

THE COMING CONFLICT. WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?

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"Here is the Patience of the Saints: Here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

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	DUAL ALLIANCE		TRIPLE ENTENTE		
	GERMANY	AUSTRIA	ENGLAND	FRANCE	RUSSIA
Superdreadnaughts	14
Dreadnaughts	21	3	13	* 5	5
Predreadnaughts	20	12	40	* 22	4
Cruisers (all types)	43	12	125	* 31	12
Destroyers	129	.....	228	* 85	.....
Torpedo boats	* 47	83	* 100	* 200	.....
Submarines	* 26	.....	* 85	* 89	.....
Other classes	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Crews and reserves	143,500	15,500	140,000	114,000	60,000

* Exact figures not obtainable.

Total personnel — Dual Alliance, about 150,000; Triple Entente, about 311,000 — *Washington Post*, Aug. 6, 1914.

The Battle in the Air

The Creation of National Debts

And there must be taken into account not only the equipment of these nations on land and on sea, but in the air as well. Alfred W. Lawson, editor of *Aircraft*, makes the following comparison of the aerial strength of the powers engaged in this controversy: —

A backward glance at some of the great wars of history will enable us to measure more accurately all that is involved in the present conflict. The last ten years have witnessed an unprecedented increase in expenditure for offensive and defensive purposes. Ac-

The Greatest War of the World's History

The Present European Conflict, Is It Armageddon?

By F. M. Wilcox

The great war of the centuries is now being waged. Not within the history of the world have such gigantic forces of men and armament been pitted against each other on the field of mortal combat as are now engaged in the European conflict. At the same time (August 23) United Germany and Austria are opposed to the combined forces of Great Britain, Russia, France, Belgium, and Serbia. Other powers have declared their neutrality; but as the conflict deepens and complications arise, these, too, may be drawn into the strife.

Practically all Europe is a great armed camp, a veritable battle field of contending armies. Before the beginning of actual hostilities, when efforts were being made to bring about a settlement of differences between Austria and Serbia, Sir Edward Grey declared that if these efforts were ineffectual, "the greatest catastrophe which can befall the concert of Europe will result, and its consequences will be incalculable."

The Conflict of Mighty Forces

Mighty forces are drawn up in battle array. Never has the world witnessed such an alignment of contending human elements. This is evident as we consider the strength of the armies engaged in the struggle for the supremacy.

The fighting strength of six nations engaged in this terrible conflict is given as follows: —

In 1815, when Napoleon engaged in his final struggle for European supremacy, there were pitted against the French emperor Austria, Russia, England, Holland, and Prussia. Napoleon commanded an army of 360,000 men. That indeed was a mighty conflict, a struggle of gigantic forces. But compared with the present conflict, it almost sinks into insignificance. In the present struggle the troops of Germany and Austria on a war footing comprise a total of 7,200,000 men. The forces arrayed against this dual alliance, those of Russia, France, England, and Belgium, make up a fighting army of more than 10,600,000 men. And these armies as no armies which have ever preceded them, are drilled and skilled in the science of war. They are supplied with the most modern and effective fighting machines and battle equipment.

Says ex-Pres. William Howard Taft of the present war: —

Nothing like it has occurred since the great Napoleonic wars; and with modern armaments and larger populations, nothing has occurred like it since the world began. It is a cataclysm. . . . The future looks dark indeed, but we should not despair. — *Independent*, Aug. 10, 1914.

Opposing Forces on the Sea

But the large number of soldiers is by no means the only important factor in the equation. There must also be considered the immense navies opposing each other on the high seas. The following comparison shows the rela-

Comparison of the Aerial Fleets of European Powers

	NUMBER OF DIRIGIBLES	GAS CAPACITY IN CUBIC FEET	AEROPLANES	GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES IN 10 YEARS
Germany	30	17,000,000	1,000	\$100,000,000
Austria	7	2,000,000	400	16,000,000
France	27	10,000,000	1,400	\$116,000,000
Russia	20	12,000,000	1,100	\$60,000,000
Great Britain	18	9,000,000	800	\$0,000,000
Great Britain	7	1,000,000	400	15,000,000
Totals	45	22,000,000	2,300	\$115,000,000

France, Russia, and Great Britain approximate.

