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Things Coming to Pass

"When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." - Luke 21:31.

THE INEVITABLE has happened. To a Europe that for nearly six years had experienced war's alarms, war at last has come. Insane war, with all its brutal horror. And yet not war as it had been waged in times past but a new kind of war that could reach beyond the battling armies to the helpless civilian population, to wreak untold misery on non-combatants. Such is the new kind of war that has burst upon a long-suffering humanity which, since 1914, has been living in an atmosphere of hatred and suspicion unparalleled in the annals of history. And yet the breaking of the long-threatened storm, so fearfully awaited, has paradoxically been welcomed by many in Europe as preferable to life lived under the constant dread of impending conflict.

The "war of nerves," of nations mobilizing for days and weeks in full view of their neighbors, of threat piled on threat, while each side waited for the other to break down, had finally become unendurable, and war itself, war to the finish, as some have expressed it, was considered preferable to a continuance of a state of affairs where the activities of one powerful nation were constantly jeopardizing the peace of a continent. And this, though thinking men had forewarned that another such cataclysm as the first world war had precipitated, would result in a crippling of the nations to such an extent that it would be with difficulty, if at all, that they could recover from it. And yet the dreadful record of past suffering seems to have had no lesson for the present generation. As has well been said, "We learn from history that we never learn from history."

"Never Coming to a Knowledge of the Truth"

When the final decision was made by the British Cabinet, in the words of Arthur Greenwood, Laborite member, the House of Commons accepted the war announcement in an "atmosphere of relief and composure that the intolerable agony of suspense is now over." And now war in all its barbaric fury has burst forth, and though the press reports are still *very* meager, the horrifying details have begun to seep through. The details of the engagements on the Western Front do not permit of a true appraisal of conditions as yet, but those obtaining on the Eastern, though still obscured by the maze of contradictory reports, suffice to enlighten a sickened world of the dreadful state of affairs in Poland.

At the time of our writing, after only a few weeks of warfare, Poland has been reduced to a terrible plight. Her armies broken up, every sizable city half in ruins due to the almost constant bombardment by German planes, her people disorganized and fleeing everywhere in terror, completely hemmed in from possible- outside, help. Hers is a condition of black despair. It is necessary to list the details of the sufferings- of 'her wretched people, practically defenseless from the rain of death from the skies. Utter demoralization seems to have swept the brave little nation, and who can read without a sense of numbing horror, the pitiful sufferings of this people, the roads choked with panic-stricken civilians afoot, fleeing their, wrecked homes, fleeing to no one knows where, but anywhere from the pursuing death. What despair must fill the hearts of these poor people, who so bravely a few years ago again established their nation, so often torn asunder, and now must realize that even with possible ultimate victory on the Western Front, Poland, as a nation, again may disappear from existence.

Desperate Plight of Polish Jews

An added note of misery is the desperate plight of 3,000,000 Polish Jews, to whom war has come as a new fear that goes beyond the danger of loss of homes and property. They flee not only the German army, but the anti-Semitic policies they believe will come with any German occupation. Today they are crowded into the entire area of south-eastern Poland, but the Rumanian border is blocked to them, and the Soviet frontiers are also apparently closed to them.

The heart is sickened at the record of these things, and also of the pages yet to be turned in the future. The realization of the consequences of loosing the forces of destruction and of the ultimate responsibility to a Higher Tribunal for the sufferings of helpless peoples, has already brought forth the tragic irony of both major belligerents claiming divine blessing. Great Britain's monarch, in his address to the empire's subjects after war was declared, said in conclusion: "We can only do the right as we see the right and reverently commit our cause to God. If all people do that, then with God's help we shall prevail. May He bless and keep us all." The German Fuehrer in his appeal to the people of his nation concluded with these words: "If our people in such a manner fulfils its highest duty, the Lord God, who always has given His grace to him who was determined to help himself, will also stand by us."

"A House Divided Against Itself"

And from Rome comes the news that one of the saddest of hearts in Europe was that of Pope Pius XII. He had been hailed at his election as a shrewd diplomat who would be an authoritative moral policeman among Europe's thugs. And now the Nazi Communist pact had brought together the Church'; two bitterest enemies. And the saddest of all was the thought of his sheep fighting each other: 37,900,000 German Catholics (21,000,000 of 67,000,000 pre-Hitler Germans, plus 6,100,000 Austrian souls, plus 10,800,000 in Czecho-Slovakia) pitted against 23,000,000 devout Poles-just about his staunchest followers anywhere. The Pope's ministrations, like those of all strivers for peace, had failed.

And what shall be the outcome of it all? Have we entered Armageddon, the last phase of earth's tribulation period, or is this but another spasm with more to follow? It is impossible to read clearly at present the connection of the present tragedy to the final outcome, the birth of the new order of things, the Kingdom of God. Of this, however, we are certain: the people of all nations- all of the world's 1,500,000,000 civilized people with few exceptions-were: (1) thoroughly sick of and appalled by the idea of war; (2) morally ashamed of it. For these suffering peoples of earth, poor groaning creation, travailing in pain together, we also groan, and with renewed zeal pray for God's Kingdom to bring the desire of all nations, the Prince of Peace and His beneficent reign.

For us, as ultimately for all mankind, the 46th Psalm with its glorious message, brings rest of soul: "The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice. the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." - Psa. 46:6-11.

- *Contributed.*

Our Fellowship

"As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man, his friend." - Prov. 27:17.

ADAPTING THESE words of the Wise Man to the needs of the Lord's children today, we might revise it and say, "As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the fellowship of a consecrated believer, his brother." For it is certainly a truth beyond all question that deep heart-to-heart fellowship with one of like precious faith quickens and sharpens appreciation for the things of the Lord to more than razor-edge keenness. Under the Holy Spirit's leadings, the words of truth and comfort which pass from lip to lip and from heart to heart become freighted with a reviving and rejuvenating power, which spiritually puts strength into feeble limbs and energy into flaccid muscles, and a new vitality into debilitated hearts, and makes the weak, depressed saint of God say, "Thank God, my weak ness is gone; I feel strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." In the hallowed atmosphere of true Christian fellowship the flash of the eye, the beam of the countenance, the intense thrill of the voice, and the energetic grip of the hand, bespeak something a thousandfold more precious than the common cause which brings men of the world together in their 'various fellowships and associations.

Inasmuch as the heavens are higher than the earth in all things, so must fellowship in heavenly things always be more lofty, more vital, more comprehensive than any fellowship on mundane things. And when the hearts of God's elect are "en rapport" in the things of "Love divine, all love excelling" -- with the sanctifying Spirit of God presiding and pervading every thought and word, then indeed is the "Joy of heaven, to earth come down."

