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Marion F. Harmon

Messenger Publishing Company

Oscar P. Spiegel

Messenger Publishing Company

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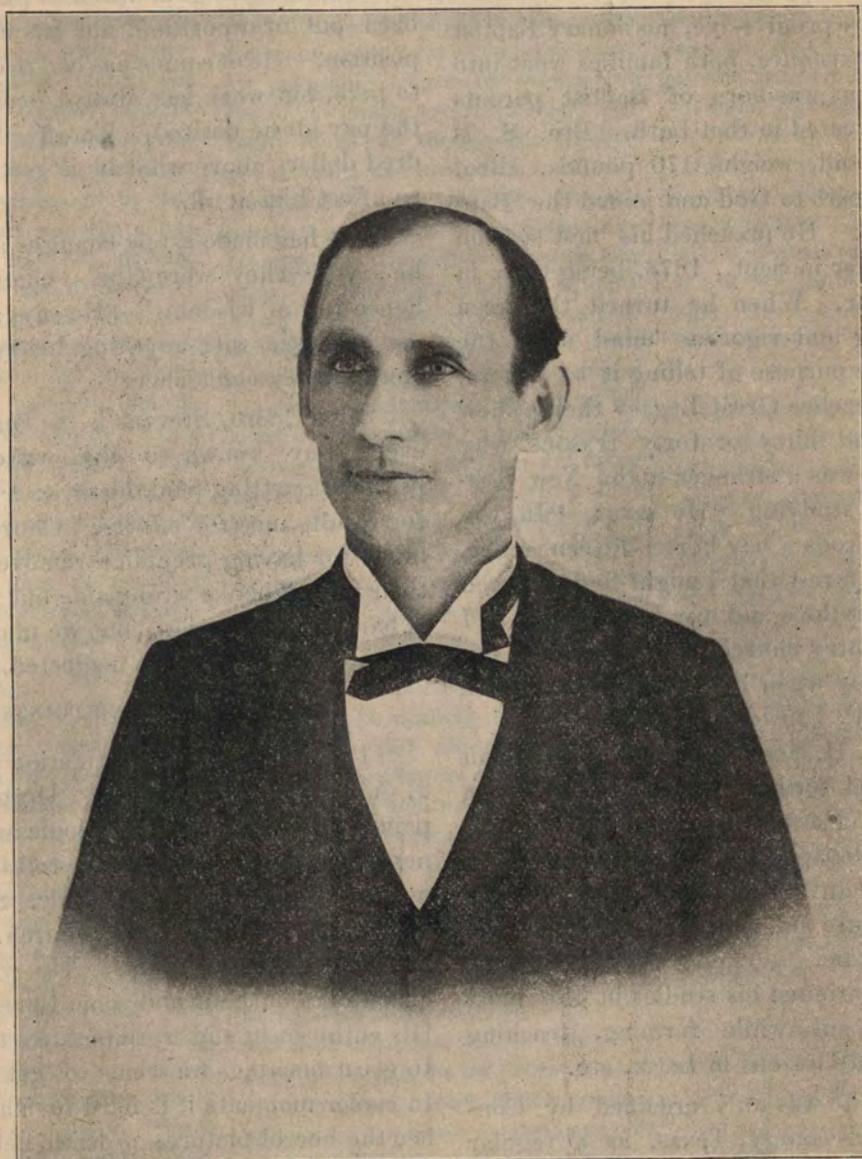
GOSPEL MESSENGER

Devoted to the Cause of Christ in all the South and throughout the World.

Volume VIII.

Nashville, Tennessee, January 14, 1897.

Number 2.



John A. Stevens

STATE EVANGELIST OF MISSISSIPPI.

Biography Department.

John A. Stevens,

State Evangelist, of Mississippi.

The subject of this sketch was born in Titus county, Texas on Dec. 26, 1857. His father was named George W., and his mother's maiden name was Mary Vann, both of whom came from Georgia, their parents coming from South Carolina. Geo. W. and wife moved to Texas in 1850. They belonged to the Primitive Baptists.

When the more progressive, missionary Baptist church came into existence, both families went into it. John A. Stevens was born of Baptist parents and reared and educated in that faith. Bro. S. is six feet, one inch, tall, weighs 170 pounds. Bro. Stevens gave his heart to God and joined the Baptist church in 1875. He preached his first sermon as a Baptist preacher in Sept., 1878, being then in his twenty-first year. When he turned the keen logic of his young and vigorous mind upon the sacred page for the purpose of telling it to others, with the help of Ezzelles Great Legacy then a new book, he soon found thirty or forty reasons why the Baptist church was a stranger to the New Testament. He kept studying. He says: "In the spring of 1880 I rode a bay horse fifteen miles, alone, through the forest that I might find a church of my faith, of my love and my hope. When I came up to the country church in the woods, my heart leaped with joy when I said to myself, 'Here I will get my liberty; I never had it before.'"

When Eld. E. H. Smith gave the invitation our subject stepped forward and united with the Christian church. He did not join the "Loyal Brethren," the "Rebaptists," the "Sounds," the "Progressives," or any other sect. He joined the Christian church, pure and simple, with all that it was, is, or hopes to be.

Mr. Stevens continued his studies in the most vigorous manner, meanwhile farming, teaching school, taking private lessons in Latin, etc.

In Sept., 1883 he was duly ordained by Concord church in Morris county, Texas, as a regular minister in the Christian church. From that day Mr. Stevens has never turned his hand to a thing but the "pulpit and the pen."

In 1886 he was married to Miss Jennie Kelley of Texarkana, Ark., who has made him a faithful wife. The fruit of that marriage is but one child, Roy W., now ten years old. Also in 1886 Brother Stevens became State Evangelist of Arkansas. He took this work when no one else seemed to want it, and during the one year he added three hundred and

fifty souls to the saved. In 1888 his health failed. He then located with the church at Russellville, Arkansas where he stayed eighteen months, doubled the membership, and paid an \$1,800 debt on the church. His health got worse and he went to San Antonio for one year. While there his health was restored and one hundred and forty-five members were added to the little band of thirty, during the year. This carries him up to the end of 1890 when he became State Evangelist of Mississippi on the 1st of Jan. 1891. This position he has held ever since with the exception of a little less than two years spent with the Walnut street Christian church in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Aside from this Mr. Stevens has held some independent meetings at different places, but has never been out of a position, nor has he ever sought a position. He of course has had to decide what course to take, but work has always been abundant, and the pay all he desired. To offer him several hundred dollars above what he is getting does not seem to affect him at all.

He has made a few changes as seen above, but he says "They were God's changes, not mine—hence full of wisdom." He says: "I never risk my judgment with anything heavy without taking God into my confidence."

Again, Bro. Stevens is a financial success in every way known to the writer. Speaking of preachers getting paid, he says: "Our churches pay for results, not for efforts. Churches will not pay much for having prejudice removed but will turn their pocket books wrong side out for additions. It is hard to contemplate, but we must learn to have additions or pay will be neglected."

HIS STRONG POINTS.

1. Much general information well remembered.
2. A large vocabulary.
3. Oratorical and word painting power.
4. Keen logic and kind-heartedness.
5. An excellent voice well trained.
5. Earnestness without measure. Mr. Stevens has had over 3,000 additions to the church. He believes in the old style exhortations. He will preach three quarters of an hour and some times over an hour. His enthusiasm and word pictures are often terrible. In great meetings he seems to get beside himself. In cooler moments it is hard to make him remember the horrid pictures of death, hell, and meanness, that he only one hour ago has drawn. After all this expenditure of nervous force, he will have his people sing, and he will exhort at internals, he will beg and plead with men for a half hour to forsake their sins and come to Christ. When asked why he does so, and so, he replies, "all I know is that I am in earnest about it."

The GOSPEL MESSENGER remains at the low price of \$1.00 a year. Cash in advance.

