

The Australasian Christian Standard.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. 5: 21.

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Current Topics.

JUR JUDGES.—If our judges, says *The Southern Cross*, will betake themselves to the pulpit and discourse to mankind at large on theological subjects, it is at least well that honest and wholesome doctrine sometimes has the shelter of the judicial wig. Mr. Justice Williams' recent discourse on prayer and theology in general, announced from every hoarding in Melbourne as "a new religion," was a singularly feeble and incoherent discourse, and has already shared the fate of other "new" religions, and been turned into mere "almshouse oblivion." But on Sunday Mr. Justice Hodges delivered an address on the same text as that chosen by his fellow-judge, and gave a singularly powerful and vehement, not to say passionate, discourse, proving that God *does* answer prayer. Prayer, Mr. Justice Hodges argued, is the necessary corollary of love; it rests on the teaching of Christ, it is justified by reason, and verified in the daily experience of men. If his child wanted bread, said Mr. Justice Hodges said, and he could not cry to God for help, he would tear his Bible in pieces! If God exists and is all-powerful, and has planted in us the instinct of prayer, and yet nicks that instinct by refusing to answer prayer, said Mr. Justice Hodges, in a flash of white-hot rhetoric, such a being was

not a God, He was a grinning fiend! Mr. Justice Hodges' address, as the testimony of a trained and powerful intellect to the credibility of the Christian theory of prayer, is a very noteworthy utterance.

HAPPINESS AT HOME.—"He is the happiest," said the great German poet Goethe, "be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home." This thought formed the subject of a sermon lately delivered by Archdeacon Sinclair. He said:—"And first, it must be in its own way as sacred a place as the Church itself. What a charm, somebody has said, has home—that magic word embodying sentiments the most holy and pure! Nothing must come there which would defile it or destroy the spell of its peace. Just as you would wish it to be clean and sweet to the outward eye, so you must labor to keep away from it all images or thoughts or memories or associations which are contrary to what is right, good and true. Let Jesus Christ Himself be the chief inmate of the home, and have everything to suit Him. Of course, we ought to keep away from ourselves, at every time and in every place, everything which is wrong; but in other places, outside our home and our church, we cannot help jostling against what is worldly or disagreeable or even sinful. In our homes we can by God's gracious help avoid these things. Do not put up a picture, I mean, for instance, merely

because it is a picture. Think what the picture means. What is its motive? Was the man who drew it or painted it imbued with the Spirit of Christ? Or is it the same flaunting, vulgar, garish thing, full of the world, the flesh or the devil? In the same way we ought at all times to keep from ourselves all language, all conversation, all jokes which are not suitable to the sisters of Jesus Christ, but especially so in a place where much of our lives is spent, and we every day return into ourselves, and make a fresh start. *There is no happiness in life, there is no misery in life, like that growing out of the dispositions which consecrate or desecrate a home.*

THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY.—Dr. F. R. Houston in a sermon on "The Mystery of Life," thus speaks of "Iniquity":—"While mystery is the trade mark of God, there is a mystery which is not God's at all. The word is mentioned twenty-eight times in the New Testament. Three of those times it refers to the mystery which is not of God. In the one place it is the mystery of iniquity, and in the other twice it is the iniquity embodied in the seven-billed city. I cannot imagine anything more important for us all than to understand that iniquity is a mystery—that it creeps upon us unawares, and that it is fertile in illusion. We get mastered by sin because we have not a proper idea that the mystery of sin is the great element about it. May God touch all our hearts with

a sudden sense that in iniquity of every kind you are dealing with a mystery that you cannot understand. You think of sin as a foul morass that lies along the path, and you have only got to walk around it and you will escape it. You say, It only wants a little patient observation and care, and I can walk quite safely by that morass. But you do not take into account that from the morass arises a miasma, and that is in the air, and while you are walking by the morass and keeping well away the miasma is getting within you. That is the mystery of iniquity. A man thinks, I can surely avoid sin by taking ordinary precautions, and he forgets that sin is a peculiar power, that baffles ordinary precautions. It is like that seed which was causing so much havoc to the French soldiers in Madagascar; a seed of grass which looks perfectly innocent, but as the men step through it the seed works in underneath their clothes, and the little friction of the seed upon the leg produces a poisonous ulcer, and by the end of the day's march the man is poisoned and lies helpless and useless in the barracks. That is what sin is. Let me remind you that no man ever touched sin feeling it was sin. He always approaches it under an illusion, and he will tell you it is innocent; and he will be mastered by it before he knows it is sin. That is the mystery of iniquity.

THE SEVEN-HILLED CITY.

☪ We are told in the Apocalypse (continues Dr. Horton), how the mystery of iniquity will embody itself in a certain state of society in a city. When the Apocalypse was written, the embodiment of iniquity was the seven-hilled city. It is a very curious fact that Rome has continued for nineteen centuries to keep a kind of embodiment of the mystery of iniquity within her walls. The spirit of Nero has never left Rome. Here in our nineteenth century the priests of South America, and of the ignorant parts of Europe, tell to deluded

peasants, as relics to worship, straws from the palace of the Pope where he lies prisoner. It is the same ineradicable spirit—as if within the walls of Rome had been shut up the very incarnation of evil from generation to generation. It streams out in one form or another to corrupt and defile the nations. There is still the old hatred of knowledge, the hatred of liberty, the old dislike of the Bible.

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EDITOR:

F. G. DUNN, 13 Queensberry-st., N. Melbourne.

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS:

A. B. MANTON.

G. B. MOYNEY.

Dr. J. C. VERCO.

A. M. LUDBROOK.

Articles for publication (which should be as brief as possible) to be addressed to F. G. DUNN, 13 Queensberry-street, North Melbourne.

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PURITY. PEACE. UNITY. LOVE. POWER.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

No. 5.

THE PARABLES.

WE intended making our last article on this question the final one, but on further consideration decided to give one more paper dealing with the Kingdom of God as set forth in the group of seven parables found in Matthew's gospel. The importance of these parables in relation to the subject, will be apparent to any who have given them serious attention. They were given by the Saviour, as illustrating various phases of the Kingdom from its in-

ception to its consummation, and consequently are important in deciding whether the Kingdom is present or future, or both, and also as unfolding its nature or characteristics. Indeed, if there were no other teaching on the subject, these parables, in themselves alone considered, would be decisive on the points referred to.

The arrangement of these parables seems to be in three pairs with a single concluding one.

- First pair "The Sower."
"The Tares."
Second pair "The Mustard Seed."
"The Leaven."
Third pair "The Hid Treasure."
"The Pearl."
Final "The Net."

We thus have a general view of the entire group, and are thereby enabled to perceive "the unity of the cluster which is apt to escape notice when they are considered apart."

THE FIRST PAIR.

Dr. J. M. Gibson, referring to these says: "The Sower" and "The Tares" set forth the manner of the establishment of the Kingdom of heaven, and the obstacles it must encounter. The sphere from which both parables are taken is admirably suited to bring out the radical distinction in regard to the manner of its establishment—between the new Kingdom and those with which the people were already familiar. *They* were founded by the sword; *this* Kingdom by the Word. Not force, but persuasion, is to be the weapon; and accordingly there is placed before the mind, not a warrior hasting to battle, but a sower sowing seed." In the first parable, we are told that the seed is "the word of the Kingdom." It is *good* seed, but there are obstacles in the way. The nature of the soil into which the seed is cast varies—the fault does not lie in the seed, but in the soil, hence while there is progress, the progress is

hindered. Leaving, however, the consideration of the nature of the soil for a more suitable occasion, we notice as more relevant to the purpose we have in hand, that the seed is "the word of the Kingdom," implying of necessity the present existence of the Kingdom. When we speak of the laws of a nation, we understand that the nation exists—there cannot be the laws of a nation without the nation itself, neither can there be "the word of the Kingdom" without the Kingdom—the two, "word" and "kingdom," must exist contemporaneously.

