

The Christian Sun.

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

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All communications, whether for publication or pertaining to matters of business, should be sent to the Editor, J. O. Atkinson, Elon College, N. C.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

A Scientific Triumph.—On Thursday Oct. 17, William Marconi announced that a regular wireless telegraph service across the Atlantic was instituted and was ready for commercial purposes. The terminal stations are Glace Bay on Cape Breton Island on this side, and Clifden, Ireland, on the other. In the first twenty-one hours after the wireless was ready for commercial use thirteen thousand words were sent by the wireless "trackless space," to the other side, and two thousand words were received in return. Thus the experimental stage of wireless has passed and the stage of service has been reached. At the end of the first day's business Mr. Marconi, the inventor announced:

"Transatlantic wireless telegraphy is a success. Transmission across the ocean is now regular and accurate, and will be continuous. On the scientific basis everything is successful, but our connections and organization must be perfected before we can hope to handle a large amount of business. It should be understood that we do not at present pretend to be able to compete with the cable companies. We cannot for the present accept any press messages other than those for papers with which we have made contracts. We handled a few exchange reports to-day, but do not want many private messages. Later we shall probably handle press reports for all papers, but now now."

Mr. Marconi feels able to compete with the cable companies already in matter of price and his charge is five cents a word for press dispatches and for ordinary messages ten cents a word. This is indeed the scientific triumph and wonder of our age. That messages may be electrically hurled thousands of miles through trackless waste and yawning space with precision, promptness and accuracy, is a marvel that staggers the ordinary mind to comprehend.

Railway Rate Regulation.—The Court of Common Pleas for the County of Philadelphia, Pa., has handed down the decision that the law in that State fixing the passenger rate on railways at two cents a mile is unconstitutional and therefore void. The decision is based on figures that the Court examined which figures, it is declared, show conclusively that this rate would give an inadequate rate of interest on the actual capital invested by the railway companies in their several plants. It will be recalled that Governor Hughes last winter vetoed a similar law for the State of New York when he had satisfied himself that such a law would not allow adequate returns on capital invested in the railways of that State. These questions are of interest now to Sun readers because laws, not identical, but similar, are now on our statute books and before our Courts.

Teaching Children Religion.—It is passing strange that a blind, fanatic theory may possess a man's mind and cause him to fly in the face of all facts and observations. It is well known of all men of this Christian country who care to know any thing of real facts that the great stalwart characters of our Christian faith learned Christianity when small and embraced the faith while yet tender in years. In fact over one-half of those ever brought to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior do so before they reach the age of eighteen; and one-half of the other half before they reach mature manhood or womanhood. The heart yields to this religion of love, when young, with ease; but with difficulty when years harden and affairs crowd and press and fill the mind. Now in face of these well known facts, bring yourself if possible to think of the absurdity, the absolute stupidity of the following which are said to be the words read the other day by President Schneider of the Chicago Board of Education:

"I believe with Jean Jacques Rousseau, that religion should not be taught to any one, in any form, until his or her mind is mature. As for the Bible in the public schools I object to it. It is not fit for children.

I would not object to a history of the Bible in the schools as a masterpiece of literature. It should be there just the same as Byron's poems or any other of the great masterpieces. And for the same reason I should be glad to have on the reading list a history of the Koran, or of the religion of Confucius or of Buddha."

We give that as a specimen of rank stupidity gone to seed in a high quarter. The Bible, not fit for children, indeed. The Bible has done more to enlighten childhood, enrich the tender years, and restrain the erring feet than any book or books ever written.

*A DESTRUCTIVE CRITIC OF 2907.

(To the Reader of 1907.)

Dear Brother: Although interested in the able writings of the higher critics of 1907, especially in their assumption of having discovered something valuable, as if the "historical method" were new in studying the Bible, I confess I became somewhat drowsy under their monotonous efforts to make the sacred writings seem to abound in misstatements. But I gradually absorbed their genius and spirit, and seemed to become a destructive critic, though calling myself a higher critic.

While in this state of mind, sleepy though I was, I seemed to live rapidly through the centuries, century after century, until I found myself moving among scholars who dated their letters with the numerals, 2, 9, 0, 7.

