

are not patented." The Telescope, like most "over-sensitive" people, can extract comfort from a very small crumb.

Bro. Walters, of West Cairo, Ohio, rejoices that the Lord has raised up faithful shepherds among us who care for the flock, and will protect it against the wolf.

A Van Wert paper says: "Jonathan Alspaugh, J. E. Alspaugh, J. Boyer and a number of others from this township attended the Masonic Lodge at Rockford, Saturday night, and witnessed the conferring of the third degree of Masonry upon Rev. Thomas Coats, of Rockford. After the work was over they all dined at Mrs. Putnam's restaurant, and then departed, feeling that the evening was well spent, and they were all made better men." What a scene! Liberalism led him wrongly. Jonathan Weaver used to say, when he started the commission ball to rolling, that he was just as much opposed to secret societies as ever; that he did not want to take in the secret orders, but wanted only to change the mode of dealing with them. But now here is one of his preachers entered, passed and raised to be a Master Mason. John Luttrell and Elias Counseller are yoked up with this masonic preacher in annual conference relation. Where will the wickedness of the wicked lead them?

A new secret society has been hatched out of Satan's incubator, called the Anti-civil Service Reform League. When President Cleveland went into the white house he was pledged to Henry Ward Beecher, in consideration of his support and influence to institute competitive examinations, and the politics of those examined was unknown. They were graded on their merits, and entitled to a place in the order of fitness in which they stood. We knew both Republicans and Prohibitionists to have clerkships under this wholesome provision during Cleveland's administration. But merit is not the mark of commendation under the reign of secret societies. A sign is infinitely more meritorious with them than the highest deservings. They became restless, and through this new secret society are trying to break down civil service reform and to re-establish a reign of ruin that will give to him that has a sign in his forehead or hand the spoils of office. All secret societies are wrong. They are established on wrong principles and adopt wrong methods.

The Liberal Church in Forreston, Illinois, had a strange affair, as it appears to us, but it may be very familiar to them. The Forreston Herald reports it as follows: "November 24th the U. B. Church gave a Dusting Cap Sociable at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Eversole. Each lady made two caps exactly alike. She wore one and the other was tied up and sold. The gentleman who bought the cap, put it on and hunted up the lady who wore a cap like his, and took her to supper. The evening was spent pleasantly in social games and conversation." This is an effectual method of leading to free-love practices, which decent people, not professing religion, would avoid. The backslidden will adopt wrong means of raising money. Such a church ought to have P. T. Barnum, Hoyl and Vanamburg to superintend it and get up shows and games for it. Is it not a shame to call such a thing a church? Yet that is the distinguishing feature of liberalism. Foolishness, fun, festivals and Freemasonry are the marks of that great farce called liberalism. It is a caricature on Christianity. Rev. W. E. Mosier and Rev. J. L. Harrison are our United Brethren preachers of the true kind in that region of country. We hope they will succeed in getting all the wheat out from that liberal chaff, and then let the storm blow away Revs.

Healey's and Wendel's chaff adorned in dusting caps.

At an annual conference held at Corruna, Indiana, before the York General Conference, Rev. A. B. Lilly asked Bishop Kephart which side would hold the church property in case of a division. The bishop told him the Liberals would hold it, and read to him the statement in Roberts' Rules of order to support his view. Part that he read says: "The court will accept the decision of the highest ecclesiastical tribunal to which the case has been carried within that general church organization as final, and will not inquire into the justice or injustice of its decree as between the parties before it." (Page 177.) So it seems that the Liberals calculated on success in the courts regardless of justice. That this is sound law no one believes; that it conflicts with good morals we all know. It agrees with nothing but liberalism.

Contributions.

Christmas Observances.

Of all the festive and gala days of the year no one is hailed with so great pleasure and happiness as is Christmas, the anniversary of the birth of our Savior. For almost eighteen centuries has this day been observed as a festival of the Christian Church. Its institution is attributed to Pope Telesphorus who died A. D. 138. It is stated that at first it was the most movable of the Christian festive days, and often confounded with the Epiphany, and celebrated by the eastern churches in the months of April and May. In the fourth century an order was given that an investigation be made concerning the day of Christ's birth. The result of the investigation was an agreement upon the 25th of December. The chief grounds for the decision were the tables of the censors in the Archives of Rome, and although in the opinion of some, there was not authentic proof that that was the day, the decision was uniformly accepted, and from that time His birth has been celebrated throughout the church on the same day.

