

The Australasian Christian Standard.

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

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Current Topics.

THE DAYS OF CHRYSOSTOM.—Dean Farrar has just written a book on the days of Chrysostom, entitled "Gathering Clouds," and covering the period 387-437 A.D. It is worth reading, not only as a story, but as giving a graphic account of that period which witnessed the union of church and state, under which alliance the Faith of Christ became little better than a bone of implacable dissension and almost an aggravation of Pagan treachery, cruelty and sensuality. Yet, as Farrar very well says: "No age since Christ has been so utterly corrupt as not to produce some prophets and saints of God. These saints, these prophets, in age after age, were persecuted, sawn asunder, were slain with the sword by kings and priests; but the next generation, which built their sepulchres, had, in part at least, profited by their lessons."

CHRYSOSTOM.—Among the noblest of these saints of God was Chrysostom. Speaking of this noble man, the *New Age* says: "We can assure the reader that in Dean Farrar's graphic pages he will find the record of a life so devoted, so noble, so heroic, that he cannot rise from its perusal without having imbibed some portion of the spirit by which the 'Mouth of Gold' was inspired." Here is the portrait that Farrar gives of Chrysostom:—"Two

things instantly struck those who heard him: one was the utter fearlessness of the man the other his absolute sincerity. If he thought it right and needful to say a thing, no ulterior consideration would ever prevent him from saying it. The one thing—the only thing which John cared for—was truth. The one thing which he despised was compromise; the one thing which he dreaded was to go before the God of the Amen, the God of eternal and essential verities, with the unclean sacrifice of a lie in his right hand; the one thing which he desired was to see the things that are, and to see them as they are. A firm believer in the great truths of Christianity, he yet held that theology was valueless unless it were made the stepping-stone to godly living. That which most overwhelmed him with its inherent majesty was the grandeur of the moral law, and he regarded dogmas and observances as altogether lighter than vanity itself, unless they produced the fruits of a holy life."

SEVERIAN, THE OPPORTUNIST, was the implacable foe of Chrysostom and a more familiar type of ecclesiastic of that day. He is thus described:—"He (Severian) separated himself from them (his flock) for years, with little loss to them, but without the smallest compunction, so long as he fancied he could further his private interests. Wealth, rank, fame, Court favour—these were the dazzling lures

which the devil dangled before him. This clerical opportunist would hold no views which were not popular; would express no opinion which would tend to hinder his advancement; would reject no alliance, however contemptible, which seemed likely to elevate him ever so little in the direction of the inch-high dignities which he coveted, and which a diseased ambition represented as enormous altitudes. With the whole meanness of his soul he was exclusively devoted to

This bubble would, whose colours in a moment break and fly. He was thus in every respect the antithesis of Chrysostom, whose simple godliness, apostolic simplicity, and transparent guilelessness he despised from the whole height of his own inferiority. . . . He was unctuous and portly. His hair was oiled and curled in a manner which would have reminded our late Laureate of an Assyrian bull. His face was broad, his features regular, his dress irreprouchable, and he had gained a character for boundless affability by cultivating a smile so sunny that it would have ripened a peach."

FALL OF PAGANISM.—The two severest blows to pagan idolatry are described. The one was struck at Alexandria, when the famous temple of Serapis was destroyed by order of the Emperor, Theodosius I. Farrar says:—"It was at once despoiled and demolished. But when the multitude entered the shrine where the huge

gilded idol sat enthroned with the basket on his head and the three-legged monster in his right hand, they paused in superstitious dread. Heaven and earth would collapse, it was believed, if the majesty of the god were violated. But one of my rude soldiers had no such fear. He put a ladder against the statue, and ascended it, amid the breathless silence of the multitude, with a huge battle-axe in his hand. Then the audacious legionary dashed his axe on the face of the image with all his force, and smote off his cheek. The mob expected to see him struck dead or blind, but no lightning flashed, no cloud darkened the blue of heaven. In a minute or two the hollow head of the image rolled with a clang on the marble floor, and out sprang an immemorial colony of rats whose home had been thus rudely invaded. The protector of heaven and earth had not been even able to protect his own rats! The people broke into shouts of laughter, swarmed up the pedestal, tore down the image, tripudiated on the shattered fragments, and ultimately flung them into a huge bonfire." The other death-blow was struck at the decisive battle of Frigidus, where Theodosius triumphed over Pagan Eugenius and his gods:—"Then our men flung down the statues of Jupiter, and seizing the golden thunderbolts, took them to Theodosius. 'Keep them for yourselves,' said the Emperor, who was in one of his gayest moods. 'Thank you, Emperor!' said the soldiers; 'may we often be smitten by such thunderbolts!' Theodosius rolled in his saddle with laughter at their rough wit. They took up the laugh—and so paganism perished at Alexandria and Frigidus, in two shouts of mirth!"

PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.—Professor Agar Beet, in examining the credentials of Christianity, reviews some of its achievements and thus speaks of what it has done for the higher life of man:—"As yet nothing has been said about progress in the sense of right, in mutual kindness, and in all that makes up the higher

life of man. This form of progress is less conspicuous than the material advance just mentioned. But it is far more important. When Christ was born the world was sinking hopelessly, in spite of considerable culture, into deeper and deeper moral corruption. To-day, with all the many blemishes of modern life, there is in all Christian countries real moral improvement, apparent in the habits of society, in a purer public opinion, and in more earnest effort to help the weak and the unfortunate. In all other countries there is moral stagnation, except so far as they are influenced by Christian nations. This monopoly of sustained progress by the professedly Christian nations is the most remarkable feature of human life and human history. From the earliest dawn of history to the present day there has been general progress in every form of material and moral good. Before Christ came, that progress was scattered over many widely-separated nations. It was also fitful, and its forms were transient. In His day, its force seemed to be spent, and apparently universal and hopeless decay had set in. But now a new element comes silently on the scene. Amid the ruins of the ancient civilization, a new morality, a new hope begin to develop. A new progress, slow but sure, is soon detected. The progress is maintained. In every department of human life we note advance. Out of the chaos of the ancient world rises the solid structure of modern society. And, strangest of all, this wonderful progress in everything that pertains to human welfare is found only in those nations which recognise the supreme authority of an obscure and apparently untrained Teacher, who was laid in the grave before he had reached the prime of life. It is not too much to say that to-day every Christian nation is rising in material and moral good, and that no non-Christian nation is rising mentally or morally except by contact with Christian nations. This remarkable phenomenon demands explanation."

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IS THE WORLD GROWING WORSE?

NO. 3.

IT may be freely granted that there are times when even those who take optimistic views of things are very much depressed when they look at their surroundings and find how much of sin and sorrow yet obtain in the world. And it is only when they turn from the present and survey the past that they are able to console themselves with the thought that, bad as things are now, they were very much worse in by-gone years. And it is because this comparison is not made that many fall into the error of concluding that the world is on the down grade. Every morning the daily press serves up to us all the notable events of the previous day. An immense array of reporters are scattered all over the world. By cablegram and telegram the world's crimes are flashed from one end of the earth to the other. That which in former centuries could only be gathered by the slow labours of the historian—finding; publicity after many years, and then

only to the few—is now the common, and we might say the instantaneous, property of all. From the daily *menu* thus provided the pessimist takes discoloured views of life and is quite certain the world is growing worse and that the end of the world is drawing near. Here is a specimen:

"The news of the past week would indicate that we have certainly struck disastrous times. Note a few of the headlines of the general news of the world for only a few days:—'Great Bush Fires,' 'Violent Thunderstorms,' 'Great Storms in New Zealand,' 'Explosion on an Italian Torpedo Boat, Twelve Lives Lost,' 'Railway Disaster in the Transvaal, Twenty-five Lives Lost,' 'Mutiny on a Russian Warship,' 'Armenian Outrages,' 'Great Earthquake in Persia, Eleven Hundred Lives Lost,' 'Five Millions for War Ships,' &c., &c. And these are gleaned from three days' accounts. What next? Is a very natural inquiry. What do these things mean? Is a silver one. And God's word tells. It says, 'In the last days *perilous* times shall come.' The *peril* are here. The last days have come. That is what these things mean."

Well, the catalogue is black enough, but unfortunately these things (leaving out the torpedo boat and the railway incidents) have been happening both before and after the Christian era. We can go back century after century, and find very much darker pictures than this. If these things were any certain indication of the near approach of the end, then the catastrophe ought to have taken place centuries ago. As a matter of fact, the pessimist is not a being of recent growth. He is a familiar object in every age, and, from his standpoint, the world has been coming to an end in any century from the first to the nineteenth. However, we will not pursue this phase of the question further. It is enough to say that no man has a right to pronounce judgment on the present until he has honestly compared it with the past. Religious teachers, above all others, should not make statements which, on examination, are found to

have no foundation of fact to rest upon.

But it may be urged that, admitting the world is better to-day than it was in the past, is it not clear that the New Testament indicates that as it approaches the end it will "wax worse and worse?" No, it is not clear that such will be the case. On the contrary, there is abundant evidence of an opposite character. In the parables of the mustard seed and leaven, the progressive and permeating powers of Christianity are distinctly affirmed. To break the force of these, attempts have been made to alter their meaning, but all such attempts end in failure and reflect but little credit on those that make the experiment. If, then, these parables declare that Christianity is a growing affair,—and that they do so is the affirmation of biblical scholarship,—then it is impossible that other portions of Scripture should affirm the contrary. The New Testament is a harmony, and not a discord. Any passages of Scripture quoted in opposition, must be quoted in error, either from a misconception of their meaning or a disregard of their evident connection. An instance of this is afforded by those who insist in quoting 2 Timothy 3: 1 as prophetic of the end of the world. "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come." It is now over eighteen hundred years since these words were uttered, and yet they were spoken to Timothy in warning as to what should happen in his day! The characters who should appear upon the scene in these "last days" are mentioned, and Timothy is charged to turn away from such. Evidently, then, unless Paul was writing nonsense, the "last days" must be an equivalent expression for "last age" or "last dispensation," and from the context we must learn whether reference is intended

to the past, present or future of the last dispensation. The prophet Joel used the words the "last days" in reference to the beginning of the Christian dispensation (see Acts 2: 17). So it is evident that the mere use of the words "last days" proves nothing so far as the near approach of the end is concerned.

