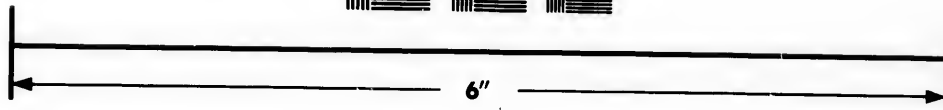
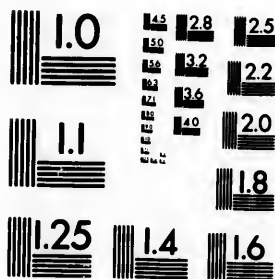


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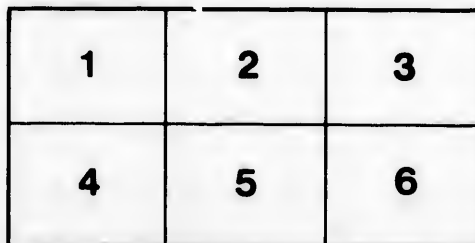
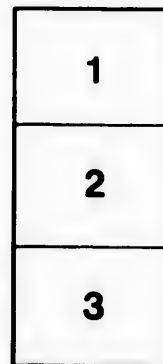
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ture of the State. It is described as "spacious and airy, containing bath-rooms, kitchens, and wash-houses in the basement; a reception and dining-hall on the first floor; a reading and writing-room, with clerks' offices on the second floor; a fine dormitory on the third floor, with 500 beds; and a hospital, dispensary, nurses' offices, &c., in the upper stories." Hither the tired and worn soldiers are brought; and first they undergo a thorough washing, cleansing, and shaving, and are provided with clean clothing throughout. Then they are taken to the upper rooms; and, after being fed and lodged, they are provided by Government with transportation to their own homes.

The cities of Philadelphia, Baltimore, &c., have established and maintained for two years, somewhat different institutions, at which regiments on their way to the seat of war, or on their return, are entertained in the most hospitable manner, and sent forward on their journey with the most pleasant recollections.

An incident which has called forth much comment, is the recent trial and condemnation of Rev. Charles Beecher, by an ecclesiastical council, for preaching heretical doctrine. Mr. Beecher is pastor of the Congregational Church in Georgetown, Massachusetts. About one half of the male members of that church petitioned that a number of the neighbouring churches, through their pastors and lay delegates, should examine into the orthodoxy of the views propounded by Mr. Beecher, respecting the pre-existence of man, the condition of souls after death, the atonement, and Divine sorrow. On all of these points the council, with five dissentient votes (one of which was that of Rev. Edward Beecher, D.D., of Galesburg, Illinois, a brother of the accused, and also of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn), decided that the teachings in question were at variance with the Scriptural doctrine. Mr. Beecher, whose whole demeanour before and during the trial is spoken of as having been eminently candid and becoming a Christian minister, seems to hold an apostacy of the race in a pre-existent state; to regard "the sufferings of Christ as suasive and argumentative, rather than vicarious," defining the God-man as "having an angelic nature, being own and younger brother of Lucifer, with the divinity of the Second Person of the Trinity added;" to believe that the offer of salvation is made to men again after death; and to conceive of God's sorrow over sin and sinners as a real suffering, thus "presenting to us a God deficient in his nature, and imperfect and finite in his blessedness."

VICTORIA, VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.—In a new colony, where the population is sparse, and churches few, ecclesiastical news of an interesting and general character cannot be frequently furnished. An occasional letter may help to keep the religious world mindful of us, and obtain an interest in the prayers of your correspondents and numerous

readers. Comparatively few come to a gold country for the purpose of improving their religious condition. The population is composed of speculators and traders, ardent in the pursuit of this world's wealth. Things temporal are sought after with feverish excitement, as if they were of supreme importance; while the powers of the world to come have comparatively little influence, even on those who pay respectful attention to religious ordinances, and to whom the good word of God is faithfully preached. This has been the state of things of late years in every gold country. The baneful excitement will pass off by-and-by, and, as in Australia and California, when immigrants obtain a stake in the country and resolve to make themselves a home, they will find leisure for religious reflection, and be more ready to entertain that blessed evangel which a thousand times has sweetened and consolidated society, and has proved itself profitable not only for this life, but for that which is to come. It appears that at present there is in California a delightful and increasing interest in divine things. Pastors report favourably of the state of religion in several districts. Sacred ordinances are more appreciated. In the smaller towns and settlements, people of different denominations have in some instances agreed to hold in abeyance their peculiar idiosyncrasies in minor matters, and to aid the majority in obtaining and supporting a minister among them.

The union of the old and new school Presbyterians in California is almost consummated. Both parties appear quite anxious for it, and only await the sanction of the Assemblies in the Eastern States to which they respectively belong. Congregationalists and Presbyterians are also drawing more closely together. And an editorial staff of ministers representing the three denominations referred to appear to co-operate harmoniously in the publication of a weekly—the *Pacific*.

