

Signs of the Times

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Delivered from Mars. These French boys have been held in German bondage for four years. They have been compelled to labor unceasingly for their enemies. Refusal meant severe punishment and oftentimes death. They are on their way home, pulling the wagon that is piled high with their belongings. Years of misery are forgotten in the expectation of seeing loved ones again.

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Does a Diversity of Beliefs Discredit the Bible?

By Missionary
KAY M. ADAMS



ONE of the stock arguments of those who disbelieve the Bible, is that there are many classes of Christians who believe that the Bible is God's word, yet differ in their opinions regarding the meaning of various texts. They say that not all these different sects can be right, as in many cases their beliefs clash. Because of this, it is argued that anything can be proved from the Bible, and that this state of affairs shows that the Bible is valueless. The class who reason after this fashion are legion. However, they forget that this difference of opinion is evident not only in religious matters, but in philosophical and scientific circles as well—in fact, it is true in every walk of life.

Among the keenest enemies of the Bible are the students of philosophy. Most of them reject the Bible as the word of God, and a great many of them unite in declaring that there is no God as portrayed in the Bible. But is there any unanimity among philosophers as to what is truth, and the best method of arriving at truth? If one were to tabulate the different sects of philosophy, or schools of philosophy, as they are called, he might find more different kinds of philosophical belief than there are different religious sects.

We have the followers of Plato, the disciples of Kant, Bergson, Schopenhauer, Treitschke, Descartes, Locke, Hume, and many others great and small too numerous to mention. And

these great philosophical lights were all striving with one aim,—to find out truth. They have many ardent disciples who attempt to explain their masters' teaching, and make clear just what they meant in what they said. The disciples of one school clash with the followers of another great philosopher. If differences of opinion are a proof of error, surely philosophy must stand convicted. Yet no one denounces philosophers and their research just because of their differences.

If we examine the natural world, how many things there are about which differences of opinion exist! Although hailstorms are as old as history, meteorologists do not yet agree as to the precise way in which hailstones are formed. Scientists have studied coral islands exhaustively, yet there are differences of opinion among them as to the formation of atolls. Anthropologists have many wordy discussions about the relationship of various races of mankind. In spite of all the knowledge the world has acquired about our globe, there are still a few people living, some of them otherwise intelligent, who will not be convinced that the earth is spherical in shape. If there are differences of opinion about such simple matters as this, surely it is not strange that people differ in Bible interpretation.

In the Supreme Court of the United States are nine judges. A case comes before them. All nine hear the same evidence, the same words, even the same inflection of voice by the

lawyers. Yet when the decision is rendered, five judges are on one side, and four differ with them. They are not ignorant men, but the choice of the land, for learning, discernment, and clear, logical thinking. Is it conceivable that such men, having the identical matter before them, can differ in opinion? Yet they do. But their difference of opinion does not alter the facts of the case in the slightest; it has no bearing whatever upon the truth of the matter in hand.

So it is with the Bible: The fact that people differ as to their interpretation of various texts has not the least effect upon the genuineness or value of the Bible; it only exposes the fallibility of human intelligence and the weaknesses of human methods of reasoning.

BIBLE INTERPRETATION NO EXCEPTION

In all parts of the nation, just prior to an election, there is a great stir-up of political beliefs. One man is a Socialist, another a Republican, a third a Democrat. Each will give verbose arguments as to why his system of politics is just what the country needs, and what will result in the greatest welfare of the people. Yet in many respects, these political creeds are fundamentally opposite. Does this difference of opinion cause all thinking men to reject politics as a whole and say that there is no good in politics?—By no means.

We are forced to come face to face with the fact that there are differences of opinion in regard to all matters of life. A man who is color-blind may call green red, and all the argument in the world may not be able to convince him that the green light which he sees is not red. If he does change his opinion regarding the matter, it will be because he has faith in the testimony of others and is willing to disbelieve his own eyes and accept the statements of others. There are many people in the world who are mentally color-blind, and who cannot be convinced of their defect.

Then, too, because our bringing up has been different, our ideas do not exactly correspond. It has been said that each man lives in a world of his own,—a world that is constructed in his own imagination, from the stimuli that reach his brain through his senses. This is to a great extent true, and each man's world is different from every other's. When we see a new object, we understand it in relation to our previous knowledge and experience. The same object may have a different effect upon two different persons. A new acquaintance may prove very agreeable to one man, while to another he will seem a bore.

A child gaining experience and knowledge in the world makes many mistakes and errors of judgment. However, he is continually learning, and broadening his experience. In realms of thought, men are all children. The more one learns, the more evident does this become. A thing is a thing, whatever we may think concerning it. An aeroplane would un-

doubtedly strike consternation to the hearts of the aborigines of Borneo, should they see it flying towards them. A European in their midst would not be alarmed in the least. But their thoughts of terror would have absolutely no effect upon the structure or operation of the aeroplane. Their imaginations

would only be the errors of their own minds.

Our differences of opinion regarding God's word have no effect upon the truth of its contents or upon the attributes of God. There is truth; there is error. Differences of opinion on any subject are

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"That our conscripts have been so delighted with army life as to be willing to have the burden of universal service clamped down upon us all."

Universal Military Training

BY GEORGE B. THOMPSON

OPPPOSITION to universal military training is voiced in an editorial in the *Nation* of November 30, 1918, as follows:

"The advocates of universal military service die hard, according to Washington dispatches. They are still insisting that we shall adopt this Prussian system just when Prussia is giving it up and falling to pieces, and without waiting to see whether there shall be disarmament at the peace conference. Its Republican advocates, like Congressmen Kahn and Fess, state that if the Wilson administration does not adopt it, the Republicans will vote for the system the minute they come into power on March fourth next.

"They take counsel of their hopes and desires; there will be a President's veto to reckon with, and the control of the Senate will rest with Borah, Gronna, La Follette, and others who are utterly opposed to Prussianizing America in this way. Moreover, the jubilation reported from every camp at the news that men are to be released at once and returned home, does not bear out the view of our militarists that our conscripts have been so delighted with army life as to be willing to have the burden of universal service clamped down upon us all.

"How differently things are going in England! There, the minister of public education having assured labor that

there will never be military drill introduced into the schools of England, the new Education Act shows that he spoke by the book. Mr. Asquith, in his latest speech, on November 19, demands the immediate ending of compulsory military service. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith both have said that England was fighting to put an end to compulsory military service the world over, and the British Labor Party, as well as the Liberal Party, is utterly opposed to it. Under these circumstances, shall the United States become a menace to world peace by adopting the most hateful custom of the Hohenzollerns?"

If a league of nations to enforce peace is formed, those who believe that such an arrangement will bring universal peace, and banish war from the earth for all time to come, will see no need of universal military training. The two do not go together.

With all the efforts being put forth in the interest of peace, the outlook is not altogether assuring. With the fires of revolution smoldering in so many nations, and national jealousies and rivalry developing, the outlook is rather ominous, indicating trouble in bringing the ship of nations into a peaceful port.

Not until sin is destroyed, at the coming of Christ, will permanent and universal peace be seen in the earth.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES WEEKLY

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A. O. TAIT, Editor

A. L. BAKER, Assistant Editor

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Does the "Arrangement of Matter" Account for Creation?

In accepting God as the "First Cause," faith and reason kiss each other, and reverence and knowledge meet in fond embrace.

By LUCAS ALBERT REED



THROUGHOUT the world, we find the marks of mind. As we see these, we remark that the hand of man has left its mark. We do not question at all these tokens of the intellect of man. But when we discover in some bird's pinion, or in a flower's corolla, similar signs of purpose and design, we are not left

undisturbed as we seek to trace these back to a divine mind that planned and executed. We are told by the evolutionist that these are not evidences of design or purpose, but merely mechanical adaptations of the living organism to its environment.

The argument is fallacious. The evidences of mind in nature are clear and distinct.

One does not have to be a scientist to know that matter is inert; that is to say, matter cannot originate force or motion.

When we are able to trace motion back to its source, we find its origin in mind. The bullet from a gun, the thrown ball, the train thundering on the rails, the automobile speeding down the highway—the cause of motion in each and all of these, we trace back to mind.

Every true philosophy of nature must accept the existence of mind as fully as it recognizes the existence of matter. And it must also perceive that force or power is the connection between mind and matter. Matter is inert, cannot originate motion. Mind readily originates motion. And that which mind expends upon matter in producing motion, we call force or power.

MATTER CANNOT PRODUCE MOTION

What is force?—Force is that which is expended in producing or resisting motion. Matter cannot do this, for it is inert. Anybody knows that. Matter cannot move of itself. It cannot change its movement, either point of direction or rate of velocity.

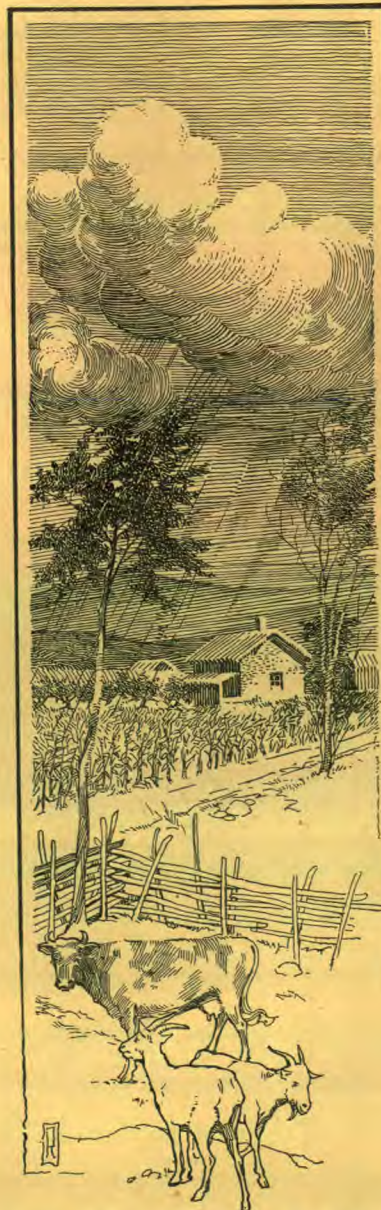
Now, everywhere we see examples and evidences of motion. The worlds whirl on their axes, and speed on in their orbits. The clouds sweep over the sky, and the winds blow over the earth. What originated all this array of motion? Matter could not. Mind could. So the Word says, "In the beginning—God."

The earth in an ocean of space spins on its silent axle. The force involved staggers the imagination, for it is measured by the weight of the whole earth multiplied by the speed, which is greater than that of a cannon ball. And that unceasing motion does not vary by the

thousandth part of a second in even hundreds of years. A force acts upon the earth almost omnipotent and ever unchanging. That force cannot be traced back to matter. There is no possibility of inert matter doing it. But when we look to mind—yes, there is the answer. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "He hangeth the earth upon nothing."

Motion is the result of the creative mind imposing its will upon the matter of the universe.

But what is matter?—Never mind; it is at least inert, and that settles our problem.



"The clouds sweep over the sky, and the winds blow over the earth. What originated all this array of motion?"

