

Correspondence.

Letter from Australia.

Dear Bro. Floyd:

This is Christmas day and although I have few personal acquaintances on the Pacific coast, I feel a strong desire to send a Christmas greeting to you and to all the readers of the HERALD. To day is not like the Christmas of my boyhood when the crisping snow and crackling fire and frost-dimmed windows brought the family circle into closer fellowship, and the day closed with nutcracking and apples from the cellar. In those days Christmas was Christmas for sure, and no red tape formality fixed it up for public admiration. Here the day belongs to the public and everybody wants to give publicity to his enjoyment. Nearly every one is out of doors in summer attire, some pushing baby carriages on the green, some walking with their families in the public gardens and others in buggies and carts and waggonettes going into the country. Flowers are blooming in every garden and hammocks "swing loose at the sport of the wind." The business houses are all closed, but still wear the decorations made yesterday afternoon, which consist chiefly in an artistic arrangement of fern leaves or stalks some of which are six to eight feet long. Christmas and New Year and the days intervening are regarded as holidays with much strictness. The day after Christmas is called "boxing day," and is an high day among the English. It takes its name I am told from an ancient custom of giving Christmas boxes or gifts on this day. Holidays are so frequent here that it is no uncommon thing for two to come together. This may be partly accounted for by the fact that the majority of church members in Victoria are in the church of England, which is noted for its observances of "days and months" like the "foolish Galatians." The religious statistics of this colony are as puzzling as the famous "15 puzzle," for the highest numbers cause the most trouble. There are 800,000 inhabitants in Victoria, 300,000 of whom are members of the Church of England and 200,000 are Catholics. The Presbyterians number 130,000 and the Wesleyan Methodists 97,000. The Baptists number 20,000 and the Disciples 5,000. Nearly every shade of religious belief is represented. There are thirteen men and two women

who are converts to Mormonism, but while the present proportion exists there is little hope of rapid growth. In looking at our own numbers one feels like asking "what are these among so many?" But Gideon's three hundred inspire us with courage and hope. Apparently small forces are often used by divine wisdom to accomplish grand results. As long as our plea is in harmony with the revealed will of Christ, we may be assured of great results from our labors. If our aim is only to harmonize with the religious jargon of our times, our success will be an eternal failure. The Disciples have about fifty churches in Victoria and only ten or twelve paid preachers, yet the demand for preachers is no greater than in America. The needs of the churches here as everywhere else are more easily supplied than their wants. The people here seem more cautious in accepting new ideas than people of the newer States. A precedent has more influence than many arguments. As my work for the past year has been wholly in new fields, I have learned more of the religious tendencies than I could have done in laboring for a well established church.

The public schools here are not equal to those in the States, yet they are good. The attendance is compulsory by law till fifteen years of age. The grade is not high and many children twelve and thirteen years of age pass a satisfactory examination exempting them from further attendance. There are only three weeks vacation in the twelve months. Gifts or prizes are distributed at the end of the year to such scholars as have shown special merit in any of the studies pursued. The government appoints all teachers, and fixes and pays all salaries. There is a local Board but it has no control nor responsibility in the management of the schools. The teachers are well paid and have permanent employment.

The temperance cause here is an infant wrestling with a giant. In Victoria there is one licensed drinking place for every 190 of the population which fully equals the proportion in the city of Chicago. Drunken women are often seen staggering on the streets. When homes are thus corrupted the temperance millenium is not likely to dawn soon. There are some active workers in the temperance cause, but the results seem small.

I see that my letter is already

full length and brevity is a part of my religion as well as my practice.

E. T. C. BENNETT.

From Bro. J. L. Wigle.

HARRISBURG, OR.,

Jan. 28, 1884.

Bro. Floyd:

We are moving very slowly in the cause of Christ in this vicinity. I find a number of brethren living in the country surrounding, but keeping house nowhere. I have just entered upon a voluntary work here, and with the support of the brethren I hope for a general awakening.

Your brother in Christ,

J. L. WIGLE.

Report.

DAYTON, W. T.,

Jan. 26, 1884.

Bro. Floyd:

The meeting at Touchet closed on the 21st, and the result has been an increase of the membership of the church here of thirty-one members; seventeen by confession and baptism, and fourteen by relation. The brethren have been greatly strengthened and build up, and have good cause to rejoice, and we think that good seed has been sown that will bring forth many fold in the future. The church at this point is one of the strongest in the territory, and we trust that its light may shine and its influence may itself continue to extend, that it may be a strong center from which to work. Bros. S. Hamilton and I. N. Richardson will preach for us until the meeting of the Coöperation in June.

Bro. Morgan is at present holding a meeting with the church at Fair View, from there he will come to Dayton. Bro. Morgan has the entire confidence of the brethren and respect and the good will of the community. May our Heavenly Father strengthen him for his work.

R. L. DASHIELL.

"My mouth shall speak truth. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. I have walked in the truth."—*The Bible*.

The citizen who invades his duties, or leaves them to be performed by self-chosen and mercenary rules, is guilty of a crime against the State, and against free institutions in general.

Missionary Meeting.

EDEN VALLEY, W. T.,

Jan. 10, 1884.

Missionary meeting met pursuant to announcement, Bro. W. H. H. McClure, chairman, presiding.

Meeting opened with singing, reading and prayer.

First in order reading of the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board, which were approved.

Chairman stated why the place of meeting was changed from Viola, I. T., (Four Mile), as per announcement, to Eden Valley, W. T., was that they could not get a house in which to meet, which speaks rather discouraging for that place, as we supposed that Viola was a town.

Roll of officers being called, showed Treasurer and Assistant Secretary absent. Bro. George Ickes was elected Treasurer *pro tem.*, and Bro. P. E. Fisher Assistant Secretary.

Motion prevailed that a committee be appointed on Credentials. Bros. P. E. Fisher, E. A. Shirley and F. D. Stayton appointed.

Motion prevailed that a committee be appointed on divine services. Bros. Clizer, Woody and Lewis appointed.

Motion prevailed that a committee of one be appointed on reception. Bro. C. J. Wright appointed.

Motion prevailed that all members of the Christian church present be invited to take part in the deliberations of the meeting.

Motion prevailed that the following question be taken up for discussion: "Is the Missionary Coöperation of God or Man?" This question was argued at considerable length by a number of the brethren, all contending that the Missionary Coöperation is of God, after which Bro. Wright made an able speech in favor of the Missionary Coöperation being within accordance to the Bible; he also argued the system of equal taxation of each member, as adopted by the Eden Valley and Hangman Creek congregations, for the purpose of raising the necessary funds for missionary work. He also argued that the weekly contributions are for the poor, and not for the preacher.

Adjourned to meet to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock.

SECOND DAY'S SESSION.

Opened with singing, reading and prayer.

Reading of the minutes of previous day's session which were ap-