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Movements of the World.

WONDERFUL THINGS happen these days. Most astonishing news comes from Memphis, this state, that the retail liquor dealers have met and have decided to obey the law and close on Sunday. The real truth is the liquor men know that there is a sentiment crystalizing in this country against their business. They know better than anyone else that if they do not stem the tide of public sentiment by appearing moral and sanctimonious themselves, their craft of getting money through the vices of the people will soon be outlawed. But it is one thing for an association to resolve, and another to have the man who left all conscience behind when he went into the business obey it. "Can a leopard change his spots?" Can the liquor business ever deceive the most simple-minded and make them believe there is a single redeeming feature in it? So long as one poor woman's or one orphan's wail is heard, this traffic will be an outcast with the mark of Cain on it.

A FRENCH PAPER at Quebec, Canada, called *L'Electeur*, recently opened up its columns for a free discussion of the question as to how far the church can control its members. A Mr. Davis contributed an article in which he took the ground that the church should control in matters purely in the province of conscience, but that the state must be supreme in matters purely political. His contention was that the church had no right to dictate how electors should vote on the school question. This at once called forth the thunders of the bishops. They have forbidden every Catholic to have anything to do with the paper. This, of course, caused the paper to suspend, and the publishers have sued the bishops for damage. No doubt a Canadian court will not dare to make a verdict against these ecclesiastical potentates, but it will serve to bring the question to a climax, and God will yet raise up another Martin Luther, who will free the remnant that the former Luther did not reach. The plan of the Catholics in America is to favor

Republican government, and then gradually gain control of the conscience of the voters, elect their measures, and take control of everything. We do not fear its execution, however.

AS A DIRECT result from our successful issue with Great Britain on the Venezuela controversy, our merchants are preparing to gain for themselves the entire South American trade. It really looks as though the English government had made some very serious blunders on this line. But the whole thing simply shows to what extremes our competitive system has gone. It is not our purpose to condemn this system, for we know of nothing better to take its place. But it will be beneficial to us to see where we stand. Individuals are in an almost death struggle with each other; associations and combines are doing likewise. In short, the world is a great checkerboard; England, France, Germany, Russia, Japan, and America are the principal players. Every move they make is intended to gain control of commerce.

IT IS GENERALLY expected that there will be nothing done on any of the great and absorbing political questions now before the people until the McKinley administration gets control of the government. Though this will be only a little over six weeks, it will be quite an uneasy waiting for the friends of Cuba and those who favor immediate action with regard to the Armenian Massacres. But it is perhaps no more than just that the new administration be given the privilege of shaping its own foreign policy. The man whom McKinley may appoint to the State Department will no doubt find his position an exceedingly trying one. It is now quite generally supposed that it will be either Senator Sherman, of Ohio, or Senator Allison, of Iowa.

CHRIST TOLD his disciples to wait until they should receive power from on high. This implies that they were not sufficiently prepared for the task before. It is not for us to say exactly how many changes were wrought in the disciples by the indwelling of

the Spirit, but none were more manifest than that they were changed from negative to positive characters. The Peter that believed in Christ, but sought to do it with caution, and even with compromise, if need be, is now the positive and steadfast Peter, who stands before the highest court in his land, and says with a remarkable brevity and firmness that he is working in the name of Jesus. What could they do with such a man? Letting him go confirms him in his work; threatening him is a concession of his power. Imprisonment and punishment are but a demonstration of his power. We in our day would say surrender to him. But a proud Sadducee or Pharisee, never!

THE CREEDS in our day are not dead, but, like some old man whose body is diseased, they are sensitive to every cold wind that blows. The truth might, perhaps, be better expressed by saying that the sectarian world is very apprehensive of danger, and has spies posted at every turn of the road to watch for some stray idea that might be labeled as heresy. The latest heresy that has been thus caught and labeled was found running astray in Ian McClaren's famous book, "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," in which he expresses his belief that if a man can be kind to a dog he has some inherent good in him. Strange as it may seem, this is interpreted to be directly opposed to the doctrine of original sin.

ONE GIVES RELIEF.	R·I·P·A·N·S
	—
	The modern standard Family Medicine: Cures the common every-day ills of humanity.
	

Correspondence = =

Things Hard to be Understood.

B. F. MANIRE.

(Continued.)

11. *The Foreknowledge of God* is another one of the things hard to be understood, over which men puzzle their own minds, and by which they so often try to perplex and annoy others. Not being able to fathom its profound depths, to scale its sublime heights, or to measure its limitless extent, many, we fear, appeal to it only to *wrest* it to their own destruction, and *pervert* it to the confusion and injury of others.

Now what the Bible says concerning the foreknowledge of God is just as intelligible as what it says concerning the power or wisdom or mercy of God. The trouble is this, however, as in so many other cases, is that men are not content with the simple facts and plain statements found in the Scriptures, nor with the practical information that may be gained from the Bible, but attempt to become wise beyond what is written, and far beyond their own very limited capacity.

The finite mind is utterly incapable of fully comprehending the Infinite Mind; hence the foreknowledge of God will ever remain a wonder and a mystery to men as long as they are in this state of being with all its limitations and imperfections. The future and eternal state only can unfold all the mysteries of the Divine wisdom, and portray in all their splendor the perfections of the Divine character. The foreknowledge of God is doubtless a theme of wonder to the angels in heaven, and may be such to the redeemed throughout the cycles of eternity. Whenever man can put himself in the place of God, and look down through all time and all eternity, as God does, then he may fully comprehend the foreknowledge of God, but not till then.

Men in their puny efforts to handle this great theme confound the foreknowledge of God with his purposes, or what they are pleased to call his decrees; and then they conclude that this foreknowledge, which in their judgment necessarily involves an irreversible decree, has, unchangeably fixed the character and destiny of every human being. They thus divest man of all responsibility, make him a mere machine which moves only as it is propelled by some outside and irresistible power, and place him under an inexorable fate both for time and eternity. The Scriptures, however, do not make any such statements concerning the foreknowledge of God in its bearing on human responsibility; nor do all the facts therein presented concerning God and man warrant any such conclusion.

12. The difficulty is frequently presented in this way,—“If God knows that I am to be saved,

then I can not possibly be lost; and if God knows that I am to be lost, then I can not possibly be saved.” The very manner in which this difficulty is often presented shows that it is regarded as absolutely unanswerable; yet no man ever imposed on himself, or tried to impose on others, by a flimsier sophism. It tacitly and insidiously takes for granted the very thing to be proved, and that is, that God by a simple act of foreknowledge has unalterably fixed the destiny of all men *without any reference whatever to their character and conduct in this life*. This utterly false assumption not only lies at the basis, but is the very core, of all the false reasoning that is so prevalent on this subject. Whenever it is admitted, as the Scriptures abundantly teach, that the foreknowledge of God takes in the character and conduct of men as affecting their destiny, the very bottom is knocked out of this difficulty.

The teaching of the Scripture being true, God does not, never did, and never will fore know the destiny of any man separate and apart from the character and conduct of that man. Therefore the destiny of mortals does not and never did hinge merely on the foreknowledge of God concerning that destiny. Man is a responsible being, made in the image of God, largely endowed with will-power, and therefore capable of choosing; and his destiny hinges to a great extent on the decision he makes in accepting or rejecting the salvation offered to him so freely in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, all of which the Scriptures most clearly and abundantly teach. And we confidently affirm that the foreknowledge of God, apart from the means of salvation, has no practical bearing whatever on the decision any man may make; and therefore does not form his character, shape his conduct, or determine his destiny.

13. It is a significant fact that men rarely, if ever, reason in this way with reference to the affairs of this life; yet the foreknowledge of God takes in all these affairs as well as those of the life to come, and has just as much to do in determining them. And should any man so reason in any given case, he would be regarded as partially, if not wholly demented, and would be treated accordingly.

