

The Christian Sun.

BY EMMETT L. MOFFITT.

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

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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.

A bill has been introduced in Congress to grant Mrs. Lawton, widow of General Lawton, recently killed in the Philippines, a pension of \$2,500 per annum. If she gets this and the \$50,000 or more that has been raised by private donations, she will certainly be able to "get along somehow."

A bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives to repeal the Stamp tax—the tax that forces us to put a stamp on almost every paper that represents a business transaction. This tax is an outgrowth of our war with Spain, and the whole country would gladly welcome its repeal.

Resolutions have been introduced into both the Senate and the House of Representatives asking of the Government officials information as to the deposit of government funds in two New York national banks, and as to whether or not General Otis refused to negotiate terms of peace with Aguinaldo after fighting had begun.

English war vessels have stopped two German vessels and held their cargoes as contraband of war; but Germany has demanded an explanation and redress, both of which will, no doubt, be forth coming, provided the articles seized shall prove to be really contraband. America's similar grievance has not yet been atoned. England could ill afford to offend either of these countries.

Governor Roosevelt has recommended to the New York Legislature the passage of an act prohibiting prize-fighting in the State. New York has for quite a while been the center for these beastly pugilistic contests, and it is to be hoped that Governor Roosevelt will succeed in ridding his State of the shame of them. Any State that permits such low practices is nursing the viper that will sooner or later strike a deadly blow at the moral sentiment of its people.

A bill has been introduced in the Virginia Legislature "providing for popular expression of choice for United States Senators by balloting at certain elections for members of the State Legislature." This is in line with movements in other states looking to the same end; and the indications now are that within the next few years many of our states will be electing their United States Senators by popular vote instead of, as at present, through the state legislatures.

The fight against the seating of Brigham H. Roberts in the United States Congress has quickened the feeling against Mormonism throughout the country. One of the strongest arraignments of this abominable sect that we have yet seen was that of Governor McLaurin in his message to the Mississippi Legislature the other day. He said, in part: "There is no threatened danger to the State more baneful than the lecherous teaching of the Mormon apostles of polygamy. It is more dan-

gerous because it is taught under the guise of the ministry of the gospel. The Mormons disclaim the open teaching of polygamy in the pulpit, but they teach it in the corner, and the minister's cloak gives potency to their speech." He recommended the adoption of laws that will prevent the teaching of the doctrine in the State. Mississippi will do herself and the cause of Christ great honor if she succeeds, in carrying out this recommendation. We would like to see similar action taken in every State of the Union.

Mr. Foraker has introduced a bill in the Senate to provide for the government of the island of Porto Rico, and it was referred to the proper committee. It provides for "the continuance of the laws and municipal ordinances now in force in the island until the Legislature provided for shall supplant them. The President is empowered to appoint a Governor and a Supreme Court and also seven heads of departments to have charge of the various interests of the government and also five native citizens, who together with the Governor and heads of departments are to constitute the upper branch of the insular legislature. A lower house of thirty-five members to be elected by citizens of the island is also provided for, and all inhabitants of the island are made citizens of the United States, the citizens are also to elect a delegate to Congress who is to have a seat but no vote. The island is to be divided up into five districts for judicial and legislative purposes and each district is to have a local court to consist of such a number of judges as the Legislature may provide for. The Constitution and laws of the United States are extended to the island so far as the latter are locally applicable. Export duties are prohibited and free trade is provided for between the island and the United States proper. Articles imported to Porto Rico from other countries than the United States are to pay the same duties as those imposed in the ports of this country."

Superintendent Mebane of this State sent out before the holidays a circular letter in which he endeavors to untangle the confusion into which the recent decision of the Supreme Court threw our public school affairs. According to the decision of this court the old School Boards in the various counties are the legal ones; but, as Mr. Mebane points out, where there is no claim set up by the old boards, the new ones may legally transact the business. The superintendents elected by the new boards, in those counties where the old board retired under the advice of the State Superintendent, are the legal ones. Mr. Mebane says further: "The Township Trustees and their official duties are not affected in any way by the decision of the Supreme Court. The District Committees and their contracts with teachers are not touched by this decision. Certificates issued in accordance with the general school law by the County Superintendent, who was elected by the de facto board of directors are good for one year from the date of their issue. In short, the school system will be carried on as it now is, except as to questions that may arise relative to the rights of certain individual officers, which can only be determined when all the facts in case are known. No one regrets confusion in the operation of the public schools more than myself, and I think I can safely say that no one has labored more earnestly to avoid confusion than myself. The time must come when the work of public education will be regarded so sacred and of such grave importance that a successful political party will not dare to tamper with its progress; if this time never comes, then the public schools will never accomplish the purpose for which they were established."

