sentence that fell from the lips of Jesus that is not recorded in the gospels is preserved for us by Paul: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." That quality was stamped upon the hearts of those early Christians. "Every man" contributed "according to his ability." So many of us are generous in our minds! It is easy to resolve to make big contributions, which often dwindle to small proportions when the time to give has come. Not so with those early Christians. They did what they made up their minds to do. They were generous in feeling and also in deed.—Charles E. Jefferson.

God is Good.

"God hath been very good. 'Tis he whose hand Moulded the sunny hills, and hollowed out The shelter of the valleys, and doth keep The fountains in their secret places cool; And it is he who leadeth up the sun, And ordereth up the starry influences, And tempereth the keenness of the frost, And, therefore, in the plenty of the feast, And in the lifting of the cup, let him Have praises for the well-completed year."—Willis.

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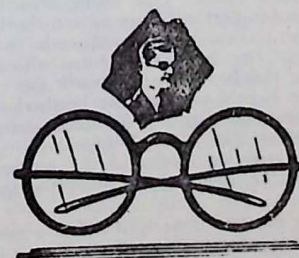
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News of the Churches.

New Zealand.

At Nelson, Bro. Percy Bolton exhorted on Nov. 30. Bro. Fitzgerald at the gospel meeting spoke to a crowded audience on "The False and the True Priesthood." Attendance fairly large at morning meeting on Dec. 7. Bro. Fitzgerald delivered a fine message on "The Attractiveness of Jesus." At night he continued his series of addresses on the "Ideals of True Protestantism," the subject being "The False and True Confession." These addresses are attracting large audiences, the building being packed at the gospel meetings. Tuesday evening prayer meetings are well attended, a number taking part in the service.

At South Dunedin, Sunday, Nov. 30, was set apart for Bible school anniversary services. Many new scholars have been gained during the year. Teachers and officers have been attentive to their work. During the recent competition inaugurated by the Bible school executive, not one of the teachers of the school was absent. On the morning of Nov. 30, Bro. J. I. Wright gave an instructive address to the young folk on "The Purpose of Life." The children rendered several anniversary hymns acceptably. In the afternoon Bro. W. D. More gave an address on "Snakes," to which the children listened very attentively. He also presented the prizes. The school, under Bro. G. P. Cuttriss, assisted by the orchestra, rendered selections in splendid style. A pleasing duet was given by Misses Audrey and Phyllis Wilson. The evening meeting was also devoted to the children, Bro. Cuttriss giving a very interesting and instructive address on "Dogs." Songs were rendered by the school and orchestra. On Dec. 3 the Bible school held its annual tea meeting, after which an entertainment was given by the school and orchestra.

Tasmania.

Invermay had good meetings on Lord's day, Dec. 14, 74 breaking bread morning and evening. Bro. Lyons exhorted in the morning and Bro. Gilliam gave the gospel message at night.

Ulverstone church is having good meetings. Local brethren are carrying on the work of the church faithfully. Bren. A. Taylor, A. Ivory and F. Dent are doing a noble work in the time of need. At the midweek meeting a visit from Bro. and Sister Noble and Bro. Nichols was enjoyed. The chapel is looking quite new, thanks to Bro. Foster, who has labored long and hard.

On Dec. 14, meetings at Devonport were conducted by Bro. J. Warren. On the 15th, at the C.E. meeting, Bro. Reville, junr., was the speaker. On the 18th a large number gathered to enjoy a social evening. Songs, recitations and dialogues were given by the children of the Bible school, after which they were entertained at a Christmas-tree. The church expects to enter the new building in King St. on the first Sunday in January.

On Dec. 7 good meetings were held at Launceston. Bro. Noble preached an excellent address at night on "Penknifing the Scriptures." Two ladies made the good confession. Bro. Noble's address was printed in the local newspapers, and a Methodist preacher criticised same from his platform on Dec. 14. Much interest has been aroused, and Bro. Noble was to reply to the criticism on Dec. 21. The Bible school anniversary on Dec. 14 proved a great success. The singing of the scholars, under the leadership of Bro. T. Arnot, was excellent. Special messages were delivered by Bro. Noble to large attendances. On Dec. 17 the prize-giving and demonstration took place. The school (despite the removal of scholars during the year to Invermay) has made fine progress.

Western Australia.

At Lake St. since last report there have been four additions by faith and baptism. The hall at the rear of the chapel is completed. This will be a valuable asset to the work among the young people. Annual H.M. offering has already passed last year's amount. More is expected.