Much use also is made of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew—a chapter which is undoubtedly difficult to understand. The prophecies therein, it is generally thought, have reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and the final coming of Christ, but where the first ends and the second begins is a matter of considerable dispute; consequently any quotation therefrom cannot carry much weight until some agreement is reached. It seems certain, however, that up to the 35th verse reference is made to events which have taken place, for in the 34th verse we are told "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." The late Dr. Dale, commenting on this, says:

"It is sheer evasion of His words to say that the 'persecution' means the Jewish race, that the Jewish race would be kept in existence until these things were fulfilled. It cannot mean that; it is only an attempt to escape from the difficulties which limit the interpretation of our Lord's words. It is sufficient that we should know that the great scheme was near completion when all the troubles which He had described came upon the Jewish race, and the vulgar gathered to consume the dead body of a great and elect nation."

Dr. Dale, we might add, is of opinion that Christ came in some sense at the destruction of Jerusalem.

It is also assumed that the prophecy in second Thessalonians in regard to the "man of sin" has not yet been fulfilled; that there is yet to be a great apostasy which will assume enormous proportions, so that scarcely any of the faithful will be left, and that when things are at their worst Christ will come and utterly destroy the "lawless one,"

It is not our intention to enquire what is meant by this "man of sin," but rather to see if a fair exegesis of the passage under consideration must necessarily yield the above interpretation. In the passage under consideration we have—(1) The apostasy already at work when the apostle wrote; (2) it was restrained by some power then in existence (supposed to have been the Roman emperor); (3) when this restraining power was removed the apostasy would be revealed; (4) it was to be consumed with the Spirit of His mouth, and (5) destroyed by the brightness of His coming. This portion of Scripture therefore tells of the development of an evil already in existence, which when it reaches maturity is to be gradually wasted away (for that is the meaning of the word translated "consumed") by the Spirit of His mouth, or by the agency of the word of God, and to be utterly destroyed by the brightness of His appearance. Or, taking Macknight's paraphrase: "And then shall be revealed that lawless one, who will openly exalt himself above every one who is called a god. Him the Lord will gradually but utterly consume by the breath of His mouth (His speech in the Scriptures), and will render his vile arts ineffectual for deluding mankind any longer by evident interpositions of His power." Properly understood, then, this passage declares the gradual overthrow of this evil, and according to our judgment the prophecy is in course of fulfilment. The apostasy has been revealed, and is now passing through the process of decay, and will finally be utterly destroyed. This and other kindred passages were not meant to indicate obstacles against which Christianity would be powerless, but rather hindrances over which it would triumph. We are therefore not called upon to sit down and fold our hands in despair,

but to "put on the whole armour of God" and fight against "principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," feeling assured that Christ is with us "all the days," and with Him on our side and by our side victory must attend our efforts.

A. H. Bryant, but long since gone home to reap the reward of loving service.

Our attention was first drawn to the church of Christ by our Sister Le Hurey of Lygon-st., who sent Bro. Peck, who was then preaching for the church at North Fitzroy, to see us. Our different interviews finally led to our casting our lot in with the brethren in that district, and for nearly eighteen years we continued



W. T. CLAPHAM.

A BRIEF SKETCH.

My first knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ was obtained whilst a scholar in the Wesleyan Lord's day school, Brunswick, Victoria. For about fourteen years I continued with that body, taking an active part, especially in school work. It was not until after my marriage that my wife and self saw that immersion was commanded, when we obeyed by being immersed in the George-st. Baptist Chapel, Fitzroy, by the pastor of the church, Bro. W. Bryant, an earnest and faithful servant of God, the father of our present Bro.

to fellowship with the church there, and for nearly the whole of that time held office there, and also the superintendency of the Lord's day school. These years have been the most pleasant and sweetest of my life. For about nine years of that time I was also preaching the gospel, and for two and a half years with our beloved Bro. Spurr occupied the North Fitzroy platform. A year and seven months was also spent with the church at Cheltenham with a great deal of pleasure. At the request of the Victorian Missionary Committee I went to Corowa, where I remained two years, spending a

very happy time, when I accepted an invitation of the New South Wales Home Mission Committee, and with whom I am now labouring. Altogether I have been identified with the Disciples about 22 years.

W. T. CLAPHAM.

SAD BOATING FATALITY.

BEVUICKING THE CHURCHES AT AUCKLAND AND GLORIT, N.Z.

On Lord's day evening, the 12th inst., the sad news was received here that on the previous evening a boat accident had happened a few miles from Glorit (a comparatively new settlement, where quite a number of Auckland brethren have gone to live), in the Kaipara Harbour, near Moturima Island, resulting in the loss of ten precious lives, as follows:—Sister Mrs Perkins, the wife of Bro Euler Perkins of Glorit; Jessie, Nellie and Lottie, daughters, and Harold, the second youngest son of the same. Bro Armstrong and his little son, the husband and only child of Sister Armstrong of Glorit; France, the only daughter of Bro and Sister Palmer, of Glorit, aged about 12 years; Josephine, the second eldest daughter of Sister W. J. MacDermott of Auckland, and Bro Beswarrick, who leaves a widow and family at Oamaru.

From information gleaned during a visit to Glorit in connection with this sad event, it seems that on the morning of Saturday, the 11th inst., a boating party of eleven—the ten just mentioned, as drowned, and Bro Thor Edwards of Glorit, who had charge of the boat—left the Oramaun landing for a day's fishing and boating at Moturima Island. They arrived at the Island safely and spent a very pleasant day, and between 5 and 6 o'clock in the evening began the return journey. When about 150 yards from the Island the boat capsized when in the act of shifting the sail in order to wear round in the direction of home.

Bro Edwards and Harold Perkins were the only members of the party that could swim. strenuous efforts were made by Bro Edwards to get all the party to cling to the boat, but with the boat drifting, the water becoming increasingly rough, and the cold, this was found to be a hopeless task, one after another dropped off and was drowned. Bro Edwards tried finally to save Bro Armstrong's boy, but the poor little fellow was so terrified that he would persist in getting upon his shoulders and head, which made it impossible for him to swim, and he had to give over the attempt to save him. Harold Perkins swam with Bro Edwards until exhausted, when he sank. Bro Edwards had to swim about a mile and a half to the mainland, which he reached at last, ex-

hausted. He rested some hours, then swam the Hotoe river, and brought the sad news to Glorit about 4 o'clock on Sunday morning. In the meantime friends on shore, getting anxious at the party not returning, had gone out to search for them.

Up to the present, five bodies have been recovered. Nellie Perkins and France Palmer recovered the day after the accident. Mrs Perkins and Mr Beswarrick the Thursday following, and Mr Armstrong last Sunday. The two first named were buried at Glorit on Tuesday, the 14th inst., after the inquest, Bro Vickers, L. Limer and Hall conducting the service.

The service last Sunday evening at Cook-street was considerably influenced by this sad event. Specially suitable hymns were sung, and an address of a consolatory character was delivered by Bro Bull, from John 14: 1-3. "Let not your heart be troubled," etc.

Sisters Jessie Perkins and Josephine MacDermott were on a visit to Glorit for a holiday. Bro Beswarrick had only lately gone there in search of employment, the others were all residing in the district. This event has touched our hearts and cast a gloom over the churches immediately concerned, but we are enabled to look up through our tears to our Father's face and to realize that He loves us still. At the Sunday evening service a kindly sympathetic note was read from Mr Aldridge, preacher for the church meeting at the Forester's hall.

The bereaved still need our prayers. May the God of all comfort comfort them with the blessed assurance and hope of the gospel. Auckland, Jan 21. T. J. B.

Church of Christ,

Auckland, Jan 16, 1896.

Church of Christ at Glorit (Oramaun). Beloved Brethren—The terrible affliction that has so recently occurred in your midst, by which many loved and valued lives have been suddenly taken away has left deep wounds in the hearts of bereaved ones, and a great blank in your little assembly. It has also made a deep impression on every brother and sister in Auckland. Your sorrow is our sorrow.

The whole church unites to convey to you their heartiest sympathy and love in this your time of keen suffering, which we share with you. Especially do we tender our warmest fellow feeling in your affliction to the bereaved ones—our esteemed Bro Perkins and his family, Bro and Sister Palmer, Sister Armstrong, Sister MacDermott of Auckland, with her husband and family, and the widow and family of Bro Beswarrick, of Oamaru, and we would by no means forget our young Bro Edwards, whose noble efforts to save his companions will ever be remembered. May they all be abundantly supplied with heavenly grace and peace,

and enjoy the comfort and consolation that only our Saviour can give! Many prayers, individually and unitedly, have been offered to a throne of Grace on your behalf, and will yet do so.

While feeling powerless to afford the help you most need, we yet can and do commend you to God and His grace, who has promised never to forsake His loved—His trusting ones, and also to attend medical strength and comfort in their time of need.

This "frowning Providence," unless a smiling face behind. May you soon be permitted to see it, and to recognize the loving Father's hand in it all.

Blessed be God, we sorrow not *hopelessly*. We know that each one was "redeemed of the Lord," and *justified* in His sight. They are now in His safe keeping, beyond the reach of any evil whatever. They have entered into rest! and a joyful reunion awaits us, where partings are unknown.

Brethren, let us take the lesson, sad though it be. How clearly it speaks to us, "He is also ready," ready for the dear Lord whenever He may call. Shall we not gird up our loins afresh—stretch out towards the things beyond—and press towards the mark more eagerly than ever? Surely with those loved ones gone before, our affections will be even more fervently set on things above than ever before, and we will give up all to our Lord who said, "Ye thus faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

On behalf of the Church

W. E. HANSON, Your in Christ,
(Signed) FREDERICK DUNN,
EDWARD DUNN,
W. H. EVANS,
T. J. BULL.

A LETTER TO A BARRISTER.

—201—

NO. 3.

Again, you say "that you are forced to believe that there is error on the part of those who tell you that immersion in water for repentance or any other purpose is necessary as an act of obedience to the will of God." It should not be with you what anyone tells you, but what the Word of God declares. And the only common sense way to know is just to turn to the utterances of the Spirit through the apostles on the subject. And in doing so, I am going to lay the doubtful passages—Mark 16: 16—and, although Dr. Barnes, Alford, and Fawcett (Bible Cyclopaedia affirm that it has the same canonical authority as the rest of the gospel. While I lay it aside because you state "that on account of its requiring immersion

prior to salvation, it ought to be stamped as spurious, I will at the same time elevate it as on a pole, that we may see it as we proceed, and compare other passages with it.