The aerial fleets of these nations form no unimportant factor in their operations. As never before through the aid of these airships, may the movements, position, and strength of the contending armies be determined.

"An Immeasurable International Catastrophe"

In the conflict of these mighty forces, who can forecast the outcome? Peasants and princes, kings and people, wealth and science, brawn and muscle, inventive skill and genius, all the forces of education, talent, and ingenuity, are cast into the balance. Well indeed does Mr. Asquith, the British premier, declare that Europe today faces "an immeasurable international catastrophe." In what condition will the nations emerge from it? What international boundaries will be obliterated? What changes will be made on the map of the world? What will be the cost in wealth and blood and human life, in ruined hopes and blasted ambitions, in heartaches and poignant grief, and wearing, grinding misery? God pity men in their blindness and madness!

According to Edgar Crammond in the November (1913) number of the *Nineteenth Century and After*, "the debt of practically every nation has either originated or been built up by the processes of war." This writer gives the following immense sums of money which have been consumed in some of the great wars of the last century: —



"THE HOUR OF GOD'S JUDGMENT IS COME"

Crimean	1854	\$1,700,000,000
Italian	1859	300,000,000
American Civil War	1861-65	1,700,000,000
Northern army	.....	.....
Southern	.....	.....
Italy	.....	.....
Franco-German	.....	.....
Turko-Russian	1877	.....
Chino-Japanese	1894	100,000,000
Spanish-American	1898	1,350,000,000
South African	1899-1902	1,350,000,000
Russo-Japanese	1904-05	2,315,000,000
Balkan War	1912-13	1,210,000,000

Fighting Strength of Nations Engaged in Terrific Conflict

COUNTRY	PEACE STRENGTH	RESERVES	WAR STRENGTH	TOTAL OF OTHERS AVAILABLE FOR WAR — UNORGANIZED
Germany	870,000	4,430,000	5,200,000	1,000,000
Russia	1,200,000	3,300,000	5,500,000	5,200,000
France	720,000	3,280,000	4,000,000	1,000,000
Austria	390,000	1,610,000	2,000,000	3,000,000
Servia	32,000	320,000	361,000	150,000
England	254,500	476,500	730,000	2,000,000
Totals	3,556,500	13,425,500	17,991,000	12,350,000

Compared With the War of 1815

It has been nearly a hundred years since Europe faced a similar situation. austre naval strength of Germany and Austria compared with England, France, and Russia: —

Taking the Industries of Peace

These wars have created great national interest-bearing debts, which add to the burden of taxation, and drain to the utmost limit the resources of the people.

The Literary Digest for Nov. 29, 1913, presents the increase in the national debts of the leading nations of the world from 1902 to 1912 in the following figures:—

Increase in National Debts for Ten Years

Table with 3 columns: Country, 1902, 1912. Rows include France, Russia, Great Britain, Japan, German Empire, German states, British India, Italy, and United States.

When it is realized, as stated by Mr. Crammond, that these debts have originated and been built up almost wholly by the processes of war, we can form some conception of the fearful expense into which the war spirit plunges the nations.

The Cost of the Present War

The war chest, or reserve fund, of the German Empire for war purposes was recently increased to \$90,000,000, and this Dr. Riesser, the well-known German economist, estimates will cover the expenditure of war for only the first six weeks of active engagement.

The cost of the present war will depend of course upon its length, its outcome, and all the issues involved. Statisticians, however, venture tentative estimates. Says the Christian Observer of Aug. 5, 1914:—

According to figures issued last week by the statistician of the University of Paris, war between the nations comprising the Triple Alliance—Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy—and those comprising the Triple Entente—Great Britain, France, and Russia—would cost approximately \$54,125,000 a day.

The Death Toll of Human Life

But if the monetary cost of war is great, the cost of human life is immeasurably greater and of far more consequence. A recent writer presents the following figures as the death toll of some of the great wars of modern times:—

Table with 2 columns: War, LIVES. Rows include American Revolution, England and France, War of 1812, Russia and Turkey, France and Austria, United States and Mexico, Civil War in America, Franco-Prussian, Spanish-American, Boer War, Russo-Japanese, Balkans, and Total.