Collie had splendid S.S. anniversary services on Nov. 30. Bro. Hallday was an efficient organiser. The gospel message was given to a well-filled house, and the children sang several hymns. The children's tea was held on Wednesday. Great praise is due to the workers who made tea and concert a success. Ewington followed with its anniversary on Dec. 7, Bro. J. Hicks in charge. Bro. Hallday addressed the children. Tea, concert, and prizes were features of the Monday following. The hall has been lit up by electricity. This will be a boon to preachers and audience. The C.E. conducted by Sister Hallday had a record attendance of 36.

Services at Subiaco on Dec. 14 were well attended. The exhortation on "The Unrecognised Christ" delivered by Bro. Leach was very helpful. Bro. Frew's message at night, "Be of Good Cheer," was enjoyed. On Dec. 16 the girls' club held its break-up social. A happy evening closed with a presentation to the president, Mrs. Clay, and vice-presidents, Mrs. Nelson and Mrs. McEwan, in appreciation of their care over the girls during the year. At the close of the prayer meeting on Dec. 17 opportunity was taken to thank Bro. Frew for his services during Bro. Clay's absence, and a presentation was made. Bro. and Sister Clay were welcomed home after a holiday at Penguin Island.

Queensland.

At New Veteran gospel service, Bro. C. Trudgian spoke on "The Magnetic Christ." Prospects are bright. About 20 believing adults attended the service.

Progress has been made throughout the circuit of West Moreton. At Mt. Walker four were received into fellowship (three by faith and obedience and one by letter). At Rosewood five were received in (three by letter and two restorations). At Marburg a father and son were given the right hand of fellowship. Total, eleven.

Bro. H. C. Spratt has taken up the work at Boonah. Sister Spratt and Sister Hodges, from Roma, have been received into fellowship. On Sunday, Dec. 7, there were good meetings—17 present at 7 a.m. prayer meeting; 74 broke bread. Bro. Spratt delivered splendid addresses morning, afternoon and night. On Dec. 10 the Endeavorers gave an enjoyable social evening. On Sunday, Dec. 14, the H.M. offering was £13/10/-.

Question night was held recently at Gympie Improvement Class. One young man from the "Training for Service" class gave a short address on "Music." Bro. H. A. Shulz, who was to be married on Dec. 20, was presented with a beautiful set of stainless carvers to mark the esteem in which he is held amongst the brotherhood. On Sunday morning Bro. C. Trudgian exhorted on the "Spiritual Side of the Lord's Day." At night Bro. E. Trudgian conducted the service, and a lad from the Bible school made the good confession.

During the fourth week of Zillmere mission the attendances were good, and there was one confession. On Friday, Dec. 12, at the close of a splendid meeting, the thankoffering amounted to over £54. Dec. 14 was the closing day of the mission. The attendance at morning worship was the largest for many years. Bro. Ball presided and addressed the church. Bro. Martin, from the College of the Bible, who comes to help in the

preaching for a few weeks, took part. In the evening the chapel was filled, and Bro. Ball gave his final gospel message. During the mission there have been 12 confessions and 3 restorations. The church has received a great uplift, prejudice has been broken down, and the way made clear for more aggressive work.

Victoria.

Work at Doncaster East is progressing. Three adult confessions at gospel meeting on Dec. 7. Bro. Probert, of the Bible College, preaching. At Hampton the Children's Day exercise was rendered on Sunday afternoon, and the offering was £2/6/6. At night Bro. E. Bagley gave a forceful address on "Following the Star."

Gardiner church and school had good meetings on Sunday. The J.C.E. had its prize distribution, and a Christmas-tree is arranged for the kinders. The choir rendered several specially-prepared pieces to the enjoyment of all.

Hawthorn held a Christmas choral service on Sunday night. The choir was assisted by a number of friends, and the meeting was greatly enjoyed by the large audience. Bro. Scambler spoke morning and evening on special Christmas subjects. The Home Mission offering has reached £62.

Temperance Sunday was celebrated at Maryborough on Sunday, Dec. 14. Good attendances throughout the day. Junior and adult Rechabite lodge and representatives of other temperance bodies were in attendance at gospel service. Bro. Baker's address on "Prevention is Better than Cure" was highly appreciated.

A pleasant ending to a successful year was enjoyed by members of Essendon Phi Beta Pi on Dec. 18. The church officers were invited to attend, and the chaplain, Mrs. Ploog, was able to present, through them, a piano to the church. Suitable responses were made by Mr. Sivyver and Mr. Jackson. A fruit supper was enjoyed.