On seeming to be roused from a semi-consciousness, and supposing that a thousand years had passed from the time I fell asleep under the dreary chanting about the mistakes of the Bible, I seemed to be walking among the fancied alcoves of my library, now increased by the additions of a thousand years, and coming across the following correspondence I give you the letters, believing that it may be interesting to the reader to observe how the reasoning of the future destructive critic (writing in 2907 of our times in the spirit in which the destructive critic of 1907 writes of Bible times) will make the conditions of our generation to appear.

If we of the year 1907 know something of the conclusions of the learned gentleman of 2907 to be false, whose letters I now reveal, or if his modes of reasoning are absurd, or if he lays stress on insufficient data in his logic, or, especially, if he is ludicrously given to denying the statements of eye-witnesses to the facts which we of our time know to be true, these faults must not be attributed to me: for I copy the letters and publish them exactly as I found them a thousand years before they were written.

J. J. Summerbell.)

Dayton, Ohio.

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THIRTEENTH LETTER.

Kinkade, New Zealand, 15, 1, 2908.

My Dear Grandson:

How time flies. When, at your request, I began these letters, we were in the summer of the year 2907. And now we are in the middle of the first month of 2908.

As I look back a thousand years, I am disgusted with the barbarism and ignorance of that age; but I assure you I have derived much satisfaction from finding that the year 1900 was not only the golden age of the higher criticism, but it was the time when scientific men were held in the highest esteem. People seemed to believe anything a scientific man would say.

One of the most striking illustrations of this peculiarity of that age I found in a paper of 1907 I dug up in the ruins of a great college. The paper had partly decayed, so that I could not learn whether the author was a member of the faculty or not. But he was evidently writing, expecting mankind to believe what he recorded. His expecting them to believe him proved the beautiful tendencies of the age, in some respects, notwithstanding its barbarism in most things.

He was contending that plants have the power of thought. He seemed to base his contention on his own personal observation of nature. (If I do not state his case correctly, do not attribute it to my prejudice,

but to my superficial knowledge of English, which has been a dead language for centuries, and with which I am the only man in our university in any degree familiar.)

The scientist of 1907 argued that plants have intellectual gifts; and he proved it by something like this. He said he had followed the course of a root of a plant in made ground. When that root reached one point in its progress, it came directly in contact with the sole of an old shoe. The root at first seemed baffled; as if it did not know how to get past the obstruction. But later, as if "making up its mind," it divided its volume into a number of fine rootlets, and sent one of them to each hole through the sole of the shoe that the shoemaker had pierced for his sewing, and after these rootlets had thus succeeded in passing the sole of the shoe, they all came together again in the volume of the root, in its full size; which then continued its course in the direction it had planned.

I believe the people of 1907 generally accepted the testimony of this botanist: for I found one article in a paper of the time deriding it; and the anger the writer showed in opposing the theory indicated that the people accepted the botanist's testimony as true. This indicates their noble habit of mind. For myself, I unhesitatingly assent to his statement. Indeed, I myself tried to verify it. But the tree I planted was not of the right kind, or the soil was not favorable, or the old shoe had not been made by the right shoemaker: for I could not secure the phenomena related by the botanist. I believe his record: for he was a scientist. I cannot explain it; but I believe it.

There was another case illustrative of the noble faith of many people of 1907. Another naturalist related a story which I failed to find, except in the articles of the press opposed to it. It seems to have been something like this: He had seen a woodcock with a broken leg. That woodcock had swathed his broken leg in wet clay, had stood on the other leg until the clay dried, thus making a plaster cast, and had kept that cast on his leg until the bone had knit together again. It is evident that that woodcock knew something about anatomy, surgery, pottery, etc. I am sorry to say that some of the writers ridiculed the story. But that only showed their ignorance. I firmly believe the history: for it was related by a naturalist.

But, my dear grandson, you must not be misled by such histories into believing that Jesus miraculously made clay, anointed the eyes of a blind man, commanded him to go and wash, and that he came seeing: for that story was not related by a scientific man, but by a common witness. And Jesus was not learned; as is proved by the saying of his enemies: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" It has always been a mystery to me, how he knew chemistry and the wireless.

