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A LAYMAN'S PLEA FOR MISSIONS.

I propose to talk a little with the numerous readers of the ADVOCATE about missionary work.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, through its only organized authority, the General Conference, created a Board called "The Board of Missions," and reserved the right to re-elect quadrennially the members of that Board, with its officers, consisting of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and making all the Bishops of the church members *ex officio*. The church also delegated to, or clothed, the Board with certain powers and duties, among which were: "The Board shall have authority to regulate its own proceedings; to appropriate money to defray incidental expenses; to provide for the support of supernumerated missionaries, and widows and orphans of missionaries who may not be provided for by any annual conference; to print books for the Indian, German, Mexican, and other foreign missions; to build houses for worship, for hospitals, for schools, and for missionaries; and to defray the necessary expenses of the work under its care." See page 180 of Discipline. Again: "The Board shall meet annually to determine what fields shall be occupied as missions, the number of persons to be employed in each, and to estimate the amount that may be necessary for the support of the missions under its charge, and to divide the same among the several annual conferences—having reference in said division to the extent and importance of the home work in each conference, and to the ability and disposition of the people to give," etc. See page 181 of the Discipline.

The authority of the Board is explicit and full. No one has raised the question, I take it, that it has transcended its authority; then where lies the responsibility of the church having any debt on account of missions, and of the Board being cramped in its operations? It cannot rest on the Board, for the Board has only done what the general church by law required it to do. The only inquiries that can be made of the Board, it seems to me, are, first, have its appropriations been limited to the necessities of the work? and, secondly, have its assessments upon the conferences been reasonable, and has the division been made in the spirit of the law? In answer to the first inquiry, we may say that the appropriations have been very much less than the amount assessed, and greatly less than was demanded for the work. To the second inquiry, we may answer that the assessments were made by the whole Board, including all of the Bishops representing the entire territory of the church, after free conference and full consultation, prayer and praise, and the assessments have averaged about twenty-seven cents per annum for each member for the last quadrennium for work under direction of this Board. If we add the collections for domestic missions, the average is about thirty-six cents. Was that too much? The Methodists of Canada give one dollar per annum for each member for similar missionary purposes. The Methodist Episcopal Church, our Northern brethren, paid last year about sixty cents per member for similar missionary purposes. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, paid for the last quadrennium, upon an average, about twenty-seven cents per capita per year, which includes payments for work under this Board and for domestic missions. Has the church done its duty in this matter?

The appropriations by the Board have been well and wisely spent. If any one has the least doubt that such is the case, let such person read the able report of the Committee on Missions, submitted to and adopted by the last General Conference at Richmond. The whole subject received at the hands of that committee a most thorough and exhaustive examination, and the indorsement of the Board in its financial operations was most complete.

As before remarked, the appropriations have been greatly less than was demanded, and yet the church has not responded to the assessments as liberally as the Board had a right to hope and believe it would do, and therefore the church has created a debt through its legally constituted Board of Missions amounting to about seventy thousand dollars, the greater part of which was created at the meeting of the Board in April, 1884, mainly in anticipation of centenary offerings which were not realized. But which would have been more than met out of the annual assessments upon the annual conferences if they had been paid in full.

Do not say that the Board should not have made appropriations in advance of collections, for in doing so you would place the work of the church on a plane below all secular employment and enterprise. Railroads, banks and manufacturing concerns are organized upon the faith that their stockholders will pay their assessments when made. The farmer plows and plants, having faith that he shall reap. Millions of money are paid daily to second parties upon faith that their drafts will be paid by third parties. Surely no one will accuse the Board of extravagance in its appro-

priations when they have not amounted to one-half of the demands from the mission-field, or say that the assessments have exceeded the ability of the church to pay, when they have averaged only about twenty-seven cents per capita per year.

Who can say this debt was not created through the providence of God? Who can tell the good that the expenditure of this money has done and will do? If the advance in the missionary work of our church had not been made in this way, can any one tell if it would ever have been taken?

A debt created by the faith of such men as Bishops Paine, Pierce, Kavanaugh and Parker, now in heaven, and by the faith of such men as Bishops McTyeire, Keener, Wilson, Granbery and Hargrove, and the other able and good men of the Board, still living and working for the spread of the Master's kingdom. A debt about which another has well said the church could easily pay off with the little finger of her left hand. The Board is unanimous in deciding not to increase this debt, but to pay it off as rapidly as can be done without crippling present missionary operations. We believe the church will come up to the measure of her duty in this matter cheerfully and with a hearty good will, and that the little debt will soon be a thing of the past.

We give a statement of assessments and payments by annual conferences for the last quadrennium as follows:

The fiscal year of the Board begins April 1 of each year, as assessments must correspond to conference years. Each fiscal year of the Board necessarily contains partial collections made against two preceding assessments.

Assessments, 1882, \$204,550; payments reported in 1883, \$160,272 82, of which \$130,973 76 was on account of assessment 1881 of previous quadrennium, leaving as credit for 1882, first year of last quadrennium, the sum of \$29,299 06.

Assessments, 1883, \$264,000; payments reported in 1884, \$183,962 91, being amount collected on assessment for 1882, and on account of assessment for 1883.

Assessments, 1884, \$264,000; payments reported in 1885, \$191,600 17, being amount collected on assessment for 1883, and on account of assessment for 1884.

Assessments, 1885, \$264,000; payments reported in 1886, \$222,127 58, being amount collected on assessment for 1884, and on account of assessment for 1885.

\$369,010 28, balance due by the Conferences and missions to the Board—but small amount comparatively due by missions.

RECAPITULATION.

Assessments for last quadrennium:

1882 (as above).....	\$204,550 00
1883 ".....	264,000 00
1884 ".....	264,000 00
1885 ".....	264,000 00
Total.....	\$996,550 00

Payments on account of assessments for last quadrennium reported in annual reports, as follows:

1883 (as above).....	\$29,299 06
1884 ".....	183,962 91
1885 ".....	191,600 17
1886 ".....	222,127 58
Total.....	\$626,989 72

Assessments as above.....\$996,550 00
Payments as above.....626,989 72
Balance due on account of last quadrennium.....\$369,560 28

Above payments include collections by conferences, special Centenary offerings and Church Extension payments received by the Board.

Assessment, 1886, \$264,000. Collection on this will not commence until after meeting of next annual conferences.

It will be observed that the assessments during the last quadrennium have exceeded collections by \$369,010 28; or, in other words, the General Church owes that to the Board of Missions. Of this amount \$264,000 is the assessment for 1885, less \$58,000 already paid by the conferences to the Treasurer of the Board; balance, \$206,000, which is now in course of collection and will be reported by the next conferences.

