

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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OFFICE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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Will Subscribers please notice the date following their names on the paper? It tells the time when your subscription expires; thus, if the date reads 1882, your subscription will expire Jan. 1, 1882. If the date after your name is a time past, you are in arrears. Please remit a little before your time is out, if possible.

The Pacific Slope.

There never was perhaps a finer field for evangelical work than that now opening up on this coast.

In the past the population was small, sparsely scattered over a vast area, so that a single effort could reach only a few individuals. Now the waste places are becoming fruitful, section claims are divided into farms, and the population is becoming so compact that the preacher may have now as auditors hundreds where he had formerly only tens. Immigrants who were, in the East bound to their altars, and harnessed to their creeds, so that they had neither time nor disposition to go elsewhere in search of truth, feel, when they reach the free West, the shackles broken and the harness laid aside, and they are ready to go in search of truth. If they find the better way they are ready to walk therein.

No people are more accessible than pioneers. The theological crust which incased them at home has been broken up, and they are ready for spiritual expansion and religious development and growth.

A new country, a new climate and new circumstances excite the mind to new activities which find expression in all the channels of thought.

The habit of comparing the present with the past, the new with the old, leads to an investigation of new forms of religion as compared with the old.

They will hear patiently and with favor here what they would not have listened to while incased with orthodoxy.

Not only will the preacher find willing hearers and anxious inquirers, but the truth will be sought in whatever literature is brought within their reach.

Hence, the importance to us, as a people, of keeping before the rapidly increasing population of the coast, the very best literature we can command, and in the most attractive and accessible form possible. We can not permit the MESSENGER to go down. From this point of view it becomes a necessity to the progress of the Church of Christ on this coast. To abandon it would be almost equivalent to giving up Christian College by converting it into a second class academy; and this would be little less than literary stagnation and spiritual death to primitive Christianity west of the Rocky Mountains.

The spirit of the age demands the latest and freshest news on all subjects.

Our neighbors have not time and our children will not read the discussions of half a century ago. Literature bound in a volume is old. Nothing is new unless it is in advance of the railroad. In the press of business, they have little more time for literature than suffices to read the telegrams.

They are intensely alive and they must have the present, living news. A paper published in Cincinnati or Lexington is old before it reaches us. Old people may read it to revive sweet memories of the past; but our children see the date; it is a week behind time; they throw it aside, and

look for a paper yet damp from the press, in which they may learn whether a nation's folly is yet focalized in "a dead lock" in Washington, whether the Christian statesmanship of Gladstone has terminated the unrighteous war in the Transvaal, what France was doing yesterday in Tunis, and Russia in Central Asia.

To wield an influence for good and impress pure, primitive Christianity upon our age and country we must command the means and bring them fully abreast of the times.

Next to the living Gospel, warm from a loving heart, a zealous mind and a tongue of fire, amongst the means of progress is a good paper full of the purest literature, soundest principles and latest news of the hour.

We have a broad and approved foundation on which to establish and maintain such a paper. Up to this day, and we are in the midst of the eleventh annual volume, we are sure the P. C. MESSENGER has never given just cause of complaint to any man; and we are very happy to think that there is no one who would not, so far as its past history is concerned cheerfully co-operate in sustaining it. Such a record is the best guarantee for its course in the future.

The times and circumstances as well as the demands and prospects, all require that we put forth a united co-operative effort to sustain the MESSENGER.

Will we do it?

Missionary Prospects.

We gather from statistics published by the various churches and the Missionary societies working under them that the missionary spirit is at this time, more intense throughout all Protestant countries than at any former period of the world's history.

In the churches themselves, the cause of missions has a deeper and more intelligent place in the hearts and minds of individual members than ever before.

The societies having missions as their special work, are more numerous, better organized and more efficient in collecting and disbursing funds, and all the external equipments are well appointed for spreading the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The supply of missionaries is fully equal to the demand, and much greater than the available means to sustain them.

This is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. As new fields are opened zealous workers are found ready to enter, leaving home and friends, and surrendering the dearest ties from love to Christ and the salvation of men.

The fruits of missionary efforts in heathen lands are very hopeful. Compared with the results of home labor they are in many cases most encouraging. Statistics show that in any of the leading Protestant denominations, now occupying missionary fields, the rate per cent. of increase has been about as four to one against home work.