At North Richmond three have been received into fellowship. On Dec. 7 Bro. A. Baker addressed the church. Meetings are keeping up in attendance. On Dec. 14 Bro. R. W. Payne occupied the platform. The gospel service was conducted by the ladies of the church. It was a splendid meeting. A sale of work recently held realised about £60.

The Home Mission offering at Brighton was £35. Sister Mrs. Robinson, of Western Australia, was present on Dec. 14. Sister Mrs. Warmsley, a highly-esteemed member of the church, passed away on Friday, Dec. 12. She united with the church during the Chandler-Clay mission about six years ago. For some time past she was only able to attend the services occasionally on account of illness. She was a very sincere Christian, and most patient in her sufferings. A son of Bro. and Sister Brigden, Mr. J. B. Brigden, B.A., has been appointed to the professorship of economics at the Hobart University. After serving in the war, he entered Oriel College, Oxford, and graduated in jurisprudence, taking also the diploma in economics and political science. He recently published two lectures on the members of the first British Labor cabinet.

Box Hill church enjoyed a visit and a message from Bro. W. Waterman, from China, on Dec. 21. Sister Mrs. Quire, of Toowoomba, worshipped with the church. Bible school attendances are showing marked increase. On Dec. 20, junior and intermediate Endeavorers arranged a Christmas-tree in aid of the Armenian fund. Little bags containing money collected by the children were hung in turn on the tree, the amount collected altogether being about £2/5/-. On Dec. 18, Sister Miss Lily Toogood was married to Mr. George Turner, of Hawthorn, Bro. Allan officiating. Prior to her marriage, the bride was given a "kitchen tea" by the church members. On Dec. 12 a sale of work arranged by the ladies' aid for the building fund resulted in a profit of about £50. Sister Mrs. C. Gill, who has been laid aside for some weeks, is recovering slowly.

At Ararat last Lord's day, Bro. Welsh spoke in the morning and Bro. Combridge at the gospel service, when one young man confessed Christ.

On Dec. 21, splendid meetings were held at Warracknabeal. The visit of Bro. Enniss was greatly appreciated. His meeting with the officers of the local church and the members of the circuit executive has been a great help. Bro. Enniss addressed morning and evening services. In the afternoon he spoke at Brim to a full meeting.

Thornbury reports another confession. The Sunday school children who attend the morning and night services of the church (about 40) were presented with prizes, and the sisters of the church presented to the officers £25 as a Christmas present, to go towards reducing the debt on building. Good services on Sunday, Bro. Swain speaking in the evening to a large congregation.

The Richmond churches held their third combined prayer meeting at North Richmond on Dec. 18, when about 250 were present. The combined North Richmond junior and senior choirs, under the leadership of Bro. Hall, rendered carols and anthems. Bro. Jas. E. Thomas spoke on "The Christ of Christmas," and an offering was taken for Christmas cheer. A happy and profitable time was spent.

Boronia had very fine meetings to close the mission. On the last night a married man confessed Christ. The church has experienced a time of rich blessing as the result of Bro. Hurren's ministry. The members are grateful to the Footscray brethren for releasing their preacher to conduct the mission. Bro. Hurren was presented with a cheque as a mark of appreciation. Good meetings last Lord's day.

At Cheltenham on Sunday, Dec. 14, Bro. and Sister Les. Thomas, from Bamba Rd., were welcomed into membership; also James Lewis, immersed last Sunday evening, who was presented with a church hymn book. A good school and kindergarten in the afternoon. In the evening service Bro. Pittman preached on "The Harvest and the Vintage." Miss Spurr, of South Australia, was a visitor for the day.

There were good meetings at Lygon St. on Sunday. F. T. Saunders gave two addresses in keeping with the Christmas season. At both services the well-selected hymns were fervently sung. At night the subject of Bro. Saunders' discourse was "Unto Us a Child Is Born." There was some very fine singing by a large choir, the anthem and Christmas carols being beautifully sung. We are pleased to learn that Dr. Douglas Renton, who has been under a serious operation, is progressing satisfactorily.

Middle Park continues to enjoy good meetings. Bro. E. Bagley gave a message last Lord's day morning. In the evening two girls from the Bible school were baptised. Bro. Robinson preached. His faithful ministry is much appreciated. On Dec. 15 a farewell social was given to Bro. Will Graham, during which the Bible class, the football club and the church showed appreciation of his fellowship and services during the past three years in a tangible way. Bro. Graham left for S.A. on Saturday. A Christmas treat was given to the kinders on Dec. 17, when gifts and sweets were given to the children.

