

Signs of the Times

AND ORIENTAL WATCHMAN

August, 1918

The Lure of the Unknown

IT was over in old Mesopotamia among the sand dunes, where Briton and Turk are now fighting for the crown, that beautiful Rachel stole her father's teraphim and ambled away on her favourite camel with Jacob through the starry night. She thought that with these images to indicate success or disaster the future of herself and family was assured.

And it was the regal Nebuchadnezzar on one of his raids to the west who stopped at the cross roads and shook his polished arrows in the quiver, and looked in the liver of the bleeding victim to know whether

fortune lay in populous Jerusalem or in Rabbath of the Ammonites.

Later, learned Greece bowed at the oracles of Dodona and the famous Delphi; and cosmopolitan Rome sought wisdom at Claros and Branchidae.

The world of mediaeval days looked to its shrines, its relics, and superstitious practises of ages past to guard from danger and death.

And today mankind, still enmeshed in the maze of the mystics, follows on after the medium, the crystal gazer, the fortune teller, and the astrologer.



INDIAN TROOPS MARCHING THROUGH BAGHDAD

It is not within our province here to dwell upon their merits or defects. But as in all things mundane we find the true and the false, the genuine and the counterfeit, so in the opening of the future to mortal eyes we may be assured there are likewise two agencies, one from above and another from beneath.

To us has been given "a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." 2 Pet. 1:19.

For "surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.

All that is necessary for our well-being and our salvation has been revealed through the Word of God. Of our individual futures none but God can forecast; and every man to whom God has given the power of logical reasoning may know with absolute certainty that the secrets of the Creator of heaven and earth are not conveyed through mysterious rappings or cabalistic signs in the darkened

chambers of the spiritualist, or the cryptic utterances of mercenary charlatans.

As humanity engulfed in its great struggle for existence gropes through the "valley of the shadow," let not the Christian in his search for the unknown go to sources of evil; let not him who believes in God, "seek unto spirits that peep and that mutter for the living to the dead." It is not for us to know the future of our loved ones except as revealed in Holy Writ. But to us and to our children belong those things which have been revealed of God's love, the final history of earth's kingdoms, and the great victory over death and sin of every sincere believer.

We point you in this number to the wonderful and unrivalled "Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

Prophetic Church History

BY FLOYD W. SMITH

A CAREFUL study of divine prophecy reveals the fact that history is but the unfolding of God's plan for the world. The supreme claim of the Holy Bible upon our belief in its testimony is its forecast of earthly history to the close of time.

The great monarchies of earth, their principal kings, the decisive battles of ancient history, the persecutions of the church, and many other important incidents extending to the present age, were revealed to the prophet Daniel in the courts of Babylon. And at the opening of the Christian era the apostle John was given a still more definite and extended view of the coming trials and the final rapture of the church of Christ, and some of the prominent political events.

There are two series of prophecy given in the first seven chapters, which are of special importance and interest. Careful study, a full exposition of which space here forbids, shows us that the first series known as "the

seven churches covers the internal history of the church, its spiritual condition, its failures and triumphs, its trials and difficulties, from the time of Christ to the end of earthly history.

The second series, "the seven seals" covers the same period of time, with reference, more particularly, to the relation of the church with the outside world. The burden of the book of Revelation seems bound up in the message of the seventh verse of chapter one, which reads: "Behold, He (Christ) cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him." To this great, impending event each separate prophecy as well as the whole Revelation points us. This, then, is the culmination of all things, the great climax, which means more to every human being than any other event in this world.

The Seven Churches

The message to the churches is addressed as to seven of the prominent churches of

Asia in the time of John. They are supposed to have been addressed thus because the general characteristics of each state or age correspond in some vital way with conditions at the time the prophecy was given, in each of the churches whose name it bore; or because the meaning of the name was applicable to the conditions in the age to which it was given.

The first church addressed is Ephesus, the meaning of which is *desirable*, a term which may be fitly applied to the church in its first condition, holding the pure doctrines which it had received from Christ himself. But even this, the pioneer, the hard-working church of the first century, was beginning to lose its first love for the truth. To this church has been assigned the period from 31 A. D. to 100 A. D.

The second church, Smyrna, which means *sweet-smelling savour*, covers a period in church history full of persecutions, the most severe of which was started by the emperor Diocletian, continuing ten years from 303 to 313 A. D. This is the tribulation of ten days

spoken of in verse ten of chapter two. We may assign the dates 100 A. D. to 323 to this period.

A third church is spoken of under the title of Pergamos or *elevation*. At this period the persecuting power now espoused the cause of Christianity, thus elevating or popularizing the church. But with this popularity came in a flood of worldliness, heathen rites and ceremonies, for which reproof is given. During this period the Biblical Sabbath was displaced by making Sunday, an ancient heathen festival day, the legal day of worship. This period ends about 538 A. D.

The church of Thyatira covers approximately the period from 538 A. D. to 1798 A. D., a time known to history as the Dark Ages, ending with the Reformation. It was the time of papal supremacy, when great darkness had come upon the church, yet there were those within it who still held the pure doctrines of the early Christians. These suffered intense persecution.

With the Reformation came a change.



MIDNIGHT IN THE ROMAN AMPITHEATRE. "BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH AND I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE,"

The true followers of God who survived the persecutions separated from the corrupted church, and Sardis represents the reformed churches. The work of this church is a work of strengthening and watchfulness preparatory to a special work to be carried on a little later. A danger is pointed out that this church will have the name of being a living church but that many in it will be spiritually dead.