Average assessment against each member per year during the last quadrennium, about twenty-seven cents. If those assessments had been made for some worldly purpose with a reasonable chance, amounting almost to a certainty, for large returns in present material benefit, and the larger our payment the greater our chance for large returns, don't you believe that every cent would have been paid? And yet the non-payment by those having ability to pay, may have involved title to "An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

The foregoing shows that the church owes the Board for the last quadrennium the sum of \$369,010 28, which, if paid, would enable the Board to pay off the debt and have a large surplus with which to supplement current collections. But even after deducting the amount advanced on the assessment for 1885 (really not advanced but only paid early in current year), if each annual conference will pay balance in full of its assessment for 1885, the debt can be paid off and the missionary work be sustained, and cancel a large amount that the church fell behind in 1882-4. But if the church will pay for current year in full the above

balance of \$369,010 28, which includes balance assessment for 1885, of \$206,000, the finances of the Board will be in a most flourishing condition, the missionaries be made happy by additions to their numbers, the church blessed in its work, and the glory of God be advanced. An average payment of thirty-seven cents for this fiscal year by each member will accomplish this. Cannot the church do this? Will she not do it? To this proposition let all the people say amen. This will be considerably less than was paid last year per capita by our Northern brethren, and much less than one-half that paid per capita annually by Methodists of Canada. Let those that are able and willing to give in each station and circuit see to it that the amount assessed against it is paid in full, and to the charges having advanced ideas of the importance of the missionary work, who may pay in excess of assessment, due praise and credit will be given. Surely the preachers and people will see that this is done. You pray, and believe when you pray, "Christ for the world and the world for Christ." The foundation plan and propagation idea of the gospel of Christ is missionary. Now, my brother preachers and brother laymen, will you not go to work at once to raise the standard of giving in our church to the missionary cause to a level of respectability with the Methodists of other sections? Surely your vow to "support its institutions," the love of souls, and the commendation of the Master, will be sufficient to stimulate you to this work.

About the only thing God has commanded us to do, in which perhaps we fancy we have no personal interest, and that is alone for the good of others and for the glory of God, is to aid in spreading the gospel of Christ in the way and by the means ordained by God himself; and possibly this is the only demand made upon us that does not in some way minister to our own interest and selfishness. We are asked in the gospel to follow Christ individually, but that makes each one a better son, brother, husband, and father, a more respected citizen, a happier daughter, sister, wife, and mother. In keeping the commandments, our selfishness or earthly interest is certainly served in all except, perhaps, where we are admonished against any god being enthroned in our affections before the great God, and against all forms of idolatry. Profane swearing is considered vulgar, and we wish to appear genteel. Sabbath-breaking is a violation of the laws of both the mental and physical man—we need rest one day in seven, therefore laws are enacted against its violation.

"Honor thy father and mother" has the promise of long life. "Thou shalt not kill." Our safety is involved in the command, and therefore it is enforced by civil law. "Thou shalt not steal." We are interested in the safety of character and property, and therefore both are protected by civil law, and so on with regard to false swearing, covetousness, etc.

The absolute command is to go, go, etc. Don't say that that applied alone to the apostles. Read the command, Matt. xxviii:19, 20: "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." With you apostles in all of your wanderings, persecutions and martyrdoms. With you Paul in all your journeyings by sea and by land. With you early Christians in all of your trials and tribulations, in prison, on the scaffold and at the stake. The Stephens of all time shall see the heavens opened, and the glory of God and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. With Luther in spirit, willing to meet as many devils as there were tiles on the houses in Worms, to do work for the Master. With Wesley and Whitefield in their voyages across the Atlantic to plant Christianity in simplicity in these United States. With our own bishops and missionaries who leave home, family, friends and country to brave the dangers and trials of travel and work in heathen and semi-heathen lands. The command, "go," has been ringing down the ages for nearly nineteen centuries. Dr. Allen is now, and has been for many years, a missionary in China, but the command to go or send is as binding on us as it is on Dr. Allen, and if we fail to do our duty we do it at our peril. Go or send, is the command, and if we do neither how can we expect to pass the pearly gate with such a record? Missionary work commenced in heaven, when God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem and save it. Imagine, if you can, an unbeliever in missionary enterprise in heaven, and meeting St. Paul, and the latter inquiring of the newly-arrived saint about the spread of the gospel of Christ in the earth—about the missionary work in China, Japan, Africa, South America, Mexico, etc., and the new-comer answering Paul with his earthly reasons for his failing to go or send, to go and work in the Lord's vineyard or to furnish means that others

might go and work, by saying that he was not satisfied that it was best for the heathen themselves that they should be Christianized; that in effect the gospel of Christ was good enough for England and the United States, but he did not know how it would work in China or Japan;

that the story of Christ's life, teachings, and sufferings might prevent some heathen from getting to heaven; that he did not know why, if God wanted the world converted to Christ, he did not do it immediately and without human means and human agencies. Besides this, it was a very expensive enterprise, and the work progressed so slowly. Now one can imagine St. Paul's answers to the new-comer more easily than the fact of the other being in heaven at all. St. Paul might say, "Was not the command to you, go or send?" What right had you to call in question the conversion of the heathen, when the great God had said to him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession, much less to call in question the wisdom of the Great I Am, as to the mode of having this work done? You, O man, the worm of a day, challenging to controversy the Infinite and Eternal! St. Paul might add: "You spent golden moments of your short earthly life in figuring out the cost of the designs and purposes of the Almighty, and the probable length of time it would take to accomplish the work, judging from past experience. Knowest not thou, O man, that thou art only God's steward or agent? Did he not, by the Prophets Joel and Haggai, claim the silver and the gold as his? Joel iii:5, Haggai ii:8. Doth not both riches and honor come of him? 1 Chron. xxix:12. Did not the Psalmist declare that the earth was full of his riches? Ps. civ:24. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." Ps. xxiv:1.

Progress slow? Remember that God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as man's ways. One day with him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. It has been eighteen hundred and fifty years and more since Christ said: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." And yet the length of time which has elapsed does not affect your faith in the promise, "I will come again." Let us do our duty and leave results and time to him. We read in the book, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Ps. lxxii:8. "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. vii:14. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. ix:7. "He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i:32, 33. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii:9-11.