Fellowships and What they Mean

It is no easy task to create a fellowship. It requires at its rallying center a strong dominating personality, or perhaps a group of such personalities. And then, further, it demands the existence of a "common cause. Given these preliminaries, expert oratory may whip up almost any assembly to a high pitch of emotion and enthusiasm; skilful presentation may show an audience that they may have many things in common with each other; and thus, in the glowing heat of the occasion, a kinship or fellowship of interest and outlook may be created and established between them. For the purposes stated, they become "fellows"-sharers together common participants in the same cause. "Each for all -- all for each" becomes their motto, and thus the "common cause" enlists the services of each to minister to the needs of all.

In this way great leaders of men have accomplished most extraordinary things among their fellows. They have fanned emotion and resolution to a white heat, and have hammered public opinion (local or general) on the anvil of their own convictions, into any shape they have desired. But to do this, the man, or men, who form the nucleus of the fellowship, must themselves carry "the fiery cross" or follow the "holy gleam. The message he or they utter, must be a "living fire" in his or their own souls. Otherwise it will fail to enkindle the enthusiasm necessary to a fellowship. The words of their evangel must come hot and scorching from the depths of their own souls-as the flow of the lava from the bowels of a volcano. It must be a burning flame, at which other men can light their torches; or else the crowd will smile and pass by on the other side.

These things being so, it often happens that when the crusader passes, the crusade dies with him, or at best leaves only a smoldering warmth. It is not often that a second hand, or a second generation, can carry forward the torch and continue to blaze the trail like the original pioneer; though, to the credit of humankind be it said, some fellowships, where idealism and common necessity join hand in hand, do succeed in carrying the banners to greater heights. But there are more failures than successes, for most of them outlive their little day, and become entirely unnecessary. Fellowships thus promoted, by the force of circumstances and the brevity of life, tend to be and must always be transient. Good and elevating though they be while they lived, changing times and the evolution of later thought make them unneeded or unsuitable to the children of their promoters. As time speeds by, they become obsolete-out of date -- so they fall and wither and die.

No "Holy Roman" fellowship of emperor and pope could possibly survive today. And the fellowships involved in the intense nationalisms of Fascism or Nazi-ism, as well as the counter internationalism of Communism or Sovietism, will serve their day and pass. And likewise all the lesser or greater fellowships within the circumference of enlightened democracy will pass, in time, to their doom. Nothing save God's fellowship will last -- no kingdom save His Kingdom will endure. Others, like the wandering Arab, set tip their tents for a night, and then silently pass on the way at dawn.

The Christian's "Fellowship" Different

The Christian's fellowship should be under no such disability. Its great Leader and promoter is not fallible. Nor is He even mortal (die-able). Nor is He limited or circumscribed by narrow horizons. Our Leader makes no mistakes, for He is infallible, omniscient; He will not pass away. He is not insular, nor hounded by national patriotisms. He is universal. He will not fail for lack of "drive and power. He is omnipotent! Almighty Eternal! Immortal! Omniscient! Unchangeable!

And "as is the Leader, so is the cause." It cannot terminate or fail so long as anything comes short of His good pleasure. It, too, is for tomorrow, as well as of today and yesterday. Ages are necessary for its accomplishment; the whole sweep of "dated" time for its setting. It does not feed its enthusiasms on hatreds, nor on the thrills of sectional loyalties. It, very truly, is for all-"for every man"-and if preferences have been and still are being made, it is in order that the "preferred one" shall be the servant of the "residue of men." If He "elects" a special servant, or class of servants, it is so that the "non-elect" shall be blessed thereby. If He deigns specially to use a nation or a people, it is to make it a "via-media" whereby all other nations and peoples may be reached and linked with His chosen one.

When our Leader and Master speaks to His followers, He does so on a theme of surpassing magnitude and of incomparable importance. He tells of God the Most High God-and His Plan of the Ages. The burning flame in His own soul is the deep unfathomable love of God, and by this He creates the "spell" for His "fellows." His story and evangel is redemption's great charter. He surveys the estate of man from paradise lost to paradise regained. And when He tells of His mission, and His Father's purpose, through the pages of Holy Writ, or through the ministries of His Spirit-led fellows and servants, a divine power drives through the hearts of His "fellows" and creates holy desires and fervent resolves to hold fast in this fellowship. His words "burn within them" as a living fire, and purge their dross, and impart to them an "enabling" power, which assists them to withstand the earthward pull of their natural senses, when acted on by the lure of this world. He creates a hunger and a thirst for more and still more of this consecration-producing food-this Bread of Life-this Water of Life-so that they who have come once to His Banqueting House long to come again and again for this Bread that never faileth for He gives what the world can never give and can never take away, so long as their hearts swing true to the magnetism of His love.

"Bread of Heaven, Feed Me till I Want no More"

Dearly beloved, sharers with Christ Jesus our Lord, and our loving heavenly Father in the most wonderful fellowship of both time and eternity, of both heaven and earth, consider Him who has called us to be His yoke-fellows to be associated and linked with Him in the greatest common union ever to be revealed to angels or men, and let the contemplation of this amazing condescension smooth out the quibbles and contentions which mar the serenity and blessedness of that fellowship as it should be known amongst us here and now. Confessedly, we do not at all times attain to the glorious ideal implied in our association with our dear Lord. Our human weaknesses and foibles intrude all too often, and spoil the bouquet of the heavenly wine, even as we raise it to our lips. We need a clearer vision of our inheritance in Christ. We need to feel the power working within which raised our Lord from the dead. We need the "spell" of His glorious personality to be cast over us as we "forsake not the assembling of ourselves together" in His name. Should they not be radiantly happy who, through Christ, have already entered the heavenlies and dwell therein with insight and understanding of their wonderful privilege?

The Ideal Beautiful

Yea, thrice happy are these "fellows" who have been made "joint-heirs with Christ" in His divine inheritance and fellowship! What then should it mean for us today, here and now, as we experience the joys of this fellowship? Ought we not to be able to come into His presence with all our heartache and cares, and leave them there? Ought we not to be able to come before Him in our unwisdom and lack of sight, and find understanding there? Ought we not to be able to come before Him when the world is cold and our hearts are chilled, and be warmed there? And when the world and its perplexing problems seem big and overwhelming, ought we not to find in His presence that heaven is bigger still, and that its firmament reaches- out far beyond the boundaries of this sac] old earth? Nay, even this cold earth may glow with radiance in the golden warmth of heaven's health and wealth and beauty.

Does some dear harassed soul say, "Oh, if it could always be so. Are these things really possible, or are you painting too rosy a picture? Are you not describing merely a grand ideal, too difficult of attainment?" An ideal it surely is, but not too difficult of attainment if only our "fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son."

But the assembling together of the brethren does not always reach this ideal. Not always does the heartache find easement there. Not always is the lack of wisdom and understanding dispelled there. Not always does the conflict-weary soldier of the cross find courage for his heart, and ointment for his wounds there. Why? Too often he carries away burdens more weighty still-at times a crushed and bleeding heart. Too often the display of knowledge and Biblical technique serves only to intensify the lack of understanding, and makes questing hearts wonder if after all there is any place in the assembly of the Lord for them. Why is this?

