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*"And they came in haste * * and found the Babe."
This striking conception of the scene at Bethlehem was
done in clay by Matrianni in Paris, where his unique
work has attracted wide notice.*

The Christmas Continent

December 11, 1919.

THE CONTINENT

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The Calendar of God

CHRISTMAS is witness to the timekeeping of a calendar-making God. It echoes the mightiest clock stroke ever resounding from the chronometer of the universe. Each new celebration of the day is a reminder of the un-failingly timed program forever in the thought of the divine Governor of creation—a graphic refutation of all skeptic imaginations which picture history as the sport of chance.

For the word says it was "when the fulness of time came" that "God sent forth his Son."

The need of the world was ancient when Christ appeared to answer it. In the judgment of men the redeeming Messiah was far overdue. Impatient faith had been crying for centuries: "How long, O Lord, how long?"

But God waited. The "times" he had appointed for messianic preparation were not complete. Imperative necessities of each passing age he met with gracious supply of prophets and teachers calling the people to himself. He ever made plain the way of righteousness for those who desired to walk therein. But he would not hasten his working plan.

Sending his Son into the world to inaugurate the era of the kingdom of heaven was an enterprise far too vast to risk its success by inadequate readiness or inopportune introduction. The Christ must come forth into a world not only set right for his arrival but furnished with power to carry forward his work.

The hour of the first Christmas was therefore no doubt the first hour when God had looked down on a world where the good news of Jesus the Saviour could be proclaimed with surety of its being retold till all nations heard.

As God's great Missionary to man, the Christ could not inaugurate his work among men until the stuff out of which missionaries are made had been developed in the earth. There are many reasons for believing that the age of his advent was the earliest age of history in which the missionary impulse could have been evoked from the human soul.

It is, however, of less immediate significance for us to try to invade the secrets of heavenly

counsel on which God's choice of times and seasons depends than to take faith from such observations as these that God is still infallibly keeping the steady time schedule of his purposes and bringing to pass year after year each new triumph of his power as early as the scene is prepared for it.

Especially should Christmas enable us to believe anew that the great men of his will—the apostles and ministers who follow after Christ as the prophets and seers went before him—come into the world in their due succession as the appropriate hour is made ready for each.

It is the current fashion to lament that this present period of ours lacks outstanding spiritual leadership. The absence of superlative figures in the church is everywhere conceded.

But Christmas bids us reflect that the time for the great leader of a new day may not yet be fulfilled. What is happening may be—no doubt is—rather the will of God for the present hour, and assuredly no less wonderful—a great groundswell of desire for larger service lifting the church entire in all lands—not a challenge from the conspicuous few but an aspiration of the consecrated many.

This singularly dynamic democracy of the kingdom of God, this spontaneous stir of the mass of the church's common people, this uplifting of the general spirit of religious folk, is a phenomenon that no previous age of Christianity has quite paralleled.

What if for the moment it does not seem to be coming to any very definite head of tangible results? What if there are many uncertain gropings which betray doubt of where to turn or what to do? May not all these things prove none the less to be God's preparation of times which shall ere long make possible vaster triumphs than the Master's cause has yet seen?

If so, the dictate of faith which inevitably ensues teaches us to believe that the leader or leaders whom God appoints to be captains of that greater victory will not fail to appear when his clock, still running true to the minute of his intentions, strikes again his chosen hour.

Field of Christian Effort

DR. BENJAMIN L. AGNEW IS DEAD

Dr. Benjamin L. Agnew, secretary emeritus of the Board of Ministerial Relief, died at his home in Philadelphia Dec. 2, aged 86. He was born in Armstrong county, Pennsylvania; graduated from Washington College in 1854 and from Western Theological Seminary in 1857. He was licensed to preach by Allegheny Presbytery in 1856 and ordained by Blairsville Presbytery in 1858. He served First church of Johnstown, 1858-1867; Westminster church, Philadelphia, 1868-1870, and North church, 1870-1872; East Liberty church, Pittsburgh, 1882-1884; and Bethlehem church, Philadelphia 1884-1896. He was secretary of the Board of Ministerial Relief from 1897 to 1912 and later served as stated clerk of Philadelphia Central Presbytery and as Moderator of the Synod of Philadelphia. He was a member of the Board of Home Missions and vice president of the Board of Publication, a director and trustee of the General Assembly, editor of The Assembly Herald and chairman of the executive council of the Presbyterian Historical Society. He is survived by a daughter, the wife of Dr. W. Dayton Roberts, pastor of Temple church, Philadelphia, with whom he made his home for some years.

WOMAN PREACHERS ORGANIZE

Woman preachers of nine denominations organized under the name of the International Association of Woman Preachers at St. Louis, late in November. The purpose of the organization, as stated in the constitution, is "to promote fellowship among women preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, to secure equal ecclesiastical rights for women and to encourage capable and consecrated young women to take up the work of the ministry." The women declared themselves as standing for the holy scriptures as the revelation of God to man and the ground of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour; a full presentation in teaching and preaching of both individual salvation and social righteousness; a missionary program that shall comprehend the needs of the whole man throughout the whole world; and a genuine democracy that shall secure equality of opportunity for all, regardless of property, caste, race or sex. Miss M. Madeline Southard of Winfield, Kan., was elected president and Mrs. Mary Kuhl, Champaign, Ill., general secretary.

STRENGTHEN BOND BETWEEN RACES

A recent luncheon, served by Rev. S. Satow, pastor of the Japanese church at Hanford, Cal., to new members of the church, their families, officers of the church and American helpers, strengthened the bond of fellowship between the two races represented. Twenty-four Japanese and Americans were seated. The Americans were given American food, and the others a simple Japanese dish, with tea. Though the orientals did not understand the words of Dr. Sturge, director of Japanese and Chinese work on the Pacific coast, and though the Americans could not comprehend the words of T. Takayma, one of the Japanese helpers, there was no mistaking the meaning of the promise of helpfulness in each address. Barriers of race and caste were swept away before the united enthusiasm for the common cause.