Does the sick man say? “If the Lord knows I am to get well, I can not possibly die; and if he knows I am to die, I can not possibly get well: all the diseases on the one hand can not kill me, and all the medicine on the other hand can not cure me.” And reasoning thus, does he refuse all medical aid and risk the consequences? No, indeed! He sends for the physician, and takes the remedy prescribed, decree or no decree, without ever thinking that the foreknowledge of God has any thing to do either with his own conduct or the result.

Suppose the farmer should reason in the same way, and in consequence thereof refuse to plant or cultivate; would the foreknowledge of God bring

about the same result as if he had planted and cultivated? The veriest simpleton knows that it would not; yet in all such cases God foreknows what will be the result of every man's labor. He also foreknows what will be the result in any case, if a man does not labor; and these two are very different results in the foreknowledge of God as well as in actual life.

The commander of an army, however numerous, well disciplined, well supplied, and well disciplined his forces might be, who would reason in this way, would insure the defeat of his army, the disgrace of himself, and the destruction of his country; yet the Lord knows the issue of every battle before the conflict is joined.

Many other illustrations might be given to show the utter fallacy and folly of this kind of reasoning, but these are deemed amply sufficient. In all the world there is only one character who reasons in this way in reference to the ordinary affairs of life, and whose conduct is consistent with his reasoning. That character is the do-nothing, good-for-nothing sluggard; and Solomon tells him to go to the *ant* and learn wisdom.

14. It may be said in answer to all this, however, that in such cases as these which have been adduced as illustrations, the results are under the control of fixed natural laws, and can be produced only by the use of the means which God has established in the economy of Nature. *Exactly so.* This covers the entire ground in both cases. All spiritual blessings are under the control of equally fixed and unchangeable spiritual laws, and can be enjoyed only through the use of the spiritual means which God in his love and mercy has foreordained in the spiritual world for this very purpose, all of which in both cases is in exact accordance with the foreknowledge of God. The principle is precisely the same, only the means used are different in adaptation to the different ends to be attained.

In the one case, the means used are physical, and therefore adapted to the attainment of physical ends; in the other, the means used are spiritual, and therefore adapted to the attainment of spiritual ends. In both cases, the foreknowledge of God takes in the means to be used as an indispensable factor in the attainment of the end. And as the foreknowledge of God does not destroy, set aside, or overlook human agency and responsibility in the one case, so it does not in the other. As in accordance with the foreknowledge and foreordination of God in the kingdom of Nature, men must plant and cultivate and reap in order to the possession and enjoyment of a bountiful harvest of earthly fruits; so in accordance with the foreknowledge and foreordination of God in the kingdom of Grace, men must believe in and obey the Lord Jesus Christ in order to the enjoyment of peace and pardon here, and continue to love and serve the Lord in order to the enjoyment of endless happiness hereafter.

Commission and Progression.

There seems to be a tendency among some of our churches and some of our preachers to practice the baptist doctrine of "Once in grace, always in grace." And I attribute it to the use, or perhaps abuse, of the commission as recorded by Mark 16: 16. These preachers visit these churches from time to time and teach them little else than the scripture just alluded to. Then they go away and do not visit them through the week to teach them and get into full sympathy with them. They leave them as sheep without a shepherd; thus saying by their action "These have been saved, and are certain of Heaven." The writer prefers to use the commission as given in Matt. 28: 19, 20. Because 1st, it is more comprehensive; covers more ground, is progressive. 2nd. The language in Mk. 16: 16 is claimed to be an interpolation, by a number of bible scholars; prominent among whom is Bro. J. W. McGarvey. 3rd. It does not sound like the language of Jesus, and it does not go far enough. It says "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." While the language in Matthew not only admits of, but is suggestive of progression. (Don't get frightened at that word.) "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This undisputed scripture forbids the error, that men do not require to be taught how to be christians, or how to be Christlike after they have been baptized. The writer is one who believes that if the church of Christ is ministered unto properly, so that the membership will be spiritually edified, and so they will "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," we would not have to ask sinners to come to Christ. They would be only too eager to come and cast their lot among such people, and go with us on our way to God and to Christ. Two young preachers with whom the writer conversed recently along this line of thought, said that they had not done so, but that hereafter their efforts would be more in line with the injunction in the last verse in the book of Matthew.

Perhaps the attractiveness of the commission in Mk. 16: 16 lies in the fact that there is a penalty in it. Some people can not be reached without threatening them, but those people, I fear, are far from the kingdom. Let us not try to scare people into the kingdom by a "He that believeth not shall be damned:" Let us not endeavor to frighten them by appealing to their fear of the devil: but let us preach Christ to them so as to make Him so attractive that they can not resist Him. The commission in Matt. tells the apostles what to do

and does not say what will be the effect on those who hear: it makes no promise and speaks of no penalty to be inflicted. This sounds like Jesus; leading, not driving. While the language in Mark appeals to the sympathies of those who are always on the lookout for rewards, with a weather eye on the penalty: and appears to have been added to Mark's story of Jesus by just such a man; and is loudly preached by a number of preachers of the same spot and stripe.

John in his account of the gospel does not mention the commission; nor does Luke. But in Luke's second story (acts) he shows us the commission in active service.

Paul stayed a year and a half in Corinth, two years each in Ephesus and Rome, teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence no man forbidding him, (at Rome.)

When Aquilla and Priscilla found Apollas at Ephesus, and heard him preach the Messiah, only according to John the Baptist; and no doubt preaching, "The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," (Mk. 1: 4), "They expounded unto him the way of the Lord more perfectly." Apollas was probably going to the length of the commission as per Mk. 16: 16, and Aquilla and his wife went farther, and dealt with him to the full extent of the commission as per Matt. 28: 19, 20.

While Mk. 16: 16 is truth, every word of it; it is unfinished and crude: and if we stop where it stops the product of our preaching will be crude. While our Savior says to us, that if we will go to the extent of the last two verses in Matthew, He will be with us always, even unto the end of the world. If he is with us, then let us do those things in teaching and edifying the churches, that will keep him with us.

MICAH COMBS.

Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 1897.

South Kentucky Field Notes.

J. W. GANT, ELKTON, KY.

I came to this place (Crofton) last Saturday to fill Bro. W. B. Wright's appointment. On account of the inclement weather, the audience was small Lord's day morning, and was completely rained out Lord's day evening.

I always enjoy my visits to Crofton. I preached here several years, organized the congregation, and aided in raising the money to build the house of worship. During my ministry at Crofton it was my privilege to baptize a large per cent of its present membership. This work as is generally known was done under the auspices of the South Kentucky Association.

There are now sixteen congregations in this county (Christian) one-half of which were organized by the South Kentucky Association. All of this work has been done within the last fifteen years.

All we ask is that the tree be judged by the fruit it bears. If it bears good fruit let it stand, if not cut it down. This is our argument in favor of organized mission work. Bro. Wright is quite popular with the Crofton people.

Congregations that give to mission work never give one cent less for work at home. Some people appear to think that if a congregation gives any thing to the missionary cause or the Orphan's Home that it will give just that much less to the support of the home preacher. This is a great mistake. At least it is not in harmony with my experience. The more people do abroad the more they do at home.

Some people as they become more able to contribute, become less willing to do so. Covetousness gives us more money, and more money makes us still more covetous. At least that appears to be true of some people.

Before any one should refuse to contribute to any cause in which is involved the salvation of souls, he should ask this question: "What would be the result if every person in my condition were to refuse to contribute anything?" If you have any hope that the cause will succeed, is not your hope based upon the belief that others possess a more sacrificing spirit than you possess? What do you say now, and how will you answer this question at the judgement bar of God at the last day?

