



Ours is a wizard age, in which mechanical wonders abound on every hand and have revolutionised communication, travel, and industry. And one of the greatest marvels of this wizard age is the great wonder-working force, electricity. It makes possible not only the brilliant lighting of our homes and cities, but also the telegraph, the ocean cables, and the wonderful wire-less, which almost annihilate time and space and make the inhabitants of lands far distant from each other seem like near neighbours. Electric trams and trains are others of the many wonders in which this force is displayed.

Earth's Last Generation

What Will It See?

By
ROBERT HARE

*"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."
Dan. 12: 4.*

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PREFACE

Some time human history, as we know it, must close. Jehovah has planned a transformation. Then this world, so long saddened by death, and rendered unholy by sin, must be renewed to take its place among the fairer creations of God. The intervening days—the days standing between that time and now—must of necessity be momentous days. In reality—

“An age on ages telling.”

This volume is devoted to the work of picturing some of the events that must register themselves on this last page of history. The reader's thoughtful attention is invited.

PUBLISHERS.

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**Dedicated
to the service of Him
whose coming means more
than anything else
both to the Church and
to the World**



CHAPTER I

Generations—Past and Present

MANY generations of men have come and gone. Just how many we cannot tell, but they have been passing since the dawn of history till now. True it is that as the generations have passed, human life has continued to shorten. In consequence the generations of men have been greatly multiplied.

The lives of men, measured before the Deluge, give an average of 912 years; but as generation after generation has gone by, the life of man has dwindled into a span, a veritable "hand-breadth," for its average is now but a fraction over thirty-four years.

Through the past ages life has maintained its struggle with death, but the destroyer has prevailed, and the "few days and full of trouble" of Job's day have shortened until the man of a hundred years is now a marvel among the sons of men. Only one man in 12,000 reaches that distinction, but the lengthened days are borrowed—sad days in which tears and sorrow both play a large part.

The ethnologist speaks of many races of men, but after all they have a common ancestry. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Acts 17: 26. Differences

there are among the nations of men in form and appearance, brought about by climatic conditions and changes of environment, but, strange as it may appear, all have one blood. No analyst or anatomist has been able to find any difference in the life-stream of our human family. It differs from the blood of every other creature, but in the blood of men and of nations there is no difference. The most minute microscopic examination fails to find any variation in the blood of either the red, white, or black man. All have one common ancestry—sons of Adam—and all have one blood.

It must be recognised that the generations of men have varied, as to duration, in the different periods of history. No definite number of days or years can be given as measuring the generations of the past or the present. So far as the Scripture is concerned, no definite measure is given, or need be given, for the work that God has in hand.

When Christ walked among men, He spoke of two "generations." First, the one in which He lived, declaring that no sign would be given to it "but the sign of the prophet Jonas." Matt. 16: 4. Then again, in His great discourse in Matthew 24, when He had outlined history down to the last days, when in prophetic vision He stood with the very people who would see His coming, He declared, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. 24: 34.

Christ does not in any way limit that generation to any number of years. But it must be that people, and that generation, to whom the signs of His coming are proclaimed as distinct and historic evidences of that great event. When Christ referred to the people in His day as "this generation," He evidently meant the Jewish people, who had rejected the testimony He

presented. But when He stands with the last people in His prophecy of the end, "this generation" evidently refers to the whole of the living world—earth's last generation—to whom the message concerning His coming will be proclaimed in the "everlasting gospel" that reaches to every kindred, tongue, and people on the earth. Rev. 14: 6, 7.

No historic point is given from which "this generation" was to be measured. It will be that generation which hears the world-wide message—the "gospel of the kingdom" that carries God's message of life, and these historic features, as the evidences of the near approach of Christ's second coming. To "this generation" which hears and sees "all these things" He will come!

Paul speaks of important points in Israel's history, and declares that they were recounted for the help of those upon whom the "ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. 10: 11. This must be the same generation of which Christ speaks as existing while the gospel of the kingdom is being proclaimed to all nations. There is an end to prophetic time and an end to historic time, and these two ends will fall upon that generation which hears the everlasting gospel.

It will not be any special class of men, nor yet any generation measured by, or from, any historic point, but that generation upon whom the "ends of the world are come," to whom the "gospel of the kingdom" is proclaimed—the everlasting gospel that must go to every nation, tongue, and people, bearing the judgment proclamation and the signs that tell of Christ's return.

How full of interest, then, grows the great question, Are we living in that generation? Is the great

Earth's Last Generation

panorama of earth's history almost completed? Are we facing the finality of things? Will this generation see the coming of Christ? Do we hear the tread of earth's last generation of men? And does the life of man today measure the extremities in the history of a world?

Is it out of the generation on the earth today that Jehovah will take 144,000 with which He plans to complete the number of His redeemed? Have all God's dealings with His people in the past been "written for our admonition" as the generation upon whom the "ends of the world are come?" And will the widening of the gospel this time complete the work of God on the earth?

The light of all the ages has been focussed on "this generation." Many great men have desired to see what we see. Many Bible prophets have foretold ages ago the very historic visions at which we gaze today. We stand in the full blaze of the world's science and knowledge and revelation. Added to all the responsibilities that fall upon this generation, will there also fall the infinite responsibility of beholding the Lord from heaven?

Noah's generation saw the Deluge, but to them had been proclaimed its coming. Lot's generation saw the destruction of Sodom by fire, but to them the warning had been sent. The generation to whom Christ preached of doom saw the destruction of Jerusalem. Many of the prominent actors in the Cross-tragedy were also participators in the doom-tragedy. It will be so again, and the generation that hears and sees "all these things" will also see the glory of the Son of man!



CHAPTER II

Latter-Day Marvels

ALWAYS wonderful, but in its last days most wonderful," may be truthfully said concerning the history of man. History's closing century will surely bring to view some unrevealed secrets; its science-fingers will surely open some hidden treasures, and its ascending footsteps will surely reach loftier heights than have been known before. With all the knowledge of the ages to work upon, this conclusion is but reasonable.

But there is something more behind this conclusion than mere conjecture or probability. In the prophetic outlinings of Scripture the last days are given this character: "I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2: 30, 31.

These projected wonders are all supernatural in character, but there will also be other marvels at which the eyes of earth's last generation will gaze. Frequently the prophetic pen pictures achievements in the rapidity of movement, in the development of

knowledge, and in the field of science that link with the highest endeavour in human life. Of this the poet writes truly—

Time's noblest offspring is the last.

True it is that man lives in a world of wonders. The very air we breathe is a miracle. The food we eat is the gift of God through the soil and the sun, while the water we drink still flows from the rock. In the heavens above, stars and pale moons shine with a borrowed light, while others burn with a splendour 12,000 times brighter than our sun. Planets ringed and beautiful, control their eclipsing moons, and others roll on as solitary orbs, to appear only in the dawning and the twilight. Nature itself is a continuous wonder, a miracle that may have ceased to be astonishing only because of our acquaintance with it.

So it may be with many of the marvels of human creation. Men gaze upon them without astonishment, because their marvellousness has become familiar. But if we would read aright these features that distinguish our age, we would discern, printed on their forefront, the words, "Predicted by the prophets 3,000 years ago." In his wilfulness and self-importance, man has been slow to learn the value that lies in the light of prophetic revelation. It has flashed over and through the darkness, but man, in his blindness, has turned from the light of God. 2 Peter 1: 19.

From the dim past, prophetic eyes looked over the ages and beheld a new creation, pictured in beauty, that the divine mind alone could reveal. Abraham saw the "city," Isaiah beheld the desert blooming as "the rose," and John looked upon the tree and "river of life."

But man has not believed and will not believe concerning the unseen. So to meet, as far as possible, all human objections, God has supplied the prophetic revelation. And today, all around us stand wonders that might be truthfully labelled, "Pictured by Isaiah 2,700 years ago"; "Seen by Moses 3,500 years ago"; "Described by Job 3,400 years ago"; "Outlined by Nahum 2,600 years ago."

Now, if any man will not believe with the written prediction in his hand and the actual demonstration before his eyes, Jehovah is surely not to blame for his unbelief. Trace a few of the wonder-photographs that the Book supplies.

SWIFT SHIPS

Before Greece had learned her letters, or Persia had kindled her sacred fire, back three thousand years before Xenophon or Herodotus had thought of their classics or penned their histories, the old prophet of Uz had talked about the "swift ships" that pass as the eagle hasting to its prey. Job 9: 24-26.

No such ships were known back in the days of Job—days quite prehistoric, except for the Bible narrative. The ships of ancient history were all slow-moving. Three years were required for Solomon's fleet to sail down the Mediterranean and bring back treasures from Ophir, Africa, and Spain. 1 Kings 10: 22. Even down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the *Duff* sailed—she was the first mission ship to the South Pacific, and took six months on the voyage—ships were still slow-moving.

In 1819, the *Savannah*, a little steam-vessel of about 300 tons burden, crossed the Atlantic from Savannah, U.S.A., to Liverpool; but twenty-two days

were required for the voyage. Both sail and steam were employed, and the passage was a record one, over which the wisecracks of those days shook their heads in wonder.

In 1836 the *Great Western* brought the record down to fifteen days; in 1850, the *City of Richmond* lowered it to eight days; in 1896, the *Lucania* to five days and seven hours; while the Atlantic liners now make the distance in four days and twenty hours, running at a speed of twenty-six knots per hour.

Here we surely approach the speed of the eagle's flight, and we stand in full view of the "swift ships" that pass in the night. But it is only the antitype of the picture drawn by the prophet 3,400 years ago. Of steamboats there are now 23,897 sailing the seas. Only 6,694 sail boats remain, and these are fast disappearing before the swifter ships that sail the great deep!

LIGHT—THE BRIGHTEST

The preacher, who "still taught the people knowledge," wrote more than 1,000 years before Christ. He compared the Christian life to a "light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. 4: 18.

"Changing night into day" is a prophetic expression (Job 17: 12), but it is only in modern life and with modern possibilities that it has become a reality. The world in its early history was not well lighted. Olive-oil lamps, pine-knots, and even wax tapers had nothing brilliant about them.

In 1798, gas began to be used as a luminant; in 1825, kerosene gave its help in dispelling the darkness; in 1826, the lime-light came, and the electric light in 1846; acetylene gas in 1861, and the magneto-electric light in 1862. At the present time our great cities seem

to forget that night has come, for the brightness of the lamps that cast their glory abroad shine as the perfect day. The prophetic picture is completed—"as the shining light . . . more and more unto the perfect day." But notice, this bright shining would be at the end of the journey.

CHARIOTS OF THE FLAMING TORCH

In writing about the "day of the Lord's preparation," the prophet Nahum pictures the railway train. The photograph is so definite that it cannot be misunderstood, and though the railway train did not find its genesis till 1825, while the vision was given 2,538 years before, yet the description is wonderfully accurate:—

The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of His preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken. The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings. He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defence shall be prepared. Nahum 2: 3-5.

The first passenger train was run on the Stockton and Darlington line in England in 1825. Its speed of twenty-five miles an hour was considered very wonderful indeed. The first train constructed by Stephenson travelled at six miles per hour. These were but rough models of the prophet's chariots. They did not run like the lightnings, nor did their flaming torches light the broad ways or the iron track. But today, when trains run from sixty to ninety miles per hour, they may be surely said to run "like the lightnings." "Thunderbolt," "lightning express," and "cannon ball"

are some of the characteristic names applied to these swift-running chariots.

The world has more than 750,000 miles of railway lines now in operation, and the trains are all running with their flaming torches. Thousands of them crowd the iron tracks, and you need only to stand on the railway platform and watch their streaming headlights, or to hear them jostle one against another to recall the prophet's picture. Stand in the city broad ways and see the crowding motor cars with their great acetylene eyes, and you cannot fail to discern the prophetic picture of long ago materialised. But as you gaze, do not forget that this photograph brings us to the "day of His preparation." It is one of the wonders to be seen by the last generation of men.

THE WINGS OF THE WIND

The poets talk of the "voice of the wind" and the "kisses of the wind," but to the Hebrew prophets it has been left to picture flying on the "wings of the wind." Three times in the Book of God do we find the expression, "wings of the wind," and once do we read of flying with the "wind in their wings." Zech. 5: 9. Beyond this we have the prophetic illustration, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" Isa. 60: 8. Here the prophet is viewing latter-day conditions, but in the passing events his view is arrested by moving bodies in the heavens, directed and controlled, flying as doves would to their windows.

More than half a century ago, Jules Verne wrote about sailing under the sea. Men looked at each other and whispered, "Romance." Then some daring spirit began to dream of sailing in the air. But the world

threw up its hands and shouted, "Impossible!" And impossible it did surely appear. Yet Isaiah did not dream when 2,700 years ago he prophesied the possibility of "flying as doves."

Tourists state that eight or ten aeroplanes may be seen flying at once, by the spectators in one of the London parks. In the distance these machines, controlled and directed by the human will, look like birds of passage. They would readily suggest the idea of doves on their homeward flight.

Agos ago David expressed the wish for "wings as a dove that he might fly away," but it is only very recently that men have attempted to indulge that apparently hopeless longing. Yet the dream has become a reality, and we see them flying today.

During the great war-struggle of 1914-1918, thousands of air machines were employed. Destruction and death rained down upon hundreds of helpless cities and defenceless towns. New methods of defence had to be employed, of which the world knew nothing before. "A bolt from the blue" may no longer serve as a figure of speech. It is now a reality.

In August, 1914, fifty aeroplanes were sent across the English Channel to France, and during the war many of the leading men, including the Premier of France and the Prime Minister of England, exchanged visits by means of air travel. In June, 1919, Albert C. Read, commanding NC-4, crossed the Atlantic, making the journey of 2,150 miles in 26 hours and 41 minutes. This was less than a quarter of the time occupied by the fastest ocean liner on that journey.

After this achievement, transoceanic flight became the absorbing theme of aerial circles, and before the end of 1919, this was recorded as a matter of his-

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tory. Starting from London November 12, 1919, Sir Ross Smith and his three companions reached Australia on December 10. The journey covered twenty-eight days, and the successful competitors received the £10,000 prize offered by the Commonwealth Government. The actual flying time from London to Darwin was 124 hours, and the average speed about 85 miles an hour.

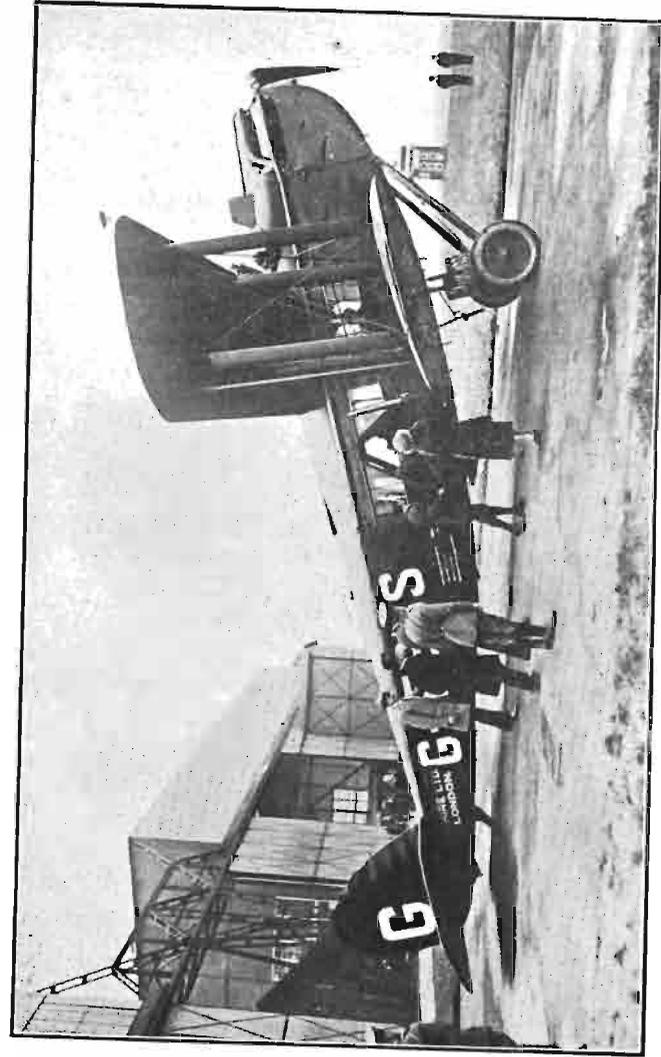
Aërial squadrons now appear "as a cloud, and fly as the doves to their windows." In fact, aërial navigation is established as one of the features of our modern everyday life. But in Scripture it appears, with many other wonders, as only the closing page of the prophetic record!

It is a vision granted to the last generation on earth, and we stand in its realisation today!

TALKING WITH THE LIGHTNING

Back in 1742, with his kite in the thunder-cloud, Benjamin Franklin began playing with the lightning. Men could not then realise any of the tremendous possibilities that lay behind the curious experiments of the man who seemed to be a philosophic crank.

More than three thousand years before this, the Unseen had questioned Job, the old patriarch of Uz, in the inquiry, "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" Job 38: 35. In those early ages no one had yet dreamed of a language in which the lightning could reply to man's questionings, or a way in which it could obey the commands of the human will. Yet by patient skill the fiery element has been harnessed, and its resistless energy employed answering the dictates and inquiries of human thought.



Kaiser & Herbert
AN AEROPLANE ARRIVING IN BERLIN, GERMANY, FROM LONDON
Regular air-services are now an established thing in Europe and America. Such services have also been introduced into Australia.

In 1837, Samuel F. B. Morse began the work of schooling the lightning to speak the language of man. After twelve years of patient endeavour he succeeded, and the lightning became the most intelligent and swift of all terrestrial messengers. On its tireless marchings lightning rushes at the rate of 288,000 miles per second.

In 1844, the first telegraph line was set in operation in America. It was laid from Washington to Baltimore, and when, on May 24, the news was brought to the office that Congress had passed a vote of £6,000 for official test purposes, Morse, the inventor, touched the sending key and ticked off the historic message, "What hath God wrought?"

Wires were soon stretched in all directions over the inhabited parts of the globe. Country after country was linked to the chain that bound the lightning courier, and intelligence flashed with the rapidity of thought from centre to centre throughout all civilisation. At the present time, 6,000,000 miles of wire connect all the arms of the great commercial world.

When this work of linking up the land centres had proved successful, the question of joining continents and islands came into view. Trials were made, and messages were sent across the sea between England and France. Finally, in 1858, after surmounting great difficulties, 2,050 miles of submarine cable were laid between Valentia, in Ireland, and Newfoundland. Across that cable the President of America and the Queen of England exchanged greetings, and the message was sent, "Europe and America are united by electric telegraph. 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'"

Sixteen cables now stretch across the Atlantic, with 2,694 crossing other seas of the world, giving an aggregate of 300,000 miles of submarine telegraphs.

The lightning has learned its language rapidly and well, and sometimes twelve messages are sent along the same wire without confusion. It is estimated that the world's telegraph messages number more than 500,000,000 annually. No invention of history has tended to bring the ends of the earth so near together as that of the telegraph. News from the most distant land can find a daily record in the newspapers of our own cities. Events of interest, strange and startling, find place in the very hour of their genesis, and the world reads its daily aggregate of 33,000,000 newspapers, but this is largely made possible by the fact that the lightning has become the servant of man.

But Jehovah has a part in all this. Man could never have tamed and harnessed this fiery steed of the atmosphere had not the mind of Deity planned it so. No other messenger could carry His message so speedily in the "time of the end." In no other way could the development of knowledge become so rapid or assured. God will yet use the lightning, with its strange language, to send some features of the "everlasting gospel" to the nations, tongues, and peoples of the earth.

There was a time when men laughed at the idea of talking with the lightning. But it is no longer so. The telegraph system, that originated in "talking with the lightning," is now an essential feature of all national, social, and commercial life.

