

page 1

SEMI-MONTHLY.
VOL. XXIV. JANUARY 1, 1903. No. 1

CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower..... 3
 New Year Greetings, 1903..... 3
 New Financial Conditions..... 5
 Missionary News..... 5
 Concerning Palestine..... 5
 Protestant Federation..... 5
 "Rejoice in the Lord Alway" 5
 Turning the World Upside Down..... 10
 Questions of General Interest..... 14
 Christ the First Fruits..... 14
 The Beginning of Our Resurrection..... 14
 What Constitutes Chastisement?..... 15

page 2

LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,
"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

--OR TO--

BRITISH BRANCH--131 GREEN ST., FOREST GATE, LONDON.

PRICE, \$1.00 (4s.) A YEAR IN ADVANCE, 5c (2-1/2d.) A COPY.
MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:--

Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER, will be supplied FREE, if
they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting
the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

=====

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

=====

TO OUR FRIENDS ON THE LORD'S POOR LIST.

If you do not wish your TOWER to be discontinued at the
end of the year, write us a postal card at once, stating your interest
and desire to have the journal continued. We are glad
to supply you regularly, esteeming it a part of our stewardship

from the Lord, but we wish to be assured, at least in each December, that you are still interested and enjoy the TOWER visits.

Occasionally we hear of some one who has been without the TOWER for a year or more, because unable to remit for it. This grieves us. We wish all the interested to have it regularly and the Lord always supplies sufficient funds to meet the expense. Any who cannot pay now, but hope to pay later on, may order on credit; and then if you are never able to pay, tell us so, and we will cheerfully cancel the debt.

But do let us know at once, for it puts us to extra trouble and expense to drop a name and then later reinstate it;--though we are always glad to do this, or in any other manner to lay down our lives for the brethren.

POEMS AND HYMNS OF MILLENNIAL DAWN.

Contains a very choice selection of 160 poems and 333 hymns, purged, we trust, from much of the too common erroneous hymn-book theology. We have them in good quantities now. In cloth binding, only 50 cents. TOWER subscribers supplied at the wholesale rate, 25 cents--postage extra, 8 cents.

=====

R3125 : page 3

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS, 1903.

THANKS BE TO GOD that his grace has preserved us, "kept us from falling," through another year!--that so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to his Word and its service! Our appreciation must be increased by the remembrance that every testimony of the Word is to the effect that the close of the "harvest" time is to be a time of special testing to all professing to be the Lord's people;--"every man's work shall be tried so as by fire." When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "strong delusions" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly his,--that they may believe lies and depart from the truth and be condemned as unworthy;--because they received not the truth in the love of it" (2 Thess. 2:10-12)--it surely should call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast,--appreciating the truth and in full accord with all the divine appointments by which he has kept us from falling.

The Apostle reminds us that rejoicings do not belong as properly to him that putteth on the armor as

to him who, having fought the good fight to the finish, shall lay aside the armor and put on robes of glory in the First Resurrection. (1 Kings 20:11; 2 Tim. 4:7,8.) Consequently we must not stop too long even to rejoice that we are what we are by the grace of God, but must go on! The new year is surely full of blessings for the faithful, according to all the precious promises of our Father's Word. We must grasp these afresh, allowing the Lord's faithfulness of the past to establish our trust the more firmly for the future. Without faith as the trolley to connect us with the current of divine power we will fail to "go on unto perfection."

"Faith can firmly trust Him,--come what may."

Love, too, should be stimulated by a retrospective glance;--discerning the mercies of the Lord toward us should enthuse us with loving zeal for Him and his. "We love him because he first loved us!" We seek to do those things pleasing to our Lord because we love him, and in proportion as we love him we will delight in such obedience and service,--even at the cost of self-sacrifice.