It is not a matter that any can charge against the Lord that fellowship is irksome or unsatisfying or disappointing. He stands ready to bless, for indeed He is under pledge and promise to bless and comfort and succor, always providing we seek His presence aright. He has set it before us that the ideal in fellowship shall not only be attainable, but become the actual, and shall also be the "regular" and "constant" outcome of our assembling together **if we gather in His name!** It need never be other than the ideal, the best -- for the "best" is always needful -- if we realize that "He is there in the midst." Our gracious Father and our adorable Lord stand waiting to make it the best -- always and only the "best." It need never fall below the ideal.

Meeting Together in His Name

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" That this pleasantness is not always attained, both experience and observation will testify. The first and primary object of our gathering together should be to **"worship God."** This is, where the trouble begins. No matter what the occasion may be, the first and predominating thought must be, "God has promised to be there." If, then, the flow of some silvery-tongued orator, or the speech of some gifted expositor, or the company of long-severed friends acts upon us as the primary prompting motive, the assembling is bound to end in failure. Over and above every other motive and consideration must be the desire to worship God, and render Him the praise due to His holy name. Exhortation and explanation, either in oratory or simple speech, may be enjoyed, but like sauce to the meal it should only be adding zest and zeal to the worship. If you have sought the fellowship of God by going purposely and (finitely) to meet God there, you can never be disappointed.

Another necessity is that the fellowship shall be sought in Jesus' name. He must be the "mercy-seat" interposing between the suppliant and His holy Father. When God gave instructions to Moses about the building of the Tabernacle, and the Ark of the Covenant in particular, He said. "And there will meet with thee, and commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the Ark of the Testimony." - Exod. 25:22.

God has set forth Jesus. to be to us as a Mercyseat, through whom we may approach before Him and offer our praises and our sacrifice. For a very long time the public lecture hall and the village schoolroom have been the place of our gatherings -- especially for public work -- and in those surroundings it has been far easier to lose than to retain the spirit of reverence.

Thrilled, perhaps, at the numbers of "strangers" who have come out to our lecture, we may have lost sight of the main objective, and so the vision of our appearing before our God for worship has faded. In "working for God" (as we have put it) we have failed to "consort with God." And the effect becomes painfully apparent in seasons of adversity and distress. In the great temple of God's truth we may be addicted to far greater irreverence than they who frequent the temples erected by men. This

should not be, brethren beloved in the Lord! If you desire your fellowship with the brethren to reach the heights of our glorious ideal, then make your fellowship with God -- your reverence, your adoration, the first item of your assembling. God, and God only, can make your fellowship a blessing. There will be no less keen appreciation of the expositions and exhortations, or of the praises, or of recontacting old friends, but everything will then be in proper order and balance.

The Living Word

A further reason for our not reaching the ideal in fellowship is that we fail to get and to maintain a proper balance between the letter and the spirit, between the written and the living Word. Here let us emphasize the need and stress the importance of giving the utmost attention to, and placing the most complete reliance upon, the sacred Oracles of God, for we would not wish to be thought to utter the least trace of disparagement of Bible study, or of the importance of Scriptural doctrine. But it is so easy for literal-minded and fallible mortals to study down to the level of the printed page, and to bring our range of thinking down to the letter of God's Word. We can take our proof-text and oppose it to our brother's counter-text, and make our attempt at Scriptural interpretation more or less a matter of words—a thing to contend for and even wrangle over. We can forget that in order to state "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," we must have the proper sense and harmonious balance of both texts, and all the other texts pertinent to the subject, and in addition the concurrence of the whole analogy of "the faith." The point we wish to stress at this stage is that our very attentiveness to the accuracy of the sacred text can so act upon our hearts and minds as to make us think that that is all that matters, and that from that sort of effort we shall get all the satisfaction to our souls that we desire.

Fortunately, this does not always yield its that desirable measure of satisfaction we are seeking for. It is not in the province of the written or printed Word, harmonized though it may be, to satisfy the deep springs of the heart, for that is the particular sphere of the living Word. And by that we do not mean any book, nor even that vast compendium of thought behind our Holy Book, but that glorious "living Word"—"the Word of life" of whom John speaks. -- 1 John 1:1.

We speak of the understanding of the divine purposes, which by God's grace we have received, as "the truth" -- and very rightly so; but let us not forget that there was One -- a living, loving "Aletheia" who said, "I am the . . . Truth." (John 14:6.) Many have had contact with the written Word who have known but little of the living Word; some may even now know theoretically much of doctrinal truth who have but little knowledge experimentally of the "living Truth." May we put it this way--the written Word of truth is for the head (the reason and intellect), but the living Word and Truth is for the heart. And the living Word is "Him," not "it"; the living Truth is personal, not "gnostic" or theoretical. The written Word is the story of a great Savior, the "living Word" is that Savior Himself. The written truth is the story about a coming King (John 18:37) and Kingdom; the living Truth is that King Himself.

Beloved! such approach makes Scripture study a thing of the "flesh," or at least predominantly of the flesh, even though the object of our discussion is the clarification and harmonization of the sacred text. The whole setting is wrong, the atmosphere is wrong, the method is wrong! Hence it cannot and does not succeed. Thus did our worthy fathers, *away* back in the clays when sects multiplied like mushrooms overnight, and when no language was too strong to brand the opponent as a liar and a knave and a gross perverter of God's holy Word. Is there any wonder we come short of the blessings in fellowship of which the Scriptures speak? How often in our assemblies we have neither had fellowship with our Lord nor with our brother! Do we wonder why?

It needs the heart not less but more than the mind, to make the "truth" alive. It needs the sympathetic atmosphere of a consecrated heart, as well as the analytical atmosphere of a sanctified brain, to interpret the truth which the mind and Spirit of God have stored up in His holy Word. When God's due time comes for His truth to speak, it is always a question of "atmosphere"

rather than of intellect, of affinity rather than ability. To see "light in His light" is always an exercise of heart as well as of mind, for the "light enters through more than one window." Most often truth is a "gift" before it becomes a deduction. It is by the goodness of Him who said once, and says now again, "Let there be light," that darkness is dispelled. Hence, till God speaks, man's poor brain struggles and struggles but in vain to probe and pierce the darkened skies. But when the voice comes across from the heavenly world, those who are "tuned in" to the heavenly things will be the first to catch the melody which comes floating across from the heavenly station.

Believing the Lord's Promise

Applying these thoughts, then, to our seasons of fellowship, if only we could believe the dear Lord's promise that where two or three were met together in His name, there would He be, what a different atmosphere and tone they would take on. If we believed that the same little room or the same large auditorium which contained us contained also our Lord, and that we were gathered beneath His loving but searching eye, how different our deportment would be.