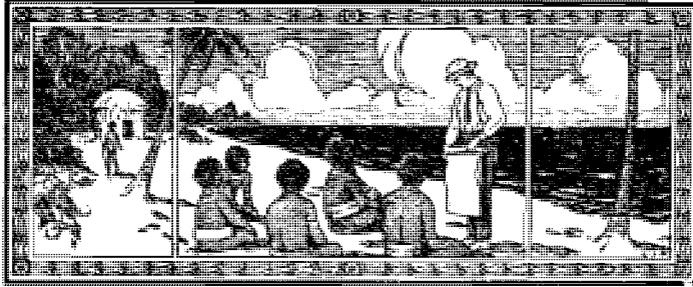
THE VOICE OF SPACE

The invention of wireless telegraphy by Marconi has been another addition to latter-day marvels. In

1906, England had six 2,000-mile stations, by which the world's hourly intelligence could be gathered. Wireless was placed on the steamship *Campania* in 1904, and since then thousands of the world's great fleet, from gigantic ocean-liners down to little coastal ships that sail quiet seas, carry the voiceless and wireless messenger that speaks and hears. Even this is as the prophet has spoken: "And thy words shall be brought down to the earth; and thy words shall sink down to the earth, and thy voice shall be as they that speak out of the earth, and thy voice shall be lowered to the ground." Isa. 29: 4, Septuagint.

Do your eyes behold these marvels? If so, do you read the great lesson of their creation? Do you see the latter-day imprint on them all? And do they testify concerning the things of this last generation? There are ten thousand other wonderful things in the world today—gigantic machines of almost infinite strength and delicate objects of marvellous design, scales that can weigh the sunbeam, and micrometers that can measure the ten-thousandth part of an inch. Yes, all life is wonderful today, and during the past century over two million patents have appeared to make this age the most wonderful of all ages. Study well the lesson, study well the demonstration, for it belongs to the last page of earth's illuminated history.

The things that men called wonders in the ages past were all stationary—great lifeless objects that grew slowly with the years. The wonders of today throb with life—almost natural, almost superhuman, and in them we have reached the last hilltop of earth's wonderland!



CHAPTER III

Miracles in Gospel Expansion

MAN is by nature a worshipping creature, but in his devotions he has indulged many moods and sought unto many deities. Whether as a crouching slave, mumbling in the darkness, or an imperial monarch, displaying at his incensed shrine the trophies of his victories, man has worshipped, and still continues to worship.

In his wisdom, man first left his Creator, then sought after the "Unknown God," but in the foolishness of that wisdom he has failed to find any good, or any god that can help! Many and varied are the objects to which the human mind has, at different times, paid its adoration. Foolish, unreal, and always debasing these objects have been, but, withal, of such a varied character that fancy cannot but be amused over the catalogue.

In dimensions these gods have ranged all the way from little creeping insects up to the gigantic Sphinx of Egypt, which measures 150 feet in length. All the known elements in earth and sky have been adored. All the characteristics of demons and heroes have been made objects of veneration. The animals of creation and even the fishes of the sea have been worshipped,

in addition to the countless number of idols formed by human hands.

SERPENT WORSHIP

Among the many hideous and debasing objects—man has never worshipped anything apart from God that has been elevating—the serpent is one that has claimed a superior place. Through it Satan first tempted man. That creature, hypnotised by the fallen Lucifer, spoke to man in the language of Eden as a deceiver. And though since then man has hated the serpent, that hatred has often turned to a dreading veneration that has led man to worship the object he feared. "It is one of the most remarkable triumphs of that 'old serpent the devil,' that has succeeded in persuading fallen man in every country and every age without exception to adore that reptile form in which he destroyed the happiness of our first parents."—*"The Book and Its Story," page 68.*

On the way to Canaan the people of Israel were bitten by fiery serpents. By divine direction an image of the destroyer was made in brass, reared on a pole, and the suffering who looked, lived. This gave Satan an opportunity. Now the serpent had apparently become a life-giver, it might surely be worshipped to advantage. Even Israel was deceived, for that "thing of brass" remained with them as an object of worship for over 600 years. 2 Kings 18: 4.

The worship of the serpent has been almost as widespread as sun-worship, the most ancient of all forms of idolatry. This will be seen by the following quotation:—

In the temple of Belus at Babylon were worshipped large serpents of silver. In Persia, serpents were considered the governors of the universe. The serpent Calyd was wor-

shipped in Hindustan, as was the serpent Python at Delphos. Under the form of the dragon, the serpent has to this day governed China and Japan; while the serpent-worship of Syria and Egypt is shown by all the ancient history of these countries. It entered largely into the mythology of Greece and Rome.—“*The Book and Its Story*,” page 69.

Speaking about the worship of the ancient Druids, the same author says: “The worship of the sun became the religion of the Druids. There soon followed, as among other nations, the worship of the serpent. The serpent’s egg was the Druid’s crest, and the actual serpent lay entwined at the foot of their altars.”

When first created, the serpent was a beautiful winged creature, possessed of charming colours and great wisdom. This enabled Satan to use it so successfully in the work of deception. The name “serpent” is sometimes applied to Satan, as he is now a degraded and fallen creature. He used the serpent, and it has fallen also. But all worship offered to the serpent is in reality the glorification and worship of that fallen angel.

In the new creation, when all marks of the curse are obliterated, one and only one reminder in nature will be left—the serpent must continue to crawl upon the earth. All other parts of nature will be fully restored. But while the serpent will lose its poison and its terror, its place will not be regained. Because it lent itself to Satan as a hypnotic subject, to do his bidding, it must keep its humble place in the dust for ever. Isa. 65: 25.

All false worship must finally be obliterated from the universe of God. But first the true must be placed in contrast with that which is false, even to the farthest boundaries of the habitations of men.

Jehovah entrusted the Jewish nation with this work, but they failed because they were too selfish to spend and be spent as missionaries, too selfish to forget self in devotion to God and man.

DEVELOPMENT OF HEATHENISM

The contest between the religion of Jehovah and Satanic counterfeits has been carried on through the ages, and often the true has seemed to be lessening rather than gaining. Heathenism had forms and practices that appealed to the vanity and impulse of the human heart. It was adapted to selfishness, and in this way it worked successfully.

Mighty temples have been reared to many deities. Costly shrines have been devoted to the worship of many gods, and multitudes have thronged to the altars of the false and the unholy. Royal patronage has been bestowed, and ceremonies the most enchanting have been devised, by which priests and vestals have sought to know the occult and the mysterious. As a rule, however, these religions remained local and circumscribed by the boundaries of their own lands. With the exception of sun-worship in its many phases, no false religion has extended far from its own country. But it was necessary that one religion should extend to all the earth, and thus talk of the true God to every nation.

Each form of religion has carried its own character, but none of the false religions carried the divine idea. It was, therefore, necessary that God should let man see His character in the heavenly or gospel form, necessary that man should see a demonstration of its superiority over every other religion just to the same extent that the power of God is superior to that of

Satan. Hence it is that Christ was sent to walk among men as God's representative—a true demonstration of the divine religion. He was the beginning of God's demonstration of superiority. He did not come in greatness or human splendour, yet the gospel He carried was supreme, and He was not afraid to proclaim its final victory.

THE GOSPEL TO ALL THE WORLD

Though rejected by His own nation and disowned by His own people, Jesus Christ pledged Himself and all the kingdom of heaven to the daring statement: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14.

Never task so great, never possibility so distant, never demonstration so improbable, yet the pronouncement was made without egotism, without question, and without hesitation, in calm certainty of its fulfilment.

Look at the picture that faced the Redeemer when the words of this prediction fell upon the ears of His disciples—A Roman emperor ruling the world; the Latin tongue spoken by 120,000,000 people, and its power extending, while the Greek language, in which the prediction was uttered, was fast declining; the world full of false gods and false religions; Rome with all her national deities protected by law; Athens with her 30,000 gods, and only one altar to the "Unknown God"; Egypt with her pyramids and her temples and her ritual yet in its splendour; India with Buddhism triumphant; China devoted to Confucius; the sacred fire of Persia still burning; while even Israel, the special and favoured people, had lost

their hope. Into this world of idolatry, superstition, and falsehood Christ launched His gospel of the kingdom, declaring, "It shall be preached in all the world."

The prospect was not one that would invite such a prediction. Yet from the blue waters of Galilee, from the slopes of Tabor and Olivet, and from the cities of Palestine, the voice was heard in its inaugural declarations concerning the gospel of the kingdom.

The "common people heard Him gladly." The rich and great stepped aside, and even in Israel they would not own the "Light of the world." Yet, followed by a few, most of them fishermen, He made the unconditional statement that all nations in the world would yet hear the gospel.

Heathenism, in all its conquests, had carried flame and sword. Through compulsion and cruelty its power was manifested. Mahomet went forth with the Koran and the sword, and for a time it seemed as though the religion of Islam would fill the earth, yet for centuries its diminution has astonished the world.

With neither flame nor sword, without earthly prestige or worldly honour, the gospel must go further than any and all other religions. It must go to "all the world." Every nation must hear the kingdom-story.

Did Christ speak truly? Did the Prophet "like unto Moses" utter words of wisdom in that most improbable of all predictions? The disciples, animated by the spirit of love and self-forgetfulness seen in the Master, "went everywhere preaching the Word." Britain, Spain, India, and Egypt heard from their lips the message of life. And when Justin Martyr wrote about A.D. 140 he could say, "There is not a nation, Greek or barbarian, among whom prayers and thanks-

giving are not offered to the Father and Creator in the name of the crucified Jesus."

The powers of darkness were roused to mortal combat. Heathenism began a struggle for life, and the heralds of the cross, with neither sword nor spear for defence, fell thick and fast! Then the sword passed from the tired hand of heathenism to the "mystery of iniquity," but it still dripped with the red blood of millions who "loved not their lives unto the death." Restricted, banished, proscribed, and trampled under feet, the gospel still maintained the conflict through years of struggle, but it was on losing ground and seemed to have reached the point of failure and almost complete annihilation. But, be astonished, O ye heavens—the burning bush is not consumed. For the elect's sake the days were shortened, and from the ruins of an apparent failure the prophecy rises again, and now heralds of that gospel-kingdom are in every land.

Two pictures, taken from the *Missionary Review of the World*, will best answer the question concerning the prediction made by Christ:—

1810

Nearly every country in Asia and Africa was closed to the gospel.

The churches did not believe in foreign missions.

There were practically no Protestant Christians in heathen lands.

1910

Practically every nation in the world is open to missionaries.

All evangelical churches are interested in missions. To speak against missions is counted a disgrace and a sign of ignorance.

More than two million Protestant Christians have been gathered in heathen lands—besides all who have died in the faith.

Only one hundred foreign missionaries had been sent out. The Bible was translated into only sixty-five languages.

Only a few thousands of dollars were given to foreign missions.

There were no medical missionaries.

There were no mission hospitals or orphanages.

There were no unmarried women missionaries, and no organised work for women.

There was no native ministry.

Missionary work was not recognised in American and British colleges.

There were no mission presses or agencies for preparing and distributing Christian literature in non-Christian lands.

There are nearly 22,000 foreign missionaries in the world. The Bible has been translated into 500 different languages and dialects.

Total foreign missionary contributions amount to nearly 25,000,000 dollars (£5,000,000) annually.

Thousands of medical missionaries in the heathen lands treat 3,000,000 patients a year.

There are 400 mission hospitals and over 500 orphanages and asylums in foreign lands, operated by missionaries.

There are over 6,000 unmarried women missionaries to heathen women and children.

There are about 93,000 native pastors, evangelists, etc., working among their own people.

There are nearly 30,000 schools and colleges conducted by Protestant missionaries in foreign lands.

There are over 160 publishing houses and mission presses, and 400 Christian periodicals in the mission fields.

Thousands of college students are in the mission fields, and thousands are preparing to go.

Let it be remembered that these changes have come in during the memory of men who are living today.

It has been a wonderful achievement, and the end is not yet.

The truth of Christ's prophecy has been demonstrated. Atheism stands astonished at the marvellous vindication. But, reader, with it all, the "end" of which Christ spoke is brought within the range of your vision and mine.

Mission work, as we understand it, does not date back very far in the world's history. In 1555-1556 Richir and Chariter, with twelve others, were sent out by Calvin as missionaries to minister to the Huguenot colonies in Brazil and to labour among the Indians.

The first contribution to missions in England was £100, given by Sir Walter Raleigh to the Virginian Company in the year 1588, for the propagation of the Christian religion in that settlement.

The first English missionary hymn was written by Isaac Watts in 1719—"Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun."

The first Moravian missionaries were sent to the West India Islands in 1733.

The Baptist ministers of Northampton first began to pray for the spread of "the gospel to the most distant parts of the habitable globe" in 1784.

The first Englishman who became a foreign missionary—William Carey—was born in 1761. He went to India in 1793. In 1800 the first Hindu convert, Krischna Pal, was baptised. He was the author of that sweet hymn—

O thou, my soul, forget no more
The Friend who all thy sorrows bore.

The first missionary to New Zealand, Samuel Marsden, went out in 1814.

In 1814 the first Chinese convert, Tsai Ako, was baptised.

The first missionary conference was held at Shanghai, China, in 1877.

Calvert and Watsford went out to Fiji in 1838. In 1835 there was not one Fijian Christian. In 1885 there was not one Fijian heathen in eighty of the inhabited islands of that group. Instead there were 1,100 churches with 104,000 attendants at public worship.

More than 2,500 years ago, Isaiah declared, "The isles shall wait for His law." Isa. 42: 4. But the days of waiting are ended. In 1796 the *Duff*, the first mission vessel, was sent out by the London Missionary Society to the islands of the South Pacific. Six months after, when the vessel anchored at Tahiti, the first gospel hymn was sung in the southern seas.

Jehovah undertook a gigantic task in the work of sending the "gospel of the kingdom" to all nations. But the marvellous way in which the gospel has gone during the past forty-eight years demonstrates very clearly that He is well able to complete the task. No greater miracle than that of gospel expansion is to be seen on the earth today. But this demonstration is another evidence, given by Jehovah, to tell this generation that the end is near.



CHAPTER IV

The Old Book Triumphant

ONE of the most startling features that confronts earth's last generation is "the increase of knowledge." The prophetic Word has definitely committed itself to the statement that in the time of the end, "knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12: 4.

In a recent lecture on "Bibliographical Research," delivered in the British Museum, Mr. R. Peddie stated, "Since the invention of printing it has been estimated that books to the number of 40,000,000 have been published." The lecturer also stated that he supposed "about 50,000 books were published annually apart from fiction, children's books, and books that were no books."

In the early years of the Christian era, the work of producing books was slow and tedious. Weary fingers traced with their reed pens slowly over parchment sheets, but today pages by the million are being hurled from the printing press in all civilised lands. When Wycliffe gave the Bible to England in the fourteenth century, it required ten months' work to transcribe the volume, and then it cost £60. But a Bible can now be purchased for half-a-crown, nicely bound, in

The Old Book Triumphant

clear, definite type, with the whole process of printing and binding completed in a few minutes.

Add to the 50,000 new books published annually, the 60,000 newspapers of daily or weekly production, and there surely appears a demonstration of the increase of knowledge that is nothing less than startling. Then, add to these the world's yearly aggregate of 35,000,000 volumes printed and 12,000,000,000 copies of newspapers issued, and see if we have not reached the time of the full increase of knowledge.

The Bible must not be numbered among the 40,000,000 books published since the art of printing was invented. It dates far back of all these. It alone of all the volumes has gone through all the various stages of printing, from the rudest lettering of art's earliest times to the most perfectly finished volume of the present.

Often the question is asked by men in the world today—

CAN WE TRUST THE OLD BOOK?

The dust of thirty centuries lies upon its pages. The anathemas of ten thousand enemies have fallen around it. The curses of a million foes have been hurled at it. The hatred of a long regiment of atheists has made war upon it; while the disloyalty of many who profess Christianity has wounded it in the house of its friends. Still the Old Book lives, and, undismayed, steps out of the conflict to engage new assailants and to occupy new battle-fields in that triumphant march that nothing earthly or Satanic has been able to hinder.

The Bible is the oldest of all books among men—the most revered, the most loved, and yet the most

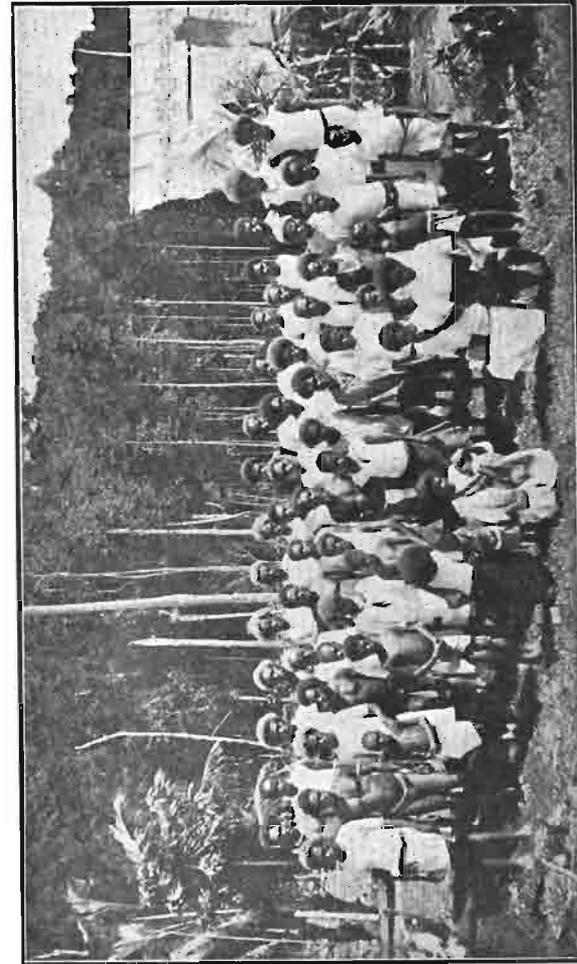
Earth's Last Generation

hated of all books. Every page has been in the conflict; every statement has been called in question. A hundred Diocletians have sworn its extermination; a hundred Voltaires have ridiculed its pathos and its power; a hundred Tom Paines have laughed over its miracles, and a hundred Ingersolls have held up to derision what they have claimed to be "the mistakes of Moses." Yet long since these gallant foemen have retired into their silent halls of dust, but the Book against which they made war lives on.

Many a Star Chamber has commanded its cremation. Many a St. Paul's Cross has witnessed its burning. Many a Bonner has condemned its readers to extirpation, and the ashes of the martyrs have mingled with the ashes of the Book. But lo! it rises from the fire. Even the grave cannot hide it, neither can the sons of men destroy it.

Today it speaks to the sons of earth in over 700 different tongues—to the Indian in his wigwam, to the Laplander in his snow hut, to the Terra del Fuegoan in his land of fire, to the South Sea Islander under his palm grove, to the natives of New Zealand among their green hills, and to the dark men of Africa on their burning plains. But to all it tells the same sweet story—the story of a love that died for man.

Never before in the history of men have such extensive plans been made for its multiplication and dissemination. In 1919, the British and Foreign Bible Society alone sent out 10,000,000 copies to the world in 504 languages. More than 17,000,000 are sent abroad every year, and the number has been annually increasing since the first book, a Latin Bible, was printed in 1450.



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MISSION AT GUGUMBI, CHOISEUL,
SOLOMON ISLANDS

Races and tribes of men the world over—white, black, red, yellow, and brown—are now hearing in their own tongues the sweet story of a love that died for man.

No wonder this Book talks about miracles, for its own history presents one of the greatest miracles of the ages. Note this statement:—

Gibbon, Voltaire, Chesterfield, strove each in his own way to destroy the influence of Christianity, yet it is recorded that after Gibbon's death, in the house which he occupied on Lake Geneva, a Bible depository was established. The stream of infidel works written by Voltaire absorbed the full capacity of a printing press, but the press before very long was appropriated to the work of printing Bibles. The club-room where Chesterfield's friends used to meet to encourage each other in hostility to the Bible became the vestry of a church where the prayers of saints and penitent sinners were constantly heard.—*Bible Society Record, March, 1914, page 38.*

With such a history written concerning it, with such a power possessed by it, with such a glory shining over it, no one need fear to trust the Old Book. Ages, the longest, have only verified its statements; persecution, the fiercest, has only made its gilding the brighter; denial, the bitterest, has only made its whole system of truth more evident.