Now let us all do our whole duty in pushing forward the kingdom of Christ, so that we may be permitted to take a part in the coronation ceremonies when he shall be crowned Lord of all. Be assured that a record will be kept of what we do. That missionary work through human instrumentality is God's plan for converting the world to Christ, but few in this age will call in question. This position is abundantly proven by the Scriptures, given in forms of predictions and commands, directions and exhortations, threatenings and promises, for youth and for old age, for men, women and children. It announces the universality of the work and pledges its final success. Out of the great array of texts I will refer to only a few in addition to those already given. Predictions, Isa. xlii:10-12, Isa. lxxvi:19; Is according to the purpose of God, Luke xxiv:46, 47, Gal. i:15, 16, Col. i:25-27; Directed by the Holy Ghost, Acts xiii:2; Teaching and exhortations, Ps. xxiv:11, Ps. ii:13, Heb. iii:13, Heb. x:25; Threatenings, Judges v:23; Promises, Heb. x:34; Youth and old age, Ps. lxxi:18, Ps. lxxii:17, Ps. cxlviii:12, 13; Women and children to engage in this work as well as men, Phil. iv:3; Universality of the work, Mark xvi:15, Rev. xiv:6; Commands, Matt. xxviii:19, Mark xvi:15; Final success of the church, Ps. xlv:13, Eph. v:27, Rev. xix:8, Isa. lii:2, Dan. ii:34, 35, Rev. vii:9-17, Ezek. xlviii:22-24. Then we say that proof from the Book is overwhelming; that God's plan for bringing the world to Christ is by missionary work. In some sense, all Christian work is missionary, but in a peculiar sense is the sending the

Word of God, preachers and teachers to heathen and pagan nations missionary work. Reader, the heathen will be converted to Christ whether you assist in the matter or not. God has said so, and it will be

done. But can you afford not to do your full part in this great work for which Christ died? "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

E. W. COLE.

NASHVILLE, TENN.

MISSISSIPPI LETTER.

By this time you are home from the General Conference and straightened out to your work again. Did you ever farm? Did you ever have the worry of straightening out in the spring, getting the plows, gear, and hands all right for steady work? How glad you were when all moved off abreast in good earnest for a summer's work. How things got tangled in your office while you were in Richmond. What piles of matter, good, better and best, accumulated on your table. How you looked at the mass and sighed a sigh full of sighing when you got home, dusty, weary, sleepy and travel-worn. You did not know where to begin, what to do or how to dispose of this mass. Doubtless you began, at the beginning, right where you came to it, in the middle or on top, and this went on that file and that on the other file and some into the waste-basket until order began to show her face on your table. By this time you have caught up so that you can grind out the grists as they come in.

You don't want to get behind any more; don't want to get in the grass again; you want to keep up even with your work so you can press your work instead of having your work press you. Some people, you know, are always behind, year in and year out, good seasons and bad. They never get up with their work; their work is always pressing them. Much of this comes from a lack of industry, and much of it comes from misdirected labor—for the want of a plan of doing things. This is just as true of preachers and preacher-work as of farmers and farmer-work. Some preachers, you know, are always behind hand with their work, always in the grass, often in the woods and frequently in the brush. They get things tangled at the start and they keep on tangling them more and more until the wheel turns over and throws them to another place, when they begin to tangle things again. Nothing comes handy. There is no order, no system, no plan about anything. They study in patches, here and there, visit at random, preach off-hand, go off half sprung, flatter and splutter and do nothing, or next to nothing. This is not the way for Methodist people and preachers to do. Method is one of the fundamental principles of Methodism. A good Methodist is methodical in his work and ways, particularly in his church work, religious work. The method of Methodism is a time-saver, a labor-saver. It enables us to accomplish more in a given time with a given sum and a given number of men than any other system or method of evangelism known among men. Our book of Discipline lays down the method of doing all kinds of church work. Where these methods are carried out the machinery of the church runs without a jar and with the least friction possible. Some people, you know, profess Methodism too, will not keep the rules, will not follow the methods of Methodism and they are always behind, always in trouble and always wondering why they do not succeed. My brother, I have yet to see a church or to hear of one that clung closely to the Methodist method of raising church money for two years together and then failed to bring up every dollar assessed. And I have yet to know a single church or to hear of one that paid its full assessment without using this method in fact or in form. Much of our financial success is due to our financial methods. Our financial failures in church matters grow oftener out of our lack of method than out of our inability or the unwillingness of our people. I know whereof I affirm. I have seen these things transpire again and again under my own eye. A Methodist preacher who does not do all in his power to put in force our method of raising money for the support of the ministry is untrue to the fundamental method of Methodism, and he is standing in his own light; in the way of his own support; does not provide for his own, and they of his own house.

"But this is the work of the stewards," says one. True, but stewards need help and training in methodical ways of doing Methodist work. The preacher owes it to the church to train the members in these wise and prudent methods. Now and then, some steward, more zealous than wise, gets up in a quarterly or district conference and, by preamble and resolution, proposes to do in substance just what is found in the Discipline. Read the General Rules? Why, yes, and the special rules, and the whole book to the people, for some of them never read it for themselves; or, if they read it, they forget it and say when it is read to them: "Indeed, I didn't know that was in the Discipline."

Now, my brother, if we are going to be Methodists, let us adopt, or rather carry out, in all matters, great and small, personal and general, spiritual and financial, the Methodist methods of doing things. If we are not going to do this, why,

then, let's call ourselves by some other name—accidentalists, pell-mellists or haphazardists. What say you?

Now, Mr. Editor, throw this into the waste-basket or under the table and go on with your work according to your own methods. GILDEBOY, VERONA, MISS.

JOHN BUNYAN.

Bunyan was the possessor of a mystic. His common sense in his sermons of advice is extraordinarily close-packed and hard, and exhibits acute observation of the ways of human nature in practical life. He wrote once what was almost a novel, a history of one Mr. Badman, which is probably truer to contemporary life than the adventures of Jonathan Wild in the next century. If he did not weaken his eyesight over books, he sharpened it on men and women. All his volumes abound with anecdotes and incidents which he had evidently seen in the town streets or by the road-side, and with phrases and proverbial sayings close to the soil. Not the least agreeable of the signs of this realism, this sight for the bare fact in sense alone, are those descriptions of the country, of the birds, and flowers, and fields, and the simple cheerfulness of them to the country-born boy, which strew his pages from cover to cover. So, when he came to write his great book, he united in a perfectly natural way, and without forethought, the reality of a journey on earth with that of the search for heaven. The success with which, in a literary work, truth is fused with fact, is a measure of genius. It is, perhaps, more striking in this case because the work is an allegory, which is usually so drearily pale a kind of composition. The characters and action of the "Pilgrim's Progress," so vivid that it cannot wear out. It is not more realistic, however, than other portions of Bunyan's voluminous writings, in which one may get an idea of English provincial character of high historical value and human interest.

Bunyan's memory is singularly agreeable. Personally he was free from the defects of assumption, dogmatism, and spiritual pride which entered largely into the religious character of his epoch, and his sensitive conscience seems to have kept him humble after he had won a name. The two great elements of his work—the homely quality and the Christian quality—were deep-seated in his nature, and give him charm. In an age of sectaries he was not a narrow bigot, and did not stickle for meaningless things; and in a time of political strife growing out of religious differences, and though himself a sufferer by twelve years' imprisonment in early manhood, he did not confuse heaven with any fantastic monarchy or Commonwealth of Christ in London, nor show any rancor or revengeful spirit as a subject. It is worth remembering that out of Puritanism, which is regarded as a narrow creed and life, came the only book since the Reformation which has been acceptable to the whole of Christendom, and is still regarded as the substantial truth of the Christian life in all the churches that preach it under any creed or orthodoxy. The life of the man who could evolve such a story must have been very simply typical of the Christian life itself.—The Evening Post.