About 1833 a special message arose proclaiming the nearness of the coming of Christ. Although an hour of intense trial came to the Philadelphian church, the church of *brotherly love*, in that their belief that Christ would return in 1844 was shattered, they are comforted by the message, "Behold I come quickly," and thus many are kept in the hour of temptation.

With the disappointment of the church in 1844 there came in a spirit of lukewarmness, a spirit of self-satisfaction. To Laodicea, the last before the coming of Christ, is the admonition to repent and prepare for the consummation of all things, for "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne."

Not only do we find these messages applicable to each particular phase of church history, but in each are lessons which are relative to our own lives. Especially is this true of the last, for we live in the age to which it particularly applies.

The Seven Seals

Being beyond the scope of so brief a study we pass over the details of the fourth and fifth chapters wherein we find a consideration of the throne of God and the finding of one worthy to open the seals. This series is presented as a book or roll, or rather, seven rolls one within the other, each one sealed in such a manner that one might be opened without disturbing the rest. The Lamb of God, or Christ, being found worthy to open the seals, we will now consider what transpires as the seals are opened, remembering that they are symbolic prophecies presented to John in vision.

The Opening of the Seals

At the opening of the first seal a white horse with his rider, who has a bow and a crown, appears, and it is written that "he went forth conquering and to conquer." How well this represents the early apostolic church which in its purity went forth to all the then

known world and preached the undefiled gospel in the power of the Holy Ghost. Persecution was of no avail to stop it, but even in the face of prison and scourge the messengers of salvation went forward. These holy men were at times even delivered from prison cells by angels in person. Conditions indicate that the period assigned to the fulfillment of this seal is contemporary with the first of the churches.

A Marked Contrast

As the second seal is opened we find a marked contrast to the previous one, for here a red horse is seen and "power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth and that they should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword." This seal, corresponding with the second church, Smyrna, represents a period when corruption is creeping into the church, as shown by the contrast between the colours red and white. The "mystery of iniquity" is working more than ever before; the ecclesiastical power seeks an alliance with the secular. Reaching its climax when Constantine embraced Christianity in 323 A. D. and Christianity became the state religion, the seal closes.

Growing Apostasy

This apostasy grew and deepened on through the third seal as represented by the black horse with balances in the hands of its rider. All manner of un-Christian doctrines entered into the church in order to make it popular in the now so-called Christian empire. Besides this, the balances and a reference to business terms seem to indicate that a spirit of seeking after worldly goods and a love of money would be prominent features, a view which the history of ecclesiasticism at that time substantiates. By the year 538 we find that a pope had been established in Rome, in the place of Christ, as head of the church, and after this the papacy bore its unrestrained and persecuting rule. It is this date or about this time that we assign as the beginning of the events of the fourth seal.

The statement that a pale horse appears, whose rider is Death, after which follows Hell (the grave), and to whom was given "power over the fourth part of the earth, and to kill with the sword and with hunger and death, and with the beasts of the earth" can direct us to no other portion of history than to that known so well as the Dark Ages, extending from 538 A. D. to the beginning of

the sixteenth century when the Reformers commenced their work of exposing the corruption of the hierarchy. For approximately one thousand years this persecuting power put to death, it is said, on the average, one hundred souls a day. The horrors of this great sacrifice to true Christian principles can only be known by a study of this period. All manner of instruments of torture were used and it is no wonder that with the opening of the next seal we find the souls of all the—

Martyrs Crying Out

like the blood of Abel, for vengeance. Such things do not escape the eye of God, and although at times it may seem as though He has forsaken the earth, He assures us that all will receive their just reward. In this prophecy it is pointed out that those who have been slain should rest for a little season. White robes are promised them. At the resurrection of the just these faithful martyrs will rise from their graves and be taken to their everlasting home. See Rev. 20: 4.

A Literal Prophecy

With the sixth seal comes a change from the figurative to purely literal language. The events shown to the prophet were so vivid that only literal description is possible. It opens with a great earthquake and this event is followed by other phenomena, which Jesus himself, as recorded in Matthew the twenty-fourth chapter, and other places, has pointed out as a sign of His second advent. Even Joel the prophet, hundreds of years before Christ, mentioned these same signs of the last days. This period, then, points us to a time important to all Christians, a time just before the consummation of the hope of this world's redemption.

The earthquake referred to must be the great Lisbon earthquake of 1755 which was, perhaps, considering its wide extent and its severity over the whole area, the most devastating in history.

Following this event comes the darkening of the sun and the moon. This was fulfilled May 19, 1780, and is known to history as The Dark Day. It is spoken of by well known writers and in state records. Such men as Cowper and Whittier have spoken of it in their poems, and the famous astronomer Herschel says that the phenomenon can not be explained by science. That night was very dark but it is said that whenever the

moon did appear it seemed the colour of blood, thus fulfilling the prophecy. A fuller description cannot be given here, but these events have been spoken of fully in this magazine, in considering our Lord's prophecy of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew.

The next event spoken of is the falling of the stars. It was on the night of November 13, 1833 that the most brilliant and extensive star-shower (or in scientific terms, meteoric shower) took place. Eye-witnesses state that the meteors fell as thick as snow-flakes, like a "fig tree casts its untimely fruit when shaken of a mighty wind."

Sublime Events Ahead

Looking down the stream of time the Revelator next sees great and sublime events which usher in the coming of the Son of Man. "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men and every bond man and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of His wrath is come and who shall be able to stand?"

After this vivid description of things yet to come, the seventh chapter brings in parenthetically an important event which apparently takes place during the sixth seal, as the events there described must necessarily take place before its close. It is so important that it has been separated from the rest of the narrative and given a place by itself. It describes the "sealing" or "selecting" of God's servants and the condition of these sealed ones in their eternal home.

