

UNDER SUNNY SKIES.

THE CHRISTIAN, like many of my friends, has not heard from me since I came to California. But my interest in them and in it is abiding. It took me six days to travel four thousand miles, but my thoughts make the return journey in an instant, and put me in places and amid people who are dear to me.

I came to California *via* Washington, Atlanta, New Orleans, San Antonio, Yuma. People who admire the scenery of the deserts should by all means make the trip from New Orleans to Yuma. I hope to return some other way. It was not till we got to within a few hours' ride of Los Angeles that the disappointment was driven from my heart by the panorama of a beautiful and prosperous country.

I spent nearly a month in Whittier, and there saw magnificent orange and lemon groves. Olives are cultivated extensively, but walnuts are the best paying crop. My old friend, the fog, made me two visits while I was there, seeking to renew a friendship that I was trying to break. I went to San Diego, but remained there only two weeks. The Pacific fog still sought me out, and, like Lot of old, I fled to the mountains and looked not behind me till I got there. I am now in San Jacinto, and expect to remain here for some months.

Southern California has a splendid climate, if you measure excellence by sunbeams. It suits me. There have been only two rainy days since I came here—one while I was in Whittier and the other while in San Diego. This is the wet season, but for six weeks there has been no rain in San Jacinto. The crops failed last year and the year before. A failure this year means ruin for many a man. On several occasions clouds have gathered and blackened, and the people waited and hoped, and were disappointed. In some other valleys the grain, which is only a few inches high, has already turned yellow.

The water problem is the great problem in the southern part of the state. Many places like Riverside, Whittier, Pomona, Hemet, have, at an enormous expense, "developed water" in large quantities, both for domestic use and irrigation purposes. They have bored numerous great wells in the mountains. The dry seasons compelled them to do this, and now they are, in a degree, independent of the rainfall. Still, irrigation is expensive and laborious work. While sunshine suits me, I want to see a good, steady rain that will satisfy the thirsty earth and make the people's faces shine.

San Jacinto is not in the orange belt. The altitude, I suppose, is too great. But peaches and pears and apricots are raised in large quantities. Figs and almonds also thrive. Vineyards do fairly well. In good seasons, when the hillsides are covered with wild flowers, many carloads of honey are shipped out of this valley; but the "busy bee" has not had a fair chance for a year or two, and

starvation has largely diminished his tribe. Many of the survivors are now spending "the shining hours" in the blossoming almond trees.

On Christmas morning this part of the earth trembled. I was in San Diego at the time. The shake there was just enough to be enjoyable, if your nerves and conscience were all right. The shock was most severe in San Jacinto, and the neighboring town of Hemet. Every brick building was injured; some were ruined. Wooden houses were rocked, but they stood the strain, though nearly every chimney in town came down. There have been a dozen or more mild shocks since, but no damage has been done; timid people are becoming more cheerful, and the refugees are returning.

There is some religion in Southern California, but I fear that many eastern people forget to bring theirs with them, or lost it soon after their arrival. The churches are not what they would have been if God had not been often forgotten in the search after gold. But in spite of infidelity, coarse and refined, the churches are doing a good work in withstanding immorality and establishing righteousness.

In San Jacinto union meetings have been held for the past six weeks in the Christian meeting-house—the largest in town, and the safest. Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists and Christians worked together. Bro. W. E. Crabtree, of San Diego, preached the first ten days. He chose such subjects as "Rightly Dividing the Word," "What must I do to be saved?" "Christian Unity," "The Great Confession of Faith." Thoughtful people were delighted with his preaching. He was followed by Baptist, Congregational and Methodist preachers. About forty came forward during the meetings—many of whom were backsliders. Great good was done, and more will follow.

I am not spending the time quite so idly as I did last winter. I have preached a few times, and have had "calls" to several churches, none of which I heeded. I think that when I get ready for work I shall find plenty of work ready for me. But I am in no hurry. The church wants me stay here, and I am remaining more for the climate's sake than for theirs. I have not promised to preach.

I have been reading THE CHRISTIAN with great interest. From afar I have been watching how the battle goes. May the great things attempted be accomplished. I am anxious to see how largely the churches gave to home missions in the February collection. I will be equally eager to learn what they contribute for foreign missions on the first Lord's day in March.

HENRY W. STEWART.

San Jacinto, Cal., Feb. 20, 1900.

BOLTON'S NOTES BY THE WAY.

Mrs. Bolton and writer are awaiting a west bound train en route to our new field of labor.

Recently we loosed from Boston and vicinity, and accepted the call to assume charge of the Church of Christ at LeRoy, Pa.

The *N. E. Messenger*, which we published, was transferred to Brother J. H. Mohorter, pastor of the Church of Christ, in Boston, Mass.

We tarried one week with our son, J. W. Bolton, who formerly preached for churches of Christ at Westport and Tiverton, N. S.,

but now is located at Sweet Valley, Pa. and has charge of churches of Christ at Sweet Valley and Huntsville, Luzerne Co., Pa.

We found son engaged in a series of meetings at Sweet Valley. Good interest was awakened.

A brother Topping, formerly a minister of the Christian Connection Church, took membership with the Church of Christ. We fell into line and preached each evening while here and twice on Lord's day and Thursday.

On Lord's day we baptized eight believers in Christ, and on Thursday two more, and several more are to be baptized next Lord's day; besides, outlook is favorable for more to become disciples of Jesus, as the meeting continues.

Son is in charge of two churches composed of good and kind hearted brethren. A good degree of spirituality prevails.

We bade adieu this morning to son and family, and this evening we expect to reach LeRoy, where we begin our new pastorate, and, we hope, under God, with his blessings attending our labors, good may be accomplished.

I must now stop else this may be dropped into the waste basket. If it appears in print, you may look for a "semi-occasional" from the Keystone state.

Yours fraternally,

R. H. BOLTON.

Hunlock's Creek, Pa., Feb. 16th. 1900.

DEER ISLAND LETTER.

In my last letter I told you that two persons had made the good confession at Lord's Cove. Since then two others have come out on the Lord's side. We are now preparing for the March offering for foreign missions, and hope to have the largest offering we have ever made.

At my present writing I am at Back Bay holding a meeting. The brethren here wanted me to hold a meeting for them last spring, but there were hindrances, so I did not come, but have kept planning to come when opportunity afforded.

We have had stormy weather and bad roads, and there have been those who thought this a hard place. Still our efforts have been greatly blessed, and although I have been here only a little over two weeks, we have had forty-one confessions and baptisms, and a number have expressed a desire to come back to the Father's house. The whole community is aroused, as never before, and a work of grace is going on in the hearts and homes of the people. W. H. HARDING.

One of the New England States has every year "An Old Home Week" at which time from all over the country come men and women who were born in the state and who there received their start in life. How would it do to have for the Maritime Provinces "An Old Home Week" and invite the many workers who have gone forth, to return and help some of our congregations in a meeting, etc. Paul, we remember, valued the salvation of his countrymen very high—"That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to to the flesh." Rom. ix : 2, 3.