In the parable of "The Tares" the seed is no longer the word, but "the children of the Kingdom"; "as if to suggest that Christians themselves are to be to the world what the word has been to them." It must be noticed emphatically here, that the field is the world. Jesus himself said it was, but there are some people who know better than Jesus, and they say "the field is the Church." We, however, believe that Jesus knew what He meant, and meant what He said. In the world the good and evil are to grow side by side. It is not the province of "the servants" to anticipate the final judgment, men are to have their full probation. If the desire of "the servants" were carried out many would be lost, who if they had been allowed other opportunities would have been saved. This seems to be the meaning of this parable—an explanation of why good and evil are allowed to continue together in the world. But whether this be the meaning or not one thing is clear, the good seed is "the children of the Kingdom," and the same line of argument holds good here as in the previous parable, viz., if there are children of the Kingdom, there must be a Kingdom to which they belong. It is as certain that "the children of the King-

dom" implies an existing "Kingdom," as that "the children of the wicked one" implies an existing "wicked one."

THE SECOND PAIR.

The first pair of parables shows the obstacles which the Kingdom of heaven has to encounter. The second pair, however, shows that notwithstanding these obstacles the Kingdom is to be progressive. It has been truly said that "The prophecy these parables ('The Mustard Seed' and 'The Leaven') unfold is most marvellous, spoken as it was in a time of so deep discouragement." The first prophecy is, that the Kingdom of heaven shall at the beginning be very small "like a grain of mustard-seed" (a proverbial expression for anything exceedingly little), but it is of the nature of seed—it will grow, even until it becomes a large tree. In this parable the external growth of the Kingdom is set forth. The second prophecy is that the Kingdom shall have permeating power. Like leaven, it has inherent life and energy hidden in the tiny germ, working quietly but effectually in permeating the mass. This leavening process has been at work in the world ever since Christ uttered these parables. As Trench says:—"How striking is the entire ignorance which heathen writers betray of all that was going forward a little below the surface of society,—the manner in which they overlooked the mighty change which was preparing; and this, not merely at the first, when the mustard-tree might well escape notice, but with slight exception, even up to the very moment when the open triumph of Christianity was at hand. Working from the centre to the circumference, by degrees it made itself felt, till at length the whole Roman world was, more or less leavened by it." Space will not permit us to speak of the innumerable heathen practices and

customs which have been eradicated by its influence—thank God. the leavening process is still going on in all lands.

But it may be urged, "Is not leaven used as a symbol of evil?" Yes, frequently, but not always. At the Feast of Harvest (Pentecost) two *leavened* loaves, of the same size as the shewbread loaves were to be waved before the Lord; and also *leavened* cakes were to be presented with the peace offerings. But even if these instances, in which leaven is used in a good sense, did not exist, it would be immaterial, as our Lord more than once used a good quality in that which was otherwise evil to illustrate some point that He wished to enforce. The good point, so to speak, in leaven is its permeating force, and this quality is used to indicate a characteristic of the Kingdom. These two parables then, "The Mustard Seed" and "The Leaven" set forth the external and internal development of the Kingdom, and demonstrate beyond cavil that the processes referred to are already at work and still have much to do before the consummation is reached. That the Kingdom is not something which is to appear at some distant date, for the first time, but on the contrary is something which has already taken root and brought forth fruit, and will continue to do so increasingly until the glorious consummation is attained.

THIRD PAIR.

The parables of "The Hidden Treasure" and "The Pearl" exhibit a general truth in two aspects. The general truth declared is, the incomparable worth of the Kingdom of God, and the two aspects of it are (1) its unexpected discovery and (2) its discovery after diligent search. Much might be said in regard to the inestimable value of the Kingdom, but as that is not a disputed point, we may leave it for the present.

The present existence of the Kingdom, however, is disputed, and as these two parables bear upon that phase of the question, it will be of interest to enquire how they determine it. The question is soon settled. The Kingdom is in existence, because men in this present earthly state can find it, either by unexpectedly coming across it or by diligently seeking for it. Men cannot find a thing either unexpectedly or otherwise without its being in existence. Moreover, the latter parable receives additional point and force from the words of our Lord, uttered upon another occasion, "Seek ye FIRST the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

FISAL PARABLE.

The parable of "The Net," stands alone, and its subject is the consummation of the Kingdom. "Its teaching is indeed to a great extent anticipated in the parable of the tares of the field; but in that parable, though "the end of the world" is pictured in the most impressive imagery, it is not the main thought, as it is here, where the one lesson is, that the present mixed state of things cannot continue for ever, that there must come a time of separation, when those in whose hearts God reigns shall be gathered together to a place by themselves, where they shall be satisfied for ever, with their treasure no longer hid, but open in all its immeasurable fulness; while those who refuse to allow God to reign in their hearts, and preferred their own selfishness and sin, shall be cast away and be consumed with "wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Thus briefly we have outlined the group of seven parables recorded by Matthew. Appropriately, the first tells us of the sowing of the seed, and the last of the reaping. The others deal mainly with the period

between the sowing and the reaping. These parables set forth the "Mysteries of the Kingdom" in clear and unmistakable terms, and indicate beyond the possibility of successful contradiction that the Kingdom of God (1) has been in existence, (2) is now in existence, (3) will continue to exist in the present earthly state, and (4) will be consummated in everlasting glory.

Editorial Notes.

PROGRAMME FOR 1896.

During the year we have received letters from a number of brethren expressing approval of the STANDARD, and the pleasure and profit they have derived from the perusal of its pages. These letters have very much encouraged us in our work and have helped us to determine to put forth special efforts to make the issues for 1896 better and more attractive than any of their predecessors. We are pleased to say that we have been successful in making arrangements to secure this end, as the following programme will sufficiently indicate.

Portraits of Representative Brethren,
with short life sketches

In Bible Lands.

By A. H. MASTON.

(with illustrations)

Notes and Travel in the East, etc.

By A. M. LEBROUX.

Letters to a Barrister.

By GEO. GOODY.

Articles on Important Topics.

By THE EDITOR.

"Things in General."

Short Sketches by A. B. MASTON.

Expository Notes.

By various writers.

Articles of Merit.

By our usual contributors.

In addition to the above all our usual departments will be carried on and made as interesting as possible.

Christianity and Social Restoration.

—We have received a copy of Bro L. S. Blair's pamphlet on "The Relation of Christianity to Social Restoration." Twenty-four pages only are taken up with the original essay, while one hundred and fifty-six are devoted to criticisms by Brethren J. Pittman, R. G. Cameron, J. E. Lasing and A. H. Bryant, and replies thereto by the

author. In this respect it is somewhat lopsided. In our opinion the criticisms have sufficiently answered the erroneous theories advanced by Bro. Blair, and for the present, at any rate, nothing further need be said.

"Let him try it."—Here is one of the stories from Dr. Hastings' latest book, which is for the benefit of those who are afraid some critic will really demolish the Bible, after the manner of Samson at Gaza.—"During evening service in a large city church a lunatic entered the building, and, stationing himself by one of the gallery posts, shouted, 'I am going to pull the house down! I am going to pull the house down! I am!' Ladies fainted, men turned pale, children screamed, and, just as everybody was about to stampede, the stentorian tones of the old minister were heard above the tumult, 'Let him try it!'"

The Acts of the Apostles.—The following from Sydney Black is worth reading: "Faith in the Son of God involves doing all He requires at our hands, and doing it in His way. It involves an absolute surrender of our wills to His in the sphere of conduct. What a wonderfully suggestive title has been apportioned to that inspiring book written by the beloved physician concerning those startling missionary enterprises of some of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb! That title is not 'The Thoughts of the Apostles.' It is not 'The Sayings of the Apostles.' It is not 'The Programme of the Apostles.' It is not 'The Ideas of the Apostles.' It is not 'The Spinks of the Apostles.' It is not even 'The Spiritual Development of the Apostles.' It is 'THE ACTS of the Apostles.' Our supreme requirement is to add as many chapters to 'The Acts of the Apostles' in south-west London to-day as possible. To have faith in Christ is, we reiterate, to obey Him, and to obey Him is, in the highest sense, to imitate Him all round. (1), for a rich increase of that victorious faith that works by love and overcomes the world!