Good resolutions and the reexamination of our ideal and standards of life are appropriate at this season, too. Not that the fully consecrated can add to their consecration--for, if proper, it included our all. Not, either, that we should have an annual round up when we would seek pardon and start out afresh--as typical Israel did each "Day of Atonement" at the beginning of their new year. Spiritual Israelites, rather, are to live a daily, an hourly life of nearness to the High-Priest. The blood of the New Covenant is to be continually invoked for the cleansing of the slightest defilement of conscience, that thus the wedding garment of our Lord's imputed righteousness may not become bedraggled, but that the slightest spot being removed, we may have it "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

Nevertheless, self-examinations and good resolutions have a value at this season in particular. That reviews of business; taking account of stocks; ascertaining the profits and the losses of the year; etc., are profitable in respect to worldly affairs, all will admit; and the much more important affairs of the soul--the ascertainment of gains and losses as New Creatures and how and when and where these came to us in the constant battle with the world, the flesh and the devil,

R3125 : page 4

will surely profit all who make such reckonings with an eye single to the pleasement of the Lord.

Let us, then, set our spiritual aims, ambitions and endeavors still nearer to the perfect divine standard; remembering the while our Lord's words, "Without me ye can do nothing," let us be strong and courageous in the strength which he supplies and promises

to increase as we are able and willing to accept it.

* * *

There is nothing specially new to note,--except that "all things are onward moving," in the direction indicated by the Word. The "churches" are coming more and more to favor the combination and trust principle and desire to apply it;--seemingly only a Morganizer is needed. Then the religious "irregulars" will be shamed and discomfited. Capital and labor are each fortifying--each preparing for the great struggle; yet neither realizes how tremendous the conflict will be--nor the results, as we do in the light of the Word. Financial prosperity holds the winds in "Christendom," though its continuance seems to depend on the expenditure of vast sums in outside wars. The financial conditions are becoming unfavorable in Great Britain, still more so in Germany, and yet more so in Russia.

We have recently noted the rapid progress of Socialism in Germany; below we quote from the New Orleans Times-Democrat respecting its progress in the United States:--

"What will be remembered as easily the most interesting--and we had almost said the most alarming --feature in the Convention of the American Federation of Labor of 1902, was revealed when the Convention, by a vote of 4744 to 4344, rejected this resolution:--

"Resolved, That this twenty-second annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor advise the working people to organize their economic and political power to secure for labor the full equivalent of its toil, and the overthrow of the wage system and establishing an industrial co-operative democracy."

"Although defeated, the resolution is especially significant by reason of the great number of votes recorded in favor of its adoption. Out of a total of 9088, the pro-Socialists lost by the exceedingly slender majority of 400 votes. In other words, the American Federation of Labor, as it is today constituted, is almost evenly divided on the question whether or not Socialism should be indorsed. To be exact 47.68 per cent of the Federation is in favor of, and 52.32 per cent is opposed to, Socialism.

"These statistics are of themselves sufficient to make labor leaders throughout the country pause and

R3126 : page 4

reflect whither they are tending. The speeches made in the Convention were overwhelmingly in favor of indorsing the Socialistic movement. Delegate Barnes compressed into two sentences the creed of the pro-Socialist advocates. 'Let us tell Mr. Morgan,' said he,

'that, to use his own words, there is nothing to arbitrate. We want your (his) mines, and we want your (his) railroads for the people of this country.' Delegate Layton said that 'the time had come when supplication should cease and action should begin.' 'The greatest power of the union, or laboring man,' said he, 'is the ballot. It should be used, and used for the attainment of the workingman's ambition.' The note sounded in these two speeches was echoed in the remarks of other delegates; and but for the vigorous speech made by Mr. Gompers the Federation would unquestionably have thrown the weight of its influence in favor of 'the overthrowing of the wage system and the establishment of an industrial co-operative democracy.'

"In straight-flung words, Mr. Gompers pointed out that Socialism had more than once been opposed to trades unionism; that the socialistic spirit was essentially the spirit of negation, and that the Federation should shun Socialism as it would leprosy. 'Good heavens!' he exclaimed. 'Study Socialism! Why, we have graduated from it long ago.' This was Mr. Gompers' position; and by taking it promptly he stemmed the tide of Socialism that was running high in the convention, and contrived to defeat the resolution. It required no little courage and no little capacity to do what Mr. Gompers did, and his attitude and conduct can hardly be too highly commended. The victory won by him was, however, dearly bought. Above the smoke of the battle, one fact looms large in the public eye, namely; that in a deliberative body of representative American workingmen, 47.68 per cent are in favor of Socialism in the United States."