Whatever rebate ought to be made in this estimate for the novelty of the Gospel on uncultured minds and the exaggeration of results through the zeal and hope of missionaries should be more than compensated by the superior faculties of Christian civilization at home.

An encouraging feature in missionary work in foreign lands, is the co-operation of different churches laboring in the same field. The folly and the sin of division are more apparent to those engaged in propagating the Gospel in foreign lands.

When trials and persecutions press upon them they are drawn together by sympathy and encouraged by the common end in view to unite their efforts and make common cause for the establishment of the Gospel.

The reflex influence of this wisdom may result in good to the home churches where this co-operation in

foreign lands is meeting with favor.

They cannot insist upon Christian union abroad without feeling the inconsistency of schisms and divisions at home. It is not less important to the successful working of missions that all Christians should be united, since this is the condition upon which "the world may believe."

In view of the vast fields now occupied and to be occupied, how appropriate the language of Jesus to his disciples: "The harvest is truly plentiful; but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord, of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers unto his harvest." Matt. ix. 37, 38.

Of What Spirit are Ye?

The spirit of Pagan Rome—The man for the nation. The spirit of England—The nation for the man.

Corrupt Christianity, like Pagan Rome, makes the church everything—would torture, burn, sacrifice thousands to save the church.

Pure Christianity, like the Anglo-Saxon, exalts the man and makes the church an instrument for his welfare. This is akin to the "freedom where-with Christ hath made us free." It is the province of the church, as an instrument of God to aid man in his weakness, assist him in the divine life and make him happy. But if he reject her aid and refuse to be obedient to the laws of Christ, the church can only withdraw from him.

This is the limit of her legitimate power. If she attempt to go farther than this, she becomes a tyrant. Jesus will have willing disciples. There is no greater folly than that which would try to compel obedience by force under the law of love.

The church is responsible for the individual only so far as her duty under the great commission of "preaching the Gospel" and "teaching" what Jesus commanded.

Having done these she leaves with him the entire responsibility of his destiny.

The man cannot, if he would, avoid this responsibility. Hence, the church should be to him a tender loving mother, training him aright in the incipency of his divine life, and using every legitimate means in his maturity to cause him to walk in wisdom's ways; but if he turn prodigal and refuse obedience, she must not turn tyrant and pursue him with wrath.

Neither in nature nor in grace can the mother employ any other means than those of love to restrain the wayward and to proclaim the prodigal.

Coercion beyond withdrawal from a disorderly member finds no sanction in the New Testament. The limit rests heavily on those puffed with pride and exalted by their own vanity to the position of infallible censors.

Many a church, and many over zealous members of the church, might do well to give heed to the rebuke of the Savior to the disciples, James and John, when they said, "Lord, will thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: For the Son of man is not come the destroyer men's lives, but to save them."

The Spirit of aggregate or corporate responsibility is ever the spirit of tyranny and leads to oppression in politics and persecution in religion; while the spirit of individual responsibility is the spirit of liberty and leads to freedom in politics and toleration in religion. No republic can long survive which does not rest on this spirit of individual responsibility, and no church ought to survive which does not regard the man as the ultimate end and grand object for which it exists as an instrument to exalt him to the heavens and install him in everlasting life.

—A kind word spoken in time is worth a million of intentions.

Suggestions in Reference to the Future of the Pacific Christian Messenger.

We are pleased to see that the future of the P. C. MESSENGER is not a matter wholly indifferent to all the brethren of the coast.

Bro. Bruce Wolverton suggests a joint-stock company with a capital of five thousand dollars, that the stockholders elect their Board of Directors and officers, and that they locate, provide for, and manage a Book Depository and Publishing house.

This plan seems to us practical. We like it better than another suggestion to this effect: that the office, press, engine and all their appointments be made a present to a competent editor who will do with it as he may think best.

But we shall wait for further suggestions.

Polk County Annual Meeting.

The time is near at hand for our annual meeting. We know not who compose the committee of arrangement; but we trust they may be active in securing preachers, giving notice, and having all things in readiness for the meeting, which will include the third and fourth Sundays in June.

Return to Primitive Christianity.

DISCUSSION OF LEADING PRINCIPLES.

[Selected.]

THE GOSPEL.

NUMBER THREE.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel, which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which ye also are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." 1 Cor. xv. 1-4.

