

# THE CHRISTIAN.

FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD.—Paul.

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WITH the next issue THE CHRISTIAN enters its thirteenth year.

OWING to lack of space we are compelled this month to hold over some excellent articles. They will appear in due time.

LET us have more news from the churches. There are nearly always some items that would prove of interest if made known. What you are doing may arouse others to effort. Tell it.

THE annual meeting of the New England churches will meet at Lubec, Me., Oct. 4-6. Special rates have been secured from Boston, Portland and St. John—the fare from the last being \$1.50 for the round trip. The Lubec church will be pleased to entertain a large delegation.

BRO. CAPP'S family is at Sister Capp's father's home on P. E. Island. He is now preaching at Plattsburgh, Mo., but we hope to soon see him located in these provinces again.

BRO. HARDING begins in this issue a series of articles on "The Bible vs. Infidelity." The discussion is timely, and as he has given much study to the subject we look for an instructive and helpful series.

THE following provincial brethren have resumed their studies at Lexington, Ky.: E. B. Barnes, G. D. Weaver, S. W. Leonard, R. E. Stevens, Nelson Stevenson and A. N. Simpson. Wm. Gates and Frank Ford have entered the Bible College at the same place. E. Crawford is at Bethany College and John Smith at Hiram.

WE sometimes think that readers prefer short articles. THE CHRISTIAN is small, but it has room for many such, though not for many of the other kind.

THE financial manager sends bills this month to those who are in arrears. Will those who receive them please remit at once? Whatever money remains after the running expenses of the paper are paid, goes to the home mission work. By paying promptly you can help that work.

Summer has gone, and the autumn is rapidly passing away. The long winter evenings are coming, and with them, especially in the country, a season of comparative leisure. These evenings must be filled in, and young people and those who are no longer young ask themselves and others, How shall we spend the time? The solution is very often found in "parties" and "companies," etc., that are more or less harmful, with the emphasis on the "more." The hours are passed certainly, but sometimes in mere aimless pleasure, often in frivolity, and not infrequently in sin. We would not be understood as passing a universal and indiscriminate condemnation on social gatherings. They are needful; but we would advise the cutting off from them of everything that smacks of sin or has the appearance of evil. If such are not cut off, cut yourself off from them, and do it at once. We believe that more evil than good results from the great majority of these time-passing devices. Those who are most in danger of injury from them are invariably their most enthusiastic advocates; and every watchful pastor or faithful Christian beholds with fear and trembling the coming of the season that brings them as surely as it brings the snow. He has fears of the young Christians that find in them their delight, and he trembles for others that are nearing the kingdom, but may be led away. He can probably recall more than one with whom the season of leisure meant the season of spiritual death.

We do not want to come in contact with an Indian club, and we desire to avoid clubs of every other kind. We do not like the word.

It seems to belong to Satan, and we want him to keep what is rightly his own. Clubs generally kill people either physically or spiritually, and we would not advise the organization of even reading clubs. Such gatherings would seem to indicate that infidel literature and yellow covered novels formed the staple diet. But reading circles are good; and common sense, as well as experience, advise their formation in every rural community, and also in villages and towns. In this way the desire for social intercourse may be fully gratified and an evening once a week be profitably spent. Let the members take up some interesting book—a book of poems, of travels, of biography, of history, of science, one dealing with some great present question, or one delineating human character, and get what they can from it. Be sure the book is interesting.

One like "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," with its deep religious sentiment and its portraiture of the tenderest and manliest characteristics of human nature, would be a mighty magnet in the centre of any circle. Having finished it, read a book like the "Life of Elder John Smith." No one can spend an evening in the company of this heroic Christian and not be benefitted. It may be objected that only a few in the community have a taste for such enjoyment. If that be so there is all the more need of the circle being formed; for this taste should be developed, and those who have it should try to create it in others. Thus they will become public benefactors, and in the future they shall have their reward.

We have often wondered why it is that while winter, with its snow-storms and blocked-up roads and keen frosty air, awakens into vigorous life all kinds of spree and dances and balls, it in a great many instances kills the country prayer-meeting. We cannot see how the road to the meeting-house can be any worse than the same road to the place of frivolity; and why the air should be any more biting, we have not yet been able to find out. Of course the merciful man does not want to leave his horse out in the cold for an hour while he is inside singing hymns; but we notice that the same horse receives no injury when he is tied for two hours near some public hall, while the owner is within listening to his favorite politician telling about what great things he has done for the country, and the greater things he is going to do. We very much fear that the excuses that many professing Christians give for not having a prayer-meeting in winter will not stand the test of common sense, to say nothing of the day of judgment. Lack of desire, and that alone, is too often the only reason; for those who want to have mere social gatherings have them, and people will go miles to attend them, not only once a month, but three times a week—if they occur that often. Surely religious people should have as deep an interest in religious meetings as the world has in its gatherings. Communities that have prayer-meetings during the summer can maintain them through the winter; and those who cannot have them in summer, can in winter. There is no better way for young people, and older ones, too, to spend an evening each week. The meetings may be small, but they can be made interesting, and then they will draw many away from sinful influences to the sphere of elevating social contact and spiritual power.