Daily Worship.—An eminent preacher speaking about the home life, thus enforces the good arising from daily worship:—"We cannot too often insist that home should have its own daily worship. What can be more beautiful and blessed, what can bring purer happiness into the day, what can spread a more golden light over the life than when father and mother and children all kneel down together the first thing in the morning, the last thing in the evening, to implore the pardon and the blessing of God? Even the pagan Greeks saw the beauty and the meaning of this. There was an old poet called Ilium, who flourished about three hundred years before Christ; and this is what he said about it: 'Most salutary is family worship as a means of promoting domestic happiness, and adding to the attractions of home. It is something to bring the members of a family together

twice a day; for in proportion as those who have duties towards each other live apart, they will cease to care for one another."

Wonderful Escape.—The English papers (says the *Southern Cross*), gives a touching little story told by Kathleen Stewart, one of the surviving children of the murdered missionary. The children had been out gathering flowers on the hills to celebrate their birthday, and were attacked by the mob on the way back.—"Kathleen got away and ran home. She saw her father enter her mother's room. This was the last seen of either of them. Kathleen hid under the bed. Mildred, unable to do so, lay upon the bed, and was attacked and wounded in the knees. She heard a rushing sound and found the house was burning. She dragged Mildred out and went to the nursery, pulled the baby from under the body of the dead nurse, and carried out in safety one by one her two wounded brothers. Taking the four children one at a time, she started for Miss Hartford's. Half-way she met a native, and, inducing him after some trouble to help, they reached the house." This recalls a well-known story of De Quincey's and is another striking instance of the marvellous way in which little children sometimes maintain their self-possession under the most trying circumstances, and are heroes and heroines without knowing it.

HOW I CAME TO JOIN THE DISCIPLES.

THIRTY years ago I was appointed missionary to a densely populated district in the west of London. Among the many departments of my mission work was a Bible class open to all, which I held in a large hall. Very vividly do I remember the first night. Among those present was a "clergyman" of the Church of England, and my dear old friend and brother, Mr. Robt. Black (father of Bren. Sydney and Milner Black), who seemed to me an elderly man even then. It was on that occasion that I first became aware of the existence of a people pleading for an unqualified return to the religion of Christ as found in the New Testament. It dawned upon me in the course of the animated discussion which these two gentlemen above referred to carried on for the space of about an hour. In that discussion I thought Mr. Black decidedly had the best of the arguments; and the new light led me to wonder who and what this people were. Immediately after I was introduced to a few of the members of the church, whose

meeting house was in my district. Among these were Bartley Ellis, then just coming out as a preacher, and now one of Great Britain's most popular evangelists; and Henry Exley, lately gone to his rest. These good brethren were all very zealous in their efforts to teach me the way of the Lord more perfectly, and I owe much of my after progress to their aid and zeal. I had gained the end of years of patient study.

From the day of my decision for Christ I had determined to devote

studies to the Bible alone. It seemed like a special arrangement of Providence that I should be thrown in the midst of a people who were contending for the Bible as the Christian's only rule of faith and conduct, just at this juncture when I had resolved to follow the same rule. But I had much more to unlearn than I dreamed of. My dear partner (partner in prospect then) had been a baptised believer for some years, and no doubt this fact unconsciously influenced me, for I soon discovered among



J. PITTMAN.

myself wholly to the work of the Gospel; and though very ignorant of most things needful to such a work, I toiled upward for a space of four years, entirely unaided, except by books, till the goal was reached. In preparing for my exams, I was compelled to study Theology, Christian Evidences, the Romish Controversy, and many other subjects; but when I was fully installed in my field of labour, it was with very great satisfaction that I resolved to devote the greater portion of my

other first principles, that believer's baptism and not infant sprinkling, was taught and practised by Christ and His apostles. Here again I traced the hand of Providence, for this discovery was made just at the time overtures were being made to me to try for "holy orders" in the Church of England. My baptism, which took place immediately after, settled this matter for ever. I was not advanced enough to see that baptism had anything to do with remission of sins, or entrance into

the fellowship of the church; so I was immersed by a Baptist minister, Mr. Frank White.

For nine years I laboured on as a missionary, and during the whole of that time I was greatly assisted in the work by the members of the Chelsea Church. And by slow degrees my pre-conceived theology crumbled away, and in its place a beautiful ideal of the Church of God rose to my view; based on the Word of the Living God. In proportion as my knowledge of the truth advanced, however, the more trammelled and uneasy I became as an agent of the Society in which I laboured. The Society professed to work on an unsectarian basis, and, unconsciously no doubt, opposed important scripture truth. For example: To have preached believer's immersion, or to have taught that the Church of God was independent of the State, would have been in the eyes of the Society, sectarian teaching. Hence I was compelled either to break the law of the Society, or fail in my obligation to the New Testament. At length my conscience became so troubled that I could bear it no longer; so I conferred with my wife, and her cheerful advice greatly strengthened me in the purpose I had formed. She said, "Let us do right in the sight of God; and leave the results to Him." We looked the consequences fair in the face, counting the possible costs. To resign meant a great sacrifice. Besides relinquishing a good and safe life-long living, it meant the loss of hundreds of valued friends, and of a host of opportunities of good work. But on the other hand there were far outweighed by the claims of the New Testament. So we resolved in God's strength to take the step.

The first thing we did was to unite ourselves to the church at Chelsea. The next thing following was for me to go to the head quarters and inform the secretary of the society. We often look back upon this otherwise serious time with no little amusement. The secretary thought I had taken leave of my senses. "Resign! Mr. Pittman," he said. "Why need you resign? I'm afraid you have got amongst a queer lot of people." "Yes," I replied, "they are a queer lot; a most peculiar people. They are peculiar enough to believe that the Bible is their divine rule of faith." "But," said he, "there is nothing peculiar in that. We all believe the same."

"Excuse me, sir," I said, "you do not; or, if you do, you refuse to your agents the right to act upon it." "How is that, Mr. Pittman? Please explain." I did explain, and pointed out the inconsistency as above stated. He was much confused, and said he was sorry, but could see no way out of the difficulty but the one I had proposed. My resignation was laid before the Board, and a few days afterwards I received a very kind letter, indicating that my resignation had been accepted with regret, and expressing the wishes of the Board for my future prosperity in any work which I might undertake. The news soon spread, and many of my old friends of the "cloth" tried their utmost to convince me that I was mad and only fit for a lunatic asylum. One of these gentlemen called to see my wife when I was out, and in the most solemn manner warned her to keep a watch upon me, for I had given clear evidence of softening of the brain. My wife smiled and said, "Well, now, I think it is just the other way. The fact is, he has been beside himself for a long time past, and has only just now returned to his sober senses." On leaving the Society I was compelled at once to look about for a means of supporting myself, my wife and four young children. I entered upon a small way of business, and succeeded in maintaining my family fairly well. During this time I was found plenty to do by the brethren, and it was a great happiness to me to be able to preach the gospel without charge. At the end of twelve months I received an invitation from the General Evangelist Committee to devote my whole time to the work. I laboured two and a half years in the general field, when my old friends, the brethren of the south, gave me an invite to labour in the southern division. In this sphere I continued eleven years, till I received an invitation to this colony of Victoria. And though I have nothing to complain of in the treatment I have ever received from the brethren, the kindness and help—especially in our rescue work—which the brethren of Australasia have shown towards us have made the past eight years the happiest portion of our Christian experience.

JOSEPH PITTMAN.