Since I aided Bro. Wright in a meeting at this place about four months ago the Harbinger of death has visited this congregation, and taken with him across "the river" two of our best members viz: Miss Sallie Clark, and Mrs. M. C. Brasher. While I was not surprised to hear of the death of the latter as she was afflicted with an incurable disease, I was greatly surprised to hear of the death of the former as she was cut down in young womanhood. That God may abundantly bless the relatives of these two noble Christian women in their deep sorrow is the earnest prayer of the writer.

A Memory of Athens, Georgia.

While sitting on the porch conversing with the daughter of "mine host" at Athens, Georgia, I noticed a well kept horse grazing on the lawn near by.

I asked the lady concerning the age of the horse and she answered "he is about twenty-five years old." She said, "he is our old family horse and is a great favorite. Papa would not sell him at any price, nor will he allow him to be worked. We all think he should be well cared for because of his long and faithful service."

There are doubtless many instances of similiar care of a worn out family horse, and I only recall the incident because of its impression on my mind. I had only an hour before addressed the convention

in behalf of our aged and helpless preachers and their dependent ones, scores of whom had served the church of Christ twice the number of years that old horse had served his master, but whose care was not so well assured as was his.

I instinctively asked myself can it be that a worn out family horse is entitled to more gracious care than a worthy worn out preacher. It was a merciful provision for the ox that he should not be muzzled so that he might be refreshed as he walked in the furrow. "Doth God take care of oxen only." What of His care for those whom He hath appointed to be ministers of His boundless Grace? What saith the Spirit, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel?" Let those whose hearts are touched by this "memory" send an offering for the better care of our worn out preachers. "The Master cometh and calleth for you." He cometh in the person of the suffering messengers. What answer will you make to his appeal in their behalf?

"In as much as ye have done it unto one of my little ones ye have done it unto me." Send offerings to my address.

A. M. ATKINSON, Cor. Sec'y.
Wabash, Indiana.

The Christian Quarterly.

TO EVERY PREACHER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST:

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G. A. HOFFMAN,
Columbia, Mo.

Report of First Christian Church,

UNION CITY, TENNESSEE.

From Jan. 1st. to Dec. 31, 1896.

These reports from the various departments, elaborated and itemized, were read in the presence of the congregation Sunday morning, Dec. 27. Here they are much condensed, and many interesting features are omitted.

Y. P. S. C. E.

Present Membership	39
Total Amount of Contributions	\$32 66
Amount Given to Missions	23 00

JUNIOR S. C. E.

Present Membership	46
Total Amount of Contributions	\$19 10
Amount Given to Missions	15 00

C. W. B. M.

Present Membership	24
Total amount of Contributions	\$29 36
Amount Given to Missions	15 45

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Present Membership	155
Total Amount of Contributions	\$156 39
Amount Given to Missions	16 75

LADIES AID SOCIETY.

Present Membership	40
Total Amount of Collections	\$334 35
Amount Given to Missions	110 00

CHURCH TREASURER.

Total Amount of Contributions	\$1 953 10
Amount Given to Missions	42 50
Grand Total of Contributions	\$2 540 41
" " Given to Missions	222 70

REPORT OF PASTOR.

Sermons Preached	154
Addresses	6
Funeral Services.	13
Marriages	9
Additions at Union City	97
" Elsewhere	57
Loss by Death and Letter	8
Net Gain in Membership	89
Present Membership	373

There are besides this many indications of growth and progress that cannot be expressed in figures. Much has been given to charity not indicated here. Notice that every department is in fellowship with missions. Each department is out of debt, with a small amount in the treasury. The church has met every cent of its current expenses, and has something left. To the Christ be all the glory.

W. H. SHEFFER.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

M. F. HARMON, }
O. P. SPIEGEL, } EDITORS.

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NASHVILLE, TENN., JAN. 14, 1897.

INVESTIGATION.

There is no way of becoming acquainted with our duty to God or man, except by investigating the authorities on the subject. A people who cease to be investigative, cease to grow and fail to ever become great. One lasting tribute recorded in God's word to the memory of the Bereans was that they studied or investigated daily, to see whether the things taught them were so. There are two classes of people in regard to investigation: One who *accept* without investigation and the other who *reject* without investigation. One class is no better than the other. The first has our sublimest pity, the latter our supremest contempt. A man's "orthodoxy," "soundness," or "loyalty," have never been with us a sufficient guarantee to prevent our looking into the truthfulness and accuracy of the things taught. The Christian church or church of Christ, (which by the way were universally used as synonymous terms among us till very recent years, a distinction only being drawn by some even now,) has always stood for the openest and freest investigation of all subjects, and never to accede to any matter of doctrine or method of work that was not fully substantiated by the only court of appeal, the word of God. For this reason we never have, indeed never could, if any desired it, ever become an ecclesiasticism. We have all room in heaven and on earth in which to grow. No man uninspired can formulate our belief or set bounds to our liberty in Christ Jesus. We stand individually as *branches* in the *true vine* which is Jesus the Christ. Each one of us must give an account of himself to God. As a religious body we have always courted investigation of our faith and worship at the hands of our religious neighbors. Again: we have always been open to the reception of the truth, all truth, from whatever source it might come. One criticism however, I would put in right here, some are too afraid of doing anything that is done by any

other body of people, for no other reason than it may have a tendency to be getting back to Rome. I am not afraid of my brethren ever falling in love with the "Mistress of harlots." The tendency of the world is in the other direction. I am not ashamed neither intimidated by accepting any truth or any thing that is proper and right, for no other reason than for sooth, some body else may do that also. No one man, no body of men, in fact all men put together do not stand for or represent all the truth. Truth is eternal; truth is God's universal gift to man. It can only be had at the expense of diligent study and honest investigation.

Watch the Preachers.

This means YOU.

TEXT: "And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch." Matt. 15: 14.

1. Paul said: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10: 17. Did you ever hear preachers say that faith comes by prayer?

2. James said: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Who is right?

3. Peter confessed: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matt. 16: 16. Do the preachers now have people to confess a living faith in a personal Savior, or a cold form of church doctrines?

4. Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16: 16; Peter said: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2: 38; and Ananias said: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22: 16. Are these passages favorite proof texts with the preachers you usually hear? If not, why? Jesus and his apostles taught sinners to believe the gospel, confess faith in a living Savior, repent of their sins, and obey the Lord in baptism, all in order to attain unto the remission of their sins.

5. "And they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Acts 8: 38. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6: 4. Do all preachers go with their candidates for baptism down into the water, bury them in baptism, and come up out of the water? If

not, are they following the examples of inspired men?

6. Paul said: "There is one baptism." Eph. 4: 5. How many baptisms do you hear preachers talk about and see them practice in this age? Should we have more than the apostles had?

7. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women." Acts 8: 12. Who were baptized? *Both* men and women who *believed*. Where do you suppose the *unbelieving infants* were? Strange we are not told that men women and *infants* were baptized!

8. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Acts 11: 26. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Acts 26: 28. Why can we not all be Christians only? But do not some preachers wear additional and unscriptural human names, and persuade people to do likewise? Are they following Paul's example?

9. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." Acts 20: 7. Do all churches now come together to break bread; or do some come to hear a sermon, others to hear a lecture, others to attend a concert? *The object* anciently was "to break bread."

10. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. 11: 28. Are you taught to let every one pass a self-examination preparatory to the communion with the Lord? Has any one the right to invite to, or exclude from the table of the Lord? If so, where did he get this right?

11. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. 5: 19. Did you ever hear sinners exhorted to pray God to become reconciled to *them*. "Be *ye* reconciled to God is Bible language." 2 Cor. 5: 20.

12. Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." John 15: 5. Did you ever hear any one preach that "ye" has reference to modern denominations? The Lord said that each of his *disciples* was a branch, not each denomination.

13. In our dear Savior's prayer, he said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17: 20, 21. Have you not heard preachers thank God for the divisions among his people? But Jesus prayed for Christian union. The devil di-

vides, the Christ unites. The closer the union among God's people, the easier the conquest over Satan's kingdom.