On Dec. 10, Moreland choir and S.S. teachers made a presentation to Miss Olive Barrett and Mr. G. R. Smyth, prior to their marriage. On Dec. 14 Bro. A. E. Knight gave the gospel message. On Dec. 20 the combined young people's societies, Phi Beta Pi and K.S.P., held their Christmas gift social. An excellent programme was enjoyed. A presentation of gifts was made to every Kappa and Phi Beta present. On Dec. 21 Bro. Gale presided, and Bro. A. Withers exhorted. At night Bro. Gale spoke on "God's Unspeaking Gift" to a fine attendance. A collection for Armenian Relief Fund realised £4/10/9. The extension of the building is nearly finished. Mildura annual meeting reports were very encouraging. For the year there were 35 additions and 16 losses. Income exceeded expenditure by £71. A very popular presentation was made to Bro. A. E. Cameron for his many years of faithful service as church secretary. H.M. offering

so far is about £16. The ladies' guild held a successful American evening in aid of the new kindergarten hall. They expect to receive about £20. Meetings are well attended. Last Sunday there were two baptisms. The church is combining with Methodist and Presbyterian churches for Christmas Day and watchnight services. Bro. A. Mansell has been appointed agent for the "Christian."

Castlemaine held Christmas services on Sunday. Bro. Clipstone gave fine addresses. The choir contributed special singing in the evening, Mr. Rowley and Mr. Watson assisting with solos. Home Mission offering has reached £27. Last Wednesday the church tendered a kitchen tea to two Bible school teachers, Miss H. Hall and Mr. Jos. Brammer, who are shortly to be married. Over 400 toys were distributed to the Bible school children at an entertainment in the Mechanics' Hall on Dec. 20. The tennis court was officially opened on Dec. 13 by Cr. Grey. Mr. Ross was presented with a fountain pen by the club for services rendered.

At Swanston St. last Lord's day morning there was a good meeting. A young lady was baptised and received into membership. Amongst visitors were Capt. and Miss Sundstrum, of Dunedin, N.Z., who were returning from a visit to England and America. In the evening Bro. Shipway delivered an appropriate address on "Visits to Bethlehem," after which the choir rendered the cantata "Bethlehem" very beautifully. Mrs. Vernon Walker, Messrs. Grainger, E. Jones and Watson rendered solo parts excellently, and the whole was very capably conducted by Mr. J. Harold Barrett. Mr. C. H. Mitchell and Mrs. Featherston were efficient at organ and piano respectively.

Footscray had good meetings last Lord's day. Bro. Hurren was welcomed home after his brief mission at Boronia. The kindergarten department, under Sister Plunket, had a record attendance of 71 in the afternoon. Bro. Tomkins presented a representative of each home in the Bible school with a special Christmas card. Excellent attendance in the evening. The choir rendered special items. Sister Elder and Bro. Hardy each sang a solo and a duet. Bro. Hurren spoke concerning "The Song of the Angels." Several brethren are busily engaged in lining the kinder room and adding fixtures. Sister Elsie Gardiner, who has been in hospital for some time, is making good recovery.

South Melbourne has had eight confessions during the month, Bro. P. D. McCallum preaching. Meetings for the past few weeks have been well attended. On Dec. 14 a splendid meeting listened earnestly to the gospel message. On Dec. 17 a farewell social was tendered Bro. and Sister McCallum, on the eve of their departure to U.S.A. Bro. F. Copeland presided. A bright social hour was spent, and travelling rugs were presented to Bro. and Sister McCallum. Miss Joy and Master Hayden were also given a small token. Bro. Les. Peacock had charge of meetings on 21st inst. Bible school attendance is at high water mark. The kinders had an enjoyable Christmas party on Dec. 13. Senior school held a Christmas-tree on Dec. 20.

Bendigo held a successful Christmas-tree on Dec. 17. The kindergarten under the superintendent, Sister Jean Turner, rendered a fine programme. Bro. Mortimer has decided to discontinue week-end visits at the end of the year. He has completed twelve months, and has rendered great service to the church. To mark appreciation the church at the close of the morning meeting on Dec. 21, presented Bro. and Sister Mortimer with a valuable gift. Bren. Streader, Duus, Kenley, Ellis and Collins spoke of the benefits derived from Bro. Mortimer's visits. At the request of the Junior C.E. Society, Bro. Mortimer presented the church with a beautifully bound edition of Sankey's hymns. Sister N. Streader has carried on this work for over four years, but recently found it necessary to resign. Since that time, instead of the Junior C.E. Society, a morning Bible school has been working well under Bro. Duus, superintendent, Sister Gladys Renault, secretary, and a good staff of workers.

South Australia.