But what is mind?—No matter; but it can originate motion, and that settles the evolutionist.

CHANCE IS NO CREATOR

It would be as easy to produce a Lord's Prayer by tumbling out a pile of letters on the floor and expecting them ultimately to frame in words the lofty sentiment, as to suppose that the inert atoms of the universe undirected could form into the beautiful sentient creation.

Let us make an experiment. We wish to produce a beautiful poem. We ignore the fact that to create poetry requires genius. We blindly insist that poetry can be produced mechanically and fortuitously. We have all the letters we need and more to frame in words all the poetry required. We will place these letters in a receptacle answering to a dice-box. We shake them up and throw them out. How many times must we do this in order that at last the poem shall originate?

You answer that no poem can result in that way, though we shake out the letters once or ten billion times. Poems are the result of mind, not of mere mechanics. Where there is no mind, there can be no poetry. Where there is poetry, there must have been mind. The poet was inspired with noble sentiments. To express his thought, he created lines of words; but each word was made up of letters that the author marked out singly one by one with his pen. Mind did it.

We reason by analogy, and analogies are the foundation of science, the truth of philosophy, the explanations of religion.

By analogy, we know that the world in which we live, with its witcheries of light and color, its creations of form and matter, its poems of force and movement, originate in a mind great enough to produce them.

For the thing we maintain is this: Design is design, and purpose is purpose, wherever we find them, just as heat is heat wherever we come in contact with it. Anything else is confusion. Therefore there is design and purpose in the adaptation of the bumblebee to the clover, and the clover to the bumblebee. Even if it does require me to recognize a Mind above it all, designing and purposing, I will be honest enough to recognize both them and Him. Purpose cannot be purpose when I do it, and mechanical adaptation or adjustment when I don't.

On every side, we see the evidences of mind; and to ignore the evidences of mind as seen in nature, and assign the cause to mere matter and force, is as illogical as it would be to refuse to believe that there is evidence of mind in a hymn or a poem, and say that they origi-

nated by accident, or in some way merely mechanical.

On the prairies near Adrian, Michigan, the figure of a nighthawk is traced on the ancient verdant acres by the mounds of some forgotten and unknown race that once peopled the region. Over against this nighthawk there is outlined an Indian with a spear balanced at the bird.

When George Bancroft wrote the first volume of his history of the United States, it was not known that the mound builders had left traces of themselves in the Mississippi Valley, and Bancroft stated that there were no ancient ruins of man's work left along the territory of the Father of Waters. It was then supposed that the swirl of the icebergs in some geological periods, and the drifting of curious currents, had made these mounds.

DO ICEBERGS MAKE NIGHTHAWKS?

Suppose now, after all, that a man continues to hold to the first theory. He maintains that there are no marks of intelligent design in the outline of the Indian and the nighthawk. He attempts to explain them by the fortuitous concurrence of icebergs and currents. He avers that since they might have been formed in this accidental way, it is not necessary to bring in an intelligent agent. And to cinch the argument, he quotes the corroborative words of certain great men, and the statement of Bancroft.

In spite of it all, the unbiased mind will see in his work a vain attempt to get away from the simplest, most reasonable, and most plausible and convincing explanation of the mounds.

But you are reasonable enough to accept the mounds as the images of the Indian and the bird. You see too great evidences of mind, of intelligent purpose, to care for any other explanation. But what now are you going to do with the nighthawk and the Indian themselves? If their images on the prairies show as products of intelligence, do not the individuals themselves, with their thousandfold greater evidences, appear to you as products of an intelligent designer?

But just because of the seemingly scientific jargon and jumble about natural law and concourse of atoms and natural selection and survival of the fittest, some one concludes that the nighthawk originated in the fortuitous concourse of feathers, and the Indian in a similar way.

If you say that the man who assigns the tracery of the nighthawk and the Indian to the work fortuitously of icebergs and water, ought to be sent to a lunatic asylum, where shall those be sent

who assign the multitudinous evidences of purpose and design to the mechanical adjustment of organs and functions or organisms and environments?

The fountain can rise no higher than its source. You are conscious of a mind, of a will, of designs and purposes. Some-

where there must have been a cause adequate to produce them. You cannot get a mind created by rattling atoms together, any more than you can get an Emancipation Proclamation by rattling billiard balls. Whatever is the height

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Old-Time Messengers of Truth

BY WILLIAM A. SPICER

THE story of the witness borne in pre-Reformation times by the Albigensian and Waldensian believers never grows old. They kept the dim light glowing through the dark days when, as Wylie so graphically puts it, "the noontime of the papacy was the world's midnight."

An old writer, Reinerius, has left on record his testimony to the character and methods of some of these Waldensian witnesses, which is worth preserving as testimony of the highest authority in behalf of peoples whose character and teaching were generally so misrepresented by their enemies. We find a translation of the testimony in a work by George Stanley Faber, "An Inquiry into the History and Theology of the Ancient Vallenses and Albigenses," published many years ago in London. Of the lives of these Protestants before the Reformation, Reinerius says:

"Heretics are known by their manners and their words. In their manners they are composed and modest. They admit no pride of dress, holding a just mean between the expensive and the squalid. In order that they may better avoid lies and oaths and trickery, they dislike entering into trade; but, by the labor of their hands, they live like ordinary hired workmen. Their very teachers are mere artisans. Riches they seek not to multiply, but they are content with things necessary. They are chaste also, a virtue in which the Leonists particularly excel. In meat and drink they are temperate.

They resort neither to taverns, nor to dances, nor to any other vanities. From anger they carefully restrain themselves. They are always engaged either in working, or in learning, or in teaching; and therefore they spend but little time in prayer."—Pages 71, 72.

In those times, if a man lived an upright life, and carried with him the demeanor of a Christian believer, he laid himself open to the charge of being a heretic. Some of the old writers explain that all this was merely put upon the outside, in order to deceive. Naturally it was but the fruit of faith in God's holy word, which through all the centuries was preserved in those mountain fastnesses.

Reinerius gives the following description of the manner in which the Waldensian missionaries had to work in their efforts to bring the gospel to the people:

"The heretics cunningly devise how they may insinuate themselves into the familiarity of the noble and the great; and this they do in manner following: They exhibit for sale, to the lords and ladies, rings and robes and other wares which are likely to be acceptable. When they have sold them, if asked whether they have any more goods for sale, one of these traveling peddlers will answer: I have a jewel far more precious than these, which I will readily give you if you will secure me against being betrayed to the priests. The security being pledged, the heretic then proceeds to say: I possess a brilliant gem from God Himself, for through it man comes to the knowledge of God; and I have another, which casts out so ruddy a heat that it forthwith kindles the love of God in the heart of the owner. In like manner proceeds he to speak of all his other metaphorical gems. Then he recites a chapter from Scripture, or from some part of our Lord's discourse."

It is this feature of the work of these old-time witnesses that Whittier commemorated in his poem, "The Vaudois Teacher":



THE VAUDOIS TEACHER

"O lady fair, these silks of mine are beautiful and rare,—
The richest web of the Indian loom, which beauty's queen might wear;
And my pearls are pure as thy own fair neck, with whose radiant light
they vie;
I have brought them with me a weary way,—will my gentle lady buy?"

And the lady smiled on the worn old man through the dark and clustering curls
Which veiled her brow as she bent to view his silks and glittering pearls;
And she placed their price in the old man's hand, and lightly turned away,
But she paused at the wanderer's earnest call,—"My gentle lady, stay!"

"O lady fair, I have yet a gem which a purer luster flings
Than the diamond flash of the jeweled crown on the lofty brow of kings,—
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price, whose virtue shall not decay,
Whose light shall be a spell to thee and a blessing on thy way!"

The lady glanced at the mirroring steel where her form of grace was seen,
Where her eye shone clear, and her dark locks waved their clasping pearls
between:

"Bring forth thy pearl of exceeding worth, thou traveler gray and old,—
And name the price of thy precious gem, and my page shall count the gold."

The cloud went off from the pilgrim's brow, as a small and meager book,
Unchased with gold or gem of cost, from his folding robe he took!
"Here, lady fair, is the pearl of price, may it prove as such to thee!
Nay—keep thy gold—I ask it not, for the word of God is free!"

The hoary traveler went his way, but the gift he left behind
Hath had its pure and perfect work on that highborn maiden's mind,
And she hath turned from the pride of sin to the lowliness of truth,
And given her human heart to God in its beautiful hour of youth!

And she hath left the gray old halls, where an evil faith had power,
The courtly knights of her father's train, and the maidens of her bower;
And she hath gone to the Vaudois vales by lordly feet untrod,
Where the poor and needy of earth are rich in the perfect love of God!

Doomed to Pathetic Disappointment

So a Yale professor says of those Christians who believe in the near coming of Jesus Christ.

By W. G. WIRTH

ARE we justified in believing that the second advent of Christ is very near? Are we fondly deceiving ourselves in saying that we live in the days of "the coming of the Son of man"? In an article on "Christ's Second Coming—Some Disappointed Calculations," in a recent number of the *Congregationalist and Advance*, Williston Walker, D. D., of Yale University, a noted writer on church history, affirms that those who are looking for the early return of Jesus will be subject to "pathetic disappointment." Dr. Walker holds out the idea that the Bible gives no clue to the time of Christ's coming, and therefore God never intended that we should give it attention.

But how can we harmonize these assertions with the declaration of Paul on the subject? He says: "Of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4. When Paul affirms that to the true child of God, "that day" will not come unexpectedly, "as a thief," the writer purposes to hold to Paul's opinion; for Paul's opinion is God's truth.

The second advent has ever been the cheering hope of God's people. How beautiful is this language of John: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:2, 3. The doctrine of Christ's return has always been the church's great purifier. Let a man get into his very soul this blessed hope, and it will keep him unspotted from the world; it will make him a consecrated man, a close companion of the Lord Himself. Why was Enoch translated? Why was he taken to glory without ever seeing death? Do we not find his life's solution in Jude 14, 15? "Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." Undoubtedly one of the favorite paths in which Enoch walked with God was that of the hope of the second advent; and the contemplation of the glorious event raised him above the earthly and sinful, and he became pure, "even as He is pure."

When we know that a dear friend is to visit us, with what delight do we get

everything in readiness to meet him! Christ has ever desired His church to be in an expectant attitude, that when He shall come, the faithful shall be ready to receive Him. "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 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 21:34-36.

ONE IN EVERY TWENTY-FIVE VERSES
TEACHES THE ADVENT

So important does God regard this preparation to meet Him, that "it is declared by Bickersteth and Brooks, who have counted them, and is repeated publicly by Moody and Marvin, who with others have confirmed the fact, that each and every verse in twenty-five makes direct or indirect reference to that last grand, mighty presence of Christ on



"The gold of Babylon, Medo-Persia's silver, the brass of Greece, and Rome's iron have long since passed the day of their usefulness. . . . Shortly the stone cut out without hands . . . will smite the toes."

earth. Every page rings out, 'Behold, He cometh!'" (D. T. Taylor, *London Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*.)