Do we take this promise to be merely metaphorical? Do we think of the limitations imposed by time and distance, and the numbers of similar ecclesias gathered together at the same hour? Do we say He cannot be at them all? Minds which reason thus will never know that deeper blessing of the Lord, which comes of eschewing reason and venturing on all such matters into the realm of faith! Apart from faith we wot not that there is a world around, above, below, within, in which exist, a shrine, a Most Holy, within which a throne of grace stands waiting for such as repair thereunto in their times of need!

Let the child of God but assure himself that He who has promised to be "in the midst" of them, will surely keep His tryst and fulfill His pledge; and then, though reason spurn and intellect scorn, he shall, rejoice as seeing Him who is invisible, and shall find himself brought into tune sublime with the infinite One. How very thrilling it would be if in actual reality our loving and living Lord did walk visibly into the house of God where we awaited His coming! And as He took His place amidst the little circle, who among the whole company would dare to wrangle and fight and dispute contentiously? Who would dare to suggest or mention separation or division? Who would be other than humble and subdued, and look up to Him with awe-inspired reverence? How long would the dictatorial, self-assertive spirit endure beneath His eyes of living fire? Would not praying rather than prating be the attitude of each soul?

Yes, verily! Then, brethren of the Lord Jesus believe it. Take His word for it, and assure yourselves, each and all, that He is as really present with you, as new creatures, as He would be if your fleshly eyes could see Him there. He is there in that other all-pervading world in which you also live, if you knew the throne of grace, that throne of grace which goes with you wherever you go, and which links in solemn and holy fellowship, irrespective of time or distance, all who come together in every little Bethel, in every land, by night or day, year in, year out. Oh, if only the eye of faith is keen and heart of trust is alert, how truly we can sense and contact Him in every little "two or three" as well as in the larger conventions.

Can fellowship like this ever fall short of the ideal? Not if He is present! Can anything but the best be experienced in such a place? Not if He is there! Then by will we wrangle and flash our shining swords or swing our loaded clubs if the light on the text be indistinct? Why dispute over words and phrases, or even over the formulae of doctrine, to spoil and intercept our entry into the ideal? Will you retort and say, "Yes, that is all very well, but are we not commanded to contend

earnestly for the faith! Ought we not to discuss the text, and set forth all the differences of our doctrine? Must we ignore the doctrine in order to maintain the peace of the assembly?" Most decidedly not. It is essentially necessary for you to take note of the text, but before you fight it out with your visible brother, ask your invisible Brother what He knows about it. When you have had your respective "say" ask Him, before the discussion is brought to its close, and before the tempers rise, and before the wounds are made, to have His "say" on the matter.

When differences in the realm of reason and logic and interpretation tend to become accentuated, pray about it. Yea, pray once and again, and then in that subdued and quieter atmosphere of prayer, the difference may, if not at first, then at some later time, become much easier of solution. One thing will transpire in very surety -- it will instill a little more tolerance and forbearance till a more fitting time, when the Spirit has had time to do a little more of the refining and attuning work within. Give the unseen Brother both opportunity and time to take His part in the discussion, and all will be well.

The Responsibility of the Eldership

How great the responsibility here, then, for each and every believer to know how to speak and how to be quiet! And should the little ecclesia possess a brother to preside after this sort, an elder and under-shepherd truly responsive to the Shepherd of the flock, who knows when to yield the control of the assembly to the heavenly Guest, happy are they.

This, then, is the point of importance here. Let every brother and sister, speaker and hearer, chairman and class, impress severally upon their minds that the exalted Son of God, the Lord and Head of the Church, is present with His people to participate with them in holy fellowship, and that it is the privilege of each and all to enter into fellowship with Him of the highest and best.

In the spirit of true worship and adoration we may enter into fellowship with our gracious God and loving Father. In the realization of His glorious presence "in the midst," according to His gracious promise we may enter into fellowship with our beloved Lord and Master not only "like" but **linked** to that above.

- *Contributed.*

(To be continued)

"The World of Tomorrow"

"The desire of all nations shall come" - Hag. 2:7.

WHEN one visits the New York, World's Fair he sees embodied in structural picturization "The World of Tomorrow." He beholds the anticipated advancement of human achievement in multifarious forms. His mind, after first being satiated with the sight of man's present accomplishments, is directed to the future, and by the aid of the thrilling spectacle which art and science and \$150,000,000 have combined to produce, he endeavors to visualize an age that shall far transcend the present one. As his powers of imagination are brought into play, he is led to wonder if there is to be any limit to the progress and development which encompass him on every side.

But what of man himself? Will his ethical progress keep step with discovery and invention? Will he have the same social, political, and economic problems that he has today? And will they seem as impossible of solution then as now? Will unemployment continue to be a menace to human happiness? Will crime increase, or will it be stamped out? Are wars to cease, or is permanent peace never to be established? Will disease disappear, will death itself be abolished, or is the Joy of living always to be marred by pain and disaster, sin and sorrow, ruined prospects, shattered hopes, crushed hearts -- the grave forever triumphant? Such questions as these cannot but present themselves, insistently, to every thinking mind.

The Age of Tomorrow

In seeking satisfactory solutions to these admittedly baffling questions, it has been well observed that we shall be greatly assisted in our search if we note first of all that the "World of Tomorrow" will be the "Age of Tomorrow." Since the Scriptures declare that "the earth abideth for ever" (Eccl. 1:4), we look for no dissolution of this planet. Three "worlds" or "ages" are mentioned in the Bible, each in connection with this self-same earth, which continues throughout all three. Each of these three "worlds" or "ages" is referred to as a separate "heavens and earth." (2 Pet. 3:4-14.) Here the word "heavens" symbolizes the higher or spiritual controlling powers, and "earth" symbolizes human government and social arrangements. It is sufficient to note here that the second of these "worlds" or "ages" or "heavens and earth," namely, the one in which we live today; "this' present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), is about to pass away. (2 Pet. 3:7.) It is to be destroyed, not with literal fire, but with the symbolic fire of judgment. (Zeph. 1:18.) The present order or arrangement of government and society, not that of the physical sky and earth, will pass away. The present "heavens" must give place to the "new heavens" -- Christ's spiritual control. The present "earth" (human society as now organized) must (symbolically) melt and be dissolved. It will be succeeded by "a new earth," that is, society reorganized in harmony with earth's new Prince -- Christ. Righteousness, peace, and love will rule, among men when present arrangements have given place to the "new and better Kingdom, the basis, of which will be the strictest justice.

In harmony with this symbolic use of the words "world" and "fire" many will recall the graphic description of affairs by Woodrow Wilson just before the United States entered the World War. "The whole world's on fire," said he, "and happy shall we be if a spark does not set us on fire also."

