

# BIBLICAL RECORDER

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## BETTER: THE CHRISTIAN'S WORD.

The nobler warfare is not between the Good and the Bad. The nobler warfare is between the Better and the Good. One lives but lowly whose battle is with the Bad. Man was meant to fight upward—not against going downward. The doctrine of "let well enough alone" is heathen. The struggle against the Bad is as the life in Egypt: the struggle for the Better is as the life in Canaan.

Better is, therefore, a great word. It is also the word of the race's hope. It is also the word of the race's consolation. It is a word of prime position in Christianity.

J. W. Lynch was recently preaching in Raleigh. He pointed out that Better is the great word in Paul's letter to the Hebrews. He uses it again and again. He bears his brethren the message of a "better hope," a "better sacrifice," a "better country," a "better covenant," a "better resurrection."

Christianity is the religion of Better—the better day, the better life, the better land. In nothing is its divine character more worthily shown. A religion that puts such aspiration in the heart of its subject, a religion that not only creates the aspiration but also supplies the aspiration with motive, must be divine. Christianity—that is, Christ—has been the motive in all the race's progress. It is He that has made men desire to be better and capable of being better. Those who have caught the vision of Him are divinely discontented forever more. They are led by a never waning, never setting star. Their word is Better. **Each day must record rise. No attainment is sufficient.** Eternity is required by them for the fulfillment of their aspirations, because, having received of God, they have infinite capacity to rise. It may be true that heaven is a place to be gained at a single bound, but a man may not be blamed for thinking that it is a place of infinite rising, seeing that of such does happiness here consist. There may be deeper joy than the joy of progress, of achievement, of rising, but men have not known it.

Who can live through a day and come to its close without consoling himself that on the morrow he will "do better" or "be better?" It is just this in your heart that carries you and the whole race onward. In this very hope do we build our heavens, and at the last we reassure ourselves by saying that all the bettering that our hearts have craved shall be attained in the moment of death. Heaven is the reaping of life's deferred aspirations.

To say that the meaning contained in the word "Better" is the race's hope, is to say that it is the race's consolation. For our consolation is hope. In the presence of loss we say Better; in the hour of pain we say Better; in the sorrow of death we say Better;—we Christians do. Our understanding is not the world's understanding. Loss and pain and death may not be altogether clear to us; but we know enough to break their power with our word Better. So we sing our song, "I worship thee, sweet will of God." So we whisper, "Tis better so," and find ourselves possessed of peace that passes knowledge because it is better than knowledge.

We all remember Sydney Carton. That boy or girl who never heard of him is poor indeed. Of all the names in the Tale of Two Cities his will be longest remembered. Sydney Carton gave his life for the life of his friend, and he finished it with these words, "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to, than I have even known." By such a consolation he was enabled to go un-

faltering to his death. He was not mistaken. There are times when it is better to suffer; better to lose; better, at length, to die. The common notion that only they are fortunate who do not suffer, is after all but vulgar ignorance. Life is good, to be sure, and pain is no more to be wooed than death. But let us never think that life consists wholly in the happier things. A good woman wrote us recently of long sickness and financial reverses. It was easy to remind her that God blesses with misfortune as often as with fortune; that "we are put upon our backs in sickness that we may look up to God." Undeniably it is hard to see it so in the hour of the thick darkness. But in such an hour, let the word—the Christian's word—Better, arise in your heart and come forth from your life. To do less is to forfeit your religion, to give up Christ.

And, remember, in the day of fortune and attainment, the word is Better. We live not to be good, but to become Better. No curse could be more disastrous, no attainment so self-destructive as that which convinces a man that he has reached his goal.

## THE SOUTH'S UNEQUALLED COMBINATION OF ADVANTAGES.

(From "Facts About the South," by R. H. Edmonds.)

