

# The Christian Sun.

BY EMMETT L. MOFFITT.

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

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## The Christian Sun

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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.

### REFLECTIONS.

All the principal railroads in North Carolina are required to put on separate first and second class cars for the white and colored races by June 1, 1899. This is in accordance with the "Jim Crow" car law passed by the last General Assembly.

Quite a number of the leading plow manufacturers met in Chicago recently and organized a gigantic trust with a capitalization of over \$65,000,000. They propose to take in after a while all manufacturers of agricultural implements. They agreed to advance the price of plows 15%. We hope that every state with an anti-trust law will rigidly enforce it, and that those that have none will enact one that will hold. In view of the numerous recent trust organizations this course seems to be absolutely necessary.

As a result of the action of the last North Carolina Legislature in re-organizing some of the public departments, several suits have been carried to the Supreme Court to determine the right to certain offices. In the case of Cherry (Dem.) against Burns (Pop.) for the office of Keeper of the Capitol, Mr. Cherry wins. Mr. Patrick (Rep.) retains the presidency of the A. & N. C. Railroad. Edwards & Broughton (Dem.) get the public printing. The Democratic Agricultural Board goes into office. Mr. Wilson (Rep.) retains his clerkship of the Criminal Court of Buncombe county.

The conference of Virginia Democrats held in Richmond last week for "the purpose of adopting such measures as may be deemed best to promote the election of Senators of the United States by the direct vote of the people, and until that result is accomplished, the selection of party senatorial candidates by some popular method," passed resolutions endorsing the election by direct vote and urging other states to take steps looking to the same end. They also favor, until the constitutional amendment can be secured, the nomination of their Senators by legalized primaries. We believe this is a step in the right direction, and one that will be largely endorsed by men of all parties.

Mr. James W. Alexander, Vice President of the Equitable Life Assurance Company, has recently asked prominent bankers throughout the country their opinion as to the rate of interest that will prevail in the future, and the greater number of those who replied gave it as their opinion that the rate will not average more than three per cent. during the next twenty years. The estimate generally ranged from 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 per cent., but nearly all of them agreed that the average rate will not exceed three per cent. The ability of our city a few weeks ago to sell \$600,000 worth of four per cent. bonds at a premium proves that Norfolk is all ready on a four per cent. interest basis, and it may be that when the time comes to retire other bonds a still more desirable interest rate will be secured.

But a few years will elapse before a large block of eight per cent. bonds will mature, and the indications are that the bonds that will be sold to retire them will bear a rate of interest which will enable the city to save more than fifty per cent. annually of the amount now paid out for interest on that particular loan.—Norfolk Ledger.

Those who have looked into the matter insist that an astonishing number of premature burials occur year after year, the suffering from which, if true, is most shocking to contemplate. One investigator along this line says he has collected evidence of live sepulture in seven hundred cases, and another in 2,313 cases. If these figures are correct they open up a subject that is well worth further examination. And if it is true that all of these persons have been prematurely buried, may it not be that the flickering lamp of life is often extinguished by the embalming process which is so prevalent in this country? It would seem the part of wisdom to so deal with bodies supposed to be dead that every possible chance for resuscitation might remain.—Ledger.

In the reunion of the Confederate Veterans at Charleston this year the poetry and the pathos that have ever marked the re-assembling of those who wore the gray more than ever predominate. In the "cradle of secession," how many and how vivid must be the memories that rise in the minds of these heroes of war and of peace! Memories of the years of bloody strife that stretched between Moultrie and Appomattox.

It is a wonderful thing this free masonry of the lost cause that has no tinge of disloyalty in it, this brotherhood born of blood and battle. Truly the world has not seen its like before, this democracy of comradeship that lifts the lowest to the plane of the highest; this gathering of men to celebrate under one flag the battles fought under another.

And who will say that it does not add to the pleasure of every old veteran as he renews the friendships of '60-'64, and fights his battles over with his one-time comrades in arms, to know that at last he can do so without danger of being misunderstood, that the vicious clamor of rancorous tongues has been stilled for aye and that a united country looks on, not with illy disguised tolerance, but with sympathetic appreciation. He and the sons he has bred have shown that, however much the "Stars and Bars" may be loved and cherished, he and they hold no jot less of loyalty to the "Stars and Stripes" than the men born under colder skies that have known no other flag.

And as if an earnest of the fact that the veteran of the Confederacy has finally won the right to cherish without censure the ashes of his dead and to return without carping the hand-grasp of his living comrades, a common country sends to his reunion a vessel bearing the trophies of a victory shared alike by the North and the South.

The reunion at Charleston is bound to be a memorable one, and there is no American worthy of the name that will grudge to the ranks in gray, thinking all too fast in recent years, the thrill that sweeps them as they cheer the men who led them at Sharpsburg and Antietam, at Manassas and in the Wilderness. All will be the rather rejoice that, "or ever the golden bowl be broken," the Confederate Veterans have been permitted to meet together again where the first page of the history of the Confederacy was written.

