

The Christian Sun.

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

ESTABLISHED 1844.

GREENSBORO, N. C., WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1907.

VOLUME LIX. NUMBER 45.

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.

Reason, Rates and Railroads.

Upon the word of our honor this railroad rate business, and the present railroad situation generally, leads us into the mist and leaves us there. Things will not reconcile and we cannot make the ends of our thinking tally with the times.

For instance, according to a bulletin of the inter-State Commerce Commission just issued, the injured and the killed on our railways during the year ending June 30th, tell a tale of tragedy startling and awful. The killed number 5,000, an increase of 775 over the record of the year before. The injured, many of them for life, number 76,286, an increase of 9,577 over the terrible record of the previous year. This is certainly slaughtering the innocent at a rate that one shudders to think of.

Now unless one accuse the railroads of wilful murder and wholesale slaughter, which it is presumed no one will do, one is driven to the only other alternative that the roads are trying to carry too many folks with too small, or too poor, equipment.

The question then that leads us into the mist is, why is our law taking such firm hold on railroad rates and having hands off in railroad service and equipment? If our law can regulate rates, why can it not have a voice in service and equipment?

For our own part we would rather pay three cents a mile and feel comfortably safe on a railroad journey than to pay two cents a mile and reasonably expect to be hopelessly wrecked or helplessly maimed. For one, I am more interested in the mortality rate than I am in the money rate. And what is strange to us is why the people and the papers do so little and say so little about the mortality rate and fill this earth with lamentations about the money rate.

If you argue that the roads would make more money if they would carry passengers for less, the reply is that the roads are already carrying more passengers than are safe on the trains and more trains than are safe on the tracks.

To our mind the discussion and talk and rant are one-sided. Economists and legal experts may know that we should have reduced railroad rates. But all this great mass of us who travel do well know that we need better railroad facilities, better trains, better tracks and better equipment. And if low rates are to give us no better service we have purchased those rates in terms of life and limb and blood.

If the law shall say how cheap a passenger must be carried, it seems to us high time it were saying also as to how safe he shall be while in the carrying.

Politicians and Preachers.—If you have heard a politician make a speech this year, or in any year when there was no election pending, you discovered how hard put to he was for a text and a theme. He beat the bushes, covered the earth and scraped the skies. To this performance he added a few jokes grown hoary with age and made an apology for not having a speech better suited to the place and people. A political speech in an "off" year is a dreary number. The people are interested in deeper themes than this.

Here is a theme the masses of humanity never tire of, the theme of Calvary and the Cross. There are no off years of Christianity and the gospel. For over eighteen centuries now faithful men have been telling the story of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, and the world is more eager to hear it today than ever before. When a man comes from communion with God, with a heart aglow and his mind afire, and speaks to the people the evangel of hope and life and liberty, men stop and listen and give heed, and go forth with better heart to their daily task and toil. The gospel of the Cross is that which never wears or wearies.

*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.

FOURTEENTH LETTER.

Kinkade, New Zealand,
30, 1, 2908.

My Dear Grandson:—It is possible that in my descriptions of the conditions prevailing in America in 1907, I may unintentionally have done some injustice, by making you believe that the people of that unfortunate country had, through their own natural materialistic disposition relapsed from a former state of Christian spirituality. If you have this idea, you may not have sufficient charity for the people of 1907. The true scholar must weigh all the facts. Fortunately we have many and can arrive at practically definite conclusions, because of our skill in the use of the "historical method".

Your own studies have made you know that America was discovered in 1492. Some regions of the land were at that time densely populated; especially Mexico and Central America. At one time it was generally supposed by our learned men that the territory later occupied by the republic of which I have already written you, the United States, was less thickly settled. But later researches have disclosed to us tremendous public works in the territory later occupied by the United States, that could only have been constructed by vast multitudes of laborers under well organized government. For want of a better name we have called them the Mound Builders. Many of their public works remain to this day, 2908, notwithstanding the destructive ravages of the year 1957.

How numerous those Mound Builders were will appear when I inform you that on one battle field in a province of the republic called Kansas, there were buried (it has been carefully estimated) more than 60,000 corpses. The skulls found indicate that the weapons used were tomahawks, arrows, etc.; firearms evidently not yet having been adopted by the great armies engaged. We know nothing about the cause of this war; but the number of deaths in this one battle indicates great hosts engaged. Consequently there must

have been a ~~great~~ population. Remember this: ~~that~~ you may not grasp the ~~force~~ of my reasoning.

It is conceded by most higher critics that the civilization of the United States was to some extent influenced by a body of men called the Pilgrim Fathers, who were undoubtedly of Christian stock and spiritually minded.

It is also established that the Pilgrim Fathers, who came to this country in 1620, numbered only 101 people. There seems to have been a settlement somewhere in the south, made in the year 1607. But there was a great war waged between the two sections of the republic, as nearly as we can determine, sometime between 1850 and 1870. The northern tribes were victorious. You know well that barbarians always exterminate or enslave the conquered people. Consequently we have a right to believe that the descendants of the people of the southern settlement, somewhere in a province called Virginia, were exterminated; since we do not find any traces of slavery after the great war. The southerners were not enslaved, but killed.