Passing to the seventh seal, as recorded in the first verse of chapter eight, we find this brief record—"And when he had opened the seventh seal there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." We cannot say definitely why this is, but when we consider that Jesus has said that at His coming all the holy angels will accompany Him (Matt 25: 31), we would infer that the silence is because heaven is depopulated for a little time—about seven days if we consider this half-hour as prophetic time. All the angels come with Christ to take home to the Holy City all the people of God. See 1 Thess.

4: 1+18. Then will the saints be "before the throne of God and serve him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. . . . And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Reader, the question for each one of us is—Will I be among that number? All the signs of that great day have been fulfilled

but the the last great act; the climax of the drama of the world's history is just before us. When that day dawns will we be among the number who will cry for the rocks and mountains to fall upon us or shall we be among the number, who, with the prophet Isaiah can say—"Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation?" Let us be ready to meet our Lord in that day.

The Head Surgeon's Patient

A True Story of the War

By HEDGAR PLUVIANES *in the Christian Herald*

IT was in a military hospital, in an out-of-the-way corner of Normandy. This hospital had been rather hastily organized, and everything was on a modest scale, as were so many things at the beginning of a war for which no preparation whatever had been made. Nearly every week arrived a convoy of seriously wounded, directly from the front.

Oh, the sad sights, in the gray, damp November mornings, or the misty twilights; the long slow trains, carefully stopping at the obscure little station! The white forms carried away, the bandaged heads, the pale, weary faces, all in a line toward the ambulance near by, between the leafless trees. And the great, solemn silence, enveloping the ominous scene. . . .

In a snowy bed a big wounded soldier is moaning. His hard, sour face has a shut, defiant air, mixed with anxiety. His leg has been pierced in several places, and some bullets are still there. The head surgeon has gently told him, this very first morning, that he was not sure the leg could be saved.

"But of course I will do my very best, you

know that, my boy," he had added, looking at him with his kind brown eyes. "You must not give up hope. I only warned you in case it becomes urgent, and so that it may



not be too great a shock to you." And he had passed on.

After the surgeon's visit, the wounded man asked the nurse: "Who is this doctor? I seem to know his face."

"It is quite possible," she answered. "You may, in any case, have seen his photograph. He is Doctor X from Paris." And she named the most famous French surgeon of the day.

The soldier opened his eyes wide. "Do you mean that he stays here? In this small, unknown place?"

The *infirmiere* smiled. "What does that mean to him? Men are men, everywhere. . . ."

THE next morning the wounded man waited impatiently for the doctor. When the dressing was done, with the minutest care, in the gentlest way, the soldier said rather brusquely, to hide his emotion: "Monsieur le Major, have you seen my livret?"

"No, boy, I have not seen it."

"Then you don't know that I am a legionnaire?"

[In the French army, the doctors alone have the title of major. The livret is the book of civil and military identity carried by each soldier. The legionnaires are a regiment of men who have been condemned to punishment, either in their civil or military life.]

"How does that affect me?" said the Major.

"Well, I wondered if you would be so kind to me if you knew what I am and had read all about my condemnations."

The great surgeon smiled and pinched the soldier's cheek. "My poor boy, I don't care what you *were*. Now I know you are a soldier of France; you have fought valiantly; you are wounded. Why should I look at your livret? It is not my business. I am not a gendarme!" He was laughing, standing there, imposing and erect, gathering his tools; he added brightly: "No, I am no gendarme. I am only your friend. Good morning, lad. You may perhaps keep this naughty leg of yours, if you are very good and quiet. . . ."

When he had gone, the legionnaire, who could not turn to the wall, covered his face with a newspaper that was on his bed and, underneath, indulged in the first tears he had shed since he was a little boy of twelve.

The days passed. He watched narrowly all around him, nurses, doctors, and, above all, the head surgeon, to discover any sign of disgust or of disdain toward him. He could see none.

He knew that in the bed next to him the son of a noble French house was suffering like himself. Could it be possible that this young man of high birth, great fortune, and honorable past would receive no better attention than a poor wretch who had been many times in prison, and had only just begun to be sorry for it? Yet, incredible as it seemed, it was so.

In spite of the most attentive watching, he could see no difference, except, perhaps, on his own side, a little more kindness, tinged with pity, in the famous surgeon's voice, when he personally dressed the wounds every day.

Then the soldier thought of his motherless childhood, without love or caresses; of his first fall into evil ways through the bad examples of older and wicked friends. He thought of his long, weary days and nights in prison; his heart full of hatred and rebellion against those who had put him there, and never the least feeling of repentance. He thought of the despising look of good people when he came out, the difficulty of obtaining work, the poverty, the loneliness. And then, as an only way, the next fall into still uglier sins. . . . And through it all, nobody had ever been kind to him, had ever loved him. . . . He had become an outcast, until he had come here, where one of the greatest men of the country had called him "my boy," and said he was his "friend!"

Time went on only too rapidly. The leg was saved, though still stiff. The soldier's health was excellent. The hour had come to leave this hospital, to give his place to another.

The morning he went away he asked a private interview to say good-by to the head surgeon. He found him in his laboratory and thanked him heartily for all his care and kindness.

The famous doctor stood up and put both his hands on the young man's shoulders. "My child," he said gently, I have a favour to ask of you."

"Of me?" echoed the soldier. "Oh, Monsieur le Major, what can that be?"

The surgeon looked very serious and fatherly. "Promise me to live, from this day, a different life. I don't know what you have been guilty of, and I don't wish to know. But I want you to promise me to become an honest and good man, with God's help."