The Alarm and Horror of War

But these figures represent only the number killed in battle. To this sum add the tens of thousands dying of wounds, of the rigors of prison life, of disease and famine and pestilence, and the picture is complete,—no, not wholly complete, for the horrors which must come into the

Long years ago the prophet of sorrow was given a vision of these direful scenes in earth's history. Looking down through the ages, he saw the terrible destruction that would befall the nations of men, and this was his sad lament:—

"I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled; suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment." Jer. 4: 19, 20.

Hopes of the Powers From the Present Crisis

The Washington Post of July 31, 1914, gives the following summary of what the nations of Europe hope to achieve from the present conflict:—

- The ambitions of the European powers in the present crisis are:— Austria—Annexation of Serbia and union of all southern Slavs under the Hapsburg crown; extension of dual monarchy to Egean Sea. Germany—Postponement of the "Slav peril" for a generation; in case of a general war, extension of German commercial interests with only Great Britain as a formidable rival. Russia—Extension of empire to the Carpathians on the southwest, possibly the seizure of Posen and East and West Prussia; occupation of Constantinople; establishment of Russia as undisputed dominant power in eastern Europe. France—Removal of German menace; the lessening of the terrible expense of

pirs. See Rev. 16: 12-16. This is not the battle of Armageddon.

What Do These Things Mean?

What then is the meaning of this great struggle of the nations? What does it portend? Does it indicate where we are on the stream of time? It does indeed. The present-day strife, the wars and commotions, the national rivalries and animosities, indicate that we have reached the time when great and important events are to take place. Many prophecies of the Scripture testify to the truthfulness of this statement. Christ in his great prophetic discourse declares that in the last days "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." Matt. 24: 7.

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21: 25-27.

We have reached the time of the distress of nations. Trouble from without and from within, perplexing problems of commerce and industry, the stern struggle for existence on the part of the

into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem: and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3: 9-16.

How fully and graphically do we see this divine prediction fulfilled in the situation which exists throughout the world at the present time. And we cannot mistake its significance. Centuries ago the Lord, through his holy prophets, declared that these conditions would be found in the last days, and that they would constitute a sign of the end of all things. We have reached the time in earth's history when these conditions exist. It is not a mere coincidence. It is an exact and literal fulfillment of the divine prediction. Surely we cannot escape the inevitable conclusion to which this fulfillment must lead us.

The Nations Are Angry

But far transcending in importance the changes among the nations of men in the closing days of earth's history are the momentous events connected with the end of all things. When the pent-up fury of the nations is finding vent in deadly strife and bloody warfare, the time will come for the Lord to put forth his hand in judgment and in mercy,—in judgment upon the ungodly, in mercy for the delivering of his servants. The prophet says:—

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great: and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. 11: 8.

Note particularly the phraseology of this divine prediction. It says "the nations were angry," suggesting that there would come a time in earth's history when all the nations of the world would be filled with a desire to go forth to slay. When in all the history of mankind has that been exemplified so fully as at the present moment? Our Saviour declares that when we shall see certain things taking place on the earth, we may know that his coming is near, even at the doors. Matt. 24: 33.

These things which we see taking place before our very eyes at the present time bring to us the message, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." They stand as precursors of the end of all things, signs of the great day of God Almighty, indications of the coming of him whose right it is to reign—the Prince of Peace. Blessed event! Blessed to those who have come to know the peace of God in this earth, and who desire to enjoy it throughout the endless ages of eternity!

What Does It Mean to You?

Dear reader, what will the coming of Jesus mean to you? Where do you propose to spend eternity? Will you be found so filled with the spirit of this present world, so identified with its interests, so dominated by its purposes, that you will be counted as dross in that testing time? Or will you become so acquainted with Christ as your Saviour, so filled with his companionship, that you will meet him with rejoicing when he comes? He calls you today to give yourself to him. He has given his life for your salvation. He loves you with an everlasting love. He invites,

War Preparations Foretold

The vast and feverish preparation for war which the nations have been making for the last three decades have been clearly foretold, and all this war preparation is a sign of the coming of the day of the Lord. Declares the inspired penman:—

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your plowshares



THE MARSHALING OF THE NATIONS

unequal military competition with her neighbor; opportunity to develop her North African empire; recovery of lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.

Great Britain—Maintenance of balance of power in Europe; maintenance of British commercial and naval supremacy; preservation of her colonial possessions.

