

The Christian Sun.

By J. O. ATKINSON.

IN ESSENTIALS—UNITY. IN NON-ESSENTIALS—LIBERTY. IN ALL THINGS—CHARITY.

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Editorial Comment.

"Fishing In Virginia," and a Contemporary.

The esteemed Times-Dispatch of Richmond in a recent editorial deposes thus: "Fishing is one of the most satisfying and healthy pleasures that a business man can enjoy. It requires neither the expensive equipment of a steam yacht or automobile, nor does it make the demands on the body that are involved in long tramps or mountain climbing. The very rush and speed of our modern life has served to make the peaceful pursuit of the wary fish more and more attractive." We copy that much of our contemporary's editorial to give it our hearty, sympathetic and unqualified approval. It is altogether sane, sensible and satisfactory. Our neighbor then diverts to the fact that the Government is beginning a most noble work in behalf of the fish industry in the waters of the Old Dominion and thus concludes "This is a form of governmental control that means a great deal of innocent, helpful and real happiness for the people, and the Times-Dispatch is glad to see the interest being shown in the restocking of the streams of Virginia with fish." In the light of a few facts known by many outside the good commonwealth of Virginia that concluding sentence from this otherwise timely article is a jolter. Since due and appropriate praise is given to the National Government in restocking the streams with fish for the "happiness" of the people, it is a pity that the writer not afford "the expenditure" of a steam yacht or automobile, and unfortunately not with the willingness of the demands on the body that are involved in long tramps or mountain climbing. He has hied him more than these last ten years to the streams of Virginia to enjoy the most satisfying and healthy pleasure that a business man can enjoy," but to our sorrow, and we think to the discredit and neglect of our sister commonwealth, he it said that the fishing there is not to be compared with what it was ten years ago. We have never in our lives seen such "slaughter of the innocents" as is now going on in certain Virginia waters. "Pounds" a mile long, some of them seemingly two miles long, are planted near the mouth of some of her most noble and productive streams and every day through the long fishing season hundreds and hundreds of barrels of fish, lacking in nothing for the fisherman's reel or the tradesman's stand, save age and size, are carted away to fertilizer establishments or shoveled lifeless and decaying back

into the friendly stream. And how much cheaper are fish on the market? None that we can see. The small fisherman, with his single line and canoe, is being done away with and the large capitalist whose dollars buy and operate the "pounds" is doing a work of devastation and ruin among the pleasure giving, life sustaining finny tribe that is shocking to behold and sickening to contemplate. So if the esteemed Times-Dispatch is really interested in the fish industry of its Commonwealth and desires that its streams shall be stocked "with solid happiness," we respectfully suggest that it turn some of its editorial attention to protecting the supply that is there as well as praising the Government for increasing a supply that her own fisheries seem ruthless and reckless to destroy.

Uniting the Nations.

One by one the nations of the earth, by one means and another, are drawn closer and closer together. Electricity has been and is a mighty factor in this union. When it is made possible for us to speak to each other within a few brief moments we invariably feel drawn closer together.

These columns recently gave messages sent directly from the United States to China and from China back—all within a brief period. Last week these messages were exchanged:

HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN, TOKYO:

"I am glad to send to your Majesty over the American cable, which has just been completed between Guam and Japan, and thus unites our two countries across the Pacific, a message of sincere good will, and the assurance of the earnest wishes of the Government and people of the United States for the welfare and prosperity of your Majesty and your Majesty's empire."

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

THE PRESIDENT, WASHINGTON:

"I have just received with great interest and appreciation the kind message sent by you over the cable which has recently been laid between Guam and Japan, and which will shortly be open to the public. I am highly gratified to know that the first telegram by this new line which unites our two countries should convey to me the assurance of the friendly sentiments of the Government and people of the United States for myself and my people. I most cordially reciprocate your expressions of good will and good wishes."

MUTSCHITO.

Not long and every nation under the sun will be in direct speaking with every other nation. This should have, and doubtless will have, the effect of putting the nations of all the earth upon better and more intimate terms.

Denmark has decided to send a large warship to the Jamestown Exposition.

The Sunday Question.

I would be glad to have you give your readers an expression of opinion as to the right and proper observance of the Sabbath for the American citizen who is occupied pretty steadily six days in the week—not in piling up a big fortune, but in earning a living and enough more to educate his children and to keep himself from becoming dependent on others when he is incapacitated for work. We are coming to the season when thousands of our people go to mountain, lake, and shore for a longer or shorter stay; their regular habits are broken into, and the temptation to neglect church services and indulge in bathing, boating, fishing, bicycling, golf, tennis, automobiling, etc., on Sunday is very strong. And as it is easier to acquire the lax Sunday-observance habit than the strict Sunday-observance habit, a part of those who grow lax during their summer outing remain so permanently. Thus we see a growing laxity in Sunday observance—the contrast today with ten or twelve years ago is very marked. If, as is claimed by strict Sabbatharians, the Christian Sabbath has been one of the strongest bulwarks of our American liberties, and largely responsible for our Nation's intelligent development and prosperity, then it becomes a serious question for Christian citizens to consider to what extent they ought and may be able, by precept and example, to resist the tendency to lax Sunday observance.—Inquirer.

This letter suggests two reflections.