The big soldier, with the defiant air, who had been, perhaps, a redoubtable "Apache," bowed his head, and in a childlike gesture leaned it against the great surgeon's arm. Then he burst into tears, broken down by the man who had revealed to him the possibility of a new life. He wept over the wasted years, his dark past.

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Editorial Notes

More Individual Freedom

Not many months ago Mr. Sarma moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council for Government to declare total prohibition as its ultimate goal. It is reported that other members replied to the effect that they "sympathized with Mr. Sarma's views but that the Council was feeling tired with the *utopian* and *nebulous schemes* brought forward from time to time. Nobody was ignorant of the results of horrible excesses, but if Mr. Sarma wanted any reform he should have come forward with proposals for the modification of the excise law instead of trying to interfere with *individual freedom*. *The resolution was unnecessary and calculated to make the already sad world still sadder.*" (Italics ours).

We have just been given an excellent example of the working of this "individual freedom" in correspondence through *The Statesman*. Certain railways allow their employees to use up their entire salary for drink through the credit system while his wife and children starve, and then throw him out for inefficiency. We have known of publicans giving a man a cordial welcome at the front door and kicking him out the back door when his money was all gone. Have the railroads turned publicans?

Municipalities are taxed to provide safeguards against accidents to their citizens; chemists are forbidden to dispense dangerous drugs; a price is put on the heads of certain wild animals by governments; and the law of the land forbids suicide. But because a poison is named "Black Horse Whiskey" or "Carrigan's Ale" a man or a corporation is given a license to exchange it for the souls, bodies and property of men, women and children. And lawmakers and politicians who profit by this hellish trade rant and rave about "individual freedom" whenever prohibition is mentioned.

And this is to say nothing of the loss to the persons involved in money, health, effi-

ciency, morals, self-respect or virtues. And there is the loss in efficiency to the corporations which allow their employees to benumb their brains and their nerves with the stuff. The merchant, the tradesman, the banker likewise suffer through being defrauded of their rightful money.

The principal American railroads do not allow their men to even enter a place where liquors are sold; and many of the large corporations of that country forbid cigarettes. They know that where these intoxicants and narcotics are used a very appreciable loss of efficiency is the result, often ending in accident and death, not only to the person himself, but to those under his charge. But because we live in India a driver is allowed to fill up on his favourite brand, on credit or other systems equally as efficient, and take out his train. And if, perchance, he runs by a semaphore "against him," and smashes up two or three coaches full of people, he is solemnly charged with "criminal negligence" and sent to prison for a few years unless he has friends powerful enough to hush up the inquiry.

Who is to blame, the drunken driver or the lawmaker who declaimed for "individual freedom?" The latter, we say, just the same as the member of a municipal board is responsible for an outbreak of plague who, by his interested eloquence, has delayed necessary sanitary reforms.

But there is an omniscient God who does not forget these crimes against suffering humanity, and the responsible parties will one day meet their lengthy accounts. The curse includes them all from the politician to the man who treats his friends in the seclusion of his own home, or at the cafe.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also." Hab. 2: 15.

The man who builds and wants wherewith to pay, provides himself a home from which to run away.—Young.

Paganism and Pessimism

Missionaries who can speak with authority on educational and spiritual conditions in Japan record the singular fact that suicide among Japanese students is probably more prevalent than among students in any other land. Whether this is due to exceptional sensitiveness and nerves that are high-strung, or more directly to the extraordinary competition of students to secure places in the government schools, is a matter for conjecture. There are probably few men better informed on missionary conditions in the Far East than Dr. Sidney L. Gulick, who has sent us some very remarkable statistics in connection with this suicidal mania, which point to the conclusion that the cause is spiritual.

One student of nineteen, before taking his life after failure at an examination, wrote to his father: "Having missed the road to success, I go into the night. . . . The days of a man's life are but fifty sad years; the end—dust." In 1914 there were 241 suicides under sixteen years, 801 between sixteen and twenty, and 3,086 between twenty and thirty. Some years earlier—1902—an epidemic of student suicides startled the country. One university graduate, brilliant and widely known, flung himself into the river above the famous Kegon waterfall near Nikko, and his body was found a few days afterward, battered among the rocks, 600 feet below. He left a letter in which he had written: "I have studied all that science and philosophy have to teach about the problem of existence. I have examined all the religions for their answers to the problem of life. Nowhere have I found anything satisfactory. I now go into the other world to search for the solution myself."

Led by this example, many other students ended their careers on the same spot in like manner. These cases multiplied until guards were stationed at the head of the waterfall to stop the tragedy, and a barricade of posts was built; but the human cataract could not be stopped. No less than 248 men and women ended their lives at that tragical spot! Many others found the same solution in the volcanic crater of Asama—how many no one knows.

The truth is that the pagan religions are

proving more and more unsatisfying. They are decadent and disintegrating. And it is probably inevitable that, in the breaking-up process, many beautiful lives must pass out and many noble careers be wrecked. This very fact that such conditions exist in Japan, showing the pessimism that springs from paganism, should become an incentive to increased missionary effort for the spread of Christianity. The Japanese themselves perceive this necessity. Major Gen. Hibiki, who recently visited New York, has said: "When Tokyo is a Christian city, Japan will be a Christian nation. When Japan is a Christian nation, the Orient will have been



A FLEMISH HOME WITHIN THE ZONE OF GERMAN GAS ATTACKS

saved!" With Japan Christian, the conquest of the East would be greatly simplified.—*Selected.*

Scientists in a Tangle

By way of a diversion from more serious topics, the evolutionists have stirred up anew the age-old discussion of man's origin. Professor Wood Jones of London, having convictions and disdaining to longer remain silent, has flung down by way of a challenge to the scientific world the assertion that Darwin was an egregious blunderer and that apes were not the progenitors but the descendants of the race of man. He declares that the find of what anthropologists have called the "Talgai skull" in Australia has revealed that it really belongs to an age so remote that it must be set down as being the skull of a human creature who lived before apes appeared on the earth.