The festivities of Christmas have been variously observed by different countries and peoples. Christmas carols had their origin in medieval times. These recalled the songs of the shepherds at the birth of Christ. The bishops and lower clergy often joined with the people in caroling, and the songs were enlivened by dances and by the music of various instruments. It is said that throughout England and the continent the bells are rung at midnight, preparatory to Christmas; and after the solemn celebration of the mass, for which the churches in France and Italy are elaborately decorated, it is usual for the revelers to partake of a collation that they may be better able to endure the fatigues of the night revelries. Among the revels of the Christmas season were what is termed "December liberties", in which every thing serious was ridiculed, inferiors personifying their superiors, great men becoming frolicsome, and all manifesting a disposition to occasionally reverse the order of society and make light of its decencies. In the Protestant districts of Germany and the north of Europe-Christmas is often called the "children's festival", and Christmas eve is devoted to giving presents, especially between parents and children and brothers and sisters, by means of the so-called Christmas tree. A large bough of the yew tree is used for this purpose, and is erected in one of the parlors lighted with tapers and hung with many gifts, sweet-meats, apples, nuts, playthings and ornaments. Each of these is marked with the name of the person for whom it is designed, but not with the name of the donor,

and when the family party is assembled the presents are distributed according to their labels amid joyous acclamations and congratulations. A more sober scene follows, for the mother takes this occasion to say privately to the daughters, and the father to the sons, what has been observed most praiseworthy and what most faulty in their conduct. Formerly, and still in some of the smaller villages of North-Germany, the presents made by all the parents were sent to some one person who attired in high buskins, a white robe, a mask and an enormous flax wig, and known to the children as *Knecht Rupert*, goes from house to house and is received by the parents with great respect; he calls for the children and presents the intended gift according to the character, which he obtains from the parents by close inquiry. The Santa Claus or St. Nicholas of to-day was originally introduced by the Dutch settlers of New York, and is the American representative of the German *Knecht Rupert*. In England Christmas has always been a religious, home-making, merry-making festival, for all ranks and ages. Tenants were entertained at the hall, and the lord of the manor and his family encouraged every thing that was conducive to pleasure. The glowing fire, with the great yule log as its basis, kept out the icy north king, and the abundance of the well filled larder was shared amid music, riddles, jokes, laughter, dances, &c. The common custom of decking the houses and churches with evergreens is derived from ancient Druid practices. It was an old belief that sylvan spirits might flock to the evergreens and remain unnnipped by frost till a milder season. The holly, ivy, rosemary, bay, laurel and mistletoe furnished the favorite trimmings. Holly and ivy still remain the favorite evergreens in England. The Christmas celebrations of England in the later years are said to have lost their former boisterous character; the gambols and carols are nearly obsolete. Family reunions and evergreen trimmings are nearly all that remain of the various rough merriments which use to mark the festivals. In the United States Christmas was for a long time less generally celebrated in New England than in the middle and southern states, because our Puritan ancestry were much opposed to Christmas pastimes. It is now usually observed by religious services, making of presents, family gatherings, and by imitating the German custom of a Christmas tree.

HISTORY.

Our Church.

Dedication.

Bishop Floyd will dedicate a church at the Otterbein appointment on Wabash Circuit, in connection with our second quarterly meeting, January 17th, 1892. All are cordially invited to attend, especially ministers. Those coming over the Pan Handle and G. R. & I. from the south, will stop at Ridgeville. Those coming on the morning train from the north over the G. R. & I. will stop at Collett. South bound trains later in the day do not stop at Collett. Conveyance and homes will be provided for all. The presence of the CONSERVATOR editor is especially solicited.

C. L. CULBERTSON.

Bishop Becker's Lectures.

In response to a number of inquiries, I wish to say that Bishop Becker can be had this season only during the months of February and March. A number of engagements have already been made, and I wish to request those desiring to engage him to write me soon, as I desire to have all engagements in before fixing any dates, and thus avoid unnecessary travel. Remember, he can be had only in February and March.

C. H. KIRACOFE,

119 N. Summit St., Dayton, Ohio.

Missionary Column.

The new Missionary Certificate will be ready in a few days. Let all who know themselves entitled to one, report to their pastor, and let the pastor report to the Branch Secretary of his conference, that the Branch Secretaries may notify me how many they will need. I can't send them out until I know where they are needed.

Missionary Soliciting Cards will be sent free on application. Orders for "Christian Giving" should be accompanied with a sufficient amount to pay postage, and if any one wishes to send in addition the cost of printing—a cent and a half a copy—it will be used in printing others when the present edition is exhausted.

Let not those who have been accustomed to give \$1.00, or more, to missions, think because we are calling for an average of \$1.00 a member, that they will not be expected to increase their contributions, for, in order to make it, each person will have to give, at least, three times as much as he has formerly given.

Rev. C. B. Sherk, presiding elder of the Arkansas Valley Conference, in sending an order for "Christian Giving", says: "Our people need light on this subject very much, that they may see the need of consecration of property as well as of the soul and body. 'Christian Giving' is just what we need to arouse us to do more for the cause of God, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom: God be with you and bless you in this work! Give us the truth red hot."