Stone witnesses from the past now testify concerning it; historic records from the palaces of the empires it condemned, and the halls of their forgotten kings, shake themselves from the dust to declare its verity. Youth finds a romance in its recitals, and ten thousand grey heads bend over its pages and lie pillowed upon its promises. It is the Book for all time, for all nations, for all hearts. In it we hear the song of the morning stars, the peace-chorus of angelic messengers, the sighings of a Gethsemane, and the triumphs of a resurrection hymn.

When Queen Mary and Philip entered London in 1554, a large picture of Henry VIII had been painted for the occasion. The artist pictured the king as

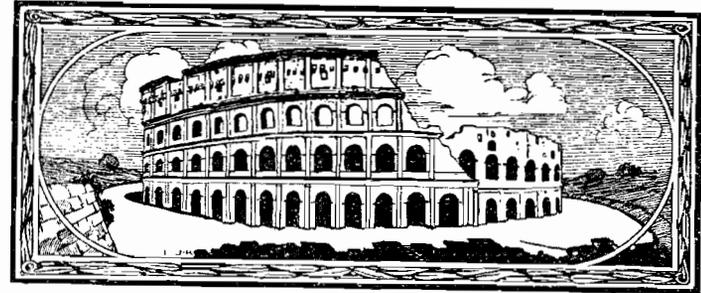
holding in his hand a Bible on which were the words *Verbum Dei*—the Word of God. This gave great offence, and the artist was called before the Bishop of Winchester and threatened with the Fleet Prison for putting that Book there. Soon after it was removed, and a pair of gloves put in the king's hand where the Bible had been.

But what a substitution! Yet millions in our world today are making an exchange as worthless. They fear to trust the Old Book; and some worldly scheme, some human philosophy, some earthly ambition, or some selfish preferment is permitted to take the place that the *Verbum Dei* should hold.

The Bible has stood every test that honesty or faith could demand, while the teeth of time itself have failed to leave any markings upon it. The great "Historic Catalogue" of the printed editions of the Bible in the library of the British and Foreign Bible Society was recently published, and describes nearly 10,000 separate editions arranged under 628 different language headings. To no other volume does this honour belong.

The Bible is a plain book, old-fashioned according to the world's idea, and yet up-to-date for every soul-need among the generations of men. More than 500 of its predictions have already been fulfilled, many others are in process of accomplishment, while others only wait the fullness of time. It is the divine bridge over all human history, and it binds together the two eternities in the life of God.

Take this "Old Book" for your companion. It is well worthy of all your confidence. History, reason, human experience, and the voice of Deity all declare that the Old Book can be trusted!



CHAPTER V

The Test of Time

LIKE an actor before the footlights, the Bible has played its part in the full blaze of all history and before the critics of a world. And if it has needed testing, sufficient opposition, criticism, and time have passed upon it to do the testing.

That Book contains predictions that cover centuries; prophecies that deal with national and imperial destinies, statements that measure time with the exactitude of days and hours; and personal references that give the name, occupation, and character of historic actors months, years, and even centuries before they were born. Will the chronologist and the historian bear witness to the verity of the Scriptures, or will they show the Bible statements to be a jumble of incoherent sentences like those found in the Koran, or a list of imaginary statements like those of romantic writings?

Let us test the Old Book and see if its statements are reliable. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Gen. 49: 10. More than fifteen centuries passed between the time when Jacob made this prophetic pronouncement and the coming of

“Shiloh” to whom it referred. But during all that time Judah retained the sceptre.

The sceptre, or tribal staff, was the symbol of tribal authority. To Joseph it might have been given as the one recognised by Jacob as his first-born, but God made Joseph the ruler of Egypt instead, and to Judah, his deliverer, was given the tribal staff.

The Hebrew word *shébet*, translated “rod, sceptre, staff, and tribe,” was formerly a staff of the almond tree. It was first held by the father of the household, indicative of his authority, then by the leader of the tribe or division of the people, and finally by the king as ruler of the nation. The sceptre referred to in the prophecy is evidently that of tribal authority. True, this distinction culminated in kingly power, but afterward returned to the tribal prominence first bestowed.

The sceptre of Judah found its glory in the throne given to David, and thence in his royal line till the time of the captivity in 606 B.C. But the kingly authority was not renewed after the return from exile. Yet all the while, even during the captivity, Judah held prominence among the tribes of Israel.

Zerubbabel, a son of the royal line, returned as governor after the captivity, and in the year 408 B.C., the fifteenth of Darius Nothus, the Jewish polity was established with Nehemiah as governor. From that time the authority lessened. Trouble and disgrace came upon the rebellious, and finally an Idumæan—Herod—was placed as king over Judea. All this lessening power should have reminded Israel of the coming “Shiloh.”

Finally, three years before Christ was born, Cæsar Augustus determined to make all the provinces a part of the Roman Empire, and he decreed that all the world

should be enrolled as subjects of his great dominion. Luke 2: 1-3. This decree took nationality from the people and made them Roman citizens. It was stoutly opposed, and did not reach Judea till some three years had passed. But it came in time to bring Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem just before Christ was born. Joseph and Mary were the last two real representatives of the royal line, and they belonged to the tribe of Judah. The law of Cæsar required that they attend, and a journey of seventy miles had to be made from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Then in that royal city, in the face of all its memories and its monuments of tribal distinction and kingly prestige, they must sign their names as ordinary Roman citizens. Evidently time would not at once permit of this, as on their arrival great difficulty was experienced in finding a place of shelter for the night. But that night Christ was born—the “Shiloh” had come. Had they signed the Roman register before His birth He would have been born a Roman. Soon after they did sign the register, and they were enrolled as Romans. But in that act all tribal distinction was lost. All were now Romans, henceforth to be ruled by the Romans, to be subject to Roman laws, and their land to be merely a Roman province. But the “Shiloh” had come.

Over a span of more than fifteen centuries reached the prophecy, but its truthfulness was established by the delay of that one night. Christ was born in the royal line of David, of the tribe of Judah, a Jew. Had He been born after His parents signed the Roman register, He would have been a Roman, and the prophecy would have failed. The sceptre would have departed from Judah before “Shiloh” had come.

Another fact from the Old Book will be of interest. In the Revelation John gives the time for the Turkish rule and independence as "five months, . . . an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year." Rev. 9: 5, 15. Taking the prophetic measure of "a day for a year," these periods totalled would reach for 541 years and 15 days.

The historian is very definite in giving the beginning of this period of Turkish authority. "It was on the twenty-seventh of July, in the year 1299 of the Christian era, that Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia; and the singular accuracy of the date seems to disclose some foresight of the rapid and destructive growth of the monster."—Gibbon, "*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*," chap. 64, par. 14.

Add to the date here given by the historian the number of days and years of the prophecy, and we are brought to August 11, 1840. If the prophecy is correct, this must be the termination of Turkish independence.

The year 1840 found the Sultan at war with the Khedive of Egypt. Losing rapidly his hold on matters, the former appealed to the Powers of Europe for help. His army, sent to oppose the Egyptian forces in Syria, had mostly gone over to the enemy, and the remainder were routed, with the loss of all supplies. His fleet, sent to fight with Egypt, was given over by its commander to the enemy. The Powers met in London, and the "Treaty of London" was signed, July 15, 1840. Immediately an ambassador, bearing an ultimatum to Mahomet Ali, was despatched to Egypt. There he landed on August 11, 1840—just the very day that the prophecy required for its fulfilment.

Since that time Turkey has been but the "Sick

man of Europe," kept in place without prestige or independence, by the decisions of the Powers of Europe. But that independence ended just at the very point indicated by the scripture. John had written the prophecy one thousand years before the first landmark was placed by the historian. And the authority, the progressive authority, of that Power ended then, and ever since has been on the decline. See "Pictorial History of the World," pages 145, 998.

Yes, the Book of God is true. It has stood the test of the ages, and no one need fear that it is now going to fail either in its predictions or its promises.

THE BIBLE AND OTHER SACRED BOOKS

The world is said to own seven sacred books: The Jewish Talmud, the Trepitika of the Buddhists, the Five Kings of the Chinese, the Vedas of the Hindoos, the Zendavesta of the Persians, the Koran of the Mohammedans, and the Bible of the Christians.

The Koran is of the most recent writing of the seven, while the Bible is the most ancient. The contrast between the first and the last of these sacred books is very great. The Koran was written by Mahomet, who was born A.D. 570 and died in 632. Between 610 and 623, much of his time was spent in a cave near Mecca. It is stated by historians that he called to his help a Persian Jew and two Christians.

The Koran contains 6,000 verses and 114 chapters. It was written in the sacred language of Arabia, but translations have been made into English, in 1734, and into French in 1647. This book is composed of fragments from the ancient traditions of the Arabs, writings of the ancient Hebrews, the Talmud, the New

Testament, the apocryphal writings, and tenets of the ancient Magi.

The matter of the Koran is exceedingly incoherent, the book evidently being written without any logical order of thought as a whole or in its parts. Gibbon styles it "an incoherent rhapsody of fable and precept and declamation, which sometimes crawls in the dust and sometimes is lost in the clouds."

This book is, however, highly prized by the children of the desert. One copy, treasured in the Mohammedan city of Ispanruza, Persia, is stated to be valued at £10,000. Its covers, nine and a half by four inches, are of solid gold one-eighth of an inch in thickness, while precious stones set in symbolic designs figure in the centre and corners of each side. The book is written upon parchment. But, like many other earthly things, the value is largely on the outside.

The Arabs have very persistently rejected anything in the way of translations into any common language or even into the Turkish tongue. In all countries where these people are, the book is still read in the Arabic—the language in which it was written. Even to mispronounce its sacred words is regarded as sacrilege, though with many worshippers it is now an unknown tongue. Of recent years, however, efforts have been made to translate the book into the vernacular of the Turks. The common people were to hear the sacred commands in their own language, so that they might be bound more closely to its people and its religion.

The result of this effort is thus told by the *Missionary Review of the World*:—

It was found, however, that the translation of the Koran created scepticism among the Turks, as readers discovered so many incongruities and falsehoods that they questioned its in-

spiration. As a result the Ottoman Government has seen best to stop this enterprise, and has ordered all copies of the parts so far issued to be confiscated and destroyed.—*June, 1914.*

It is stated that 20,000 commentaries have been written on the Koran, and yet it has been largely an unknown book except to its priesthood. Like other false creations and false theories it will not stand the light. While it speaks of Adam, Moses, Abraham, David, and Jesus Christ, and some of its statements are borrowed from the Scriptures, all are so linked with fable and romance that faith finds no basis on which to rest.

How different is all this from the Christian's Bible. Mahomet claimed inspiration, but no prophecy or prediction is given to support or demonstrate that claim. Mohammedanism is a subject of Scriptural prophecy, but of itself it has no predictions. On the other hand the Book of God challenges the world on the fulfilment of its prophecies. More than 500 have already seen their accomplishment, and others are commanding the attention of a world today.

Then, the Bible has no fear of contradiction or questioning. It ever points to the light and seeks the light. It has been translated into more than 750 of the leading languages of the world. One book is characteristic of the work of man; the other is the work of God. The light diffused by the Bible is, no doubt, one of the reasons why the sons of Islam are beginning to question the illogical statements of the Koran. The Book of God appeals to reason and an intelligent faith; the Koran, to the credulity of its superstitious devotees. Mahomet took his book in one hand and the sword in the other and started out to dominate Asia. Jehovah takes His Book and its sword and

undertakes to dominate the world—but it is the “sword of the Spirit.”

THE BOOK OF POWER

Bible multiplication and Bible power must be placed among the marvels of this marvellous age. It has outstripped every competitor in the race for supremacy, and it has dominated every antagonist in the demonstration of power.

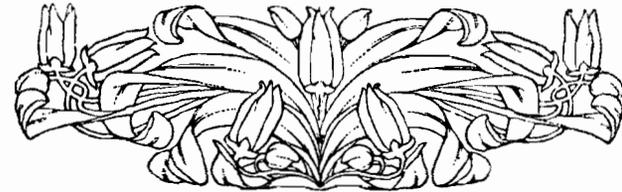
A young Chinese in Kansu bought a copy of every edition the colporteur carried. He piled the volumes before the image of Buddha in his home, and said to it, “Are you true, or are these books true? I have bowed down and worshipped you for many years, and you have said no good words to me, or given me any good books like these to read. In them I find forgiveness of sins and the way to heaven; are you true or are they true?”

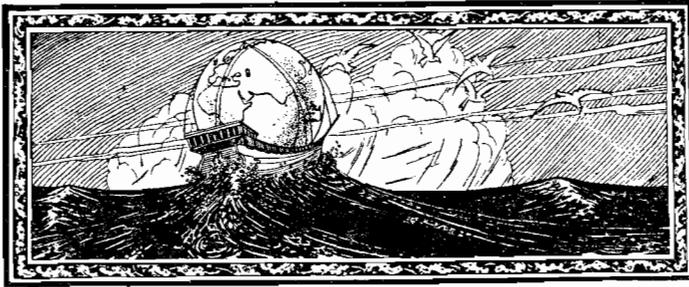
There is a power in its prophecies, a sweetness in its promises, an exactitude in its historic statements, and a divinity in its commands, that appeal to the heart of man. Not yet has the perfect elevation of this Book been seen. The “two witnesses” are pictured as ascending to heaven in the very sight of their enemies. The world once deemed them dead, but the life from God has taken possession of them. Rev. 11: 11-13.

Greater methods and plans for Bible extension are in mind. The Marquis of Northampton, in presiding at the 106th annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, held at the Queen's Hall, London, gave a forecast of the future in regard to Bible distribution. “A revolution,” he said, “was being effected in the society's means of distribution by means of quick travel, but in the next few years it was possible that

things would be completely altered by what was known as aërial navigation. Possibly the time was not far distant when they might receive visits from the society's colporteurs, and when these would be flying through the air, dropping Testaments as they went, and reaching parts of the world where as yet no missionary had been able to go.”

The Book has proved itself equal to every emergency, and in every contest it has come out triumphant. Soon the great contest will close, and those who have dared to believe and obey the Book, as it whispers to the millions of earth's last generation, will, with it, stand triumphant in the light of eternity.





CHAPTER VI

Higher Criticism

IN the Book of God we read of "scoffers" coming in the last days. Scoffers there have been since the time when Ishmael ridiculed the child of promise, nineteen centuries before Christ. But their number has increased into a mighty multitude in these last days.

The Voltaires, the Tom Paines, the Renans, and the Ingersolls have had their day. They have loudly proclaimed their disregard of God and all that is holy. The world has listened, but an unsatisfied conviction has crept over the heart of humanity. Atheism has proved disappointing, and in the darkness that trembling heart has reached out again after its God.

But now the ground of conflict has changed, and under the name of "higher criticism" a refined atheism has laid its hand on things divine, and the Book of God has been "wounded in the house of its friends."

Rejecting the grosser factors of infidelity, these latter-day critics have undertaken the gigantic task of setting God right, and of rearranging His Holy epistles to the sons of men. In their hands the Book of God becomes an object for mere intellectual criticism. Its historic records are classified as "myths of

Higher Criticism

the past" or inventions of human thought, while its mightiest problems are discussed and regarded as matters of little moment to the modern scientific mind.

The story of Creation runs all through Bible history as a well-recognised fact. But the "higher critics" will persist in pushing in "evolution" where God has emphatically spoken only of "Creation." And in order to make the fact changeless and positive, He *wrote* it with His own finger on the adamantine slab from Sinai. Ex. 20: 11. Fifty-six times the Book declares for Creation, but it knows nothing of a world produced through evolution.

Jonah's book is recognised by Christ as authentic and perfectly historic. Four times in the Gospels He refers to the narrative, and, in order to put every question aside, He finally presents the fact of the prophet's entombment in the great fish as a figure of His own burial and resurrection. Matt. 12: 39, 40. But the critics who pity the Biblical mistakes would have us believe that this remarkable writing is nothing but "a romance of the past," a crude example of ancient letterpress production, unworthy alike of credence and a place in the Divine Record.

Paul, the New Testament logician, speaks of the resurrection of Christ as the great event on which the future of God's people depends. Without it a hopeless eternity would rest over those that have fallen asleep. But these "latter-day critics," big in their own conceit, push this rainbow of hope, that God has stretched over the ages, to one side as "improbable, impossible, and unnecessary." Surely we live in the days of the "scoffers" and the age when men declare, "My Lord delayeth His coming."

INTELLIGENCE IN NATURE

Not only does the Bible declare for Creation and a Creator, but this great fact is stamped over all nature, so that man is left without excuse in his unbelief. The honey-bee in forming its cell does not build it square with a flat plane at the bottom. The bottom is composed of three planes shaped like a diamond, and these are placed in such a manner as to form a hollow pyramid at the bottom of the cell. Maraldi, inventor of glass hives, measured these angles and found them to be $109^{\circ} 28'$ and $70^{\circ} 32'$.

Reaumur, desiring to know why these particular angles were selected, without stating his design or mentioning Maraldi's researches, requested M. König, a skilful mathematician, to determine by calculations what the angles would be of three equal and similar rhomboid plates forming a concave pyramidal base of a six-sided cell, so that the least possible amount of matter should enter into their construction. M. König, after a long and most careful calculation, and employing what mathematicians call the "infinitesimal calculus," found that the angles would be $109^{\circ} 26'$ and $70^{\circ} 34'$. This calculation was found to differ only by two-sixtieths of a degree from the angles chosen by the bees.

Later, Maclaurin, a Scotch mathematician, going over the calculation again, found a slight error in the logarithmic table used by König. The bees were found to be right after all, and an error was thus detected in the table that might have wrecked a vessel employing the figures. See "Graven in the Rock," page 52. Just think of earth's great scientists being corrected by an unscientific little bee, and then ask if there is not an intelligent God over nature.

DESIGN IN NATURE

"Every one of the minerals and metals composing the crust of our globe has its own peculiar formation, physical character, and chemical properties; and when we come to understand these, we shall no longer regard them as shapeless masses, . . . but objects modelled by the Divine Hand, and revealing the Divine Mind. Even in the profound depths and dark recesses of the earth, where the influences necessary to sustain organisation and life cease to act, the Creative Spirit has pursued His stupendous task of giving form and beauty to every particle of matter. . . . But the crystal form in any one particular mineral is the same everywhere; that of quartz, for example, whether taken from the Alps, the Andes, or the Himalayas, is the same, not an angle is found to differ. So of salt, iron, and marble, etc. Hence, each mineral may be properly said to have as much a distinct shape of its own as each plant or animal, and may be as readily distinguished by the character presented to the eye. . . .

"But these combinations and figures of crystallisation are so far from indicating the fortuitous result of accident, that they are disposed according to laws the most severely rigid, and in proportions the most mathematically exact. In the work of crystallisation we behold the perfect forms of geometry as traced by the finger of God."—"*Work Days of God*," page 168.

No, neither the atheist nor the "higher critic" can put God out of the written Book nor out of the book of Nature. Mineral crystals from below the sod and untold millions of snow crystals from above all proclaim the skill of an Infinite Designer who works without shop or tools. No snow crystal without its perfect

angles, no flower without its beauty of form, hence each one proclaims its Creator and the God of Creation.

CRITIC FAILURES

In summing up his great work on "higher criticism," A. H. Sayce writes thus:—

Our task is done. The records of the Old Testament have been confronted with the monuments of the ancient Oriental world, wherever this was possible, and their historical accuracy and trustworthiness has been tested by a comparison with the latest results of archaeological research. . . . In glancing over the preceding pages we cannot fail to be struck by the fact that the evidence of Oriental archæology is on the whole distinctly unfavourable to the pretensions of the higher criticism. . . . The cuneiform inscriptions have restored the historical credit of certain passages of the Pentateuch which have been resolved into myth, and have demonstrated the worthlessness of the arguments by which their mystic character had been maintained.—*"Higher Criticism," pages 554, 561.*

Sir William Dawson has truly said:—

The Bible is the bravest of books. Coming from God and conscious of nothing but God's truth, it awaits the progress of knowledge with calm security. It watches the antiquary ransacking among classic ruins, and rejoices in every medal he discovers and every inscription he deciphers; for from that rusty coin or corroded marble it expects nothing but confirmation of its own veracity.