This is very interesting and must have been tremendously exciting to evolutionists generally, since we find them simultaneously rising at points far remote from each other, to take up the Englishman's challenge. Prof. Franz Boas of Columbia University, New York, gleefully grasps the opportunity and counters by claiming that both Darwin and Jones are wrong—that neither the human race nor the monkeys descended from one another, but both sprang from some animal belonging to an age far earlier than any of which we now have a geological trace. Dr. Boas brings Professor Smith of Sydney University, Australia, into the arena as the man who classified the "Talgai skull" as that of a young proto-Australian, probably a bushman. Next comes Dr. Norris, president of the Royal Society of Queensland, who admits that geological evidence of the antiquity of the Talgai remains was lacking. Last to enter the circle of scientific controversy is Dr. Edward Hickey Bradford of Harvard, who disagrees with them all and caps the climax of discussion by proclaiming that the true line of human descent led back to the lizard, and that the race of men must trace its remotest ancestry to the great saurians, from which sprang not only human beings, but dogs, horses, and monkeys also. Just when a break occurred in the lizard family resulting in this strange development, or whether the breaks occurred at long intervals apart, none of the scientists could or would explain. It seems like a mockery of science that a discussion should develop on lines which do not converge at any point, when the old Bible, which is not a scientific manual, disposes of the whole subject with a brief and dignified reference, clothed in such nobility of language and clearness of expression that none need misunderstand. And as far as history and investigation have led up to the present time, this record of Genesis has never been successfully contested.—*Selected.*

Archeology and the Bible

In a timely article in the *Biblical Review* Professor Cobern of Alleghany College, U.S.A., tells of the advances made by archeologists in recent years. Not only has the key been found to many ancient manuscripts which formerly were a riddle to the learned, but more light has been thrown upon Biblical history by archeological study and discovery than at any previous time since the finding of the Rosetta Stone, over a cen-

tury ago. The language of ancient Egypt has now been fairly mastered. It is seen that there were early periods of great literary activity in that land, comparable even to those of seven centuries later, and that in architecture, astronomy, law and all the arts that pertain to a high state of civilization, the Nile races were ahead of their contemporaries.

Among other discoveries that connect the ancient writings with the Bible, we may mention the record of the seven years' famine in Egypt, which has now been confirmed; and an Egyptian equivalent to the name of Moses has been deciphered. Not only have the bodies of the Pharaohs of the Oppression and the Exodus both been identified, but also fragmentary records of their reigns. The Israelites themselves are shown to have been mentioned in a Hymn of Victory of King Merenptah, which, in celebrating a successful campaign, says: "Plundered is Pekanan (Canaan). . . . Israel is desolated. . . . Palestine has become a widow for Egypt." Reference has also been found to the Khabiri (Hebrews) invading Palestine. In the bordering lands, there have also been disclosures of great historical value. In South Arabia are traces of an ancient "Kingdom of Sheba."

Other discoveries, some of which are old and others of a comparatively recent date, Professor Cobern shows in their relation to Bible history by pointing out that they include events and personalities which have long been in dispute by critics who assailed the Scriptures as untrustworthy and legendary. Among the discoveries, as many of our readers already know, are included the Babylonian and Sumerian accounts of the Creation; early versions of the stories of the Fall and the Flood; identification of Jehu, Ahab, Ben hadad, Tiglath-pileser, Belshazzar, and other personalities which have been in dispute and are now shown to have been real historical characters.

In these and many other instances archeology has given to the Scriptures the special kind of corroboration which the hostile critics long ago declared could never happen. There can be little doubt that much more is to follow. For centuries most of the Bible lands have been in the possession of the Turks. Should these lands now remain in control of the Christian nations we may not only look for a great forward movement among the archeologists, but for new and still more wonderful surprises.—*Christian Herald.*

The Setting of the Crescent

BY GEORGE A. SNYDER

The Very Month When Turkey Became a Pawn in the Great European Political Game Foretold Centuries Before

S EVEN great war trumpets were heard sounding down the ages from silent, lonely Patmos over eighteen hundred years ago. The last of these trumpet blasts is today summoning the nations for the final climax of world war. Let us hearken to a few of these bugle calls that came to the lonely exile sitting on some rocky headland that shouldered boldly out against the angry dash of the surging southern sea.

Rev. 8: 7-13 records the first four of these war trumpets. The pictures here drawn are frightful, and find their fulfilment in those paroxysms of war which convulsed and finally shattered the very world power by which John was exiled to the lonely spot from which he caught his vision of the ages.

About A. D. 350 Western Rome was rudely awakened from her slumber. As the historian Myers asserts, "The inhabitants were wakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet." For a period of nearly one hundred and fifty years, Rome was ravaged, plundered, and finally partitioned by the fierce tribes from beyond that beautiful blue Danube which has so often since run red with human blood. What student or even casual reader of history does not recall the ruthless onslaughts of Alaric, Attila, and Genseric against Western Rome? Such atrocity has probably never been exceeded except by the modern devotees of Mars.

