

# The Christian Sun.

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT.

**Summer Resorts and Religion.**—A few miles east of Asheville on the Blue Ridge is being built a Baptist city, to which Christian people may go in summer and find rest and recreation without being forever harassed by non-religious and irreligious carryings-on. In discussing this city, with its promised resort, Editor Johnson of *Charity and Children* speaks a parable in this manner: "The average summer hotel is not the proper place for Christian people to spend their vacation with their children. Cards, dancing, drinking liquor, and the like, do not make the best environment for the Christian life. There ought to be some place to which people who love the Lord can go without seeing religion dishonored and despised."

It is a deplorable, not to say notorious, fact that many people who go to summer resorts are guilty of conduct and give themselves to pastime, such as they would not think of engaging in at home. Many go to resorts and turn rest into revelry; as if late hours and irregular habits were conducive to health and happiness. Away with the old delusion that pleasure means indulgence and dissipation. Cards and dancing and liquor are not paraphernalia of rest, they are the belongings of late hours, unsteady nerves, and unthinking brains. There are those who count it a pleasure to be allowed to think some while they rest. The average summer resort is hostile to such persons.

This writer had the privilege of spending three weeks or more last summer at a real resting place—a place to which thousands resort every summer to find rest to body, mind and soul. There was no drinking, no card playing, no dancing, no Sunday newspapers. Meals were regular and on time. Early and regular hours were kept. Rest, that was rest. The thousands there, old, young and indifferent, were a jolly, good natured, joyous, happy lot. I never saw before so much real rest and recreation packed into the same length of time. There was nothing long-faced nor dull, nor poke easy about it. There was rest, recreation, relaxation, genuine enjoyment. We are glad the Baptist are building a summer resort to which people may go and rest, while they keep their conscience and enjoy their religion. Christianity is not incompatible with recreation and a good time. Of all people on earth Christians have the surest right to a good time, healthful recreation and refreshing rest.

**Railroads and the People.**—President Garrett of the Seaboard railroad has declared that "hereafter, all reports of wrecks or accidents on our lines will be fully turned over to the press. If one of our men has been careless or thoughtless, we will see that the public gets the truth." Now that is coming to the point, and we trust President Garrett will make good and that other roads will follow his lead. There is legislation from Nevada to Maine on railroad affairs and much of it can hardly be said to be in sympathy with the roads. President Garrett is coming very near to the heart of the hostility now existing between railroads and people. The railroads have tried too hard to keep secret all their mishaps and careless deeds. Let them take the people into their confidence, and the hostile feeling now extant will break down. There is no good reason why the people should hate the railroads or the railroads be suspicious of the people. The interests of both are identical. The people must use the railroads and the roads must have the people.

There are two reasons why wide-spread hostility exists between railroads and people today: 1st The roads have kept secret or tried to do so, many things that concerned the public, and that the public had a right to know. 2nd The railroads have to be driven, in almost every instance, to all measures of public relief and utility. They submit with grace to the inevitable, and usually flourish upon the fruits thereof, but they seldom yield until the appeal is made to Caesar. Why this method is adopted is a mystery. Why

legislation and enactment must force convenient connections, order the erection of suitable stations, demand equitable adjustment for losses from carelessness and indifference, remains an untold secret, but such is the case.

It is a pity this hostile feeling will not break down; but President Garrett's words give hope—let the public see and know that which they have a right to and much will be done in the right direction.

**Weight of A Soul.**—A certain physician in New York claims to have discovered the weight of a soul. The discovery was made in this fashion: A man was weighed just before his last breath, and then again immediately after life was extinct, and the latter weight was about an ounce less than the former. Ergo, the soul weighs an ounce. Now isn't that a sure enough discovery though. Suppose the same discoverer weighs a bird before it sings, and then again after it sings; the weight of the song will then be discovered. So the melody of music, so the fragrance of flowers, and so forth.