AMERICAN PREACHING.

The Rev. Francis Pigou, D.D., one of the missionaries during the late Advent Mission, gives in the (English) Churchman his impressions of the condition of the Episcopal Church in New York, and the New York namesake of the English journal copies several extracts. According to Dr. Pigou, the Americans are fond of preaching, and are good listeners. He thus writes: "They prefer, as a rule, an extempore to a written sermon. Their preachers bear in mind Demosthenes' rule 'Action, action, action.' Preaching would be more effective but for the habit congregations have, to a degree I have nowhere else noticed, of conversing freely with one another within the precincts of God's house. My friends in New York must not resent my saying that this habit of talking in church, before and after service, is not conducive to devotion; does not promote reverence for sacred places, and is fatal to the retention of good impressions, however earnest the sermon may have been. The sentence with which divine service commences in the American church is one which should have a prominent place assigned to it, on which eye and mind could rest. 'The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.'"

"I had but very little opportunity for ascertaining the general tenor of the pulpit message. I should say that, for the most part, distinctive evangelical teaching prevails, with much the same defect which we find in evangelical utterances at home, and to which I shall presently more particularly allude. The ritual is what would be considered 'moderate.' I doubt there is as much diversity in 'use' as in England. In America all places of worship are 'churches'; if 'chapel' is used, it is understood of a mission chapel. Large toleration exists. There does not seem to me to be the rancor and bitterness amongst differing schools of thought in America, that unhappily prevails among ourselves; there is less sour milk. This arises, doubtless, partly from the fact that all denominations are, in the eye of the law, on an equal footing. No denomination enjoys any special protection or privileges. In saying this we must not, however, forget that they have never known anything but the voluntary system, which is not without its felt disadvantages."

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PILES Instant relief. Final cure in 30 days, no operation. Sufferers will receive a complete report free, by addressing J. J. MASON, 35 Nassau St., N. Y.

OLD AND YOUNG.
 A WESTERN MIRAGE.
 Chaplain Nave, in Western Advocate.
 We had just crossed the long wooden bridge which girls together the right and left banks of the Arkansas river near West Las Animas in Colorado. It was in June, and as yet no rain had fallen. The earth was parched and bare, and the reflection of the sunshine from the minute particles of detritus gradually darkened the eyes. The sun was shining with almost torrid power, and the air waved like the heat from over a furnace.
 As we ascended the slight acclivity which limits the flat of this muddy and unattractive stream, so that our vision comprehended the long table-land bounded on the left by distant bluffs and in front by the more distant horizon, my attention was surprised by a belt of timber which I had never noticed before, extending from the river across the plateau to the bordering hills. As I rode along behind four patient government mules hitched to the convenient and substantial "daughters" wagon listening to the driver's goad as he hurried the shivering leaders, I reproached myself for having ridden that road so often without observing so conspicuous a forest as that which now greeted my vision. While thus torturing myself for such stupidity I noticed that the trees were moving slowly from the direction of the river towards the bluff. Moving trees? I thought, but how can I be mistaken, for I see them? When suddenly the trees changed their appearance. An expansive covered road of the prospect before me, and my traces quickly changed to tall-masted ships, casting deep shadows into an unfathomable ocean. They looked phantom-like. I have often seen the great hulks that ride the waters of the Pacific or carry the commerce of the Atlantic with wide-spread sails, but never before saw a square of such gigantic proportions as were now sailing before me in what was once called the Great American Desert. The vision was spectral in the extreme, and yet real as I was standing on the rock-ribbed shore of some vast ocean, while before me passed in review the white-sheeted navies of the world. But it was a disorienting vision, for in a twinkling it was gone and what was first a thick belt of timber and then the ships of an ocean, was simply a herd of cattle and nothing more, grazing and returning from their pastures ground beyond the bluffs.
 This was a day for visions. When two miles from Fort Lyon, to which place I was returning, the post comes in plain view. On this occasion a new scene greeted my wondering eyes. Before me was a clotted pile of buildings like some strong fort, with battlements, wings of stone, towers, domes and countless minarets. Tall archways, with pillared supports in distinct outline, broke the great battlements that stood in shadowy and gloomy recesses. I was as tall as I could be at that block of massive buildings had been reared one upon the other. The chimneys had great spirals that spiraled the air, while the foundations profound appeared to be a vast colonnade reaching the depths, as if mirrored in a deep and shadowy lake. As the distance lessened by our approach, the heights and depths decreased, until the buildings seemed three or four stories only, but still weird and dancing like some fairy scene, and at last, when we were a mile separated, they resumed their true and natural aspect, a group of one-story and one and a half-story buildings built for human habitations rather than ghostly homes for devils.
 Similar visions are by no means rare, nor are they of a moment's duration as some might suppose the mirage nature of the scene. In quick succession became the point of view was changing. Had I remained near the bridge where I first ascended to the tableland, the cattle would have continued to appear like trees until they or the sun had changed position so as to alter the reflections from the countless grains of sand that lay scattered on the surface of the ground, and sent distorted images of things into our eyes. So, too, would the fort have appeared a vast citadel, shimmering in the heated atmosphere, a dream of exaggeration of what it really was. Another deceit that is common is the appearance of lakes of water between the observer and some hills in the distance. This deception often reaches out beyond bounding hills and melts away in the horizon. The most distant hills seem to be islands fully surrounded by water. This appearance is nothing more than the innumerable reflections of the sky in the thin facets on the grains of sand, that cover the almost boundless desert. Yet the deception has oftentimes led the weary and thirsty traveler onward to certain disappointment and despair.
 LAREDO, TEXAS.

From Kyle.
 I am twelve years old. I will answer Rosa Adella Vest's question. Every knee shall bow every tongue shall swear in the Book of Isaiah, forty-fifth chapter, twenty-third verse. This is my second letter to the ADVOCATE.
 Sunday Book in the Bible does the word God not appear. I hope to see this in print.
 LEE O. COCKREHAM.

From Campbell.
 I am ten years old. I live with my grandpa and mamma; but am now going to school at Campbell and board Mrs. HAY'S, who is my pastor. My school teacher's name is Miss Jessie Matthews. I love her dearly. I am studying arithmetic, geography and third reader. I am a member of the ADVOCATE and it is always a welcome visitor. This is my first letter.
 JOSIE M. WHEAT.

From Logansport, La.
 As I have never seen anything in the letter box of Marfa, so I thought I would answer Leola Wooten's question. The 19th chapter of Second Kings and the 3rd chapter of Isaiah are alike. I will also reply to Ada V. Maynard's question: Christ's first miracle that he turned water into wine was recorded in the 2nd chapter of St. John.
 Where in the Bible does it speak of boys and girls?
 BERTIE MITCHELL.

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 Where in the Bible does it speak of boys and girls?
 MYRTLE BURDITT.