Place side by side the Biblical account of making man with Darwin's description, and note the difference:—

We thus learn that man is descended from a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in its habits and an inhabitant of the Old World. This creature, if its whole structure had been examined by a naturalist, would have been classed amongst Quadrumana as surely as would the common and still more ancient progenitor of the Old and New World monkeys.—*"Descent of Man," Part III, chap. 21.*



WHERE NATURE REVEALS IN HER BEAUTY—A DELIGHTFUL FERN SCENE
In the realm of nature, the miracles of God are constantly displayed. Every leaf and tree and shrub and flower shows the design and working of a Master Mind.

How differently reads the Genesis record:—

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them. Gen. 1: 26-28.

How grandly simple and complete this sounds after the suppositions of men. But this is not the only record concerning man's origin. Twenty-seven other passages in the Bible tell of man originating as a created being, while the divine Christ Himself reports that man was made "at the beginning." Matt. 19: 4.

But how different is all this to the rude guessings of Darwinism over the monkey-origin of man. And yet many of the professing wise among the religionists of today seem to prefer the theories of evolution to the positive declarations of Scripture. Yet so it is, but the end is not yet. Even now, man, in his self-sufficiency, is planning to reduce and modify the "Ten Words" once spoken by the voice of Deity and engraven by the finger of the Eternal. It may be that the Ten Commandments are too cumbersome and the "higher critics" wish to reduce and modernise them. But against all such the "latter-day" divine anathema is already pronounced, "Lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord." Isa. 30: 8, 9.

O when will man learn to leave what God has said and done alone? When will he learn to accept with a dignified faith the changeless decisions of the Almighty?



CHAPTER VII

The World-wide Message

WITHOUT ostentation or display, often in weakness and humility, God has begun and carried on His great moral reforms in the world. The Babe, in a manger at Bethlehem, did not give much promise of greatness, yet that helpless Child was the chosen of God, as well as the One upon whom the salvation of our race depended. A dead Christ entombed did not mean much to a thoughtless world, but in that entombment and its sequel there lay the great demonstration that decided the redemption of humanity.

Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, came from a blacksmith's shop, and Luther, the hero of the Protestant Reformation, from the cottage of a wood-chopper. Yes, all God's plans, to human vision, have been cradled in weakness, and all His reforms have had their birth in humility. But the weakest instrument that He employs is mighty to accomplish His purpose.

Gideon, the least in his father's house, was called from his hiding-place behind the wine-press to lead the armies of Israel to a national independence. A shepherd boy was afterwards chosen to be their king. Thus God has chosen the weak things of earth to confound the mighty. 1 Cor. 1: 27.

The World-wide Message

The Sabbath reform, that part of God's work which must stand prominent before earth's last generation, had its rise during the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. In the Schaff-Herzog "Religious Encyclopædia," Vol III, page 2,166, article "Seventh-day Baptists," we read the following:—

There is not wanting evidence that an unbroken chain of observers of the seventh day was preserved in the face of de-traction and persecution all through the Dark Ages, and that they appeared in the dawn of the Protestant Reformation, and were represented in that movement by a number of its prominent actors.—*Edition 1884.*

From the Reformation the work was carried into England, and a number of congregations were worshipping there in the reign of James II. But persecution was raised against them, and one of their leading ministers, John James, was put to death, and his head was placed upon a pole before his church in White-chapel.

In 1664 a member of this congregation, Stephen Mumford, was sent to America by the Seventh-day Baptists of London. He soon found believers, and in 1671 the first church of Sabbath-keepers was organised in America. In 1802 a conference of 1,130 members, consisting of eight distinct churches and nine ministers, was organised.

A lady from among this people, Mrs. Rachel Preston, became acquainted with a company of Advent believers, and communicated to them the Sabbath. They read the message that must go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people—"Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters"—saw in it the work of Sabbath reform, and from that little spark God kindled the message that

is now touching all nations and speaking to all people. Rev. 14: 6, 7.

Obstacles and difficulties untold have been met, but the work has gone forward, irresistably as the tide, and great only in the strength of God.

The great message of Sabbath reform and of the second advent has now become a world-wide message. A few statistics will be given, but they rapidly get out of date, so swiftly does the message advance. It may be said, however, that at the close of the year 1921 there were 15,009 institutional and evangelistic labourers giving their whole time to its proclamation. This was an increase of 1,928 labourers over the preceding year, 1920. These labourers were working in 108 countries, representing a population of nearly 1,500,000,000 people. Orally the work was being carried on in 175 languages, while denominational literature was being issued in no fewer than 100 languages, a remarkable total. This literature consisted of 148 periodicals, 768 bound books, 506 pamphlets, 2,085 tracts, a total of 3,507 separate publications; and to get a full set of this literature, that is to say a single copy of each periodical, book, pamphlet, and tract issued, would cost in the aggregate no less a sum than £200. But every year sees a great advance all along the line.

GOD'S DEFINITE PLAN

To the last generation of men, and before the last generation of men, just such a message must go, for in that generation God must complete His work. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14.

Through the ages, God has been working out one great plan, filling out one great design, and accomplishing one settled purpose. In the beginning, the earth was formed by the Creator that it might be inhabited. Isa. 45: 18. But behind the design of that inhabited earth there lay the diagram of a kingdom with twelve thrones, a city with twelve gates, and a population numbered in twelve divisions, each member of each division an overcomer, an "Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

This prospective kingdom was not an after-thought with Jehovah. It was prepared when the foundations of the world were laid. Matt. 25: 34. In the mind of the great Architect it was, and still is, a grand reality.

The people as well were in the mind of God, for when He separated the sons of Adam, the work was done with the number of the children of Israel in view. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Deut. 32: 8. This was done long before any historic Israel existed. It was in God's original plan, and the earthly Israel that came afterward were but a typical people by whom God could show forth the pattern of His design. Even the names given to the twelve sons of Jacob were typical, as they were borrowed from the gates of that city for which Abraham looked, "whose builder and maker is God." The ancient capital of the kingdom of Israel was also typical, for centuries ago Paul wrote of the "Jerusalem above" as the mother of us all. Gal. 4: 26.

When that typical people and that typical city rejected Christ, both were set aside as no longer having a part in the plan of God. "They were broken off be-

cause of unbelief." The true Israel are all children of faith, hence all the overcomers of all ages belong to the Israel of God.

In the Book of Revelation we read of the 144,000, and our translation suggests the idea that they are taken from the twelve tribes of Israel. This cannot be so, for the message that gathers them goes to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

The Greek word *ek*, translated "of" so often in Rev. 7: 5-8, has in the New Testament a variety of different meanings. It is translated twenty-two different ways, and the majority of these favour the idea that the 144,000 are gathered *for*, or *because of*, the twelve divisions of Israel rather than *from* the twelve tribes of the past. Notice a few of the ways in which this word is translated:—

Among	5	times	Over	4	times
At	3	"	Reason	3	"
Because	2	"	Since	1	"
By	42	"	Through	3	"
For	2	"	To	1	"
In	2	"	With	17	"
On	2	"	Unto	1	"

Nearly all these words convey the thought of an objective Israel, an Israel to be, rather than an Israel of the past. The simple fact is, God has finished with the earthly diagram, and He is now gathering the 144,000 from the nations to complete the number of His redeemed, to fill the "house" that God first designed for the overcomers of earth. Luke 14: 23.

The names lent to the twelve divisions of the earthly seed were taken from the gates of the heavenly city, and contain a shorthand history of the people who will enter that future capital of the redeemed land.

God's original design will finally be completed, and He is now gathering out a people for that purpose. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21: 43), was the sentence pronounced by Christ even while He walked and talked with the Israel of old. This has been done, and the story of the rich man and Lazarus has found its perfect fulfilment in the sad history of the natural branches being broken off "because of unbelief."

To those alone who bring forth fruit for the kingdom will it be given, and these are to make up the number of God's elect, "and so all Israel shall be saved."

Hence it is that God is now gathering the loyal hearts from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" to complete the number He requires to inhabit this kingdom when the earth is cleansed and re-created in beauty. Today God is working "for" the Israel to complete His great objective design, and not with the fleshly or earthly type of that design. The 144,000 are gathered "for" the Israel of God.

THE JUDGMENT HOUR

According to the prophecy this world-wide message must proclaim the "judgment hour." In that message the prophet heard the proclamation, "The hour of His judgment is come." Rev. 14: 7. This will be the anti-type to the great day of atonement.

The great day of atonement stood in the line of Israel's festival sabbaths. It came as "number five" in the annual list—before it the passover, the feast of firstfruits, the Pentecost, the feast of trumpets; and after it the jubilee and the feast of tabernacles. These feasts were but typical factors

shadowing forth greater events in the coming history. Those annual events of the typical year betokened more important events in the "acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4: 19. Hence the day of atonement must have its antitype, just as surely as Christ crucified is antitype to the ancient passover.

True, the time came in God's plan when these typical feasts, with their annual recurrence, all ceased by limitation, for they were only "imposed" "until the time of reformation." Heb. 9: 10. But the lessons they taught and the objectives they had in view must still speak to the people of God. Their symbolic language has been greatly misunderstood or quite disregarded by men, still their voice is the voice of God to man.

Near the end of the harvest, and just before the final ingathering and the winter, came the "day of atonement." As to time, it fell on the tenth day of the seventh month in the measurement of the religious year. It was the most solemn, impressive, and important of all the national days observed by Israel. "These things happened unto them for ensamples [margin, *types*]: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. 10: 11. The lesson this important feature of Israel's typical system carried must have a meaning and a warning for God's people today.

So important was this day that ten days of trumpet-blowing preceded it in order that the people might be fully prepared for the decisive occasion. Among the Hebrews of the present time, this day is still regarded with great ceremonial distinction and veneration, but more as linking with the past than for anything present or future; hence much of its mean-

ing has been lost or forgotten. In past ages its environments were all more awe-inspiring than anything known at the present time. The reason of this will be seen in the following quotation:—

Among the Hebrews this day had three names—the day of memorial, the day of judgment, and the day of sounding the horn. . . . The ten days preceding it were called "the ten days of penance," and also "the days of awe." They were spent in serious meditation and solemn preparation for the day of atonement.—"*Manners, Customs, and Observances,*" page 228.

As the "day of memorial," it reminded them of the transgressions committed during the past year; as "the day of judgment," it told of the justification granted on the removal of sin; while as "the day of sounding the horn," it told of the restitution that came with the sounding of the jubilee trumpet. This jubilee blast was given immediately at the close of the day of atonement—once in each fifty years, or once to each generation of men.

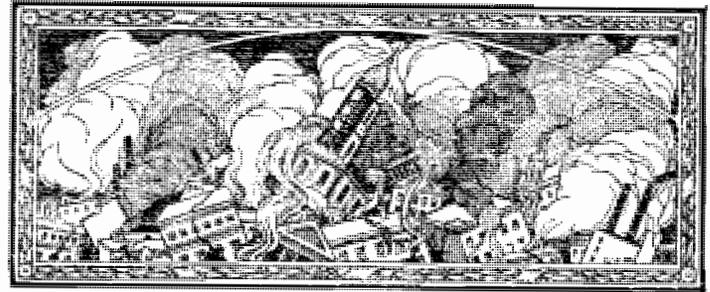
On this day the cleansing of the sanctuary took place in type, but in the antitypical day it must take place in reality. In the earthly sanctuary the sin of the people was written in blood sprinkled in the dust before the mercy-seat; in the great sanctuary above sin finds its only record in the books of heaven. It now awaits final removal, for the end of God's antitypical harvest is near. Even now the angelic reapers are preparing to gather in the sheaves. See Matt. 13: 37-43.

Daniel's great prophetic line of 2,300 days ended in 1844, and at its close the sanctuary was to be cleansed. Dan. 8: 14. So it is at this time "the hour of His judgment is come." That judgment will close with the removal of all sin-records from the books of

heaven. The angel of Revelation is pictured proclaiming the approach of this solemn time in the words, "The hour of His judgment is come." Then, as the thing most fitting, men are called upon to worship Jehovah, the Creator, as set forth in the great Sabbath law, a part of the fourth commandment being repeated in the angel's message. Rev. 14: 6, 7.

Neglect or refusal on the part of the Hebrew to confess his sin on the day of atonement resulted in disaster, as either banishment or death awaited him. He must be "cut off from among his people." Lev. 23: 29. Thus it will surely be when the final reckoning is completed and the antitypical cleansing is accomplished—the unrepenting, unprepared, and unforgiven sinner must perish in his sin. In an "everlasting cutting off" he must disappear from the congregation of the righteous for ever.

"The hour of His judgment is come." Who, then, is preparing for the solemn visitation of the Almighty? After judgment the jubilee brings in its eternal joy—"the restitution of all things." But will you be prepared to share in the jubilee-restorations? You must stand with those forgiven, or else with those cut off for ever!



CHAPTER VIII

The Story of Sodom Retold

DOWN toward the south of the Dead Sea, in a vale beautiful as the "garden of the Lord," there once stood the proud city of Sodom. The story of its building has not been told, neither has its architect been named, nor the number of its inhabitants chronicled. One thing alone has given it a place in history and carried its name down over the ages—the record of its impurity.

No monument has been left as a memento for time; no ruined towers reveal the locality of its decadence; nor has one vestige of its ruin been left for the eye of either scorn or pity to rest upon. It is even as though it had not been.

In the passing of its last night a tragedy was enacted that filled its cup of iniquity to overflowing. Two messengers were sent from heaven to report upon the wickedness of the cities of the plain. But the sons of licentiousness sought to abuse them. Even the defence of Lot's hospitable home proved no barrier to their wicked design until the defiled and criminally-minded multitude were smitten with blindness. Gen. 19: 9-11.

Finally the last morning dawned over that doomed city. The rising sun gilded the distant hills and cast

long shadows across the plain. All was bright as usual, but when Lot departed a thunderbolt fell and set the city, with all its palaces, on fire. Then, after its baptism of brimstone, it went down to give its unholy inhabitants a dishonoured grave under the briny waters of the Dead Sea.

A double destruction, a nameless grave. Why?—The sin of Sodom was great, and its people were “sinners before the Lord exceedingly.” Gen. 13: 13.

It was a place of unusual fertility, surpassing beauty, and charming in all its aspects. So delightful was it that Lot was charmed by the prospects that it presented, and he became one of its citizens. First his tent was pitched “toward Sodom.” Then nearer and nearer until at last the pilgrim tent was renounced, and the man who was looking for worldly advantage became an inhabitant of Sodom and a judge in its civic affairs.

But the beauty of its position could not save that city. The vision of its green fields could not arrest the impending doom. Neither could the abundance of all its charms atone for its guilt. Rising above every advantage, towering above every line of beauty, the criminality of its social life condemned it to an awful and hopeless ruin.

CAUSE OF ITS DEFILEMENT

Sodom was not built a corrupt city, neither did it become corrupt in a day or a year. In writing about it Josephus says:—

About this time the Sodomites grew proud on account of their great riches and wealth; they became unjust towards men, and impious towards God, insomuch that they did not call to mind the advantages they received from Him.—“*Antiquities*,” *Book 1, chap. 2.*

These things are also spoken of by the Hebrew prophet. Three reasons are assigned for its immorality—“Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness.” Eze. 16: 49. But these are all destroying elements. “Pride” cast the angels from heaven, “appetite” cost man his Eden home and the crown of this new kingdom, while “idleness” is Satan’s great highway to ruin. They are all agencies of evil, and the people of Sodom were led to destruction by them.

By Peter we are told that Lot was vexed with the “filthy conversation” of the people of Sodom. 2 Peter 2: 6, 7. Jude tells how they “gave themselves over to fornication.” Jude 7. But, as the impure word and impure act are both the result, or product, of the impure mind, this people must first have given themselves over to mental debasement.

Not only was their language filthy, their actions licentious, and their minds corrupt, but the very “show” or appearance of their countenance became tell-tale in its evil aspect under the influence of their unnatural crimes. Isa. 3: 9. Then, when there was no hope, when love had pleaded for just “ten,” and ten could not be found in all the cities of the plain, then the rain of fire came down, and the mantle of oblivion was cast over the typical scene of earth’s corruption.

THE PICTURE HISTORIC

Think not, gentle reader, that the story of Sodom’s debasement, dishonour, and overthrow is a romance of some Hebrew writer. True, it appears in definite colours in the Book of God, where the name is mentioned forty-nine times, but it also finds a place in the records of ancient history. Tacitus tells of its barren

fields and the "cities burned by lightning." Strabo tells of the lake, the burnt rock, the soil turned to ashes, and a report among the people that the cities were formerly destroyed by earthquake and fire. Diodorus pictures the Lake Asphaltites as filling the place where these cities once stood, and states that the adjacent country was set on fire and sent forth a grievous smell. See Stackhouse, page 176.

But why should this picture have been stamped so indelibly upon the minds of men and nations? Why held up so continuously in Bible prophecy and historic narrative? Why pictured so often in its garments of carnality, and then in its baptism of "eternal fire"?—It is set forth as an "example" before an unbelieving world. 2 Peter 2: 6. It is a picture of destruction, hung up in the great historic gallery, for the eyes of earth's last generation to gaze upon.

ANTITYPICAL SODOM

When the great Teacher walked among men He used many parables and many illustrations to exemplify the Word and make it plain to earth's darkened minds. The lily was made to convey the lesson of faith; the sparrow, confidence in a Father's care; while the vine, with its branches, told of the abiding life. But when the story of unexpected doom was to be told, that greatest of all the prophets took the scene of a flaming Sodom and lifted it above the hills among which earth's last generation were to build their mansions—"As it was in the days of Lot . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17: 28, 29. Then they planted and builded, "but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all."

Has society of today lost its moral tone? Is the world being moulded by passion rather than reason? Has Sodom's unholy trinity—"pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness"—left its mark on human associations in this age as in the long ago?—Not on one city alone, not on one little corner of earth, but on the world itself. Is it so? In picturing society of this wonderful age, has the story of Sodom to be retold? And has impurity risen in a tide that threatens to sweep the purity of manhood and womanhood, and civilisation itself, from the earth?

The optimist might hold that these questions are pessimistic in their character, but remove the interrogative form, and put them in the declarative, and they are all true. Pride has taken possession of the great ones of earth. Never before were there so many dainty epicures, and never so many idle rich as are seen today. From this Satanic trinity spring many of the conditions that are reproducing the Sodom characteristics of these last days.

Dr. Brand Whitlock, writing in the *English Review*, after deploring the failure of all adopted plans to regulate vice and prostitution, states:—

Reformers everywhere are quite united in affirming that the world is being inundated by vice, and that our civilisation is thereby most seriously menaced. Each school of reformers has some particular theory or panacea that it is sure would be a cure for these evils. But all must admit that the trouble lies in the fact that the world is breaking away from the great foundations of morality.

Sodom had broken away from all the foundations of morality; now the world is "breaking away." It is only a question of time; for the same forces are in full operation.

THE WORLD HOLIDAYING

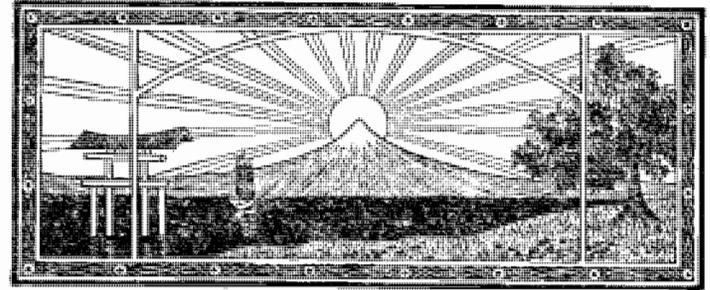
The world's pride and luxury have long been on the increase, but the spirit of idleness has also been developing. Lazy individuals there have always been, but the do-nothing spirit of modern times is more than a fit of laziness. "The idle rich" has become a common reproach, but the labouring world is not free from the same spirit. The old workaday conditions of society that produced such men as Garfield, Carey, and Livingstone, with their pioneer energies, have disappeared, but conditions have not much improved. The strike spirit has come in and taken the place of the quiet, plodding spirit of the days past.