ADOPT PLAN TO EVANGELIZE JEWS

A plan to win Israel to the gospel is the program recently adopted by the Hebrew Christian Alliance at its annual conference in Cleveland. The program includes a determination to minister to the 3,500,000 Jews in America; to evangelize the multitudes flocking to Palestine, establishing a Hebrew Christian colony in their midst; and to send suitable evangelists and missionaries to the 7,000,000 Jews in Russia and Poland. On one night of the conferences \$5,000 was pledged toward the work of the alliance in America, Russia and Palestine.

FORM KOREAN LEAGUE

With the assistance of the ministerial alliance of the city, a "Friends of Korea" league has been formed in First church of Kansas City, Mo., Rev. William C. Isett pastor. Ten other cities have similar leagues. The aim of the movement is to spread information about Korea in the present struggle against Japanese rule. Dr. Philip

Jaison, a Korean living in Philadelphia, made the principal address at the dinner that followed the meeting. The dinner was supplied by twelve Korean students resident in Kansas City, three Korean restaurant men and five Koreans from Park College.

OFFERS CUTS FOR CHRISTMAS USE

In an effort to help pastors provide attractive and interesting printing for their Christmas programs the western office of the department of publicity, 17 North State street, Chicago, has prepared cuts which it is offering churches at low prices. This offer to the pastors is in the nature of an experiment to discover if there is a demand for religious cuts. The three cuts offered for Christmas are Raphael's "Madonna of the Chair," Lerolle's "Arrival of the Shepherds" and a cut of a mother and two ragged children to whom Santa Claus may not come. Circulars describing these cuts, with prices, can be obtained from the Chicago office. The same office has made arrangements to obtain for churches half-tones of church buildings or of pastors at specially low rates.

ASK GIFTS FOR RELIEF IN EAST

An appeal has been made by General Assembly's moderator, Dr. John Willis Baer, and Dr. W. H. Roberts, stated clerk, in behalf of the 3,000,000 sufferers in Armenia, Syria and other near east regions. After consultation with the Board of Foreign Missions, the moderator and clerk recommended that subscriptions for relief of the sufferers be made on Sunday, Jan. 18, 1920, or on the Sunday designated by state and county committees on near east relief. Gifts as large as possible are asked for that day. All checks should be sent promptly to the treasurer of Near East Relief, 1 Madison avenue, New York city. The national committee of near east relief is successor to the committee on Armenian and Syrian relief.

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

Pledge Funds For Tusculum—On the rally day for the endowment fund at Tusculum College, Greeneville, Tenn., the student body pledged \$5,000, the faculty \$5,000 and the community \$6,000.

To Teach Applied Christianity—A chair of applied Christianity has been established at San Francisco Theological Seminary at San Anselmo, by Robert Dollar, president of the board of directors.

Endow Athletics to Honor Heroes—Rollins College, Winter Park, Fla., has begun a campaign for \$250,000 to be used in building a new athletic field and gymnasium and in starting an athletic endowment fund as a memorial to the seven Rollins students lost in the war.

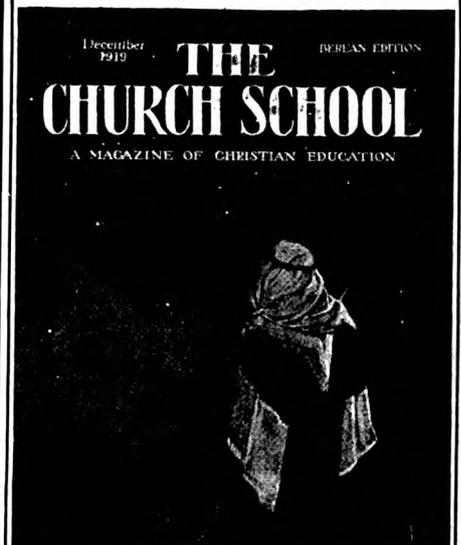
Dr. Farmer Transferred—Dr. William R. Farmer, memorial professor of New Testament literature and exegesis at Western Theological Seminary, has been transferred to the chair of practical theology recently made vacant by Dr. David R. Breed, who resigned to accept the chair of homiletics created for him.

Hastings To Have New Buildings—All but \$60,000 of the \$315,000 building fund for Hastings College has been subscribed, and the board of trustees has ordered work to be begun on the new plant immediately. Arrangements have been made by the board for launching an additional campaign for \$500,000 for upkeep of these buildings, beginning April 1, 1920. All the money so far subscribed has been raised in Nebraska.

Cyclone Damages Utah College—During the worst wind storm in the history of Salt Lake City a large part of the roof of the boys' dormitory of Westminster College was carried away. The north gable of Converse hall, the administration building, was blown in, and many water pipes were frozen. None of the occupants of either building was injured, although the escape in the dormitory seemed almost miraculous, as the boys occupying the part of the building unroofed had just moved to the other side of the building to escape the intense cold accompanying the storm. Inasmuch as cyclones are almost unknown to Salt Lake, no cyclone insurance was carried and the damage is a total loss. At this time destruction of its property is doubly serious to the college; President Reherd is burdened with the

task of raising \$600,000 for endowment and enlargement. Any who are interested in the work of the only Protestant Christian college working at the Mormon problem may send extra financial aid to assist in repairing the damaged buildings.

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- Christmas for All—a story told in pictures
- In the Wake of the Turk—Milton S. Littlefield
- Making the New World—Henry F. Cope
- The Pilgrim Faith—Thomas C. Richards
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