Eloquently does the great New Testament apostle express his hope in 2 Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give

me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

Dr. Walker is right in saying, "There can be no doubt that the early Christians looked for the speedy return of their Lord and the visible establishment of His kingdom." Let us go back to early Christian days, and see how church leaders of that time viewed the soon return of Jesus. Clement of Rome wrote about 95 A. D., and it is very likely he is the "fellow laborer" spoken of by Paul in Philippians 4:3. In his "Second Epistle to the Corinthians," he says, "Let us every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness, because we know not the day of God's appearing." (Oxford edition, page 357.)

Ignatius of Antioch was a disciple of John and Peter, and sent letters to the early churches. To the martyr Polycarp he wrote, about 100 A. D.: "Be every day better than another; consider the times, and expect Him who is above all time." ("Ante-Nicene Fathers," volume 1, page 94.) With deep feeling he wrote these words to the Ephesians: "The last times are come upon us; let us therefore be very reverent and fear the long-suffering of God, that it be not to us condemnation." (D. T. Taylor, "The Voice of the Church," page 53.)

When the apostate church was shrouding the Christian world in spiritual darkness, so that the period of her supremacy is rightly termed "the Dark Ages," there were some noble, godly people, unjustly called heretics, who held up the Bible amidst bitter persecution. In the first five lines of the "Noble Lesson," a poem that expresses the religious faith of the "Israel of the Alps," the Waldenses, a composition which is the oldest remaining literary monument of this people, we read:

"O brethren, give ear to a noble lesson,
We ought always to watch and pray,
For we see the world to be near a conclusion;
We ought to strive to do good works,
For we see the end of the world approach."

A ROOT OF THE REFORMATION

Dr. Elliott, in his scholarly "Horæ Apocalyptice," volume 2, pages 312, 313, 330, 331, says this of the medieval heretics, the Paulicians or Cathari, whose only fault was that they held to the Bible: "As the great object of their hopes, they looked for their 'King and Judge' to return and introduce the world to come, overturning the usurper and reigning with power and authority."

And this same belief in the soon coming of Jesus was one of the chief causes of the Reformation. But for the inspiration and impulse of this doctrine, it is doubtful whether we would now be enjoying the blessings of the Protestant Reformation. Truly does Dr. Barnes say, in his Notes on the Book of Revelation, page 292: "The anticipation that the Lord Jesus was about to come; that the affairs of the world, in the present form, were to be bound up; that the reign of the saints would soon commence; and that the permanent kingdom of righteousness would be established, became almost the current belief of the Reformers, and was frequently expressed in their writings. Thus Luther, in the year 1520, in his answer to the pope's bull of excommunication, expresses his anticipations: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ yet liveth and reigneth; who, I firmly

trust, will shortly come, and slay with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming, that man of sin.' Merle D'Aubig. ii. 166."

In 1643, the English Parliament ordered the Westminster Assembly, composed of 151 learned and godly men, to frame the doctrines of the Church of England. That the premillennial belief in the return of Jesus permeated strongly this Reformation convention, is witnessed by the following taken from the Westminster standard written at that time: "So will He have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come." "We pray that Christ would hasten the time of His second coming."

A PLANK IN THE PLATFORM OF METHODISM

John Wesley, the father of Methodism, voices the eighteenth century hope of Christ's second coming, when he says: "Perhaps He will appear as the day-spring from on high, before the morning light. Oh, do not set us a time—expect Him every hour. Now He is nigh, even at the doors." (Quoted by Pickett, "Blessed Hope," page 190.)

Since Wesley's time, Spurgeon, Moody, Talmage, Arthur T. Pierson, and many others have found comfort in this consolation; and to-day there are more who believe in the nearness of our Lord's return than have ever believed it at any previous time.

But says one: "The early church believed in the soon coming of Christ, but He did not come. The Reformers believed it, but Christ did not appear. From Wesley on, good men have believed in the soon return of Jesus, but He did not come. What assurance have we to-day that He is 'even at the door'? May not Dr. Walker be correct when he says: 'The plain lesson of history from these repeated disappointments is that such attempted predictions are without value. They have been earnestly believed by excellent people. They have been made by sincere and Christian men. But they have proved idle by the march of time. There is not reason to believe that the story of the future will be different from that of the past?'"

Friend, we do know that Christ is soon to appear. We confidently affirm this from the prophecies in God's word. Yea, from these prophecies, we can hear in the distance the hoof-beats of the rider on the "white horse." We believe that Peter wrote truly when he said: "We have also 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 Peter 1:19.

What do we find when we "take heed" to the "sure word of prophecy"?—We find that we are living in the days of the toes of the world's history image of Daniel 2. The gold of Babylon, Medo-Persia's silver, the brass of Greece, and Rome's iron have long since passed the day of their usefulness. The iron-clay toes of the ten kingdoms of Europe are now performing their parts. Shortly the stone cut out without hands, the glorious advent of our blessed Saviour, will

smite the toes; His everlasting kingdom will be established, and He will reign as "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

"Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Daniel 8:14. In this scripture, we are brought face to face with the solemn fact that the investigative judgment on the righteous, to determine who are worthy, began at the end of the 2300 prophetic day period, or in 1844. Over seventy-four years have passed since that time. It cannot be long now before Christ's "jewels" will be made up;

BELLAH'S SERMONETS

- ¶ Noah didn't plant any crop the year the Flood came.
- ¶ The nearer we get to the end of the journey, the less baggage we should have.
- ¶ We are on our way to heaven, having just stopped on earth for a little while.
- ¶ Will you make the round trip to heaven, with Jesus when He returns, and back in the new Jerusalem when it descends?
- ¶ A railroad ticket is just as good in a tunnel as in the sunlight. So your title to heaven is just as clear in war and pestilence as in worship and prosperity.
- ¶ Will you be on the reception committee appointed to meet the Saviour when He returns?
- ¶ The disciples were sorry to have Christ go away. Many to-day are sorry to have Him return.
- ¶ Paul hadn't very good eyesight; but when he was talking about the return of Jesus, the Lord gave him wonderful foresight.
- ¶ God once drowned a flood of wickedness by a deluge of water. Soon He will burn up the fever of sin by the heat of fire.
- ¶ The watchman who does not know the time is either asleep or does not read his timepiece, the Bible.
- ¶ The devil knows more about the second coming of Christ than do many modern preachers, for "he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Revelation 12:12.
- ¶ Those who emphasize baptism, and deny the advent, forget that Paul mentions baptism only thirteen times, while he speaks of the advent fifty times.
- ¶ What do you think of the wife who hopes her absent husband will never return? Then how about the church (the bride) that says, "I hope He (Christ) will not come in my day"?
- ¶ Enoch, the pioneer preacher of the advent message, is still living.

CHARLES G. BELLAH.

and when they are made up, then will He "return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not;" then shall He give reward to His "servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear" His name. Malachi 3:17, 18; Revelation 11:18.

It is sufficient answer to the argument that God never intended His people to concern themselves with the proximity of the second advent, to remember that Christ Himself, when He was upon earth, gave clear signs whereby we might know

when that event would be near. This prophecy is recorded in Matthew 24; Mark 13; and Luke 21. And when we think of the usual brevity of Christ's discourses as given in the Gospels, contrasted with the fullness of statement of this prophecy, it reveals how important Christ deemed the understanding of this subject by His people.

IRREFUTABLE SIGNS IN ABUNDANCE

Turning to Matthew 24, we find that Christ gives three lines of prophecy leading to the return. The first line begins with conditions in His own day (verse 4), and ends with this stirring word in verse 14: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Up to the last century, practically nothing was done to carry the gospel to the heathen peoples of earth. Outside of Europe and America, the gospel had little foothold. But what has been the story of foreign missions since Carey went to India in the close of the eighteenth century? The glory and inspiration of it are known to all. Now Christian missionaries belt the world; they are found in almost every land. Christ said that when this should take place, then would "the end come."

Passing over the second line of the Saviour's prophecy, which deals principally with the "great" papal "persecution," we are brought in verse 29 to the outstanding physical signs of the Redeemer's approach: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." The sun and the moon were darkened on the day and night respectively of May 19, 1780. The greatest meteoric shower recorded in history occurred November 13, 1833. The next event foretold in the prophecy is the shaking of the powers of the heavens at the appearing of "the sign of the Son of man." Inasmuch as the falling of the stars in 1833 is the last sign given by Christ in His prophecy, before the second advent, we can easily judge where we are in the stream of time.

Time fails us to take up other prophecies which show that we are living on the very threshold of eternity. Let it suffice us that of the fifteen or more lines of prophecy given in the Bible, focusing on the second advent, every point has been fulfilled except those clustering around the world-embracing battle of Armageddon, when Christ Himself will appear.

We are living in Armageddon times—not the Armageddon of an idle sentiment, but the Armageddon that should make us solemn, serious, soul-stirred. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6.

EVEN before the prayer is uttered, or the yearning of the heart made known, grace from Christ goes forth to meet the grace that is working on the human soul.

ELLEN G. WHITE.



Civil Law, the "Reed" of the Church

BY CHARLES S. LONGACRE

AS stated in my article of last week, the Preliminary Assembly of the Third World Christian Citizenship Conference, held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, June 23-27, 1918, was in actuality a conference of the National Reform Association.

Dr. Samuel Zane Batten, of Philadelphia, said: "The churches of the world, negatively, are largely responsible for this war. We have represented disunion and division, rather than union and fellowship. We must organize the international life of the world on a Christian basis. That is the supreme question before the church and the world at this hour. What does it mean? We do not know. There is practically no light from the past. The first thing is to create an international commission and make that commission effective, and make that a parliament of men,—a federation of the world. The only thing is world federation. We must preach it. There must be a council representing all the nations. We must have a United States of the World, with a congress representing all the states, with a world supreme court to which cases may be referred. We must have a world police force, strong enough to meet any emergency that is liable to arise."

This international parliament and federation of men and nations, we were told, is to be organized "on a Christian basis." The churches as well as the nations are to federate into world organizations; and the National Reform idea is that these two world organizations are to unite in order to formulate "world law" "in the terms of world redemption," and in this way usher "the kingdom of God into the world."

Dr. Batten then asks, "What does it mean?" and states: "We do not know. There is practically no light from the past."

HISTORY AGAINST THE PLAN

Can it be possible that Dr. Batten has never read the history of the past? We cannot conceive that he has not. History furnishes us with some striking examples of world parliaments. The Roman government was the most highly perfected world parliament of nations the world ever saw, yet it crumbled to pieces under its own weight. What the National Reform Association designs to accomplish through a world federation of all the Christian churches, and through the establishment of a national and ultimately a world religion, is ex-

actly what was worked out before, when the so-called Christian religion was legally established as a national and world religion in the days of the Roman empire.

