

COMMUNICATIONS

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

BY REV. C. L. WOOD.

Spiritual unity binds together all true believers. Many are prejudiced against Christianity because they see in the many denominations the spirit of sectarianism, selfishness, and censoriousness. Hence they go away saying that Christ's church is divided, and that there is no unity, no sympathy, no oneness of action in carrying forward the Lord's work. All this, and more, seems true to them from their position outside of Christ and the Church. These impressions gained are no doubt keeping many away from Christ. It is a fact to be regretted that there should be any cause for such incorrect findings.

We believe all true Christians of all denominations love the common cause of Christ, and are united in sympathy and true fellowship. Some expect too much of the churches, and because these expectations are not realized fully, they discard all. We are not to expect uniformity. Unity may exist with out uniformity. The first is commanded of Christ's own, while the latter is not required, nor is it possible. Paul says: "there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all." (1 Cor. 12: 5-6.) The various denominations have their differences as to method, operation, government etc., but who shall say there is not among them all the purpose to glorify God, spread his gospel, and save souls. If a church can be found not having these objects before it, it would be entirely safe to unchristianize such a people.

That there are those in all churches who are selfish and unchristian is indisputable. But there is undoubtedly among all true Christians, of all denominations more of the Pentecostal spirit of *oneness* and *love*, than is apparent to prejudiced observers.

The Evangelical denominations are one essentially in doctrine. Their chief differences are found in methods of government etc. All believe the true church is composed of all true

believers. Hence there is only one body. But this, one body has many members. All members have not the same office, or place in the body, but all believers occupy an important place in the one body, and were it possible that a really spiritual member be severed from the body, the (spiritual church) the body, or church, would be sadly incomplete. But it is not so. Sin alone can separate us from Christ or his spiritual church. Some, who oppose the churches, tell us we have not Christ for our head; but that we have men rather, the Methodists have Wesley for their head, the Free Methodist, P. T. Roberts, the United Brethren in Christ have P. W. Otterbein etc. This is a flat misrepresentation. All these evangelical denominations, and others as well, accept no other head save Jesus Christ. This is their faith, their declaration every where.

Jesus is the head of the body, i. e., the church, and all believers though they may by right differ in methods, governments, administration and unessential matters, are making toward one common centre, Christ, where all lines of truth meet. Christians of all denominations should seek to manifest more love, interest, and true fellowship with and for each other, that their good may not be evil spoken of. Jesus our *Head* is the thought and life of all true Christians.

THE CHURCH'S OPPORTUNITY.

BY M. N. BUTLER.

There are times in all ages and in every land when the struggle for bread is tremendous, and warring elements, socially, politically, yea, and religiously, contend for precedence and power. Upon the result human weal or woe depends. America is drifting to such a crisis. Never before in the history of our country have all classes become so absorbed in adjusting this matter. Statesmen, sages, politicians, demagogues, parties, newspapers and organizations are swallowed up in the agitation. "Labor and capital" is the watch-word everywhere. Good, bad and indifferent movements are busily engaged in pushing forward the labor discussion. And if Christianity and the Bible are of any use to the

race it is at such critical moments as this when national upheaval is visible on every hand. It is at such hours that the church should raise a standard and point to the source of all wisdom in determining the true relation of man to his fellow-man. This great labor question has got to be settled, and if not settled right America will pass through a conflict unparalleled in all history. The professed Christian people carry a weighty responsibility in this matter. The gospel, the church and ministry, to deserve the confidence of the poor, should not hesitate or falter in a struggle for the oppressed and down-trodden. Is the church too narrow, or God's arm shortened that his church cannot espouse the cause of the humble or lead the struggles of the lowly? To the decalogue, the golden rule and revelation, then, let the nation turn for instruction and the knowledge which cometh from God alone. All other plans will prove misleading, unsatisfactory and disastrous. Let every pastor instruct his congregation and point them to the Word of God as the great compass chart that is to lead onward and upward. And if the church lives up to its high privilege it will come out of this great struggle fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners.

CONTRIBUTORS.

BY REV. D. H. SHELLY.

Mr. Editor will you allow me, as a contributor, to say a few words through the CONSERVATOR in reference to an article which appeared in the paper of March 28th, headed "Some Reasons for the Reasonable." I am not an editor and never expect to be, but I have written for nearly all kinds of papers and especially for our church papers. I wrote my first article for the *Religious Telescope* about thirty-five years ago. I never saw that article in print, and I am sure that I put my best efforts in it. It, undoubtedly, went to where the worm dieth not—the bottomless pit. At the time I felt a little grieved, but possibly I would have been more grieved had the article been published. For a long time I would not write for the paper, thinking that the editor had a few favored ones and then he would accommo-

date and no others. But after I got thoroughly cooled off, I commenced to write again, and have kept it up ever since, though every once in a while an article has gone to the bottomless pit. When a subject presses itself upon my mind I cannot rest until I write it off, then I can rest, thank God. And, Mr. Editor, when an article of mine comes to you and you can't rest until you send it to the waste basket, for your *rest's* sake send it there, then you and I will both be happy; our minds will be free. I have no doubt that if all the articles which are sent in were published just as they come, the paper would appear somewhat like a pile of wheat that had never gone through the fanning-mill.

Let me say to the contributors, "Send on your articles, and let them go through the editorial fanning-mill, and if there is any good wheat in them it will come out. Don't be discouraged. Remember the old motto: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Keep on writing, and if the paper dies for the want of matter to print, we writers will be clear, bless God for that. We can then preach the paper's funeral. Mr. Editor put my articles where they will do the most good.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

BY S. MATHEW.

It is with the kindest feeling toward those who differ with me that I write the following:

Does God authorize any one to plant a tree in his house, and make it a Christmas tree? There is nothing in the Word of God for it, which our discipline says is the only rule of faith and practice. I believe the Christmas tree destroys the sacredness of the solemnity and the reverence for the house of God; and therefore, sacrilegious in its very nature, and that we ought have a rule in all our churches against it.

If the four weeks' time that, spent by millions of people the excitement over the novel arrangement of the Christmas tree, were spent in holding revival meetings no doubt there would be thousands of immortal souls saved that are being lost. The novelties of the Christmas tree demand a vast deal more attention than the prayer meet-