Armageddon

Before Woodrow Wilson came into office another president, Theodore Roosevelt, had used a word which today is well known, but which, when he uttered it, sounded strange and unfamiliar to the reporters -- a word which sent them searching not their dictionaries only, but their Bibles. It was the word "Armageddon."

Armageddon was the name given to the plain of Esdraelon, the scene of many battles recorded in the Old Testament; and hence the prophetic scene of the great battle between truth and error, right and wrong, love and hatred, with which this present "world" or "age" is to close. (Rev. 16:16.) The Battle of Armageddon, which even in Theodore Roosevelt's time seemed imminent, and to which the World War undoubtedly led, is fast approaching -- if indeed it is not already waging. Wise men of the world recognize this. For years they have seen the elements of this social conflagration in preparation. Selfishness, increase of knowledge, concentration of wealth, wrong ambition, fear and despair are the ingredients whose friction has set the angry, passions of the world aflame, causing its various social "elements" to melt in the "fervent heat." (2 Pet. 3:10.) Notwithstanding the multiplication of temporal blessings, the satisfied contentment which was measurably enjoyed' by all a century ago, is rarely to be found today. All are dissatisfied. As another has well observed

"All are selfishly and increasingly grasping for 'rights' or bemoaning 'wrongs.' True, there are wrongs, grievous wrongs, which should be righted, and rights that should be enjoyed and respected; Nit the tendency' of our time, with its increase of knowledge and independence, is to look only at the side of questions closest to self-interest, and to fail to appreciate the opposite side. The effect foretold by the Prophets will be ultimately to set every man's hand against his neighbor, which will be the immediate cause of the great final catastrophe. God's Word and providence and the lessons of the past are forgotten under the strong convictions of personal rights, etc., which hinder people of every class from choosing the wiser, moderate course, which they cannot even see because selfishness blinds them to everything out of accord with their own prejudices. Each class fails to consider with impartiality the welfare and rights of others. The golden rule is generally ignored; and the lack of wisdom as well as the injustice of this course will soon be made manifest to **all classes** (rich and poor, male and female, educated and ignorant), for all classes will suffer terribly in this trouble.

This outlook, which statesmen are at their wits end to avert, would occasion us only sorrow and anguish were it not for the assurance of the Scriptures that the results shall work good to the people, overthrowing the reign of selfishness, and establishing, through Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom, the, reign of righteousness. Yes, after the destructive forces of this titanic struggle shall have spent themselves, "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4), and the white banner of peace shall float over all the lands of earth. Mankind will have learned the titter futility of seeking to live apart from God, and in their extremity will call upon Him to save them. When in such contrition. and humility of heart they do turn to Him -- they will find Him waiting to be gracious. He will put His wondrous laws of truth and justice, of righteousness and love, in their minds; He will write them, not again on hard tables of stone, but in the softened tablets of their hearts; He will be to them their God, and they shall be to Him His people. No more will it be necessary for a few enlightened ones to instruct the others in regard to the gracious character and purposes of God, for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest. - Heb. 8:10, 11.

The "Lost Horizon" to be Found

In time, man's social and economic problems will all be solved. The only aristocracy recognized will be that of character, and each will be assisted to develop into the character-likeness of the Master. The "Lost Horizon," as envisioned in the book of that title, and as portrayed in the motion picture based thereon, will have been found. The spirit of brotherly-kindness, which in that artistic work was shown to be so conducive to longevity, peace, and unfailing youth, will displace all opposing influences, and prove to be more effective than the author dreamed. In the genial atmosphere then prevailing, crime, bribery, corruption -- selfishness in all its many forms -- will be unknown; for they could no more live amidst the conditions which will then, obtain than ice could live in a burning sun, or darkness coexist with noon.

Something of this spirit exists even now, perhaps more than most of us are aware. As an illustration we cite the case of Dr. William J. Mayo. Just as we are going to press the news reaches us of his death, an event that will be chronicled all over the world. As we reflect on his passing, with a sense of personal loss, knowing that a great, good, and kindly man has irrevocably gone from us, we are reminded of the philosophy of life he inherited from his father, which was succinctly set forth in 1935 on the occasion of an additional gift to the Mayo Foundation, when, speaking for his brother and himself, he said:

"We are the oral custodians of the people's money, which is being irrevocably returned to the people, from whom it came. The fund which we had built up came from the sick and we believed it ought to be returned in the form of advanced medical education, which would develop better trained physicians and of research, which would reduce the amount of sickness.

"Our father believed that any man who had better opportunities than others, greater strength of mind, body, or character, owed something to those who had not been so endowed; that is, that the important thing in life was not to accomplish for one's self alone, but for each to carry his share of collective responsibility."

Commenting on this the "Minneapolis Tribune" of July 29, 1939 observes: "Here, without cant or affectation, is stated with a noble simplicity of language, a rule of life that contains the solution of most of the problems that have always faced the world." In this we heartily concur, and while this "rule of life" is not yet the rule, we rejoice at each fresh evidence that some have sought, and others are seeking to make it their own. That it will be the rule without exception in "The World of Tomorrow" the Scriptures make abundantly clear.

No more Disease-Death itself Abolished

In regard to health, the future Age is radiant with promise. But disease and pain being the natural concomitant of death, we must go back to the beginning of earth's troubles if we would fully comprehend what is involved in their elimination. Our first parent, because of willful transgression of God's law, was cut off from the source of life. In Eden was the Tree of Life, to which, but for his disobedience, he would have had continual access, and lived forever. (Gen. 2:16; 3:22-24.) Expelled, with his life, from this perfect home, he was compelled to live in the unfinished earth, and so the sentence his Creator had passed upon him, "Dying thou shalt die," went gradually into effect. (Gen. 2:17, margin.) Within the thousand-year day in which he 'ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil," Adam died -- nine hundred and thirty years old.

It would have been entirely just of God to have inflicted the death penalty suddenly, as by a lightning stroke or some other speedy method, instead of permitting it to take effect gradually, as He did, by the exhaustion of Adam's vitality through conflict with the unfavorable conditions (of climate, sterility of soil, storms, thorns, weeds, etc.) of the unprepared earth. And this, indeed, He doubtless would have done, and none of Adam's race would have been permitted to come into existence at all had He not had it in His heart to grant Adam (and the unborn race in him) a further opportunity, under still more favorable conditions, of choosing righteousness and life. Because of this gracious purpose, He saw that by allowing the death penalty to take gradual effect, Adam would receive a valuable lesson on the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its baneful results; such a lesson, indeed, as would never need to be repeated. There is a depth of meaning in the Creator's words as He sent forth His fairly tried and justly condemned creatures amongst thorns and briars; to labor, and pain, and sorrow, and disease; and to subjection to the casualties and calamities of nature's unfinished work. He said, "Cursed is the ground for thy **sake**" (Gen. 3:17-19); that is, the earth in general is in its present imperfect condition for your profit and experience; even though you may not esteem it so.