The experiment has been made repeatedly among the nations and religions of ancient and medieval times. Before we make the experiment over again, let us first read the bloody history of the past. These mighty combinations of political and ecclesiastical organizations working together for one common end, when that end was an evil design, wrought a havoc to the peace of the world and to the progress of civilization and true Christianity from which the world has not yet recovered. Every lover of civil and religious liberty, and every friend of genuine democracy, who learns what the aims of the National Reform Association are, will raise his voice in protest against any movement that shall attempt a repetition of the old-time experiment which is so foreign to the American idea of civil and religious liberty, the rights of the individual conscience, the separation of church and state, and the equality and justice of all separate religions before the law.

THE MOTIVE BEHIND RELIGIOUS LEGISLATION

Dr. W. M. Rochester, of Toronto, Canada, secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada, presented his "Report of the World Commission on the Lord's Day." A few excerpts from his report afford us an idea what the Lord's Day Alliance is working for in the legislative bodies. In the past, they told us they were working for the enforcement of "a weekly rest day," not a religious institution. All the while, we knew that their motives were not in harmony with their outward professions when they stood before lawmaking bodies.

Dr. Rochester tore off the mask, and told us what their real motive was, when he stated, in his report, that "we need a holy day. The weekly rest day is not sufficient. . . . The world's sore need cannot be met by the weekly rest day, the holiday, but only by the holy day, the Christian Sabbath. The first great task subsequent to the war is to restore the Lord's day in its proper place in the life of the people."

We do not want to be misunderstood. We believe, with the Lord's Day Alliance, that the Sabbath of Jehovah ought to be observed with true holiness, faith, and piety in the life of every Christian. We

believe that all men ought to observe it; but we do not believe, with the Lord's Day Alliance, that any man should be forced to observe the Lord's day by the power and authority of the state, any more than he ought to be forced to observe the Lord's baptism, the Lord's Supper, or the Lord's Prayer. All are religious institutions, and should be observed religiously instead of civilly. It is an obligation we owe to God, and not to the state. A failure to recognize a distinction between religious and civil institutions has been the primary cause of all the bloody religious controversies and persecutions of the past.

THE S. O. S. OF SUNDAY CHAMPIONS

Dr. Harry L. Bowlby, secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States, made some striking statements as to the future aims of the Lord's Day Alliance in the United States. He said that "the battle ground of the churches during the next ten years will be on the field of the Christian Sabbath. The battle front of the Sabbath extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the lakes to the gulf. The church has been too long on the defensive, and must now turn upon the enemies of the Lord's day and hurl them out of this trespassed territory. The day is threatened with disaster. The time has come when every minister of the gospel must stand up and be counted, and when every church must have a clear vision of the dangers which threaten it through Sabbath desecration and the breaking down of the legal safeguards of our civil Sabbath. At no place in the church's battle lines are the drives of the enemy more terrific than at the point of our American Christian Sabbath. If the Sabbath goes, everything goes. The Sabbath is so absolutely foundational to all the work of the church, that if we lose it, Christianity herself will go. Christianity cannot stand and live if we lose our Christian Sabbath."

Dr. Bowlby does not mean that he is going to give up his Sabbath or his practice of Sunday observance. Nor does he believe that any real Christian is going to give up his day of worship. What he means is that we must have "civil laws and Sunday laws to protect the churches and the day" if Christianity is "to survive."

AN UNBIBLICAL INSTITUTION

If Christianity has no better foundation to build upon than a civil Sunday "reed," it certainly will go down; for Christ said: "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15: 13, 9. Did our heavenly Father institute Sunday observance? Is it a plant of His own planting?

Sunday observance has no foundation in Scripture. Sunday was never set

"Can it be possible that Dr. Batten has never read the history of the past? . . . History furnishes us with some striking examples of world parliaments."



aside as a holy day by God, Christ, or the apostles. It does not have the approval or blessing of heaven. Christianity was not built upon the Sunday institution. The first Sunday law that was ever enacted was issued by Constantine the Great, in 321 A. D. Christianity had nothing to do with Sunday laws for over three hundred years. Christianity spread and prospered, in the face of the greatest opposition, without a single Sunday law, during the first three centuries of the Christian era. Later, when the Roman government united with the Roman Church and enacted the strictest Sunday laws that were ever put upon the statute books of any nation, both the church and the state fell into moral turpitude and decay.

A church "that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh" its arm, has the curse of God resting upon it. Such a church depends on civil laws to protect it and its institutions; and when these civil laws are taken away, and it has no divine

laws to sustain it, churchianity goes down. But true Christianity does not rely upon civil laws. Its foundations are divine laws. It is able to survive not only the absence of all human laws, but the fiercest opposition and assaults of its enemies. All that the true church needs to sustain her is a "Thus saith the Lord."

Seventh-day Adventists do not entertain the least thought of giving up their Christianity because there is no civil law to protect their church and "the seventh day of the week," which they observe. Without the aid of a civil law, they are more than doubling their membership every decade. They do not want a civil law to force people to observe the seventh day as the Sabbath. They would oppose such a proposition. It is contrary to God's plan. God desires to draw and win men to His cause by the power of love, instead of driving them into His church by the force of human decrees. Any cause that cannot stand opposition and survive, is not worth saving.

tions? Don't theater men, cafe workers, cigar store clerks, bathhouse attendants, and others excepted, need rest as well as barbers and grocers? It is hard for an ordinary mind to grasp the consistency of such legislation. To how many of California's people has bread ceased to be a necessity, while theaters and cigars are essential?

Such legislation is wrong in principle. Well did Justice Terry in 1858 say, "If the Legislature have the authority to appoint a time of compulsory rest, we should have no right to interfere with it even if they required a cessation from toil for six days instead of one."

That the bill is a religious measure is apparent in that it exempts those who observe some other day as a day of worship. That a man shall simply rest on another day is not enough. He would have to prove to the court that his rest had been coupled with worship. In order to observe a day of worship, one must be religious. So to escape the law on this ground, a man must be religious, or at least profess to be.

Being a religious measure, it is opposed to the spirit of true Americanism. It is not in harmony with the spirit of true Christianity.

The great Author of all that is right and Christian said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Religious coercion is not sanctioned by the Author of the Christian religion. It originated with the author of rebellion, and so should not be fostered in any civilized nation.

Does a Diversity of Beliefs Discredit the Bible?

(Continued from page 2)

a sign of error somewhere. But such differences of opinion, instead of causing one to reject the subject of such differences as worthless, should cause still closer examination, in hope of finding the truth and coming to an agreement.

If two miners were washing for gold in the bed of a stream, and one should discover a large, heavy, yellow mass, there might be a difference of opinion as to whether the mass were gold or not. But we would consider the miners foolish for casting it away just because they could not agree as to what it was. They ought to keep it and subject it to closer examination, in order to find out the truth regarding it.

It is thus with God's word. The existence of so many sects, with their varied beliefs and interpretations, should arouse in us a determination to study the Bible more closely than ever, with the hope of finding just what is the truth in it. The fact that there are many things in it that we cannot understand should not deter nor discourage us. There is no limit to the number of phenomena in the natural world that the greatest scientists do not understand; but these men do not give up in despair. They go on faithfully plodding, learning what they can, and thus make constant progress. God is infinite, and His knowledge is infinite. We cannot hope to understand all His word; but in it is enough made plain to teach the simplest the plan of salvation, and enough to lead the wisest ever higher to more beautiful and more glorious vistas of understanding.

California on the Brink

BY WILLIAM F. MARTIN

ON January 15 of this year, a Sunday bill was introduced in the California Legislature. Simultaneously with this, the same bill was introduced in the Assembly. In the Senate, the bill was referred to the committee on capital and labor; but in the House, it went to the public morals committee.

The bill is entitled, "An act prohibiting unnecessary labor and the pursuit of unnecessary occupations on Sunday, defining and excepting 'works of necessity,' and providing a penalty for the violation of the provisions hereof."

The bill defines Sunday as the "period of time which begins at twelve o'clock p. m. on Saturday night and ends at twelve o'clock p. m. on the following night." The bill is supposed to have originated with the barbers' union, and has enlisted certain grocers' organizations of the state.

If this bill becomes a law, it will be unlawful—

"For any person, firm, association, or corporation in this state, or for any officer or employee of the state of California, or of any political subdivision thereof, to violate any of the following provisions:

"(1) To keep open on Sunday for the purpose of transacting any business or labor, any store, office, shop building or place of business where goods, wares, or merchandise is sold or offered for sale; or to sell or offer for sale any goods, wares, or merchandise on said day.

"(2) To keep open or operate on Sunday for profit any mill, mine, factory, bakehouse, barber shop, workshop, or any such or similar place of business or occupation which is managed by or employs either skilled or unskilled labor, or both; provided, however, that the above provisions of this section do not apply to unavoidable work in caring for live animals, or in cases of urgent emergency within the meaning of this act."

Then are given a number of exceptions or exemption clauses classed as works of necessity. Among these are:

(a) Work essential to the relief of sickness and suffering, including the sale of drugs, medicines, or surgical appliances by retail for strictly medicinal purposes.

(b) Furnishing lodging or meals at hotels, boarding houses, restaurants, lunch stands, cafes, and work incidental thereto.

(c) Ice cream parlors, candy stores, and cigar stores.

(d) Parks, bathhouses, libraries, museums, or art galleries.

(e) Sports, theaters, and amusements.

This bill goes farther than such measures generally do. It would exclude all farm work except "necessary work in planting and harvesting of crops."

One of its most notable exemptions is for "any person who observes some other day of worship, and who actually keeps his place of business or occupation closed and does not work for gain or wages upon said day of worship."

If the legislators should pass this bill, a new era would set in for the liberty-loving state of California. For a number of years, no Sunday law has been on the statute books of this state.

The proposed law has many inconsistencies. In plain terms, it is ridiculous. The work of the barber is a lawful occupation. Under such a statute, for keeping his place open on Sunday, he could be arrested as a criminal, and fined or imprisoned.

Again, while the clothing man and the baker must close their places on Sunday, the cigar stands and candy stores may keep wide open. A loaf of bread cannot be bought, not being classed as a necessity; candy and cigars are called a necessity. One could secure a meal at a hotel, a restaurant, or a lunch counter, yet he could not have a lunch put up to carry away with him. Drugs and medicines could be secured only on a doctor's prescription.

The plea has been made that the bill is in the interest of the workingman. If so, why such an extended list of exemp-



EDITORIAL



WILL THE PLAIN PEOPLE DO IT?

WHEN making his great speech on January 25 before the Peace Congress in France, President Wilson said:

"The select classes of mankind are no longer the governors of mankind. The fortunes of mankind are now in the hands of the plain people of the whole world. Satisfy them, and you have justified their confidence not only, but established peace. Fail to satisfy them, and no arrangement that you can make will either set up or steady the peace of the world."

The utterance of such a sentiment is worthy of the great President of what we may be pardoned for calling the greatest and the truest democracy of all history. But is there a reasonable prospect that we may be able to satisfy "the plain people of the whole world"?

Some time ago a magazine article enumerated twenty-seven different varieties of socialists in Russia, of which the Bolshevik and the Soviet are but two. And when we think of the strikes throughout the world, representative of disputes between capital and labor, and when we think of the commercial rivalry among the various nations, what is the evidence that these "plain people" can be brought together for an amicable, contented life within the boundaries of peace?