As you think there is ambiguity in the great commission, let us follow the commissioned twelve, and see how they carried it out in practice. On Pentecostal morn the Holy Spirit descended. The apostles were then induced with supernatural wisdom to give infallible utterance to the will of God or this very matter. When the multitude was convinced of having crucified their Messiah, they exclaimed, "Men—brethren—what shall we do?" The Holy Spirit replied (as the apostles spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance). But what was the reply? "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ." For what purpose? If I quote the Spirit's statement without comment, will you say that that is my interpretation of it? The divine statement is, as you know, "FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS." This is the Holy Spirit's method of carrying out in practice the great commission. The foregoing is as decisive and as exclusive as Mark 16: 16, and must therefore be stamped as spurious along with it. Are you prepared to attach your signature to a petition to its Divine Author to have it also expunged?

Again, when Saul of Tarsus, who had put followers of the Lord Jesus to death, saw Him in glorious majesty, and felt for the first time the guilty position he occupied, he exclaimed, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The Lord had given His commission to His apostles and would not meddle with it, but told the penitent to go into Damascus, and it should be told him *what he must do*. When there, the Lord sent a messenger of His own choosing to tell him *what he must do* (in order to his salvation). Be astonished, yet believe the divine record. Ananias, this chosen messenger, finds the man in such depth of penitence that for three days he had fasted, engaged also in prayer—and was a true believer in Christ. According to present-day theology he was a pardoned, accepted, saved child of God. Yet if his sins were forgiven before Ananias came to him, on account of his repentance and prayer, then neither the message nor the messenger was from God. But mark what the Lord meant by the expression, "What thou must do." The only thing he

was told to do was, "And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." This passage is even more emphatic than Mark 16: 16. It is both foreign and antagonistic to the freeness of God's gift of pardon. It must therefore be stamped as spurious and expunged—or shall we charge the message from the Lord as a delusion? John Wesley, commenting on this passage, says: "In the primitive church God did not ordinarily confer the blessing of pardon but by *this means*." What a contrast between the leader and the admiring follower! Will you candidly compare your statement, that it is *error* to state that "immersion in water for any purpose is the will of God," with the foregoing statements of the Holy Spirit, or even with that of Wesley.

I am deeply grieved to see that in every instance in which you allude to a passage in the Word of God, there *seems*—I say there *seems*—to be an effort to evade the true sense, e.g., you state that you turn to the New Testament or the Epistles—where your Baptist friends tell you "you will find immersion, but to your astonishment you find *not one* mention of aquatic immersion." While I admit that the element is not mentioned, still your reasoning sets aside both the judgment and the testimony of the great cloud of witnesses of the greatest Biblical critics and commentators from Origen, A.D. 180 to the present day. On the passage, Rom. 6: 3, 4, being baptised into Christ and into His death, and of being buried with Him by baptism, Dr. Barnes says: "An allusion to the ancient manner of baptising by immersion, as it will appear to every unbiased mind." It is only prejudice that prevents people from seeing it. John Wesley, on the same passage, says: "Evidently alluding to the manner of baptising by immersion as practised by the apostles." Though truthful, and used by thousands, yet what a childish expression of two great men! It is equivalent to the absurdity of saying—baptised by baptism, or immersed by immersion.

By Dr. C. H. COOPER, D.D., G.O.P.V.

The Exhorter.

LOVE.

Jesus in coming into the world manifested at once the love of the Father and the love

of Himself, the Son. Of this love the world was largely ignorant prior to His advent. Just before His betrayal He instructed His disciples to continue in His love (John 15: 9). If we are to continue in it, we do well, at times, to study it.

1. IT WAS SHOWN TOWARD ENEMIES

Man was a rebel, he was at enmity with God. God looked, and could see that our "thoughts were only evil continually." There was nothing in us to produce love in the Godhead. We had joined hands with the evil one against the great Creator. But in spite of all this, He loved us. He manifested His love in the gift of Jesus. Jesus loved us, and showed it by what He did on our behalf. Now, we are to continue in this love. We are to love our enemies. "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans so?" It may be somewhat easy to love those who love us and seek at all times to do good unto us; but it is somewhat difficult to love a man that seeks to do us an injury. But the latter is the love of Jesus, in loving him we get the reward. It is here where that text that seems to puzzle so many applies—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust." Even so must we love and do good to the wicked as well as the good, our enemies as well as our friends.

2. THIS LOVE WAS SELF-SACRIFICING.

Jesus was "rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich." Christ left the glory of the celestial world; turned His back upon the songs of the angelic choir, came into this world as a babe.

"Took our nature, took our place,

Lived and died, to save our race."

While on earth He was poor. We find Him working at the carpenter's bench. We find Him during His ministry not having "where to lay his head." He went willingly to the death of the cross. He sacrificed self on our behalf. And we are to continue in this self-sacrificing love. A love that costs us nothing to bestow, is not the love of Jesus. If we are filled with His love, we will sacrifice time, money, ease, and even life for those we love. "Continue ye in my love."

It is very necessary that we should manifest this love, for without it, eloquence, faith, knowledge and benevolence are nothing. "Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." (1 Cor. 13: 1-3) T. H.

THE SUPERHUMAN CLAIMS OF JESUS.

An Argument for the Truth of the Bible.

AN ADDRESS BY DR. J. C. VERCO.

It is an unshaken and unshakable confidence in the divine origin of the Bible is all important. "The good word of God," to use the phrase of the writer to the Hebrews, lies at the foundation of all that is spiritual. Abandon this—blot out the information it affords,—and we cast ourselves adrift upon a sea of human conjecture without a single fixed point to indicate our position or our course—all become mere speculation. If the strangely positive statements of the Bible be rejected, we have not one fragment of reliable information in the realm of the spiritual. What are the purposes of God, or if there be a God, we do not know. What other light have we, as to any world beyond this seen and temporal one; any state beyond the grave; any life of happiness or misery, of rewards and punishment? what guide as to how we should live for the one or the other? what evidence that the present has any causal relation with the future at all?

Shall Spycy ever visit the mouldering urn,
Or day ever dawn on the night of the grave?

We cannot tell.

Happily for us, we do believe its grand revelations. They are the infallible utterances of a divine inspiration. Nevertheless some people discredit or deny them. And it is our duty, our wisdom, and our pleasure to investigate this subject, and if possible to win others to an acceptance of the truth and truth of the Bible, and to establish and strengthen our own faith.

Last year in "Mistakes about the Bible" I sought to confirm our assurance in it by enumerating the many instances in which attacks upon the veracity of its history had been triumphantly repelled. That was a kind of external evidence. To-night I propose to bring under your notice a sort of internal evidence. Then I deal entirely with the Old Testament Scriptures. Now the New Testament will claim our attention almost entirely.

The internal evidence as to its divine origin may be looked at from several stand-points, and each view would give us, if the details were considered, abundant material for more than a single address; but most of these evidences are probably quite familiar.

I will just indicate some of them in outline, and then in a general way elaborate the line of thought which I desire specially to discuss.

1. There is the unity of the Bible, looked at in its entirety. Though we call it "The Bible," that is, The Book, it is in reality a

collection of tiny booklets, no fewer than sixty-six in number. The first was written about 1,490 years before Christ, and the last about 90 years after Christ; so that its authorship covers a period of nearly sixteen hundred years. The writers lived in various parts of the world, and penned their manuscripts in different languages. But it is, nevertheless, manifestly one book. From Genesis to Revelations there is an evident connection between all the several parts. One idea pervades the whole. One thought is developed throughout, one mystery is gradually unfolded, one great promise is fulfilled. Everything in all the booklets is consistent with this one idea, and more, is relevant to it; so that little or nothing could be omitted without destroying the continuity of the book and interrupting the thread of its discourse. There is no other volume like it in the world, none that can in any way compare with it in this respect. How to explain this circumstance, this marvellous consensus of parts, except on the theory of inspiration by a divine over-ruling mind, is an impossibility with me. And the Bible, from internal evidence, is an abiding miracle and true:

2. There is the fulfilment of its prophecy. It is always a dangerous undertaking to prophesy—unless it be after the event. But the Bible is abundant in prophecy from beginning to end. Not only does it deal with spiritual matters, about the fulfilment of which there might be some cavil; but with secular events, predicting the rise and fall of empires and kings in the most positive manner, sometimes in figure, sometimes in explicit language. These predictions have been fulfilled. Their accomplishment stamps the Book as of divine origin. For though an acute man may occasionally give a shrewd guess in a general way as to occurrences in the immediate future, the prophecies of the sacred Scriptures are not of such character; but refer, often in some detail and with much precision, to events, foretold in some cases hundreds of years before they came to pass. Such prophecies indicate the inspiration of one who knows the end from the beginning, and to whom the things that are not are as though they were, and so constitute an impregnable and enduring testimony to its divine authorship.

3. There is the evidence of our own spiritual experience—an evidence difficult to demonstrate to those who have not believed in and obeyed the gospel, but one which grows stronger with our growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The longer we live the Christian life, as we follow on to know the Lord and know ourselves, the more persuaded we become that the Bible is true, because it meets a felt want of our nature and corresponds with and is adapted to our constitution as we know ourselves

We feel that it is true, and progressively this feeling becomes more deep and intense.

Let me try and explain what I mean. The New Testament comes to us, with the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, and expounds the divine philosophy of our redemption. It points out our need of a Saviour, because of our sins—our transgressions against divine law. We feel this to be true, as well as its declaration about the exceeding sinfulness of sin—its deceitfulness, its ingratitude, its folly, its desert of condemnation and punishment. Our unregenerate natures, as made known, are realized as an experience. It shows us our utter inability to remove a single stain, to cancel a solitary transgression. We can see this. It reveals a substitute—one who comes and suffers the punishment in our room and stead, and so satisfies eternal justice and displays infinite love. We feel our debt has been paid and a foundation laid for our salvation, and this depends, not upon any merit in us, but upon the merit of our substitute. More than that, in the self-sacrificing love of Jesus there is a constraining and a restraining force, constraining us to follow after holiness for the rest of our lives, restraining us from every form of evil, as a manifestation of love for Him who has loved us. Then in all the conditional promises of the new covenant, the blessings to be enjoyed here and the greater blessings hereafter—provided we try to live in worship, in holiness, in service as we should—and the warnings and threatenings in respect of evil: do we not feel how adapted they are to the constitution of our mind, appealing to almost if not to every emotion, and so prompting us to realize the divine ideal. Now it is our hope, now our fear, our pride, our ambition, our curse; all the springs of nature are touched in turn, and we feel that this religion has come from the hand of one who knew us well, in fact, from no other than our wise and faithful Creator.