The Christian knows no limits in doing good, except those which are fixed by his power and opportunity of doing good.

WHAT BOOKS TO READ.

No. 11.

In my last it was urged that works of fiction of a *fairly unsustained* character should be shunned, as entailing a great waste of time and energy, and as being, in many instances, only so much mental and moral poison. Productions of a *humble* cast may be indulged in moderately, as affording occasional relaxation to the mind.

We come now to another class of books,—works of

FICTION WITH AN INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL PURPOSE.

These are on a different footing. Fiction may be made a vehicle of truth. For instance, there are the fables of the little hunchback slave of 2000 years ago, "rare old story," full of ethical suggestions. The plays of Shakespeare, "the bard of Avon," though founded on fact, are fiction; yet they are educational, finely delineating various traits of human nature. The writings of Sir Walter Scott, such as *Rob Roy*, and of Chas. Kingsley, such as *Hypatia* and *Westward Ho!* have a historical and moral value, as have also Gen. Lew Wallace's famous romance *Ben-Hur*, and Ingraham's *Pillar of Fire*, *Thomas of Dorset*, and *Prince of the Heavens of David*. Among other interesting novels with a purpose (though some of them are now a little out of date), are Dickens's works, Chas. Reade's *Never Too Late to Mend*, and such like, written to expose social evils, and public abuses in the "old country." Mrs. Stowe's famous production, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, realised its purpose in the emancipation of the negro. More recently still, Hellamy and Bessant have availed themselves of fiction in advocating certain schemes of social reform.

But even such books as these should occupy only a small proportion of the time and attention we devote to reading. In the ratio of perhaps *its to one* works that are distinctively works of *fact* should be read rather than even the better sort of fiction. These may be divided into two classes—the instructive and the stimulative, LOOKS OF INFORMATION AND LOOKS OF POWER.

By books of *information* I mean those that stock the mind with knowledge, such as books of travel, history, science, Christian evidences, etc. By books of *power*, I mean those that not only educate the head but beneficially influence the heart and mould the character. Of course some of the better novels do this, but I am referring now to works that are distinctly true in substance and fact. In this class we may place the biographies of the great and good, of Martin Luther, "the monk that shook the world," of John Howard, the prison philanthropist and reformer, of Florence Nightingale, the heroine of the Crimea, of Garfield, the late martyr-president of the

United States; and of the world's great missionaries, Carey, Judson, Livingstone and others. Also works of a devotional character—Bushnell's *Character of Jesus*, Arthur's *Tongue of Fire*, Everett's *Evenings with the Bible*, etc. Also such productions as Smiles' *Self Help*, and Foster's *Devotion of Character*—worth its weight in gold.

Read them, books that enlighten the mind and stimulate to noble living. One volume of this sort read six times, will do more good than six of the previous class read once. It has been said that "a book may raise us to highest heaven, or degrade us to lowest hell." If so, let us go for the books that will tend to elevate us to a higher level of thought and life. In a class by itself must be placed

THE BOOK OF BOOKS.

If we ought to give far more time to works of fact rather than to works of fiction, even of the better sort, how much more ought we to give to the Word of God, than to all other books beside. Some time ago, I heard a paper on "Free-ling," in which it was affirmed that the great need of the churches was more preachers. I begged to differ. The great need of the churches is a more diligent and devout study of the Word of God on the part of the rank and file of the brotherhood. Read the Bible regularly and systematically, carefully and prayerfully. When that great author, Sir Walter Scott, was on his death-bed, he said to one who stood near, "Bring me the Book." "What book?" was the query. The dying man replied, "There is but one Book. Before the sun the stars all sink into insignificance. Says Joseph Cook, of Boston, "Do you know if a book on which you would like to pillow your head when you lay a-dying? That is the book which you ought to make your daily study while you are living." There is but one book to which we shall desire to turn for comfort and strength in our latest hour. Let us prize it now all others above

"Men's books with heaps of chaff are stored,
God's book doth golden grain afford;

Then leave the chaff, and spend thy pains
In gathering up the golden grain."

A. M. LEBRON.

Things in General

NEW SOCIETIES.

I am always on the lookout for something new in the Society line. I have been startled so often the past two or three years that it takes something out of the ordinary in this line to attract my attention now, as they are becoming as numerous as snakes in huckleberry time. But the other day I was quietly reading down a column of one of our religious weeklies, when I dropped across the name of a new organisation, which so thrilled me, by appealing to

the biggest side of my human nature, that I actually jumped up from the seat on which I was just then located. I had not only found something new, but something I might, perhaps, join—as so far I have refused to join anything but the Church of God. But this new society? It is called "The Amalgamated Sons of Rest—a society with conscientious objections to work between meals." Now, I am sure if some fellow would just start an organisation of this kind, that there would be a grand rush for membership, or ought to be, if everybody gets into it who would like to be there. Or if the last word of the descriptive title were taken away and the word 'Sundays' substituted, and the thing introduced into our churches, it would truly merit a long felt want, and the Y.P.S.C.E. as to numbers would soon be nowhere, that is if everybody joined it who ought to, as not one in ten of the members of our churches has the slightest notion of doing anything from one Sunday to the other, and not much even then. They are not only conscientiously but constitutionally opposed to attending a week night meeting, unless there is something specially good "on"—something to laugh at or grin over. But a prayer or evangelistic meeting they absolutely abhor. Once upon a time I was at a prayer-meeting in a church boasting a big choir, and there was nobody there to "hist the tune." Next: "The Amalgamated Sons of Rest."

A GOOD BAPTIST.

We all know, or ought to know, that a Baptist is one who baptises, that is, administers the ordinance of baptism. Some people whom I have met think just anybody can "do" the baptising. In my estimation not one of those in a dozen whom I have seen try it, can attend to this solemn duty properly. I have seen baptists do their work so badly that I have felt like hiding my face for very shame; and I have seen it done so well that I have been filled with solemn delight. I am not writing now for the mere sake of writing, but in the hope that the brethren may read and profit by what I say. But how should it be done? 1. Both baptist and candidate should be properly dressed, that is, neatly and substantially. I saw a brother once, a long time ago now, go into the water without either coat or vest on, with his trousers fastened up

with a strap, and took the candidates into the water as slightly clothed as himself. The lookers-on were moved to laughter, instead of solemn awe. 2. Everything should be done with deliberate tenderness. "A good baptist" should handle his subject as a careful mother her babe. 3. Every symptom of anxiety and fear, and every appeal of modesty which the candidate exhibits should be sympathetically and promptly met. 4. The ordinance should be performed with refined solemnity. I don't believe one lit in mock solemnity, as shown in simply a solemn tone of voice; this must always be an abomination to the thoughtful, religious or irreligious. But I mean a solemnity that is born of the performance of a sacred duty. Let baptists seek to so observe the ordinance that reverent awe and sobriety shall fill all hearts. If you cannot do the work in this way I think you may reasonably conclude with Paul that you are not sent to baptise, but to preach the gospel.

A. B. MASTON.

Open Column.

ENDEAVOUR SOCIETIES.

DEAR BROTHER EDITOR.—While reading Bro. A. Davidson's article upon this subject, it occurred to me that the support of the main proposition, viz:—"That Endeavour Societies are unscriptural and of sectarian tendencies" required two things "found wanting" in his article. First—*A knowledge of the nature of such societies.* Second—*A clear statement of a Divine principle violated.* By the request of the president and secretary of the Endeavour Union, I accept the "challenge" thrown out. Please understand that my reply is penned in the spirit of love which has undoubtedly prompted your correspondent, the sole aim being the advance of truth and righteousness.