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, we are exhorted to "know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good." 2 Timothy 3: 1-3.

The apostle wishes us to know that love of "self" and love of "money" will make "grievous times" in "the last days." The conditions throughout the world seem to bear out most clearly the prediction of the inspired apostle.

But while we should know definitely what these conditions mean, we must not condemn the ideals of strong, upright rulers who are working for the peace of our times. This anarchy throughout the world is not originated by our heavenly Father; and as He has exhorted us, we should continually pray to Him for rulers, that the lawless element may be held in check until the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached to all the world for a witness, so that the end may come. But it will be only the end of sin and suffering. It will be the beginning of the eternal day of righteousness; for Jesus, the Prince of peace, is soon coming, for the purpose of bringing salvation to all who will prepare to receive Him.

A LEAGUE OF MEN AND ETERNAL PEACE

IT is affirmed by many that President Wilson made the supreme effort of his life in speaking before the Peace Council on January 25.

Among the notable utterances on that occasion are the following: "I may say, without straining the point, that we are not the representatives of governments, but representatives of peoples. . . . We are bidden by these people to make a peace which will make themselves secure. We are bidden by these people to see to it that this strain does not come upon them again, and I venture to say that it has been possible for them to bear this strain because they hoped that those who represented them could get together after this war and make such another sacrifice unnecessary. It is a solemn obligation on our part, therefore, to make a permanent arrangement that justice shall be rendered and peace be maintained. This is the central object of our meeting."

From President Wilson's viewpoint, then, "the central object" of the Peace Congress is the formation of a permanent league of nations that will maintain peace. Several other speakers of world renown, including Lloyd George, supported our President's plan for a league of nations, and the Peace Congress took action as follows:

"Resolved, That it is essential to the maintenance of the world settlement which the associated nations now are met to establish, that a league of nations be created to promote international obligations and to provide safeguards against war. This league should be created as an integral part of the general

treaty of peace, and should have a permanent organization, and secretaries to carry on the business of the league in the intervals between the conferences.

"The conference therefore appoints a committee representative of the associated governments to work out the details of the constitution and the functions of the league."

Thus the idea of a league of nations with a permanent organization is definitely launched. There should be no question in regard to the desirability of that for which the league aims; namely, a world peace founded upon justice. It is not proper, therefore, to condemn so worthy an ideal. But may we not in all sincerity ask what will be the probable results?



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When the Americans stormed Juvisy, and took it after some very hard fighting, they were aided by Whippet tanks. Several of them are shown returning from the battle field. They proved fast and powerful, and aided greatly in hastening the end of the war.

And will these great ideals of permanent peace established upon justice be attained through any league of nations formed so that it must depend upon the acts of sinful human beings?

To be sure, great ideals are to be kept before us if the world is to advance; and without any question, this world is in a safer, better condition because of the ideals and the efforts of men like President Wilson, Lloyd George, and others who are associated with them. And in the breast of many a human being, there may be the awakening hope that their plans will meet with abundant success. But do they have a sufficient amount of material of the right sort out of which to build upon the foundations of eternal justice such a substantial league as is proposed?

In this connection, the words of the prophet Isaiah come most vividly to mind: "The wicked are like the troubled sea; for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Isaiah 57: 20, 21.

Please note closely just what this text says. Like the troubled sea, the wicked cannot rest; and furthermore, says the prophet, there is no peace to the wicked.

What are the actual conditions in our world at the present time? As we think of the social unrest, of the revolutionary upheavals that are prevalent on every part of our globe, how impressive are the words of the inspired prophet, that "like the troubled sea," the wicked cannot rest! But they are in a state of constant turmoil and agitation.

Then again we have the words of the apostle John, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one." 1 John 5: 19. Dr. Weymouth translates this text, "The whole world lies in the power of the evil one."

Paul says, in his letter to the Galatians, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father." Galatians 1: 4.

According to this text, Christ has given Himself for our sins, and it is for the one purpose "that He might deliver us out of this present evil world."

The Bible picture, then, is of a wicked world in a constant state of commotion and unrest because of sin. War and revo-

lution have been the leading theme of history all through the course of our world since sin entered; and true to the Bible thought, we may expect this until the end of time. It is through the power of Christ, and through His power alone, that we are delivered from this evil world.

Speaking of world conditions at the time of the day of the Lord, the apostle affirms that "when they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape." 1 Thessalonians 5: 3.

Men may even persuade themselves that they have developed governmental machinery which will make the world safe; but do not fail to observe that it is when men are proclaiming peace and safety that sudden destruction breaks over them as a great storm from which there is no escape. There must

be general unrest and general revolution in the hearts and minds of some men in order for such "sudden destruction" to come at a time when other men would be chanting the refrain of "peace and safety."

Let us earnestly pray that the efforts of these men who are so strongly working for world peace may result in giving us a time of comparative quietness in which the gospel of the kingdom may reach its great fulfillment and touch every part of the world with the urgent invitation, "Come, for all things are ready."

Let us also be thrilled with the truth that there is a time of peace lying just before the world, a peace that will be founded upon eternal justice. But that peace is reached through, and only through, the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



A Nation-Wide Truth Search

Upon the subject of the second coming of Jesus Christ the religious thought of the nation is focused.

BY CARLYLE B. HAYNES

TO those who have been waiting long for "that blessed hope" of the coming Christ, and who have long been proclaiming the nearness of the second advent, it is most gratifying to mark the growing number of earnest students of God's word—leaders of thought in the various denominations of Christendom—who are becoming interested in and convinced of the accuracy of that glorious truth of prophetic Scripture, that Jesus Christ is coming personally and speedily to this weary earth.

Recently a new impetus has been given to the study of the prophecies regarding the return of Jesus, by large Prophetic Bible Conferences that have been held in various cities of America, Europe, and Asia. A new movement in Protestantism seems to have started, permeated with religious fervor and enthusiasm. It seeks to place great emphasis upon and direct world-wide attention to the Christian doctrine of the second coming of Christ.

Some of the ripest scholars and ablest teachers of the various Protestant denominations are connected with this movement. It is neither undenominational nor non-denominational, but rather interdenominational; and it has succeeded in creating in thousands of minds definite, clear-cut views and beliefs regarding the second coming of Christ, the purpose of that coming, its manner, the signs preceding it, and the events connected with it.

Wherever a Prophetic Bible Conference has been held, a remarkable and profound interest has been created, and the largest auditoriums have been crowded with immense audiences, which have attended every session, whether held in the morning, in the afternoon, or at night. On these occasions, the people have gathered long before the time set for the meeting, and while waiting for the doors to open, have congregated in the streets, and engaged in singing the well-known old gospel songs and hymns.

Thousands of people in the churches believe firmly that this movement is

foretold in prophecy. They believe it to be giving to the world the message of the coming of Christ. There is no doubt that it has stirred up a love for the doctrine of the second coming, sadly lacking before; and many are ready to testify that it has resulted for them in greatly deepening their love for God, their faith in the Bible, their zeal in Christian service, and has given them a new spiritual experience.

There can be no question that those believing the teachings of this movement, and those who are associated with it, are in earnest. One cannot help being impressed with their sincerity. They believe what they teach and are taught. It may be wrong; they are sure it is right. At any rate, it has brought in among them a fellowship unknown before. Regardless of their denominational affiliations, they have become one in their acceptance of the teaching of the Lord's return. They are very friendly and warm-hearted.

Another significant feature of these conferences is that the meetings are attended by an unusually large proportion of men. And they are serious-minded men, thinking men, intelligent men, successful business and professional men. It has been gratifying to note, in the meetings I have attended, how profoundly interested these men seem to be in the study of Bible prophecy.

I have heard many things taught in these Prophetic Conferences, that I do not believe are consistent with Bible truth, but also many things that are good, and right, and true, and that I rejoiced to hear.

LEADERS SINCERE AND EARNEST

It would be an easy thing, because of the errors of teachers, to condemn the whole movement out of hand, and denounce its leaders as blind guides. Unfortunately, there has been altogether too much of this spirit since that day when the disciples forbade the casting out of demons in Christ's name because the one who did it "followeth not with us." That

men do not see as we see, do not accept as true what we believe the Bible teaches, is no reason why we should hold them up to ridicule or impugn their motives. They may be, and undoubtedly are, as sincere and earnest as we. They accept Jesus Christ as Lord; they uphold the Bible as the Word of life, and defend vigorously its inspiration; they believe in the virgin birth of Christ, in the fall of man, in the vicarious atonement, in justification by faith, in the fundamentals of Christianity. They oppose the false teachings of higher criticism, the evolution theory, Universalism, Unitarianism, Christian Science, "new thought," spiritualism, and Russellism. They exalt the Lord Jesus, and give Him His preëminent place as Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and coming King. They hold forth a high and exalted standard of Christian experience, and call for a deeper faith in Christ in order to obtain that experience. Their ideals are noble and uplifting, and their motives pure and clean.

A SEARCH FOR TRUTH

These men who call others to a study of the Bible do not neglect to study it themselves. Certainly the time has come for the people of God to give the teachings of the Scriptures closer scrutiny and greater attention. Therefore we respond to the appeal these men make so urgently, and unite with them in the study of God's word, praying that God will give both to them and to us greater and clearer light on the great lines of Bible prophecy. No man and no denomination possesses a monopoly of Bible truth, but all will be helped by going again and again to the Bible to learn "whether these things are so." Until we have evidence to the contrary, we believe that the men who are the leaders in this Prophetic Bible Conference movement have open minds. We desire to be credited with having minds equally open.

An open mind, led by the Spirit in its search for truth, can be brought fully to recognize and acknowledge all the truth which God has to declare to the world. Therefore we enter upon a friendly discussion of the teachings put forth by the Prophetic Bible Conference movement, believing that this will be mutually profitable, and prompted thereto by an almost overwhelming desire that our brethren in this movement, as well as we, in comparing these teachings with the Bible, may be so stirred by the compelling power of truth as to be moved to grasp the laurels which belong alone to those who are valiant for the truth, and

that we may clasp hands in full citizenship in that kingdom soon to come, which we both love and long for.

We enter into such a study the more readily because we know that God desires His children to do so especially at the time when the rapidly fulfilling prophecies of the Bible are throwing a flood of light upon the most stupendous problems of world statesmanship in all history, which confront the people of the present generation. Certainly God has

a futurity full of His own designs; and one of His objects in dispensing prophecy to us is to make us participators in His thoughts and purposes, and to acquaint us with His will in the destiny both of men and of nations.

In an article next week, we shall set forth in detail a statement of the teachings constituting the platform of the Prophetic Bible Conference movement, which we shall then study and compare with the teachings of the Bible.

tuary and God's people have then been cleansed. Then what?—Then, by the hand of an angel (in the type, "a fit man"), he is sent away "unto a land not inhabited." And what land is this?