Sodom went down; it reached its last generation, and the last hours of that last generation were the most corrupt and wicked of all its history. So it will be in the ending of a world's history. Even now the destruction hastens, and the cry is heard, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."



EVIL ANGELS ARE IMPERSONATING THE DEAD

Spiritualism is today deceiving and captivating millions. The Bible exposes its nature and working, and faithfully warns man against it.



CHAPTER IX

Spiritualistic Revelations

MYSTERIES, many and varied, have linked themselves with the existence of man, some of ancient days, some of modern years; but, whether ancient or modern, they have always claimed a large share in his attention.

Though man is desirous of unfolding the problems that irritate his fancy, many of these mysteries have remained, and must still remain, beyond his reach. Not until with clearer vision, in the light of the new dawning, may he hope to understand.

Looking out from a life bounded by impossibilities, man has longed, and long endeavoured, to comprehend the secrets of the unknown. The future, with its hidden possibilities, has especially proved an inviting field for speculative thought, and no price would, even now, be esteemed too great if by it a faithful revelation could be purchased. But the margin of the unknown is drawn so closely around the horizon of life that the future can guard its secrets well. Standing as on the shore of an unknown sea, the watcher, without God's Word, looks in vain for the unfoldings of futurity—all is dark beyond.

True, man, endowed with marvellous capabilities by his Creator, has learned much, and has achieved great things! Captured by his wondrous telescope, the stars and sun-worlds have told their story. Measured by his sounding line, the deeps have revealed their treasures. Controlled by his will, the silent spirit of the air has become a messenger, and by it men whisper across the sea; while the lightning, harnessed to his car, has become an obedient servant! So wonderful are the achievements of man that gold is gathered from the dust; oil is drawn from the rock; stones become iron, "and out of the hills men dig brass."

THE FORBIDDEN PATH

Satan held out the promise of knowledge to man, but the path to which the deceiver pointed was a forbidden path. It appeared right to man, but in the end it proved to be "the way of death."

God has spoken of Satan in the Scripture as the being who "deceiveth the whole world." His work of deception has measured with the whole history of the human race. With the hope that he would be able to satisfy, or at least increase, man's desire to know the unknown, Satan has endeavoured to meet him in all the forbidden paths of life. He has designed by this means to lead man to transgress more seriously the will of his God.

By the grave of the loved and lost the human heart has, in all ages, bowed to weep out its sorrows. And there, gazing into its blackness, man has asked most longingly concerning the future. But no answering voice has come back from the land of silence. Inspiration alone can supply an answer to the heart's plaintive inquiries concerning the dead. Yet men have turned

away from the Holy Book, supposing, in their blind uncertainty, that it spoke untruly. But, in turning away from the truth spoken by God, man has listened to a lying spirit that has whispered about the possibility of a life that the grave does not claim, and of a spirit-being that does not die.

With this thought in mind man has, in all ages, endeavoured to learn from the departed some revelation of that spirit-life of which the Book has not spoken, and which he has been unable to measure. With a will-o'-the-wisp persistence that revelation has seemed to dance just before his vision, but always beyond his grasp.

With each age and generation of men these inquiries have perhaps taken different forms, or at least assumed different names. But of whatever name or age the one principle—communicating with an unseen intelligence that is supposed to survive death—has always appeared.

NECROMANCY

Perhaps the most ancient form of which we have definite knowledge is that of "necromancy." Webster defines this as, the "art of revealing future events by a pretended communication with the dead." The Hebrew form of the word, *darash methim*, according to Dr. Young, signifies, "to inquire at the dead."

This form existed early in history, for it was found among the forbidden things practised by the nations inhabiting Palestine long before the Exodus. Deut. 18: 11. Beaton's Dictionary states: "The origin of this pretended art extends far beyond the limits of history. It is generally believed to have arisen in Egypt at a very early period, and to have been carried from thence into most of the other countries of antiquity."

MAGIC

This was another form known in early days. It was practised in both Egypt and Babylon during Bible times. But it seems to have belonged especially to Persia. It is thus defined by Webster: "Science of evoking spirits or inducing the occult powers of nature and performing things wonderful by their aid." See Dan. 2: 2.

Magic mingled largely with the teachings of Zoroaster and the fire-worshippers of the East. In fact the East has been regarded as the "favourite land of sorcery and magic, and the professors have from time immemorial been looked upon as venerable." Belief in magical powers is still prevalent among the savage races.

EXORCISM

In New Testament times exorcism was practised at Ephesus and other parts of Asia Minor. Acts 19: 13-17. It is defined as, the "act of driving out an evil spirit, or performing acts of divination by means of evil spirits."

According to Josephus, the Jews made great pretences to this power, and he cites some strange tales of their exorcists. About the fourth century it began to be practised largely in the Church.

WITCHCRAFT

This is another form of pretended association with the spirits of the dead. A man addicted to this art was called a wizard, and a woman a witch. It was doubtless practised in early times, but the modern idea of witchcraft dates back from the rise of Christianity. It obtained its highest development in the Middle Ages. Beaton's Dictionary describes witch-

craft as, "a supernatural power which some persons were supposed to obtain possession of by entering into compact with the devil."

It met with no opposition from the Church till the twelfth century. Trial and persecution were then introduced. Pope Innocent VIII issued a bull against it in 1484. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England, some 30,000 persons were put to death for this offence. In 1562 an Act was passed making witchcraft a crime of the first magnitude.

SPIRITUALISM

Under these severe restrictions the science of dealing with the dead was almost eradicated from Europe. But Satan is a wise old general, and when one form or name fails he will readily try another. This is no doubt the reason why so many changes appear in the different ages of Spiritualism.

In its modern form it boasts a number of names, all more or less misleading—Occultism, Theosophy, Christian Science, mental suggestion, hypnotism, psychic phenomena, and science of the soul. By these Satan hopes to capture all minds, scientific as well as non-scientific.

On March 31, 1848, modern Spiritualism claims to have been born, and Hydesville, Wayne County, New York, was the place of its birth. Mysterious rappings alarmed a family by the name of Fox. Measured strokes were finally given in answer to a question, and in this way they learned that a pedlar had been murdered five years before and buried in the cellar.

Soon after, letters on a board were employed, and the pointer in the hand of a medium spelt out the message, "We are all the spirits of your dear departed friends."

From this obscure beginning the occult science spread rapidly. In twenty-eight years it claimed 11,000,000 adherents in America; while in 1894, after but forty-six years, the world had over 60,000,000 modern Spiritualists. And if to this number be added the tribes, peoples, and nations of the heathen world whose religions rest altogether upon the principles of Spiritualism, there would be a mighty multitude.

What its numbers are now, and what they will be in just a short time cannot be told in figures, for it has the world by the ears today. Physicians, lawyers, emperors, queens, and kings stand among its votaries, and many of the men of science have already been captured by it. The following statement we copy from a Spiritualistic work:—

During the dark interval of the Middle Ages spirituality was almost crushed out of existence; the most hideous religious wars supervened, and all the mediums were sent to the stake as "witches" or "wizards." The movement, therefore, received a tremendous set-back, but in later years it recovered by spasmodic outbursts, and in the year 1848 modern Spiritualism came into active life in an obscure township in the State of New York. It spread like wild-fire throughout the country, and during the succeeding fifty years made marvellous progress in every nation in Europe. *Today it commands the attention of the intellect of the world, and seems destined to eventually cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.*—"Science and the Soul," page 63.

Spiritualism has everything in it to fulfil this estimate. It is pleasing, interesting, and bewitching in many of its features, but it is dangerous. See the reason.

ANGELS CAST DOWN

Unsatisfied with his position as covering cherub by the throne of Deity, Satan risked all in his mad

attempt to be equal with God. He declared that he would exalt his throne above the stars of God, and "be like the Most High." Isa. 14: 14.

But the lawless spirit that ruled him, and would have worked ruin to all the universe of God, must be controlled; so after the war in heaven Satan and all his sympathisers were cast out. Rev. 12: 7-9.

Jude speaks of the beings who were thus cast out as "the angels who kept not their first estate." Jude 6. And Peter refers to them as "the angels that sinned." 2 Peter 2: 4. They were cast down to the earth, and since the casting down of that "third part" of the heavenly host, Satan, acting as their chief, has been going about like a lion in his anger, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Peter 5: 8.

The plans and schemes that Satan has devised for the deception of man have been many and masterful in their designing. Yet among all his schemes for deception none has proved more successful than his attempted personation of the dead. The host of his sympathisers, with all their angelic intelligence, have lent themselves to this work of deception, and through this means beings that were once in heaven personate those who are now in the grave.

How successfully this work of personating the dead can thus be carried on may be seen by the fact that these fallen angels know all the history of man in the past. They have studied it with the object of deceiving the sons of men, and they have had a long preparation for the coming final contest between Satanic cunning and human intelligence. Unaided by any divine assistance human intelligence must go under, for it is no match for that great mind that was cast out of heaven.

AN ANCIENT SEANCE

Saul, the king of Israel, went to communicate with a spirit medium after God had refused to speak with him because of his rebellion. At the call of the witch at Endor, a spirit came up to personate the old prophet who had been buried at Ramah, more than seventy miles distant. In its communication to Saul that spirit spoke as Samuel would have spoken to the rebellious king by referring to his past disobedience. But to show the thoughtful reader that it was not Samuel, or any part of that old prophet, that spirit lied both as to the time of the battle and the place of Saul's final abode. 1 Sam. 28: 7-20.

This attempt at communicating with the dead was the last act of rebellion in a wayward life. In a few days after that, Saul died a suicide. 1 Kings 31: 6. In his obituary he is charged with two great sins—disobeying God, and asking counsel of “a familiar spirit.” 1 Chron. 10: 13. That spirit was not Samuel, it was a fallen angel personating the dead prophet.

Satan leads astray and then reproaches the poor sinner, so that hope is lost, and life goes out in despair. Trust not the deceiver, and hold no communication with the angels that were cast down for their rebellion. He who does commune with the disobedient will also learn to disobey.

SCIENCE ASTONISHED

Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian mediums of 1491 B.C., withstood Moses and astonished the king with their Spiritualistic revelations; so now, in these latter days, the world is again astonished. The multitude of wonders performed has marvellously increased. To recount them would be as the recital of a fairy tale.

The closing part of the Spiritualistic drama is very clearly outlined in Scripture. Satan is to work wonders before the last generation of men that will astonish the scientists and confound the religionists. There will be no question as to the reality of these revelations, but they are definitely stated to be signs and “lying wonders.” 2 Thess. 2: 9, 10.

Fire will be called from heaven in vindication of the claims set forth in the name of Spiritualism. Rev. 13: 13, 14. The wonders are real, but the objective for which they are wrought is *the deception of a world*. Rev. 12: 9.

SCIENTISTS DECEIVED

There have been many bogus revelations made in the name of Spiritualism, but these do not preclude the possibility of realities. Science has long looked with questioning eyes at the psychic circle and the séance, but the mysterious has won, and science owns its captivity. Notice the following:—

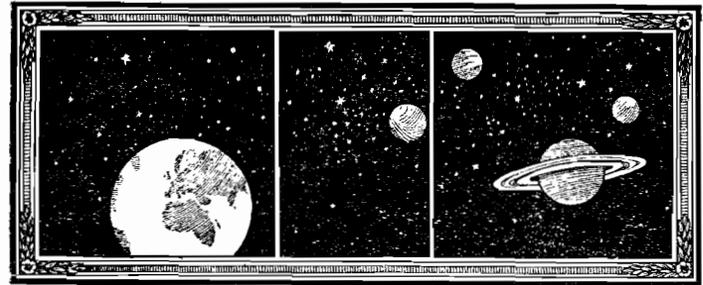
Daily a large section of the community is being led to believe in Spiritualism. Both religion and science are represented among its leading lights. The venerable Archdeacon Colley, rector of Stockton, England, has declared that “Spiritualism comes as a real God-send to save men from the Sadducean materialism that looks for no hereafter beyond the grave.” Sir Oliver Lodge, the celebrated British physicist, and principal of Birmingham University, says: “We are beginning to hear, now and again, the strokes of the pickaxes of our comrades on the other side.”—*Sydney Daily Telegraph*, June 26, 1909.

Thousands of other scientists and religionists, men of keen thought and deep research, stand with these in their belief and confession respecting Spiritualism. All who do not prefer the Word of God to human reason must finally take the same position.

God has always prohibited His people from taking part in any Spiritualistic operations. The infringement of this prohibition was formerly punished with death (Lev. 20: 27), while all attempts to communion with spirits or Spiritualists were also strictly forbidden. Deut. 18: 9-14. Very emphatically the declaration is set forth, "The dead know not anything." Eccl. 9: 5. God expects His people to believe His Word rather than the demonstrations of Spiritualism.

This last generation of men will have to pass through the workings of this Satanic deception. They will see miracles wrought by disguised hands that personate the Son of God. Dead friends, materialised, will speak in the voice of long ago, and the heart in its fondness will forget to question the demon form behind the personation.

But to the child of God the written voice will still be supreme. "To the law and to the testimony." "When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, . . . should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" Isa. 8: 19, 20.



CHAPTER X

The World in a Hurry

THE world has not always been in a hurry. In past ages it has been slow-moving, and the jog-trot of its life and commerce seemed well suited to its ideas, and gave great satisfaction. Waiting for wind and tide was part of its daily programme, and called forth no question and but little discontent.

Its vessels spread their white sails when the favouring breezes blew, or waited in some sheltering retreat when the storm was on the wave. The mule-team or ox-waggon served its purpose well on land, and the inhabitants did not even dream of upholstered cars that would travel sixty miles an hour, or motor lorries that would move off with tons of produce by the mere pressing of a lever.

The housewife sat by her spinning-wheel and sang in glad contentment, while the weaver whistled in merry time to his flying shuttle. Then the reaper went forth with his reaping-hook and bound his sheaves with the straw band, while the sower scattered the seed with his hand and then took a tree branch to serve the purpose of a harrow.

As to happiness, probably there was more in life's cup then than there is today, for the world is in too big a hurry now to wait for happiness.

But the slow-moving age has passed, and the world is buckling on its shoes and oiling its wheels as for some final contest. The wind and tide no longer meet its demands, so steam and electricity have been harnessed to its floating palaces and linked to its rushing cars.

But why this transformation? Why could not the world have continued to float with the tide and wait for its favourable breezes? Why must it start in a hurry as though determined to reach some winning-post that is yet invisible to human vision?—There is a prophecy at stake, and the world has been wakened up to fulfil it. In the time of the end “many shall run to and fro.” Dan. 12: 4.

In early days there were two predictions that required fulfilment—one relative to the sceptre departing from Judah, and the other concerning the birthplace of the world's Redeemer. To accomplish their fulfilment, Jehovah moved upon the mind of the world's ruler, Cæsar Augustus, to pass an edict that would remove the sceptre from Judah for ever, and at the same time bring Joseph and Mary down to Bethlehem that Christ might be born in the city of David. See Gen. 49: 10; Micah 5: 2.

Now, another prediction is in question, and the world itself is stirred up to accomplish its fulfilment. Today the world is on wheels, and the many are “running to and fro.”

A MODERN REVELATION

From the slow-moving world of sixty years ago to the present age of travel and unrest, the transformation has been a rapid one. Jonah's gourd grew up in a night, but the world's restlessness seems almost to have grown up in a day. Within the memory of thou-

sands now living, the old immigrant boats still flapped their sails on their weary passages across the deep. Measured by months, and almost years, these slow voyages across the sea contrast strangely with the swift-moving fleet of sailless ships that now measure their movements only by weeks and days and hours and minutes.

More marked and remarkable still is the demonstration of rapidity found upon the shore. Wheels now move at the bidding of thought, where, in the days past, the power came from the slow-moving oxen that toiled wearily across the plain. In the early part of the seventeenth century stage-coaches were employed in England, but they were slow and cumbersome factors in locomotion. In 1825 came the passenger railway train. Then the world began to move, and now in London alone 410,744,610 passengers run to and fro on the iron rails every year. Soon after, the tram service started, and the London passenger list, as far back as 1909, read thus: 687,138,908. In 1881 the bicycle was introduced, and the workaday world began to run in its efforts to keep up. It is running still, only much more rapidly. Since 1901 the motor-car has added its whirl to the song of the world's movement.

In America there are now more than 717,233 motor-cars, while in Europe the number is over 650,000. In New South Wales there were but six motor-cars in 1901, but more than 26,000 cars were registered in Sydney in 1920. The outlook in this direction is pictured by a quotation from the “Daily Mail Year Book”: “One factory in Detroit, U.S.A., . . . will turn out 75,000 cars this year, or 240 a day. Taking the eight-hour day as a basis, this means that one car is

made in this factory every two minutes. Next year, however, plans have been made for the production of 250,000 cars, or over 4,800 a week, which would mean nearly 700 cars a day, or one car every seven-tenths of a minute. The manager of this factory anticipates that this huge output will hardly be large enough to meet the demand. The mere transportation of these cars away from the factory is a great industry in itself. Over 130 freight waggons a day will be needed by this one factory alone, or, allowing about thirty waggons to a train, no fewer than four trains a day would be required to take away this one factory's production."

Surely the world is on wheels! But what does this mean to the world and the inhabitants thereof?—Perhaps only increased facilities for running about in the restless life that has forgotten its peace. But from God's standpoint the significance is greater. This rapidity of movement, this multiplication of ways and means in the restlessness of a world on wheels, proclaims "the time of the end," for at that time "many shall run to and fro." Dan. 12: 4.

So they are running today. The quiet movements of the past that fully satisfied all life's requirements have been abandoned for the ceaseless "running" that marks the time of the end! "Hurry" is the key-note to which modern life has been tuned, the pitch to which its scale has been strung, and the man who does not hurry is left behind.

In the city of London, on the street near the Mansion House, 500,000 persons pass every day, besides 50,000 vehicles. In Paris 450,000 passengers pass by the Palace de L'Opera each working day. In Broadway, New York, nearly 500,000 persons pass

daily on foot, while 700,000 go by in motor-cars and trams.

Reader, do you see them moving? Do you see them running in their eagerness to catch the train, the tram, or the motor-car? They are hasting with a haste that forgets eternity, and life has become too restless to be divine. But even this restlessness should speak to the child of God, for it surely betokens "the time of the end."

There was something more than fancy in the declaration of the World's Missionary Congress held in Edinburgh in 1910: "The next ten years will in all probability constitute the turning point in human history, and may be of more critical importance in determining the spiritual evolution of mankind than many centuries of ordinary experience."

We have reached the time of extraordinary experiences. The world in its unrest, its anxiety, its hurry, is on wheels, but this is the time of the end.

WHY SWIFT-MOVING?

A little before the middle of last century, both the steamship and the steam-engine had their genesis. But they have come to play an important part, not only in the commercial world, but in the religious world as well.

Now the nations and kingdoms of the whole earth are brought into juxtaposition by means of improved modes of conveyance. Nations are no longer alienated by formidable distances, or unknown seas. There is scarcely a tribe on the surface of the globe which is not easily accessible to those who hold in their hands the everlasting gospel. A voyage round the world, a visit to the remotest islands of the Pacific is but an enterprise of a few months.—"*The Hand of God in History*," page 137.

Earth's Last Generation

In order to make this running to and fro easy, swift ships, adorned like floating palaces, sail the seas, while cushioned and mirrored cars link with the lightning express on the railways. Velvet-lined motor-cars move in noiseless haste through the city and across the plain, while the fleet-winged airships add their romance to the recital.

Sure it is that never in the history of our world has there been such rapidity in travel as we see today. Never have there been so many running to and fro as at the present time. The world is in a hurry, and this generation beholds what has never been seen by any other generation since the history of man had its beginning.

LIKE THE RUSHING OF WATERS

In speaking of the last days the prophet declares: "The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters." Isa. 17: 13. We hear it in the trampling of a million feet in the city mart, in the thundering of the express trains and the whirling of engines and cars; we see it in the ceaseless stream of passengers flowing to and from the city every day, and in the moving masses that rush to the holiday scenes or the horse-race.