The children of the condemned pair inherited their fall, imperfections, and weaknesses, and shared likewise in the death sentence imposed upon them, and as convict laborers, so to speak, have not only been learning what sin is, and its undesirable results, but by their labor and skill have for six thousand years been preparing the earth and bringing it as a whole to the full perfection designed -- illustrated in the specially prepared Garden of Eden -- getting it ready, although they little realize it, for their everlasting habitation, if, when the offer is presented to them under the favorable conditions of Messiah's Kingdom, they shall choose righteousness and life.

Nor will this offer be made to those only who have not actually entered the tomb. No! In order to give Adam and all his family this favorable opportunity above described, there is to be an awakening of all the dead, as we read: "There shall be a resurrection of the, dead, both of the just and unjust"; in harmony also with the Master's words, "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice [the voice of the Son of God], and shall come forth," (Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29.) We thank God for the wideness of His mercy, "like the wideness of the sea"-that God is no respecter of persons, that every member of the race, condemned through Adam's disobedience, redeemed from that condemnation by the death of Jesus, shall have a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth and of using that knowledge for his own recovery from sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, and death -- the ultimate attainment of human perfection and everlasting life in Paradise-the restored earth. - 1 Tim. 2:4; Acts 3:21.

And what a portion it is which God has elected to give the human race! "Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor, a pain, nor any evidence of decay -- not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete." - Rev. 21:3, 4.

The Desire of All Nations Shall Come

The "World of Tomorrow" will fulfill "the desire of all nations." (Hag. 2:7.) And what is that desire, above all else? Oh! surely it is for peace. Yes, amidst all the clanging and the clashing of a world in arms, most men of every nation earnestly desire nothing so much as peace. Peculiarly in point, it seems to us, are some observations made by the great industrialist, Henry Ford, in his recent address delivered at "The World of Tomorrow" itself. Of the various nations' exhibits he said:

"These exhibits and not their wars, show their real character. The nations of the world have sent to this Fair the things they are really proud of the things they want to be judged by. They haven't sent their bombs and poison gas and samples of their concentration camps -- they're not really proud of those things; they wouldn't want to exhibit them. Anyway, most of the nations represented here are so sick of war that, if it only rested with them, there would never be another one.

Commenting on Mr. Ford's speech, the "Minneapolis Tribune" of June 17, 1939 observes "There is something striking in that simple thought about what it is that nations put on display when a big exposition gives them a chance. The handiwork we're proud of is the kind that shows inventive genius applied to the performance of constructive tasks. As each nation puts its 'best foot forward' in international displays, we're just a bit ashamed of our 'weapons of death and destruction. Needless to say, we should be."

Ah! did they but know it, the "desire of all nations" is Jesus. That which will satisfy them as nothing else ever could is His Kingdom -- that Kingdom for which Christians have long prayed "Thy Kingdom come." How rejoiced we are to know that shortly that Kingdom is to be ushered in. It will shine with such a splendor as we have not hitherto dreamed.

Hail to that Kingdom. Hail to "The World of Tomorrow." In all its plenitude of gladness let it come, and let it clothe the world in the radiance of righteousness, and in the beautiful garments of happiness, contentment, and peace.

"Ring out old forms of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold,
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand,
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

In the belief that the subject considered in the foregoing article is timely, we are having it printed in separate Pamphlet form, slightly abridged, for distribution to all who may seem to have a "hearing ear." Readers and Class Secretaries are invited to order freely as many copies as can be judiciously used. In ordering, please specify the number desired.

"What Must I Do to be Saved?"

ALL SANE persons desire to live forever in peace and happiness, yet most of them recognize they will be lost if something is not done for them. There is, however, a diversity of opinion as to what should be done. Even among Christians who see alike the plan of salvation in its outline, there is often a difference as to the details. Our Lord promised the Holy Spirit to "guide us into all truth," but still this difference of interpretation exists among His people. "All Scripture that is given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," and yet much of this Scripture is given in parables, dark sayings, types, and prophecies that are difficult to understand, and the Lord's people often place different interpretations on these Scriptures. The Holy Spirit does not lead us to a proper understanding unless we use our minds to "search the Scriptures," and different minds often reach different conclusions. Some try to eliminate the human element in their reasoning and to take only the plain statements of Scripture, but that is impossible to do. Words are only expressions of thought, and the same words often produce different thoughts in different minds.

However, our reasoning should be on the Scriptures, and not apart, from them. Our study should not be, to conceive; some plan, doctrine, or theory of our own and then, try to find Scripture to support it. We should study God's Word to find out what His will or plan is.

Then, too, we, will find some rather plain statements of what we should do to be saved, and we will also find a philosophy of the plan of salvation. In the first instance we are told what we must do to, be saved, and in the second we are given the reason why such things should be done. The Apostle probably referred to the philosophy of the plan of salvation when he spoke of "strong meat." (Heb. 5:14.) It is one thing to know Christ Jesus died for the sinner, and another thing to understand the principles of righteousness and justice involved in such a transaction. We will perhaps find that most of our differences of interpretation arise from our efforts to understand the philosophy of the plan.

"Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." There is no salvation without a proper understanding if at least such Scriptures as apply to our particular case, for "they are they which testify of Me (John 5:39); but "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14.) Some in their endeavor to arrive at an accurate knowledge of the truth forget that we are not saved by knowledge alone, for though I may understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, I may still be nothing. (1 Cor. 13:2.) "Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (James 1:22.) It requires no proof when we say none of the Lord's people down through the age have accurately understood all Scriptures. How much knowledge then is necessary for each individual? Can you determine? Can I determine? I do not feel that I can answer that question, but leave the matter in the hands of the Lord, while I diligently search the Scriptures to know all I can about His Word of truth. I seek to be fully persuaded in my own mind as to the proper interpretation of all Scriptures; and it is my privilege and duty to help my brother to an accurate knowledge of the truth. But I must allow him the same privilege of being fully persuaded in his own mind. The effort of some to determine exactly how much knowledge his brother should have, leads to divisions, sects, and, needs, which the Apostle says are wrong.

Character

God's Word of truth is a means to an end, and that end is a transformed and strengthened character. But what is character? We use the word to mean our fixed disposition in regard to God's laws of righteousness, as determined by our mental faculties. Our character determines how we will act when confronted with various temptations. A strong character is one which resists strong and subtle temptation. Character determines our action in relation to God and to our fellow-man.