EARTH REVERTS TO PRE-CREATION TIME

The story is given us in Revelation 20. The "bottomless pit" is that land. The term "bottomless pit" is rendered "abyss" in the American Revised; and in the "Emphatic Diaglott," it is rendered "the deep." This expression "deep" gives light on the subject as viewed in connection with Genesis 1:1, 2. Here the word "deep" covers the whole phrase, "the earth . . . without form and void," and reveals actual conditions in this planet of ours before God called order out of chaos.

The term "bottomless pit" in Revelation 20:1-3, rendered "abyss" and "deep," points to a similar chaotic condition in this same old earth of ours. The time brought to view in Revelation 20 is the second coming of Christ, the time of "the first resurrection" (verses 5, 6; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17), the beginning of the thousand years' sojourn of the saints in heaven. Revelation 20:4; John 14:1-3.

Just before Jesus comes, God's unmixed wrath will be visited upon men in the form of seven plagues. Under the seventh plague will occur a great earthquake. We read, "There was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." Revelation 16:18. In this terrible cataclysm, "the cities of the nations" will fall. Verse 19.

In the prophecy of Jeremiah we read: "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down

Sentenced to Solitary Confinement

"I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years."—John the revelator.

BY A. R. BELL

IN the service of the Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary, two goats were provided; one for the Lord, the other as the scapegoat. The goat upon which the Lord's lot fell was sacrificed for the sins of the people. The other goat was to "be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him." Leviticus 16:8-10.

When the high priest had finished the work of the atonement, the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the cleansing of Israel, the live goat was brought before the high priest. The high priest laid "his hands upon the head of the live goat," and confessed "over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them [the sins] upon the head of the goat." And when this was done, the live goat, bearing the sins that Israel would have suffered for had they not repented of and sought cleansing from them, was given into the hands of "a fit man" and sent away "into the wilderness." "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited." Verses 20-22.

In this service of the earthly sanctuary, the service of the heavenly sanctuary was typified. The high priest was a type of Christ, our High Priest. The goat upon which the Lord's lot fell was a type of Christ and the sacrifice made for the work of atonement, which sacrifice was provided in the antitype on Calvary. As the high priest in the earthly sanctuary took the blood of the goat to perform the work of atonement, or cleansing of the sanctuary, so Jesus Christ, as our great High Priest, ministers His own blood in the work of atonement, or cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. This is clearly revealed in Hebrews 9.

Showing the passing of the earthly for the heavenly service, the apostle Paul says of the service of cleansing, "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens [the earthly sanctuary] should be purified with these [the blood of bulls and goats]; but the heavenly things themselves [the heavenly sanctuary] with better sacrifices than these" ["the sacrifice of Himself," Christ—verse 26]. Verse 23.

When the atonement, or cleansing, was finished in the earthly sanctuary, the

high priest, as a type of Christ, carried in type the sins that had been atoned for, and from which the sanctuary and the people had been cleansed, from the sanctuary, and confessed them over the head of the live goat, "putting them upon the head of the goat." Leviticus 16:21. So Jesus, our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, when the work of atonement, or cleansing, is finished, bearing the sins that have been atoned for, and from which the heavenly sanctuary and God's people have been cleansed, and which have been blotted from off the ledger of heaven, will come out from the sanctuary; and all the sins that God's people would have to answer for were they not confessed and forgiven, will be placed upon the antitypical "scapegoat."

SATAN THE SCAPEGOAT

But who is this scapegoat? Who is it that was typified by the live goat in the Day of Atonement service in the earthly sanctuary? The margin of Leviticus 16:8 reads "Azazel." The Syriac reads

"The high priest laid 'his hands upon the head of the live goat,' and confessed 'over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel.'"



"the angel [strong one] who revolted"; and one Jewish writer says, "The Jews at the present time use the word 'Azazel' as a synonym for 'Satan.'" The majority of commentators apply the term to the devil.

So when our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, shall come forth from His work in the heavenly sanctuary, and, so far as the sanctuary and the people of God are concerned, the atonement is finished, Satan, the scapegoat, will be brought, and upon him, the author of sin, will be laid all the sins from which the sanc-

tuary and God's people have then been cleansed. Then what?—Then, by the hand of an angel (in the type, "a fit man"), he is sent away "unto a land not inhabited." And what land is this?

Here is a scripture paralleling Genesis 1:1, 2, revealing the earth in a chaotic condition, waste, and desolate, and bringing to view the same conditions regarding the cities of the world as found in Revelation 16:19. This is said to be "at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger." Jeremiah 4:26. We read of this fierce anger in other phraseology in Revelation 6, where, as the Lord comes in His glory, men cry out to the rocks and to the mountains, "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?" Revelation 6: 15-17. They will not be able to stand. They will be destroyed "with the brightness of His coming." 2 Thessalonians 2: 8; 1: 7-10. The prophecy of Jeremiah 4 says, "I beheld, and, lo, there was no man." Verse 25.

The wicked will then all be dead, and the saints will all have been taken to heaven. Here is where Revelation 20: 1-6 fits in. The earth will then be an "abyss," "a land not inhabited." To this earth in that condition, Satan, the scapegoat, will be brought. By the decree of God, and a chain of circumstances, he will be bound here "a thousand years." None for him to tempt, none for him to deceive, his hands will be tied until "the thousand years are expired." Revelation 20: 7. For a thousand years, he will be left to the company of a stinging conscience, and to view the ruin that he has wrought through sin. And as the scapegoat was left in "the wilderness," in "a land not inhabited," his final end to perish, so Satan finally will perish.

A BELEAGUERED CITY

In Revelation 20, we read of the expiations of the thousand years, and of Satan's being "loosed a little season." Verse 3. The chain of circumstances will then bind him no longer. The wicked dead will be raised; they will live again when the thousand years are finished. Verse 5. Satan will begin again the work he has ever wrought both among angels and among men. He will go out "to deceive the nations." What is his deceiving?—He will deceive them into believing that he is the one who has raised them from the dead. The holy city will have come down from heaven, and will then be on the earth. Verse 9. Christ will have come again; this time, His saints have come with Him. Jude 14. The time has then come for executive judgment upon the wicked. Verse 15. With Christ, His saints will have been dealing with the cases of the ungodly. John shows them during the thousand years seated upon thrones, "and judgment was given unto them." Revelation 20: 4; 1 Corinthians 6: 1-3. Then they are with Christ in the holy city, and the time has come for judgment to be ministered.

Deceived into believing that Satan has raised them from the dead, the whole host of the wicked will be further deceived into believing that they are fully able, under Satan's leadership, to go up and take the holy city. Verses 8, 9. They will compass "the beloved city"; and then, in the "judgment and perdition of ungodly men," which judgment and perdition is fire (Revelation 20: 9; 2 Peter 3: 7), they will all be devoured. Like the impenitent at the close of the work of atonement in the earthly sanctuary, they will be "cut off" and "destroyed," and the scapegoat with them.

In this last act in the great tragedy of sin, and not till then, will the atonement be finished. Satan and sinners, "root and branch," will be consumed. Malachi 4: 1; Psalm 37: 20. Sin's finished work, "death," the "enemy," will be destroyed. (See 1 Corinthians 15: 26; Revelation

21: 3, 4.) Every vestige of the curse will disappear in the purifying of the fire; and out of the ashes of the old will the Creator make the new earth appear (Revelation 21: 5; 2 Peter 3: 11-13); and a world will again take its place in the family of God, the atonement—atonement—complete.

Does the "Arrangement of Matter" Account for Creation?

(Continued from page 4)

to which you can think or aspire, that at least is the height of the Primal Cause which created them; for something cannot come from nothing.

Somewhere there is a Being higher and better than the best in all of us. He is the origin and the source of all that is good.

As a great scientist has said:
"All bodies with which we are acquainted, when raised into the air and

"Looking thus at the divine Being as the Lord who has consciously expressed His thoughts in the material world, the world becomes glorified, and glows with heavenly splendor. Science becomes the study of the autograph works of the infinite God; and natural history, which is the highest of the series of the physical sciences, and links them to the sciences that deal with the human mind, becomes the means of communion with the highest geometrical, algebraical, and chemical thoughts of the Father of men, which He has yet revealed to us."

The Rev. Joseph Cook was present at the delivering of this lecture, and at its conclusion, heard Professor Agassiz say emphatically, as the audience was leaving the room:

"That truth is not more great than sure."

What a joy and comfort to know that God created and now upholds His universe!

"We who believe life's bases rest
Beyond the probe of chemic test,
Still, like our fathers, feel Him near."
—Lowell.

Here faith and reason kiss each other, and reverence and knowledge meet in fond embrace.

Faith is always reasonable, but it goes infinitely beyond reason. Reason should lead to faith, for faith is in harmony with true reason. By reason we may think with God, and by faith we may aspire to Him. By reason we may partake of the divine mind, and by faith we may be in harmony with His Spirit. It is only when men become vain in their reasonings that their foolish heart is darkened. No man is really reasonable until he is in harmony with the Supreme Will, and faith relies confidently upon Him.

Then we have come to know that nature is but the ever changing panorama of the glory of God. Nature everywhere bears witness to the power and intelligence of the mighty Sovereign upon the great white throne.

In Venice there was a merchant prince who was the victim of a beastly intemperance. During one of his drunken feasts in his own palace, his sons resolved to do what they could to break his habit. Before the company gathered, they wrote in large letters across one of the walls of the room, with a pencil of phosphorus, to be seen only in the dark, the words, "Prepare to meet thy God."

BURNED UPON THE BRAIN

The revelers met and their orgy began. Late at night, the merchant's companions lay in the stupor of intoxication beneath the massy mahogany of the table, and the merchant himself asleep, dead-drunk, in his chair. Waking toward morning, when the lights had burned out, his own benumbed senses aiding the deception, the only thing visible in the room was the inscription throbbing on the wall opposite him, "Prepare to meet thy God."

He was so moved that he never gave way to intemperance again. The chains of intemperance fell off him there that

(Continued on page 15)



EARTH, O Earth, bowed down with anguish,
List the tidings that I bring;
Tell thy sorrowing sons and daughters
There's a message from the King!
Blow the trumpet; wake the nations;
Shout the tidings near and far;
Cry above the din of battle
Where the fighting legions are:
Christ, the mighty King, is coming
In His dazzling chariot ear.

See! He rideth forth to conquer;
Cry aloud, ye sons of men;
Look! The heavens are bright with armies;
Christ of Calvary comes again,
And Earth's prison house is opened,
And the mighty, troubled sea
Hears the mandate of the Victor,
That shall set her captives free,
And the resurrected millions
Rise to immortality.

Then rejoice, O Earth, though bloody
Be thy bosom, rent and torn,
Though the thorn and thistle flourish,
And thy sons and daughters mourn.
Soon shall be fulfilled the promise
To the Galilean men.
Rise! With might and power proclaim it:
"Christ of Calvary comes again!"
MRS. L. D. AVERY-SCUTTLE.

quietly abandoned, descend to the earth's surface in lines perpendicular to it. They are, therefore, urged thereto by a force or effort, which it is but reasonable to regard as the direct or indirect result of a consciousness and a will existing somewhere, though beyond our power to trace, which force we term gravity."

—Sir John F. W. Herschel.