Nature has given this section advantages unequalled by those of any other country. About 75 per cent of the world's cotton is raised in the South. More than one-half of all the standard timber in the United States is in the South. Iron and coal are in unlimited supply, and owing to their proximity, and to the low cost of mining, pig-iron and steel can be made at a smaller cost than in any other part of the country, if not in the world. Nearly every Southern State has an abundance of the best water-powers to supplement the advantages of cheap coal. It is not an exaggeration to say this favored land has greater advantages and resources, such as mineral, timber and agricultural potentialities, than any other section; it has greater advantages than any other country in the world; by virtue of its rivers and long seacoast it has the guarantee of the lowest freight rates; it has a climate that is conducive to good health and long life—a climate that reduces the cost of living to a minimum; it has all of these mighty factors to insure its prosperity, and with fewer disadvantages than any other factors to insure its prosperity, and with fewer disadvantages than any other equal area in the world. It can produce nearly everything, from the widest range of agricultural growth to the widest limit of manufacturing and mining diversity, at the lowest cost. It is becoming a great iron and steel centre; it is monopolizing the manufacture of coarse cotton goods, and is turning its attention to the finer grades; it is becoming the market garden of the North; its people can live more cheaply, because of natural advantages, than those of other sections, thus always insuring the maximum profit on everything that the South produces. The vast traffic of the West, which has heretofore sought a foreign market through Northern ports, is now turning to the South, and along the South Atlantic and Gulf coast there will of necessity grow up a number of opulent seaports. Climate attractions are making the South a winter home for an ever-increasing number of tourists and health-seekers, who annually spend in the aggregate many millions of dollars there.

Some countries have coal and iron, some have timber, some have oil, some have phosphate, some have good agricultural lands, some a good climate, some have water powers, some have other advantages, but no other country combines all these, and to them adds cotton, which is the foundation of one of the greatest manufacturing interests in the world. Nowhere else is this combination found.

The South is a well-watered country, with a regular and abundant rainfall. From the great mountain ranges that form its backbone innumerable streams and rivers flow to the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico. Some furnish cheap transportation and will forever regulate railroad rates; others afford water-powers, used only to a

comparatively small extent now, but capable of furnishing sufficient power to spin all the cotton which the South produces.

The lumbering business of Michigan and the adjoining States was for years the foundation of much of their progress and prosperity; it afforded employment to millions of capital, to many thousands of hands, and yielded very large profits. In the extent and variety of its standing timber the South far surpasses any other section. It has the basis for a lumbering and wood-working business much greater than that of the North West. Its virgin forests of hardwood will furnish the raw material for as many factories to manufacture costly furniture and fine woodwork of all kinds as are now in operation in the entire country; its cheaper lumber will go into the lower grades of furniture, while its pine will continue, as it now is, indispensable in building operations.

Nowhere else are the natural conditions so favorable for the production of iron and steel on the largest scale that the increasing consumption demands and at the lowest cost. In the greater mineral and timber belt which stretches from West Virginia to Northern Alabama, covering, roughly speaking, an area of about 700 miles in length and 150 to 200 miles in width, there is a concentration of mineral and timber wealth greater than can be found in any other equal area in America or Europe, with ideal conditions for its development.

Instead of having to haul ore 1,000 miles, as many Northern furnaces do, and coke 500 to 600 miles, as many Western furnaces are compelled to do, the iron-maker in this section finds ore and coal and limestone within a few miles of each other. And as new railroads open up new and large fields, the cost of production should steadily decrease, against a gradual but certain increase in a very large part of the North and in Europe.

On one side of this mineral belt is the cotton, fruit and truck-growing and yellow-pine region of the South, needing the coal, iron and hardwoods of the mountains, and furnishing in exchange its cotton, its fruits, its vegetables and its pine lumber, creating a mutually profitable exchange. On the other side are the rich and populous prairie States, which will afford an almost unlimited market for all the manufactured products of this central work-shop region, while the development of these industrial interests will create a new market for all diversified products of the farm. The assured construction of the Isthmian Canal will open to the cotton and the coal and the iron of the South new markets, in which the demand will tax the productive capacity of this section.

## A PROTEST AGAINST THE TIMES.

That man standing yonder, with pencil and note-book, measuring the hours, counting the minutes, examining the seed, writing "growth" here, and "success" there, and "failure" in another place;—that man, I say, I wish he would go away and let my heart live for an hour! He is ever speaking of "bringing things to pass," of figures as representing the true measurement of life; when the fact is, he is not measuring life at all. Heart throbs are not found in statistical tables nor are longings after the infinite on stock exchange reports. He is truly achieving who is living; whose heart is right toward God and his fellowmen; who makes each day a season for honest service, for lofty motives, for kindly relationships. Only vice is news, according to the newspaper standpoint; but heaven does not read the newspaper. The best life is the unrecorded life, and the success of heaven is a matter of heart and not of yard-stick or bushel measure.—Baptist Union.

## A GOOD COAT.

A Scottish nobleman once, seeing an old gardener of his establishment with a somewhat threadbare coat, made some passing remark on its condition. "It's a verra guid coat," said the honest old man. "I cannot agree with you there," said his lordship. "Ay, it's a verra guid coat," persisted the old man; "it covers a contented spirit and a body that owes no man anything, and that's mair than mony a man can say of his coat."—John Mitchell.

Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year.—Emerson.