In the lofty conception of the Christian life to which we are called, as followers of Jesus, the honesty, the purity—not of deed or of word only, but even of thought,—we feel there is evidence of a divine origin. In the grand and glorious prospect which is opened out to us in the future, we feel there is that which is calculated to elevate and gladden our present.

In the unity, the simplicity, the purity of the doctrine of the word of God, in the way in which one part dovetails into another, forming a consistent whole, we recognize the evidence of its truth, and recognize this more and more as we come to the maturity of our knowledge to grasp the relation of its incidental teachings.

But the point which I desire to make plain just now is one altogether different from any of these. It has been frequently in my mind during the past few weeks, and

as it has been turned over and over, it has seemed to grow larger, and the evidence to become fuller and more powerful.

It is an argument which I do not remember to have seen in any book: maybe some of my readers have, for books are very many, and my perusal of works on theology is very limited indeed. In fact, I would desire to express my thoughts upon the subject rather as a preliminary study than a matured dogmatic deliverance, to provoke thought and enquiry; and I shall be pleased to receive instances in confirmation or elaboration of the argument, and suggestions in the way of correction of any statements which may appear unfounded or liable to be gainsaid: because what we are all seeking is truth, nor do we wish to hold anything as such which is evidently erroneous. It needs no bolstering up by arguments which are fallacious, however strongly they may seem to support it.

The argument in favour of the truth of the New Testament is one drawn from the supernatural contained in it. Now some one might interject: "But it is the presence of the supernatural which prevents very many from accepting the Bible as true! They are prepared to receive the natural in it, but the rest being outside the realm of experience they repudiate, and since there is no great substratum of the supernatural in the New Testament, and this is made the basis and the explanation of the whole, they have little or no faith in any of it. For instance: the immaculate conception, the celestial prodigies at the birth of Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit at His baptism, His wonderful miracles—the healing of the withered hand, of the man born blind, the deaf mute, the raising of the dead (as detailed in the particular instances of Jairus' daughter, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus of Bethany, four days after his death)—the resurrection of Jesus Himself on the third day, His ascension into heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the repetition of the same sort of wonders by the hands of the twelve apostles: these are veritable stumbling-blocks to very many, simply on account of the miraculous or supernatural element.

I am pleased to know and to testify that they are in no way a difficulty with me. Had they continued down through the centuries to the present day (though perhaps such a circumstance as this would have taken away their miraculous character, and they would have been regarded as the natural consequence of becoming a Christian, just as a thoroughly changed character of mind and mode of life are so regarded) I say, had they continued down to the present, though we should have been constrained to accept them as facts in our experience, they might have been difficult of explanation. But their purpose—performed at the time

when, and under the circumstances in which, they are alleged to have been wrought—is so clear and seems so reasonable that they are easily accepted by me. Of course, the way in which they were done, how they were effected, is past my comprehension, but 99 if not 100 per cent. of the simple facts of our life are just as incomprehensible.

Miracles have never been—so far as the sacred Scriptures reveal—mere exhibitions of supernatural power, wondrous wantonly wrought. They have always been demanded by the exigencies of the immediate circumstances, as divine credentials of some messenger of God, and as attestations, seals, of the divine origin of the message he has brought. So it was with Jesus Himself. As John writes at the end of his gospel, "Many other signs truly did Jesus which are not written in this book: but 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." As credentials of His Sonship and Christhood the miracles were wrought, and as such they were effective. Nicodemus says to Him: "Master, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man could do the miracles that thou dost except God were with him." They were the proofs of the divine mission and the divine presence. So also with the apostles. Mark writes of these: "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with the signs following." The miracles were heaven-granted confirmations of the divine origin of the words spoken. Were a man to appear to-day and affirm himself a messenger from God, burdened with a revelation from the skies, I should ask him at once to show me his diploma in the form of a sign from heaven. If he could not produce it, I should not feel called upon to believe him or his words: nor, so far as I can gather from the Book, would God expect me to. Hence, as long as new revelations were coming from heaven in reference to our salvation through Jesus, so long there ought to have been miracles: when the revelation had been completed and established by a sufficient display of supernatural power, miracles should then cease, and as a matter of fact they did. Until God has some further revelation to unfold, I expect to see no miracle. When He has, He will again seal it with the supernatural. I repeat, therefore, I experience no difficulty in the miracles, either as to their appearance or their disappearance: it is just what reason and revelation seem to me to demand.

But it is not the supernatural in this sense to which I wish to call attention. Perhaps I ought rather to use the word superhuman than supernatural, as being less

likely to convey a wrong impression. Let me say, then, the superhuman claims of Jesus are a strong argument in favour of the truth of the sacred Scriptures.

The man who does and can do only the same as the rest of his fellows, is an ordinary, average—shall I say natural or human?—man.

He who does what most other men do not, is an unusual man. He who can do what the majority of men cannot, is above the average man; but he is still perfectly natural and only human.

He who does what no other man has done, is a singular man—a unique man.

He who can do what no other man can do, or ever has done, is a superhuman man.

Perhaps you will say: "But it is nonsense to talk of a superhuman man." Perhaps it is, perhaps not. If the Bible is true, it is common sense and right. If the Bible be not true, it may be nonsense so to speak. According to its teaching Jesus was a man; more, he was a superhuman man—a man with power above that of men.

Now it matters not in what department the power of the individual is put forth; if he has done or can do what no other man has done or can do, his power is in some degree above that of men, and it becomes us to enquire whence he gets this superhuman power. It may be only human after all, and he may be only the greatest, highest, loftiest of mankind; but it may be the result of a cause above and outside the human. And if he avers the power to be superhuman, and not of man, we should pause before we flatter and stoutly deny it.

This unique power may be manifested in the physical world, in addition to be seen with our eyes. "Since the foundation of the world was it not known that anyone opened the eyes of a man who was born blind? the man who can do it is unique. It may be in the realm of mind. He may write and speak as never man before or since has written or spoken. Here he towers above mankind. He may live as never man lived before or since. He is a living wonder. He may dream as never man dreamed before; then if his predilections are only dreams, he is a superhuman dreamer; but we had better tread cautiously along the path which necessitates our characterizing his predilections as dreams, especially if he should affirm them positive realities.

And this brings me to the laying bare of the argument. The claims of Jesus, as made known to us in the New Testament, are absolutely and essentially unique. No one in this world, not one of the whole race of mankind has ever urged them; not one particular claim, but a whole series of them; and they all partake of this singular character. Let us pause before we deny them. For the very fact that they are unique, and still more, are intrinsically far, far beyond

any similar claims preferred by any man or any combination of men, should suggest to us that he who made them is something more than man. If he be only a man, how comes it that he thus rises head and shoulders above all other men? Why have not other men made the same demands upon us? why have they never made any demands like them? Because they were only men, and He was more than man; therefore He soars above them. And when, with the evidence that He is far different and far greater, He affirms that He is greater because He is different—because He is more than man—who will dare deny? Shall not prudence and common sense restrain us?

Let us examine some of these claims.

1. He claimed DIVINITY.

He appeared like a little babe born in Bethlehem. He grew up through childhood; He was known by the people in Nazareth as a lad; he worked at the carpentering with His father. The multitude knew His father and mother and brothers and sisters. He called Himself the Son of man, but He declared Himself to be the veritable Son of God. "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" demanded the high priest in Jerusalem, and He replied "Thou sayest it"; although He knew if He thus "confessed the good confession," it would seal His doom and He would seal it with His blood upon the cross of Calvary. He affirmed that He dwelt in the bosom of the Father; that He had a glory with the Father before the world was; that He came forth from the Father to come into the world, and that He would go out of the world to return to the Father. He implicitly declared His eternity, "Before Abraham was I am," and the Jews took up stones to stone Him.

These claims, originated by Jesus Himself, were iterated and reiterated by His apostles; they thrust upon the world in the boldest phrases that Jesus was divine, that as the Word He dwelt with the Father, and then clothed Himself in flesh, and was "God with us," "God manifest in the flesh."

When did any man in this world besides Jesus make such a statement as this? I know of no instance in the annals of human religions. Men have stood forward as prophets of the Most High, some of them truly and some of them falsely. But what man ever stepped out from his fellows, and quietly and boldly maintained that he was God himself, and sealed his testimony with his blood? Such a claim is altogether outside the range of human experience. There are mythological stories, I allow, of the incarnations of heathen deities, for example, Vishnu among the Indian gods, but they are of a different class and stamp. Here is a historical character, whose actual life is more certainly attested than that of Napo-

leon Buonaparte, who repeatedly proclaims His own divinity. Why have no other men thought of doing this? Why have no others dared to do it? Because it was beyond them. How did Jesus come to do it? Because He was beyond all other men. Why did He do this, and make this enormous demand upon the faith of our race? Because He was what He claimed to be, no other, and nothing less. This to my mind is the easiest solution of the problem.

2. Notice further His claim, and on His behalf that of the apostles, as to His PERFECT HOLINESS.

"Which of you," said Jesus, "convinceeth me of sin?" "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Not only is this affirmed, but it is made the foundation of the whole scheme of redemption—"We are not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The efficacy of His atonement stands and falls with His immaculate life. Was He perfectly holy? Then He could redeem. Did He sin? Then His sacrifice was vain. So also His spotless life is made the ideal, the perfect ideal of the Christian career. "He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps." We should "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus."

In these respects His claim is superhuman. Other men have laid down maxims for the guidance of their fellows, and have taught their followers to apply them in their lives. But where is the man who has had the unique presumption to stand forth and say in effect: "I am perfect, absolutely holy. I have never sinned in thought, word or deed, either by omission or commission. I alone, of all the men that have ever lived, and by virtue of this spotless life which I voluntarily resign, atone for all your bad past, and set a perfect, flawless example for all mankind and for ever?" Where is the man? *Ecc Homo!* Behold the man, Christ Jesus! Whence came this unique presumption? From the consciousness of truth. This alone is the explanation which can satisfy me!

3. See again His claim in regard to the KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE.

He boldly affirmed, without doubt or hypothesis. There is neither "if" nor "but," unless it be for rhetorical effect, e.g., "If I go away, I will come again."