With just pride in a past made glorious by their heroism, they meet also to pledge the South's unflinching support to every worthy cause for strengthening the bonds of American unity and thus accelerating the onward march of the republic in its benign mission to humanity.—News and Observer.

## CONTRIBUTIONS.

### IS CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE?

BY W. F. PRICE.

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Prov. 14:12.

That silent, but ever reminding monitor called Conscience is one of the most wonderful faculties of man. It is one of the three inherent, and perhaps immortal principles that go to form man's moral and mental make-up—the conscience, the memory and the soul. But whether it is immortal and shall be a part of man's possession in the other world is not a matter with us at this writing. The great question is: How important a part does it play now in the affairs of men? Is it an inflexible rule that will guide us neither to the right nor to the left, if faithfully followed; or is it simply a creature of the mind, and liable, therefore, to err when the mind is not enlightened? In other words, is conscience a safe guide?

I believe all knowledge was given for man's enlightenment. The rocks, the rivers, the mountains, the trees and the flowers were all given by the great creator, God, and serve to teach us of His glories and omnipotent power. By these the Saviour made plain many of his greatest truths and taught many of his most wonderful lessons. God never intended that we should live in ignorance concerning himself, or his laws, or our duty towards one another. He has placed before us the great volumes of nature, experience and inspiration and has invited us to look therein and learn, and has made the way of truth so plain "that a wayfaring man though he be a fool need not err therein."

But with all this man is prone to follow his own convictions, even though they may be in opposition to the teachings of God's word. He erects himself a standard of right, and whatever does not measure up to it he rejects as being wrong. He does not stop to ask, "what sayeth the law of the Lord," but blindly follows the dictates of his own deluded conscience, and the consequence is, of course, his conclusions are often very erroneous.

The Holy Word of God is the only standard of truth. It is God's law, and we all have access to it, and can therefore know the truth if we will. Now the question is, if we fail to study that law and go on following our own blinded consciences, doing things contrary to that law, will we be excused because of our ignorance? I do not think we will. I believe God will hold every one of us rigidly accountable to Himself in this matter on the day of judgment. Why? Because we could have known better. In his blessed book he has given us commandment after commandment and admonition after admonition, and warning after warning, and still we go on heedless and careless about these sacred things, drawing our own conclusions and following our own blinded convictions regardless of whether they are in accordance with the laws of God, the standard of truth, or the will of the Almighty. Oh, I tell you, some people will wake up to a sense of their awful mistake, I fear, when they come to the judgment bar of God. Ignorance of the law is no excuse, even among frail mortal men in this world, and what right have we to presume that the great and eternal God of all worlds will be any less exacting in his requirements "when he shall judge the quick and the dead."

This brings up, of course, the great question, "Will the heathen be saved?" I do not know whether they will be saved or not, but if they are it will be because of God's great and unbounded mercy, and not because of their ignorance. Some one has very truly said, "If ignorance will excuse or save the ignorant in heathen lands, it will also save the ignorant in all other lands, for God is no respecter of persons." If ignorance will save the ignorant in all lands, then all should be ignorant. If all should be ignorant, then we have no need of the gospel, and so the life and death and resurrection of the blessed Christ, and the great plans of salvation and redemption are in vain.

This style of reasoning, of course, reduces the matter down to the most absurd of all absurdities, and yet this is the kind of a foundation that many are willing to build their reasons upon for not believing in foreign missions. Brother, you are not only wrong, but you are terribly and awfully wrong. And this is not all, your stand and influence is hurting your Master's cause. Hark! you better change? You may have thought you were right, but what does the text say? "There is a way that seemeth right." And what is the consequence of such believing? "But the end thereof is death." It is more honorable in the sight of both God and man to change one's opinion than to stick to error, and then you know the Bible says a man may believe a lie and be damned. (2 Thes. 2:11, 12.)

What I have said about disbelieving in missions will apply also to many other of the firmly established and well authorized aids to the church, such as Sabbath schools, young people's meetings and the higher branches of education. As to the Sunday school, let me say that I believe that more souls are born into the kingdom of God under its sacred influence than by all other means combined. Have we not evidence of this fact in the rapid growth of the church since the Sabbath school was established? And look at Methodism, with all the world implies. I tell you, the Sabbath school is literally the ante-chamber to the eternal paradise above.

And what are the conditions of those who do not believe in Sunday schools? Too often their children are found playing ball or rabbit hunting on the Sabbath in the country, or stealing in and out gambling saloons, and "blind tigers" and places of sin and shame in the cities. You say, "Give the boy a chance." Yes, give him a chance to be a man; and he will never learn the lesson faster than in the grand and glorious institution known as the Sabbath school. Give him a chance to follow older and more evil companions into sin (and there is no better day than Sunday for it) and one day he will cast a shadow over your happy home, and a blot upon your fair name, and your heart will be bowed down with sorrow and grief because of your wayward boy.