THE PULPIT.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

BY REV. HERBERT SCHOLZ, A. B.

TEXT.—For God is love. 1 John 4:8.

[Continued from last week.]

And this conduct on the part of Jacob had aroused the wrath of Esau against him and Esau declared that after their father's death he would take revenge on Jacob by putting him to death. And so Jacob becoming alarmed at this threat secretly left home to go into a strange land and there abide until his brother's wrath should be somewhat allayed. It was a very lonely trip for Jacob. He had never been away from the parental roof before. He was sad at the thought of turning his back upon his loved ones, his old afflicted father, his beloved mother and all the pleasant scenes of his youth and young manhood. And as he traveled along alone, there is no doubt but that he felt like he was almost alone in the world, forsaken by his friends and beset by difficulties which were hard to bear. The way seemed dark and uncertain to him, a stranger traveling through a strange land. But one night as Jacob slept with nothing but a stone for a pillow and the canopy of heaven for a protection, he dreamed a dream that was something more than a dream. The heavens were opened, a ladder extended from the earth to the abode of the angels and they were ascending and descending as though on some special errand. And above that ladder stood the Lord God of Hosts, who declared to him that if he would be true to the covenant which God had made with Abraham, God would again bring him to the land whereon he laid in safety, and that he would make of him a great nation, and that all he undertook should prosper. And there in the darkness of that night, shut out from the terrestrial world by the environments of a dream, Jacob made a covenant with God, and God blessed him, and sent him on his journey with renewed hope and a feeling of peace and security. God loved Jacob because of his character. He did not condone the deception which Jacob had practiced, but he saw in him something which Esau did not possess, and that something was the ambition to be somebody and to do something more profitable than merely to roam over the country in pursuit of wild deer. There was a divine element in Jacob that appealed to God and God responded to that appeal by showers of blessings and abundant manifestations of his presence and guidance. God guides and watches over every individual who puts his trust in him. We are told that not so small a thing as a sparrow falls to the ground without the knowledge of Him who created that sparrow, and that the very hairs of our heads are numbered, and that in his love he values us as of far more importance than the little winged creatures who are the objects of his daily care.

There may come times in our lives when we get into trouble as Jacob did. There may come times when we feel friendless, when fortune has apparently taken its flight, when everything seems to have gone wrong. But if we are obedient to God, if we possess for him any of that spirit of love which God is the embodiment, in the dark hours, there will come rays of hope, beams of sunshine, demonstrations of God's presence and assistance that shall re-assure and comfort and strengthen as no earthly influence can do. God takes care of those who desire his care.

When Joseph, the beloved son of Jacob, was sold by his brethren to the Ishmaelites, it doubtless seemed a hard lot to Joseph. But God followed him through all his trials, and made him aware of his presence. Joseph was re-sold to Potiphar, the Egyptian; he became the innocent victim of an impure wo-

man's wrath, he was an inmate of an Egyptian prison for two years, but through adverse circumstances, trials and difficulties Joseph showed himself a man in whom there was no guile, and being tried as by fire and found pure, he was placed as second alone to Pharaoh in power over all the Egyptians. Joseph's brethren meant to do him harm, but God turned their designs into something good, for it seems that God as well as Jacob loved Joseph.

Adverse circumstances are no sign that God does not love us, but they are a pretty good test of our love for him, and if when weighed in the balance of adverse circumstances we are found true, the prosperity that follows will make us forget that adversities encompassed us so threateningly.

There was a time when the Israelites groaned under bondage in the land of Egypt. The daily tasks they had to perform were burdensome and severe. Their masters were harsh and cruel. Their homes were saddened by the destruction of every male infant that was born to them. From Bible accounts their lot was a pitiable one indeed. But God heard their groanings and their prayers. A deliverer in the person of Moses was raised up, who was an instrument in God's hands in leading them out of Egyptian bondage into a land of freedom, that flowed with milk and honey. Very often they murmured against God and rebelled against him, but in his forbearance and long-suffering he led them safely through the desert and was with them in the occupation of Canaan. The whole story of the Israelites is but a story of the wonderful love of God in dealing with a stiff-necked and rebellious people, and pictures to us how unworthy human beings generally are of the love which God bestows upon them. But the great love of God is not seen in his dealings with this individual or that individual, neither with this nation nor that nation. There is a greater manifestation than any which we can associate with any particular individual or nation of earth. And that manifestation is seen in the gift of Jesus Christ. For we are told that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish but have everlasting life. God cleansed the world once by a flood, but it did not stay clean. He sent Christ on earth to show men and women how to live, and ever since that time the earth has been getting better, and wherever the gospel of Christ goes, there happiness and peace and sunshine go. There is not an act of love of which man is capable of forming any conception, that can equal or surpass that great act of love which God performed in the gift of his son. We cannot understand it. We need not try. For God's love is higher than our love, his ways are more mysterious than the ways of men, and we must be content to know that the gift of Christ to us was for our salvation and happiness and joy and peace if we are disposed to accept him. But aside from the evidence of God's love for men as set forth in the Bible, let us recall some of the evidences which we have been compelled to acknowledge in our own personal experience.