Let me first call attention to the following mistakes:

1st Our friend objects to the church handing over a large portion of the young "to a body which is not a part of the Church at all." He is fighting an imaginary evil. A good opportunity of obtaining accurate information concerning Endeavour Societies, has been afforded me, with the result that so far, I have never heard of one which is not "a part of the church." We have eight societies in and around Melbourne; every one of which consist wholly of church members, and are sanctioned and I trust zealously supported by the officers. Indeed, by virtue of their office they are members

(Model constitution, article 9, "This society being a part of the church, the pastor, Deacons, elders or stewards, and Sunday School superintendent shall be *ex officio* honorary members. Any difficult question may be laid before them for advice.") Our friends premises being therefore erroneous, it is equally so to class such societies as "secondary to the church," for they are a part of and "entirely subject to the guidance of every individual church," and it certainly does not mean a "giving up of our plea" to acknowledge it.

and The Endeavour establishes another law, viz., the pledge and good works, neither of which are to be found as such under the new account." Are not good works contained in the churches bond of union? Of course I understand our brother, but this really sounds as though he doesn't believe in them. Then again, if the Endeavour Society is a substitute for the church, our friend is right; but seeing it is subject to and within the church, his argument fails.

3rd. "In the case of the immersed members the pledge would be unnecessary, baptism having secured the child ground." (Now, as a matter of fact, baptism is not a pledge; you might just as well talk of the Lord's Supper as a pledge; baptism is an act of faith, expressive of a pledge made.) I am afraid baptism too often covers the whole ground in another sense. We are prone to forget the pledge that by that act was signified. It needs daily renewal, for it usually is daily broken. Surely such a pledge is none the worse for repeating, and as to any peculiarity in the Endeavour pledge, such as—"To pray and read my Bible every day," no harm is done thereby; against such there is no law. Every day of their lives true followers of Christ make specific resolutions for future service, such as—"I will engage in tract distribution; I will do what I can in the Sunday School; etc." and surely there is no harm in the continually pledging oneself to do good."

4th. "In the case of the unimmersed, it stands unauthorised and invalid." None of the unimmersed in our societies make this pledge, this statement therefore, does not affect the subject at issue.

5th. "The unimmersed have no right character to a vote or active part in church matters, yet our Endeavours practically do so, and that as members of our Endeavour Society." The latter statement is not correct.

6th. "As they all immerge! Is not the Endeavour Society at all, a mixed Fellowship?" The fifth emphatic statement surely should have rendered it unnecessary to ask that question. Concerning its correctness, the correspondent evidently had grave doubts, I reply, yes; they are all immersed, as far as I know, and consequently the Endeavour Society is not a mixed fellowship, and it

take contributions from such for Gospel work is right.

7th. "The young members are allowed to meet with the Society upon a common footing; by this, I feel that I should be violating the command to come out from among them, and to separate." At a meeting held a few months ago, the question as to whether it was expedient to unite with the sects in this work, was discussed, resulting in the decision that it was inexpedient, and a Union of our own has been formed, that any tendency of that character might be guarded against. The Societies are conscious of the position we occupy as a people, and adhere to it. We grant that we have occasionally met at Conventions, etc, but regard the fraternal spirit thus manifested to be infinitely superior to a disposition which seems to say, "stand off; I am holier than thou."

And now, Bro. Editor, having cleared away misrepresentation, my task is very light. The contention that Endeavour Societies is unscriptural, is lacking in evidence. Your correspondent says, "Our motto is: 'Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent, we are silent.' It seems to me that if I adhere to this maxim, I must let the Endeavour go; I cannot adhere to both." Well, if this maxim leads us to oppose works of this character, I would say, "drop the maxim;" for while it is a very good one, it is not within the covers of the scripture, and was made up by Thomas Campbell; and if such noble work is hindered by a motto, I would certainly insist that the motto should be dropped. But why let either go? Both maxim and societies are good. I venture to assert that Bro. Davison does not understand Thomas Campbell's famous saying. The statement was intended to guard the church against unscriptural belief and practice, and certainly did not mean that we should slavishly abide by this rule in every respect; how absurd to put this rule to that extreme in all matters? We should then, in preaching, use only the words of Peter, or other apostles, and *validate* our principles when relating to such an extent as to insert one adjective or preposition not found in apostolic speeches. If such an extreme be taken, for ever let the maxim perish. It was intended to guard against unscriptural faith and practice, and not to be thus slavishly adhered to. Then again, if this motto leads my friend to drop Endeavour Societies, it *legitimately* leads him to drop Sunday Schools. If he says no, I want to know by what principle the one is supported, and the other rejected. This appears to me to be one of the weakest points in our friend's argument; he has been wielding a sword which cuts both ways, for his might be raised equally against Sunday Schools; but all admit their leading arguments scriptural and I trust the day will come when the universal

acknowledgement will also be made, that against Endeavours "there is no law."

It seems to me, Bro. Editor, that in view of the substantial work being done by Endeavour Societies, objections raised should have weightier reasons to back them up than those advanced by A. Davison. I can speak confidently of the church with which I labour, and I have no hesitation in saying that since the inauguration of the society, tract distribution, house-to-house visitation, supplying clothes and food for the poor, bringing in children to the school and the general spiritual tone of the church has increased fifty fold; not because there were not willing workers previously, but because thorough organisation was lacking. From the church should emanate all good works and workers. Temperance effort is needed, and specially qualified persons should be selected to arrange and direct. S. School work is needed, and from church ranks teachers should be chosen. Tract work, visiting, etc., is required, and why not also select those who, banded together in Christian love, can organise and carry the work into effect? and to give them their name "Endeavourers" is surely as well deserved and harmless as "teachers," "superintendents," etc. This systematic work is authorised and superintended by the officers, and conducted by a part of the church itself. I trust that when this is plain to your "unknown" correspondent, to whom the nature of the societies has been equally unknown hitherto, the objection shall cease, or weightier reasons be advanced.

FERDINAND PITMAN,
Vice-president, Christian Endeavour Union.

Church News.

NEW ZEALAND.

SPRING GROVE.—Since Bro. Clapham from Sydney has been laboring amongst us we have received twelve welcome additions to our number—nine young sisters from the Sunday school (with one more to follow), and three young men—all of whom we trust will prove faithful followers of Christ. Coming in young they have every chance of making the best of workers in time to come. Bro. Clapham now has the assistance of Bro. Turner from Wellington for a month, and the two working together lighten each others' labors, Bro. Clapham not having the best of health. They are holding evangelistic meetings at Nelson, Brightwater, Spring Grove and Waititi.

Though being very thankful to see Bro. Lewis back amongst us, we will all be very sorry to part with Bro. Clapham, but hope to meet again.

A. C. N.

SPRING GROVE.—The Sunday School anniversary tea meeting in connection with the Church of Christ was a very great success in every way. During the afternoon an address was delivered in the grounds to a large gathering by Bro. A. F. Turner, president of the school, and shortly after the superintendent of the school, Bro. John Griffith, presented the prizes to the scholars. At four o'clock about two school children sat down to a free tea, and did full justice to the good things provided. At the adults' tea there were three sittings, over two being accommodated. A public meeting held in the evening was presided over by Bro. J. Griffith, but owing to the large number present only about two-thirds could be got inside the building. Some of those outside, not to be outdone, took up a position in vehicles drawn alongside the opened windows. During the meeting Bro. W. T. Clapham spoke on Sunday School work, and urged parents to support the work of the school by attention to biblical instruction in the home. Bro. Turner referred at length to the foundation of Sunday Schools, which he said, history traced back to the first century. He closed his remarks by reciting "The Starless Crown." Brethren Telemus and Dunn, who are connected with the school, also addressed the meeting, and reference was made to the present highly satisfactory state of the school. The singing and recitations of the young people were highly creditable. A couple of splendid anthems were well rendered by the choir. Bro. A. G. Knapp acted as conductor, and to him is due the excellence of the singing throughout the meeting.

