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ESSENTIALS OF THE FAITH THAT SAVES.¹⁾

1. SINGULARITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

In the judgment of modern men everywhere Christianity occupies the foremost position among the religions of the world. As regards the number of its adherents, it is surpassed by some Oriental religions, but it is unquestionably the greatest as regards spiritual power, moral dynamic, and civilizing force.

Men whom extensive and close observation, protracted and exhaustive study, have enabled to form conclusive opinions on the matter have declared that the Christian religion, by reason of its basic principles, is in a class by itself. With the assurance that characterizes the matured conviction of the historian, Guizot declares: "Outside of Christianity there have been grand spectacles of activity and force, brilliant phenomena of genius and virtue, generous attempts at reform, learned philosophical systems, and beautiful mythological poems, but no real profound or fruitful regeneration of humanity and society. Jesus Christ from His cross accomplishes what erstwhile in Asia and Europe princes and philosophers, the powerful of the earth, and sages, attempted without success. He changes the moral and the social state of the world. He pours into the souls of men new enlightenment and new powers. For all classes, for all human conditions He prepares destinies before His advent unknown. He liberates them

1) Two lectures delivered before Lutheran students of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, Wis. Published by request.

MISCELLANY.

AN EFFECTUAL PROTEST.—Serious-minded persons all over the country have been amazed at the palpable unfairness of the American press in their reports of matters of state and the progress of the war in Europe. Not only the news bulletins offered the public have been unfair, both as regards the “facts” reported and the manner of reporting them, but also the editorial utterances. The *Outlook*, the *Independent*, the *Literary Digest*, *Collier’s*, etc., have all been offenders in this respect. The following letter of the most recent American biographer of Luther, which was printed in a recent issue of the *Nation*, reveals the profound disgust of fair-minded Americans with the present-day press:—

“NOT ONLY PRO-ENGLISH, BUT ENGLISH.”

“To the Editor of the *Nation*:—

“Sir: Please take my name off your list of subscribers. It is with regret that I sever my connection with so able a journal as yours, which I have taken for some years and have read ever since I was in college. I particularly like your literary and academic features. But it seems to me that you no longer represent an American point of view. You are not pro-English, but English. I take one English weekly, and I prefer an American journal as a contrast. I suppose you will think me ‘criminally insane’ when I say that I do not see the German blockade in the same light as you do. Germany is hard pressed and suffering herself, and there is very little difference in her blockade of England and England’s blockade of her. Drowning a few thousand non-combatants is no more inhuman than to starve a hundred million non-combatants. I am not pro-German, but an American of Colonial descent, without ties of blood or marriage to Germany, but I have read history, at least sufficiently to know that in the past all nations have been nearly equally the aggressors and the sufferers. I assure you the *London Nation* has a fairer appreciation of the German point of view than you show. But what I chiefly dislike is the intemperance and insobriety of your language. It is strange that you did not notice the contrast between the two parts of your leading editorial of February 8 (p. 150). In the latter half you commend President Wilson’s good temper and dignity in his note referring to Germany, and in the first half, of the article you inveigh against that country in a Catilinarian style. I do not suppose you will care for my criticism, but I am merely explaining why, to my regret, I cannot take your very able paper any longer.

“Poughkeepsie, N. Y., February 14.

PRESERVED SMITH.”