From Independence.
 I am ten years old. I go to school. My teacher's name is Mr. W. Bishop, and I am reading in the second reader. Papa takes the ADVOCATE and I enjoy reading the little folks' letters. I cannot read well enough to write a letter. Bedstead of iron is found in Deuteronomy, 34 chapter, 11th verse. I ask any little reader in what part of the Bible "Greyhound" is found?
 MARTHA FAYERS.

From Henderson.
 I am ten years old, and have never written a letter for I do not know how to write. Papa and mamma take our ADVOCATE, and I love to read the letters in it. I go to school and study fourth reader, third geography and arithmetic. I will answer Leola Wooten's question: Christ's first miracle that he turned water into wine was recorded in the 2nd chapter of St. John.
 IRMA McCLARY.

From Homer.
 I am twelve years old. I go to Sabbath-school every Sunday. My papa is superintendent, and has been for ten years. My teacher's name is Dr. Manning.
 I will answer Annie Sowell's question: Amram was the father of Moses. Now, I will ask the little cousins a question: Who was the woman that stood praying, and by whom did she stand while praying?
 Wishing success to the dear ADVOCATE, I am your friend,
 ALMA STEGALL.

From Commerce.
 As I have never seen anything from Commerce, I thought I would write you a short letter, and hope it will not be cast into the waste-basket. I have three little brothers. We do go to Sabbath-school, but we have one at home. Papa and mamma teach us and we are learning very fast. Papa and mamma belong to the M. E. Church. I will not close by asking a question: What relation was Esther to Mordecai? So no more.
 YOURS TRULY,
 WENDELL A. FATHERBERG.

From Larissa.
 I am ten years old. I am reading the Bible every day. I have a little girl, and I have a good mamma and papa. They are members of the Methodist Church. We have a Sabbath-school at Larissa, and we live two miles from Larissa. I will answer Annie Sowell's question: Amram was the father of Moses. Now, I will ask the little cousins a question: Who was the woman that stood praying, and by whom did she stand while praying?
 Wishing success to the dear ADVOCATE, as it is my first.
 LILLIE DUBLIN.

From Pleasant Grove.
 As you were so kind as to print my first letter, I will write again. I would like for our preacher to organize a mission band here. I cannot read well enough to read the nice little stories and letters, but sister reads them to me and I enjoy them so much. I wanted to have one letter, but my mamma said she would write for me if you would be kind enough to print it. I have two brothers and one sister, and the sweetest little nephew—we call him Buckie. He is a great boy.
 Our quarterly meeting is just over, and Bro. Johnson and Smith preached for us. We all had a good time, and we are glad and speaks a kind word to us children when he comes. I belong to the Sunday-school, and want to learn all I can, and grow up to be good and useful. We do go to Sabbath-school every Sunday. My teacher's name is Prof. S. E. Godkins.
 I will answer some of the questions the little friends asked: Where is Noah's ark found in Deuteronomy, fourth chapter and eleventh verse. Amram was Moses' father.
 EDWIN K. CAMPBELL.

From Farnersville.
 I am fourteen years of age; will be fifteen in August. My father takes the paper and I like it splendidly. I like to read the letters. We have Sunday-school and singing every Sunday. We have meeting at the Methodist Church the first and third Sunday in every month. Bro. B. Man is our pastor, and my father and mother and oldest sister belong to the church. I go to school in Farnersville. It is about two miles. I will ask some of my little friends a question: "Where is hawk first mentioned in the Bible?"
 MINNIE BALL.

From Durango.
 I am eight years old. I go to Sabbath-school at Durango. My teacher is Mrs. Harley. There are ten little girls in my class. Bro. Hart is our pastor. We all like him and his wife very much. I will tell the little children of other Sunday-schools that when we do not have nickels we take eggs and give them to Mr. Wallace Moore, our superintendent, and he sells them and pays for our little papers. My papa and mamma are Methodists and take the ADVOCATE. I love to read the little children's letters. This is my first letter.
 MANNIE RAY STEWART.

From Ravenna.
 I am six years old. I go to Sabbath-school, and know my lessons well, as my teacher will tell you. Mr. Cravens is my teacher. I like him very much. Papa is superintendent of our Sunday-school. I will not close by asking a question: What animal was it that Noah did not take into the ark?
 Your little friend,
 LEE CANAFAX.

From Forterville.
 I will answer Rosa A. Vest's question. By referring to the 45th chapter and 23rd verse of Isaiah you will find the answer. Next I will answer Amanda E. Griffin and Ada V. Maynard's question: Where was his first miracle. Some of the cousins will please answer my question.
 Yours truly,
 LILLIAN M.

From China Grove.
 I am five years and three months old. I have just finished spelling through my first reader. Four months ago I did not know all of my letters, but now I can spell real well. I have two little blue-eyed brothers—one three years old, named Herbert, and the other six months old, named Cyrus. I have a pet hen that weighs nine pounds; her name is Plym. We have Sunday-school every Sunday and preaching twice a month. Brother Hayes is

our preacher. Grandpa and papa take the ADVOCATE. Grandpa is steward and class leader. I could not write to go to my mamma to write for me, I want you to please print my letter in the ADVOCATE.
 CORA B. TERRY.

From Thornton.
 I write this letter to let you know that I am a member of Aunt Mary's missionary band. I will be thirteen years of age in June, 1886. I see so many nice letters in the ADVOCATE that I thought I would write also.
 I will try to answer Leola Wooten's question: 37th chapter of Isaiah and 19th of 2d Kings are alike.
 I cannot allow me to ask some questions: How many times does Jehovah occur in the Bible? Which is the little chapter in the Bible? Why was Abraham's name changed from Abram to Abraham? Our friend, from Abram to Abraham?
 CALVIN FOX.

From Granger.
 This is my third letter. We have no school now: it is out. We have Sunday-school every Sunday morning at Macedonia. Bro. Samuel Child is our pastor, and he is a very good man. He preaches for us once a month.
 I will try to answer some of the questions Bro. B. asked: What was the cause of Uzza's death? It was for touching the ark. It can be found in I Chron. thirteenth chapter.
 Mrs. Abbot asked where iron bedstead occurs in the Bible. Deuteronomy, third chapter, eleventh verse. Amram was Moses' father. I Chron. twenty-third chapter, thirteenth verse. I will close by asking, Who were the sons of Moses? Your friend,
 ALICE HOLSHOUSER.

From Wimerley.
 We take the ADVOCATE and like it immensely. My parents, a sister and myself, are members of the M. E. Church, South. Bro. J. W. is the pastor of our church at Wimerley. Bro. A. F. Bridges (a local preacher) also preaches for us.
 I will answer Leola Wooten's question: The 19th chapter of II. Kings and the 37th chapter of Isaiah are alike. Also Amanda E. Griffin's question: The first miracle that he turned water into wine was recorded in the 2nd chapter of St. John.
 Who established idolatry? Would Aunt Mary of Thornton like to write to the paper. My best wishes to the ADVOCATE. I am one of the cousins.
 MAGGIE L. CRUZE.

