

PACIFIC
CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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Something New.

In order to get the MESSENGER more widely distributed, that the people may see it and judge of its merit, we will send the paper to any new subscriber four months for FIFTY CENTS. Let each friend of the MESSENGER send it to some friend for that length of time and thus help us and help the cause. A separate list of the four month's subscribers will be kept, and the paper be stopped promptly at the end of the time unless the subscriber likes it well enough to send us a year's subscription in advance. Remember FOUR MONTHS for FIFTY CENTS. This offer to remain open till the 1st of January only. Each name, post-office, county and state must be written plainly in full.

There has been nothing heard from the California State Meeting except through the San Francisco dailies, and a letter from Bro. J. J. Moss, containing a number of new names and some renewals accompanied by a money order, which has helped us not a little, but not a word concerning the meeting itself.

Elder J. J. Moss is our special agent to receive and receipt for the money contributed by the brethren of California for investment in the office of the PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Unaccountable Delay.

More than ten days have elapsed since the close of the California State Meeting, and yet we have not received the minutes for publication, nor a line from any one touching the results of the meeting.

Is this silence ominous? Did the brethren of that great State come short of their duty in any respect? Have they reconsidered the resolution of 1879, and resolved to take no stock in the PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, and feel, consequently, not at liberty to use its columns? We trust not; but rather hope that the delay is attributed to the irregularities of the mail.

Opening of the Fifteenth Session
of Christian College.

We were agreeably surprised and pleasantly disappointed at the opening of the session on the 20th. We had been detained at home through the entire vacation. The time generally given to soliciting was employed with watchings intense and cares oppressive in the sick room. So great was our anxiety that we could scarcely give due attention to the correspondence relating to the college. Yet we were greeted at the opening by a larger number of students than were in attendance at the opening last year. This is encouraging and very grateful to our feelings, as it gives us to understand that while we were prevented from soliciting by the duties prompted by affection for one suffering greatly, the friends of the college were not idle, but did for the institution more perhaps than we could have done had we been free to go to the work.

We feel our energies renewed by the result, and we enter upon the labors of the session with more zeal and greater cheerfulness than we supposed possible under the sad and distressing circumstances by which we are surrounded.

The classes were promptly and well organized early in the week, and the work of the session was fully inaugurated.

The present out-look is exceedingly favorable for a pleasant and profitable session.

Tradition vs the Bible.

"Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which art in heaven."—Sermon on the Mount.

Mr. Spurgeon, the celebrated Baptist preacher of London, is reported as having said in a sermon recently that, "Salvation is not by doing the will of God, but by believing in Christ." And Mr. Moody, the revivalist said, "If a person wanted to be saved he had got to give up trying and let God save him."

Such language from such men shows the blinding and stultifying power of tradition, and the deep-seated prejudice against the simplicity of the Gospel plan of salvation.

Mr. Spurgeon's remark is in direct contradiction of what Jesus said, while Mr. Moody's is flatly opposed to common sense and to Bible-teaching as well.

All this out-cry against works and in favor of some metaphysical conversion which no man professes to be able to explain is to invalidate, not baptism, for all teach and practice it, but the purpose of baptism as stated in so many words in the Bible, viz.: "for the remission of sins." This is called the work of the sinner on which it is feared that he will rely alone for the remission of his sins. There is no one act connected with the entire plan of salvation in which the subject is more passive than that of baptism.

The command is in the passive form—"be baptized." Faith is coupled with an effort and repentance is a positive act, but in baptism the subject submits himself passively into the hands of another, as one dead unto sin and ready to be buried, from which burial he is to be raised to walk in newness of life. If a party have not a living faith in Christ and a repentance unto life, resulting in a change of heart and a death to sin, he is not a fit subject for burial. Without these antecedents Christian baptism is simply impossible.

But the remarkable feature in this folly is the extraordinary work these men do, and teach the sinner to do in order to believe in Christ.

The time and effort of praying and agonizing with and over one sinner to have him converted would more than suffice to baptize a score of penitent believers who had "confessed with their mouth the Lord Jesus and believed in their heart that God raised him from the dead."

To witness the work at the mourner's bench and to hear the loud prayers verging on to importunities and absolute commands for God to come down and pardon sinners, one would never suspect that such a reading as this could be found in the Bible: "That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling upon the Lord."