It is inevitable that the pursuit of these plans and policies must bring the nations of the Old World into strong and mighty competition; and whenever favorable opportunity for advantage presents itself, into open and armed conflict. This mad, wild struggle for the supremacy can only end as the conflict of the nations is surely bound to end, in the great battle of Armageddon just before the coming of the Lord, in which not only the nations of Europe, but all the nations of earth will be engaged.

Is It Armageddon?

Considering the magnitude of this conflict and its far-reaching results, many have wondered if it were the last great war of the age, the battle of Armageddon, which is to take place just before the second coming of Christ. Repeatedly has it been denominated as such by newspaper writers. We are not left in doubt regarding this question. The battle of Armageddon does not take place until after the close of probation. It will occur under the sixth of the seven last plagues, and will be preceded by the drying up of the River Euphrates, a symbol of the Ottoman Em-

laboring masses and the spirit begotten in their hearts by their hard lot.—these are some of the things which are bringing distress to the nations of earth at the present time. Men's hearts are failing them for fear. They view with alarm the growing unrest and disquietude. They listen with apprehension to the mutterings of the coming storm in our industrial and political life, which sometime is bound to break into an overwhelming deluge.

We may not know the day nor the hour when our Lord will come. The exact time has not been revealed (Matt. 24: 36), but we may recognize the omens of the coming day. God would not have us remain ignorant so that the day of his visitation would come upon us as a thief in the night. 1 Thess. 5: 1-8. He exhorts us, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21: 36.

"Son, give me thine heart;" "today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart;" "acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." Peace in the midst of the present strife and turmoil, peace throughout eternity,—this is the heritage of the child of God. To

this satisfying, enduring peace he invites you by his Spirit.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

Signs of the Approaching End

By W. A. Spicer

SEATED with his disciples on the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem, Christ gave an outline of events reaching to his glorious appearing in the clouds of heaven. Looking down upon the city of Jerusalem, all careless of its time of visitation, Christ had foretold the destruction of the sacred temple. The disciples, astonished, said, "Tell us, when shall these things be?" and, evidently associating the end of the earthly temple with the end of the world, they added, "and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:1-3.

The Saviour's answer is equally for us who live in these latter days. Briefly he sketched the scenes of confusion and tumult that were to quickly follow in their own time, as the doom predicted by the prophets of old should fall upon Jerusalem. The signs that he gave meant deliverance and escape to the Christian believers in the day of Jerusalem's fall. "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh," he said. "Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them which are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." Luke 21:20-22.

The unbelieving of Jerusalem and Judea could not conceive such a thing as the destruction of the favored city; but at the first compassing of Jerusalem by the Roman armies the Christians recognized the sign and knew that the fateful day was at hand; and when for a time the siege was suddenly lifted and the armies retired, the believers heeded the warning and fled to safety. Watching the signs of the times and being ready, they were delivered when the day of desolation came a few years later. Even so are we to watch the signs of our own times that we may escape the things coming upon the earth, and "stand before the Son of man."

Having foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolations that would attend it, Christ's prophetic discourse answered the second part of the disciples' question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The prophet Daniel had foretold a time of great tribulation that was to come upon the church, with persecution of the saints of God through long, dark centuries until the time of the end. The Saviour's prophetic vision reviewed this long period. "Then shall be great tribulation," he said, "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." But for the elect's sake, he said, for the sake of the Lord's people and the cause of truth on earth, those days were to be shortened. Even so the rise of the reform movement of the sixteenth century, and the setting free of the Word of God, cut short the days of tribulation, and brought the dawn of the era of light and knowledge that was to come with the time of the end. Dan. 12:4.

Next the Saviour's prophecy begins to deal with the signs by which believers may know when the end is drawing near. That no false theories of a secret coming of the Lord or of a quiet breaking of a millennium on earth

might deceive those who are awakened to watch, the Saviour first of all describes the manner of his coming and warns against teachings that were to arise in the last days advocating a mystical, secret second advent:—

The Warning—Christ's Coming Visible to All

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:23-27.

Hastily, in few words, let us review the prophetic outline, watching to catch the true signals as earnestly as the mariner strains the eye to read surely the shore beacons on a dark night. The signs cannot fail us, for Christ said:—

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:25-28.