Oh, I tell you ignorance of these great facts will bring terrible results on the day of judgment! It will even in this world, which has been demonstrated over and over in the lives of our young people many thousands of times. We should know the truth. Ignorance of any kind is attended more or less with fatal results. The old proverb, "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise," does not compare very favorably with Jas. 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God." Neither will blissful ignorance keep the man from dying who takes strychnine for calomel, nor give back to life the unfortunate victim of the ignoramus who "didn't know the gun was loaded."

Environments and associations make convictions, but this is no proof that they are correct, and may be followed. The poor, deluded heathen may worship idols with all of the fidelity and ardor of his soul, but this does not make it right.

And so we may say we do not believe it is wrong to dance, or play cards, or drink whiskey, or swear, or make of ourselves slaves to the filthy habit of using tobacco, and may associate with those who indulge in these things till we really believe there is no harm in them. But what is the truth? Our convictions are simply biased by circumstances. If we had been reared

among different associations, say in a Godly, Christian family, we would detest all such evil practices. In such a case as the first one mentioned, the conscience is seared, and biased, and blunted by wrong conceptions of truth, and like the false compass, guides the unwary mariner upon the rocks to his utter destruction.

I believe God will hold us to account for our convictions. The conscience is simply the creature of the mind, and may be educated to believe or disbelieve almost anything. It all depends upon our moral training and the influence of the blessed Spirit of God. As I said, it is simply the creature of the mind, and unfettered by evil it will always dictate the right, so far as the mind has knowledge of the right. But when the mind is in error, of course the conscience will be in error also.

To illustrate, a man may say, "This is the road to Boston" and be traveling in it. But it is proven to his mind that he is on the wrong road, his conscience will immediately dictate going another way. This is also true in spiritual things, only we do not commonly exercise as much common sense and good judgment in spiritual things as we do in others.

Conscience, therefore, is not an infallible rule or guide; it is governed entirely by the mind. To have your mind and conscience then in harmony with the will of God you must study his holy law, which is the standard of all truth. Let your every question be "what saith the scriptures?" The only safe way is God's way, which leads from Gethsemane to Golgotha, and thence to the mount of transfiguration. "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John 14:6.

### MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS AND MINISTERS' RELATIONS TO THEM.

BY MRS. AMORETTE BALLENTINE JUDD.

Before our Lord's ascension he announced one little word which has caused many missionary organizations to spring into existence. This powerful little word is "Go." "Go ye into all the world and preach my gospel to every creature."

The church, directed by this command, feels it has a mission, and the mission calls for organization, then it establishes one best suited to its specific need, thus the numerous mission societies have been formed. It was this same impulse which gave birth to the British and Foreign Bible Society, and her sisters in France, Germany, Sweden, and America, the various tract societies, the religious press, the church extension boards, and the young people's societies, comprising the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, which is 2,636,000 strong; the Epworth Leagues, 1,801,000 strong; the Baptist Young People's Union, 225,000 strong; the Young People's Union of the United Brethren in Christ, 74,000 strong; the Lutheran Leagues of America, 60,000 strong, and other, smaller but similar organizations, 75,000 strong, making in all, an army of 4,801,661 Christian young people, who are trained and ready for the service of the King—more than a million more than all the men who were in the war of the Revolution, in the war of Tripoli, in the war of 1812, all those who were in the late civil war and in the ten great Indian wars.

We can scarcely comprehend such a host of trained and organized, strong, vigorous, and enthusiastic youths; yet under all-wise supervision, and by the tireless energy and consecrated work of devout Christians this force exists, with its power for evangelizing the world.

One of these societies with a membership of eighty-five, in 1894 gave \$50.00 for missions; by work and prayer the interest grew till in five years this same society contributed \$1,085.00 pledged for five years to keep a

young missionary in the foreign field.

With societies like this throughout our land the speedy evangelization of the world would seem possible, for in the different colleges of the day there is an abundant supply of young men who are preparing themselves to minister to the heathen of the world, and only the funds to support them seem necessary to provide teachers and preachers for the benighted lands.

If the 4,801,000 young people should do as well as this society, they would contribute enough in three years to support 1,200 missionaries. Thence the question arises, how are they to be stimulated to so great a work? Not through the printed page alone, although books, tracts, and periodicals can be used to a great advantage and should be scattered all over the land, but these do not reach the heart as a message directly from the lips of a man who is thoroughly educated along the line of missions and whose life is consecrated, and permeated with the missionary spirit.

Let us have leaders like this and the societies will be set ablaze with the great fire of missions.

