

The Christian Sun.

BY EMMETT L. MOFFITT.

IN ESSENTIALS, UNITY; IN NON-ESSENTIALS, LIBERTY; IN ALL THINGS, CHARITY.

\$2.00 PER YEAR.

ESTABLISHED 1844

RALEIGH, N. C., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1896.

VOLUME XLIX: NUMBER 9.

The Christian Sun

The Organ of the General Convention
of the Christian Church (South).

CARDINAL PRINCIPLES.

1. The Lord Jesus is the only Head of the church.
2. The name Christian, to the exclusion of all party and sectarian names.
3. The Holy Bible, or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, sufficient rule of faith and practice.
4. Christian character, or vital piety, the only test of fellowship or membership.
5. The right of private judgment, and the liberty of conscience, the privilege and duty of all.

Editorial Reflections.

Texas claims the longest wagon bridge in the world. It is at Galveston, and is three miles long.

The new Government 4's are selling at 115. The small bids are being put on the exchange market.

The N. C. Dairyman's Association met last week at Occaneechee Farm. Col. Carr is a popular host.

The Army Appropriation bill for \$23,275,902 was passed by the House last week. It certainly does take money to run the Government.

About \$4,500,000 in United States per cent bonds have been awarded to the Morgan Syndicate, according to circular letter of the Secretary of State.

Secretary Carlisle says he has nothing to do with instructing the Democratic Senators in regard to the election of the Kentucky Senator. No election has yet been made.

After discussing the matter for several days the House killed the Senate's substitute free coinage bill by a vote of 215 to 90. The President will not be troubled to veto the bill now.

The amount paid to Federal pensioners will be much less this year than they were last year; but that makes little difference to Southern tax-payers, because just as much money will be spent for some other purpose.

During the past twenty years there have been about 450 churches organized, in which there are about 18,000 communicants. This makes a fair showing, but the number might be greatly increased.

There must be some money in farming: the expenses of the State penitentiary were paid last year by farming. A large number of acres of land have been recently leased, and more work will be done by the convicts.

The first through train ever run from San Francisco to Norfolk passed through Raleigh last week over the Southern's new route. It transferred 125 United States marines from the navy yard at San Francisco to that of Norfolk.

When we consider the fact that the king of the Armenians was baptized in the third century, and that the Armenian was the first race that accepted Christianity, at least our sympathy and prayers should go out for them continually. A long and bitter struggle have they had.

The Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition Company has sent out invitations to the various States, requesting them to send delegates in charge of various products and relics from their respective States. The exposition opens May 1st, 1897, and closes October 1st, 1897. May it be a success.

Within the past two weeks ten vessels carrying arms and ammunition to the insurgents have left this country for Cuba. The insurgents are preparing for effective action.

Great Britain is said to be making preparations for war with some country or countries. She is increasing her navy, which is already the strongest navy owned by any government. Her forces will hardly come over this way, and if it is sent anywhere it will probably be to try its force upon some poor little country in Africa.

The Ladies' Benevolent Society has opened the Emergency Hospital at Goldsboro. There are four wards: two for white, and two for colored, both male and female. Mrs. Duke has taken charge as matron of the hospital. We are glad to see the tendency of caring for unfortunate humanity growing more popular among our people.

In "The Armenian Crisis in Turkey", Mr. Greene says: Misgovernment as it exists in Turkey is a disease, of which the germs penetrate the whole system of the body politic. No creed is exempt; every man is attacked by it. The more apparent result is outward impoverishment and material prostration. The more dangerous and deplorable symptom is the moral deterioration of all the races affected.

With the new light of science and the awful experiences of our people we should make a complete diagnosis of the disease in our Government and put forth every effort to check it before the case becomes more aggravated.

The Government of Great Britain had better settle her various disputes on friendly terms while it has an opportunity to do so. Mr. Gladstone is trying to get Parliament to give an attentive ear to cries of distress coming from Armenia. Mr. Gladstone knows of the injustice being done in Turkey, and is aroused to sympathy for the oppressed people. He will make an earnest and persistent appeal to his people, and says he will not relinquish his claims upon them until a just and peaceful determination of the Armenian question is arrived at. Mr. Gladstone manifests that brotherhood of nations which should exist among all civilized and christianized people.

The Catholics of this city are soon to erect a new cathedral at the enormous cost of \$70,000. That will be the finest one in North Carolina, and shows with what zeal these people are pushing forward their work. Should not this inspire the members of the evangelical churches to greater effort; if not in the building of costly houses of worship, to providing soul food for those who are stumbling about in darkness and superstition? Let us help those who are willing to be helped to take Christ for a foundation upon which to build an everlasting temple. If we are to succeed in business we must work. If the world is to be taken for Christ, his followers must be active in the service.