For this novel system at the mourner's bench it is not claimed, perhaps, that there is any Scriptural warrant either in precept or precedent; but where, we may be permitted to inquire, does the Gospel direct the sinner to pray as a condition of pardon? There is not a single case in apostolic teaching or practice where the sinner and his spiritual teachers labored with God to send the Holy Spirit with converting power, according to modern, orthodox practice.

Another remarkable feature in this anomalous Gospel is, that many a sinner after days, weeks and months of effort, even to exhaustion of body and mind, goes away unconverted. Who is to blame? There is just here a strange inconsistency between the language of the efforts to "get the sinner through," and the explanation of the failure. The instructions sent up to the Lord in the prayers are that all things are ready—the church is ready, the sinner is waiting; and the supplication is that

the Lord would come or send converting power for the comfort of the waiting one; but when the conversion fails, the explanation is made by heaping blame on the poor sufferer who has been so sadly disappointed, by telling him that he failed to give himself up wholly to the Lord, or that he was wanting in faith and sincerity. The man has submitted himself to the requirements of the Gospel in earnestness and honesty according to the very best instruction he has been able to get from his teachers. He knows he was sincere, yet the result which he was encouraged to expect did not follow. The disappointment is likely to prove a deep and lasting injury to him; while the practice, unscriptural and unsatisfactory in results, is likely to bring christianity into ridicule and contempt in the estimation of the multitudes who ought to be saved by it.

A plain presentation of the Gospel in its simplicity and beauty ought to be enough to induce every responsible person to embrace it.

Yet the magnitude of the issues involved justifies fervent zeal, warm exhortation and persistent effort on the part of Christians to influence others to accept it, and to place themselves in position that they may become the recipients of eternal life. Zeal should not be abated, but it should be manifested according to knowledge, and tradition should not be permitted to render of no effect the word of the ever living God.

The Oregon Pacific Railroad.

For years past we have insisted that a railroad from Corvallis to the Yaquina Bay would repay to the farmers of Polk and Marion and the counties in the valley south, in a few years, more than the cost of construction in reduced freights arising from competition between Portland and Yaquina as shipping points.

We have watched with deep interest the efforts of Col. Hogg in agitating and working for this road.

We were not prepared, however, for the pleasant surprise caused by the articles of incorporation of

THE OREGON PACIFIC RAILROAD which appeared last week in the papers, and the editorials from Corvallis and Albany speaking of "The Yaquina Bay-railroad sure this time," with many other pleasant things.

We were, by no means, prepared for the amplification of the idea from a mere switch of a few miles to a grand trunk of 600 miles in length. And yet, when we remember the immense capital in the East and in Europe, just now idle and seeking investment, and the fact that this road will be located on one of the most eligible and profitable routes on the coast we can readily understand why Col. Hogg should have succeeded in enlisting ample capital for so grand an enterprise. Cutting across all roads running from the South to the Columbia river, it must offer sharp competition as a shorter and cheaper route to the ocean, and give to the Yaquina a very strong claim as a shipping point against Portland and Astoria. For all that vast region in Oregon embracing the lake district of the South and the blue grass country of the South-east, and for that portion of Idaho including Boise basin and Snake river valley south this road, will form the most direct outlet to the ocean. It will ultimately form connections at Boise, or some other point east of the Blue Mountains, through a road by the way of Snake river valley, with the Union Pacific to the southward, and at Spokane Falls with the North Pacific, northward.

Such a line will be of almost inestimable importance to the producer, not only in multiplying the facilities for transportation, but in reducing freights by the competition it can offer over a shorter and better route.

This very circumstance suggests a thought worthy of consideration by

our legislatures now in session: While every reasonable encouragement should be given to every enterprise which has for its object the development of the resources of the State, great care and prudence should be exercised lest while advancing the interests of one, another should be impeded or prejudiced by legislation.

The fierce conflicts coming up so constantly in the East between competing lines, show how earnestly and zealously we will work who are controlled by the vast interests of a great system of railroads. That special legislation will be sought by some of these lines may be anticipated. That our legislators have gained sufficient wisdom from the current history of special legislation in the East to guard against obstructing one enterprise, while encouraging another, is fair to presume. And yet the wisest and most prudent may sometimes be benefitted by having their attention called to a point which requires to be well guarded.

A Good Law.

We are in receipt of Senate Bill No. 82, introduced by Clow, of Polk, "to provide for the interchange of traffic by Common Carriers."