Father Garns, of Helena, Ohio, says: "I am glad for the effort you are making, but I think \$1.00 a member is too low. Each female member under age ought to pay \$1.00, those over age \$2.00. Each young man under age should pay \$2.00, and those over age, \$4.00, while older persons should pay from \$10.00 to \$25.00."

Don't fail to read the following letter from Bro. Livingston, one of the presiding elders of the Auglaize Conference, whom God has blessed with much more of this world's goods than usually falls to the lot of ministers:

QUINCY, O., Dec. 17, 1891.

REV. C. H. KIRACOFE, DEAR BRO.—Yours received and considered. After an experience of about twelve years in giving one-tenth to the good cause, I am satisfied that it is a plan that God will approve and bless. It would surprise the inexperienced to find how very natural and easy it may be done. We are scrupulously careful to keep a strict account of all our net income, and then it is so easy to divide by ten. We give to the different interests of the Church and Christ's cause according to our idea of their merits and the pressing demands of the same. I have often felt like urging it upon others, but have felt backward about mentioning our own case as an example, and do so now by request of our Missionary Treasurer. If this would become the rule instead of the exception in the church or churches, we would likely all be surprised at the swelling—the great increase of funds and the general prosperity in the church, and the fatness of God's house in every respect. It must work well, because it savors of faith in all that is good, and recognizes indebtedness to the higher claims, and the gospel rule—"give as the Lord has prospered you." It is according to system, and that will recommend it too.

I would not change it, for any hap-hazard way I ever saw tried. If I ever change I think it will be to increase the per cent.

S. S. LIVINGSTON.

The Columbia Summer Assembly, which meets near Columbia, Mo., at its session last August organized "The Cross-bearer's Missionary Reading Circle", whose object is "the education of people in all churches on the subject of Missions". This is certainly a new move in the right direction.

The Woman's Missionary Column.

THE COMMANDS.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." Matt. 28:19.
"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Eccl. 9:10.
"Be strong and of good courage." Josh. 1:9.

All items, notices, &c., for the W. M. C., and orders for Constitutions, Helps, &c., should be addressed to Mrs. A. E. Kiracofe, 119 N. Summit Street, Dayton, Ohio.

Mrs. W. O. Dinius, Treasurer, 1618 West 2nd St., Dayton, Ohio.

We have on hand a good supply of mite-boxes, Christian Giving and Bishop Becker's Galliean song. Price of single box, two cents; twelve, fifteen cents; twenty-five, twenty cents. Song per copy, twenty cents.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Isa. 9:6

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:13-14

Christmas.

Already there floats upon the breeze the chiming of bells and the distant notes of the coming joys and festivities of another Christmas season. A season made dear to all Christian hearts because of God's best gift to man. Ring out ye bells the glad, glad time, and may the inhabitants of earth, air and sky honor Him who came to bring "peace on earth to men of good will". As the joyous strains peal forth, beginning at the eastward, let it be continued to the westward, until the westward is lost in the eastward, and the waters of the seas, together with hill, valley, mountain and plain, echo and re-echo the tidings of great joy. The coming of kings, queens and potentates have been heralded by plumed knights with music and gay banners,—but these stand no comparison with that heavenly host chanting the praises sublime, of Him who came as man's Redeemer. Good news! Glad news! Let it be proclaimed near and far that all who will may know and accept the proffered gift and render thanksgiving and praise for Bethlehem's King. And inasmuch as ye have freely received, freely give—good gifts, precious gifts—such as will satisfy hunger and give warmth to body and soul; such as will bring comfort to the neglected and forsaken, and cause them to look heavenward; such as will cheer the disconsolate and cause the erring to return; such as will bring good cheer and great peace of mind to the weary and tempest-tossed; and if on this festive day your own heart is not in the Savior's keeping, give it to him, for it is a gift long merited. A happy, merry, joyous Christmas to all.

DEAR SISTERS:—Have you during the year been asking the Master what he would have you do, and have you in his fear done his bidding? If so, happy are ye.

Among our Christmas presents let there be one for our Savior.

The sad intelligence has reached us, that Miss M. M. Titus, our much esteemed president, has been bereft of a dear mother who has completed her earthly journey and now dwells in a heavenly country. We feel that the sympathies and prayers of our W. M. A. workers are with our president in these moments of sadness. This Christian mother, though dead, yet speaks through a Christian daughter.

I wish to correct a mistake made in the report of the Branch officers for East and West Nebraska Conference. Mrs. N. J. Haskins, of Guide Rock, Nebraska, is Branch Treasurer, Mrs. E. E. Motter, Plat, Nebraska, is Branch organizer.

MRS. E. F. DUNN, Branch Sec.