We are glad to see a disposition on the part of the South to manufacture her own raw material and thus keep our own capital at home; and capitalists from other states, seeing the good work going on in the South will be induced to come and cast their lot with us. Our people, until recently, have taken little interest in manufacturing, hence the North has gotten far in advance of us. Our raw material has been shipped North to manufacturers, and then sent back to us in a more valuable state, for all of which we had to pay; but the Southern States are making great progress, especially in this line of work, and not many years will pass before we will at least equal the Northern States in manufacturing.

From Our Contributors.

WHY HAVE NOT THE PASTORAL LABORS OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS BEEN EFFICIENT?

BY REV. W. G. CLEMENTS.

As has already been stated in a previous article, the pastoral labors of Christian ministers have not been efficient when seen under the light of visible results. There must be some reason for this. What can it be? It cannot be a lack of gospel thought or zeal in the sermons preached, for in this respect the sermons of Christian ministers have compared favorably with those of other denominations. What can it be? Can it be a lack of following the Bible plan? Yes; in my opinion here is the cause. Paul says he preached publicly and from house to house. Christian ministers have done faithful gospel preaching publicly, but have failed to preach from house to house. Small salaries and scattered fields of labor have made it impossible to preach from house to house. Men having to travel from 500 to 1000 miles a month to reach their appointments, have no time to preach from house to house.

Jesus earnestly preached in public will have its desired effect in bringing sinners to a saving knowledge of Jesus; but it requires doctrines explained to build up organization. This Christian ministers were not willing to crowd into the short time given them to preach Christ. And not having the time to visit, doctrines or principles were not talked around the fireside. This being true, thousands upon thousands of those who were brought to Christ under the preaching of Christian ministers have found homes in other denominations. Thus the Christian church is thankful for her record in bringing sinners to Christ, but counts her churches and members with rather a blushing face.

"SOUL TALKS."

BY REV. J. PRESLEY BARRETT, D. D.

The poor pilgrim said: I have no part nor inheritance with those who prosper in this world; no corner lots; no chance to make money." Well, praise the Lord for that. Do you ask, Why? There is a good reason. I know a man who had the chance to make money and he gave himself to it, till he could hardly break away from the habit, for money-making had become a habit with him. When he stood at the end of a long life, he was most anxious to break away from the bondage of money-making, but he found it most difficult to do so. Better not have the chance to make money, and so lay up your treasure in Heaven, than to have the chance to make money, and lay up no treasure in Heaven. But if we have no "corner lots," and no "stocks," and no gold, what then? Why something better than all that—be a Levite—why the Lord is your inheritance. Read Deut. 10: 9. The riches of His grace will grandly make up, a thousand times over, for all we lose in our earthly possessions. Try it, depend on it, and cling to Jesus through all the testing days of this earthly life.

How many of us are living on the husks of the gospel? Alas, brother, that is poor living, and then it is such a pity to live a half-starved life when the Lord spreads a table of abundance before us. Many of us are living on the poor little dried up questions of mere denominational lines, while the rich feasts which are spread in a life which is hid with Christ in God, are left untouched. "Brother, sister, hear me: If you are starving, as a Christian, it is not because you have nothing on which you might live—for the Bible is full of the Bread of Life. O, cease to feast on the mere denominational shibboleths, and take the great and rich doctrines of grace,

of faith, of holiness, and live—feast and grow fat in the Lord. You may doubt, beloved, but doubting does not change the facts—the Lord spreads a rich table for His people, and all are welcome. Why stand off—why hesitate to eat—why starve spiritually? Why live on husks when the sweeter and richer food of the gospel is so abundant? O, why!

THOUGHTS OF NATURE.

BY REV. W. C. WICKER, A. M.

All nature expresses the thought of God. The flower blooms; it; the lightning flashes it; the thunder howls it. All nature speaks it. God is truth. The geologist finds an expression of God's thought in every strata of the earth; the biologist finds God's conception in the amoeba, the smallest animal structure; in every blade of grass, tree and flower; the astronomer sees the thoughts of God streaming from the distant worlds of light, declaring his omnipotence, expressing his omniscience. Is there a skeptic or atheist? Let him turn his telescope upon the midnight heavens in their radiant splendor, and they will declare the glory of God. Let him turn his microscope upon the world of animalcules and study God's thoughts as embodied in a world invisible to the natural eye. The student of nature is endeavoring to think the thoughts that God thought in the morning of creation. All that God has made is a visible, tangible, material embodiment of the creation of the divine mind. This is not a world of chaos. It is a world of orderly arranged conceptions, and these conceptions have been objectified or materialized in God's creations. The more we study and understand of the creation the more we can understand of God. Some would claim that religion and science conflict; but how? True science is the proper understanding of God in his own work, and religion seeks to understand God and man as related to each other. The sacred scriptures deal directly with this relationship, and reveal a great deal that cannot be learned directly from nature; but Christ made nature speak in confirmation of the revelation in his many parables.