But this weight of the soul attracts us. It is important. It is worth considering. Nay verily, our Lord Christ himself considered it. But how different the weight in the two estimates. This New York physician thinks the soul weighs an ounce: Lord Christ thought it weighed—just one soul weighed—more than all the world besides. Fling the whole world into one side of the balance, and a soul—not a soul, but your soul—into the other, and which weighs more? Christ thought the soul weighed more. One day this New York physician, one day every one who chances to read these lines, one day ever immortal soul and mortal man, will see this matter as Christ saw it, and will say as He said, What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

There is nothing on this earth, even all the earth itself, that weighs as much as one soul.

### "IF THERE BE ANY VIRTUE."

"If there be any virtue," even the least, we are to find it and think of it. If there be any ground for praise or commendation, no matter how small it may be, we are to note it and speak our encouraging word. It is easy to find reasons why we should do this. It is Christ's way with us. If there be even the faintest spark of good or hope in a life, Christ sees it, takes account of it, nourishes it, calls it out. If he looked upon people, ourselves included, as we too often do, seeing the imperfections, the shortcomings, the defects and failures, and thinking of these, nobody would be saved. But he always finds something to approve, to commend.

We shall never become of much use in the world until we learn this lesson. We shall never lift up any one to a higher, better life until we find something in him to approve and commend. There are some men and women who never do anything but discourage others. They have keen eyes for specks and flaws,—no spot is too small for them to see,—but they never see the beautiful things in any one. The Master refers to such persons when he speaks of those who find notes in their brother's eye. The religion of Christ teaches an altogether different way of dealing with notes. It sees them, but it is silent concerning them, finding rather the things to commend.

There is no life so devoid of beauty and good that it has in it nothing worthy of commendation. Ruskin found even in the mud of London streets the elements out of which gems are formed,—the opal, the sapphire, the diamond. The love of Christ finds even in the moral refuse of this world possibilities of loveliness in character and heavenliness in life. We cannot do anything to help men by indulging in criticism and denunciation. We can call out the good in others only as the sun waxes out the plants and flowers from the cold earth in the spring-time,—by its warmth. If the friends of

Christ would cease their fault-finding, and become true friends of men, finding the smallest beginnings of virtue and encouraging them, the earth would soon be changed into a garden. James Whitecomb Riley teaches the lesson:

"When over the fair fame of friend or foe  
The shadow of disgrace shall fall, instead  
Of words of blame or proof of thus and so,  
Let something good be said.

"Forget not that no fellow-being yet  
May fall so low but love may lift his head;  
Even the cheek of shame with tears are wet  
If something good be said.

"No generous heart may vainly turn aside  
In ways of sympathy; no soul so dead  
But may awaken strong and glorified,  
If something good be said.

"And so I charge ye, by the thorny crown,  
And by the cross on which the Savior bled,  
And by your own soul's hope of fair renown,  
Let something good be said."

One of the most striking words in the Old Testament is that in which David tells us, at the close of his wonderful life, that all he had attained and achieved he owed to God's gentleness. "Thy gentleness hath made me great." If God had been harsh with David, stern, critical, severely exacting, David would never have reached the noble life he finally attained. God's gentleness made him great. We can help others to become great only by being patient with them. Men and women everywhere need nothing so much as gentleness.

"So many gods so many creeds,  
So many paths that wind and wind,  
When just the art of being kind  
Is all this sad world needs."

Are not many of us too burlesque with each other? Do we not lack in kindness, in patience, in tenderness? Some men would have us believe that gentleness is unmanly. But it is not,—rudeness is always unmanly, gentleness is divine. Jesus was infinitely gentle. For many people life is not easy, and we make it very much harder for them to live worthily when we deal harshly with them, when we are exacting, when we chide or blame them, or when we exercise our wits in saying smart, cutting, and irritating things to annoy and vex them. It was said of William Cullen Bryant that he treated every neighbor as if he were an angel in disguise. That is, he had a feeling akin to reverence for every one who entered his presence. We do not know to whom we are speaking when we meet a stranger on any one of these common days. Let us treat him as the poet did,—as if he were an angel. Cardinal Newman defines a gentleman as one who never needlessly causes pain to another. If we are followers of Christ, we have no right to be ungentle, to be ill-mannered, to act disagreeable, to treat any other one rudely. "If there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

We should never forget the teaching of our Master, that the hungry person we feed in his name, the sick person we visit, the stranger to whom we show kindness, the discouraged person we encourage, the fainting one we lift up and start on his way again, is the Master himself. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." How would we treat Jesus if we found him in dealings with men. We dare not be ungentle to any one—it may be an angel unaware; it may be Christ himself.