Cottonville kindergarten were given a Christmas-tree last Wednesday. It was a splendid success. The chapel was crowded out with parents and friends. The school in all branches is progressing, and the church is in the very best of spirits and prosperity. Each auxiliary is making headway.

At the Nailsworth mission six confessed Christ and were baptised. Four united with Nailsworth church. Last week a Christmas-tree was laden with toys for the kindergarten children, numbering about seventy. The treat to the primary class took the form of a tea party. Several scholars have been added to the Bible school. One confession at the gospel service last Sunday. Bro. Garnett, who has been on holiday, has now returned.

The young ladies of Prospect Y.P.S.C.E. held an enjoyable social on Dec. 16. Kindergarten and Beginners' Departments received a visit from Father Christmas on Dec. 20, when every child present received a gift. The same afternoon the scholars of the primary department held their Christmas party at the Botanic Gardens. A special service was held at the J.C.E. on Sunday; Mr. Beiler gave an interesting Christmas message. A baptismal service was held prior to the morning service. Sisters Mrs. Bluntish and Mrs. Smith were received into fellowship. Bro. Beiler delivered the gospel address. The choir rendered special singing.

Semaphore Bible school annual picnic was held at Belair. On Dec. 17 the sisters' guild held a drawing-room afternoon; over 50 ladies were present. A musical and elocutionary programme was enjoyed. The guild has done valuable work. At the annual business meeting of the church on Dec. 17, reports from all auxiliaries were good. Junior Endeavorers enjoyed a picnic on Dec. 13. The kindergarten scholars were treated to a Christmas-tree last Saturday. Good services on Dec. 21. A sister received by letter from Kadina. Solos by Mrs. L. V. Mathews, A.L.C.M., and anthems by the choir, were appreciated. Bro. Rootes has accepted a further term with the church as evangelist.

New South Wales.

Recently one of the senior boys of Hornsby Bible school was baptised and received into fellowship. On Wednesday his mother was baptised. Bro. Payne leaves shortly on holidays; in his absence the gospel services are to be taken by Bren. A. Stevenson and J. Crawford. The Bible school Christmas social and kindergarten Christmas-tree, also the K.S.P. break-up social, were very happy gatherings.

Chatswood on Dec. 21 received into fellowship Sister Chapel and Bro. Gray. Bro. Whelan gave fine Christmas messages morning and evening. Mrs. Chapel was baptised. Visitors were Sisters Mrs. Little and daughter, from W.A. Sisters' Dorcas distributed 180 garments to the poor of Chatswood and Erskineville districts. The J.C.E. provided a Christmas-tree to cheer the poor children—90 present.

Lidcombe anniversary celebrations were a success. Good meetings on Dec. 7. Continuation. Thursday, Dec. 11, a basket social was pleasant and profitable. Bro. G. Stimson, President of the Parramatta District Conference, presided. Bren. Forbes and Jones conveyed greetings from South and North Auburn respectively. Dec. 14, Bro. H. Priestly addressed the church and conducted the gospel service, also on Dec. 21. Attendances at meetings are growing.

At Lismore City Temple on Dec. 14, thanksgiving was offered for God's deliverance from disaster by fire five years ago, in loss of tabernacle. Amongst visitors were Miss Marsden, of Albion, Qld., and Bro. F. Furlonger, now a resident of Brunswick Heads. At night Bro. P. J. Pond preached on "Faith Essential to Christian Baptism." Two young men were baptised: Arthur Snow, of Banzalaw, and Allan Lutton, of Lismore. By the transfer of Miss O. Price from Lismore High School to Petersham, a valuable and esteemed worker will be lost from Lismore.

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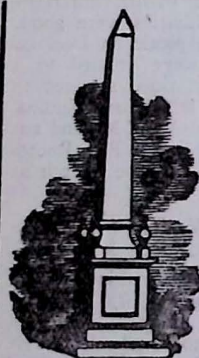
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Through all kinds of weather with smile or with
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In sorrow or sunshine, in tempest or calm,
Thy friendship unchanging, my lamp and my
psalm.

We've travelled together, my Bible and I,
When life had grown weary and death e'en was
nigh;

But all through the darkness of mist, or of wrong,
I found there a solace, a prayer or a song.

So now who shall part us, my Bible and I?
Shall "isms" or "schisms" or "new lights" who
try?

Shall shadow for substance or stone for good
bread

Supply thy sound wisdom, give folly instead?

Ah, no! precious Bible, exponent of light,
Thou sword of the Spirit, put error to flight;
And still through life's journey until my last sigh,
We'll travel together, my Bible and I.

—Rose Been, in "Young People."

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