He that hath eyes to see, let him see these signs of his coming Lord:—

1. Signs in the heavens.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days [the prophetic time of tribulation reaching through the Dark Ages] shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven." Matt. 24:29.

These signs began to appear at the appointed time, "immediately after the tribulation of those days."

"The Sun Shall Be Darkened"

On May 19, 1780, came the wonderful darkening of the sun, known in the list of unexplained phenomena as "the dark day" of 1780. Thoughtful hearts were impressed that the mysterious darkening of the sun was a sign from heaven. In a sermon preached by the Rev. Elam Potter, on May 28 of that same year, reference was made to the occurrence as follows:—

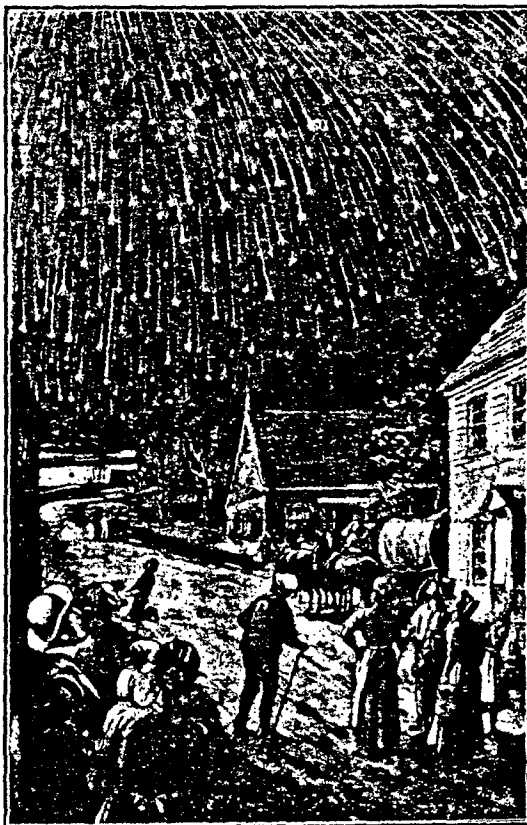
Then, as in our text, the sun was darkened; such a darkness as was probably never known before since the crucifixion of our Lord. People left their work in the house and in the field; travelers stopped; schools broke up at eleven o'clock; people lighted candles at noon-day; and the fire shone as at night.—"The Coming King," page 114.

The note of solemnity is caught in the following from the proceedings of the Connecticut House of Representatives, which adjourned when the great darkness came on. A Mr. Davenport rose in his place, urging that the session continue:—

Mr. Speaker, it is either the day of judgment, or it is not. If it is not, there is no need of adjourning. If it is, I desire to be found doing my duty. I move that candles be brought, and that we proceed to business.

"And the Moon Shall Not Give Her Light"

That old-time sermon by Dr. Potter says of the night following the dark day: "The moon, though in the full



THE FALLING STARS

gave no light, as in our text." R. M. Devins, in the work "Our First Century," says:—

The darkness of the following evening was probably as deep and dense as ever had been observed, since the Almighty first gave birth to light; it wanted only palpability to render it as extraordinary as that which overspread the land of Egypt in the days of Moses.

"And the Stars Shall Fall From Heaven"

Years passed, and men's hearts were stirred as they studied the Word and saw that the great historic prophecies taught that the coming of the Lord was drawing near. In Europe and in America there was a revival of the preaching of the advent idea. Thousands of ministers of all denominations saw that the doctrine of Christ's second coming was to be emphasized. Just here came another great sign to cause men to give heed to the significance of passing events. On Nov. 13, 1833, came the thrilling display of falling stars, which is listed as one of the remarkable phenomena of the astronomical story. Professor Olmsted, of the astronomical department of Yale College, wrote:—

Those who were so fortunate as to witness the exhibition of shooting stars on the morning of Nov. 13, 1833, probably saw the greatest display of celestial fireworks that has ever been since the

creation of the world, or at least within the annals covered by the pages of history. . . . The extent of the shower of 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface. From the middle of the Atlantic on the east to the Pacific on the west, and from the northern coast of South America to undefined regions among the British possessions on the north, the exhibition was visible, and everywhere presented nearly the same appearance.

It was indeed such a picture as that described among latter-day events by John in the Revelation:—

"And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untime figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Rev. 6:13.