The record of the last three war trumpets begins with the ninth chapter of Revelation, and has to do with the incursions of fanatical hordes from another point of the compass, this time against Eastern Rome and her capital city, Constantinople. Hardly had Western Rome been parcelled out into those tribal divisions which are perpetuated in the European nations of today, before the great cloud of Mohammedan invasion began to darken the eastern horizon.

Swarming up from the desert wastes of Arabia, and leaving blackness and desolation

in their train, they could hardly have been better symbolised than by swarms of "locusts" issuing out of smoke from a bottomless pit. See Rev. 9: 1-5. From verses five to eleven we gather that from the time "they had a king over them," they were to torment men five months. The first prince who, after the death of Mohammed, succeeded in fusing the scattered Saracenic forces under one leadership, with himself as their king, was Othman I, whose fame has succeeded him in the name "Othoman Empire."

King Othman began his great campaign in Asia Minor, with Constantinople as the ultimate goal, on July 27, 1299. (See Gibbon.) The five months of "torment" to be added to this date amount, in Bible time—30 days to the month,—to 150 days. Seeing that we are considering a symbolic prophecy, it will be necessary to count "each day for a year," as indicated in Eze. 4: 6. This year day principle is followed by practically all expositors. This period of 150 years, beginning in July, 1299, reaches to July, 1449; and it is a fact that previous to this latter date, the efforts of the Moslems against Eastern Rome, although not greatly successful, were very tormenting.

From Torment to Slaughter

The sixth trumpet covers another phase of conquest, during which this power was not merely to torment, but to "slay." To this second period is allotted "an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year," of prophetic time, amounting in all, by the aforementioned rule of each day for a year, to 391 years and 15 days. Add this to July, 1449, and we are brought down to the month of August, 1840, for the close of the sixth trumpet.

The questions now arising are most important. First, did the Mohammedan conquest pass, shortly after 1449, into a new phase corresponding to the prophetic prediction calling for a passing from mere "torment" to actual slaughter? — Decidedly so. Just at that

junction, Mohammed II, the Great, was beginning his career of conquest, under which Constantinople was captured in 1453. In speaking of this event the historian Myers says:

"Thus fell new Rome into the hands of the barbarians of the East almost an exact millennium after old Rome had passed into the possession of the barbarians of the West."

Thus the fifth trumpet ended and the sixth began; and before the close of the following century the Ottoman Empire had reached its greatest extent.

Turkey Becomes an Invalid

The next matter that crowds itself upon our attention is momentous. Did anything occur in August, 1840, at the close of the sixth trumpet, that stands out as a landmark in the decadence of the Ottoman Empire?—Most certainly. Turkey became an invalid of so chronic a character that a consultation of "political doctors" became necessary. In order to save Turkey from being conquered by the Pasha of Egypt, the great Powers of Europe established a sort of joint protectorate over the Ottoman invalid; and an ultimatum, the acceptance of which made Turkey really "the sick man of the East," was actually delivered into the hands of the Pasha of Egypt in the month of August, 1840.

Two years prior to this time, Josiah Litch, a student of this prophecy, predicted that in August, 1840, at the close of the sixth trumpet, something would happen of dire portent to Turkey; and when the prediction was thus signally fulfilled, it made a deep impression on the public mind. Hundreds of infidels were led to accept the Bible as the Word of divine inspiration; and the great second advent movement, just then attracting world-

wide attention, received a new and remarkable impetus.

As the clarion tones of the sixth trumpet were sounding their last call in 1840, a great historical document was ratified, by the terms of which Turkey ceased to be an independent factor in world politics. From that day to this the Ottoman semblance of power has been maintained as a mere pawn in the great political game between the rival Powers of Europe.

As we pass over the record of other events, which space forbids us to notice even briefly in this connection, we are brought to the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, in Rev. 11: 15. Note some of the thrilling

announcements here made. "There were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." This language evidently refers to the great climax of the ages, which ushers in the second advent of Christ.

"The nations were angry." What language could better describe the present conditions among the nations?

The time is indicated, when God is about to "destroy them which corrupt the earth," margin, verse 18. How much longer can God bear with the corruption of this planet?

Verse 19 presents a sublime picture: "The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His covenant." (R. V.) Notwithstanding the anger of the nations, and the corruption of the earth, God still reigns in His great temple above. "The ark of His covenant," containing the great original of the ten commandments—typified in the earthly sanctuary by the two tables of stone within the ark in the most holy apartment—was seen in the temple



H. H. SULTAN AHMAD FUAD OF EGYPT

of God in heaven during the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the anger of the nations.

In Rev. 15: 5, 6, we have another glimpse of the opening of this temple. "The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened; and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues." What do they signify?

The nations are angry; the great climax of world war is already under way; from the open temple above, where God's great law is still recognised as supreme, the seven angels will soon come forth, and pour their vials of wrath upon all who are found wilfully and persistently violating that law. Are you ready for the solemn issue?

In Rev. 16: 12 and onward, under the sixth plague, we read of the "drying up" of "the great river Euphrates," and the gathering of the nations for Armageddon. Long ago, when the proud kingdom of Babylon was watered by the Euphrates, Jeremiah predicted a drying up of the waters of the kingdom by a drought upon her rivers. See Jer. 50: 38-46.

Turkey's Demise Imminent

This prophecy was fulfilled, not by the drying up of the literal river, but by the drying up and absorption of the kingdom itself by the victorious Medes and Persians. Isa. 8: 7 shows how the Lord used an overflowing river to represent the invasion of Israel by the all-conquering armies of the kingdom of Assyria. So also the drying up of a river is used to represent the decadence of a nation, and its absorption by stronger powers.