Do you say, whence are such leaders to come? How are they to be thus prepared? The higher institutions of learning of the American continent can alone answer these momentous questions. It is in these colleges that this education and consecration is best obtained.

Let our young ministers in their college career thoroughly inform themselves as to the history of missions, its advance and possibilities—let them come to their churches filled with the spirit that all are one in Christ, and that the world must be conquered for him, and under such leadership there will be an uprising of missionary interest.

The great need of the people is knowledge and information in regard to missions, and the only way for this to be given is through the pulpit—as it is mainly those who have already knowledge of missions who read enough on this subject to get the necessary information, it is only the few who may be reached by the press, leaving the masses to the ministry.

It is the young ministers, the college students of today, to whom we look for leaders in this grand and glorious work of inspiring churches and their societies to diligence in preaching the gospel to every creature. Let our ministers be wide-awake, intelligent, enthusiastic advocates of missions, full of missionary zeal, born of knowledge, let them teach that the noble plan is to "do the thing we can," whether to teach, preach or send the preacher "and not fret because it seems so little."

Let the people, through the ministry, be taught the whole gospel.

Information is the only means of making a missionary people and through the young ministers this information is mainly to come. Oh, young student-lives in all the world, ye hold the key of missions! Ye see the beautiful vision. Ye have faith in it. Ye are God's chosen vessels. Unto you much is given and of you, thank God, shall much be required.

### THOUGHTS ON HEAVEN AND ETERNITY.

BY S. A. A.

Eternity, Oh, eternity! Where are we going to spend that vast unknown and untried realm? Should ring in the ears of the unsaved soul, and on and on until the greatest question the soul is concerned in can be answered, "Where shall I spend eternity?" Will I spend it around the throne of God with the angels and all that holy circle who sing praises forever and ever to the Father, and the loved of long ago, walk with them beside the clear waters, rest with them in the shade of the ever-green and blooming tree of life, and gather flowers that grow

and bloom forever in that celestial city, or will it be down in the regions of gloom and despair, misery and woe, where demons shriek and howl and we are tormented without one ray of hope, no joy, no peace, nothing but pain and sorrow forever and ever.

We have the chance of making our choice now and only now for all eternity, and it we are wise and faithful ours shall be a home of untold bliss, but we go on in sin and heed the warnings of the tender loving Saviour, then no tongue can tell nor pen portray the greatest artistic picture to the misery that surely will be ours in that world where those who forget God have gone and where nothing can reach and save us.

Beyond the golden sunset there is a happy resting place for the soul, and there is a star that will guide us there. The Star of Bethlehem no matter how rough the way, no matter how steep and high the mountains we must climb, His hand will hold ours firmly and keep us from falling into the deep abyss of despair, that may be on either side, His arm will encircle us and His words cheer the drooping and tired heart. The child of God often has great trials and the most bitter disappointments; but the heart staid on God never utterly fails, though the dark clouds may lower and the sun be hid for a time. The promise that He has given that He will never leave nor forsake is never forgotten by the faithful. Amid the very darkest and saddest hours of life, there is a sweet peace that fills the soul with joy, the realization of a loving and protecting Father who loves us, with the assurance that beyond this there is a joy unspeakable awaiting them. But to those who have to look forward to and what consolation can they have when sorrow and death come, where can they turn for comfort, if they do not trust in God who alone can give them peace and rest? Oh, poor, weary, suffering and wandering child come, rest thy tired head on His bosom and cast thy burden on him for he has promised to bear it for thee, and to give a blessing the heart cannot contain. Look unto the loving Father, who can save to the uttermost; make peace with thy God, and spend eternity with him around the great throne of heaven. The golden gates will open wide to receive thee, angels will welcome thee with a glad shout of glory into the mansions of light and beauty. Some sainted loved one even now stands waiting to receive thee and some sweet spirit is hovering near, whispering and beckoning unto thee to come this way. The voice of the dying asking you to meet them in heaven, the spirit of an angel mother who loved you so dearly, who has prayed and labored for you—her true heart has ceased to beat and the hands are cold and have been crossed on the bosom where you have nestled so often, but in heaven she stretches those faithful hands out to you and they say "come."

Shall all this be in vain? No. Something surely will touch the heart and bring the wandering, lost child home at last.

This world can give no lasting happiness and if we miss heaven we miss all. Gold and silver, grandeur and fame cannot save us—nothing but the blood of the Lamb. Oh, that we could wake the heart of every unsaved one and bring them home to God in one unbroken circle, where we would spend eternity in the realms of bliss.

Ransom, N. C.

Life and death are great mysteries. Good and evil are great mysteries. Light and darkness are great mysteries. But man's unfinished work and undeveloped faculties in the life that begins today and ends after the lapse of a few fleeting years are a greater mystery. Here it is absolutely certain that "we know only in part."—Sel.