The Lord Bishop of Columbia leaves for England by next steamer, after a sojourn of three years in his extensive mission field. As has been remarked by the local press, a great change has passed over these colonies since his arrival. Our auriferous wealth was then confined to the Fraser. There was no Cariboo—no Peace River, no Stekin, no coast routes, no settlers in this colony beyond the district of Victoria—but two schools on this island, and none in British Columbia. Our town, from a few shanties, has become a rich, populous, and well-built city, our harbour thronged with ships. Roads radiate into the island. Thriving settlements dot the colony, whilst the frail canoe of the Indian has given place to a fleet of coasters. Great roads traverse British Columbia. Hamlets have become towns. On the tops of our Sierras, where white man's foot, three years ago, never trod, there are now flourishing towns, inhabited by a population unsurpassed for dauntless enterprise and thrift, and where the earth, as if struck with the Midas wand of the magician, has been changed into fabulous heaps of gold, making the poor suddenly

rich, and attracting thousands from the utmost parts of the earth. The Bishop has visited every inhabited part of his diocese, comprising 250,000 square miles. He has seen as much of these colonies as any traveller on this northern coast, and it may be supposed that he will carry with him to England a treasury of interesting facts, and that favourable issues will attend his visit. He goes to England, we believe, with the intention of obtaining, if possible, an Episcopal coadjutor for this colony (Vancouver's Island), and it is to be hoped he may find a friend of the Church disposed to follow the noble example of Miss Coutts in founding a new See. Being in possession, too, of one of the finest sites for a cathedral on this coast, he may be expected to do a little in the begging line, and we wish him great success.

The Presbyterians are building a handsome church, which is nearly finished. They are about to erect another in the capital of British Columbia. The Wesleyans purpose to enlarge their fine church in this city, to accommodate their growing congregation.

All the churches have improved of late, not in numbers merely, but in appearance also. A year ago very few females were to be seen in our churches; now a goodly proportion of the fair sex attend, which lends agreeable relief to our religious gatherings. It is melancholy to relate that there are sixty dram-shops in this city, which comprises little over 4000 inhabitants. To counteract their influence, three or four temperance societies have been organised in succession in as many years. It has been found rather difficult to fabricate a substantial association out of the heterogeneous elements which compose even the more promising portion of our population. There are among us, however, hopeful advocates of the cause, who despair not of its final triumph. The order of Good Templars has been lately introduced. It originated, I believe, on this coast, and with its signs, passwords, and imposing paraphernalia, as well as by attention to destitute abstainers, it is a rather popular institution, supported by a band of brothers, pledged in sacred compact to promote temperance, and abstain from strong drink on principle.

The native tribes have been rather troublesome of late to settlers in remote districts. It is estimated that not less than 5000 of the natives have been cut off by small-pox during the past year. Some of the tribes ascribe their mortality to the colonists,—who, it must be acknowledged, brought the contagion last spring from California,—and they are beginning to retaliate by robbery, arson, and murder. The gunboats are occasionally commissioned to bring the criminals to justice; and when a tribe refuses to deliver up the guilty, the savages are spared, but their encampment or village, which is generally near the beach, is burned, and their canoes destroyed. Nearly 20,000 of them have been vaccinated chiefly by French priests, who set a noble example in their self-denying efforts to

instruct and elevate the savage. All that has been done for them by Protestant missionaries is hardly worth mentioning. A hopeful work has been inaugurated by Duncan, near Fort Simpson. A number of the better disposed natives of that locality have followed him to a new settlement, and under his direction are learning the more useful arts of civilised life. The Bishop has just returned from that station, having baptized during his short visit some twenty of the tribe. The Indian mission in this city has been abandoned, and the agent is now occupied in pastoral work among the settlers. Many excellent judges are of opinion that Bishop Hills, having large funds at command, might have attempted much more for the Indians than he has done, and not have left them almost entirely to the teaching of French priests. By-and-by they will understand who have been their best friends, and it may be the old story of Celt and Sassenach over again. One reason doubtless why more has not been done has been owing to the want of suitable missionary agents. And, indeed, when I think of the filth, the stupidity, and the brutal impulse of the poor degraded Indian, I am not able to conceive of any calling which requires more singleness of aim and greater self-denial than that of an isolated Christian reformer in an Indian village, always accessible to savages, and acting towards them so as to secure their confidence, without which an Elliott would have laboured in vain. Not a few of them about town have become useful servants and excellent mechanics. But as a race they are disappearing rapidly, and it is the opinion of many that at the same ratio of mortality which has prevailed within the last few years, a red man will be a rarity in the next generation. I have just room for a little story which will show that the native is a genuine specimen of humanity. They are polygamists. In obedience to the Roman Catholic priest a wife of a young chief left him, and without asking her spiritual adviser, married another. For a wife to forsake her husband, and particularly a chief, is considered disgraceful to the last degree! The young chief resented and was shot in the scuffle. The big chief, his father, proclaimed war. The Roman Catholic bishop, from whom I had the story, was called in as mediator. The old man privately requested him to say that his murdered son had gone to heaven, but that the soul of the murderer should never get there. Such a statement to the people, he said, would comfort his heart more than a present of forty blankets. He took the blankets as a ransom and renounced all intention of war for that offence. But what assurance the Bishop gave him of the future state of the departed I am unable to say. With some difficulty the warriors were brought to terms, and an entire day was spent in effecting a truce among the tribes. The Devastation has just returned from a trip North, having seized nearly 1000 gallons of rum from smugglers, who have proved a greater plague than the smallpox to the poor Indian.