I wish I had time to show you how the people of 1907 had faith; although they doubted so many things of the Bible. It was simply wonderful. Their faith was heroic. They believed in patent medicines; in Dowie; when Dowie fell, then in Voliva; in destructive criticism (which you must not confound with higher criticism); in Mrs. Eddy; in morality by law; that there is no such thing as sin; that what is called sin is one way of getting nearer to God; in Christian union by parliamentary votes; in evolution beyond the proofs; in the fixity of the atom of matter; in pictures of God; in an ether filling infinite space; in church lotteries; in government philanthropy; in church dances; in liquor saloons; in all kinds of isms and fads. Their faith was wonderful. Some of them believed in everything but God, and his Son, and his word. Their multiplex faith kept the year 1907 from being unworthy of mention in history.

Your affectionate grandfather,
Higher Critic.

In the second international balloon contest starting from St. Louis last week there were nine balloons. A German balloon won, with France a close second. All previous records were broken. The flight of the winning balloon was 880 miles,

of the second best, 875 miles. The previous distance record was 402 miles. Time of flight between 42 and 44 hours. The German balloon besides winning the cup gets a cash prize of \$2500.

OUR UNCONSCIOUS MINISTRATIONS

Some years ago, at the time of the sudden death of a beloved minister, among the messages which reached the family was one mailed from a railway train, unsigned, undated, and bearing but four words. "My friend, my friend!"

Whether the cry came from one who had been personally ministered to, or whether the service had been rendered through some sermon or printed word, no one ever knew. It was enough that in some way the servant of God had delivered his message to the needy soul.

The incident is typical of one of the most beautiful phases of life—the unconscious ministry of human souls to each other. A little while ago a farmer's wife, burdened and discontented, chanced to visit, with a friend, a home for incurables in a nearby city. Among the patients there was a youth of twenty, totally paralyzed, so that he could move nothing but his eyes. They were wonderful eyes, clear, blue and happy, with an eager light of recognition for old friends and greeting for new ones.

The farmer's wife had no son of her own, but she carried home with her the memory of that prisoned youth with his clear, happy eyes.

This is not a story. She never saw him again—she never even wrote to him, for writing did not come easily to her unwonted fingers. But she did not complain over her life as she had before. Her tasks were heavy, and she had little pleasure, and, it seemed to her, little appreciation. But after that time, when bitter words sprang to her lips, they often died unspoken, and her eyes softened with pity; between her and her hard, gray days a vision lingered—the vision of a crippled boy with heaven's peace in his eyes.

There are few lives that do not know such ministry. Men in temptation have been strengthened by the memory of some woman who had stood faithfully in a hard place through heroic years. Women pressed by worldly duties hide in their hearts a shrine hallowed by some humble, unsuspecting saint—an old servant's room, perhaps, or a simple country farm-house, known in the far-off years, where one walked who carried the fragrance of prayer in her garments.

Is there not comfort here for humble souls who feel themselves doing little for the world's great need? Their lives are God's messages. In ways they cannot know their comfort and their healing will go forth to those who need them. God's messages cannot be lost nor go astray.—Youth's Companion.

The Japanese government is so thorough in all that it does that not one of the 800,000 soldiers who served in Manchuria has been allowed to return home without being disinfected. Every man had to strip, and place his uniform and personal effects in a specially constructed bag. Then he had to plunge into a bath, the water of which was at a temperature of over 120 degrees, and was calculated to kill any microbe lurking in his skin. Meanwhile his clothes were being disinfected by steam, and his weapons by formal. Even the paper money used during the war was not allowed to pass, but every soldier was given the amount he had on him in notes which had never been to Manchuria. The work went on day and night, and each man took an hour and a quarter before he was pronounced fit to go home. Not one of the fevers and diseases which might have been brought back from the seat of war has made its appearance in Japan. Can't some Japanese health officer be asked for by the President to teach some of ours?—Ex.

"Sow a thought and you reap an act;
Sow your acts and you reap habits;
Sow a habit—you reap a destiny."