The same teaching applies to sorrow. We should seek the line of brightness in any dark picture and think of that. And there always are breaks in the clouds through which we can see the blue and the stars.

"You scarce can wander in a wood so dense at night,

But if the heavens be clear,  
Some trembling star, rejoicing in its grateful light,

Gleams through the atmosphere.

"You scarce can tread a track so sadly dark in life,

But if your heart be right,  
Some kindly hope, benignly beaming o'er your strife,

Illuminates the night."

There always are comforts, no matter how great the sorrow. Every cloud has on it some bit of silver lining. There are hopes, consolations, comforts, songs, in every experience of grief or loss, and we are to think of these, and not alone of the sad elements in the experience. One chill day a beam of sunshine, coming into the parlor through the shutters, made a bright spot on the carpet. The little dog that had been lying in a dark corner of the room got up at once and went and lay down in the patch of sunshine. That is what we should do in our larger life. When, into any darkness or gloom of ours, even the faintest ray of light streams, we should accept it, and sit down in its brightness. There is reason for gratitude in the most bitter experience—we should find and enjoy its brightness. We should turn our eyes from the clouds and look at the stars.

"Live in the sunshine—God meant it for you;  
Live as the robins, and sing the day through."

Think on the good, not the evil. Think on the loveliness, not on the disfigurements. Think on the pure, not on the soiled. Think on the hopeful things in men, their possibilities of nobleness, not on their faults. In sorrow, find the Face of Christ, and gaze on that till you forget your grief. In all life, if there be any virtue, any praise, any beauty, any joy, think on these things, and it will lift up your life into strength, nobleness, divineness.—S. S. Times.

### HOW TO SPEND SUNDAY.

The Sabbath was made for Man.—Mark 2:27.

In an ordinary lifetime of threescore years and ten there are no less than ten years of Sundays. Ten Sabbatic years! Who shall estimate the possibilities of eternal good or evil involved in them? Christ says two things: One is that the Sabbath is His: "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." And He says also that the Sabbath is ours: "Sabbath was made for man." Consider the things that are right and lawful on this day.

1. Rest. There are two kinds of rest, which the Romans would have distinguished by the words *sopor*, that is "sleep," and *solatium*, that is, "Solace or refreshment." The rest designated as *sopor* is for the nighttime. In this there is a suspension of the conscious activity of all our powers. Our energies are repaired by such an intermission of our effort. The rest designated by the word *solatium* is different. The faculties are all awake and alert; they are being reinvigorated by change of activity.

II. Devotion. "The Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." It is not a holiday, but a hallowed day; set apart for spiritual uses. 1. The world should be shut out. (1) "In it thou shalt not do any work." The hammer should lie unused on the anvil, the ledger should be closed; and there should be a suspension of all work except such as is necessary for the sustenance and comfort of life. The argument against the Sunday newspaper is that it brings the world into the Lord's day. (2) There must be a cessation of secular pleasures. The great multitude of those who insist on having their Sunday pleasures are not our busy toilers. But suppose they were. Is it not true that you have no other day for the culture of your spiritual life? When will you attend to your immortal soul? When will you read your Bible, worship in the sanctuary, meditate on holy things, and prepare for the endless life? 2. We should be "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." So writes John in Patmos, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I saw—" Then follow the apocalyptic visions. No such dreams and visions come to the man who does not allow himself a suitable time for the trysting-place, sanctuary, the reading of the Word of God.

III. Service. Sabbath is not indolence. "Rest is not quitting the busy career, Rest is the fitting of self to its sphere." This is the church's busy day. The Sabbath is designed not only for our happiness here and now, but preeminently for preparation for the life beyond.—Homiletic Review.