Please study the foregoing suggestions in the fraternal spirit prompting them, and "Be not deceived."

The following is self explanatory:

"Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Barrall, requests your presence at the marriage of their daughter, Olla, to Rev. W. H. Alford, Wednesday morning, January 20th, 1897. Bride's residence at 11 o'clock."

Bro. Alford is one of our Mississippi boys, and we had hoped to see him located in Mississippi. Possibly he will be working there before many months. Possibly some may not be able to harmonize this statement with the fact that the Sr. editor of this paper left Mississippi. Those however, who have read closely what we have said along this line heretofore will understand. As an editor and publisher of a great and good paper, we can serve Mississippi better from Nashville than from Jackson, Miss. Did I expect to make pastoral work my life work, I would that very minute pack my little effects together and take the fastest train to Mississippi I could get. I say this in all good faith, yet with a full appreciation of, and a great love for my brethren of the other states that the GOSPEL MESSENGER is trying to represent.

Who wants a better paper than is found in this issue? Read our church reports and see how encouraging! Read our correspondence and see how rich and meaty. Our first page; good as the *Standard's* or *Evangelist's* or even the *Firm Foundation's*. Our editorials? Modesty forbids, but we think mighty loud. Our biography and photography department contains a sketch of one of the livest evangelists of the South, or of any country. Well if this copy don't please you, nothing short of a *Heavenly MESSENGER* would.

Read "A memory of Athens, Ga." in this issue by Bro. A. M. Atkinson, and take heed. It is strange, yet it is true that whatever a man has nearest his heart, he can always find in the common affairs of life lessons to illustrate his pet theme. Bro. Atkinson is so full of this mission of love and mercy in which he is engaged, that he can turn most any incident to account for the mortal good of the aged preacher. The Lord is blessing him in this noble work.

We have received from Sister J. W. Crenshaw, of Cadiz, Ky., a copy of her beautiful little poem, "Christmas times in Ole Kentuck." It shows

that Sister Crenshaw is a poet of no mean ability. Ordinarily we have but little taste for poetry, but this one catches us, as it brings into play a good deal of the old time negro character, which we always enjoyed studying.

We were late in mailing the MESSENGER to South, Kentucky subscribers last week, on account of a delay in getting the mailing list of the Evangelist.

Difficulties incident to a change of paper, coupled together with other office changes, caused us to be two days' late last week. We will have a fine number next week.

Bro. T. B. Larimore is holding a good meeting in this city at the Line St. Christian church. Bro. L. is doing some fine preaching, as he always does. So far there have been 5 additions.

T. A. Reynolds, of Frankford, Ind. has taken charge of the Woodland St. Christian church, this city. He is a fine preacher, a splendid mixer, and we are expecting a fine year's work. His audiences Sunday were very fine both morning and evening.

There was a delightful little entertainment at Southern Christian College, this city on last Friday night, given by Sister Lillian Armstrong's class in music. We are glad to note that this college is steadily growing, and we confidently hope to see the day not far distant when it will take rank with our foremost colleges.

We give this week a splendid cut of Bro. John A. Stevens, State Evangelist of Mississippi. Some of the cuts that will appear from time to time, will be furnished us by the party as in this instance, which will cause them not to appear uniform in size or style.

We club the GOSPEL MESSENGER and the *New Christian Quarterly*, one year for \$2.25. Every preacher in the church should have the *Quarterly*, and this is a fine opportunity for you to get the MESSENGER for 25 cents a year, or the *Quarterly* for \$1.25, money with the order. Address this office.

Married, at the residence of the bride's mother, near Sand Hill, Ala., on the afternoon of December 23rd, Bro. J. H. Thompson to Sister Lou Ella Mullins, the writer officiating. May peace and prosperity be theirs in this life, and bliss unalloyed in the life to come.

J. A. BRANCH.

Love.

Lorenzo Love was born Dec. 1, 1811; was married to Miss Sarah Roberts, Jan. 29, 1846; was "born again" in 1847, the saintly Tolbert Fanning officiating; died Jan. 4, 1897, at the home of his daughter, Sister Wyatt, in Chattanooga; was buried at his old home in Marion, Ala., Jan. 5, '97.

In 1846 Sister Love became obedient to the faith, and in 1847 Brother Love took his stand with her upon the Bible alone, he having previously been a Methodist. This couple had a long, useful, and happy life together. Jan. 29, 1896, their "golden wedding" was celebrated, and upon that day their only remaining single daughter, Sister Annie, was married to Brother W. T. Wells, our preacher in Jeffersonville, Ind.

Our dear Sister Love, who is known throughout the brotherhood of our State and the South for her liberality and consecration to the Lord's work, has the deepest sympathy of her brethren and sisters everywhere in the loss of her life-time companion.

All who knew Brother Love spoke well of him. He had an unbounded confidence in men, and some of his associates took advantage of him at this point. He was kind-hearted and generous. All felt that when they were within the length of Father Love's cable toe they were near a true friend.

Such a life is an inspiration to the young. We shall miss his form and features, but the memory of this true man of God shall live on, and the wave of influence generated by him shall lash upon the shores of eternity, bearing many ransomed souls.

O. P. S.

Give Earnest Heed.

The time for the March offering for Foreign Missions is at hand. The missionary force is larger, and the receipts will need to be correspondingly increased. We must do three things this year:

1. Enlist 3,000 contributing churches.
2. Bring 1,000 churches up to their full apportionment.
3. Reach \$100,000 in the receipts.

The *Missionary Voice* will be sent to every church requesting it. It should be distributed in each church preparatory to the offering. See that one copy reaches every family represented, in the church. And the March Offering Envelope will be furnished the churches. Place one in the hands of all the members. Order *Voices* and envelopes at once.

The watchword for the year is: An offering from every church; a gift from every member.

A. McLEAN, Cor. Sec.

F. M. RAINS, Treas.

Box 507, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Reports from the Churches.

ALABAMA.

BIRMINGHAM: We had six additions yesterday. We hope for hundreds this year. In the afternoon I preached to a crowded house in North Birmingham. We have a beautiful little church building in this part of the city but no "local organization." We are engaged in protracted services in North Birmingham this week. The meeting will continue indefinitely. Bro. O. P. Spiegel will be with me part, or all, of this week. I have planned a vigorous gospel campaign for Birmingham, this year. Early this year Bro. Spiegel will spend four to six weeks with me. Early in the autumn I shall have other help. This year, we trust, will witness a great ingathering in this city.

J. M. WATSON.

FLORIDA.

OCCOEE: When the undersigned in these columns six weeks or more ago promised another missive he did not think of being silent so long, but it is now too late to apologize.

The Junior editor of the MESSENGER was with us in Southern Georgia about three weeks in November.

The meeting at Lake Park lasted ten days without any visible results. Four years ago Bro. Spiegel held a ten days' meeting at this place which resulted in twenty-nine accessions. Some who are in a position to know say this last meeting was a better one than the first. The good done in a meeting is not to be judged by the number of additions. Our experience was not quite that of a good brother who made the following report: "we had a glorious meeting, there were no accessions but we turned out six and are now ready to move on and do better work." There are times with some congregations when they would do well to cut loose from the dead weight that retards their progress that they might "move on."

From Lake Park Bro. S. went over into Hamilton county, Florida, (ten miles distance) and hold a three days' meeting. At this place there was one confession and baptism and good seed sown the harvest of which others may reap.

We next went to Quitman, Georgia our last meeting but an account of this has been given to the MESSENGER. The first of December I bid adieu to Southern Georgia and came to Ocoee, Orange county, Florida to spend the

winter and "bake the bread of life" for these good people.