This infinite foresight, this positive prediction, is exemplified in the detailed manner in which He foretold the circumstances of His own approaching betrayal, desertion, condemnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension; the manner and method of the establishment and spread of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, the destruction of

the city of Jerusalem by the Roman forces, and the demolition of the Herodian temple. But away beyond that and far beyond the centuries, His own glorious return after preparing the mansions in the Father's house, the resurrection of the righteous dead in glory and honor and power and incorruptibility to an everlasting life of happiness with God, the coming forth of the wicked to a judgment before the throne of the Most High, with the reward for the faithful and actively loving, and the punishment of the unbelieving and the disobedient. And all declared with complete assurance, without a single indication of any doubt of His own knowledge. Everything was predicted as positively as though He were detailing the perfectly remembered incidents of the well-known past.

Where shall we find a parallel? Do you say, in His apostles? True, they did foretell with a like assurance. But they only elaborated His prophecies, filled in His outlines with further details, and then acknowledged either that they were only recalling what He had taught them whilst He was with them, or that they were speaking by the Spirit of Christ, which He had bestowed upon them, being in fact but the instruments through which He uttered His voice and revealed the things to come.

Why has no man, before or since, been able to compare with Jesus in prophetic revelation, for fulness, for assurance? Because He is above and beyond all men; because He alone of all men knew the things wherof He spoke.

4. He lays claim further to SUPERHUMAN WORKS.

He moved among men in the land of Palestine for some three years, and during that time He went about doing good, with a miraculous hand dispensing His manifold blessings; working, as He puts it, the works of His Father. He called upon the people to accept Him as the Son of God. He affirmed His divine parentage and nature; but He told them not to believe His statements simply because He made them. There was better evidence than His mere *ipse dixit*, stronger proof than the explicit testimony of John the Baptist; "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (John 5, 36). And at the very end of His earthly ministry, on the night of His betrayal, He said: "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not believed me" (John 15, 24). Here is the claim that His works, in quantity or quality, or both, were beyond and above those of any man who had ever lived. Their multitude and magnitude stamped Him as being wise. He said He was something more than human, the Son of God, and left disbelievers without a chance

or excuse for their sin—their sin of unbelief. Now here is a staggering claim, that of works beyond the performance of any man. How can we reconcile such presumption, such audacity (if we can reverently use such terms) with the character of the meek and lowly Nazarene, the humble philosopher of Galilee? Best, if not only, by acknowledging the truth of His claim, and believing Him for His very works' sake.

5 Hear Him, further, in reference to His own teaching.

When on the Mount of the Beatitudes He delivered that grand sermon, which has never been approached in the profundity of its doctrine, He cried time and again: "Ye know that it hath been said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you." I am the teacher. My doctrine must stand before that of all who have preceded me. Moses may have given you the law, but a greater than Moses is here. Solomon, in all his wisdom, may have written his thousand and one proverbs, and made his wisdom yours, but a greater than Solomon is here. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," My teaching, strange though it be and new, must replace all other doctrine, however respected for its hoary antiquity, however venerable, from custom and usage. "I am the way, I am the truth." "And the people were amazed, for he spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Not they dogmatized in their petty way, and ransacked from the traditions of the elders childish travesties and contraventions of the commandments of God. But He, with the voice of authority, set all their elders and fathers aside, and boldly proclaimed the truth in its fulness and depth. And even the Herodian soldiery, sent to take Him by force and bring Him as a prisoner to the priests, left Him at liberty, and gave as their wonderful excuse for dereliction of duty "Never man spake like this man."

Nor are we struck simply by His assumption of doctrinal authority; we are no less impressed by His pretension to eternal infallibility. "The words that I speak unto you, they shall judge you at the last day." His doctrine is to be the standard of appeal at the grand assize, when all shall be gathered at the bar of God. By this all shall be tried; by this acquitted or condemned; by this rewarded with glory and felicity, or sentenced to destruction and banishment. Yes, His every word is universal and divine law. His teachings must every one be accepted and installed—all are essential; and every thought, word and deed must be brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. The rolling centuries must introduce no change in them, can effect no improvement upon them. They are the perfection of doctrine for man, and the duty of all mankind is to receive them with a ready mind, and live them with all

the heart and mind and soul and strength. No human being is to be begotten through the ages, to be evolved during developing eras or cycles of civilisation, who can amend the thoughts of Jesus by a human after-thought. Those and those only are to be allowed as the tests and test-books for the final examination of mankind. What a stupendous claim! Where in the annals of the great or little is an equal claim to be found? But even this is not all. Before He had risen, and while He was teaching amongst men, He said: "He that sent me is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him" (John 8: 26). "As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (John 8: 28). "I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12: 49, 50). Here is the astounding declaration that everything spoken by Himself was of divine origin; nothing proceeded from Himself as a man. He was but the spokesman of the Father; and just as He had been taught of God, so He taught the people. Every word He uttered in doctrine during His three years' ministry was the direct revelation, the unaltered and unalterable revelation of the Deity Himself.

Where is the teacher who has dared to demand so high a seat as this? Here is no allowance for misconception, or mistake, or progress: The doctrine is wholly from above, and is for all nations and for all time, until the affairs of the world are wound up for eternity.

Are we not amazed at such an arrogant dogmatism, absolutely without a parallel amongst the most conceited of that most conceited class—the teachers of men? Surely there must be some sufficient explanation. Is it to be found in a superlative human pride? Was Jesus the most conceited man that ever lived? Is such an imputation consistent with the story of His life, who said "I am meek and lowly of heart," and who washed His own disciples' feet? The easier explanation by far to my mind is, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, who came down from heaven to bring us the pure, infallible, universal and eternal truth of God, and told the truth about Himself.

6 And lastly, look at the preternatural or superhuman assumptions, manifested in the great *sermon on the mount*, just before He left the world to ascend up where He was before. We see in it four universals, and a grander, more telling passage I do not know where to find in all the literature of the world.

"All authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me." Here is a statement that

might well take our breath away. For one to claim authority over the whole earth would be much! Who has ever possessed it? who has ever made pretensions to it? None but Jesus! But His prerogative embraces not merely this little atom of a world, but all the heaven as well. All the myriad worlds that glitter in the immensity above; all the Intelligences, however many and great they may be, who people the universe of God—all are given over to the authority of Jesus; all come beneath His sceptre for His rule. He is exalted far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.

"Go," says he, "and make disciples among all the nations." Who is this young man, just three and thirty years of age, who bids his eleven illiterate and timid followers go and bring the nations to his feet? Who is this obscure Galilean Jew, this despised Nazarene carpenter, that he should have the unexampled assurance to exped a gathering of disciples, not merely from his own insignificant and down-trodden people, groaning under the iron heel of Rome, but from among all the nations of the habitable globe?

"Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Who is this Son of man, that links His name with that of Jehovah, and demands that all His disciples shall be baptised into God's name and His own, making Himself equal with the Father, the peer of the Almighty, the fellow of the Eternal?

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"—all things, without one single exception. Every commandment he ever promulgated may be observed. Every disciple must be taught to observe it. Every teacher must be strict and careful to teach it. Who is this arbitrary, supremely arbitrary dogmatist, whose every doctrine must be the universal and infallible rule of life for all the nations of the earth?

"And lo, I am with you always"—all the days—"even to the end of the age." Here is a promise as immense as any of His previous universal pretensions—"all the days, even to the end of the age;" the promise of an age-abiding presence. Where his ambassadors are, there will He be. Where their teaching is—provided their teaching is His—there will He be, with His unlimited authority, with His celestial and terrestrial power, to fulfil all the conditional promises of God, which compass with spiritual blessings all the present life of His people, and stretch away into the eternity beyond the grave.

O magnificent young dreamer, if dreams they be! Never has any other dreamer dreamed like this! In the highest flights

of our human imagination, no one has ever soared into realm like these. Whence were those pinions borrowed that bore Him so far beyond His fellow men? Borrowed? They were ever His own, for He was more than man. "Now that He ascended," says the Apostle Paul, "what is it but that he also descended FIRST into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things" (Eph. 4: 10). He ascended because He had previously descended. He was able to go up, because He had first come down. It was no gradual evolution of a great man. It was the inherent force of the celestial, which revealed itself persistently while He sojourned amongst men, and finally raised Him to the skies. And so also does His forerunner, John the Baptist, thus simply explain it all, and solve the dark enigmas we propound: "He that cometh from above is above all." That is it, no mere extraordinarily endowed man, but a heaven-descended one. "He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all: and what he hath seen and heard that he testifyeth, and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set his seal to this, that God is true." For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life: but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3: 31-34).

Yes, here is the simple solution of the whole difficulty. Reject this, and we cannot comprehend or explain how such claims ever came to be made by Jesus or for Jesus. We have an insoluble puzzle, an inexplicable riddle. But accept this, and the whole matter is easy. Why did He claim divinity? Because He was divine. How is it His claims are above those of all other men? Because He was above all. Mere men, who are of the earth, are earthly and speak of the earth, they speak after the manner of men, and as the stream can never rise above the level of its source, so they can never rise above the human, but He came from heaven, and therefore He is above all. There He heard the majestic celestial truths. He spoke, therefore He brought the Holy Fire, and derived His supernatural power. Because the Father loved His own Son, therefore He commended all things into His hand. The theory that best explains the greatest number of facts is the one we must hold, and the theory of the Swissist's divinity is in my mind the one which most easily and fully satisfies the requirements of the case. Therefore I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. But this is the burden of the testimony of the

New Testament. Then its burden is true. And the superhuman claims of Christ, so persistently pressed by Him, constitute strong evidence of the truth of the Bible, and stamp it as "The Word of God."

In Bible Lands.



GRINDING AT THE MILL.

The hand-mills spoken of in Scripture are doubtless of the same kind as those almost everywhere seen at this day in western Asia. They consist of two stones, eighteen inches or two feet in diameter, placed one on top of the other. The upper one has a hole in it, through which the grain is introduced, and a wooden handle by which it is turned. The upper stone, *the rider*, was probably that which the woman seized by the handle, and running with it to the battlement, let it fall upon Abimelech's head (Judges 9: 53). Two women sit facing each other to grind, both taking hold of the handle, while the one who has her right hand disengaged pours in the grain as it is wanted. Hence we understand the words of our Saviour when He said: "Two women shall be grinding at the mill: one shall be taken and the other left." Mills were almost in every house as necessary for daily use (comp. Num. 11: 8); hence this merciful prohibition against taking the mill-stones in pledge (Deut. 24: 6): the subsistence of the family would be interfered with. "I heard the ring of this apparatus," says Dr. Thomson, "some time before I saw it, and now understand what is meant by the preacher when he says: 'The sound of the grinding is low, because the grinders are few' (Eccles. 12: 4)."