From Burton.
 I am ten years old. Having never seen any little letters from Burton, I thought, as I had been to-day and heard Bro. Wesson preach, I thought I would write to you. I have been going to school to my sister, Youngie Summers, but our school is out and she has gone on a visit to Helton and Cornwallville. My best friend, little brother, little brother, Youngie Summers, with her, which leaves me quite lonely, but for my beautiful, large doll with real hair and some of her old dresses, and my little year old sister, I wish some of the little cousins could come and help me pass the time away playing with them during holidays.
 What chapter in the Bible is the shortest verse to be found? Please do not send this to the waste basket.
 PEARL BOWENS.

From Orange.
 As I have not seen any little letters from this place for some time, I thought I would write to you. I have a good meeting, but we have had here, Bro. Archer, of Beaumont, and Bro. Smith, of Liberty, assisted Bro. Callahan; they had a glorious meeting, and I think the church is better than ever. We all enjoyed that. We love Bro. Archer and Bro. Smith. We have had a nice party, and we were very glad. We had sisters Lizzie and Clara could not go to Sunday-school today on account of the rain. It is the first time we have had a rainy day here. I will close by asking the little folks a question: What became of the nine lepers which failed to glorify God? I hope to see this in print, as it is my first.
 I AM TEN YEARS OLD.
 JIMMIE ELROD.

From Pontotoc.
 I am eleven years old and I have a little brother. His name is Eddie, and we thought we would write you a short letter.
 I have been going to school all winter, but our school has closed now. My little brother and I both go to Sabbath-school, and we are going to learn our lessons well, so when we grow to be men, if we live, we may know a great deal about the Bible.
 Bro. Kingsbury is our preacher this year, and I go to church every time he preaches. The girls ask the question: I want the ADVOCATE: How many times the word shivers occurs in the Bible? I think I can tell her. It is just mentioned one time, and that is in Revelations 1:17.
 If you will be so kind as to print this letter may we can do better next time.
 GEORGE WILLIS.

From Carthage.
 I am eight years old and live in East Texas. I am a Methodist, and takes the ADVOCATE, and says she never expects to be with good and useful. We do go to Sabbath-school every Sunday. My teacher's name is Prof. S. E. Godkins.
 I will answer Annie Sowell's question of April 25: Amram was the father of Moses. Your little friend,
 MAGGIE BLAIR.

From Lufkin.
 I will answer Ada Maynard's and Amanda Griffin's question: What was the first miracle that he turned water into wine? It was recorded in the 2nd chapter of St. John.
 At a wedding feast, in the city of Cana of Galilee, Christ changed water into wine.
 I think it is so nice and pleasant for us little children to write to each other through the ADVOCATE.
 Now, I am going to tell you how we manage around home. Each girl has a letter box at her desk. Bro. B. Man is our pastor, and my father and mother and oldest sister belong to the church. I go to school in Farnersville. It is about two miles. I will ask some of my little friends a question: "Where is hawk first mentioned in the Bible?"
 MINNIE BALL.

From North Georgia.
 Mrs. N. A. McCreary writes from Spring Place, Ga. She says she has been very much afflicted with indigestion, sick headaches and nervous prostration caused from biliousness and constipation. I tried many remedies, but got no permanent relief until I used Dr. Moly's Lemon Elixir. I am now in better health than I have been for many months. My husband has been subject to chills and fever from his infancy. I could get nothing to relieve her; the Lemon Elixir restored her to perfect health as per direction. I would get nothing to relieve her; the Lemon Elixir restored her to perfect health as per direction. I would get nothing to relieve her; the Lemon Elixir restored her to perfect health as per direction.
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 IN ALL ITS
Various Forms.
 SUCH AS
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This is a combination of Saline and Vegetable materials, and contains no Mercury or any drastic vegetable cathartic, such as Mandrake and Aloes, and is far superior in action, as it never debilitates or produces any unpleasant effects. It will remove all diseases incidental to a disordered state of the Liver, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. It will act thoroughly on the Liver in from two to four weeks, and does not produce nausea or griping pains in the bowels.
 Dr. Tobin having suffered for years with Liver Disease, and after trying every known remedy to no success, has succeeded in curing his liver, and there is no other remedy so recommended in all Liver Complaints. It will act thoroughly on the Liver in from two to four weeks, and does not produce nausea or griping pains in the bowels.
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READY RELIEF.
NOT ONE HOUR
 After reading this advertisement need anyone SUFFER WITH PAIN. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF IS A CURE FOR EVERY PAIN. It is the first and is THE ONLY PAIN REMEDY that instantly stops the most excruciating Pain, such as Indigestion, and cures congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application.
 For Headache, whether sick or nervous, Toothache, Neuralgia, Nervousness and Sleeplessness, Rheumatism, Lumbago, Pains and Weakness in the Back, Spine or Kidneys, Pains around the Liver, Pleurisy, Swelling of the Throat, Pains in the Bowels, Heartburn and Pains of all kinds, Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effects a permanent cure. 50 cents a bottle.
 Dr. Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent, The Great Blood Purifier, For the cure of all Scrofulous, Skin and Blood Diseases. \$1.00 a bottle.
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 Dr. Radway's Pills are a cure for this complaint. They restore strength to the stomach, and make it perform its functions. The symptoms of Dyspepsia disappear, and with them the liability of the system to contract disease. Take the medicine according to directions, and observe what we say in "False and True," respecting diet.
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 Price 25 cents per box. Sold by all druggists.

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 Read the Great Methodist Divine and Eminent Physician Says of
Dr. J. BRADFIELD'S
Female Regulator.
 ATLANTA, GA., Feb. 20, 1884.
 Dr. J. BRADFIELD: Dear Sir—Some fifteen years ago I examined the recipe of Female Regulator, and carefully studied authorities in regard to its components, and then as well as now pronounced it to be the most scientific and skillful combination of the really reliable remedial vegetable agents known to science, to act directly on the womb and uterine organs, and the organs and parts sympathizing directly with these; and, therefore, providing a specific remedy for all disorders of the womb, and of the adjacent organs and parts. Yours truly,
 JESSE BORING, M. D., D. D.

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 Sold by all druggists. Send for our treatise on the Health and Happiness of Woman, mailed free, which gives all particulars.
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Iron Invigorator!
 GUARANTEED TO CURE ALL
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 When the simple directions are followed, no humbug in this. For benefit of sufferers, I call here few names of best citizens of Waco and McLennan County, as testimonials to the verity of above merit, claimed in this wonderful medicine. J. L. HARRIS, M. D., MCGEE, M. D., W. DUNN, M. D., JOHN H. HARRISON, CAPT. SILAS EDWARDS, REV. S. L. MORRIS, DR. THOS. MOORE, MR. W. C. CLAY and A. C. RIDDLE.
 Many physicians now use it daily in their practice, and with happy results. The described Iron fully known and appreciated to become the universal Phoenix for all the ailments arising through sympathy from depleted secretions of the stomach, but all the ailments are cured. Hence, nothing made to equal it as a "LIVER TONIC" and "BOWEL INVIGORATOR."
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to be remarkable for their beauty, clean lines and industry. The children especially are beautiful. Many beautiful flowers and various kinds of fruits abound in the country. For full information on the subject I refer my little friend to Bro. H. Coleman's work "Light on the Dark."
 Bro. Hancy is our preacher here. We all like him because he is good. The ADVOCATE is a member of our family (so to speak). Your little friend,
 GEORGIA LEE DENMAN.