Ocoee is a small village in the interior, but it is healthful and has one of the best congregations of christians in the state. The disciples in Florida are gaining numerically and financially. It is strictly a mission field. A good sign is the brethren are encouraged and hopeful of better days in the near future.

T. J. Longdon of DeLand has been engaged for two months (January and February) beginning the first of the new year to labor as state evangelist.

Prof. E. B. Wakefield is to fill the pulpit in DeLand during the winter.

W. E. Philipps is at the "helm of the ship" with Bro. Pendleton at Eustis.

J. J. Irvine is holding the fort at Jacksonville with good success.

The reports indicate a good work by W. E. Dougherty of Hampton in his field.

Our beloved Brother B. F. Manire has returned to Hampton for the winter which gives more strength to the preaching force in the "Land of flowers."

The Florida State Convention is to be held at Ocala, Marion county, the first week in March. A programme will be gotten out soon and we hope for the best meeting in the history of Florida.

We would be pleased at that meeting to have a representative of the MESSENGER, and in behalf of the brethren and sisters of Ocala I feel free to extend a cordial invitation and welcome to all disciples who may visit our state this winter. We want to see a "grand rally." It is only about two months off. All who can attend should address H. C. Graves, Ocala, Fla.

A. B. HERRING.

KENTUCKY.

VALLEY STATION: I began my labors with the church here in November, 1894 which continued until January first, 1897 at which time I resigned. During the twenty-six months which I served the congregation, its active membership has almost been doubled. Our last service was rewarded by three uniting with us from the Baptists. May the work here still continue to prosper is my prayer.

W. H. ALFORD.

MISSISSIPPI.

JACKSON: The writer returned Saturday morning from a week's visit in Alabama 'mid' the scenes of his

childhood. Our "New Year's day," for the first time in eight years, he sat at his father's stable. In the meantime many changes have taken place. Some, have made us sad, but after all we have reason to rejoice and be glad, for the Lord has been very good to us.

La Grippe is no stranger among the inhabitants of our city. It will not belong until every body will be trying to convince every body else he had it worse than any body.

On account of the all day rain our audiences were small yesterday. But, while our audiences are always small when compared with some of our congregations, I dare say, they are as large at heart as can be found any where. The Lord is sure to bless this people's efforts, because, their "labor is in the Lord."

On Thursday Dec. 24, '96, the mortal remains of the wife of the late T. W. Caskey were brought to this city from her home in Texas, and after a short service conducted in the Christian church by the writer, peacefully and quietly laid to rest by the side of him whom she had loved and honored so long and who had preceded her only a few months. Sister Caskey was eighty-two years old and had been helpless for several years.

As I know of no one better prepared in every way to chronicle her life and fall on the field of battle than Bro. B. F. Manire, I would suggest that he do so.

We trust the Lord may "establish the work of our hands upon us" during the year that His name may be glorified and our "deeds be blessed."

WALTER A. NEAL.

TENNESSEE.

NASHVILLE: *Vine Street Christian Church:* Good audiences yesterday at both services. There were two additions at the morning service.

R. LIN CAVE.

UNION CITY: A very rainy day yesterday. Small audiences. One addition at night. Our people are hopeful for the new year. Our motto is enlargement.

W. H. SHEFFER.

CLARKSVILLE: Fine meetings yesterday. One added at morning service. Work opens up well for 1897. You have improved the MESSENGER. Success to you.

A. M. GROWDEN.

NASHVILLE: *Woodland Street Mission:* Our work began with this church Sunday with preaching at night. On account of short notice, a small crowd was present. After this, services will be held after Sunday school, which meets at 8:00. This is the prettiest

and best mission church building in the city.
M. F. HARMON.

KIMBERLIN HEIGHTS: The students of "The School of the Evangelists" listened to Brother John W. Moody preach last Lord's day eve. Brother Moody is a very promising young man, and his many friends look forward to his future as that of a successful minister of the gospel. He was formerly of Baldwyn, Miss., now a student here. Your Brother in Christ,
M. G. ASHBY.

PETERSBURG: Our meeting here has been in progress a week. Interest on the increase, one hundred chairs from the college and several from the "K. of P." lodge have been added to our capacity but still many have to stand in the aisles and about the door. The preachers from four other churches in town dismissed their services, and came with their audiences to our meeting last night, a thing never known in the history of this place before. Pray for us brethren that the "Word of God may have free course and be glorified."

JAS. L. HADDOCK.

NASHVILLE: *Woodland Street Christian Church:* The weather last Lord's day morning was almost ideal. A splendid audience greeted the pastor. At a meeting of the Official Board it was decided to make an effort to put a MESSENGER in every home of the Woodland Street Church, and a committee to make the canvass was named. From now on the Endeavor Society will hold its meetings Lord's day evening at 6:30 instead of Wednesday evening. Six members were received at the last meeting, five active and one associate. The society means business. The Official Board have arranged to have Brother Harmon preach at the Woodland Street Mission two Lord's days in each month. The outlook for this mission is bright. May it soon be able to stand alone.

T. A. REYNOLDS.

CHATTANOOGA, *Highland Park:* Since October 1st have preached regularly; visible results are not in numbers, Bro. Myhr says the scriptural growth is very noticeable. I preached eleven sermons at Rossville and baptized two. Organized a Sunday-school with sixty students. We had to call it a Union Sunday-school but we have the Supt. Herbert Taylor and most of the teachers, are our kind of people. We also organized a Wednesday night prayer-meeting which is well attended. Since I began a mission work there the Methodists have appointed a minister for that place but that only nerves us for more work.

Bro. Myhr has promised to help me in a meeting there soon. The prospects are first-class for Chattanooga. We had one addition last Lord's day. I was down with La Grippe last week but am up now. Bro. B. G. Woodworth of the Walnut St. Cong. committed suicide this A. M. in his son's store, was found dead with shot in head by Office boy. Cause, business failure. How uncertain is this world! but O, how sure and stable is God. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee and trusteth in thee." Your Humble Brother,
W. M. TAYLOR.

An Unfinished Life.

Fanny Harris Mayes entered the earthly life Jan. 13, 1877; the Christian life March 17, 1889, and the heavenly life Dec. 21, 1896.

At her favorite hour of sunset, on a bitter wintry day, when but twelve years old, she followed Christ into the cold waters of the Yazoo River. When asked if she was not afraid of being swept away by the current, she answered, "It would be a good way to die." Every day had its appointed reading in each Testament, and she read the Bible through every year. Every desire of her heart was made known to God, and she saw in every joy an answer to prayer. She did not wish to be alive when judgment comes; not because she dreaded the awful day, but because, since Jesus died, she wished to experience death also. Every hymn of heaven sang itself in her heart.

She did not live to complete her twentieth year, but young as she was, she cared nothing for foolish amusement, and refused to go where the object of gathering was merely pleasure. She never saw a playing card, never entered a circus tent, could not have been forced to look upon a dance. Yet she was so full of life and merriment that she won the pet name of "Fun;" that she often complained of her difficulty in suppressing mirth on inappropriate occasions; that she was known everywhere by her clear and ringing laugh. Thoroughly natural and childlike herself, she was much amused at the impossible piety and early deaths of the good little children of Sunday school literature; was proud to be called for her ceaseless activity "the architect;" delighted in saying, "I'm strong and muscular and well-developed." She joyfully refused the pleasure of the world for Christ's sake, but the Lord gave her much more than this.

With the form of a goddess, the head of a queen, the brow of a poet, the face of an angel, this daughter of

song—born and reared in the country, by poverty deprived of her birthright, familiar with hoe, spade, hatchet and saw; who never went four miles from home, who slept but once beneath another roof, who never took a lesson in music, never studied the rules of verse—sang with a melody that thrilled every hearer, and wrote such poetry as Nature taught her child. She loved to wear wreaths of autumn leaves, to walk under the breeze repeating Bryant's *Forest Hymn*, to watch the dawning and the dying of day. Birds were her companions, flowers her friends, the winds and leaves her playmates.