In 1818, a little over one hundred years ago, there were but forty-eight small steamboats in the world, and they were only in the rivers and harbours; none had, as yet, crossed the sea. Now there are more than 23,000 steamships on the seas, and one of the great palatial liners would be equal to the whole fleet of the period mentioned.

In describing the steamboats of 1838, Henry Ince, M.A., editor of "The Wonders of the World," wrote:—



THE OLD AND THE NEW CONTRASTED

The bullock-waggon and the pack-horse were often the sole means of transport to the Australian pioneer. How slow and cumbersome such conveyance seems compared with the swift-moving motor-lorry.

The feats accomplished by the *Sirius* and the *Great Western* have now fully determined the practicability, so long doubted, of navigating the Atlantic seas by means of steam vessels—no longer is it a matter of speculation; and in stating the fact, we can hardly divest ourselves of the feeling but that we are relating a fairy tale. . . . The arrivals and departures of these leviathans of the deep—these eighth wonders of the world—have caused an excitement rarely ever before evinced both in the old continent and the new.—“*The Wonders of the World,*” page 153.

When it is understood that these “leviathans” were only of about 1,500 tons (less than many of the little coasting steamers of today), the reader will smile over the astonishment expressed in this description, especially when it is remembered that it required fourteen and a half days for the fastest of these two boats to cross the Atlantic. The great 50,000-ton liners of today make the same passage in less than five days.

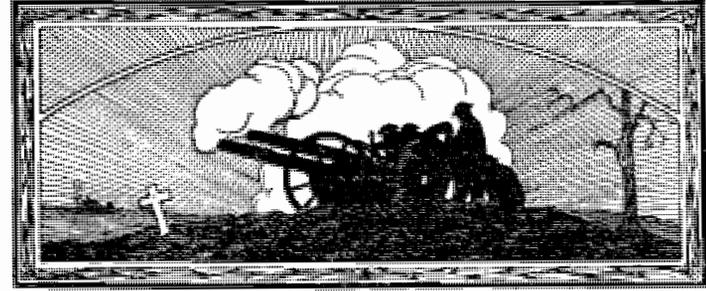
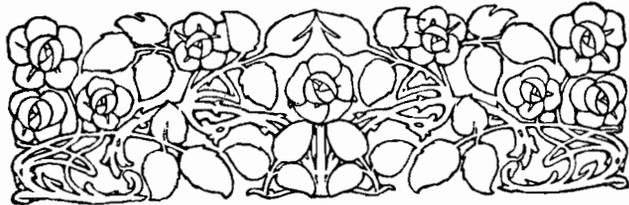
In describing the opening of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, a writer in the *London Times* of September 17, 1830, states:—

I have just returned from our journey along the railroad from Liverpool to Manchester and back again; and though I had intended to give you some faint description of this astonishing work of art, of the crowds which have lined almost every inch of our road, of the flags and banners, and booths and scaffoldings and gorgeous tents, which have enlivened even the dullest part of our journey, I am obliged, on account of the lateness of the hour, to defer that description.

The Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel were passengers in this train, and at the end of the journey Stephenson boasted proudly that “he had gone that day thirty-three and a half miles in the hour.” This would be esteemed very tedious travelling today, when the trains are expected to reach sixty or seventy miles in the hour.

Earth's Last Generation

Yes, the world is in a hurry, and all features of life bear witness to the intensity of the struggle. The nations are "rushing," and earth's millions are "running to and fro" with a determination hitherto unknown. The Word of Jehovah has been fulfilled, even in a world's restlessness. But why will the sons of men not remember that they are looking upon these things from the standpoint of earth's last generation?



CHAPTER XI

Peace and War Problems

THE world has just passed through its greatest struggle. History cannot turn to any page so momentous in its recital as that which chronicles the contest that is known as the "Great War." Other wars have lasted longer, but no combat among men has ever meant so much to individuals, to nations, and to the world.

Ten millions among men—the fittest of their sons and fathers—have fallen; millions have been wounded, and tens of thousands made homeless in the awfulness of the strife. Twenty-nine nations shared in the endeavour to assist friends or conquer foes. It has been a struggle in which crowns have fallen and thrones have crumbled in hopeless decay.

Is it any wonder, then, that over the graves of its heroes, and over the tombs of its shattered and nameless dead, the world is talking of "Peace." Never has it wept so many tears, never owned so many broken hearts, never listened to lamentations so deep, so sad, and so hopeless. We could only expect that it would dream of peace, and plan great things in the name of peace.

Out of its dream of peace there has grown the "League of Nations." But so far that wonderful crea-

tion has not been able to calm all its own troubled waters, nor yet restore peace to the world.

RELIGIOUS FORMALISM

Mr. Lloyd George, when Prime Minister of England, said, in one of his great London addresses, that he "hoped the churches would help to put the world into the right mould." But the churches cannot put the world into any right mould, for they themselves are not right. Self has largely dominated their positions, cramped their possibilities, and formulated their creeds. As a rule these creeds are too narrow and illogical to have much influence with the great masses of men found in Christendom.

Religion has been at work for centuries, but still we have an unbelieving world. The legislators of earth have made thousands of preventive and remedial enactments, but still the world is lawless. Man cannot cure its sorrows or set right its difficulties. Neither the diplomacy of the great Peace Conference nor the heroism of the world's philanthropists will be able to save a dying world. It is too old for rejuvenation, and too full of self to be won from its idols. In spite of all that religion and law have been able to do, wrong still triumphs. True, religion is not what it might be. It is the religion of the last days—a form of godliness without the power: "But of this be assured: in the last days grievous times will set in. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, profane. They will be disobedient to parents, thankless, irreligious, destitute of natural affection, unforgiving, slanderers. They will have no self-control, but will be brutal, opposed to goodness, treacherous, headstrong, self-important. They will love pleas-

ure instead of loving God, and will keep up a make-believe of piety and yet live in defiance of its power." 2 Tim. 3: 1-5, Weymouth's Translation.

SOCIALISM ON TRIAL

Labour is planning for a great "world union." It dreams of putting society and the world right in that way. But organisation will not put matters right. Labour has been organising since the London tailors' strike in 1834, but there are still hungry men in the world. "Federation" is written large over the world's plans today. Both national and social elements are talking of combinations, unions, and confederacies of almost endless number. But, strange as it may appear, Jehovah's last-day warning is: "Say ye not, A confederacy." Isa. 8: 11, 12.

BOLSHEVISM

Socialism in the South and Bolshevism in the North have both endeavoured to convince the world that they hold a panacea for its sorrows and inequalities. But the demonstration has, so far, proved an utter failure. No paradise has blossomed after their steps, neither have the vine and the fig tree of promise appeared. In the North pictures of the French Revolution have been re-painted and its dark scenes re-enacted, but no millennial dawning has been kindled. A picture taken from the *Nineteenth Century* magazine will show this:—

All that they see is that the Bolsheviks have destroyed Russia, despoiled the accumulated resources of the nation in pursuit of their plan of universal revolution; torn asunder the bonds of Russian society; dried up the springs of industry, commerce, and science; broken up the homes of thousands of Russians; destroyed privacy and intimacy and faith; made

of the community of Russians a mob of miserable and mutually suspicious slaves; murdered thousands of the best in a vile effort to exterminate whole classes irrespective of the moral and intellectual qualities of the individuals who compose them; trampled on Russian honour, Russian pride, the national tradition and heritage.—*January, 1921, page 55.*

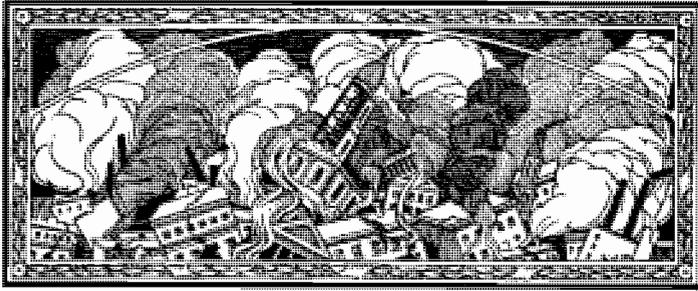
The divine outline of the social world pictures a contest between capital and labour in the last days. As we look at the world of today, lo! the picture is already staged and the tragedy is running its course. In the last acts of the drama the world's finances are to become "booties" to the lawless. Hab. 2: 6-8.

Jonah's gourd, outside of Nineveh, sprung up in a night, but it perished just as quickly. Millionaires appear to be the creation of a day. Only a few years ago they were unknown. But they may perish just as quickly as the prophet's gourd. They belong to the last days: "You have hoarded up wealth in these last days. . . . Here on earth you have lived self-indulgent and profligate lives." James 5: 1-5, Weymouth's Translation.

A WORLD DISEASED

In addition to all its moral declensions, the world is sick physically as well. Medical practitioners have compounded 12,000 prescriptions for its 2,000 known diseases, but the world is still sick, and 12,800,000 of its inhabitants still raise the cry of suffering, and long for the morning. No, the task is too great, the world will not be healed. Philanthropy has expended its very lifeblood in the endeavour. The John Howards, the Grace Darlings, and the Florence Nightingales have done their noble work, and thousands now stand in the field they pioneered, but the world is still in need. The fever has not left its blood.

Yes, the world's problems are still unsettled. Its £50,000,000,000 of war expenditure is a pressing but unprovided-for indebtedness—an account that will never be settled. The world's religion will grow less spiritual and more mechanical, less Scriptural and more a thing of human devising. The problem of capital and labour will meet with no solution. Legislation cannot find the key to unlock the secrets of this great question. Already we stand within the zone labelled, "Distress of nations." Perplexity is all around—a perplexity that clearly determines the staging of the picture as one of the last for earth's last generation.



CHAPTER XII

Earth's Hour of Sorrow

INSPIRATION has long since pictured "a time of trouble" as a finale to the march of human history, and the stoic philosophy of today is sometimes heard murmuring anticipations it has long endeavoured to suppress—anticipations that find voice now and then in portents of disaster that reflect corresponding shadings to the prophetic pictures of "the last days."

"Perilous times shall come," long since wrote the hero of the Roman dungeon; and as we lift our eyes today, lo, they have come! The conclusion, then, is inevitable—these are the "last days." Look at the picture: Earth's legislatures all distressed in their perplexity; labour and capital facing each other for a death struggle; monopolies and combines ruling the financial world; suicides to the number of over 100,000 registered yearly; America with an annual record of 70,000 divorces; England with 145,000 sisters of shame walking her streets, sensuality demanding 1,000,000 white slaves as victims for its altars of crime; madness increasing beyond all parallels of the past; a world's decreasing birth-rate, and behind it all, shading the darkening picture, every mountain and sea trans-

Earth's Hour of Sorrow

formed into a war-area, where warships play with death and mountains re-echo the tread of gathering millions for earth's final Armageddon.

In the background of the great historic picture through which Jehovah has outlined the ages, there lie the darkened shadings of utter ruin. Cities, temples, and gods of every class and description, with their many worshippers, share in a complete and final overthrow.

This great visitation is spoken of in Scripture as the "seven last plagues"—the full measure of God's judgment against sin, the dregs of the cup that the unholy must wring out and finally drink. Ps. 75: 8.

When God called Israel from the "house of bondage," in the land of the Pharaohs, He sent ten plagues to distinguish between His people and the nation of false worshippers that oppressed them—between the gods of the heathen and the God of heaven.

In reviewing the plagues of Egypt, men sometimes misunderstand or forget the objective that Jehovah had in mind. That visitation was not the expression of hate or indignant wrath at the weakness or wickedness of a helpless people, rather it was God's protest against the ambitions and false worship of a nation that had many deities whom she held and worshipped as superior to the God of the Hebrews.

As each plague fell it was a potent and well-defined blow at one of the prominent objects to which the Egyptians had offered their worship. Jehovah designed that Egyptians and Hebrews alike should see the utter impotence of the objects declared to be gods, and thus learn the folly of a choice in which they had deliberately preferred mere human creations to the Divine.

Egypt was a great nation, and at that time stood as the world's representative power. God took deliberate aim at her deities, so that the world might know that earth's most renowned and honoured idols were powerless to save even from the very calamities over which they were said to preside.

The first plague (Nile turned to blood) was directed against one of the principal deities in the land of Ham. The River Nile was worshipped under the name of *Heapee-mu*, the abyss of waters. But the god that brought its yearly gift of life to the valley became a thing of death. Bathing in its waters was an act of worship with the Egyptians, but all of its supposed life-giving power and the pleasure of its worship were set aside on its becoming a loathsome and deadly thing.

In the second plague, frogs, unclean things, appeared in great numbers, and the land was defiled. The people of Egypt had a goddess possessing a human form but bearing a frog's head, and to this deity they sought for protection against the frogs that sometimes multiplied to an undesirable degree in their fertile valley. This deity was supposed to provide immunity from a pest that was hateful to a people so clean as the Egyptians; but it could not even afford protection from these loathsome creatures.

So with all the other plagues, each one had its definite object, either in defiance to some idol, or in the setting aside of some part of their idol worship. The plagues of lice, flies, murrain, boils, hail, darkness, locusts, and the death of the first-born, followed each other until the last blow, aimed at the god of the home, brought Pharaoh, of the proud heart, to his knees.

In all this God planned to execute judgment on the

gods of Egypt. See Num. 33: 4; Ex. 12: 12; 18: 11, where this is definitely stated. When at last the contest was over, both Egyptians and Hebrews could see that all the deities of Egypt were impotent objects of worship, through which the people had been deceived.

Jehovah did not willingly afflict the children of men; He would cast dishonour upon their gods, and in proving their impotence, the worshippers must suffer without a helper.

Even so it will be with the seven last plagues. Many Egyptian deities have been discarded, but today other forms of false worship hold the minds of men in thralldom even as then. In God's closing and final demonstration all man's false deities must again be shown to be impotent. Egypt had many gods enshrined as deities that did not appear as external objects of adoration. It is even so in Christendom today.

THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES

Of these plagues we read, "In them is filled up the wrath of God." Rev. 15: 1. In our minds the word "wrath" represents anger, fury, rage, or vengeance. It is associated with passion. But these are not characteristics of Jehovah, and do not belong to His rule or government. Punish God will, but in that punishment resentment and anger find no place.

The Greek word here translated "wrath" is *θυμὸς* (*thumos*), and, according to Liddell and Scott, signifies "the soul, heart, any vehement passion; in a good sense, spirit, courage, the mind, will, purpose."

Now in the seven last plagues God is not venting His spite against helpless humanity, He is revealing His mind, will, or purpose against the gods that men

have worshipped. Those who have turned away from the light of heaven must needs suffer through the impotence of the gods they have served.

As we look at the world today, there are to be seen seven great agencies—national deities, gods of human devising, Molochs to which Christendom is paying tribute, objects to which men offer their hearts' devotion, and round whose altars the multitudes ever press.

Numberless gods there are, just as there were in the land of Egypt, but seven is God's complete number, and in smiting the seven great objects of Christendom's devotion, He smites and dishonours all her lesser deities. In their final overthrow every god in which the human heart has trust, apart from Jehovah, will be dishonoured and proved impotent. God will express His mind in no indefinite way, and man will surely know it.

Back in the days of old, it was against the gods of Egypt that Jehovah warred, now it will be the gods of Christendom that must fall.

THE GOD OF REBELLION

The first plague (Rev. 16: 2) falls upon the men who have the "mark of the beast." But this beast-power represents a counterfeit deity on earth, the power that "sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 2: 4. This is the power that has thought to "change times and laws," and the men who have its mark are the men who have accepted its changes and adopted its counterfeits in worship.

In making this change they have placed their dependence in the boastful power that has claimed equality with Jehovah. But no help can ever come

from any power that opposes the God of heaven. The failure that meets these rebellious people is a demonstration of this. They have said, "Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" Rev. 13: 4. But lo, the plague falls upon them, and all the attributed infallibility and power of the beast is shown to be impotent, for it cannot save even its devotees.

But what may this deity be called?—"Rebellion" is surely the proper name, for the power is described in Scripture as the one who "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." 2 Thess. 2: 4.

"Human rebellion" is one of the oldest of all terrestrial deities. Man first acknowledged its dictates in the Garden of Eden. It was overthrown in the Deluge, appeared again in Nimrod's Tower of Babel, and thence its worship spread over all the earth, and then centred in Rome, to gain strength for its world-wide supremacy in the latter days. This Babylon spirit must finally disappear in the overthrow of the counterfeit sabbath, lifted by the hand of human rebellion as a challenge to the authority of the living Creator who "made heaven and earth."

Jehovah returns the challenge to the rebellious world, and demands that their god shall heal the new disease—"the noisome and grievous sore"—that falls upon the devotees of the "spirit of rebellion." But there is no healing, and the might of the beast-power god, and the devotion of its worshippers, are alike proved impotent by the first plague.

THE GOD OF AMBITION

The second plague falls upon the sea, and it becomes "as the blood of a dead man." Rev. 16: 2. But

why should God plague the sea? Have its billows resisted His will, or its waters disregarded the decree placed upon them?

The Psalmist speaks of the great and wide sea, wherein "go the ships." Ps. 104: 25, 26. It is surely a great sea, for 145,000,000 square miles of our earth's surface are water, leaving only about 52,000,000 square miles of land. That great and wide sea is the highway for the world's commerce, the haven for its 32,000 ships, and the sporting arena for its thousands of war leviathans.

For centuries the nations have been engaged in a struggle for sea dominion. Warships of more destructive type and deadlier power have been in constant demand, and today these death-ships exceed all previous conceptions of destructive power.

What word might we inscribe on the flags that float over these national fleets of the sea? Perhaps no word would cover the situation so perfectly as that of "ambition." It is surely to the god of ambition that the nations are bowing in all their struggles for sea dominion. But when that sea is turned to blood, a poisonous, pestilential thing, what will it mean for the great highway of the world's commerce?—The ships of death and the merchantmen will both be abandoned, for no man, however ambitious, would dare to sail the sea of blood. In this way Jehovah will strike an effectual blow at the god of human ambition whose throne is on the sea.

THE GOD OF WICKEDNESS

Under the third plague the rivers and fountains of water turn to blood. Rev. 16: 3-6. It cannot be that the rivers and fountains of water have incurred the

displeasure of Jehovah. They still go down to the valleys and wander among the hills. Nature does not become rebellious. Why, then, should the fountains turn to blood?

In one of the Egyptian plagues the river turned to blood, but there was a false deity behind that river that Jehovah wished to challenge in the sight of all the nation.

It will be noticed that those who suffer this third plague stand in community with those who have slain the saints and prophets of the Lord. A long line of actors in the great blood-drama of wickedness reaches right back through history to the days of Cain, the first murderer among men. Cain "was of that wicked one," and the same spirit has continued to control the mind of man whenever and wherever possible. Put into human life and language, this spirit becomes the "spirit of wickedness." Men have yielded to its unholy promptings until the altars to Moloch and fields of slaughter have been found in every land. Saints, prophets, and martyrs have fallen most readily under its demand for blood. Through the long ages before Christ, thousands fell by the hand of their fellow-men, and since then more than 50,000,000 martyrs have been slain; while in the antagonism of nation against nation, more than 6,860,000,000 men have fallen in battle. Besides all this, the craving of man's appetite demands one million victims daily from the animal world.

This Moloch of human wickedness has never ceased to slaughter, and greater preparations for this work of death are being made today than ever before. The world is running mad after its armies, its prize-fights, and its side-shows of the battle-field. The vision

of blood seems to fascinate the human imagination, yet it is one of the things from which God would altogether separate His people. Isa. 33: 15. The crowded arenas of ancient Rome, the popular bull-fights of Spain, the multiplied prize-rings of the modern stadium, and the almost universal glorification given to war, all demonstrate the power that blood-scenes hold over the mind of man.