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 GEORGE WILLIS.

From Carthage.
 I am eight years old and live in East Texas. I am a Methodist, and takes the ADVOCATE, and says she never expects to be with good and useful. We do go to Sabbath-school every Sunday. My teacher's name is Prof. S. E. Godkins.
 I will answer Annie Sowell's question of April 25: Amram was the father of Moses. Your little friend,
 MAGGIE BLAIR.

From Lufkin.
 I will answer Ada Maynard's and Amanda Griffin's question: What was the first miracle that he turned water into wine? It was recorded in the 2nd chapter of St. John.
 At a wedding feast, in the city of Cana of Galilee, Christ changed water into wine.
 I think it is so nice and pleasant for us little children to write to each other through the ADVOCATE.
 Now, I am going to tell you how we manage around home. Each girl has a letter box at her desk. Bro. B. Man is our pastor, and my father and mother and oldest sister belong to the church. I go to school in Farnersville. It is about two miles. I will ask some of my little friends a question: "Where is hawk first mentioned in the Bible?"
 MINNIE BALL.

From North Georgia.
 Mrs. N. A. McCreary writes from Spring Place, Ga. She says she has been very much afflicted with indigestion, sick headaches and nervous prostration caused from biliousness and constipation. I tried many remedies, but got no permanent relief until I used Dr. Moly's Lemon Elixir. I am now in better health than I have been for many months. My husband has been subject to chills and fever from his infancy. I could get nothing to relieve her; the Lemon Elixir restored her to perfect health as per direction. I would get nothing to relieve her; the Lemon Elixir restored her to perfect health as per direction.
 W. G

portunity to attend any or all of the other exercises of the San Marcos Assembly.

Every city in Texas, interested in work for young men, which cannot yet employ a General Secretary, is invited to select one or more of its Christian young men who can devote their nights to work for young men, and raise enough money to pay his expenses to San Marcos, to give him some compensation for his services at night during the year, and arrange to furnish and furnish at least one room in the city as a clean, pure home for young men.

Gate fees to the Assembly grounds are 15 cents per day, 75 cents per week, \$2 per month. Tents may be rented of the Assembly at \$3 to \$5 per month. No charge for the Y. M. C. A. school, except 25 to 50 cents for text book outlines.

For further information concerning the Y. M. C. A. school, write Henry Edwards Brown, during April and May, Dallas, Texas; during June and July, Oberlin, Ohio.

Concerning expenses, write Judge Sterling Fisher, San Marcos, Texas. Concerning the Assembly, write Rev. H. M. Dubose, Houston, Texas.

REVIVAL NEWS.

Rev. J. M. Bond, Dawson, June 11: Revival still going on at Dawson; ninety conversions up to date; twenty-five penitents left; congregations very large day and night. No help except resident preachers. Interest is wonderful. To God the glory.

Rev. C. I. McWhirter, Forney, June 7: The meeting here of seventeen days closed with some twelve or fifteen conversions and fourteen accessions to our church as some of the results. The revival in the church was considerable. We hoped and prayed for greater results, but we are thankful for and encouraged by the good accomplished. Hope to report greater things before the year shall close. May I mention the recent pointing at the parsonage? Good sisters, assisted by kind friends, surprised the preacher and wife by presenting them with a large variety of articles of food, dress and comfort. In return the donors have our prayers, best wishes and grateful acknowledgments.

Rev. M. A. Black, Luling, June 8: I closed the meeting at Luling last night, that being the thirteenth day of the meeting. The entire membership of the church was revived, and about forty conversions with twenty-two additions to the church to date, with a number of others who will join our church, as the fruit of the revival. Bro. Deets, from Gonzales, was with us through the meeting. He is the best preacher in revival work in the West Texas Conference, and I suppose ranks with the best of any conference. Bro. W. H. H. Biggs came in and gave us two of his best sermons, and that means much. Bro. Holbrook was with us a few days, and while not able to preach, otherwise helped us. Luling to the front.

Rev. H. H. Vaughan, Trinity, June 8: We have just closed a meeting of ten days' duration, which, taking all things in consideration, was remarkably successful. Growth in the Trinity circuit, and in a new mill town. Only four members of the Methodist Church could be found the first of the year. About two months ago we organized a church with ten members. The first Sunday in May we commenced a meeting, assisted by Bro. A. J. Frick, of Mt. Vernon circuit, an able and earnest minister of the New Testament, who stayed with us through the entire meeting, and worked in the pulpit and altar and home for the conversion of souls. God blessed our labors. We do not know the exact number of professions of faith, but there were several who gave bright testimony for Christ. Seventeen were added to the church, for which we bless God and take courage.

Rev. John T. Graham, Edna, Jackson county, June 7: We have just closed a protracted meeting of thirteen days continuance at this place, which resulted in eighteen conversions and eight accessions to the church. The majority of those converted previously held membership in the church. Rev. H. A. Bourland, financial agent of the Southwestern Union, was with us the first week of the meeting and did some direct gospel preaching. He came to us as the minister of God for good, and left in the consolation that his labors were fruitful in beginning of a work of grace, the increase of which will not be measured in time. The interest was first manifested during a service for children on the first Sunday evening and has grown to the proportions of a decided revival movement. A young men's prayer-meeting will be organized this week. Family altars are being erected in the homes of our people, and we feel permanently improved every way. The figures above indicate only in part the results of this meeting. Dr. Bourland brought the subject of Christian education prominently before our congregation, and showed clearly the relation of the church in Texas to the Southwestern, and the importance of co-operative effort in its support. A small amount was contributed to the Helping Hand Fund, and some real estate donated to the endowment fund. Rev. S. G. Shaw, of Quero, visited us during the meeting and remained several days, much to our pleasure and the advancement of the work. He is a solid preacher. Rev. W. H. Killough spent one day with us and preached two excellent sermons. We are also favored with copious showers of rain, which insure a good crop.

TEXAS CORRESPONDENCE.

From Five Conferences. Rev. J. F. Archer, Beaumont, June 9: My second quarterly meeting just over. Bro. Sproule was with us in the Spirit of the Master. His sermons were plain, practical, pointed, soul-stirring. Finances somewhat behind. Spiritual outlook encouraging.

Rev. J. F. Denton, Beeville, June 7: Well, we have had another election on prohibition. Beeville voted eighty-one for prohibition; not one against. No whisky-sellers wanted in Bee county. We have had a great quantity of rain in the last few days; will make plenty of corn and cotton. Railroad within four miles; will be here this week, I think.