Her fatal illness was caused by exposure in the service of others. Sprung from a race of warriors and pioneers, this heroine of nineteen years endured hardship and disease as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. None of her illustrious kin ever bore suffering or faced death for his country's sake with sublimer courage than she for Christ's sake.

On the Sunday evening before she died, the Lord's supper was kept as usual in her room. Her glorious voice had been weakened by three months of pain, but she sang, "There is a land of pure delight," and "There is a home eternal."

"Soon shall I join that anthem
Far beyond the sky;
Jesus became my ransom,
Why should I fear to die?"

Twenty-four hours later she joined the anthem. It was her beloved sunset hour when she passed through glory's western gate and walked in Paradise. * * *

Yazoo, Miss., Dec. 29, 1896.

IN JESUS' ARMS.

Will he take us in his bosom?
Will he fold us in his arms?
Shall we weary lean upon him,
Sheltered from this earth of storms?
We at last will go to heaven,
There we'll really see his face;
Oh! I never can imagine
What we'll feel in that fair place.
Only this I think—the sinners,
With their crimson washed away,
Could not rise from his dear bosom,
But from entrance there would stay.
How could I leave it for one moment,
After there I once recline?
Not for all the radiant beauty
That will there around me shine!
Not for all those dear, dear Christians,
Over whom I shed my tears,
Those for whom my heart was breaking
In the distance dim of years.
No! when at last I reach my Savior,
And my arms around him are,
My heart to him alone will open,
I could not think of others there.

FANNY HARRIS MAYES.

[This "simple and heartfelt lay" was written a few months before the end.]

To Subscribers.

We rarely ever say anything in these columns about our subscribers "paying up." We want to say now in large type, once for all, that we not only want those in arrears to "settle up," but we are going to adopt a

CASH IN ADVANCE

system. Those over one year in arrears, will be dropped at once, unless they pay up. Pay up before you order the paper discontinued. We don't propose to publish a paper for people who won't pay for it, for such readers do not appreciate it. Again: Let us suggest to those who have the welfare of the MESSENGER at heart, that a paper needs something more substantial to operate on than "good will." We appreciate good wishes, but the mortal DOLLAR will

go much farther in paying rents, printers, buying paper, paying postage, etc. &c. Are you a friend? This means U. We don't want to lose a single subscriber, but a name without the money is like "faith without works," dead, with a big D. Send money in any legitimate way, to

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Prayermeeting topic for Jan. 17—
Revivals—at Home and in Mission
Fields. 2 Chron. 30: 13-27.

Taking the word in its negative meaning, a revival implies nothing forced or unnatural. The underlying idea is life—life full, abundant, and beautiful.—R. O. Ernest.

A revival is a work of God and so is a crop of wheat; and God is as much dependent on the use of means in the one case as in the other.—Finney.

San Francisco, '97! Are you going? The history of past conventions shows each one to be better than the last, for those in charge of the program have the best obtainable, and it is a responsible honor for any man to be given a place on the program no matter how famous he may be. Moreover, the committees on reception and entertainment profit by the experience of those who have already served, so it would be strange if each year did not bring some improvements on the last. San Francisco has wanted the convention for several years, and would have had it but for the railroads; now, that satisfactory rates have been granted, the California Endeavorers are getting ready to receive the great gathering, and Endeavorers everywhere else are getting ready to go or to send delegates. Those who have never attended one of these International conventions can scarcely comprehend what they have missed, while the societies that sent even one delegate have seemed to take a new lease on life from the reports brought back. We wish it was possible for every society in existence to send at least one delegate this year; and we believe that if you begin to think about it now you may do so. Think about it, exercise your will; and then, if it is at all possible or right for you to go, the way will appear.

The *Young People's Weekly* says "for a man to exert his power in doing good so far as he can, is a glorious task." "So far as he can"—here is the stumblingblock which trips up many a worker, who is really anxious to do something, provided it was something of importance. He forgets that even this great world is composed of tiny atoms; forgets that the long years come just a minute at a time, each minute to be lived through and its duties accomplished before another

can take its place. A swarm of buzzing, biting mosquitoes is more irritating to most nerves than the sting of a bee or wasp; and yet life has a great many more mosquito bites in the world than there are mosquito bites than bee stings. There are so many insignificant duties, compared to the great battles that call for courage and strength and skill; the trouble is to remember, or to realize, that these can come only through the daily discipline of petty trials. These mosquito bites teach endurance for the bee stings.

When George McDonald said that "the lack of service is the mire of humanity," he must have spoken from wide observation. At all events, it is true, as any lookout committee will tell you. They have discovered that the best way to interest indifferent ones, and to make timid ones forget themselves, is to give them something to do. It may be only to speak to the stranger who takes a back seat. It may be only to select a verse for the new member who is afraid of his own voice, and doubts his own ability to select a suitable verse. There are just such timid ones, fellow Endeavorer, though you may not be able to understand it; and you are fortunate if you did not have any such fear of yourself to overcome.

We wish that every Y. P. S. C. E. would form a Junior society among the children of their own church if there is not one already. This has come to be an important part of Christian endeavor—to help the Juniors and increase their numbers; surely it is work that ought to be done. First, appoint a Junior committee, and see that its members are wide-awake; indifference can do nothing here. Appoint a superintendent who can arouse the children's interest. Instruct your committee to help her, especially at first, with the music and in carrying out the program of the meetings; the Juniors will soon need but little help in the latter. But, remember that the superintendent is human like the rest of you, and there are apt to be times when she cannot be present. Then the committee must be ready to take her place, which they can do much more acceptably if they have kept in touch with the little ones and their work.

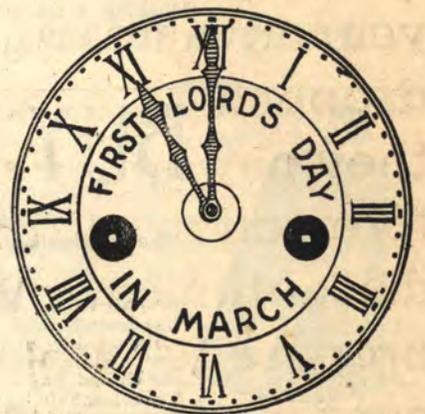
An item from a recent Junior topic is worthy of thought from the Seniors:

"If you are not brave in your own place in life, you would not be brave in any place." Another: "It sometimes takes more real courage to say 'no' when tempted to do wrong than to say 'yes' when called to do a heroic act." It goes without saying that the Juniors will be stronger men and women for having learned such lessons as children.

In the mission band of the Broadway Christian Church, Louisville, are two boys who expect to become preachers. One of the members of the Mission Band at Covington, Ky., "hopes some day to be a missionary."

The Juniors of the Harlem Avenue Christian Church, Baltimore, contributed during last year to the C. W. B. M. \$100, the banner society for '96 in foreign missions. The Gleaners Band, of Cynthiana, Ky., stood a close second with \$102.

The *Christian Standard* speaks encouragingly of the Cottage Prayer meetings held by the Y. P. S. C. E. of the Christian Church of Cameron, Mo. The society is divided into three sections, each having a leader and several singers. Tuesday evening is set aside for this work, and each section conducts two or three meetings.



The obituary notice in these columns of Sister Fanny Mayes is the sister of our former office editor, Brother Robert Mayes. Our prayers and sympathies are extended to them in their hours of grief.

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Elam to Minton.

I know nothing of the speech made in the convention except what the GOSPEL MESSENGER, as copied in the *Gospel Advocate*, said about it. I presume from what it says that Brother Minton made the speech. The MESSENGER says: "He showed that they (the apostles and early disciples) evidently did not have a special plan for doing this work, but that they no doubt experimented until they got the best plan, and adopted this, adjusting it to the peculiar circumstances in each case. He cited Paul's 'experiment' in 2 Corinthians 9: 13 as evidence for this."