* * *

Socialism should not be confounded with Communism or Anarchism; nevertheless, we believe it will surely eventuate in anarchy. Capital--private ownership--will not consent to Socialism on a broad basis and the conflict resulting will be what neither party premeditates or desires. There are really very few people sufficiently unbalanced in heart and mind to approve anarchy.

SOCIALIST VOTE OF THE WORLD.

The Appeal gives the following figures as showing the marvelous growth of Socialism all over the world:

United States.	Spain.
1890 13,704	1893 7,000
1891 16,552	1895 14,000
1892 21,512	1897 28,000
1893 25,666	Belgium.

1894	30,020	1894	334,500
1895	34,869	1898	534,324
1896	36,275	Denmark.	
1897	55,550	1872	315
1898	91,749	1884	6,805
1900	135,770	1887	8,408
1902 Est.....	400,000	1890	17,232
Italy.	1892	20,098	
1893	20,000	1895	25,019
1895	76,400	1898	32,000
1897	134,496	1900	43,285

R3126 : page 5

Germany.	Austria.		
1867	30,000	1895	90,000
1871	101,927	1897	750,000
1874	351,670	France.	
1877	486,843	1885	30,000
1878	437,158	1888	91,000
1881	311,961	1893	590,000
1884	599,990	1898	1,000,000
1887	763,128	Great Britain.	
1890	1,427,098	1895	55,000
1893	1,786,738	1902	350,000
1898	2,125,000	Switzerland.	
Poll 1903.....	3,100,000	1890	13,500
Servia.	1893	29,822	
1895	55,000	1896	36,468

NEW FINANCIAL CONDITIONS.

The London Spectator, one of the ablest journals in the world, remarks:--

"What a wonderful change has passed over our conception of the word 'property.' The writer is old enough to remember when nothing except land and houses was regarded as true property; but now a man may be a millionaire and own nothing that he can see. A few pieces of paper in a box at his banker's, or, better still, an inscription in a book of which he knows nothing, except that it exists, constitute him a man rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and, moreover, a man who has not to guard his property, and who can realize it --which the rich man of old could not do--in half an hour. It is a very curious change, and one the full effects of which we have yet to perceive."

This is in full agreement with what we have already pointed out--that bonds and stocks are being used now as instead of money. This is sure to affect conditions during the time of trouble.

MISSIONARY NEWS.

The Secretary of "The American Board of Foreign Missions" reports \$18,369,163 annual summary of income for Protestant foreign missions; and additions to church membership in all heathen lands for the year at 160,000;--the number dying during the year is not stated.

Estimating the births among the 1,000,000,000 heathens at only one tenth of one per cent, the population increased 1,000,000. Question: How long would it require to convert heathendom to the present standard of "Christendom"? And then,--How long would it require to convert "Christendom" to the condition mentioned in the Lord's prayer--when God's will shall be done on Earth even as it is done in Heaven?

Thank God for the promised interference in the present order of things by Immanuel and his promised Kingdom of Heaven;--to bind Satan, open the blinded eyes of understanding and heal and bless all the families of the earth--forcefully, but lovingly--ultimately destroying all wilful evil doers!

CONCERNING PALESTINE.

"Vienna, Nov. 5.--A dispatch from Constantinople confirms the statement that the Sultan is considering the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, and that the proposition is opposed by the French and Russian legations in the interest of the claims of Catholic and Greek Christians to the holy places. The dispatch states that if these claims could be arranged satisfactorily, the scheme of a Jewish State could probably be carried out. The British embassy at Constantinople is said to look with much favor on the proposition to create a Jewish State in Palestine, and if matters should come to an issue, England would undoubtedly support the Sultan as against Russia and France in giving Palestine to the Jews. A noted diplomat is reported as saying: "The Sultan of Turkey could take no wiser step for the maintenance of his power and the permanence of his empire than to make Palestine a Jewish State. He would thereby attract to his empire the friendly interest of Jews throughout the world, and the Jewish State would be a bulwark for Turkey against Russian aggression in that direction."

PROTESTANT FEDERATION.