M. R. L. Pleasant Ridge, June 5: Pleasant Ridge Sabbath-school lost an excellent superintendent when Bro. P. C. Robam died last December. Bro. Bond carries on his work. A flourishing Sabbath-school is now conducted by a father in Israel, Rev. E. C. Cox. In May a memorial service was held for the deceased superintendent, Rev. E. C. Cox, preached an excellent funeral sermon.

and Rev. S. C. Vaughn conducted the other service in a solemn and impressive manner. It has been said: "Country churchyards, thy name is desolation." Not so at Pleasant Ridge, where many of the evergreens and flowers bestrew the dead.

Rev. J. Jones, Bedias, June 6: Second quarterly conference over; Bro. Morris absent, visiting Georgetown; Bro. Mickle in the chair; good report from preacher in charge; had report from the stewards. Money very scarce. Crops in good fix. Nearly six weeks without rain, but it came this morning—a slow rain for five or six hours; the ground thoroughly wet. The oat crop good, considering the drought. We thank God for the showers of rain upon the earth, and pray for showers of grace upon our church.

Rev. C. J. Oxley, Willow City, June 1: Our much talked-of Sunday-school celebration took place Saturday and Sunday (May 29, 30). I think I say all enjoyed it hugely; some three or four hundred were present; beees, sheep, and hogs were slain without stint, and a most abundant repast was furnished. The celebration was held on the Comanche camp-ground. The schools began to arrive about 10 o'clock a. m., and after singing and prayer, the program of the day was commenced. We had speeches from prominent Sunday-school workers and essays from scholars and teachers. At intervals we were treated to fine instrumental and vocal music. The marching of the schools with banners waving in the breeze, and the voices of young and old blending in hymns of praise to Him whose cause we are striving to advance, was inspiring; and I know that many resolutions were formed that day that will tell on the Sunday-school interests in this part of the country for many days to come, and God grant, throughout eternity. We intend to make it an annual event, and I trust that it will be a means in God's hands of advancing the interests of Sunday-school work in this part of his heritage.

Rev. T. C. DePew, Lone Grove, June 4: Bluffton mission was cut off from the Valley Springs circuit at the last annual conference, and lies in the northeast part of Llano county; full of people who are just making a start in the world. As usual, the odium is in the ascendancy; we found about one hundred members. Forming some of these classes was part of the last year's work of Father J. F. Cook. Religious denominations are well represented. We have Presbyterians, Baptists, Campbellites, Christadelphians, and on down to a few Mormons. Plenty of preachers; but, as we are sure to find, God has scattered some of the salt of the earth here, too. Good, warm Christians have held one protracted meeting during which the church was revived, the old familiar "shun" being heard. Three conversions and three accessions. We are working for, praying for, and expecting greater things this year. But we hope our brethren will spare us in judgment when our financial report is read next fall. Our people are having a hand-to-hand struggle with poverty for bread, and if God will, it will hold the rain, many will suffer. Bro. Stevenson, our presiding elder, said "boastingly," at our first quarterly conference, that he had never seen a starved Methodist preacher yet. He may have to modify that expression before the year is out.

A. J. Johnson, Mason, June 2: The writer and John A. Caplin took the train in Galveston, May 17, bound for western Texas on a trip for health and recreation. We laid over in Houston one day and took the train for Austin the next day, arriving there at 6:25 p. m. After taking the night, among the rest the capitol building in course of erection, which, when completed, will be one of the grandest structures in the South. The work is all done by machinery, the rock being prepared at the quarries on the Colorado above Burnet, numbered and carried by rail to Austin. We were told that the building lacked only 100 yards of being a mile in circumference. After remaining in Austin two days we purchased ponies and started on our journey for the west, camping out of nights, sleeping in our hammocks as comfortably as though we were in a palace. We did not see much game on our journey, but had royal sport fishing on the Colorado, and in the creeks, all of which have abundance of fish of various kinds. We visited several places of rare interest in the country. On the top of White Bluff Mountain there are several springs of the purest and coolest water. At Mr. Wells' place the spring runs through his orchard and he has irrigating ditches all through the place so that his trees flourish in the very driest weather. He has a peach tree in his orchard which measures five feet in circumference and has been bearing for fifteen years. We ate plums, peaches, apples and cherries in the orchard with the clear, cool water flowing by our feet. We also visited Mammoth Falls on Fall creek, in Llano county. The water falls 117 feet from the rocks above to the pool below, and the pool is said to be sixty feet deep. This is one of the grandest sights in the South. There is also a cave, which we explored as far as we could without lights, which is one of the greatest curiosities the writer ever had the pleasure of seeing. We were careful to take our Winchester with us. We visited several mountains and collected some rare specimens of ore which abounds in great quantities. We also visited old Fort Mason, which has long been abandoned by the United States troops, nothing being left to mark the spot but large piles of rocks and bare walls. This is noted for being the place where Gen. Lee wrote to Gen. Scott, telling him of his intention to resign his commission in the United States army and join the Confederacy. Gen. Lee's street was quarter-master here also. We also had the pleasure of meeting several good, old-fashioned Methodists who gave us a hearty welcome, and of seeing several camp-grounds where great revivals had taken place. Methodism seems to be on the up grade in all the country we traveled through. We go from here to Devils river, in Crockett county, where there is said to be good fishing and hunting. Will write again from there.

A needle was recently found in an egg taken from under a Philadelphia hen that had "stolen" a nest. In this instance her owner mistook the nest for a hen's, and allowed it to take its course, as she was evidently setting on the egg with the intention of hatching out a sewing machine.

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MISSIONARY APPROPRIATIONS.

Table with columns for location and amount. Includes entries for Mexico, Brazil, Japan, etc.

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FLEMING BROS.—Dear Sirs: Enclosed you will find one dollar for which you will please send me more of your Dr. C. McLane's Liver Pills. I have two boxes I ordered and received. I would only say they have done me more good than I could express. I feel much better now than I have for two years past. Yours truly, REV. PHIL SPAETH, West Sandlake, N. Y.

MESSRS. OF DAN, PATRICK CO., VA. FLEMING BROS.—Gentlemen: I have been using McLane's Liver Pills in my family, and find them very beneficial, and now ask what you will send them to me for, per dozen boxes. I have almost constant use for them. I wish to know if you want them for my family use only, as I am a farmer and don't wish to buy for them every time that I want them. Please write me on receipt of this and let me know what you will do for me in this case. Truly yours, &c. JOSEPH G. TERRY, MIDDLETOWN, MASS., January 11.

FLEMING BROS.—Sirs: Received your package of cards you sent me, and I think they are very beautiful, indeed, and every young lady is in love with them. I can get your Pills in the city, and I have used them and find they are just what they are represented. Yours respectfully, MRS. J. W. BOWLEY.

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