

## CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP.

The regenerate man is a good citizen. It goes without saying that a man who does his duty towards himself, towards his neighbor, and towards his God, the characteristics that comprehend all Christian relations, is a good citizen of the state, as he is a good member of the church. A man with a feeble conscience, a blunted moral sense, a low standard of life, and a blurred vision of the distinction between right and wrong, who is too selfish to do right except when he has a sinister motive to serve, is not, and can not be, a good citizen. The Christian world seems to have lost sight of this citizenship obligation of regeneration. It appears to have been forgotten that the truth of Jesus Christ must be applied, not to a single segment of life, but to the whole circle of human existence. The regenerate man knows that good citizenship is religion and morality applied to politics and to the business and civic life of the community. He knows that society and the state should be governed by the same moral laws and principles as the individual. He is never heard to make the idiotic assertion of a modern politician, who declared that the application of the Sermon on the Mount to politics was an iridescent dream. It would not be difficult for us to believe that the man who made this declaration is an iridescent fool; but the assertion that national and social righteousness, the application of the eternal law of right to states and nations, and social compacts is a dream, iridescent or otherwise, is something no Christian man should be asked to believe.

Is it right for men in aggregation to kill and steal, and for men in segregation to be hung for killing and stealing? If it is right for one hundred men to do an iniquitous thing, is it wrong for one man to do it? The same moral law must be applied to nations as to individuals; and states must be converted as well as men. Does it strike the readers that a regenerate man carries his conscience in his Sunday clothes, if he happens to be the fortunate possessor of the last named article, while his politics he regards as inseparately a part of himself, to have and to hold, for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, as long as they both shall live? He may change his politics, and the average American would be better if he had none to change, but never his religious and moral principles. When you talk to a Christian man about honest methods, purity of the ballot, a clean franchise, moral men for office, civic righteousness, incorruptibility in the administration of government, he does not shout at you, "Sunday-school politics," or, "Keep religion out of politics," by which is meant, keep politics and political methods out of the realm of moral decency and common honesty. He knows that the Augean stable of our political life needs most of all to be cleansed by the power of the cross.

It is all right to sing hymns, offer prayers, listen to sermons, hold services in sacred buildings, but along with these we must thoroughly comprehend God's revelation to the age, that religion does not consist in doctrines up in the air, and sacraments in the church, unconnected with human life, but in God's eternal truth of character, which covers and regulates the whole area of

human action. Christianity is not for the south-east corner of a man's life, but for the whole of it. It is the regulative principle of existence, and being an essential part of the man, and not something separable from him, goes with him into business, into politics, into society, into domestic life, into every place where there is a human relationship that can beget a moral obligation. The man who declares that he goes to the communion table on Sunday as a Christian, and to the polls on Monday as a citizen, may know something of the corruptionist politics he votes to sustain, but precious little does he know of the Christianity he pretends to honor. He reminds one of the wicked English Bishop who was also Chancellor of the Exchequer. When rebuked for conduct incompatible with the Christian profession and the highest office in the church, he blandly declared that he sinned as Chancellor of the Exchequer and not as Bishop of the Church. This bit of ecclesiastical casuistry laid him open to the awkward question, When the chancellor goes to hell for his wickedness, what becomes of the bishop? When this citizen, like Judas, is sent to his own place for voting on Monday to sustain and perpetuate one of the most corrupt political parties known to civilization, what will become of the pious Christian who communed on Sunday? Where will he go?

The life of the regenerate man must be felt in the channels of commerce. Into all the great realm of selfishness, greed and dishonesty, where conscience has no authoritative word that anyone feels bound to respect, the Christian man does not enter. Where commodities are bought and sold in absolute disregard of the dire curse and hopeless ruin they may bring to men, if only dollars can be acquired, is Satan's emporium of blood traffic in which no man of God can participate. He does not say "Business is business," the wretched apology by which moral principles are divorced from commerce. "Competition is the life of trade," is another of Satan's maxims in which the Christian citizen is losing faith, for he hears it repeated in absolute forgetfulness of the fact, if competition is the life of trade, it is the death of character; and it does seem that eighteen centuries of Christian civilization ought to have been able to devise means by which the enlivening of trade did not mean the destruction of manhood. "Self-preservation is the first law of nature." Yes, and self-sacrifice is the first law of grace. The nature that makes self-preservation the first law is selfish, animal, and depraved, but the altruism of grace through Jesus Christ, seeks the highest good of self by sacrificing for the common good. Is Christian socialism, or social Christianity sufficiently advanced to give even Christian men this conception of life?—*The Christian Oracle*.

## OUT OF BONDAGE.

Chundra Lela was a Brahmin, and the daughter of a wealthy land owner of Nepal. In accordance with Hindu customs, she was married at the age of seven, but two years afterwards, while still in her father's house, news was brought her that her boy husband was dead. What it means to be a child widow in India none can fully know but the miserable girls themselves. The humiliation and the misery of their lot is so great that many have said it was better for them in the old days, when the widow was burned on her husband's bier.

Chundra Lela some years afterwards was called to undergo another bereavement. Her beloved father died, and her lot was then

desolate indeed. She had been taught to read the Hindu sacred books, and from them she learned that the loss of husband and father was a punishment for some sin she had committed. The only way that she knew of to atone for it was to go on a pilgrimage.

For more than seven years she painfully toiled over the mountains and plains of India, travelling on foot from one shrine of reputed sanctity to another, making offerings, seeing the priests, and bathing in the sacred rivers. But she gained no assurance that her sin was forgiven. Then the idea of self-torture fastened itself on her mind. She joined the fakirs at Ramgunge. Like them, she smeared her body with ashes, and painted her face with the red and white marks which make them hideous. Stripping herself almost naked, she seated herself on a deerskin rug under the broiling sun, and lighted five fires around her. There she vowed that she would sit day and night without moving during the six hot months of the year. During winter she vowed to spend her nights in a pond with the water up to her neck. Day and night her constant prayer was to the gods that they would accept her suffering as atonement, and forgive her. Three years passed away in these tortures, and at the end she was as far away from peace as ever.

One day she was at Midnapore, and there for the first time she came in contact with Christianity. A sister of Dr. Phillips, the missionary, saw her, and told her the gospel story. The woman's heart thrilled under it. She bought a Bible and read for herself. She went to Dr. Phillips for teaching, and after a few months, in spite of the entreaties and menaces of her Hindu relatives, she embraced Christianity and was baptized. She has now been for several years a messenger of Christ to the women of India. Scarcely a city or a town that she has not visited, going from home to home proclaiming the gospel that set her free.—*Christian Budget*.

"You teach," said the Emperor Trajan to Rabbi Joshua, "that your God is everywhere, and boast that he resides amongst your nation. I should like to see him." "God's presence is indeed everywhere," replied Joshua. "Suppose we try to look first at one of his ambassadors?" The emperor consented. The rabbi took him in the open air at noonday, and bade him look at the sun in the meridian splendor. "I can not," said Trajan, "the light dazzles me." "Thou art unable," said Joshua, "to endure the light of one of his creatures, and canst thou expect to behold the resplendent glory of the of the Creator? Would not such a sight annihilate thee?"

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More names will be added as they are appointed