

The Christian Sun.

BY J. O. ATKINSON.

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 judgement, and the liberty of conscience, the privilege and duty of all.

Current Comments.

Insurance.

No form of business has grown so rapidly in the United States within the last few years as life insurance—with the possible exception of banking. A quarter of a century ago only the few took out policies on their lives, many thinking it to be a sort of chance game or gambling scheme in which one had to die to win. Sentiment along this line has changed and so has business. The many now insure and only the few do not. Instead of being a gambling scheme insurance is considered more of a savings account. And, without statistics at hand to the contrary, people are better satisfied with their savings in this sort of an account than they are with their savings in bank. This for the reason that if you start a savings bank account you will put your savings there at leisure and when a convenient surplus accrues. But, once having taken out a policy you know the annual premiums must be paid if the first and previous payments are to be saved. One begins to look upon one's premiums as a recurring debt and obligation that must be met. Hence one plans, cuts and saves accordingly. The difference is that of saving voluntarily and at random, and saving under a sort of obligation and compulsion.

A man now reckons his insurance among his assets with a property value which, if he dies, goes to his heirs; if he lives he collects himself, if he wishes, at the end of a given period. The people of this country now have the incomprehensible sum of eighteen billions of dollars invested in insurance. And this amount grows larger, not smaller, since the American people are taking out insurance now at the rate of \$8,000,000 a day. It is safely estimated that at least 10,000,000 heads of families, representing 50,000,000, people are now carrying life insurance of some kind. The world has never witnessed any co-operative enterprise on a scale so gigantic. An exchange remarks that the people of the United States are carrying life insurance policies equal to the capital of all the trusts and the railroads of the country combined. They represent a sum equivalent to about one-fifth of the entire estimated

wealth of the nation, public and private. In Philadelphia alone the insurance in force is nearly \$900,000,000, a sum equalling the entire bonded national debt of the United States. In New York the amount is \$2,300,000,000, a sum four times as great as the value of the Standard Oil Company. All the trusts and combinations of capital sink into insignificance when compared in volume to the amount invested in life insurance.

If we as a people make such tremendous outlay for our future in this life and strive with such great expenditure to provide for a comfortable future for ourselves and families here, how much more ought we to strive by sacrifice, effort and treasures rightly placed to provide for that future life that has no end. "For where our treasure is there will our heart be also."

The Mikado.

The above is the title by which we of the English tongue know and name the ruler of Japan. His own subjects, however, affectionately and reverently call their chief, at present, Tenshi Sama, "August Son of Heaven." Each mikado, or emperor, has a personal name, but no family name, that of the present ruler being Mutsuhito, the educated of Japan calling it Shujo, "Supreme Master."

The present dynasty of the mikados is said to be the oldest in the world, the present occupant being the 123rd of the imperial line which dates back 660 years before the Christian era in the official chronology. Descent of the present line is claimed from the gods that created the heavens and the earth, the real origin being lost in mythology and having the authority of history only since 400 years B. C. The first seventeen mikados are said to have died at ages ranging from 110 to 141, the average reign of the whole line being 20 years. Seven of the mikados were women.

The mikado's person is considered sacred and inviolable, and though Japan has a constitution and enjoys a high degree of civil liberty and personal freedom, the mikado is considered the fountain of all authority and the centre of all government. The present emperor, born in 1852, succeeded to the throne in 1867, and has made a wise ruler in that he as monarch ruled little, leaving it to his people to enact and execute most of their own laws. No hostile criticism has been directed against him and his character is considered blameless. Under his administration the Japanese government has gone forward by leaps and bounds in all that makes for national progress and civilization. Only a few years ago the "Flowery Kingdom" was of little consideration in the galaxy of great nations, but to-day has to be reckoned with in all international considerations.

"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Will thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same." Rom. 13:3.

Covington Letter.

*** In North Africa there are six millions of people, among whom are laboring only sixty-nine missionaries. Do you think that is pretty good? Stop a moment. London has about the same population, but she has 2,189 preachers, and yet there seems to be no complaint that London is greedy! It is surely true that the greater need has the fewer laborers, while the less need has by far the greater number. Would it not do good to London, if she would divide with her heathen sister? If it would bless London thus to divide, would it not be a blessing to us all to divide our enjoyment of the Gospel with the men and women who are living in heathen darkness? I believe it would—would bless us to have less, if in doing so, we could give them more. Let us try it.

** I had a pleasant call a few days ago from Rev. C. J. Jones, D. D., the new President of Union Christian College. He was on a hurried round in the interest of his college work, and took the time to give me a little call. He is in fine health and hard at work for the college. Unexpected and most trying difficulties are confronting him as he enters upon his work, difficulties of which he knew nothing when he accepted the presidency. In a conversation on the spiritual state of the church he expressed it, as his opinion, that there is generally spiritual depression all over the country, and the facts bear out his view of the case. It is said that the Baptist in the United States gained to their membership last year only about 1200 members. And what is true of them is in an alarming degree true of nearly all of the great denominations, and possible of the smaller denominations as well. What does all this mean? We need not attempt to conceal the fact, there is a cause for all this low spiritual state of the church, and it is alarming! I do not feel capable of naming the full cause, or all the causes, that may have part in this state of the church, but, were it my duty to assign the cause, I should begin by looking into the emphasis placed upon the spiritual life in the teachings of the pulpits, and I should expect to find the trouble right there. Rich food nourishes and promotes health and gives vitality and strength, and this is just as true in the spiritual as it is in the natural, life. If the farmer wishes to increase the value of his crops, he selects the best fertilizer for fruitfulness and uses that liberally, and he gets results. I believe that this is true in the church-life of this day. If the people could be enriched with the best fruit-bearing truths of the Gospel, the results would unquestionably be better—far better. In many of our pulpits the work seems to be ineffective, not because the minister does not preach the truth, as he sees it, but rather because he preaches truths that are not fruit-bearing and the results are disappointing sadly so. Let me illustrate: Bro. A. preaches the Gospel, he deals with historical questions,