Every human being who ever thinks about his Creator and his relationship to his Creator must have had some things to take place with regard to his own personal welfare that made him believe that the hand of God was in it. Every Christian has had things to take place in his life that forcibly impressed him with the thought that they were the works of God. In other words, every person who is not so far beyond redemption as not to give God and the things of divinity any thought at all, sees in certain affairs of his own life the hand of God at work.

What are some of the evidences of God's love which you and I possess? Let us see. The first evidence which we might

mention is our own existence on earth. It was God's love that brought us into existence. There was a time when we did not exist. We now do exist and exist in the image of God. Perhaps you may say that it would have been better for you if you had never existed at all. You may feel just that way. But you are not a competent judge in that matter, because you do not know. God certainly had a purpose in giving you an existence, and that purpose was a purpose of love, because God is love. We are crowned with the dignity of God's image. We have in us the breath of life. We have in us the possibilities of accomplishing good in the world. And our mission is a mission of love, whether we fulfill it or not. Our existence is an evidence of God's love for us, because it is unreasonable to suppose that God would have created us if he had not loved us. I do not believe, neither do you believe, that God creates anything that he hates.

Another evidence which we possess of God's love is the blessings with which he surrounded us and the good influences which he brought to bear upon us when we were passing along the different stages from infancy to manhood or womanhood. I suppose every one whom I am addressing had a good, kind father and mother. They may not have been perfect, and when you were under their control you might have thought them rather severe at times. But they took care of you and brought you up in an honorable way, and taught you lessons of truthfulness and honesty and integrity, and through their efforts exerted in your behalf you are today. Of course, there are some parents that do not take care of their children, and there are some children who never follow the teachings of parents. But they illustrate the exception and not the rule. Parents who possess natural affection will love and protect and train up their children in the way they ought to go. Good parents are the gift of God and are the result of God's love to us. We remember very well the good which our parents bestowed upon us and the interest they took in us. We remember well the early impressions for good which we received at the old country church and Sunday school, or the city church and Sunday school as the case may be. We remember well the presents of our teachers in the week-day schools as they labored with us and endeavored to shape our young minds to work in the proper channels of thought. We remember well the pleasant times we spent together with agreeable associates and friends and the sunshine and happiness they brought into our lives. We remember well the doings of fond grand-parents and their healthful advice. And all these pleasant things were the gift of God and were bestowed through his love for us. They are evidences which we possess of God's love for us.

Another evidence which we have is the way in which we were at some time led out of some dark trouble. That trouble may have taken the form of sickness, or financial distress, or loss of property, or inability to obtain work whereby an honest living could be made. Every person has dark days in his life at some time. They sometimes assume one shape and sometimes another, but all have them. There was a time in your life, perhaps, when you were very sick. Your friends became very uneasy about you. Your physicians, perhaps, gave you up to die. But the great Physician, who is able to heal every disease, administered a dose of his never failing love, and you are a well man or woman today. There was a time in your life, perhaps, when failure in business overtook you. You were closed out by your creditors and all your property had to go to pay your debts. You felt discouraged and friendless. You did not see how you would ever rise again in the world. You had no money. Starvation stared you in

the face. But just at the moment when you were at an utter loss to know what to do, a way was opened up for you, and the dark clouds suddenly cleared away. You, perhaps, then did not realize that it was the hand of God that so suddenly changed the appearance of the world to you, but if you can see at all you see it clearly now. There may have been a time in your life when you felt like you were under the curse of a broken law. Your mental anguish was great. You knew that if some change in your life did not take place you would, in the great day of judgment, hear the command from the great God of heaven to depart into the hell prepared for the devil and his angels. But when your trouble was greatest and when you were in the greatest depth of wretchedness, some kind friend pointed you to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, and bade you lay all your distress and anxiety and anguish on him, and you did so, and suddenly the burden of your heart rolled away and God gave you a manifestation of his love which your heart to overflow. You were, for the time being, as happy as the angels, and experienced a little of that feeling which the redeemed saints of heaven possess all the time.