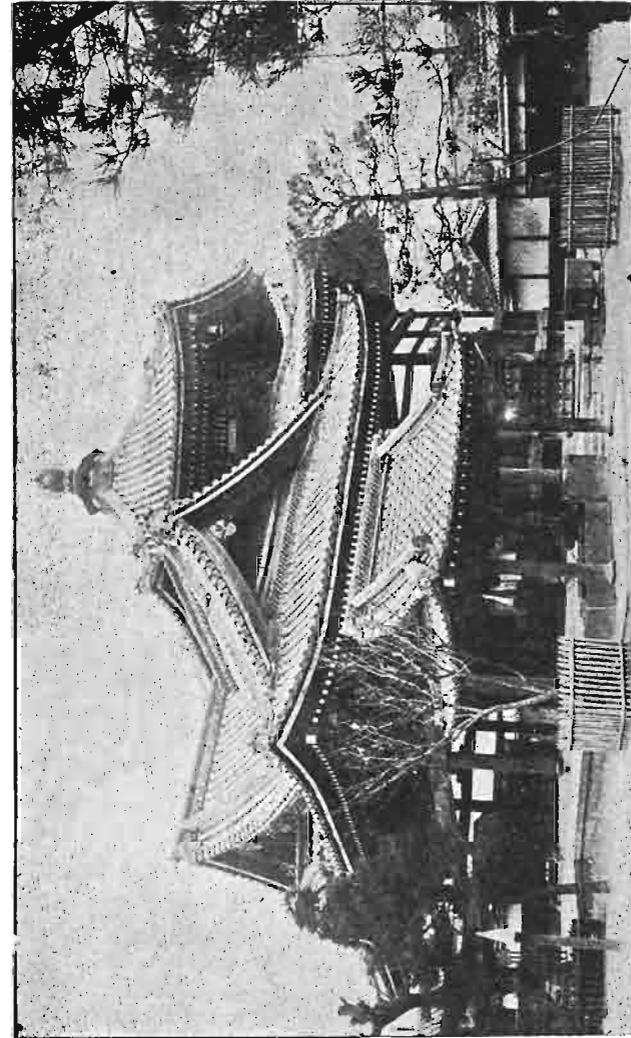
Now that the nations are all bowing at the altars of this god of wickedness, Jehovah will let them see what the finality of this worship must be. Timour, the Tartar, asked for 60,000 skulls that he might build a pyramid to his honour. The nations have all their pyramids of death though their victims may have been buried.

Man has boastfully and persistently endeavoured to carve his way with the sword, and now God will let him see the other side of the picture. As it is revealed, men's thirst for slaughter, revenge, and wickedness will surely go out in shame when they are given blood to drink.

THE GOD OF FALSE SCIENCE

The fourth plague brings great heat. The angel pours his vial on the sun, and the day-star becomes a plague to the sons of men. The sun has not in any way betrayed the confidence of the Creator who long ago made it the light-bearer for our world. Faithfully and constantly it has continued to supply heat and light to the planets of its system. Why, then, should judgment fall upon the sun?

It seems very probable that the sun was the first object to which man rendered false worship. It may be that Cain turned toward its brightness after being refused a place to worship before the glory by the



HEXAGONAL TEMPLE, KIOTO, JAPAN

Kioto is called the City of Temples, and deserves the name. One of these temples is said to contain 30,000 idols, most of which are rude images carved out of solid blocks of wood and heavily gilded.

gate of Eden. Ever since that time it has commanded human veneration. But with the development of these latest years it has passed from the mere object of heathen adoration to a kind of "science god" among men.

Perhaps there is no object visible to man around which so many false theories have been woven as the sun. The heathen of long ago attributed to it creative power, and put it in the place of God, with the first day of the week dedicated to its worship. Unable to account for its heat and light, scientists of more recent years have often concluded that it must finally burn out and become "a cold, black ball, rolling through infinite space."—*"Astronomy," by Lockyer, page 53.*

But this is what the Word of God refers to as "science falsely so-called." The Scripture declares that the sun is to grow seven times brighter in nature's redemption. Isa. 30: 26. And now, in order to destroy the last vestige of confidence in human science-worship, and in the evolutionary theories and scientific speculations respecting the sun, the very opposite to what men have predicted respecting the sun's declining glory comes to pass, and men are plagued with great heat; but behind that great heat there lies the failure of all their scientific theories and of the gods of science which men have worshipped.

THE GOD OF HUMAN WISDOM

Under the fifth plague great darkness falls upon the seat of the beast. Rev. 16: 10, 11. Through all the long years of history men have loved darkness rather than light.

In the Scriptures "darkness" and "light" are terms frequently employed to represent ignorance and knowl-

edge, or the way that man plans for himself in contradistinction to that planned by Jehovah. God's people are spoken of as "children of the light, and the children of the day: . . . not of the night, nor of darkness." 1 Thess. 5: 5. For the unholy the "blackness of darkness is reserved," while the path of the just shines more and more unto the perfect day. Prov. 4: 18.

In the beginning, Satan promised man that he would be as God, "knowing good and evil." But the way in which he has led man has been a path of darkness. Yet in the abundance of human wisdom man has fondly imagined that he has been ever walking toward the light. In his boasted wisdom, man has set aside the wisdom of God. But in this, men "professing themselves to be wise, . . . became fools." Rom. 1: 22.

The boasted excellence of human wisdom has found its culminating point in the blasphemous decree of human infallibility sent out from the Vatican in 1870, when the Pope of Rome was declared to be infallible and to speak as God.

Over the seat of this power, known in Scripture as the beast-power of Revelation, the darkness falls, and in that darkness Jehovah is pouring His contempt on the pretended god of human wisdom and all the assumptions by which men have chosen their own way in defiance of the dictates of Heaven.

Men have long worshipped at the altars reared by the human intellect, but every light kindled there is finally extinguished in the darkness that God sends as the counterpart of the spiritual darkness which men have chosen for themselves.

THE GOD OF SELFISHNESS

The sixth plague falls upon the Euphrates; its waters dry up, and the kings of the East find their way to Armageddon, where the kings of the whole world appear. Rev. 16: 12-17.

Doubtless, under the name of this ancient river, the Lord is pointing out the Turkish Power that has long occupied the country where that river flows. Isa. 8: 7. Assyria once occupied that territory, and it was called "the river" by the prophet. The term must again mean the Power that occupies the country, for the mere river could not hinder the kings of the East.

Armageddon is the final contest for the sceptre of world-dominion. It was held by Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, then Rome, and finally by the ten kingdoms of Rome's division.

History has demonstrated that the ten kingdoms carried with them the same spirit of selfish longing for supremacy that filled the heart of the Cæsars, the Alexanders, the Xerxes, and the Nebuchadnezzars. Nothing but a large share has satisfied any of them, so that but little of the earth is left now for division.

The world has but 52,000,000 square miles of land surface. Of this, England holds 13,000,000; Russia 7,200,000; France 500,000; Germany 212,000, and America 3,577,000 square miles; while Turkey with its 800,000, and China with its 5,000,000 square miles of territory, await the fatal scalpel that shall determine the last boundaries of dominion-selfishness among earth's kingly spoilers.

"Kings of the whole world"—what then? "Who will be the whole-world king?" Armageddon will be called to determine this question. But while bowing at the altar of the god of human selfishness the sceptre

is lost for ever. He whose right it is appears, and with that appearing the selfish greed that has made "kings of the whole world" goes out for ever in eternal disappointment.

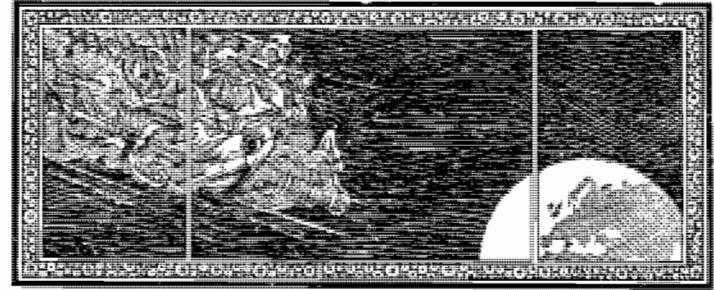
In the seventh plague *human greatness* is humbled in the dust. Rev. 16: 17-21. The earthquake and the great hail level every monument of human glory. The cities of the nations fall. Lordly palaces and monuments of grandeur all go down, and Jehovah is alone exalted.

Listen to the solemn determination given in the prophetic picture of that time: "The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, . . . and the idols He shall utterly abolish . . . when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isa. 2: 17, 18.

Not one idol will be left. Men bow at many and strange altars today; but the seven last plagues will smite the principal deities, and in these Jehovah will smite them all. Man's false worship has proved a failure from beginning to end, and now the worshippers must share in the ruin cast upon their idols.

My brother, it is not the idols of a heathen world that God is dealing with in the seven last plagues, but the gods of Christendom—the gods chosen by men who walk where the gospel echoes have fallen. Instead of coming out of Babylon at the Lord's gracious call, they choose to remain heedless of the judgment that Jehovah has pronounced upon all false deities and their devotees.

Where will you stand in the final crisis? With those who "worship Him who made heaven and earth," or with those who worship the gods of human thought and will? With one class or the other you must stand. But God leaves it with you to decide which it will be.



CHAPTER XIII

His Glorious Appearing

OF all the exceeding great and precious promises given in the Word of God there is none that means more to the homeward-bound pilgrim at the present time than that spoken by the Man of Nazareth: "I will come again."

Down over the hill-tops of history and across the valleys of pain the echoes of that promise have fallen sweet as the vesper chimes, and cheering as the breath of springtime when the winter is done. Courage and inspiration have been given to the hand of the toiling ones through its power, and from its heavenly radiance light has flashed across the weary path that leads down the dark valley till Jesus comes.

While this promise has meant much to the people of the past, it means most to the people of God in this generation. To the tear-dimmed eyes that look for the Redeemer, that coming means tears all wiped away! To the heart bowed long under its sorrow it means fullness of joy for evermore. To the tired soul, spent with its long vigil, it means rest in the joy of its Lord. And to the pilgrim, friendless and alone, it means home and inheritance for ever. Next to the marvellous promise, "They shall see His face," the

promise, "I will come again," means most to the child of God today.

PROPHETIC EPOCHS

In human history there are many epochs around which ordinary events arrange themselves like satellites around some mighty sun. But in prophetic history there are but two such epochs, and around these all other events gather, and from them borrow their glory. The first and second advents of Jesus Christ form the two great prophetic hill-tops from which all other prophetic landmarks measure.

To the ancient Church the prophets wrote of the first advent. The woman's Seed, the Star out of Jacob, and Daniel's measuring line of seventy weeks, were all messages that pointed onward to the time when the Messiah would be revealed, while the announcement made by the angelic host to the Judean shepherds, and the call of the wise men from the East, left the Jewish Church without excuse. A thousand prophetic fingers pointed to the first advent as the greatest hill-top of ancient history, but the Church was in darkness, so did not prepare for that great decisive point. When the Messiah appeared He found His people in darkness, for the God-given light had been disregarded. In the deepness of that darkness the glory of that ancient Church disappeared for ever.

Both before and after the first advent the prophets spoke of the glory that would attend the second appearing of the Lord from heaven. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of the time when the Lord would come with His holy ones to "execute judgment." But Enoch spent over 200 years of his life with Adam. So the first man, who lost all, heard the promise con-

cerning the coming of the second Adam, who would regain all.

From the days of Enoch on down to the time of the Patmos seer, all the prophets pointed over the ages to that second great historic event, when the opening heavens would reveal the Son of God. Do not wonder, then, that longing eyes have grown dim in looking for that appearing, or that anxious hearts have ever waited for the revelation that must banish pain for ever. The first *promise* made by God in Eden concerning the woman's Seed told of Christ's first coming, while the first *prophecy* ever made through inspired lips told of His second coming. Gen. 3: 15; Jude 14, 15.

THE HOPE OF HIS COMING

Sixty-five times in his epistles Paul, the great prophetic apostle, tells of the second coming of the Lord from heaven. He sets it forth as the incentive to godliness and the development of all Christian character. That event was to him "the glorious appearing" and the "blessed hope."

We expectantly wait for that for which we hope, and in this waiting we naturally prepare ourselves to receive that for which we hope. Hope thus becomes an active element in the mind that works with transforming and renewing power. So John writes, "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him. . . . And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3: 2, 3.

Christ will not receive a people who are unprepared. This vile body, or rather, "the body of our humiliation," is to be changed and made like unto His glorious body, by the miracle-working power of Jehovah. But we must become like Him in character;

and this can be obtained only in active, individual life. Hence the need of the purifying hope that must cleanse and purify the soul that waits expectantly for Him.

Present-day Christianity has largely lost this hope. Because of this it has failed to reach the standard that God requires. The corruptions that have marred church history in the past, and the lack of spiritual power at the present time, are due, in no small degree, to the absence of this inspiring hope. Darkness and lack of spiritual power must also mark the individual life that is separated from this "blessed hope."

When pointing to the cross Paul speaks of drinking the cup "till He come." We must still drink the cup, yet even in that memorial of pain we are to remember that He is coming again, so that those who carry the cross below may go with Him to share the glory above.

THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING

Numerous predictions of that great event stand on the sacred page, and these are all supplemented by the thrice-repeated promise of Christ Himself, "I will come to you," "I will come again," "Behold, I come quickly."

Lord Chatham, the celebrated English statesman, once promised his boy the opportunity of seeing an old wall pulled down that stood near their home. But during the earl's absence the wall was demolished by some workmen, and the promise was not fulfilled. On his return the father required that the wall be rebuilt in order that he might keep the promise made to his boy.

Think you that our absent Lord will not keep the promise made to His children?—Surely He will. Eternity itself would be reconstructed sooner than that promise might fail. "Unto them that look for Him

shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9: 28.

In Persia and some Eastern countries an ancient custom was formerly observed. On the visit of a king a special door or gateway was opened for his reception. On his departure it was closed, never to be opened again.

Through the gateway of humiliation with its manger, its cross, and its tomb, the Redeemer has passed already. But it has been closed for ever. Again He comes, but this time it will be through the gateway of glory. On His departure and return to the heavenly land, angelic hosts will cry, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; . . . and the King of glory shall come in."

Earth, thou grain of sand on the shore of the universe of God; thou Bethlehem amongst the princely cities of the heavens; thou art and remainest the loved one amongst ten thousand suns and worlds, the chosen of God. Thee will He again visit, and thou wilt prepare a throne for Him, as thou gavest Him a manger cradle; in His radiant glory thou shalt rejoice, as thou didst once drink His blood and His tears, and mourn His death. On thee has the Lord a great work to complete.—*Geikie.*

This great work will be completed, and the Redeemer will come for His own to fulfil His promise of long ago. But when He does come, when the glory of cherubim and seraphim encircles Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand shout their triumphs before Him, will you be prepared to welcome Him as your Lord and Redeemer?

THE OBJECT OF HIS COMING

It was while comforting the hearts of the sorrowing disciples that Christ made the promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." This is the

when "our God shall come, and shall not keep silence." Ps. 50: 3. Then it shall be "very tempestuous round about Him." So tempestuous indeed will it be that all the monuments of human pride will be levelled with the dust. Jeremiah tells of the time when the fruitful place will be a wilderness, and all the cities will be broken down. This will be at the "presence" of the Lord. Jer. 4: 23-27.

Then it is that the sons of men will need a shelter and a refuge from the storm. But while the righteous are hidden in the "secret of His pavilion," the unholy will seek for shelter amid the falling rocks and crumbling mountains, so that they may be hidden from the presence, or "face of the Lamb." Rev. 6: 15-19. Reader, which would you rather meet, the falling mountains or the face of the Lamb?

The day of mercy will then have closed for ever, and God must do "His strange work." The proud knees that have long refused to bow in adoration will then bow in abject terror. The rich of the earth, who have held back their treasures as a thank-offering to selfishness, will then cast away their silver and gold as unholy things, while they hasten to hide in some cleft of the rock from the glory of His power, when the Lord rises to "shake terribly the earth." Isa. 2: 21.

The atmospheric heavens will depart in connection with all the other manifestations of dissolving nature, and then the earth will be left empty, desolate, and waste, and its inhabitants will be scattered abroad. Isa. 24: 1, 3.

Amid all these convulsions of a dying world those who love and long for His appearing will look up and say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him,

. . . we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25: 9.

As the righteous are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, the remainder of the unholy are slain by the brightness of the glory that accompanies Christ and the myriads of holy angels. Then it is that far over the earth the "slain of the Lord" will lie "neither lamented, nor gathered, nor buried." Jer. 25: 33.

When all these supernatural manifestations present themselves; when the undimmed glory of Christ is revealed, and the majesty of crumbling mountains and departing heavens proclaim that the day of His wrath has come, will you tremble with the trembling earth, or will you say, "We have waited for Him"?

If Christ did not come, what then?
If He failed in His promise to men?
If the prophetic Word
Dishonoured its Lord,
And Christ did not come, what then?—
The grave on the hillside would keep
Its treasures, while lone hearts would weep
O'er the dark, silent tomb
With its changeless gloom
Through ages eternal and deep.
Then sin's crimson tide would roll on
And deepen with each coming dawn,
Till madness and rage
Filled history's page,
And hope's last prospective had gone.
Then self in its struggle would plan
To capture the conscience of man,
To blot out the right,
And trample in might
Each part of God's holy plan.

Earth's Last Generation

And the story of love that has cheered
The soul in the grief it has feared,
 Would all prove a lie,
 And faith's dream must die
In view of the home it has reared.
If Christ should not come?—Oh, in vain
Men question the gospel refrain;
 The promise divine
 From your Lord and mine,
Declares, "I will come again."

THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING

Only to the careless and unbelieving will Christ appear unexpectedly. Only to the man who shuts his eyes and persistently refuses to see the evidence of His coming will He "come as a thief."

With a kindness unexampled and a patience that is wonderful has Jehovah outlined, over and over again, the course of events leading up to that supreme event. With great plainness has He foretold the conditions that would obtain in the social, political, religious, and financial world. So the nations are without excuse.

In addition to all that should touch national life, Jehovah has sent to many classes of men special warnings and signs, telling of the approaching crisis that must finally fix human destiny. It would almost seem as if no class among men had been forgotten or overlooked.

In the first chapter of Joel's prophecy Jehovah has presented a latter-day picture for the farmers, orchardists, and land-workers of earth. In it blight and mildew spoil, while the drought consumes and hinders the products of the earth. In Australia alone over twenty-seven different pests are now attacking the fruit trees.

His Glorious Appearing

In Joel 3: 9-16 military men are given their warning. The weak say, "I am strong," and make haste to prepare for battle. But all the preparation is for the last losing struggle of earth's Armageddon.

Daniel, the great prophetic historian, gives to earth's ambassadors and diplomatists a graphic picture of the declining "Crescent." Turkey is to leave Europe and "plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain." And after that he comes to his end with none to help him. Dan. 11: 40-45. For more than seventy years this finality-drama has been staged before a world. The curtain will soon drop. At that time Michael stands up and human probation ends.

In Matt. 24: 29-31 the astronomers of earth are called to attention over the darkening sun and falling stars. Both these great events have taken place and have been carefully noted in their volumes of scientific research. But these are only the prelude to the most magnificent of all celestial phenomena—the second appearing of Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, gives a warning and a charge to the "latter-day" religious world. Its formalism, love of pleasure, and insincerity are pictured in deep and life-like shadings. Its high-minded selfishness is set forth in dangerous guise, and the warning is given, "From such turn away." 2 Tim. 3: 1-15. O that the Church of God might turn from these things in these last days, and prepare for the coming of her Lord and Master.

Earth's millionaires are drawn in a life-sized portrait by the Apostle James. James 5: 1-8. But once more it is the "last days," and to the financiers of earth this prophetic photograph is dedicated. It

Earth's Last Generation

tells of heaped-up treasures and rusting gold; of crying labourers and financial greed; of poverty pleading, and the wastefulness of wealth. But it is all on the last page of history, and that is the page we read today. The second advent comes next.