"Protestant Christianity is planning to make a demonstration. It is to be an outcome of a convention,

just arranged, to be held in February, 1905, and probably in the city of Washington. The national federation of churches, at its meeting this year, created a committee, whose duty it is to secure representatives from all evangelical bodies. This committee has met with hearty response. Religious bodies South as well as North are taking hold of the idea with interest. The highest authorities are naming delegates, and these will meet in the proposed convention representatives from state and local federations. It is purposed by this convention to send forth a joint message signed by the chief pastors and addressed to Protestant Christianity of the United States. The purport of this message will be unity. The plea will be made that Christianity has been weakened by divisions and that the time has arrived for united action. No attempt will be made toward organic unity, but it will be claimed that upon a score of important questions a common ground exists, that overlapping and duplication can be prevented, and that evangelical thought can, if it will, make itself felt as it has not done heretofore."
--St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

=====

R3127 : page 5

"REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS."

--PHILIPPIANS 4:1-13--JANUARY 11.--

THE EPISTLE to the Philippians is one of the most loving of all the Church letters written by the Apostle Paul. In our last lesson we considered the story of the founding of that Church and the cost thereof to the faithful Apostle and his companion Silas. The Epistle to the Philippians contains no reproofs, no chidings, such as appear in others of the epistles, but rather it is full of approval, commendation and special

R3127 : page 6

love. Apparently, too, this little company of the Lord's people loved the Apostle as fervently as he loved them. His afflictions on their account bound their hearts to him in lasting gratitude. We find that on at least four occasions they helped to sustain the Apostle; once while at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:9), twice while at Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16), and once while he was a prisoner at Rome. On this latter occasion they sent their gifts and expressions of love by a special messenger, Epaphroditus who, arriving at Rome in the malarial season, took dangerously ill--probably with what is termed the Pontine, or Roman fever. It was on the occasion of the recovery of Epaphroditus and his return to Philippi that the Apostle sent back with him this

epistle.

A contemporary writer, referring to the practical manifestation of love by the Philippian brethren makes the following comment: "The people of Malta were the only others recorded who expressed their love in this way to Paul. The Ephesians wept over him, but there is nothing said of their expressing their feelings by aiding him. Perhaps they did." Evidently the Apostle needed some such manifestation of affection and appreciation of his efforts on their behalf, for his own encouragement. It must have been hard, indeed, for him to love the Church at Corinth as he did--laying down his life on its behalf, as well as on behalf of the other Churches--while realizing keenly, as his epistles distinctly intimate, that he was but lightly esteemed in return.--1 Cor. 4:7-9; 2 Cor. 10:10.

In view of this close and dear relationship between the Apostle and the Church at Philippi, as between an under shepherd, or pastor and the flock, how full of meaning the first verse of our lesson! "My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown, --so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." These words from the pen of a conscientious and sincere man, such as the Apostle was, are fragrant with the very essence of Christian love and fellowship. How much they must have been appreciated, and how much they must have been deserved!

But if there was nothing in the condition of the Philippians to reprove, they, nevertheless, needed the exhortation to stand fast. They had already, by the Lord's favor, reached a considerable attainment in the graces of the spirit--they must needs be tested, however, to prove them, to try them; and for this ordeal, which every individual, as well as every congregation of the Lord's people must expect, the Apostle wished to prepare them--to urge that they do not retreat from the advanced steps of love and obedience already taken --that they continue firm, not, however, trusting to their own strength, but, as he expresses it, that they should "stand fast in the Lord," trusting in his power, in his grace, sufficient for every time of need.

Several of the sisters of this congregation appear to have been prominent helpers in the work, not only when the Apostle was with them, but subsequently. Two of these are mentioned by name (v. 2), and the exhortation that they be of the same mind in the Lord implies that in some respects at least these two were at variance. It is well that we note the Apostle's language to them very carefully, for there is wisdom in it. He does not exhort them to be of one mind in everything; quite possibly realizing that because of very different temperaments and dispositions, habits of life, etc., this might be impossible; but he does urge them to be of the same mind in the Lord--to preserve a unity of heart and head in all things relating to the Lord and his cause.