"The conception," writes a critic in the *North American Review*, "of a being with a nature akin to our own, but perfect in all that we aspire to be; infinite in power, with perfect goodness and knowledge, whose will is just as immediately manifested in the order of nature as in any supposable miracle, such a conception is a most cheering and inspiring one, and is not inconsistent with anything which human science has ever discovered, or is ever likely to discover."

At a lecture some years ago, Professor Hill, then president of Harvard University, said:



The Other Half

By
MISSIONARY
JOSEF W.
HALL



THE majority of the people who live in lands where Christianity has long exerted its uplifting and civilizing power do not fully realize the proportions of the task that lies before them in bringing the whole world to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. Millions of people in the sin-darkened lands have divorced their idols and turned to the only true God; but the originator of idolatry and superstition, Satan, has not given up the contest for the allegiance of these people's hearts and minds.

In an insert on this page, you will read from a Chinese newspaper clipping the record of an official who was elevated to a godship upon his death. Notice especially the last sentence, "Thus one more idol has been added to the millions China already worships."

A second clipping gives an illuminating glimpse into the practices of the so-called "enlightened" group which is at present ruling China:

"The president and the premier have sent delegates to offer sacrifices to the late General Lu Chien-chang, who was executed in Tientsin by the order of General Hsu Shu-chen not very long ago."

The late General Lu, to whom sacrifices are executively ordered, was lured to a "dinner party" by General Hsu in Tientsin, and murdered by him over the table. The president condoned the murder and protected the murderer by a typical Chinese method. He issued a mandate dated before the slaughter took place, ordering General Hsu to execute General Lu on behalf of the state for his many crimes, catalogued in detail. Now he attempts to placate the Lu family by appointing delegates to sacrifice to the murdered man's departed spirit. Besides showing the moral baseness of some high officials, this incident shows as well the superstitious and heathen religious practices still recognized by the present Chinese government, which was rejoiced over as being Christian and democratic upon its inception seven years ago. "Enlightenment," which became a catch phrase upon the lips of the Chinese public several years ago (it became so popular that we even have "Enlightened Barber Shop" emblazoned on street signs) is, because of the practices of those who profess it, becoming a term of sneering depreciation.

Let us turn from distressed and bewildered China to Japan. Civilization has become, during the past four years of the world's history, a pretty badly discredited institution; and by the following, we see that it is no discouragement to a most zealous idol worship:

"The largest statue in the world is being carved in Japan. It is a recumbent effigy of Nichiren, a Japanese patron saint, cut from a natural granite rock on a hillside on the island of Ushigakubi, in the island sea of Seto, Japan. The stone image will be 240 feet long from head to foot, sixty feet longer than the Sleeping Buddha statue at Segu, Burma, and considerably larger than the Sphinx in Egypt."

It is a fond delusion of those who do not know how the other half of the world lives, to think that all that lies between the present and a world Utopia is the signing of peace articles to conclude "the war for democracy." World righteousness can never be safe while a vast proportion of the earth's population lies a prey to the influence of false and su-

perstitious religions, whose moral code is always untrustworthy, and subject to interpretation in accordance with whatever fanatical motive may agitate the minds of the people at the time.

The most promising assurance of a world dominion of righteousness and peace, and the best way to help usher the same in, are set forth in the words of Christ: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come"—and, as well as the end, the longed-for beginning.

Ravens and Aëroplanes

HIGH-POWERED airplanes are now used for conveying food to the distressed inhabitants of Italy who have just been released from the thrall of the Austrian invaders. So accustomed has the world become to hearing of wonders, that it accepts this new feat of feeding starving populations *via* air route, with only passing concern. The report is accepted as a fact, without question.

This new accomplishment is very much akin to the Biblical account of the manner in which ravens fed the prophet Elijah during famine times, bringing him food both morning and evening daily, while he was in hiding from his enemies by the brook Cherith, in Palestine. Why should the human mind be swift to accept the truthfulness of the report that men have been flying through the air with food for starving multitudes, yet be slow to believe the Biblical account of a similar occurrence?

Especially is it surprising that modern theologians should refuse to accept this and other miracles of the Bible, when by their refusal they reject the plain statements of Jesus Christ Himself, and with one great heave, cast Christianity overboard. Bible students will remember that the Saviour vouched definitely for the narrative of Elijah's visit to the widow of Sarepta, which immediately follows the record of the ravens' flights, and which is no less wonderful. For months, a handful of meal and a little oil in a bottle remained on hand, although the entire family was fed from it during this whole period of famine.

The very fact that in the Gospels, Christ vouches for the authenticity of this narrative, should establish faith both in this miracle of the meal and oil, and also in the visits of the ravens. If the word of the Son of God is not to be depended upon, whose is? If human intelligence has solved the problem of man's flight through the air, it is not unthinkable that divine intelligence should guide a few birds with food for the prophet. The work of higher criticism in discounting Scripture is out of keeping with this century of wonders.

FRANK A. COFFIN.

WHEN you have eliminated from life the tinsel and the show and the nonessentials, you have come back to the place where God designed you to live.

T. E. BOWEN.

ONCE FAMOUS CENSOR BECOMES FUKIEN GOD

Chiang Ch'un-lin Dies In Native
Fukien City And Is Made
An Idol

China Press Correspondence

Hinghwa, Fukien, June 20.—The final chapter has been written in the career of Chiang Ch'un-lin, the famous ex-censor of the Manchukuo dynasty.

Chiang Ch'un-lin was a native of a small and insignificant village some twelve miles up in the mountains from this city. He became one of the most famous literary men of the province. Not only did he win all three of the coveted degrees sought by all literary aspirants, but he won other literary honors as well, some from the hand of the emperor. About a year before the fall of the monarchy, he was holding office in Peking as censor. At that time, he handed in a severe criticism of two of the high officials, one of whom was Yuan Shih-k'ai. Upon the throne's ignoring these criticisms, he resigned his office in protest. His return was a trip of ovation. At the provincial capital, he was feasted and honored. Hinghwa outdid herself in honor of her famous son.

Then followed the revolution. Chiang Ch'un-lin refused, to the surprise of all, to take leadership and guide the Republican party of this section. A republic, and one especially in which Yuan Shih-k'ai had a prominent part, was distasteful to him. He retained his queue after all other literary men had parted with theirs. He chose to seek quiet in the seclusion of his mountain home.

During the past year, he had been ill more or less of the time. His son called in a physician of Western training. After the prescription was made, he sent and inquired of his favorite god if it was all right for him to take the medicine. When lots were cast, it turned out that permission was given to take the medicine. Just at China New Year's time, he was taken much worse. Again the son sent for the doctor who prescribed. But the ex-censor informed the son that he could not take the medicine, as all the gods had gone to heaven to make their yearly report, as was their custom at the close of the year, and as they were not yet back, it would be impossible for him to inquire as to the propriety of taking this medicine. He died before the time set for the return of the gods. Such an end to one ranked so great after the standards of the Chinese people is a sad comment upon present conditions of the nation.

Three months after his death, it is now announced that one of such marked attainments would be sure to be immediately elevated to power by the gods of the other world, and that therefore the ex-censor is a god. A great procession and festival are now being held. In due time, a temple will be built and idols made to represent him. Thus one more idol has been added to the millions China already worships.

Who Is the True Optimist?

BY GEORGE E. GURNEY

THE great carnival of blood is over, the maelstrom of death and destruction has subsided, and the long-hoped-for respite has come.

Fearful and well-nigh distracting have been the momentous days of the past four years, and the nations have stood aghast at the great conflagration as it swept through the earth. The very heart of humanity is sick, and its nerves are unstrung at the cataclysm that has overwhelmed it. Like a terrible tornado it came and went, and every heart is thankful that it is gone at last.

But though it has passed by, men of all nations are staggered at the awful chaos of mankind it has left in its train. And now, in order once again to bring cosmos from chaos, and eradicate the cause of the grievous blight that has touched all the earth, great statesmen are forming a league of nations, which is intended to prevent the demon of war forever from devastating the earth again. Probably never in the history of this troubled planet has so great a task been set for men as confronts those who represent the nations at the Peace Conference. Not only will this great council have the almost impossible task of adjusting racial and territorial differences so as to satisfy the many nations involved, but they must attempt the even far more difficult task of solving the great economic problems that are causing so much internal strife.

Great-hearted men who long to ameliorate earth's trials, are commendably desirous of establishing an order that shall culminate in a new era for the people of earth,—an era of unparalleled contentment and harmony, during which the nations shall cooperate for the good of humanity, and emancipate the world from its present turbulent condition, and thus usher in the long desired "brotherhood of man." Never before was such a stupendous program conceived as is now attempted by finite man, and probably none sense the tremendous responsibility that rests on their shoulders more than the delegates who are participating in the great Peace Conference. Truly the difficulties are appalling as one views the situation and sees the surging unrest among the nations.

SIN AND PEACE ANTAGONISTS

We see the ever more desperate struggle of the working classes to escape from underneath the crushing weight of the great "cars of Juggernaut"—the gigantic corporations of the money barons—which would crush out their lives as valueless, and which prevent them from supplying the common needs of life. They strain as a hound on leash to attack their oppressors, while the men who have grown rich at their expense hold on with the grip of an octopus to retain all they have, and strive for more. And then we have had demonstrated to all the world that the laboring classes are often as intractable as the plutocrats.

Is there no possible chance for an ideal plan of equity and fairness among the peoples of the nations, and a certainty

of age-long tranquillity among the inhabitants of earth? We answer regretfully, No. While we admire and uphold all attempts that are made to better the lot of mankind, it surely ought to be plainly seen that no human devisings can accomplish the great end of eternal peace that is sought. The reason is very simple. All trials, sorrows, pains, and every other intolerable thing in the earth to-day, come through sin, and as the result of sin; and no system of man—socialism, Bolshevism, or any other scheme—can make this old earth an Elysium for humanity, because sin and sinful conditions can never be eradicated by the sinner. Consequently the one hope of mankind lies in the intervention of the all-powerful God, to bring about the change that is so sorely needed and so ardently longed for.

No doubt many will say: "Oh, that is only morbid pessimism! Be optimistic, and breathe the hopeful atmosphere of these more tranquil days." But there is occasion to be both pessimistic and optimistic, paradoxical though this may seem. We may well be pessimistic in regard to man's being able, in the immediate future, to evolve a staple and universal law of love and order from the residue of war and strife that is strewn over most of the earth; but we are warranted in being supremely optimistic—yes, radiantly jubilant—at the prospects that are yet to open out before us. And this belief is not based on

the gold and the silver, which are their idol, will at last eat their flesh as if it were fire. Again, the apostle Paul, in his second epistle to Timothy, declared through the Holy Spirit, that in the last days perilous times would come, because men would be lovers of self, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, trucebreakers, traitors, *et cetera*. Many other statements can be found analogous to these, but surely these are abundantly sufficient to prove that no plan of man will convert the hearts of either rich or poor and bring about the harmony necessary for a world of contentment and peace. But finally, when human plans have failed, the cries of earth, which have reached to the heart of the Infinite, will bring about the kingdom of joy and peace which shall endure. "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3: 3, 13.