Adam when created had a righteous character, but it seems that it needed development. He would remain righteous under ordinary conditions but could not stand more subtle testings. Hence he was put on trial for the purpose of developing character. The thing that brought about his fall was his failure to exercise proper faith in God; for "God is faithful, who will not permit you to be tried beyond your ability; but with the trial, will also direct the issue, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13.) But if we do not properly trust God, He cannot so direct the operation of our minds that our characters will be strengthened. Hence, "the just shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4) and not because of his inherent ability to resist temptations. Adam did not have that inherent ability in its highest degree, but if we understand the Scriptures aright, it was God's purpose to so develop his character that he would have this inherent ability. When he sinned his ability to live a righteous life was still further weakened. However, God continued to exercise a restraining influence on the human race, except in some instances where they became so faithless that He gave them up to uncleanness and vile affections. (Rom. 1:21, 24, 26.) God said to Israel, "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it [with ability to live a righteous life]. But My people would not hearken to My voice; and Israel would none of Me. [They trusted in their own ability.] So I give them up [no longer exercising a restraining influence] unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels." - Psalm 81:10-12.

Since Adam when created needed the Father's help to develop a stronger character, and seeing that all mankind are now in a fallen condition, defiled in character, the question continues to arise, "What must I do to be saved?" Some would answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31), and they are content to let the matter rest there. Well, that correctly answers the question; that is the plan of salvation but it is like the oak tree in the acorn-it is very condensed. If Adam had properly believed in God, he would not have fallen; and now our Lord Jesus has been given the task of leading man out of the fallen condition. The work will be a process of character development, and faith in His leadership is vitally important, for "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life" (John 3:36); "for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:17.) If we have faith in the power and work of our Lord, He will so "direct the issue" that our characters will be transformed and the principles of righteousness so fixed in our minds that we ultimately will have the inherent ability to resist all temptations that may come to us.

This work of our Lord will involve many different but essential lessons. Faith is very important, but not of itself sufficient, for "faith without works is dead." (James 2:20.) The law covenant with its types and commandments was valuable, but not of itself sufficient; for "that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." (Gal. 3:11.) Affliction, too, is necessary; "if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Heb. 12:8.) But affliction alone is not sufficient, for "though I give my body to be burned; and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." (1 Cor. 13:3.) Service in the

cause of the Lord is certainly essential, for "woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16); but service alone will not transform our characters, for "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Love is the main objective in the transformation of a character, but it is beyond the ability of man alone to attain. Our Lord must "direct the issue."

Seeing then that so many things are involved in the development of a righteous" character, and being mindful of the many different types of mind to be dealt with should lead us to refrain from judging our brother. How can we know how much knowledge he should have, and how can we know what experiences will best round out his character? It is better to leave the matter in the hands of the Lord, while we seek to let our light so shine at our brother may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in *heaven*

- *Contributed.*

Recently Deceased

During recent months we have noted with interest the large number of brethren who are finishing their course. Both that our readers may share in this knowledge and that they may be informed regarding their former acquaintances who have completed their course of probation occasional lists of the deceased will be published. Your assistance in supplying us with names and addresses for this list will be appreciated. Recently we have learned of the deaths of the following:

Mrs. Fred Voltz, Elgin, Ill - (August).

Mrs. E. L. Ross, Stevens Point, Wis. - (August).

Mr. B. F. Engle, Rochester, Pa. - (August).

Mr. Alexander Keklinski, Jersey City, N. J. - (September).

The Blessed Rest of Faith

"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands." - Psalm 138:8.

THE BEAUTIFUL rest possible to the Christian in his life of faith has been well expressed in the lines, "For O, the rest of faith is bliss, The bliss of rest in Thee." These words are abundantly confirmed in the Scriptures, and testified to as true by such as have put them to the test. It was of such rest the Apostle thought when saying, "We which have believed do enter into rest." And the character of this rest he further assures us is none other than God's own measure of rest, "For," he writes, "he that hath entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." (Heb. 4:3, 10.) God rested "from His own works" by committing all the work of human redemption to the Son. Our rest, these texts tell us, is a similar committal of all our interests in that redemptive plan to Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of our faith. To recognize fully His power to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him, therefore to save us in whom He has begun the good work, is to know the blessed rest of faith.

As many Scriptures show, the believer's rest of faith depends upon the degree of faith exercised in the promises and character of God. How finely and forcefully this thought is expressed in a favorite text, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set, before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb. 6:17-19.) Again the word is, "Faith is the basis of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1.) It is of this basis we sing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!" And **what** more can He say than therein He has said?

As a background for our faith in God's purposes concerning our own particular hopes, what solid pillars are such statements as these, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host -of them by the breath of His mouth. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast." And again, "I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." (Psa. 33:6-9.) To have this word from the omnipotent Creator, "I will do all My pleasure," distinctly heard in a heart where faith abides, how much it means. How much of reality it gives to those words of Jesus to us, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." (Luke 12:32.) And what weight is given to Paul's reference to this **good pleasure** of our God. You who have received "the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will," and "according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." (Eph. 1:5, 9.) Possessed, then, with a faith begotten by the Word of truth, reinforced by consistent affirmations such as, "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to "the saving of the soul," may we not appropriate to ourselves the language of our opening text, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me"?

Does faith survey the havoc of six thousand years of Satan's destructive work, visualize the appalling depths of degeneration into which masses of the human family have fallen, and stagger not over God's promise of a "restitution of all things" in the time of Christ's glorious reign? Yes indeed! Does faith remember that millions upon millions of Adam's children have gone to dust again in the sleep of death, and yet believe that for these "there shall be a resurrection of the dead,

both of the just and the unjust"? Surely so! The answer of faith to all that might seem impossible in things pertaining to the race the Son of God redeemed by His blood on Calvary is, "It is written"- "My counsel shall stand, and I **will** do all My pleasure." With the telescope of "His excellent Word" focused upon the great arch of man's past, present, and future, that same Word anticipates our need of appropriate language wherewith to clothe our faith's expressions, and so we say, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?" "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" - Rev. 15:3, 4; Rom. 1:33.

Saints are His Peculiar Care

If, then, our faith can rest in quietness and full assurance regarding the certain fulfillment of all God's purposes for mankind in general, why should there not be as complete a sense of rest and confidence enjoyed by us as we contemplate the consummation of our own blessed hope? If to us there has been given a "strong consolation," "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," 'hen the weakest saint may indeed "look to the hole of the pit" from whence divine mercy has lifted him, then look also to the height of glory and perfection to which he is called, even to "be holy and without blame before Him," and in undiscouraged faith say, " 'Tis mine!" For "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."