The wind now whispers, now howls, some thought divine. It is likened to the silent operation of the Spirit. He who understands nature can make nature reveal many wonderful conceptions that would inspire man to study more and more the direct revelation. Truth, pallid truth, is seen beneath all the material.

There was a conference at Philadelphia on the 22d inst., Washington's birthday, the prime object of the meeting being to advance the cause of arbitration among the nations. This "child's play of war" has been going on long enough. Some method should be carried out whereby all questions of difference could be heard impartially and settled according to the demands of justice. Millions of dollars were spent on account of the recent difficulty between the United States and Great Britain, and the matter is not yet settled. Surely the people must be contending for principle, for there is no money in it.

According to the Chicago Times-Herald, the South is making rapid strides toward increased wealth. It states that "Since 1880 the annual output has increased about 100 per cent. Today the new South is turning out annually \$1,000,000,000 more than it did ten years ago."

Since it appears that a war with Great Britain has been averted, the House is taking no part in making the ex-Confederate soldiers eligible to service in the United States army.

The President has signed a bill prohibiting prize fighting in the different Territories and the District of Columbia. Here is one good law that Congress has made.

THE PULPIT.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST

BY REV. JAMES MAPLE, D. D.

He was transfigured before them.—Mark 9: 2.

There is some difference of opinion among biblical scholars about the place where this wonderful scene occurred. Some think that it was on Mount Hermon, which rises grandly above Caesarea Philippi. Against this view ecclesiastical tradition, running back to the fourth century, assigns Mount Tabor, in Galilee, as the place. And this is more likely, since Jesus, when he descended from the mount, found the scribes engaged in a discussion with disciples. The presence of the scribes would be far more natural in their own country of Galilee, at the foot of Mount Tabor, than in the heathen and distant country at the foot of Mount Hermon; and although, when last mentioned, Christ was near Mount Hermon, yet during the six days' interval he could easily have gone to Galilee.

The disciples were not all permitted to witness the glorification of Christ. When he ascended the mount he took "with him Peter, and James, and John." These were witnesses enough, and those who were best qualified. They were the same who had witnessed the healing of Jairus' daughter, and who were with him in the garden of Gethsemane. There is an instructive lesson in this selection. It shows that the seventy were dearer than the many, the twelve dearer than the seventy, the three dearer than the twelve, and John the dearest of the three. These three were selected because they were destined by Christ to be distinguished disciples in the future work of his church. Those who live nearest to Christ will be favored with disclosures by him. Let us look at the three scenes in the transfiguration and learn what they teach us.

I. FIRST SCENE.—'Tis night, the scenery is rugged and wild; Christ withdraws himself from his disciples to pray. He has need of it now: he is nearing the great tragedy. He "went up into the mountain to pray." He prayed much, and often when he prayed went up into the mountains, or into the deserts; for he chose to be alone. There is something in the solitude and deep and awful stillness of the mountain favorable to devotion.

It is proper to withdraw from society and retire to some lonely place to hold communion with God; and it is desirable that every one should have a place where he may be alone with God. This avoids the appearance of ostentation, and guards against pride; for pride is easily excited when we know that others hear us pray. There are many things that we need to talk with God about, and ask his aid in, that would not be proper to mention before others. The mountain was a sublime place above lower things. John when worshipping alone in the Isle of Patmos saw Heaven opened, and witnessed marvelous manifestations of the divine glory, and heard the inspiring music of the holy angels and the mighty host of the redeemed.

As the disciples watched Christ as he prayed they witnessed a marvelous change in his appearance. "He was transfigured before them, and his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; and his face did shine as the sun." The word "transfigured" means to change the appearance or form. It does not denote change of substance, but simply the appearance. Christ's inner and supernatural glory broke through the walls of the flesh, causing even his raiment to shine "white as the light." "His face did shine as the sun." In his pre-existent state Christ was "in the form of God," "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." In the original it is "splendor or shining like the sun." When Christ became in-

carate this glory was veiled in the flesh. Paul calls this "the veil, that is to say, his flesh." As the veil of the tabernacle concealed the glory of God in the holy of holies from the view of men, so Christ's body screened his higher nature; and his earthly associates did not see him as the angels saw him before his incarnation in heaven.