THE CHRISTIAN THE ONLY OPTIMIST

In this text is revealed the basis of our optimism. And from the same source of divine illumination, we are confident that the trials of earth's peoples are nearer an end than many believe. We are now living in that time which Christ specified as the time of the beginning of sorrows, and sorrows will multiply until He comes to abolish them forever. True, there is to be a short respite, when all the world will be lulled into the belief that they have entered the period of brotherhood. Paul says they will be crying, "Peace, peace"; but even in the midst of it, sudden destruction will come, and they will not escape. (1 Thessalonians 5: 1-4.)

And now, from the sad scenes of death and destruction which are so depressing, let us climb the hill of faith, and from its



"Like a terrible tornado it came and went, and every heart is thankful that it is gone at last." Boston Photo News

mere human opinion, which is so prone to err; but it is firmly founded on the promises of God.

The divine record is the one and only chart, compass, and sextant, to guide mankind in the present trackless sea of speculation. That record says that the heart of man is "desperately wicked." The Saviour Himself definitely stated that when He comes again, all tribes of the earth will mourn, and there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth." The apostle James tells us that in the last days, rich men will oppress the laborers, and keep back their rights by fraud; but

summit, gaze on a vista of such perfect beauty and tranquillity, that the trials of life's journey seem small indeed for the glory revealed. Instead of a groaning and heaving nature, with its thorns, thistles, and weeds, we behold a new earth, blooming with beauty from its Creator's hand. No sign of discord, or sin, or decay. No war, or even harsh words between those who inhabit it. No need to toil from early morn to late at night, and then fail to reap the harvest. No mothers weeping and sighing for bread for their little ones, but rather with joy gazing on their eternal youth.

No more cripples, or disease and pain; but the lame will leap as the hart, and the blind will see all the works of God. No moan of anguish is heard in the land, but the joy of life brings songs from every heart. It is the home of the redeemed of earth; and Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is their everlasting King. And there, in that long promised home, shall the down-trodden find refuge, no more shall the helpless feel the sear of want, no more shall the poor and impotent feel the chill of social ostracism. There will be equity and love, and all will be governed by a righteous and blessed Redeemer-King. In that day—and not before that day—will be consummated a true and lasting brotherhood of man.

The Devil Interprets Scripture

BY BENJAMIN G. WILKINSON

THE devil carried Christ to a pinnacle of the temple, and then attempted, by a quotation from the Scriptures, to lead the Redeemer into a false act. Undoubtedly he had the Saviour in a perilous position. Its very height meant either death or daring. He never expected that the Saviour would turn the tables on him, and put him where he would be obliged either to confess the failure of his effort, or to bring from heaven another testimony to the divinity of Christ.

Satan made an attempt to interpret Scripture. He said to the Redeemer: "If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." He expected that Christ would accept his interpretation of the scripture simply because he said, "It is written." Thus to-day many people hastily resort to a text of Scripture in defense of their actions, when a closer inspection of what the Word teaches would bring condemnation instead of approval.

The rebuke of Christ made plain the inability of the evil mind to interpret the Scriptures. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. When the apostle speaks of the peace that passes all understanding, he teaches that there is a relation between the soul and God which goes beyond the grasp of the intellect. The evil mind may be intellectual, but it is not spiritual.

The world has not yet witnessed the greatest efforts of the devil to advance his kingdom, and to defend this advance by appeals to the Bible. We need to-day only to cast our eyes over this land to see teachings which deny the atonement of Christ, securing multitudes of followers. Yet these very same teachings make appeals to the Scriptures.

Had Christ obeyed the insinuations of the devil, and cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, it would have demanded on the part of God some manifestation of physical force to prevent His destruction. But Christ did not enter this world to demonstrate the kingdom of heaven by appeals to physical exhibitions. The devil had tricked the majority of the human race on this point. Some people to-day appeal to the healing of the body as evidence of the genuineness of their religion; but physical acts are inferior to spiritual acts.

Adam beheld in some measure the great work of creation. That did not, however, keep him from sin; but the cross of Christ keeps many from sin. Creation was a physical act; redemption, a spiritual. Any effort which relies upon physical demonstrations only to ratify an interpretation of the Scriptures, is false, and proceeds from the carnal mind. The spirit with which we approach the interpretation of the Scriptures determines the character of the assistant by our side.

Does the "Arrangement of Matter" Account for Creation?

(Continued from page 12)

hour. Years after, when describing his emotions at the sight of the words, he said: "That round O in the word 'God'! That round O! I think it is yet burned upon the substance of my brain!"

Just so the round world, round as that O, round as a ball, should burn into our brains the word "God." The rim of the whole universe, indeed, is such a round O. Let it be burned upon the substance of the brain, branding in our very thoughts the name of God.

Nature speaks of her Maker. In the material creation, we shall find the prototype of every miracle. There too we shall find suggestions and examples of that providence which guides all creatures. His the hand that marks the epochs of centuries and the cycles of eternity.

"God is law, say the wise; O soul, and let us rejoice;
For if He thunders by law, the thunder is yet His voice;
Speak to Him, thou; for He hears, and spirit with spirit may meet;
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

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He Saw the Future Plainly

ON the road to Jerusalem, just before the Lord was crucified, the record says: "He took unto Him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written through the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of man. For He shall be delivered up unto the gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon: and they shall scourge and kill Him: and the third day He shall rise again. And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said." Luke 18: 31-34, A. R. V.

This is one of the many instances wherein the Lord continually impressed upon His followers the necessity that all the predictions made by the prophets should be fulfilled. And observe in what a clear, vivid manner the Lord foretold His arrest; that He would be delivered to the gentiles by the Jewish nation; that He would be mocked, shamefully treated, and spit upon; that He would be scourged and finally killed; and also with what clearness He foretold that He would rise again the third day.

No one can read that language thoughtfully without being impressed with the fact that the future is as plain and real to the Lord as either the present or the past may be to any living human being. The Lord knew definitely just what He was going to suffer, and He told it beforehand to His disciples. And through John, He declares, "Now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe." John 14: 29.

Have you given special study to the prophecies of the Bible? We do not mean to ask, Have you specially studied what men have written concerning the prophecies? but, Have you studied these prophecies yourself? And as you studied them, have you asked God to fulfill His own promise of having His divine Spirit teach you through the divinely inspired prophetic utterances?

If we will but permit Him, God will send His Holy Spirit into each of our hearts; and through the words of His inspired prophets, as indicated in John 16: 13, He will show us things to come. Is the future all dark and perplexing to you? Then study the prophecies of the Bible. Through these prophecies, our heavenly Father has made the future so plain that we need not be perplexed or mystified.

Gleaming Through the Dark Clouds

OUR planet seems to be in a ferment of strikes. Discontented laborers all over the world are openly combating the capitalistic class, against whom they hold numerous grievances.

During the month of January, something over two hundred thousand men were striking in England and Ireland, and England was declared to be "on the verge of an industrial collapse." The situation was so serious that Lloyd George felt constrained to leave the important Peace Conference in Paris to look after matters at home.

Eight hundred are reported killed, and some five thousand injured, in the strike

that has been in progress in Buenos Aires. Lima, Peru, has had a serious strike, attended by mob violence. Mention in passing might also be made of the universal ferment and rioting throughout Europe and Asia.

In our own country, we had serious difficulties during January over the labor situation in New York, Philadelphia, Schenectady, Erie, Pittsburg, Cleveland, in addition to the great strike in Seattle, which was perhaps the worst of them all.

The world is rife with the spirit of revolution; and probably no one would



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The former sovereign of Luxemburg. The little grand duchy has just been through a mild revolution. With a view to making economic treaties with the Entente, Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide was asked to abdicate, and her sister, Princess Charlotte, was formally installed as sovereign by the Chamber of Deputies. The photograph is of the former grand duchess.

contradict us if we should say that at the bottom of all this spirit of unrest is the well-nigh universal sentiment, among the common people, that they are not enjoying a fair share of the blessings and comforts, to say nothing of the luxuries, that the world has to offer.

In the third chapter of Second Timothy, the apostle Paul warns us against the perils that will be stirred up in the last days through the love of self and the love of money; and in the fifth chapter of the epistle of James, he speaks to us of the heaping together of treasure in the last days.

Never in the history of the world was it possible to have such a concentration of wealth as we see at the present time. The means of communication that have brought the world all together as one neighborhood have enabled a comparatively few men to seize nature's commodities and exploit them in the building up of great fortunes. The greed and the selfishness of men have led them to avail themselves of these opportunities of piling up wealth without any regard for the comfort and the actual needs of millions of their fellows.

In that same prophecy of James, God calls upon the rich men to weep and to howl for the miseries that shall come upon them. The apostle speaks of the delicate and luxurious manner in which the wealthy have lived, nourishing their hearts as in a day of slaughter. He

furthermore points to the fact that the hire of the laborer has been kept back by fraud, and the cries of these laborers have entered into the ears of the Lord of hosts.

Attention may be called to the fact that some of these striking men are demanding very high wages. Possibly some of them may be unreasonable in their demands. But back of all this lie the millions in Russia and throughout Europe who do not have the common necessities of life, but who are underfed and underclothed in a time and place where a few men are rolling in luxury. And what is true in Europe and Asia is true to a greater or less extent throughout the world. Millions of our fellow beings are constantly living below the bread line, and that right under the shadow of men and women who are professing the name of Christ, yet rolling in wealth and luxury while their fellow mortals suffer.

James, in this scripture already referred to, indicates very clearly that we may not hope for any redress through the agencies of fallible men; for he exhorts us to patience, and says, "Stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." The coming of the Lord will bring relief to every one who is prepared for it, and that great event is the one door of hope.

If we know the Lord as our personal Saviour, we have entered into experiences that fill the soul with joy; for we know that He has power to reach into all of these warring elements, and save each individual soul placed in His hands.

The governments of men are rapidly breaking to pieces. Unrest and turmoil are everywhere. Our fellow beings are distressed and perplexed because of these conditions; but there is hope and light and joy and peace in the Man of Nazareth and of Calvary. His second coming is on the great prophetic program. The events all about us show that the day is very near. To be ready for that supreme moment is the most important work of each and every individual.

Jesus of Nazareth loves men; Jesus of Nazareth saves men; and the same Jesus is soon coming to put an end to all strife and sorrow, and to give immortality to each soul that is ready to receive Him.

Each One Lighted

JOHN speaks of Christ as "the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." John 1: 9.

Observe the statement of this text. Christ lighted every man coming into the world. Then there is enough light falling upon the pathway of each individual, if he will but follow it, to lead him to the salvation there is in Jesus Christ. But we must cherish that light and receive it if we are to be illuminated and benefited by it. God earnestly and lovingly urges this light upon us, but He will not force us to receive it. We must act our part if we would gain the benefit.

IN the United States, statistics show that of men engaged in all professions and occupations, bookkeepers and office assistants die the earliest, averaging a life of 36.5 years, while farmers and farm laborers live the longest, with an average of 58.5 years.