1. The question of Sunday observance cannot be considered apart from the question of the true end of life. A man enters the American race eager, if not to distance, at least to keep pace with, competitors. His doctor tells him he ought to take exercise; he replies, I have no time. His wife begs him to take his meals more leisurely; he replies, I have no time. His children clamor for more of their father at home and an occasional day off; he replies, "I have no time. His work spills over into Sunday, or he works so hard and rests so little through the week that he has no inclination for a service at church or any forthcoming fellowship at home; to the whispered rebukes to his conscience, he replies, I have no time.

What does this "I have no time" mean? It means that he is so busy making a fortune or earning a living that he has no time and little inclination for higher life—for culture, worship, home.

What is the remedy? Not rules prescribing hours for sleep, or meals, or children or worship. Such rules are better than nothing. But the real remedy is a radical change in the point of view. Life is the end of life. To live purely, nobly, to cultivate the mind and develop the affections, to reverence God, love our fellows, make sacred our home, inspire and instruct our children—this is what we are on

earth for. This involves giving to the children a roof for shelter, food to eat, clothes to wear; but this is only the beginning. It also involves giving to them, and giving to society, something more and higher than shelter, food and clothes. Not until a man lives that he may himself reverence God and love his fellows, and that he may inspire them with reverence and love—not until this is the end of his life, and the material conditions take their proper second place in his estimation, is he prepared to consider the Sabbath question. Not till then can he realize that the Sabbath is a privilege, not a prohibition; not till then can he realize that the spirit of the Fourth Commandment is this—For one day in seven you are released from the law, in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou earn thy daily bread; for one day in seven the cherubim sheathe the flaming sword, and we are invited out of the wilderness with its thorns and thistles, to return to Eden, where labor is not toil, and the sighing is turned to song.

2. When one has this conception, as our correspondent seems to have, the question still remains, How shall one use this day of privilege to the best advantage, for himself, for his family, and for society?

Not by attempting to go back to the Puritan idea as it is expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith; not by a resolve to be "taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy." Any such continuous concentration of the mind upon one theme is equally destructive of rest and of spiritual culture. It is psychologically impossible, and is inconsistent alike with the teaching of Scripture, with reason, and with experience.

Not by turning the day into one of mere merrymaking and junketing, a day of frolic and games; not by consecrating it to golf in the morning and automobiling in the afternoon; not by congesting it into a weekly composite of Thanksgiving Day and Fourth of July. This is not to give either body or mind the best rest; it is not to give the life any real inspiration; and is generally to purchase a more than doubtful pleasure by depriving one of needed rest and refreshment.

Make it first of all a day of rest. Escape from the cares and worries of life. Lay aside the current problems. If you take a Sunday paper, do not read it until evening. At least leave politics and the markets till Monday. So live on Sunday as to prepare yourself to take up the week's work on Monday with a fresh mind.

Make it a home day. Give it to the wife and the children. Remember that you cannot make it sacred to them unless you make it dear to them. "Call the Sabbath a delight," says Isaiah. He who would make the Sabbath sacred to his children must know how to make it a delight to them.

Turn the day into a day of exercises of worship. If possible, do this with other in a church service. This is sometimes impossible. Sometimes there is no church accessible. Sometimes there is no church that can be made inspirational, attractive, or even more than barely endurable. Even when the church service is barren and inadequate, rest, inspiration, and joy may often be found in the endeavor by one's presence and co-operation to improve it. And there is always possible the church in the home. Where the service of song is possible, it fuses the hearts of the family in one experience by uniting their voices in one voice.

Further than this one cannot prescribe for another. We certainly can give no Sabbath rules. We cannot say that golf is right and tennis is wrong, or that riding is right and boating is wrong. One may make nature a sacred temple; one may make the church a secular meeting-place for the performance of an irksome duty. The church choir may be a burden; the bird choir may be an inspiration. Yet he who has human sympathies should find his spirit uplifted by sharing his penitences and his aspirations with others for an hour. If one has no such sympathies, we cannot advise him. A worship which is unpleasing to the worshiper cannot well be pleasing to God. We can only say that the Sabbath is ill spent if it sends us back to our weekly work irritated, wearied, reluctant, and the Sabbath is well spent if it sends us back refreshed in body, mind, and spirit, to take up a round of daily duties and unselfish service with inspiration of courage and patience.

The best of rules are a substitute for the right, and we cannot in anyway interpret that spirit as by George Herbert's lines:

"O Day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this, the week's delight,
The indorsement of some one's delight,
Writ by a Friend, and what his blood;
The couch of time, care's balm
and bay!
The week were dark, but for thy light
Thy torch doth show the way."

—The Outlook.

Honduras has declared war on Guatemala. A poor day with our neighboring republics across the line when they cannot hatch a revolution or declare war.

Some one says that a distiller rides in a steam yacht, the wholesale dealer in an automobile, the retail dealer in a carriage, but the purchaser is pulled around by the hair of his head by a policeman.—Ex.

One of the most touching of all the many touching stories relating to the San Francisco disaster is that of the meeting of half a hundred lepers of the Molokai Colony in Hawaii, their passing of resolutions of sympathy, and their raising of a fund, consisting of five cents or more from each person, which has been sent to San Francisco. Surely suffering softens hearts, and does not always harden them.—Ex.