Things in General

"MAKING PREACHERS."

Preachers, like poets, are born—not made. But everybody don't think so, and I don't really see that it is absolutely necessary that everybody should think so in order to establish the truthfulness of the statement. If any of the readers of "Things in General" have not yet accepted as gospel the bit of philosophy forming the head waters of this little stream of thought, if they will attend regularly for 12 months any one of our morning meetings and keep their eyes and ears open, they will be ready to accept it without a mental reservation. The "Bad times" has certainly done us much harm during the past few years, but the harm done in this way has been as nothing in comparison with that done by bad preaching and teaching. How has this state of things been brought about? Partly, I admit, by the force of circumstances. As churches we have been trying to make the best of a bad job. But there is a wide-spread notion that just anybody can preach—that the most unpromising material can be taken, and in an incredibly short time turned out a preacher. You may take a man without natural ability, and give him all the polish he is capable of receiving, and you will never make a preacher of him. Now I believe in giving every encouragement to those who show the slightest ability in this direction, and I as emphatically believe in showing every *discouragement* to those who have no ability, and shall vigorously protest against being lured on a Sunday morning, or sit passively by while the cause of truth is being murdered in the house of its friends. Much of our teaching and preaching not only does no good, but worst of all it does harm. But what is to be done? If acceptable preaching and teaching cannot be secured, let us do without, thus avoiding the harm done by the promulgation of error; and best of all, avoid encouraging those who are trying to "make preachers" of themselves when nature has designed them for something else.

"THOU SHALT BE A BLESSING."

The highest ambition that many Christians have in life is to get good, and anything which does not con-

tribute directly to this end is discarded, with the result that they live a little, cramped, miserable life, and die "unhonoured and unsung." "O Lord, bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife—us four and no more, amen," is the centre and circumference of their prayers and ambitions. If 50 per cent. of the Christian population of the world should go to heaven within the next 24 hours they would not be missed outside of their own families. Why? Because they have missed the Christian's secret of a happy and useful life. They have started out to get good, which is in itself commendable and right, but they have not gone about it in the right way. From the enlightened Christian's standpoint, the only way to get good is to do good. Be good, do good, and *get* good is the divine order of things, which can never be reversed, so that the Christian who would get a blessing in the highest, best, and most abiding sense, must first of all "be a blessing." Now don't let us make any mistake about this matter, as it requires no great sacrifice, or long years of waiting, for the good to come to us. It comes often at once—in fact, in the best sense of good, it always comes at once, in the satisfaction of knowing that in Christ's name we have done something to lighten the burden or brighten the darkened pathway of some fellow-pilgrim. To those who are thinking of "good" in a material sense, to do good materially is the surest and, in fact, the only way to get good. This is true of the ordinary sound business transactions of the world, and pre-eminently true of the man whose trust is in God. Give something and get something in return should be the foundation principle of the most material Christian's life. May the joy of the fulfillment of the promise made to the father of the faithful, "Thou shalt be a blessing," be realised by an ever increasing number of the STANDARD readers.

A. B. MASTON.

Foreign Missions.

F. M. LUDDEBROOK.

LETTER FROM MISS THOMPSON
HURDA, C. P. India.

January 1st, 1896.

I think I write that Gopal, the young man who was baptised over a year ago, had at last found courage to write with the

church here. We have known him for years, and all of us have great confidence in him. Three patients from the hospital were received in at the same time, and since then I think four patients and one leper have been baptised. I am not quite sure whether there were three or four, as some who have been baptised have not been received into the church. Two of them have since died. I was unable to be present at all the baptisms. I think I wrote about a young wife who was brought to our bungalow some months ago by the Inspector of Police. She had been ill-treated by her mother-in-law and ran away. Her husband had another wife, and said he did not want her again, and signed a paper to that effect. Janki has several times said she wished to become a Christian, and a few days before Christmas Mr. Wharton had a talk with her, and was persuaded that she fully understood the step she was about to take. She was baptised at the same time as an old servant of Mrs. Jackson's. He is over 90 years old. The same day a young woman whom Miss Jackson brought from Bombay was also baptised. She had a strange history. She said a gentleman in Hyderabad adopted her and a number of other girls in a time of famine. They were allowed to remain Mohammedans; in fact, they were provided with a teacher to teach them Mohammedanism, but they were not taught to read. A little while ago her protector died, and she was brought to Bombay, and Miss Jackson saw her in the house where she boarded. She was asked to take her away, as it was not a good place for her to be. When the girl came here she objected to coming to prayers and gave us a good bit of trouble, but gradually her opposition gave way, and she too desired to follow Jesus. The two girls are with Miss Graybiel now in Mahaba.

We have had some very interesting temperance meetings for the Europeans and Eurasians lately. It would take too long to write you about the state of the railway people here. We thought it would be a good thing to have our Sunday school children's treat on Tuesday this year and spend part of our Christmas with the railway people. Mrs. Jackson invited all who would come to her house. About 40 came, one of whom said it was the first Xmas for ten years that he had not been drunk. I heard it was said that this was a temperance Xmas in Hurda. Xmas Eve the government official here invited all the missionaries to dinner to meet the Church of England clergyman who comes here occasionally. He said he believed our Temperance Society was doing more good here than his services, and that he would not be surprised if he became a teetotaler within the next twelve months. It is nothing new in India for Church of England clergymen to be seen drunk. The one who visited here when I

first came to Hurda often had to be carried home, so you can imagine what an influence he would have on the people.

The box from Australia did not get here this year until the day after Xmas, but Miss Judson had a nice sum of money sent her several months ago to have garments made for the children, and there were enough dolls sent from England last year to give Miss Judson's school-girls one each. The garments sent in the box will be needed in Charna and Oora, where the children have not yet received their gifts and the dolls just came in time for me to give to the women. Our great day (as the people call Christmas) is known far and near, and all who have had anything to do with us look for something at that time.

Bro. Wharton had a post card from Bro. McLean last week. He was about to visit Singapore, and will be here before he visits Australia.

Mrs. Wharton has had an attack of *la grippe*, but is getting better. The rest of us are fairly well.

With kind and Christian regards, very sincerely yours in the Master's service,

M. THOMPSON.

—101—

QUEENSLAND.

FROM JOHN THOMPSON.

In a letter to the committee Bro. John Thompson reports he is mending, though slowly. He says: "I have a very good report to give of the attempt made by the Christian Kanakas to establish a mission in their island, also of the support kindly given them by their white brethren here. It ought to stimulate the white brethren to follow their example in going to the Kanaka Mission. But I am so tired in trying to keep moving that whenever I have a few moments to spare I am more inclined to have a rest than to write."

Church News.

NEW ZEALAND.

NELSON.—Since my report last month 13 more have been added to the church here. That brings the number of additions up to 60 in this district since Bro. Clapham started his most successful mission in September last, and in which Bro. Turner, from Wellington, so ably assisted during the latter part of the mission. God has truly blessed the effort so very ably put forth by our good Brethren Clapham and Turner while in Nelson. We are very thankful to our Father in heaven for sending us such faithful and unselfish workers, and we are very grateful to the brotherhood, who granted us these two brethren, especially the Wellington church, who sent Bro. Turner back

again to help us for another three weeks after the mission was closed. Words cannot express how we appreciate the very noble action of the Wellington brethren—the strong helping the weak. Although there has been a good gathering in here during the last three months, there is still a great number almost persuaded, some of which we trust, with the help of God, to be able before long to add to the saved. We heartily thank God for the great encouragement we have had in the past, and pray that the work may still go on and prosper.

Dec. 27, 1895. C. P. A. Sec.

WELLINGTON.—The church here is growing strong in the faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Great interest is being taken by members, especially the young, and altogether the spiritual nature is firm and hopeful.

During the Xmas holidays many visiting brethren have been with us. The majority are Nelsonians, and their presence has been a source of pleasure to the brethren.

The usual church picnics have been held, fine weather prevailing throughout the holidays. The most successful and largely attended one was held on New Year's Day, at Day's Bay.

The rendering of Burnham's service of song, "A Lamb of the Flock," was marked by excellent singing. The affair was by far the best, musically, ever given in the chapel. Bro. Gallhawk gave the readings, and Mr. Turvey presided at the organ.

Jan. 9. JOHN A. SHENNAS.

KALANGATA.—Nothing stirring to relate at present, just a line, however, to let you know that as a church we still exist and are endeavouring to carry on the work in its various departments. On New Year's Day the church treated the Sunday School in the form of a picnic, to which the majority of the scholars turned out. During the afternoon a goodly number of visitors put in an appearance, and altogether an enjoyable day was spent, no hitch of any kind having occurred.

The sisters' sewing class, which has been having some few weeks vacation, meets again on Wednesday the 8th inst., before their vacation they handed over to credit of the building fund the sum of £2 10s.

We have no additions to report, but on the other hand, from one cause or another, the worst of which is lukewarmness, our number is gradually lessening. To it not sad to realize that there are those who after having put their hand to the plough do back track. May they be rescued to think of their position, and turn again to the Lord ere it be too late. A. R. W.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

QUEENSTOWN.—I suppose you are wondering where we have got to, it is so long

since you saw a report, but thank God He has spared us. We are still working and happy in doing that work. We are having good meetings. A variety of speaking brethren from the city have helped us, for which we thank them. We have received into fellowship 3 by letter from sister churches and one young man by faith and obedience. We also rejoice with exceeding great joy that our Master has seen fit to exalt one of our brethren to the heavenly city—our beloved Bro. Lee. We are not jealous of our brother's exalted position, but are happy that the Master thought him worthy of honour. Our brother was connected with the Primitive Methodists for many years, but being a sufferer in body he came over from Victoria to spend a little time with his mother, who is in fellowship with us, to recover his health. Bro. Jno. Verco, in visiting the house, pointed out to him his duty in regard to baptism, which he saw clearly and at once gladly confessed his Master before a crowded meeting, and was immersed into His name, after which, in so far as he was able, took part in the work and exhorting the brethren, which shall be treasured in our hearts until we meet him again. On recovering his health somewhat, he again returned home to Victoria, but it must have been the beginning of the end, for only a few weeks elapsed before he passed away at a good age. I shall not forget the parting with him. I met him on the wharf, and he told me he had lost the steamer. We passed the remark that it would have been terrible to have lost heaven, when he joyfully answered that he was sure of heaven. Now we pray that his dear ones may be comforted. We wish you happiness for the New Year.