This compels us to the conclusion that the Pilgrim Fathers were the only Christian influence that permanently continued in the country called the United States.

Now when you come to consider their few numbers in the year 1620, as compared with the vast numbers of the Mound Builders, who were undoubtedly savages, and the warlike character of the Mound Builders, it is necessary to believe that the Pilgrim Fathers must have been practically swallowed up by the natives.

It also follows that by the inter-marriages with the Mound Builders the Pilgrim Fathers would lose their European purity of religion, their institutions of civilization, and probably even their affection for what they had left on the eastern continent. This crossing of the Pilgrim Fathers with the aborigines of America must not be charged against them as a fault; for it was almost inevitable. When the ten tribes of Israel were carried away captive, you remember that they disappeared in the blood of the nations wither they were taken. When the Normans entered England, though they were the victorious people, they were gradually swallowed up by the Anglo-Saxons. When the Goths invaded the Roman territory they ultimately accepted the institutions of the Romans. You know the course of history.

Therefore we have the right, by the "historical method", to believe that, by the inevitable crossing of the Pilgrims with the savages of America, the savage customs and religions were perpetuated and grafted upon Christianity and European civilization. So that the corruption and heathenism of the Americans in 1907 were only the necessary incident of their evolution from the barbarism and savagery of the Mound Builders.

I trust this explanation will cause you to have some charity for the Americans of 1907. Now that they have disappeared from the earth, we should speak as gently of them as possible in harmony with truth.

I have been somewhat annoyed by unlearned men of our time, who do not accept the reasoning I have given you. They say that the population of the territory later occupied by the United States, when the Pilgrims arrived, was very small. But in their ignorance they are so unwise as to trust the records of the 17th century, following the date when the Pilgrims arrived. Those records all seem to represent the natives not as being the multitudinous Mound Builders, but as being a scanty population of Indians, and the vast territory later occupied by the United States as being a comparatively uninhabited wilderness. But to trust such records evinces a lack of the critical spirit. For the writers of that time must have had much incentive to misrepresent the

facts. They were personally prejudiced, and in many respects were not worthy of confidence. For instance, they believed in witches; and therefore were as untrustworthy as Martin Luther, who once threw his inkstand at the devil. We cannot arrive at the truth by believing the testimony of such witnesses. The true critic must discard the direct evidence of the contemporaries and eye witnesses; and depend on the indirect proofs from the monuments, whose meaning we must interpret in the light of experience—our experience.

Also, these writings which my opponents quote, to prove the scanty population of the United States in 1620, though supposed to have been written in the Seventeenth century, are really of uncertain date. There is strong reason to believe that they were not written by the men whose names they bear, or to whom they are attributed. The styles, the literary styles, of the same supposed authors, carry so much that the books are evidently compilations gathered by literary hacks of a later time. I have no definite proof that this is the fact, except my own judgment after inspection. But that is of far more value than the traditions handing down the manuscripts. In fact, most of the original manuscripts are now lost, and the copies of these records, while harmonizing in the general statements, yet differ in some minor particulars; and these discrepancies, sometimes occurring in the same author, make me regard their statements as to be rejected, except when corroborated by my own judgment as probable. We must reject everything that is not probable. And it is not probable that a great territory like that of the United States would be occupied by only a few hundred thousand people, while Europe was crowded.

After a thorough investigation of the subject I am of the firm opinion that the Americans of 1907 were a cross between the Pilgrim Fathers and the Mound Builders; and that the Mound Builders were the more influential race in determining the conditions, religion, institutions and civilization in general, of the people of 1907. The people of 1907 were certainly great builders; and the serpentine windings of their lines of travel (if they were lines of travel, as some histories state) suggest to the mind some of the great serpents, acknowledged by all to have been constructed by the Mound Builders; and a critic has only to notice the evidences of the vast multitudes that must have been engaged on the monuments of the Mound Builders and the railroads of the Americans, to discern the incontestible evidences of the command of a great population combined with the dense ignorance of the forces of nature. The civilization of the Americans was unquestionably that of the Higher Critic.

Affectionately, your grandfather,
Mound Builders.

Volume I. No. 1. of the *Elonian* made its appearance last week. It is to appear monthly hereafter during the college year. It is the organ and exponent of the student social and literary life of Elon College. The first number sets a high standard and if it is to improve with age it will certainly rank early in its career, with the best of college magazines. The volume is dedicated to Rev. W. S. Long, D. D., carries an excellent cut of him and a helpful article from his pen. The contributed articles as well as the editorials, are of a high order. The price is \$1.00 per year.

Charles T. Barney, deposed head of the Knickerbocker Trust Co., New York, which went to the wall when the money panic began recently, committed suicide November 14th. His estate is said to be valued at \$2,500,000, though previous to the bank's failure he was supposed to be worth \$9,000,000.