NELSON.—Good news from Nelson. Bro. W. T. Clapham from Sydney has caused quite a stir here. He has just left for Spring Grove six weeks hard and earnest labor. He gave two week night addresses, besides speaking twice on Sundays, to very large audiences. The meeting house was at times densely packed, having had to put the people up on the platform and provide seats up the passages. Never has such interest been created since the church has been established. Bro. Clapham spent all his spare time visiting, perhaps doing quite as much good that way as with his able preaching. Bro. Clapham's earnest labor has already yielded good fruit. He had the great pleasure of baptizing 16 before leaving Nelson, and many others are making anxious inquiries (almost persuading). Seeing that Bro. Clapham aroused such enthusiasm here the church applied to Bro. Clapham's committee for an extension of time, as we were sure that in another two or three months he would have gathered an abundant harvest, but former engagements had to be fulfilled. Hence Bro. Clapham had to leave a ripe field ungathered, which,

I believe, he regrets as much as the brethren. Truly laborers are wanted. A few brethren have been struggling here for years to keep the cause of Christ open, passed through troublesome times often, and sometimes almost disheartened; but the hearts of these faithful brethren are now rejoicing by seeing souls saved and the kingdom of Christ extended.

We are all very thankful to the brethren who sent our Bro. Clapham to help us, and especially thankful to Bro. Clapham for the unselfish and untiring zeal he displayed while with us, as he was working hard almost night and day. But most of all we thank God for having so greatly blessed the effort put forth by His people. When we found Bro. Clapham had to go we wrote to Wellington, asking the church there to send Bro. Turner to help us. They responded at once by sending Bro. Turner next boat. Thank you to the brethren for their unselfishness.

Nov. 8. C. P. A. Sec.

VICTORIA.

GENEROUS.—We have been cheered and built up by a visit from our Bro. Cavanagh, who has been lecturing and preaching among us for the last few weeks. Our brother's visit was most opportune, as the church is in a very disorganised state and not working very harmoniously together, but we hope soon to be able to report better things. We regret that through financial difficulties we were not able to keep our brother much longer, as he is just the man for the class of work required to be done here, being such a good visitor. Any church requiring the services of a true Godly man, cannot go far wrong in sending for Bro. Cavanagh. His visit among us was too short to be of as much benefit as we could wish, but we expect to get him back again in the autumn if finances will permit. May God bless, strengthen and keep him for many years of usefulness in His service, is our earnest prayer. THOS. COLLINS.

BARKER'S CREEK.—On Sunday Nov. 10th, Bro. Smedley from Clifton Hill brought a three week's labor in the Master's cause to an end in this district. It was refreshing to have afternoon and evening services, we having had none, only in the morning, for a very lengthened period. On the conclusion of his labors Bro. Smedley and the members of the church had the pleasure of seeing five of the elder Sunday School scholars confess the name of Jesus. The Sunday School is the nursery of the church, and the teachers look forward to see yet still more from the Sunday School vowing their intention to live for Jesus. Our school is in a very flourishing condition, with 120 children on the rolls and an average attendance of about 70. Last Wednesday, 20th inst., the Sunday

School celebrated their annual picnic, about 100 children, teachers, and friends were present, and a very enjoyable day was spent.

Hoping to send you some new news further on, EDWARD SMYER, Sec.

WEDDERBURN.—Since last report there have been two more added to the church—one by faith and baptism and one reported. We thank our Heavenly Father and take courage.

Nov. 29. J. TRUBLE, Sec.

ST. KILDA.—The anniversary services in connection with the Sunday School were celebrated on the 24th ult. The church was addressed in the morning by Bro. A. H. Main on "Bible Study." Bro. Phillips gave an address to the children in the afternoon, and Bro. Huntsman, jr., gave a highly appreciated gospel address in the evening.

The usual tea was held the following Wednesday. The evening's entertainment was contributed mainly by the children, including a very amusing dialogue given by the elder boys, showing the folly of intemperance. Bro. C. Newham gave a short address, and the distribution of prizes, numbering between 40 and 50 (donated by the church), brought the meeting to a close.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.—Usual monthly meeting of the Committee was held on Monday, November 25th. The subjects for the annual examination for 1896 was decided and will be the first quarter's lessons for 1896, dealing with the life of Christ. We trust that teachers and others of schools will at once commence to awaken an interest in the examination, so that next year's competition may be a record one. In anticipation of larger entries the committee are offering an additional prize in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th divisions of scholars, and also in the junior division of teachers. We hope that this will have the desired result, and that it will encourage many more of our scholars and teachers to compete. It is the intention of the musical committee for the Easter Festival, Mr. Ernest Pittman, to start the rehearsals during this month, so that all schools that have not obtained their music should do so at once. The interest evinced so far in this cantata is rather desultory. All our musical friends should rally to the assistance of our Bro. Pittman, and do their best to provide the usual musical treat for the Easter Conference. The union is very pleased to welcome into association with them the Bendigo S. S., who are especially desirous of competing in the 5th examination, and some of our town schools will have to look to their laurels if they do not wish to be beaten. In accordance with the usual custom, the December meeting of the committee lapses, and the next meeting will be held on January 27th.

Some of the associated schools are rather dilatory in payment of their subscriptions, and as the union is in need of funds they should at once forward them. The union has yet room for a large number of honorary members, and we hope those interested will do their best to enroll more. The subscription list can be sent to the secretary, E. F. REVELL.

ASCOT VALE.—We are pleased to report that the good work is still going on here. Bro. Wilson is still faithfully proclaiming the ever blessed gospel to attentive and increasing audiences, and it is still proving to be God's power unto salvation, three having recently confessed their faith in Christ Jesus. Of these, two have put him on in his own appointed way, while one has not been able to do so yet on account of sickness, but is anxious to obey her God, when she is well enough. Others almost persuaded. To God be all the praise.

Dec. 2

T. M.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The following are the results of the annual examination of the S. S. Union of Churches of Christ in S. A. held in October.

TEACHERS.—*Senior Division.* 1st prize, Miss Jarvis of Balaklava; 2nd prize, Miss H. Jones of North Adelaide. *Junior Division.* 1st prize, Jas. Thomas of Unley.

SCHOLARS.—*Senior Division.* Section 1st prize, Theodore Fischer of N. Adelaide; 2nd prize, Rd. Hindley of Hindmarsh. Section 2nd prize, William Campbell of Unley; 2nd prize, Daisy Marsden of Hindmarsh. *Middle Division.* Section D 1st prize, Daisy Verco of North Adelaide; 2nd prize, Jeannie Wright of Balaklava. Section C 1st prize, Daisy Brooker of Hindmarsh; 2nd prize, Claud Verco of Henley Beach. *Junior Division.* Section B 1st prize, Constance Verco; 2nd prize, Alberta Verco, both of Henley Beach. Section A 1st prize, Leslie Verco of Henley Beach.

NANTAWAKRA.—The church here is living in peace, and has been glad to receive the confession of an intelligent young man for Christ. He will be baptised (N. Y.) next Lord's day. This is the first fruits of the Hygienic home, he being an inmate.

Nov. 23

Sic

NORTH ADELAIDE.—On the evening of Nov. 17th, at Kermode-st., two were immersed, one of whom confessed her faith the previous Sunday at Prospect and will be meeting with the members there. The other is going to Maryborough, Queensland, and will take a letter of commendation with her. On Nov. 17th another confessed the Saviour at Prospect, and on the 24th two others; to that we are rewarded for our labors, with the evidences of an awakened interest. At Kermode-st. on the 24th, Miss

Pyerson was welcomed amongst us. She was baptised some months ago at Grote-st., but had been so situated since as to be unable to meet with the church there. But now she will be able to assemble with the Lord's people for the breaking of bread.