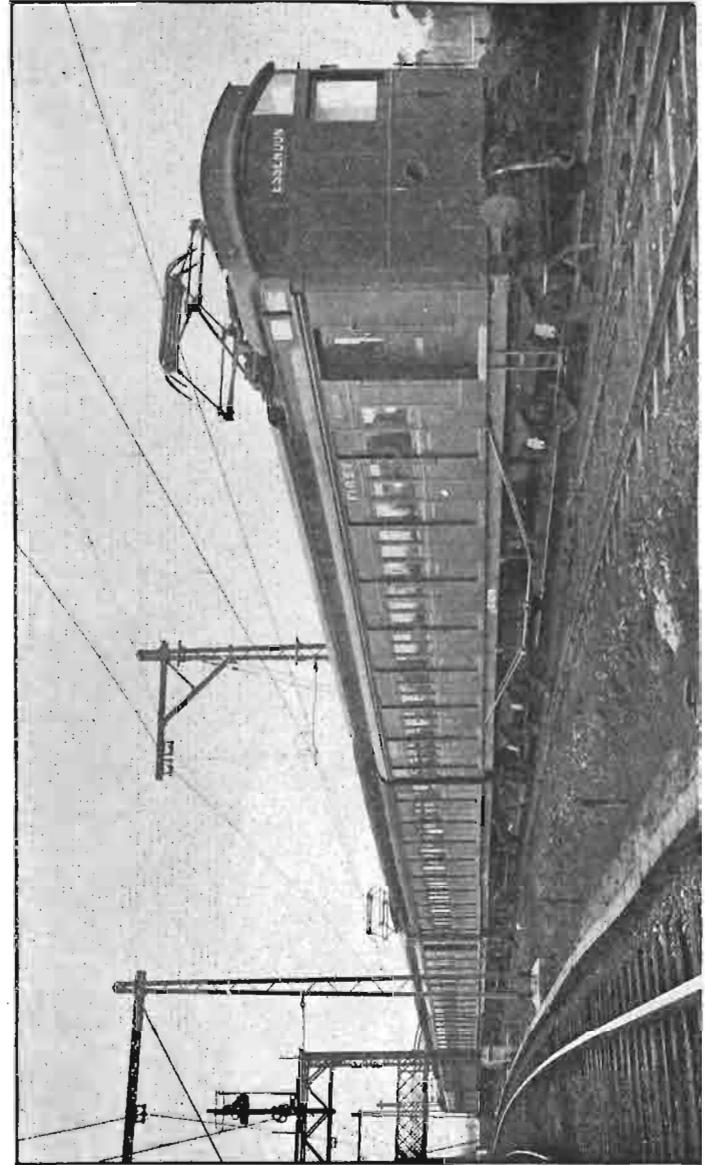
Scientists and educationalists may read their message in Dan. 12: 4. But this is the age of all that is rapid in movement, scientific in character, and skilled in knowledge. But it is also the "time of the end." The demonstration of "running to and fro" is too evident even for inquiry.

The great army of engineers and traffic men have a special page with its "iron-horse" of the last period running "like the lightnings." Its cars are jostling one against another. It is the day of the "thunderbolt," the "eclipse," and the lightning express, but it is also the day of "His preparation." Nahum 2: 2-5.

For the incredulous and the unbelieving a warning has also been given. In the "last days" scoffers are to walk in selfish ease while they tauntingly ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?" 2 Peter 3: 3-10. This millions are doing today. Never before in the world's history were there so many scoffers, and many of them belong to the religious order and write large letters after their names; but their indulgence and their scoffing point out latter-day times.

For the mariners and the sea voyagers Christ points to tidal waves and ocean disturbances as the immediate evidence of the coming of the Son of man. Luke 21: 25-27.

Hence it is that all classes may know, if they will, concerning this greatest of all events—an event that must thrill heaven and earth with its grandeur and overwhelming splendour.



A TWENTIETH-CENTURY CONVENIENCE—AN ELECTRIC TRAIN

His Glorious Appearing

But for all that Jehovah has done in order that men may be prepared for this great finality of history, millions and tens of millions will be awakened from their dreams of pleasure and self-seeking only to find that "the harvest is past and the summer ended," yet they are not saved.

But to those who are prepared for His glorious appearing it will be an event of joy unspeakable. "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him," will be the glad declaration. Isa. 25: 9.

Sometime, just when I cannot tell,
Some dawning after night of pain,
Amid the glory yet unseen,
My absent Lord will come again.

Sometime, I cannot tell just how,
When earth's deep shading brings the night,
His hand will lift my tired feet
To walk the glory-streets of light.

Sometime, I cannot tell just why,
His power will fashion into grace
The fading form this life has given,
That I may rise and see His face.

Sometime, and though I cannot see
The transformation love has planned,
I wait His "sometime," and toil on
The "little while" at His command.



CHAPTER XIV

Called from the Grave

GREATEST of all the great events linked with the "glorious appearing" of Jesus Christ is the first resurrection. In it there centres the hope of all God's people in the past ages. And it will be the final revelation given to the last generation of men this side of the thousand years.

Through all the ages, from the time of Abel till now, death has been taking captive the fairest and holiest from among men! So constant has been the work of the destroyer that a continuous procession of weeping ones has been on the march bearing their dead to the tomb. It has been estimated that more than 280,000,000,000 of the human race have died since Adam forfeited his right to the tree of life.

More than 40,000,000 die every year, 109,300 every day, and 4,500 every hour. Hence this old earth has become a land of death, a great cemetery where the grave hides its millions from the eyes that weep and are sad.

What death has done for man cannot yet be known. How many broken hearts, how many tears of sorrow, how many wails of anguish, and how much pain it

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has caused cannot be told. There are few hearts that have not sometimes wept over the shaded resting-place of the loved that are not. There are few homes without the "vacant chair" that tells of the departed! Yes, this old world is a land of death, and all over its marred and battered fields sad hearts are longing—

"For the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still."

Rachel, weeping for her children, still refuses to be comforted, while the work of the destroyer goes on. Trembling humanity hastens toward the abyss, while a ceaseless multitude of helpless ones passes down into the darkness. Yet there is no voice that comes back from the land of forgetfulness!

But must human life thus always prove a failure? Must death continue to swallow up all its ambitions, its hopes, and its heart-yearnings? Must the cry of pain for ever mingle with its sweetest songs, and will the silence of the tomb sometime hush all its gladness? Will the grave hold its captives for ever?

CERTAINTY OF A RESURRECTION

With God the resurrection of the human body is a necessity, though to man it appears an impossibility. Should there be no resurrection, those who have fallen asleep in Christ must for ever perish. 1 Cor. 15: 16-19. If there were no resurrection, death would claim eternal victory, and Satan, who has the power of death, would triumph over Jehovah. But this cannot be, for death, as the "last enemy," is to be abolished, and Satan also is to be destroyed. Heb. 2: 14.

In preparation for that time, when all that are in the grave shall hear His voice, Christ already holds

the keys of the tomb, and it is only a question of time as to when man shall be wakened from his dreamless sleep.

But you may ask the unbeliever's question: "Suppose the body has been mutilated, and part of it buried here, and part of it yonder, how can it be raised again?" Do not forget that all human bodies are made of dust. Remember, too, that all atoms of dust are exactly alike. All atoms of gold are alike and it matters not whether the atoms that compose the sovereign were gathered here or yonder. The stamp upon it marks its nature and value, and whether the gold dust composing it was gathered from the valley or the mountain matters not.

The identity of man does not depend upon the atoms that compose his body, but rather upon the arrangement and organisation of those atoms. The boy of fourteen years does not retain in his body any of the particles that compose his body when seven years of age. The man of threescore and ten years would have changed his body nine times, yet he is still the same man, and his face remains familiar.

There is in the books of heaven a life-photograph of every man, and when made to live again in the resurrection, the body is organised according to that plan.

David writes: "In Thy book all my members were written, . . . when as yet there was none of them." Ps. 139: 16. Even the sea will at last give up its dead. But every man will rise in his own order, "Christ the firstfruits; and afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." 1 Cor. 15: 23.

Reorganised from the dust, but made like unto the Son of God, and with the life of God in them (Eze. 37:

13, 14), the righteous rise in the first resurrection, redeemed from death, to die no more. But the unholy come last in order, and so rise in the second resurrection after the thousand years.

They can claim only that life after which they have sought—the fleeting life of pleasure. Hence they rise to die the "second death." From that death there is no resurrection, and he who shares it will never live again. Throughout the eternal years it will leave the unholy "as though they had not been." Jehovah is Lord of both living and dead. He holds the right to kill and to make alive. Deut. 32: 39. In the second death He will destroy both soul and body in Gehenna—that great antitypical valley of fire in which the rubbish of a world will be consumed.

God has not yet finished with the dead. All must live again! The grave must restore its veiled faces, the sea must give up its dead. And beyond that restoration there is the life unending for the holy and the death unending for the unholy. Eternity begins for the righteous after the first resurrection.

POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

During the long ages, while pondering over the hereafter, man has stood by the silent resting-place of his fellow mortals, asking, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

But the closed lips of the loved answer not, and the silent tomb heeds not the wail of sorrow that has cast its sadness over every human heart.

In speaking of his future hope, Job declares, "If I wait, the grave is mine house." Job 17: 13. This resting-place he describes as a "land of darkness," without any order, where the rich and the poor are

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equal, where the weary rest, and the servant is free from his master. Job 3: 18, 19; 10: 21, 22.

Oh, silent land, how many millions of the children of men rest in thy valleys of peace! How many of the sons of clay have taken up their abode in thy narrow fields! How many slumber in thy dust together! No mad tide of ambition fires the heart of thy inhabitants, for kingly crowns and captive chains lie ever side by side in thy silent halls.

The grave is, indeed, a silent land. In fact, it has no tale to tell. The dreamless sleep of its countless inhabitants measures not the days and hours of time. They know naught of the affairs of men. Thus it is written: "The dead know not anything." Eccl. 9: 5.

Satan planned that the grave should be a prison-house—a prison-house that might never be opened. But Christ went down into its darkness, rested a while in its silence, and then came forth a conqueror, with the keys of the grave and of death. Rev. 1: 18. That silent land is now a resting-place, held under control by the living Christ, where God's wearied ones may rest a while before the long activities of Eternity begin!

We tread the path with weary feet;
But rest of clay,
Calm, cool, and silent just beyond,
Will close the way.
Here love its sweetness must borrow,
Here hope must paint each coming morrow,
Here joy must conquer every sorrow,
Till ends the day.
Oh quiet rest for pilgrims lone,
For weary heart,
No visions of the tyrant's rod
Or bitter smart

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Can mar the quiet dreaminess stealing
Where love's devout recessional pealing
Would ever pour its spirit healing,
And peace impart.

Alike through darkness and the day,
A resting sweet;
Where millions of the high and low
Together meet;
With love's recessional ever sighing—
"Sleep on, beloved, while flowers are dying,
Sleep on, till years have ceased their flying,
In rest complete."

Scientists talk learnedly about what they are pleased to term the "impossibility of a resurrection." But, like the Sadducees of old, in this they err, "not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Matt. 22: 29. Measured by human science and scientific ideas it is surely an impossibility, but when the power of Jehovah touches the question the impossibility disappears.

In a cemetery in the city of Hanover, Germany, there is a tomb, known as "The Open Grave." One overturned piece of marble bears the inscription:—

Henrietta von Ruling, Born January 19, 1756. Died April 15, 1782.

On the front foundation stone is chiselled the remarkable statement:—

This burial place, purchased to all eternity, must never be opened.

This haughty princess did not believe in the resurrection, and in this way proclaimed her belief that this grave would never be opened. But during the interment a tiny seed found a place in the earth. The marble slabs were joined together by iron bands, but

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through a tiny opening the dew-drops kissed that seed and it grew. A little shoot crept slowly through the joint to seek the light. Thicker and stronger it grew, and human eyes looked in wonder to see what the result would be. Finally the iron bands burst asunder, the marble covering, weighing over a ton, was pushed aside, and now a large tree grows from the grave that was "never to be opened." The eyes of curious millions now look down into the blackness of that grave that has been opened.

If the power, placed by the Creator in a little seed, could thus undo the work of determined unbelief, what cannot the word of that Living Creator Himself accomplish? Ezekiel looked upon a valley of dry bones. He was commanded to speak God's word to them, and, lo! each came to its place and the valley was filled with living men. Eze. 37: 3-14.

Three times during His walk among men, Christ called the dead back to life, just by the power of that "word." He has left the assurance—"All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." John 5: 28, 29. So it is not the possibility or the impossibility of the scientists upon which the matter of the resurrection rests—it is the word of the living God. The same voice that called man from the dust in his creation can call him back from the dust in his resurrection!

WHEN THE SEA GIVES UP ITS DEAD!

In the city of Melbourne, Victoria, there is a cemetery where over 200,000 dead lie in their dreamless sleep. More than £3,000,000 has been spent in rearing memory monuments over their resting-place. Marble slabs, towering cenotaphs, sculptured figures,

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and gilded crosses all tell the story of the loved and lost ones.

But what a wonderful revelation it will be when all these monuments, and those of ten thousand other great burial places, are scattered and overturned by a hand more daring than that of the earthquake! A nation is to be born in a day, and the eyes of earth's last generation will behold that wonderful vision: "O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves. . . . And shall put My Spirit in you and ye shall live." Eze. 37: 12-14.

Not only will the monuments of the cemetery be cast aside in a great overturning, but even the sea shall give up its dead. Rev. 20: 13. Millions have found a nameless and unmarked resting-place beneath its mighty waters. Thousands have gone down with only the wild winds to sing their requiem and the wild waves to cover them, but it is written: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it." Perhaps to man this would be the most unlikely of all unlikely things, but in God's possibilities it is one of the possible things. "They shall come again from the land of the enemy," and they shall also come from the depths of the sea!

ALIVE FOR EVERMORE

We read in the Holy Book of a people over whom "the second death hath no power." Rev. 20: 6. Here man is subject to death. All life-forms die, and this old earth has become a wilderness of graves—a garden of death, where all the fairest blossoms die.

But there is a time coming when the face of man shall no longer wear its shroud of sorrow, or the heart weep its tears of pain—a time when the eyes of man

may look out over scenes immortal without fear of the dimness that falls at eventime.

David speaks of the life to come as "length of days for ever and ever." Ps. 21: 4. Christ calls it "life eternal." John 10: 28. Paul pictures it as the putting on of "immortality." 1 Cor. 15: 54. But perhaps the most expressive term by which that life is presented before man is the statement, "Neither can they die any more." Luke 20: 36.

Man cannot fully understand the meaning of "eternal life," but he knows what it is to die. He may then know how sweet life would be without a fear or even thought of death.

Think of it! No night of pain, no morning of sadness, no foreboding of coming trial, no hours of loneliness, no funeral processions, no longer the conflict and the cross, for the days of weeping are ended! Rev. 21: 4.

After the resurrection God's people will not need to say, "If all is well." All will be well! Eternity will stretch its long ages before them, immortality will rest its glory upon them, "pleasures for evermore" will await them, and over it all the heart will thrill with the divine proclamation—"Neither can they die any more."

Sometime, beside the margin of death's narrow sea,
Where muffled surges chant a requiem strain,
Our feet may stand in twilight's deepening hour,
We too may hear the sad refrain.

Ten thousand pathways leading to the tomb
Pass by that shore where countless millions meet;
Master and slave, the high and low alike
Enter its tide with shoeless feet.

That margin marks the boundary of the human will;
Despot and coward tremble by its wave;
There pride its tinsel casts away in scorn,
Since all are equal in the grave.

The further shore lies hidden in the deeper gloom,
No gleaming beacon flashes bright between;
Faith's lamp alone can gild the distant heights
With revelations yet unseen.

Great Father, let this trembling heart of mine,
Commit its will, its way, its all to Thee,
Since "Love Triumphant" on the further shore
Whispers its pledge of life to me.

"Because I live," the echoes, sweetly soft and clear,
Still reach this shore where sorrow yields its breath;
"Because I live, the pledge of life divine,
Thou, too, shalt triumph over death."

It is enough! the promise given is all complete;
No requiem song can ever hush Faith's hymn—
After the night of deep and darkest gloom
I shall arise to live with Him.

God will not have finished with this old earth in
its sorrow until His people are called from the grave!



Conclusion

TO the disciples of long ago Christ said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." But there are many in the world today who have eyes that will not see and ears that will not hear. Fascinated by earthliness, like Bunyan's man with the muck rake, their eyes look only earthward, and their ears—tickled with the songs of time, the romance of unreality, and the plaudits of worldly fame and fashion—cannot hear the Voice that calls, "Why will ye die?"

Archias, governor of the Spartans, was invited to a banquet by false friends. When the company was in the height of the revelry and pleasure, a messenger arrived from Athens with a letter warning Archias of a plot against his life. The messenger was urgent and required that the letter be read at once. But the Spartan hero was already overcome with wine, and he replied, "This is no time to trouble us with business; serious things tomorrow." But for him the morrow never came. That night he died under the dagger of an enemy. "Serious things tomorrow" is the cry of the world today, but its tomorrow may be a fatal delay.

The disciples had seen Christ dressed in homely garb and walking among men. They had seen the miracles He wrought, and the sinners He had for-

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given. They rejoiced in the demonstrations His presence afforded, in the glory-scene of the transfiguration and the manifestations of resurrection power. But how much more blessed it will be to see that Christ come again "without sin unto salvation"; to behold the glory of the innumerable company of angels that escort the Redeemer back to His own; to hear the lifetones of that Voice which calls the dead from the graves of a world, and then pronounces the holy people holy for ever! This will be the portion of "earth's last generation," but whether it will be an enjoyable experience or otherwise will depend upon the choice made by each individual.

"Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time." They will look up and exclaim, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Isa. 25: 9. But those unprepared will call to the rocks and mountains to fall and hide them from that glory which they dare not face. Rev. 6: 15-17.

We are standing in the full blaze of an age of wonders. We behold the gospel touching the furthest shore and crossing the highest steeps. We see the Bible a triumphant Book, and, after a battle of 3,000 years, still leading in the van of all the world's literature. Spiritualism is presenting its revelations all around us, demanding our attention. The world is in its greatest hurry, and its nerves are tuned to the song of "Unrest." Peace Parliaments and Peace Proclamations have brought no peace. Labour and capital stand facing each other as for a final contest. With its submarines, science has fathomed the seas; with its aeroplanes, it has accomplished the traditional impossibility of "flying in the air" to an altitude of 33,000 feet.

And now the great flash-light of Prophecy falls right upon our generation. Just a little step beyond and we will be in the great day of earth's sorrow. Then the glory of His appearing and the resurrection of the righteous must complete the picture of marvels to be seen by this last generation.

No generation has ever received so much from God. Here the light of all the ages comes to a focus and the prophetic warnings of all history repeat themselves. Surely this is a generation without excuse, and yet it is a generation upon which greater responsibility rests than upon any other. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Luke 12: 48.

Reader, what does it all mean to you? Do these things talk to you of realities? Do they picture to your mind the consummation of all things? Do they lead you to feel after God and to think less of this ageing world? This is the generation "upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10: 11), and in it God is looking for the 144,000 who are to stand before the throne "without fault." Rev. 14: 1-5. Never an age so full of solemn realities, never an age so heavy with tremendous possibilities, never an age whose lost opportunities will mean so much to eternity! This is the voice with which God would have them speak to you. Do not misunderstand their message: "Now is the day of salvation."

In the days of Noah it was a temporary salvation that was offered to man. In the days of Lot it was also a salvation for the hour. But this must be an eternal salvation. No dawning after will renew the hope of forgiveness. No second probation awaits beyond. God is looking to you to make your final decisions. Make them now!

Counting on You

HE is counting on you, my Brother, on you,
For the work He has planned, for the prospect in view;
And if you should fail Him, then what will He say,
When reckoning comes at close of the day?
With crowns, thrones, and sceptres all cast in review,
The God of the stars is counting on you!

He is counting on you, my Sister, on you;
In life, love, and promise He bids you be true;
And if you should fail Him, one star will be dim
That might have flashed out in its splendour for Him.
With stars, crowns, and sceptres all cast in review,
The God of the stars is counting on you!

What matters if tempests burst over the way?
Jehovah still lives and guards while they play.
What matters if friendships pass by and are sad?
Jehovah still loves and bids you be glad.
What matters though all earth's hopes prove untrue?
The God of the stars is counting on you!