Jan. 6

R. H.

QUEENSTOWN.—Bro. Nelson from Moree, N.S.W., paid us a visit on 22nd inst. Our brother is on the way to Westralia. The brethren gave him a cordial welcome, and commended him to the care of our Heavenly Father.

UNLUV.—We are pleased to report that the work is going on steadily. Since our last report we have had three additions by faith and obedience, and we pray that they may talk worthy of their high calling. We have preaching meetings at the Mitcham Block with fair attendance, the brethren taking a great interest in this work. We hope soon to start a Sunday School, for there is a large number of children, and by this means a lasting good may be accomplished. T. G. STORER.

HINDMARSH.—One young lady previously baptised, Sister Bygott—has been received into fellowship. There have been no confessions. At a meeting of the executive committee of the Foreign Missions Society last Tuesday evening 213 was allocated to

Bro. Strutton, our own boy in India. £4 was also devoted to the Indian Mission—Sister Thompson—and £4 for the Kanaka Mission—Bro. Thompson, Total £21. This will pretty well exhaust our funds in hand, we would therefore remind the friends of their needed help for the coming year, having put our hands to the plough there must be no looking back.

The West Torrens District Union of the Y.P.S.C.E. held their annual meeting in the chapel last Wednesday evening. It was a large gathering. The usual business of presentation of reports, election of officers, etc., was interspersed with songs, choruses, and suitable addresses.

Last evening an interment service was held, having special reference to the death of Bro. Joseph Leaver, who died during the week, leaving a widow and a very large family. Our brother's death was rather sudden; consequently his family are feeling his loss acutely. We commended them to the God of all comfort and consolation.

Bro. Smith will leave for Mitham at the end of this week. From thence he proceeds to the south-east in an engagement for four weeks with the Evangelist Committee. Consequently we shall have supplies for five Sundays.

Jan. 27

A. G.

VICTORIA.

WILLIAMSTOWNS.—A sister made the good confession and put on Christ in Lapraire Lord's day evening, the 12th. An effort has been made to reopen the Sunday School. The first Sunday, there were only seven scholars, last Lord's day, 15. Bro. Thompson preaching.

Jan. 20

E. C. K. See.

PANMUNA.—In spite of the intense heat the chapel here was full last Lord's day evening. Bro. W. Cavannah placed the truth plainly before the congregation. Zac came out and were interested after having made the good confession—a young son and daughter of Bro. Carroll. A brother from the Baptist church in Sweden is also going to join us next Lord's day. People are attending from all the churches. Bro. U. visited the people in Hillside district last Friday evening, having obtained the use of the Wesleyan church there, and placed the truth before all. Besides this he visits daily all neighbors in Pakemba and Hillside districts, and a thorough good and substantial work is being done. Bro. C. will visit Nar Nar Goon district shortly. He is succeeding admirably. We cordially expect more additions shortly.

CHAS. E. HURSTMAN.

WELLSFORD.—The Deacons Society and Sunday School held their picnic at the Green Hills on New Year's Day. Although the weather was very warm there was a

large gathering, and everything passed off pleasantly. Our Dorcas meetings are still improving, the number now being about 11.

Jan. 25. M. JACKSON, Sec.

BALABAT.—The half-yearly meeting of the church was held on Wednesday, Jan. 15th, 1896, Bro C. Morris in the chair. The reports and balance sheets, duly audited, were adopted. The church has a balance of £4 to start the year with. The Sunday School is in good working order; average attendance, 100. The Endeavour Society is doing good work; average attendance of members, 23. The society has distributed 25 packets of groceries, £1 18s 6d. in cash and loaned £2 out of the funds. The Dorcas Society also presented a very favourable report, have held 12 meetings for the half year with an average attendance of 50, receipts for the term being £9 16s 8d.; expended in gifts of clothing £8 15s. 10d., leaving a balance in hand of £1 0s. 10d. Additions to the church by faith and baptism for the half year have been four.

T. H. VANSTON, Sec.

NEWSTEAD.—For some time past we have been holding open air meetings at this place, so far without visible results. Other places have also been visited. About a week ago Bro Park visited Carisbrook, a township fourteen miles from here. Three Christians were living there at the time, and one more (an old man aged 84 years) put on Christ in His own appointed way, the result of Bro Park's labour. As the brethren desired to hold meetings at Carisbrook, on Lord's day morning the writer attended for the purpose of breaking the emblematical loaf. A very enjoyable day was spent, and in the evening, assisted by two brethren from Newcastle, the gospel was proclaimed in the street to a large and attentive gathering.

Maldon, nine miles from here, was also visited by Bro Park, who, assisted by brethren from Newcastle held some good meetings, but, although some were visibly impressed there were no additions. We soon hope to be able to report further progress. The field around here is large and promising. The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few.

Jan. 25. T. H. SCHEFFLER.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PETERBHAM.—Bro C. F. Nison has preached for the past eight months and has greatly strengthened the hands of the brethren. Four have been immersed into Christ, and three were received by letter. Open air meetings are held on Parramatta Road every Saturday with much success, Bro Nison being the speaker.

We expect to report the death of our beloved Bro J. Bennett on the 14th inst.,

at the age of 76. May the Lord console the bereaved ones.

The Secretary (Bro Halliday) has resigned, as he is going to England on the 28th. The new secretary is Bro. A. M. Ward. Please note his address—Douglas-street, Dulwich Hill.

16/1/96

J. HALLIDAY.

QUEENSLAND.

MARYBOROUGH.—You will be glad to hear that two were added to our number last night by faith and baptism (a man and wife) and notwithstanding the fact that the president of the Baptist Association was preaching in the Baptist Church, we had the largest number I have yet seen at any of our meetings. We expected Bro Mahon from Gympie, but he wired at 10 p.m. Saturday night that he could not come down, so we had to do the best we could, and we did very well, I think. After a holiday of three weeks we re-opened our Sunday school yesterday with about 45 scholars, with a prospect of more. Sister Howard, our only sister teacher, is a great worker in this direction, and the success of the school is mainly owing to her, and only for the fact that she has so many other duties to attend to the world would have been unanimously elected superintendent yesterday.

Bro Thompson has been out of hospital for the last fortnight and progressing as favourably as could be expected. He will soon be himself again.

An old sister from Adelaide named Thompson, bringing letters from Bro J. C. Dickson presented herself at the evening meeting on the 14th inst. and was quite pleased at having found us.

Jan. 20. S. O'BRIEN.

WEST AUSTRALIA.

COOLGARDIE.—Just a word or two to let you know that we are still living and don't forget that the brethren in general would like to know how we are getting on. We are happy to say we have a small place of our own a little out of the town. It is the best we could get under the circumstances, and we have very enjoyable meetings there every Lord's day morning at eleven. It is not a big place, but it accommodates us, and there is still room for as many again. We have done no preaching yet; we could not get a suitable place, and our speaking talents is very limited at present, still we will do what we can. We have had no more additions since my last letter to you, but brethren have come and gone, and have been cheered and comforted by meeting with us, and we have been benefited by their presence at the Lord's table.

Should any of the brethren be visiting Coolgardie, we will be glad of their presence, and we will do them all the good we can.

Our meeting place can be found by calling on Bro. Clark and Payne, next the Theatre Royal, or on Bro Royle at Philip and Royle, builders, Sylvester-st. I am desirous by the church to ask you to insert an advertisement in the STANDARD that the church meets at eleven o'clock every Lord's day morning, and how that place is to be found. Although we are few, we have done what we could in the past, but hope for brighter things in the future.

What is wanted here is a good speaking brother that could devote a little time to the work, and some money, so that we could get an allotment of land and build a good-sized meeting house on it. With some good evangelist for three months at least—say if Bro. Maston could be here for that time—we all think that a grand work would be achieved and much golden grain gathered into the Master's garner. We are only a small people here, but we have big hearts, and bigger aspirations for the future. All that is needed is a good man and the means to uphold him in the work. Still, the want of that is not going to deter us from toiling on and do what we can. Do not construe this into a begging letter; it is only a suggestion of the brethren here. If such could be done a large church would very soon be established for a certainty—and we wait in hope.

Jan. 13.

F. P.

OUR BUDGET.

Bro R. G. Cameron leaves for South Australia on Tuesday next.

Whoever fancies that he has advanced so far in Christianity that he needs nothing more, may perhaps in God's school hardly sit upon the lowest form.

The following lines are by the late Professor Blackie and express the ideas of many thoughtful men in the present day—

Low:

I cannot say—but you would vastly please us

If with some pointed Scripture you could show

To which of these belonged the Saviour Jesus

I think to all or none; not curious credence

Or ordered forms of churchly rule He taught,

But soul of love that blossomed into deeds

With human good and human blessing fraught

On me nor Priest, nor Presbyter, nor Pope

His shop or Dean may stamp a party name

But Jesus, with His largely human scope.

The service of my human life may claim

Let puffed-up Priests do battle about creeds.

The Church is mine that does most Christ-like deeds.

Two confessions at South Melbourne on Jan. 19th, Bro Hamill preaching.

Bro. P. A. Dickson has accepted an engagement with the church at Sydney.

There were two immersions at Merveth, N.S.W., on Lord's day evening, 12th inst.

Bro T. J. Bull has now removed his family to Auckland, N.Z., and settled down for a time.

We hear that Bro. Walden will not reach his new field of labour at Newtown, N.S.W., until June next.

He must have no friends that will have a friend with no faults, hence Christians stand in need of forgiveness from each other.

Miss Thompson's letter shows that Bro McLellan was at Singapore about Christmas and would visit India before Australia.

The churches at Colac and Ballendella will probably be added to the list of a sociated churches next Victorian Conference.

A B. Maston writes that he reached Auckland safely after a quick and pleasant voyage from Sydney. By this time he is expected to be in Nelson.

Owing to Bro Halliday leaving for England, Bro A. M. Ward, Douglas St., Dulwich Hill, N.S.W., will succeed him as secretary of the church at Petersham.

Bro A. M. Ludbrook has been spending a few days in Adelaide on his homeward journey. He reports having a good time in visiting friends, public institutions, etc.

Bro R. Dyke is secretary of the church at Coolgardie, W.A. This church has a standing advt. in our advertising columns, in which they notify a hearty welcome to all visitors.