And is it then the Gospel that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again? Have these few simple facts constituted the hope of the ancients and the joy of the moderns; the inspiration of the prophet and the fortitude of the martyr? Are these of the theme of seraphic and cherubic song, and the power of God himself to the salvation of the world? Can it be that an announcement so brief, and apparently simple, has already wrought such important changes in the affairs of men, and is yet to exert so predominant an influence in the accomplishment of human destiny?—that the same truth which is the solace of the solitary wanderer, is to operate upon the entire mass of the human family? So Paul affirms, and both history and prophecy confirm his declaration.

Nor need we be surprised that so great effects are to be produced by means so simple. This only proves the perfection of the instrument, and is perfectly in accordance with the divine procedure in other cases. To combine simplicity and power is regarded as a manifestation of consummate skill. No one is rewarded for making a machine more complicated. Every improver aims to produce the same or a greater effect by a more simple mechanism. The very simplicity, then, of the gospel, is but an additional evidence of its divine origin.

It is also in harmony with other exhibitions of the wisdom and power of God. In the economy of nature, for instance, there is nothing more common than the accomplishment of the greatest purposes by the simplest means; nor is there anything more familiar than the ready applicability to particular and minor things of principles and powers which are capable of exercising supreme and universal control. It is the same pervading influence, the attraction of gravitation, which brings to the ground a sere and yellow leaf from the oak, or the blazing meteor from heaven, and sustains in their orbits the immense planetary bodies, with their satellites. It is the same power, the attraction of cohesion, which moulds the dew-drop, which, poised upon a slender blade of grass, and touched by the sun's first

rays, appears bright and beautiful as the diamond or pearl—"a gem of purest ray serene," and lifts to the clouds the rocky precipice where the eagle builds her eyrie, and against whose base the waves of ocean rage in vain. It is not strange, then that the same Divine Mechanician should in the religious and moral world endow the simplest means with power to accomplish the greatest ends, and to act with the same facility upon individuals and upon nations—upon one and upon all.

But again: it will be evident that the gospel must be of necessity something very simple, when it is recollected that it is to be preached to every creature. The great majority of the human race are ignorant and debased, slow of apprehension, and feeble in their capacity. Their capacity. The Gospel is designed to open their blinded eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, to inform the understanding and to move the heart. That it has accomplished this purpose wherever it has been faithfully exhibited, and that the present civilization and refinement of the nations is mainly owing to its influence, is admitted by the best informed. Being then suited to the comprehension of all—the European, the Indian, the Negro, and the rude Barbarian, it cannot be anything abstruse or remote, but must necessarily be easily perceived, understood and felt. Could we indeed suppose for one moment that this divine and glorious Gospel had transformed itself into those ponderous and complicated bodies of divinity which life will scarce afford time to read, or eternity to understand, we might well despair of our own salvation and the conversion of the world. Alas! how weak is man's power, and how foolish his wisdom, when compared with the omnipotence and omniscience of Jehovah. It is in his grasp that the simple and beautiful creations of God perish, and he would fain substitute his own awkward and complicated contrivances. It is in his impure vessel that the waters of the sparkling fountain lose their clearness and refreshing coolness, but all his art is insufficient to purify and restore them!

How different might have been the state of the world if the Gospel in its simplicity had been exhibited to mankind since the days of the Apostles! And to what a speedy termination it would bring the discords, feuds and party jealousies of Christendom, if all would confine themselves to the joyful tidings that Christ has died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he rose the third day according to the Scriptures! These are facts, not opinions or speculations. These are easily proved, readily understood, and quickly felt. "And by these also we are saved," says our Apostle, "if we keep them in remembrance."

Lot Fund.

PORTLAND, OR., May 2, 1881.

Editor Messenger:

Please say through the MESSENGER that it is most earnestly desired by Lot Fund Committee to finish collection of subscriptions for the same by the first of July.

To this end it is requested that all who have lists will collect all they can by the first week of June, and with the list, send the same to the chairman of the committee at that time. As the county meetings will be in progress about that time, it is hoped that some one agent in each county may reach all other parties who have not been called upon.

The committee desire after July 1st to make a report in full of all collections received.

BRUCE WOLVERTON,
Chairman.

—Life's evening will take its character from the day which has preceded it.