Over the whole Atlantic coast, from New England to the South, men witnessed what one writer describes as the greatest spectacle "ever beheld by man;" and an observer living at the time in Georgia wrote: "Everybody felt that it was the judgment, and that the end of the world had come." Rather was it a signal that the hour of God's judgment was drawing near at hand; for very clearly the Scriptures tell us that the time of the last generation is to be the judgment hour in heaven. Every case comes in review as the records of heaven are opened both of the living and of the dead; for when Christ comes the judgment has already determined to all eternity who are the righteous and who are the wicked. These signs, therefore, were to warn men to prepare for the judgment hour, and to arouse the church of Christ to do the work that must be done in proclaiming the gospel message just before the end.

2. Signs in the social and industrial world.

"And upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26.

The prophet James describes latter-day conditions with a warning to the careless rich, and a warning also to the laborer and the poor not to be drawn into strife and contention for this world's possessions while the judgment hour is passing in heaven above and the righteous Judge is at the door:—

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in the day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, the Judge standeth before the door." James 5:1-9.

It is well known that some of the nations of Europe have felt that only a plunge into war could for the moment heal the dissensions due to social discontent and industrial strife. Yet war can but intensify the conditions, and impoverish the survivors. But a few years ago Lord Albury, better known as Sir John Lubbock, discussing the impossibility of the European countries by preparation for war, said in the "Review of Internationalism":—

The religion of Europe is not Christianity, but the worship of the god of war. . . . Unless something is done, the condition of the poor in Europe will grow worse and worse. It is no use shutting our eyes. Revolution may not come soon,

not probably in our time, but come it will, and as sure as fate there will be an explosion such as the world has never seen.

Mr. Frederick Townsend Martin, of New York, wrote an earnest warning concerning these conditions, in *Hearst's Magazine* for September, 1913. Addressing his words to the "idle rich," he said:—

The Romans were overconfident, and they were swept from the earth. The French overdid the thing, and rivers of blood flowed. The English again and again have forced the workers into open rebellion. All countries, including ours, seem ripe for revolution.

Fifty years ago there was scarcely a voice of protest; indeed, there was hardly anything to protest against. Twenty-five years ago the protest was clear and distinct, and we understood it. Ten years ago the protest found expression in a dozen weekly publications; but today the protest is circulated not by hundreds or thousands of printed copies of books, pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers, but actually by the million.

This propaganda of protest has its daily papers that are distinctive and published for that purpose, and that purpose only. It has its magazines and tens of thousands of weekly papers. Only a fool sneers at such a volume of publicity as that.

The warnings that hundreds of us are uttering may be ignored. The squandering may go on, the vulgar bacchanalia may be prolonged, the poor may have to writhe under the iron heel of the iron lord—the dance of death may go on until society's "E" string snaps, and then the Vesuvius of the underworld will belch forth its lava of death and destruction. Anarchy may reign for a period, values may be cast aside, reason may be flung to the winds, and history may reenact one of its red dramas; then out of the chaos and disorder will come as there always has come a new society.

But this time, we know by the sure word of prophecy, there will come, not a new order of things on earth, but the utter end of this wicked, warring world, with the destruction of sin and sinners.

3. Signs in the political world,—the arming of the nations.

As the hour of God's judgment came in heaven, according to the view of the prophet, he saw the nations rousing to the strife, and heard voices in heaven crying:—

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged." Rev. 11:18.

The prophet Daniel describes this judgment scene in heaven that closes Christ's ministry before his second coming. (See Dan. 7:9, 10.) This investigative judgment begins with the dead, reviewing every case as recorded in the books above, and closing with the cases of the living. While this solemn work is proceeding in the heavenly temple, on earth the nations are angry, preparing war, as the prophet Joel long ago said; waking up the mighty men, even the weak saying, I am strong; beating plowshares, or the products of the field, into swords. This is the picture that prophecy gives of the last days. And the prophecy says also that while the nations are fulfilling this word, multitudes of the thoughtless and the unprepared will be crying, "Peace and safety," and talking about beating swords into plowshares and learning war no more. All through this generation we have seen these prophecies fulfilling before our eyes, and now the earth fairly shakes with the shock of titanic combat. Events are hastening on to the end.