The radiant light that streamed from the face of Moses with unbearable splendor was an external reflection of the Divine Being with whom he had been in sweet communion; but this effulgence of Christ was the momentary outshining of his divine nature. It was a flash of the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and it made such a profound impression on the mind and heart of Peter that thirty-four years after he spoke of having been an eye-witness of the majesty of Christ. Speaking of his confidence in Christ as his Lord and Saviour he said:

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

Christ was in the form of God (Phil. 2: 6). God is light (1 John 1: 5). God dwells in the light (1 Tim. 1: 16). God covers himself with light (Psalms 104: 2). When Christ would appear in the form of God, he appeared in the light (Job 1: 5, 10).

Christ's "raiment became shining exceeding white as now." All his body was transfigured as his face was; so that the beams of light darting from it through his clothes, made them white and glittering. The brightness of Moses' face was so feeble that even a thin veil could conceal it; but such was the glory of Christ that it made even his heavy garments shine brilliantly.

What does this scene signify? First, That Christ was divine. Whence came that glory? Evidently from within. All this glory which Christ was invested with only a faint earnest of the sublime glory to be given afterwards. In the close of his ministry when the cross was just before him he said in solemn prayer to his Father:

I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

This prayer was answered in the exaltation to the right hand of God, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church." So with all the disciples of Christ, of whom Paul says, "I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Second, A higher order or character of prayer. While he prayed he was invested with glory; so with Moses; so with Stephen; so with the disciples on the day of Pentecost. It is through prayer and the contemplation of Christ that the Christian is spiritually transfigured. Hence Paul says, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

II. THE HEAVENLY SCENE.—"There appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus." They "appeared in glory." Their personal appearance was similar to that of Christ. They appeared to the three disciples just as they do in Heaven among the angels of God.

It was by Moses that the law was given, and its institutions pointed to Christ. It "was a shadow of good things to come." "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Moses appeared on the mount with Christ to show that this was so, and the law ended in the gospel. It was proper for him to appear there now that his prophecies and types were all to be fulfilled in the Messiah. He was there to bow to Christ as his Lord and Saviour. Elijah was a distinguished prophet, and represented the restoration of the law and re-establishment of the kingdom; and indeed he was the mightiest of the prophets. They all pointed to Christ. "To him gave all the prophets witness." Elijah came as the most distinguished and most highly honored of the prophets to show that their predictions of the coming Messiah were fulfilled in Christ, and that they all acknowledged him as the Teacher of teachers—as "the truth."

The theme of the conversation of Moses and Elijah was as significant as their glory. They conversed with Christ about his death that was soon to take place at Jerusalem. They had been living in Heaven for centuries, and had seen Christ there as the Son of God clothed in the uncreated glory that he had with the Father before the universe of world were called into being by his omnific "Let it be so." Doubtless they had seen him leave the bosom of his Father, lay aside his glory, and enter on his mission of mercy to this lost world. Now they too have left their home in Heaven and descended to earth to honor him. They knew what he had yet to suffer, and were deeply interested. We have no record of the conversation, and it is best that we should not have, or we would have had it. It is wonderful that in this indescribable physical glory of Christ's transfiguration the attention of all should be directed to the higher moral glory of his crucifixion. To these celestial visitors the cross of Christ stood upon the throne of the universe, and was the symbol of redemption. There is no problem like that of redemption, and it is of deep interest to all the inhabitants of Heaven. The angels anxiously desire to solve its profound and sublime mysteries (1 Pet. 1: 10-12). It awakens the deepest feelings of gratitude in the hearts of the redeemed, and inspires all their songs (Rev. 1: 5, 6; 9: 9-12).

III. THE OVERSHADOWING GLORY.—"Behold a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." This was a luminous cloud, not dark like that on Sinai. It was analogous to the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night in the wilderness. This cloud was to break the force of the light which otherwise would have overcome the disciples. It was like the veil which Moses put over his face. It was also a symbol of the divine presence as the cloud of glory was above the divine mercy seat. The disciples trembled with fear when they saw themselves enveloped in the cloud, for it was not an ordinary cloud and it was at night. Out of the cloud came the Father's voice: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." A great crisis was at hand, and the same supernatural voice from the everlasting Father, which prepared him to battle with Satan in the wilderness now prepares him to meet and overcome the malignity of the prince of darkness on the cross. There was no sound of a trumpet, no flash of lightning, no crash of thunder as in the giving of the law. There was the manifest glory of Christ, the luminous cloud, and the loving voice of the loving Father. This makes the difference between the law and the gospel. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

[CONTINUED.]