There may have been a time in your life when heaven seemed a great way off to you. It seemed like a far country where no one lived whom you knew anything about. But one day a beloved grandfather died and went there, and you felt like there was one person there whom you knew. And after a while grandmother died, and as the years went by some of your friends and early companions passed peacefully away. Father and mother and wife and husband, and brother and sister, and children all came down to the waters of Jordan, and the waters divided and permitted them to pass over into the promised land. You could not understand, perhaps, how God who loved you could take so many kind friends and relatives away from you and leave your heart aching and your happiness crushed. But tonight as you think of the home over there, and the friends over there, and the companions or relatives over there, and of Christ over there, heaven does not seem so far off to you as it once did. It is not so strange and friendless a country to you as it once was, but there are ties which bind, you can realize tonight that those sorrowful partings in the flesh were but the means which God in his love used to draw your attention more directly to the things of heaven and to lift you upon a higher plain of Christian living, and to make you to know that earth is only a temporary abiding place. These lives of ours are checkered and fitful. We spring up as the grass and flourish for a season, and then pass away to give place to others. But from the moment of our entrance into this life the love of God overshadows us, and if during the years of our accountability our appreciation of God's love is as a grain of mustard seed, that is sufficient to save our souls from death and to keep us on the safe side of life's changing fortunes. For no matter what our temporal condition, no matter what our position among men, no matter if by difficulties or trials or adverse influences we may be surrounded, we have it from the authority of the Most High that all things work together for good to them who love God, and are loved by him.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

A CENTURY SOCIETY.

BY TUBAL-CAIN AND BOAZ.

MR. EDITOR: I want to speak to the people of the Christian church, South, through the columns of THE SUN. I want to ask them if they do not feel highly favored and

blessed of God to be permitted to live to the last year of the 19th century.

Now, if so, do you feel like making a little offering to the Lord this year? As we are now about to organize a Century Society, will you join us? The conditions upon which you will become a member of this society are, you will send your name and the amount you will give as a free-will offering to the treasurer of the society whose name will be given to the public in a short time, God willing.

Now, do you ask to what will this fund be appropriated? That should not be a question. Do you feel under obligations to make a free-will offering to God in the closing year of the 19th century? If so, I will tell you what the society proposes to do—raise 50 cents per capita for every member of the Christian church, South, and place it at God's disposal. We want to collect half this amount by the time the Southern Christian Convention meets at Franklin, Va., this year. We want to appropriate any way direct. We want to raise the other half by the end of the century and pay it over to the treasurer of the Convention.

This may seem strange to some of you, but I will tell you, some of the leading denominations have been working at this for two years and say they will raise \$1.00 per capita for each of their members.

Shall we lie still and miss such a glorious opportunity? It is in the hearts of our people to make free-will offerings, and if the clergy and the lay members of the Christian church, South, would be faithful and co-operate together it would be an easy matter to raise 50 cents per member this year. If there are 16,000 members in the Convention, this would be equivalent to \$8,000. The half of this can be raised by the last of May. This society can be organized by correspondence, if the editor of THE SUN will give us a column and the leading men and women of the various conferences will write and confer with each other on this important subject, and will work and pray it will succeed.

Oh, it seems to us that it is a necessity. If we could have this amount to help our enterprises just at this crisis it is sure we would start the new century with new life and God would bless us more abundantly.

We would like Bros. Barrett and Staley, the Editor and Bros. Fleming, Klapp, Peel, Butler, Holt, and Hunt of the Ga. & Ala. conference, would write and say what they think could be done in this way.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT SALARIES.

"What salaries are paid in different business callings is a question often asked by young men, and one which seems to enter into their deliberations as a qualifying factor as to whether they shall enter certain trades or professions," writes Edward Bok in the Ladies' Home Journal. "I never could quite see the point of this, nor the reason for it. What are the salaries which are paid to others, to you or to me? They signify nothing. If the highest salary paid to the foremost man in a certain profession is \$10,000 a year, what does it prove or signify? There is no obstacle to some one's else going into that same profession and earning \$25,000. The first step in going into business is to find out not which special line is most profitable, but which line you are most interested in and are best fitted for. Then drive ahead, and the salary will take care of itself. When a young man thinks too much of his salary it is pretty good proof that he is not of very superior make. Ability commands income. But you must start with ability; not with salary."

In the Transvaal war the Boers have been the victors in almost every important battle. During the past week, however, the British have won in two or three minor skirmishes.