We therefore conclude that the drying up of the Euphrates under the sixth plague represents the final complete subjugation of the power whose territory embraces that river; namely, Turkey. We all know that this drying up process has already begun; and this prophecy shows that it will be completed after the seven last plagues have been falling for some time. The work of the Entente Allies is certain to result in the obliteration of Turkey from the face of the earth; and when Turkey goes down it will be in the battle of Armageddon, when the seventh and last vial of God's wrath is poured out, and a great voice comes from the temple in heaven, saying, *It is done.*" Rev. 16: 12 17.

A Miracle of Missions

Delivered from the Basuto Raiders

THE day of miracles is not past. Incidents of the fulfilment of God's promises are continually coming to light. They constitute an unanswerable argument to the truth of the Bible and the fundamental beliefs of Christianity,

The following story from the lips of a daughter of a pioneer of missions is one of the many which may be told. Her father was William Shepstone, whose work on the frontiers in the early colonial times forms a bright chapter in the history of South Africa.

"My father had a station near the border of Basutoland. Trouble had broken out, and the Basutos were trying to drive back the white settlers. My father was active in working for peace. Sekonyele, chief of one party of the Basutos, said to his chiefs, 'We must kill the missionary first. We shall never get on until we have driven out the

mission. Then we shall be able to do something.'

"Everything was prepared for the raid upon the mission station. Friendly Basutos brought word to my father that he and his family must fly for their lives, as that day the war party was coming to kill them.

"But the missionary could not flee. Even that very day a little girl had been born to the mission family. The mother could not travel. They could not escape by flight. All the missionary could do was to put his family under the protection of God, and await His merciful providences.

"That afternoon the Basutos came over the border, riding down upon the mission. But as they rode on, Sekonyele's horse fell. It was pulled up, but stumbled again and again. And many of the horses of the war party kept falling and stumbling as they tried

to come along. So remarkable and unusual was it that Sekonyele became afraid. He called to his chiefs, saying, 'The great God is against us today. It is not good to try to kill this missionary. Let us go back.' And he called off his people, and back the war party swept, over the border again, into Basutoland. The missionary family was saved.

"A little time after, the chief said to my father: 'Your God protected you that day. We would have killed every man, woman, and child when we came if we had been able to reach you then. Your God surely helped you.'

"Then the Basutos learned why it was that my father and mother could not flee from them at the time—that the birth of the

baby girl had held them at the mission. They were so convinced that God had turned them back on account of this, that they gave a name to the girl, after their own custom. They called her Ma-Sekonyele, that is, the mother of Sekonyele. 'For,' they said, 'this baby was Sekonyele's mother that day; she would not let him come, and turned him back. She shall be called Ma-Sekonyele.'

"So my father and mother knew that God had indeed protected them in their helplessness, and had borne a witness to those wild Basutos that He was with the missionaries."

And to us this story bears witness yet again to the reality of the ministry of heavenly angels in these modern times, and to the ever-watchful providence of the living God.

There is a Difference

To talk is easy. But talk, to count, must be born of knowledge. And knowledge comes from experience. The following incident, related in the *Youth's Companion*, illustrates the difference between mere opinion and a living experience:—

"As for me, I think one religion is about as good as another. It's mostly a matter of climate and race and tradition."

"That's so," said the other man. "Christianity is sentimentally attractive. But what has it ever really done? It has broken down under the war. It's no better than any other religion."

"The world is small, and travellers in America may expect the unusual. The two men were on a transcontinental train. A man seated across the aisle, who had the air of a foreigner, suddenly leaned forward and said very politely:—

"Pardon. But your remarks, which I could not help hearing, deeply interest me. May I say why?"

"Surely: go ahead," the first speaker replied, looking curiously at the foreigner.

"Thank you, sir. I am an Armenian. I was born in Bitlis. Bitlis has about forty thousand people. Have you a town of that size you can think of in America?"

"Just the size of my own town," said the second man.

"Take your town, then, and call it Bitlis;

and say of your town these things: no hospital, no doctor, no dentist, no church except the mission and the Armenian, no press, no telephone, no sanitation, no water system, no library, no transportation, no nurse, no public school. And that is your town, here in America. That is, you understand, my town of Bitlis in Turkey."

"The one bright spot in my town is the Christian mission, which supports a dispensary and a school and the hope of life. During the recent uprising against the Armenians, in which over three hundred thousand of them were massacred, the missionaries in Bitlis, aided by those in Van, at the risk of their lives, saved me from torture and death. All my relatives were murdered and our property was utterly destroyed. My wife and children were tortured and burned alive in my house."

"Do you wonder that I cannot agree with you that one religion is as good as another? Gentlemen, it is Christianity that has stretched out its healing hand to the tortured people of Europe; and after the war it will be the spirit of the Master that will build up life on the ghastly ruins. I am a witness of it."

"The men who had flippantly dismissed Christianity in two sentences spent the next hour learning some wholesome truths about Christian missions and the heroes of the cross. The Armenian was helping the Bitlis missionaries raise money for a hospital in

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his city. The two travellers pulled out their pocketbooks to make a contribution.

"Send it to the headquarters in Boston," said the defender of Christianity. And they did, to the agreeable surprise of the treasurer."

The Head Surgeon's Patient

(Concluded from page 7)

At this moment an assistant, entering the room, saw a strange, unexpected scene.

The celebrated scientist had passed both his arms around the legionnaire's shoulders and was kissing his forehead. He also had tears in his eyes, but the man who until then had believed himself despised and fallen forever was suddenly transfigured under this paternal embrace. At this supreme hour a divine spark had lit in his dark soul a wonderful fire that nothing could ever extinguish. He felt he could, indeed, live another life. God had not forsaken his poor soul, since a

good man had loved him and gathered him to his arms.