4. The most joyful sign,—the gospel message to the world.

Surest and brightest and gladdest sign of all of the coming of the Lord is the world-wide missionary movement, sending the light shining into every dark corner of the earth. Christ's own word declared:—

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14.

What does it mean? It means that the time of the prophecy has come; and while the nations are preparing for the final conflict, the message of the gospel of peace must reach the yet unevangelized peoples in all the dark portions of the earth. About 22,000 missionaries are in the field, and many thousands of trained native converts are spreading the Word of God. This remarkable development has come in our time, and is a fulfillment of prophecy.

The last century has been a century of missionary activity, culminating in a truly world-wide work in our own time. Century after century passed after these prophecies were uttered, and the world saw no such movement. But with the coming of the latter days we have seen just such a world-wide gospel movement as the prophecy demands for the time of the last generation.

The last phase of this gospel work, according to the vision given John in the Revelation, was to be the rise of a movement proclaiming the soon coming of the Lord, declaring the hour of God's judgment come, and calling all men—in Christendom as well as in heathendom—to take their stand upon the

New Testament platform of the "commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Read the plain and graphic description of the movement in Rev. 14:6-14, ending with the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven.

When the time of this generation came, this special gospel movement of the prophecy arose; and the special reform message of the prophecy is being carried swiftly to all the world today. We thank God for what all the great missionary societies are doing to spread the gospel of Christ's kingdom. But the "sure word" demands that in these last times there shall be this special closing proclamation of the "everlasting gospel;" for when this gospel of the kingdom has reached all peoples with its call to prepare to meet the Lord, the day of human probation closes; then quickly must come the loosing of the four winds, the great battle of the day of God Almighty, the quaking of the earth, the coming of the Lord, the destruction of sin, and the eternal salvation of all who have put their trust in God and have put away their sins through faith in Jesus Christ.

will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3.

12. What part will the angels have in this event?

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24:31.

13. What takes place at the sounding of the trumpet?

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16.

14. What is done with the righteous living?

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:17.

15. What change will then take place in both the living and the sleeping saints?

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15:51-53.

He Will Come for His Own

"And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Mal. 3:17.

He comes not as a thief in the sense of stealing in stealthily and quietly upon the world and purloining goods to which he has no right. But he comes to take to himself his dearest treasure, his sleeping and living saints, whom he has purchased with his own precious blood, whom he has wrested from the power of death in fair and open conflict, and for whom his coming will be no less open and triumphant. It will be with the brilliancy and splendor of the lightning as it shines from the east to the west. Matt. 24:27. It will be with a sound of a trumpet that shall pierce to earth's lowest depths, and with a mighty voice that shall wake the sainted sleepers from their dusty beds. Matt. 24:31, margin; 1 Thess. 4:16.

We Must Be There

We must hasten to the smiles of God, to whom we have become reconciled, and sin no more; we must put off the rent garments of our warfare, for the white robes of triumph, and feel that the conflict is ended and the victory gained; we must exchange the toil-worn, dusty girdle of our pilgrimage for the glorious vesture of immortality, and feel that sin and the curse can never more pollute us. O day of rest and triumph and every good, delay not thy dawning! Let the angels at once be sent to gather the elect. Let the promise be fulfilled which bears in its train these matchless glories.

"EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS."



Christ's Second Coming

A Bible Study

1. What promise did Christ make concerning his coming?

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

2. To whom is salvation promised at Christ's appearing?

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

3. Following the signs of his coming, what did Christ say would take place?

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21:27.

4. Has the exact time of Christ's coming been revealed?

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matt. 24:36.

5. In view of this fact, what does Christ tell us to do?

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Verse 42.

Manner of Christ's Coming

6. At his ascension, how did the angels say Christ would come again?

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as

ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:9-11.

NOTE.—When Jesus was taken up into heaven, he left his disciples, visibly and in person, "and a cloud received him out of their sight." So also, according to this promise, when he comes the second time he will come visibly and in person, and seated upon the clouds of heaven; for, said the angels to his disciples, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

7. How did Christ himself say he would come?

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels." Matt. 16:27. "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24:30. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26.

8. How many will see him when he comes?

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Rev. 1:7.

9. What wonderful demonstration will accompany the Lord's coming?

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16.

10. How visible is his coming to be?

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:27.

The Object of His Coming

11. For what purpose did Christ say he would come again?

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I

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