On Nov. 27th the sisters had their anniversary social. There was a full attendance of members of the church, and several brethren and sisters from the sister churches. Mr. John Verco took the chair, and addresses were given by Mr. Dickson and Bro. Verco with a view to encourage the sisters in their work of faith and labor of love, and to enlist an even greater measure of sympathy and support for them from the church than has been accorded. There were two very nice part songs rendered. Reports were read by Miss H. Jones the secretary, and Mrs. Henshaw the president, showing a very large amount of work done, much interest, and much pleasure and profit in their meetings. A long interval for refreshments and for mutual conversation was granted, and a very happy and successful meeting was brought to a close by a vote of thanks from Mr. A. Fischer.

NORTH ADELAIDE.—Bro. P. A. Dickson is in S. A., on a visit to Bro. J. C. Dickson, and we had the pleasure of listening to his earnest presentation of the truth on Sunday evening, in Kermode-st. On the same day, in the morning, our aged Sister Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson, well aged in Jesus. She has been in fellowship with us for about two years. She met with an accident two weeks ago, from the effects of which she gradually succumbed. Her daughter, who is a member with us, has the sympathy of the church, and the gracious consolations of the Holy Spirit, and the comforts which are in Christ.

UNLEY.—We are very glad to report having received a very welcome letter from Bro. W. Burford, who has promised to continue his father's contribution of one pound per week as long as the Lord wills. Our prayer is that the Lord may abundantly bless our brother, who has been in the past a great help to us since he started the cause at Unley.

T. G. STORER, Sec.

OUR BUDGET.

Too late for classification.—Vic. Mission Fund, Bro. Guillum, £10

We expect to give a portrait of our late Bro. W. Burford in our next issue.

Bro. H. Carey Tucker, of "Westralia," is on a holiday visit to Melbourne.

The reports from Nelson and Spring Grove, N. Z., give cheering news of the good work done by Bro. W. T. Clapham during his short visit to that colony.

An error crept into the Hindmarsh Church report in last issue. The anniversary services were made to be nine months beyond the usual time, instead of one month.

Bro. F. Pittman has entered into an engagement with the Collingwood church for a further period of twelve months. They have had quite a number of additions lately.

The St. Kilda S. S. anniversary tea and social meeting was held last Wednesday. Forty-five prizes were distributed, which seems to indicate that the school is in anything but a moribund condition.

A Service of Song, promoted by the Victorian Conference Temperance Committee, was recently rendered at the Christian Chapel, Brighton, illustrated by limelight views. A crowded house. 18 pledges.

THE ALMANAC.—The Church of Christ Almanac for 1894 is now ready. Orders should be sent at once to the Austral Publishing Co. In our opinion it is equal to the best English sheet almanac of the kind published.

Several brethren from N. Carlton and Brighton, furnished with lanterns and slides, visited the Austin Hospital for Incurables last Thursday and gave the inmates a very interesting programme. This is an example worthy of imitation.

We congratulate Sister Nellie McClelland on her being selected as the principle soprano soloist in the "Messiah" on Christmas night, when this great oratorio will be rendered by the Philharmonic Society in the Melbourne Town Hall.

At the preachers' meeting at Lygon-st. last Monday, Bro. Carr read a paper entitled "Science and the Bible v. Strang Drink." This excited a most lively and interesting discussion. Brethren were urged to devote more attention to this subject in the pulpit, in the S. S., and in the homes visited.

A young brother, J. A. Wilson, has recently gone to Kalgoolie, W. A., and would like any brethren who may be there to communicate with him. Letters addressed to care of W. Etfield, Kalgoolie, will find him. He says, "I miss the 'breaking of bread' very much." We are glad that he does, and hope that he will not be satisfied until he can find some others to join with him in commemorating the dying love of Jesus.

RESCUE HOME.—By kind permission of the editor, we appeal through the STANDARD to the numerous friends of the Rescue Home for their kind consideration of our pressing needs. Christmas is drawing nigh, when many benevolent friends distribute their offerings. We ask you for a small share. The Home funds are very much in arrears, and it being full of inmates, the expense are still going on. May all our friends enjoy a very happy festive season!

J. AND L. PITTMAN.

At the last Foreign Mission Committee Bro. W. C. Thurgood tendered his resignation as Treasurer, which was accepted with deep regret. Bro. Wm. Wilson, of Surrey Hills, is the new Treasurer, and all funds should be sent to him, or to the Hon. Secretary, Bro. F. Ludbrook, 121 Collins st.

Bro. Brandt writes again and wishes to know if we will allow the "other side" a "column in each issue" in reply to our articles on the Kingdom. We cannot promise Bro. Brandt this, as we are somewhat doubtful of his literary ability, but we should have no objection to allowing a space to a representative and capable brother for a few short articles.

We notice from a report of the Presbyterian Assembly that Dr. J. G. Paton has presented them with the sum of £12,000, the proceeds from the sale of the work entitled "My Life." The gift was made on the following conditions:—1. That the fund and interest be at the disposal of J. G. Paton during his life time for extending mission work in the New Hebrides. 2. That on his death the fund be used by the general assembly for the same purpose, with advice from the New Hebrides Mission Synod.

A number of brethren seem to be making tracks for South Africa just now. In addition to Bro. T. Renton, referred to in our last, Bro. Christopher jun. of Geelong, and Bro. Ernest Kemp, of Swanston-st., are leaving for Johannesburg. The last named was entertained by the young men of the Melbourne church at a farewell "dinner" last Monday, some 50 or 60 friends being present. We hear that there is a small church meeting in Johannesburg, of which, we trust, all brethren crossing there will avail themselves.

"General" Booth has paid a second visit to Australia. We have heard it said that the "Army" was on the decline in some of our colonies. Probably he is going to try and give it an impetus. His enthusiastic followers received him as their "God-given General." As the *Age* very truly says, "What the Pope is to Roman Catholicism, and the Archbishop of Canterbury to Anglicanism, so is 'General' Booth to the Salvation Army." The "General" himself says, "Among other opprobrious names that had been applied to him was that of Pope, because people said he was the leader and initiator of a new papacy. The word 'Pope' was simply an abbreviation of the word 'papa,' so that perhaps after all, people were right in calling him a Pope, because he was the father of the Salvation Army."

While we have no wish to belittle the good rescue work done by the Army, we protest against this species of "man worship." Speaking of the "General's" reception, the *Age* says:—"From England

to Australia, from Iceland to tropical Africa, are scattered a vast army, looking up to and venerating their leader with a devotion hardly unequalled in the history of hero worship." From this, it is evident that the "General" is a man who wields a great power. In the hands of a less scrupulous man, such power would be fraught with great danger.

The question of electing "lay" moderators of the Presbyterian Assembly was discussed by the assembly a few days ago. The "clergy" evidently look askance at this proposed innovation, as they rejected the overture made on the subject, although Prof. Harper pointed out that "a moderator had no spiritual functions to discharge, which a 'lay man' might not undertake." Dr. Renton "hoped the assembly would do nothing to make the church appear vulgar and cheap in the eyes of a too democratic age." The "Rev" H. Robertson said "a wave of radicalism was threatening the church, and something must be done to check the danger." Thus it is that the dividing line between "clergy" and "laity" is sought to be perpetuated, although the Word of God knows no such distinctions.

The Chinese Mission is still carrying on its good work of educating and influencing the Chinese. And many of the teachers are deserving of much credit for their self-sacrificing zeal and devotion to the work, which is a distinct set-off against the "wet blanket" throwing of some of the professors of the name of the universal Saviour. Partly with the object of creating a better impression regarding the Chinese, a public demonstration will be held in the Uj-con-street chapel, on Tuesday, Dec. 10th, at 7.45 sharp, when songs, recitations, and readings will be given by the scholars, and a short address on "Confucius and Christ" will be given by S. Ah Wong. The Rev. Cheok Hong Cheong, I. Selby, and W. Wilson are also expected to speak. Tent-attended instrumentalists are expected to be present and render several selections of music. A generous invitation is given to all. There will be no charge for admission and no collection taken up.