poetic questions, social questions, scientific questions, and yet he does not see results, such as he hoped to see, and he thinks it strange. He says he has preached the truth, and doubtless he has, but it was a kind of non-fruit-bearing truth in point of spirituality. What the church needs to-day is the fruit-bearing truths of the Gospel, specifically such truths as Man's lost condition without God, Redemption in Christ, through the Convention of sin, Repentance; Justification through the forgiveness of sin; Regeneration by the Spirit, deep and thorough, and a full consecration to the service of God under the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual life cannot be begotten, developed and made fruitful without the teaching in a definite and positive way of the great doctrine of the offices and works of the Spirit in the hearts and lives of believers. Here is one of the explanations of the depressed conditions of the spiritual state of the church. We need not think that we will disregard these facts and go on, as we have done of late years, and finally overcome and get the victory! We cannot do it. We must emphasize more and more the fullness of the spiritual life, if we would have power and bear fruit that will glorify God in the enrichment of the church and in the saving of the lost. The great social, historical and scientific questions may be all right in themselves, but they are not fruit-bearing, not soul-saving, not spiritually up-building, and the sooner we recognize this as a truth, and change our practice; the sooner we may see the power of the Gospel in the conversion of sinners and in the establishment of a great spiritual church in the world, and this is the need to-day—we need a church of spiritual power far more than we need a church of literary culture, of socialistic ideas, of historical knowledge. While all truth is to be desired by the Christian, he must not forget that every truth he gets must be dominated by the power of the Holy Spirit in his own personal life, or he cannot be a power in the saving of souls. The truth makes men free, and it is

just as true that truth enriches and makes fruitful the heart-life of men and women under the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us recognize this as a reality, and let us bend our energies to this end that the church may become a real living spiritual power. Surely, we need to let nothing stand in the way of our best efforts for the promotion of such a purpose, for it is certainly a sad thing to see the church a spiritual weakling, and all for the lack of a full share of the Bread of Life. Feed the church on the right food, giving it good healthy share, and I believe the day will come when she will put on the Christ-life in its beauty and power, and under its mighty sway, she will go forth to pull down the strongholds of sin, and at the same time be a mighty agency for the upbuilding of the cause of Christ in the hearts and lives of God's people.

J. PRESSLEY BARRETT.

What Does the Future Hold?

How often it is that we strain our hearts and eyes to get just one single glimpse of the dark and unknown future. Do we, indeed, possess the key that unlocks this mystery? The more closely we study this subject the more clearly do we perceive that indeed does it lie within our own power to determine, to some extent, what the future holds in store for us. If we give loose reins to the passion, if we forget to be charitable towards the failings of others, if pride and vanity are cultivated, if we return evil for evil, then the future will hold for us nothing but woe, shame, disgrace and degradation, but if, on the other hand, we train well our better nature and cultivate every God-given talent, are full of charity that thinketh no evil, abound in generous actions, and above all, are cheerful and not sparing in pleasant smiles and kind words—for words cannot be too carefully chosen—if we are careful in every good work, then we may be sure the future holds some good for us. We should use every spare moment of our time for something, for there is nothing else that is given us so sparingly. Anything else we may accumulate, but we cannot lay up time; it slips away from us without will or consent. The passing time, spoken words and lost opportunities can never be recalled, and it bears with it whatever good or evil we may have done while it was with us. If we do well, then it is a comfort to know that it stands forever on the record of yesterday, but if we do evil, how sad it is to know that it also stands there to appear against us at the day of judgment. We think but little of a wrong act while we are doing it, but there is One who does not think little of it, and it is recorded against us. We may be very sorry afterwards, but we cannot blot it out; we cannot roll back the mighty wheel of time to correct it; cannot turn back and go over it as we can a piece of work that we have done badly. We should remember this and try to keep our record bright.

Let us look to the future with hope. Without it our hands would fall motionless to our side. Hoped to the discovery of continents, to the opening of unknown regions to the advancement of science, the progress of civilization, the establishment of religious liberty, and lightens up the pathway towards immortality. It has entered into and led in the building of homes, churches, schools, colleges and all institutions for the benefit and comfort of all mankind. Its influence has ever led man "onward and upward" to better things, step by step.

R. G. STINSON.

Greensboro, N. C.

The Mormons are quite active in securing lands on which to plant colonies in Mexico, 500,000 acres having been recently secured. If the Mormons had as much Christianity and right on their side as they have zeal and lust they would take the earth.