And he thought of a simple story he had heard when he was a little child, . . . the story of a prodigal son, who had come home to his father. . . .

Love had done it for him also!

HEALTH AND TEMPERANCE NOTES

No American Grain for Beer

It is gratifying to learn that before agreeing to send grain to the Allies, America exacted the promise that none of it would be used for malt liquors.

Earlier Closing

The Calcutta Licensing Board has recommended the closing of all bars and cafes in the city at 10 P. M., instead of 11 P. M. Before April of 1917 they were "wide open" until 1 A. M.

Motorists

The *Scientific American* sounds the warning against running an automobile engine, or any other internal combustion motor, in a "closed garage, under any circumstances." These motors, when running, produce a gas that is both odourless and colourless, but at the same time is very fatal.

British Army Free from Typhoid

According to a statement from the British War Office, the British Army is almost entirely free from typhoid fever.—a total of 24 cases altogether in France, Egypt, Saloniki, and Mesopotamia. In the South African war there were 60,000 typhoid cases with 8,227 deaths. The improved condition is doubtless due to the general use of anti-typhoid vaccine.

Hunger and High Death Rate

Mortality statistics from Germany compiled for the *Monthly Review* January, 1918, "show a startling condition of affairs" in Germany, apparently the result of food shortage. A comparison of the mortality figures for lung diseases for the three spring months of 1917 and 1918 show that deaths from phthisis (consumption) increased 56 per cent; from pneumonia, 62 per cent; from other lung diseases, 77 per cent; and from all lung diseases, 60 per cent. German comment admits that these increases "can only partly be explained by the inclemency of the weather." The compiler of the article in the *Monthly Review*, suggests that "a more plausible explanation is underfeeding and bad food."

POINTED PARAGRAPHS

Statistics inform us that in this ultra-modern war Rs. 60,000 worth of shells and bullets must be fired for every man killed.

The state of South Dakota in America has passed a state-wide law against the teaching of the German language in any kind of school.

The number of words in the New Testament and the number in each of many newspapers are about equal. Nevertheless, many persons who read everything in the daily paper, from the war dispatches to the advertisements, plead a lack of time for Bible study.

Mr. Churchill, addressing an Anglo-Saxon fellowship meeting in London said that nothing since the beginning of the Christian era was more likely to restore man's faith in the moral governance of the universe than the American, French and British unity against the common enemy. He was convinced that the world was being guided out of carnage towards something better and finer than had ever been known.—*Statesman*.

Mr. Churchill may be "convinced" but he has been misinformed. The Apostle Paul said, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Nations are composed of men and we shall see a corresponding deterioration in governments.

Two great events had happened (in Ireland) to change the situation, namely, the discovery of the Sinn Fein conspiracy and the action of the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland, who had ordered their flocks under the penalty of eternal damnation to resist conscription to the uttermost.—*Lord Curzon*.

One of the sad developments of the present time in connection with the war is the way in which a certain type of preachers, instead of preaching the gospel, or even Christian ethics, are playing to the galleries, and seeking applause by utterances which are not really patriotic, but which tickle the prejudices of the thoughtless.—*The King's Business*.

Nations and states will come under control neither of king nor president, but of the men with the hoe, as a result of the world war. The time is coming when the men of the working classes, the men without property, will control the destinies of this world of ours.—*Charles M. Schwab, president of the United States Steel Corporation*.

Of the sixty languages and dialects spoken in Russia, the Bible is found in fifty; and in one year alone the British and Foreign Bible Society distributed 2,217,000 copies of the Scriptures there.

Among the acts of the Bolshevik government in Russia has been the simplifying of divorce proceedings; and since that action was taken, it is said that 38,000 applications for divorce have been made in Petrograd alone.

The idea of a united Christendom that seems to prevail among the non-Catholic sects is a condition in which every one will admit that the religion of every one else is right, insisting upon the doctrines which all equally hold, and putting aside as of no consequence the doctrines that have divided them. The desired new religion that will result is what we have termed a religion of the least common denominator. It is in other words a religion of indifferentism.—*Pilot (Roman Catholic)*

A Buddhist temple was recently dedicated at Los Angeles, U.S.A., and it is not the first such temple to be in use in that city, we are told. "It is rather startling," comments the *United Presbyterian*, "to learn that there are seventy-four of these temples in the United States, mostly on the Pacific Coast, each of which is the centre of active missionary operations, especially among the Chinese and Japanese. Twelve hundred Japanese have recently been converted to Buddhism in Los Angeles alone."

A patient in an American hospital in Turkey was given a copy of the Bible, and carried it home with him to his native Armenian village. He was proud of having it, but an Armenian priest, seeing the Bible in his hand, snatched it from him, tore it in pieces, and flung it into the street. There it lay until a grocer, coming by, picked it up to use it as wrapping paper in his shop. He wrapped such little purchases as a candle, a bit of cheese, or a few olives, bought by the poorer villagers, in the leaves on which the Word of God was printed. In this strange way that one Bible was scattered all through the village. Soon the grocer's customers began to ask if he had any more leaves. They had read the torn pages, and they wanted to know more of the Book. The grocer did not know anything about the Bible, of course, and could not help them find another. But the leaves were treasured, and read over and over again. One day a missionary colporteur, on his round through the Turkish provinces, came to the obscure village. What was his amazement when a hundred persons came hastening to him for Bibles, or parts of the Bible! No Christian preacher had been at work, but the scattered Bible had proclaimed its own message of light and life, and proved again that God's word shall not return unto Him void.—*Selected*.