F. M. McCLIFAN, Supt.

Bro. Clapham and Turner seem to have been adopting the apostolic plan of going out by twos. A correspondent in the *Newcastle Evening Star* says:—"The advent of two preaching gentlemen into the little village of Upper Wakefield, rejoicing in the names of Clapham and Turner, has created some little interest. There is nothing in the personal appearance of either gentleman calculated to inspire the audience with feelings of awe or even reverence, there being an entire absence of the religious clerical garb. The first named would pass for a well-to-do farmer, having just sold his wood clip to advantage. The latter's appearance is suggestive of the ex-cholera-master just recovered from the worst of cholera in general, and cholera crasis in particular. They are far from the time being working on the plan

initiated by our Saviour when He sent out His disciples, two and two, and which was adopted by the apostles as far as possible. One noticeable feature in the campaign is the absence of anything approaching religious cranks, they appear to deal with the Bible as though they believe it to be a book of authority, a complete and perfect standard of appeal upon all matters of faith and practice.

LOVED ONES GONE BEFORE.

HOCKING.—Bro Hocking, one of the first disciples at Ballarat, departed this life on June 27th, 1845, after a long and painful illness, which he bore with fortitude, realising that He in whom he believed was able to keep him unto the end. He was a constant attendant at the meetings, and was 70 years of age when he died. He leaves a wife and family of four children. He passed away with a glorious hope of sharing in the resurrection of the just to be forever with the Lord. Amen, so let it be.

W. RAMAGE, Sec.

FERGUSON.—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" can be truly said in reference to our Bro. Ferguson, who passed away on the 29th June at the residence of his daughter, Sister Hancock of the church at Trahan. Only last April did he lay his dear partner to rest, and now his happy spirit has rejoined hers in the home above. Our brother was born in Perthshire, Scotland, and he was immersed by M. W. Green and with his wife received into the church at Castlemaine about 18 years ago, since which time he did his best to follow the footsteps of his divine Master. Those who came in contact with him can testify to his faithfulness. He was never afraid to bear witness to the truth, and rarely missed an opportunity to preach Christ, and when at last the end came, the Lord was very near and gently took him to Himself from the bosom of his family, whom he had been cheering and comforting with the assurance that he was going to be with Christ, which was far better, and we feel sure that our Bro and Sister Hancock with all his loved ones would not wish him back, feeling that he is now—

Far from a world of grief and sin,

Eternally with God shut in.

W. RAMAGE, Sec.

BURFORD.—On the 23rd October our aged Bro William Heaville Burford fell asleep in Christ. He had reached nearly eighty-nine years of age. He was born on January 24th, 1807, at St. Katherine's, Middlesex, England. His father was a Baptist. He gave himself to the Lord early in life, and began preaching at the Seaman's Mission at the age of nineteen. He was connected with the congregation where the late eminent Baptist minister, Charles Sturt, preached. Bro Burford had throughout life a very kindly remembrance of those early days, and specially of Mr. Sturt, of whom he spoke with much respect and esteem. Bro Burford resided in South Australia on the 10th, 18th, 1853, where he has continuously resided ever since.

When the writer of this came to this colony in 1867 the church in Grote-st. had three elders, J. C. Verco, Philip Santo and W. H. Burford, all men good and true: these have all fought the good fight and finished their course. Bro. Burford was the oldest of the three and has been spared longest. The example of these three has been for the Glory of God. Many in the churches to-day look back with gratitude to the benefit received from their teaching and manner of life. Bro. Burford had been for years connected with the Church of Christ in the colony of South Australia. His membership was last with the church at Park-st., Unley. This was the nearest to his residence at Lower Mitcham. These grand men of the church, though gone, yet speak.

Bro. Burford during the whole of his Christian life was a diligent student of the word of God. He was a speaker who always made preparation for his duties, and hence, was always able to interest and instruct his hearers. He loved the gospel in its simplicity and was firm in his convictions. What he believed to be the truth of God he unflinchingly advocated. He continued to speak in the church until he became too weak to stand the exertion. He continued to attend the Lord's house, though in great weakness, up to within a short period of his death. He did not think any child of God should stay away from the Lord's table if it was at all possible to be there. His hearing had almost entirely failed him, yet, though he could not hear any of the service, he delighted to meet with the brethren to remember his Saviour.

Bro. Burford had a grand conception of the person and work of Christ. He dwelt much on this theme. Jesus the Christ seemed to be always the inspiration of his life. Some while ago in a conversation with the writer he said he would like to have a grander conception of his Lord and Master. Jesus seemed to be his great theme. Our beloved brother has looked upon Him in His glory, and the infinite vision is now before him.

Our brother was a man of great will power. He was tender hearted, yet of very firm convictions. Those who have come into intimate relationship with him have recognized the noble, upright, just and honorable man; yet they have seen the kindly, tender and loving man. The men who worked in his establishment, some of them for many years, can speak of his kindness and uniform consideration for their welfare. A man of great energy and strong will he faced the difficulties of the early pioneer life and compelled success in the new land of his adoption. In religious matters he never thought of compromising, in any way, the truth, yet he would speak the truth in love. His religion, with him, stood first. To have

Christ in his life as well as in his heart was his aspiration. His religion ennobled his business and his business exalted his religion. He believed that works were the expression of faith, and that faith which works by love was the only faith that placed the soul in fellowship with God. His convictions of truth were so strong that no cloud of infidelity ever obscured the bright vision of the Lord of glory. As his convictions, so was the life which dwelt in his soul, healthy, vigorous, Christlike, speaking ever of the unending and glorious presence.

As might be expected liberality and largeness were very characteristic of him. He believed that as he had surrendered his heart to the Lord, so should his means be surrendered; hence his giving was of the conscientious kind. He tried to give always as the Lord had prospered him. This we know to be right—in accord with His will. Hence the church was blessed by our brother's presence in more ways than one. He felt that it was more blessed to give than to receive.

Bro. Burford was a man of childlike faith. He was a student, yet never seemed to be troubled about anything in opposition to the word; that was a grand reality to him. He used the word of God rather than defended it. What a blessing to everyone when the light from God shines with undimmed power and beauty into the depths of the soul. When the light is never darkness, but when faith is always undimmed, and always becoming stronger, until the great consummation in the sight of the glorified One. His faith was in Christ when two of his grand daughters, Lillie and Eva, daughters of our Bro. and Sis. Wm. Burford were some months since leaving for Germany, he tenderly bade them farewell and said: "In the temptations and struggles of life keep close to Jesus—Goodbye."

As we would expect he was a man of prayer. He loved to pray. The Bible was a power in his house. Even in his extreme age and infirmity he opened his pages morning and evening, read and prayed in his family. He continued in this family worship to kneel until it was impossible, by reason of physical weakness, to kneel any longer. He then would read and pray as he sat in his chair. The grand old man! He believed in approaching God on bended knee. In his last sickness he prayed that the Holy Spirit might be with his children. He loved his family—his wife, his children, his grand-children. Our beloved brother was a grand Christian man. His Christian life was well lived, well begun, well-sounded, well-closed. He has passed to his rest in the fullness of the hope of the blessedness of eternity. His declining days had been blessed by the devout care of his children and of Sis. Burford, his wife. Sis. Burford had devotedly attended upon him. She also

is one of the faithful disciples, who lives the truth as it is in Christ, and does what she can for its advancement in the world. Bro. Burford leaves four children, all Christians: Benjamin Burford, William Burford, Mrs. R. K. Finlayson, and Mrs. R. M. Eddy. Bro. Wm. Burford is well known to, and highly esteemed by, the brotherhood in the colonies.

In taking our last farewell of our loved brother we can only say the church is gradually losing the pioneers in church work among us. We love to think they leave a rich inheritance for the church of to-day.

T. J. GORE.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

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W. C. T. TRAY

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BIRTH.

LADBROOK.—On Sunday, December 1st, at "Nyora," Church-st., Middle Brighton, the wife of F. M. Ludbrook, of a Son. Both doing well.

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