As a result of a short mission carried on by Brethren Clapham and Turner in Nelson, N.Z., sixty additions are reported. The brethren in Nelson are much encouraged and very grateful for the help they have received.

The Perth brethren have transformed their Sunday evening meeting into a "Bible-Reading and Expository Meeting." The change has met with success, as the hall in which they are meeting is badly situated for preaching services.

Bro W. Wilson, owing to his expecting to be in W.A. at date of next Victorian Conference, has resigned his position as secretary. Bro F. G. Dunn, in response to a request from the Committee, has agreed to take his place.

The next preacher's meeting will be held at Lygon-st. on Monday, February 3rd. A cordial invitation to attend is given to all preachers. Outlines of sermons will be given by Brethren Cameron and McLellan. An interesting and profitable time is expected.

During Bro Selby's absence in New Zealand the Lygon street platform will be occupied by various brethren. G. B. Moysey and D. A. Ewers preached the last two Lord's day evenings. Bro W. Wilson will preach next Sunday evening.

Good meetings are reported from Fremantle. Bro A. E. Illingworth has been preaching for the last seven weeks and has been requested to continue for three months longer. Four confessions taken, and indications of more results in the near future.

A recent telegram in the *Jezeu*, from N.S.W., informs us that the Primitive Methodist Conference at Newcastle resolved by 54 votes to 4 to accept the recommendation of the federal council to adopt a scheme for the union of Methodist bodies.

The Sixth Annual Meeting of the Armadale Rescue Home was held in the Lygon-street chapel on the 21st inst. Bro W. C. Craigie occupied the chair. Addresses were delivered by Messrs A. R. Edgar, F. M. Ludbrook, and "Sister Hannah." The collection amounted to £5 14s 7½d.

The North Carlton church held its anniversary last Sunday. J. Baker addressed the church in the morning, F. M. Ludbrook the school in the afternoon, and F. G. Dunn preached in the evening. A tea and public meeting was held on the following Tuesday. All the meetings passed off successfully.

The Prahran College for boys and girls (at "Ewa Leigh," Malvern and Williams Roads, Prahran) reopens on Tuesday, 31st February. The Head Master, Mr J. Edgar Laing, will be at home on Monday, 3rd February, to receive and enroll new pupils. The college is five minutes' walk from the Haskburn Station. Prospectus at Muller's.

The A.C. STANDARD Newspaper Company held a quarterly meeting on the 22nd inst. The following committee was re-elected for the next six months:—C. Edwards (chairman), F. G. Dunn, A. B. Maston, J. E. Lang, W. C. Craigie, W. C. Thurgood and R. Lyall. W. J. Phillips and J. Barnacle were re-elected as auditors, with thanks for past services.

The cablegrams from Europe in regard to the war scare may be summed up briefly as "rumours of war—but no war." The Transvaal, American and German affairs will be settled quietly enough, as soon as the newspaper people can get hold of some other sensational item. The real difficulty is the Turkish question. It is scarcely possible that this can be settled without war. It is only a matter of time when the "great powers" will be fighting over the dead body of the Turk in Europe, and what the outcome of that will be no man can tell.

The church at Coolgardie has furnished us with a copy of their balance sheet for the year, and though the total amount of their contributions amounts to only about £43 for the year, they have given away £10 of that for benevolent purposes. The church of course is a very small one, but evidently it has the spirit of Christ. May it go on and prosper.

The good work done by Brethren Clapham and Turner in Nelson, N.Z., affords a striking example of what may be done by strong churches helping those that are weak. In most cases these churches in a position to sustain an evangelist do not care to part with his services, even for a short time. It would be a good thing if such churches would make it a rule to give the services of their preachers to some weaker churches for a month or two in each year.

Two young ladies—Miss A. Nichol and Miss E. P. Kingmill left Melbourne last week to take up work at Ku Cheng in the place of those who were massacred on the 1st of August last. Both come from Tasmania, and Miss Nichol returns to the mission-field after twelve months' furlough. Miss Kingmill is going out for the first time, and after the Lamb at Foskrow she will labour at her own charges, while the other young lady will be supported by the Tasmanian branch of the Young Women's Christian Association.

The fear expressed in our last issue, that the ad boating fatality at Kaipara Harbour, N.Z., was connected with some of our brethren, has been only too truly confirmed. We enclose a letter from Bro Bull giving the sorrowful details. It is undoubtedly the most grievous fatality in our history as churches. No less than ten souls were drowned just after enjoying a day's pleasure and on the point of starting homeward. Our hearts are full of sorrow and sympathy for the bereaved churches and families, and we join with the church at Auckland in its expressions of condolence.

Bro Sydney Black writes that he has sent us a report of the Fullam Cross Mission. Up to the time of going to press it had not come to hand. He further writes:—"Will you kindly notify in the STANDARD that reports can be obtained from the following, who will also be most pleased to receive and forward any donations and subscriptions:—Victoria and Tasmania, F. M. Ludbrook, 127 Collins-st., Melbourne, South and West Australia, Mrs. Henderson, North Terrace, Adelaide, N.S. Wales and Queensland, Mr. Hunter, Market-Street, Sydney, New Zealand (both Islands), Mr. J. Hugh Wright, Gairloch-st., Dunedin."

Selfishness vanishes before universal love, the intense yearnings of a spiritual brotherhood are developed and perfected.

LOVED ONES GONE BEFORE.

CHEESMAN.—Sister Alice Cheesman, eldest daughter of Bro. and Sis. J. Cheesman, was very suddenly called home on the 27th December. Our sister was baptised on 5th October, 1850, being a member with us a little over five years. During that time she has been a consistent follower of the Lord, for she was one who we may lovingly call a peacemaker. She had a good report from those without and within, which was manifested by the sympathy shown to the bereaved parents, and the many who attended the funeral. Our sister had not reached her 50th birthday, thus she was cast off in the very bud of womanhood. Oh, the uncertainty of life! On the night she was called home she was apparently in the best of health, her friends remarking how joyful and bright she was in making preparation for the coming holidays. After playing at the piano, and wishing her parents good-night, she retired to rest. But, alas! it was the last good night, for the Master was waiting for her. Her parents were awakened by an unusual sound in her room. The doctor was summoned speedily, the parents doing all in their power for her recovery, and he arrived just three minutes before she passed away. On asking her if she had any pain, she replied no; and her spirit immediately took its flight to be with her Lord, whom she loved to meet on the first day of the week in the breaking of bread. She was a member of the Young Women's Bible Class at Grote street, where she regularly attended. Our prayer is for those who are left to mourn their loss, that they may find in the sweetness of the Father's love all they need in this their hour of trial.

One more lamb at home in safety,

In the loving shepherd's fold:
Ne'er to wander weak and weary.

O'er the mountains bleak and cold.

One more gem, as rare as any,

Taken from our earthly mines;

In his coronet of glory,

Evermore in radiance shines

One more rosebud, fair and perfect,

Gathered ere it blossomed here.

For the Saviour bled our flow'ret

Fit to grace the heavenly sphere.

So we wait till we are summoned,

To appear before the throne;

Where united with our loved ones,

We shall know as we are known.

—T. G. STOKES.

CONNING.—As intimated in a recent number of this paper, our esteemed Sister Elizabeth Conning (nee Ferguson), wife of Bro. R. Conning of Ascot Vale, has passed on to her reward, and it becomes our melancholy privilege to pen a short notice of her excellent life. She was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, June 27th, '48, arrived with her

parents in Victoria about the year '68, died December 20th, '95, and was consequently at the age of 47 when she was called away. She with her brother Thomas were some of the fruits of Bro. Surber's faithful labors, and she joined the Church at Lygon-street some 25 years ago. After a few years, the church in Hotham being established, she took and retained membership there for many years, till having removed to Ascot Vale, she cast in her lot with the church in that place. Sister Conning was a woman of lofty, fearless and independent character; her piety was deep and intelligent, and from the hour of her baptism—25 years ago—till laid aside by bodily infirmity, her zeal never flagged. Without refusing any method because it was new, she worked on the old lines with remarkable success. The Bible Class and Sunday School were her especial spheres of labor, and the prayer and Lord's day morning meetings were her peculiar sources of enjoyment. Practical in her turn of mind, attending all business meetings, and influencing considerably the politics of her church, she was conservative enough to believe that Paul actually required sisters "to keep silence" in the churches. Intelligent enough to correct many a crude sermon she heard, she was a preacher's friend, and all sympathetic presence was seen at all gospel meetings. Though blessed with no children according to the flesh, she was truly "a mother in Israel," and among the large and reverent throng around her grave there were many, ranging from children up to heads of families, who owed largely the shaping of their spiritual destinies to her moulding hand. Measured by the light of years our sister died young, but measured by life's activities both in and out of the church, she passed away "full of days." Thus Elizabeth has journeyed on to join the "loved ones gone before," to join her parents who left us full of years, and gifted John who faded in his manhood's dawn, and gentle, gracious Annie, whom all the ties of youthful motherhood could not bind to earth. Sorting, but with sorrows' shadows about through with hope's radiance, we tender our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved husband and sisters and brothers, trusting that the mantle of her virtues may rest upon us all, and her faith and hope sustain us in the hour of death.

CORNWALL.—On January 8th Bro. John Cornwall fell asleep in Jesus at the age of 59. For the past nine months our brother was suffering from an internal complaint, and although operations were performed upon him, they proved of no avail. During the whole of his illness Bro. Cornwall was perfectly resigned, and in the midst of all his sufferings maintained a firm faith in Jesus as his Saviour. For about 16 years he has been a member of the Church of Christ,

and was a Christian never ashamed to let his light shine before men. Many of his fellow-workmen from the Government workshops at Islington followed his remains to the West Terrace Cemetery, thus showing how he was respected by them. We, as a church, feel the poorer for our brother having gone from us, and Sister Cornwall has lost a loving and faithful husband, while the six children our brother has left behind have to mourn the loss of a kind and Christian father. May God sustain the bereaved in this their time of trial, and bless this event of Providence to the good of all concerned. A. C. RANKINE.

Norwood, S.A.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

RESUME HOME.

Collection at Annual Meeting, £5 15s 7d. Church, Warracknabeal, per Bro. Cust, £2. Bro. O'Brien, £1 15s; Mrs. Morris, Newcastle, 7/6. Proceeds of lectures by Mr. Ludbrook, £2; M. Bros., per Mr. McLeellan, £1.

Armadale, Vic.

JOS. PITMAN.

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