This bill, if passed into a law, will anticipate and prevent much vexatious delay in transportation and extortion in freight, especially in case of competing railroads, from which the middle and western States have suffered so heavily for years past.

We commend the wisdom of our joint senator in introducing the bill at this time when there are no competing roads in the hands of strong, wealthy corporations to oppose its passage.

This style of general legislation is very much better than that special legislation which while encouraging enterprise for development in one direction obstructs and cripples it in another.

Public interest requires that the point to which the bill looks should be well guarded, and now is a most favorable time, before conflicting interests are arrayed for and against the measure, to enact a general law, looking to the welfare of the people by requiring Common Carriers, who enjoy peculiar privileges, to reciprocate courtesy and do their whole duty for fair and reasonable remuneration.

Return to Primitive Christianity.

DISCUSSION OF LEADING PRINCIPLES.

[Selected.]

THE CHRISTIAN CONFESSION.

I. The only apostolic and divine confession of faith which God, the Father of all, has laid for the church—and that on which Jesus himself said he would build it, is the sublime and supreme proposition: THAT JESUS OF NAZARETH IS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD. This is the peculiarity of the Christian system: its specific attribute. The antediluvian Abel, Enock, &c., believed that a son of Eve would bruise Satan's head. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob believed that a peculiar son of theirs would be the child of blessings, the Son of promise to the human race. Indeed, Jesse, David, and all the prophets, looked for one from the accepted tribe, who would be king of all the earth, and a benefactor of humanity. John the Baptist in his day preached and believed that the Messenger of the covenant of eternal peace was immediately to appear. But the disciples of Jesus, the son of Mary, believed and confessed that he was the identical person. "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and all the prophets did write: Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of David, the King of Israel." "Rabbi," said Nathanael, "thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." But yet it remained for Peter to speak fully and expressly, the very proposition which contains the whole matter.

"We believe and are sure that thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God." "On this rock," responded he, with a blessing upon Peter's name and head, "on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." Of this foundation, Paul has said, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is already laid, which is Jesus Christ." God himself laid this corner, this tried and precious stone, as the foundation of the temple of grace; and therefore with his own lips pronounced him his beloved Son; and sealed him by the visible descent and impress of his Spirit, as his Messiah, the Messenger of life and peace to a condemned and rebellious world.

II. This confession of faith has in it two distinct ideas—the one concerning the person, the other concerning the office, of the Son of Man. The one asserts his divine relations, the other his official rank and glory. No one can intelligently believe this proposition, and not turn to God with all his heart: for there is in it a thousand thoughts and motives to bind the soul to God, and melt it into the most affectionate devotion. There is also in it the strongest bond to secure the affections of all Christians to one another. There is no other confession of faith on which the church can be built, on which it can possibly stand one and undivided, but on this one. With the heart man believes this proposition in order to justification: and with his mouth he maketh this confession of it in order to his salvation. So Paul explains it, Rom. x.: and thus we have one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, among the immutable reasons why Christians should maintain unity of spirit in the bonds of peace.

PATRIARCHAL, JEWISH, AND CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS.

Having dwelt upon leading principles of the Reformation, it will now suffice to present a very brief statement of the results proceeding from the practical application of them. Among the earliest of them was the discovery that Christianity is a distinct and peculiar institution, complete in all its parts, and requiring no addition from any system of religion previously established.

No clear and just distinctions had heretofore been made between the different religions presented in the Bible; but, on the contrary, such were the confused notions of the religious public, that Christianity was supposed to be merely an amendment of Judaism, as the latter was, in turn, regarded as an improvement upon the more simple system of the patriarchal age. In short, it was supposed that the Bible contained but one religion; and it was usual to attempt to cover the confusion of thought and the practical incompatibilities arising from this view, under the notion that this religion was presented in three dispensations, each of which was a modification of the one that preceded it; and that is the form called Christianity we were to find, as it were, a mere change of external rites, or a substitution of one thing for another, without any radical or essential difference in principle, administration, or authority.

Hence, in different parties, we have so much of Judaism incorporated with Christianity, from the external pomp of Temple-worship and simulated robes of the Aaronic priesthood, to the more serious commixture of the discordant introductory principles—mere fleshly descent, and a living faith in Christ.

It is not to be denied, indeed, that the great principles of religion and morality have been the same in all ages, and that the essential means of access to God, and of acceptance with Him have remained unchanged since the faith of Abel. But it is equally true, that for special purposes, connected with the development of the