I referred in my letter to Brother Srygley only to "Paul's experiment in 2 Corinthians 9: 13 as evidences" for the statement that the apostles "no doubt experimented until they got the best plan and adopted this," etc.

The apostles never experimented at all about the work and worship of the church. They spoke, wrote, and acted by inspiration. They were forbidden to leave Jerusalem or to begin preaching the gospel until endued with power from on high. The Spirit was to teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever Christ had commanded them (John 14: 26,) and to guide them into all truth, to take of the things of Christ and to show it unto them (John 16: 13, 14.) Paul's letters to the various churches and to individual Christians are inspired. To the Corinthians themselves he says: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. 14: 37.) Then his "order" to the churches of Galatia and the Corinthians concerning the collection for the saints upon the first day of the week, in 1 Corinthians 16: 1, 2, is inspired, and therefore the command of God; hence, no experiment. God never works by experiment. This discredits inspiration and depreciates the wisdom of God.

But if the apostles "experimented" until they discovered that "the best plan" for helping the poor saints "in the peculiar circumstances" of the Corinthians and Galatians was for every one to lay by him in store upon the first day of the week, was not the meeting itself on that day an experiment? If they "experimented until they got the best plan" for doing this, did they not experiment as to the "best plan" of worshiping, "and adopt this, adjusting it to the peculiar circumstances in each case?" Did they not experiment as to "the best plan" of setting the church in order with a plurality of elders, deacons, and other members? Then are not the apostles themselves an experiment, the church an experiment, and the whole affair an experiment? But we are told that the apostles not only "experimented until they got the best plan and adopted it," but that they adjusted "it to the peculiar circumstances in each case." This, being interpreted, means that even the apostles' "best plan" for helping the poor saints, having been discovered by experiment, and not given by inspiration, may not be adjustable to "the peculiar circumstances"

of the present age, and therefore not of binding authority; hence we may experiment until we get the best plan adjustable to our times. May we not also experiment as to the best form of church government, "the best plan" for worship, adjusting it to the refined, æsthetic, and fastidious tastes of this enlightened and advanced age? Through this "experiment" hole may come every departure from apostolic faith and practice. This opens the floodgate to all the foul waters of infidelity, and makes the heart sick.

But should it be granted that the apostles did "experiment," I still deny that II Corinthians 9: 13 is proof of the fact. Simply because the word "experiment" occurs here is no proof that the apostles "experimented until they got the best plan" for doing that which the Holy Spirit guided them in doing. This use of the passage is what I lament.

I never said "the Revised Version contradicts the common version." It does not; but Brother Minton's use of the passage contradicts both versions. He says: "I wonder why the brother did not tell us that the part which contradicts the speech made in Nashville was supplied words, and not in the Greek at all." I did not say what "part" of the passage contradicts his speech, for the reason that the passage itself and the entire context contradict the idea that Paul was experimenting or commending an experiment of his own, when he had already given order by inspiration to the churches of Galatia and Corinth how to do. Will the brother say that I Corinthians 16: 1, 2, is an experiment? The Revised Version of II Corinthians 9: 13 is: "Seeing that through the proving of you by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all" "Of you" are the "supplied words, I presume, to which Brother Minton refers. But, while they are supplied, they show how the translators of the Revised Version understand the passage—viz., that the Corinthians were proved "by this ministration," and not by some "plan" of the apostles. All the scholars, then, of England and America who made the Revision Version are against Brother Minton's "experiment." Where the common version has "experiment" the Revised Version has "proving." Now the question is: What was put to the test—an uninspired "plan" for raising money for the saints, or the Corinthians themselves? Both versions clearly show that the Corinthians themselves were tested by "this ministration." Coneybear and Howson say of this passage: "While they praise God for the proof thus given of the obedience wherewith you have consented to the glad tidings of Christ, and for the single-minded liberality which you have shown both to them and to all." Adam Clarke says: "In this and in the preceding and following verses the apostle enumerates the good effects that would be produced by their liberal almsgiving to the poor saints at Jerusalem." The Revised Version translates the word "dokime" proving, instead of "experiment," in the common version. This takes the

word "experiment" entirely out of the New Testament. Brother Minton says that the common version is right here. Does he mean that the common version correctly uses the word "experiment" instead of "proving," as in the Revised Version? If he does not mean this, there is no point in his declaration that the common version is right here. But in the common version this work is nowhere else translated "experiment," and not so in this place in the Revised Version. Is the Revised Version wrong in saying "proving" instead of "experiment"?

Thayer says this word means: "1. In an active sense, proving, trial; and gives II Corinthians 8: 2 as an example of trial "through affliction." Here the Corinthians through affliction were tried. "2. Approvedness, tried character" (and he cites Romans 5: 4; II Corinthians 2: 9; Philippians 2: 22;) and "exhibited in the contribution, II Corinthians 9: 13." "3. A proof (objectively,) a specimen of tried worth, II Corinthians 13: 3." These are all the places where this word occurs in the noun form. According, then, to Thayer, what "approvedness," whose "tried character" was "exhibited in the contributions?" For what did the poor saints give thanks? For the way Paul's experiment" in raising money worked, or for the liberality of the Corinthians? I doubt if any one except those who are "experimenting" with "a special plan" ever thought of giving to this verse any other than its plain, accepted meaning.

No, I do not especially desire to discuss. I want, as I said, this society issue discussed by the wisest and best men on either side of the question—such as Brethren Lipscomb and McGarvey. Let the discussion involve the real issue, and let it be in Nashville or Louisville; or, if the brethren prefer, let it be written and published in at least two papers, one representing the position of the one man and one representing the other. If it be an oral discussion, let it be taken down and put in permanent form. These men are more competent to discuss it than Brother Minton and myself. Their discussion would be more thorough, and have far greater influence for good; but in the meantime, while arranging for this, Brother Minton and I can take a crack or two at it, as a sort of advanced guards, while the main army and heavy artillery are loading up and moving up. But, instead of the first proposition which he arranges for me to affirm, let me affirm, that "the church of the New Testament, as set in order by the Holy Spirit through the apostles, is the only organization necessary for the evangelization of the world."

To this church I belong, and in it I work, and am ready to affirm its all-sufficiency for the evangelization of the world.

Let him affirm that "the Tennessee Missionary Society, as it now exists in the State, with its officers and plan of operation, is Scriptural and therefore necessary to the evangelization of the State."

He belongs to and works in an organized missionary society, and it is proper and logical for him to affirm that it is authorized by the Bible.

Then let the discussion be in the Christian Standard, as well as in the Gospel Advocate. Why not? Let the publishing companies take care of themselves; I presume they are able to do so.

I am not set, either, for the defense of the "Sunday school, as it now exists in a majority of the churches of Christ in Tennessee." What if Brother Minton should succeed in proving that there is as much authority in the Bible for the "Tennessee Missionary Society" as there is for the Sunday school, "as it now exists in a majority of churches," etc.? He would then have to prove that the Sunday school, "as it now exists," etc., is of Bible authority; and this would require double work. We will let him off if he will prove that the society itself, "as it now exists," is authorized by the Bible, and therefore Scriptural.

"Now, brethren, if you want to discuss the question, the way is open."

Will the Christian Standard please copy? E. A. ELAM.

[The above is copied in this paper by verbal request.—ED.]

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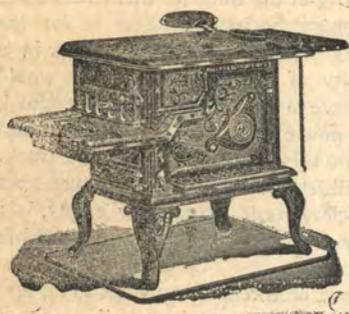
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