Out of the riches of His grace, and to the end that the blissful rest of faith may be the portion of every pilgrim heavenward bent, our gracious God, whose mercy the Psalmist in our text tells us "endureth forever," has strewn "exceeding great and precious promises" all along that way. Never a "Slough of Despond" into which the traveler perchance will slip, nor a "Hill Difficult" to scale, nor lions seen besetting the upward path; never a "Doubting Castle" struggle, but divine love has anticipated the needs and furnished the word of assurance therefor. No deep waters permitted to flood over that way, no scorching fires allowed to burn with seven-fold heat, but in their midst will be found the saints' rendezvous with God. Has He not said of these very same deep waters and fiery trials, "When thou passest through ... I will be with thee"? God has not forgotten to speak to us words of comfort always in their appropriate season, and how "like apples of gold in pictures of silver" these words proceeding out of the mouth of God are to the ear of faith. Such a word is our text taken from the 138th Psalm, particularly so as it is rendered in Moffatt's translation, in which it reads, "The Eternal intervenes on my behalf; Eternal One, Thy kindness never fails, Thou wilt not drop the work Thou hast begun." How similar to this is the word of the Apostle Paul, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, . . . Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:3, 6.) Not, however, to encourage any false confidence are we given such statements as these, for of a truth

Trust in Self is Weakness; Faith in God is Strength

In this connection it is interesting to note a few of the confident affirmations spoken by different men of faith, and which we can believe are recorded for our benefit. Harken to Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth": "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." (Job 19:25, 27.) Listen again to the Psalmist's tone of confidence, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.... My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for-

ever." (Psa. 73:24-26.) In one grouping together of faith heroes looking forward with confidence into the future fulfilment of faith's expectations, we read, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them... and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Heb. 11:13.) With all of these it was faith in the Promiser by which they triumphed. The language of all was, "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." (Psa. 16:8, 9.) The true balance of mind is thus made clear to us in the Word of God. There must ever be a full recognition of our own frailties present with us, trembling, yes, as we think of self, but having a consciousness of unfailing strength as we look to the Lord. Joshua and Caleb made no effort to minimize the difficulties to be encountered by going up to take the inheritance God offered Israel. Their very different viewpoint from that of the other ten spies was due to an assurance they so confidently expressed in the words, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." "If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us." (Numbers 13:30; 14:8.) Faith in God is strength. Let us not, therefore, be of the "fearful and unbelieving," but strong in the faith of Christ, "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." - Heb. 3:6.

Faith Changes Things

Having found the place of blissful rest through faith as respects the matter of our present assured relationship to God, and a good foundation for a confident expectation of finally triumphing through His power to keep us, let us think of the rest of faith to be enjoyed now. That life for the true Christian is to be filled with many and oftentimes exceptionally severe trials of faith, the Word faithfully forewarns us. Through much tribulation ye shall enter the Kingdom, was the true word of Jesus to all undertaking discipleship. "Unto you," writes the Apostle, "it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." (Phil. 1:29.) Thus we may think of our Lord saying in some measure of each of us, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My sake," but "My grace will be sufficient" for all the trials permitted to be the portion of each. It is therefore the knowledge of the fact that tests of faith are to be expected, and that at times deep perplexities will seem to darken our "heavenly places," that so much of comfort comes to us from the assurance that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) This is the magic promise by which faith changes things. And how mightily changed many things become before this promise. Miracles are wrapped up within it.

We remember the lament of Israel languishing in Babylon, "How shall we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land?" And too often we seem to feel similarly depressed in the midst of heavy trial, forgetting that "songs in the night he giveth". But we speak of miracles hidden in that "carry-all", text (as one dear saint happily termed it), "All things work together for good."- There have been such miraculous things in the lives of other Christians, and such there can be in ours now. Think of Paul and Silas in prison, with backs bleeding and feet in the stocks. Great things came to pass in the darkness that night. An earthquake shook the prison doors open, and, more remarkable still, it loosed the chains from the feet and hands of the imprisoned men within its walls. A miracle? Surely so! But a much greater display of power had already been witnessed in that dark midnight hour. Two men with bruised bodies and bleeding wounds, unjustly punished victims of religious intolerance, had filled their dismal prison with the melody of songs in the night. Far from their spirit was the question, "How can we sing the Lord's songs' in this environment?" Strong in faith to believe in God's overruling power, they found restful visions in so strange a place. In all of this

they testify to the verity of another precious word, "When He giveth quietness, who then can make. trouble?" (Job 34:29.) The beautiful faith which filled the prison with songs in the night, and while their flesh was smarting from the painful beating administered to them, tells us of a powerful inworking of God's grace in these men. Who of us can ponder over their story without feeling constrained to pray, "Lord, lead me to a faith like this, Through trial though it be.

The faith that changes things is heaven-born. And the thing that gives birth to such a faith in God is love. Love surveys the revelations of God's grace, the greatness of His "love divine, all love excelling," the sacrifice of His beloved Son, and the hope set before us in the Gospel, and exclaims --

"O! what are all our sufferings here,
If, Lord, Thou count us meet
With that enraptured host appear,
And worship at Thy feet!"

How beautifully Paul links up the thought of how love operates in one of our present-day trials -- that of waiting for the consummation of, our hope. This is indeed the test of our patient endurance, a real part of that very experience, suggested. in the warning, "He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved." In 2 Thess. 3:5 we read, "And the. Lord direct your. hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." Yes, love can wait patiently, albeit with an ever increasing yearning. We turn back the pages to read again that sweet love story which ends with these words, "And Jacob served seven years for. Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her." (Gen. 29:20.) Seven long years of waiting shortened by the power of love to what seemed "but a few days." O may it be so with us toward the One who holds the supreme place in our affections. In the time appointed by a divine wisdom the longed-for consummation will come. We acknowledge it within our yearning hearts, saying to ourselves, "Thou knowest well, the time thy God appoints for thee is best." While knowing this, we may, nevertheless, have the consistent longing so often breathed out in the prayer:

"Then, O Lord Jesus, quickly show
Thy glory and Thy light;
And take God's longing children home,
And end earth's weary night."

But He asks us to wait and watch. A full knowledge of the exact hour of our deliverance is withheld from us for reasons eminently wise and loving. To "the souls under the altar" the word was given, "rest yet: for a little season," and such is the word to us also, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." Rest in His love. Rest in faith, and rest in the blessed confidence that "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." Ere long, on His own likeness in us He will smile.

Cast not Away your Confidence

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward"-so says the Apostle. (Heb. 10:35.) This confidence we have seen must have its foundations firmly laid in the Word of God. It must not be any false or sand foundation, the kind on which they build who hear, -but do not what the Word has commanded. It is a foundation wherein love is the principle thing. It is a confidence begotten by a faith that comes "with boldness to claim from the hand of God the treasured blessings ever ready to be poured out from that hand. This is the faith which

spontaneously acts on the premise suggested in Paul's logical argument, "He that spared not His-own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32.) Then with our hearts possessed by that "faith which worketh by love," and the "work of faith, , and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ," likewise wrought into our inner being, surely we may with becoming humility and true gratitude appropriate to ourselves the words of our opening text, and in the preferred rendering of Moffatt, rejoicingly affirm, "The Eternal One intervenes on my behalf: Eternal One, Thy kindness never fails, Thou wilt not drop the work Thou hast begun." If there be in our hearts the fervent longing and prayer, "Perfect that which concerneth me; forsake not the work of Thine own hands," there, will be for us also the assuring word by which God in loving-kindness encouraged the sleeper at the foot of a ladder long ago, "I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." - Gen. 28:15.

- *Contributed.*