It will be of advantage to all of the Lord's people to pursue in such matters the course which the Apostle here advocates--not to attempt to "harmonize all earthly things" under present conditions;--to be content that each should have differences of opinion on various other subjects, and to insist only on oneness, fellowship, union, harmony in the Lord, in the truth, in the spirit of love, and toward all the members of the household of faith. Insistence on more than this--endeavoring to bring all to one view on social, financial and other questions--endeavoring to bring all to one view respecting dress and food, etc., has caused grievous strivings and estrangements between members of the household of faith; and all such endeavors should be recognized as contrary to the Lord's instruction through the Apostle--contrary to the "spirit of a sound mind"--contrary to the wisdom that cometh from above,--which entreats and exhorts for unity only in the Lord and along the line of questions positively settled by the Lord in the Scriptures--which generously leaves with each full liberty to act and to judge on all questions not positively settled by the Scriptures. We urge that all of the Lord's dear flock copy the wisdom of the Apostle in this matter, and heed his injunction, given to these two sisters, to let nothing come between them in the Lord.

In the third verse of our lesson "Yokefellow" apparently should be written with a capital, as the proper name of a brother in the Philippian Church--not only a Yokefellow in name, but as here declared, "a true Yokefellow," and, as we might expect, therefore, one who would be ready to cooperate with and to assist others. In the Apostle's judgment, some others were burdened, needing assistance. He specifies Clement and the two sisters already referred to, whose differences were burdening them. That the differences had not yet extended so as to injure them spiritually, the Apostle firmly believed, and hence he declares that he

R3128 : page 7

still recognizes them as fellow-laborers, still recognizes that their names are in the Book of Life. On this account they should seek harmony in the Lord, and Brother Yokefellow should fulfil toward them the true meaning of his name, by helping them over their difficulties; helping them to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace in the Lord.

There is no room for any of us today to become apostles, for there were only twelve of them, and never will there be more. (Rev. 21:14.) There may not be opportunities for all of us to do great things in the Lord's service in this harvest time, either; but there are opportunities for every one of us to be true yokefellows--to assist the dear brethren and sisters with their burdens;--not merely financial

burdens, or burdens of illness, but sometimes to assist them over difficulties and burdens of the kind suggested in this lesson--burdens of different temperaments and dispositions. Let us each and all seek to be true yokefellows to the various members of the body of Christ. We may be sure that the Lord will highly esteem such service, and that thus we will be growing in that grace which he so highly commended when he said, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God."

Laying down certain general principles for godly living, healthful for New Creatures, the Apostle exhorts, --"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice." This, the Golden Text of the lesson, represents the very essence of Christian living. Under present conditions it is not supposable that outward circumstances will always be favorable to rejoicing, from the natural standpoint. He, therefore, who would rejoice always in the Lord must have faith in the Lord,-- trust, hope, love. Without these he could not so appropriate to himself the gracious promises of the Word as to be able to rejoice in tribulation and suffering and under trials and difficulties, and when falsely accused and misrepresented, and when slandered and evilly entreated for the truth's sake. The only ones who can rejoice always are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with him, and that his protection and care are over them, and that his promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as New Creatures.

Others may rejoice today and be cast down tomorrow; only the faithful in Christ Jesus are privileged to rejoice always. The thought of the Lord's favors, past, present and to come, makes all the trials and difficulties of such to appear very light afflictions, as but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the glory, honor and immortality promised, and the blessed privileges of divine service, both here and hereafter. The Apostle emphasizes the matter by saying, "Again I say, Rejoice." We cannot have too many rejoicing Christians, nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice in the Lord. This rejoicing is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. It implies serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul, however, and does not mean that noisy demonstration is essential, as some seem mistakenly to think.

The Apostle further exhorts that the faithful let their moderation, their forbearance, be manifested, not only toward the brethren, but toward all with whom they have to do. The Greek word here rendered "moderation" seems to carry with it the thought of reasonableness, and of not exacting our rights too rigorously. Mercy and leniency are certainly qualities required of all who would be members of the body of the Anointed. Faithfulness in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of us, and mercifulness in

respect to all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule: so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for he is kind and merciful to the unthankful.

"The Lord is at hand!" The thought seems to be that we who are the Lord's are not living for the present time. We are expecting great changes to be ushered in when our King shall take to himself his great power and begin his reign. We are not to be struggling for the last inch or the last penny, nor for the extreme of our own rights; but, rather, to be so full of rejoicing in the good things coming, and already ours by faith, that it will make us generous as respects the things of this present time in our dealings with the brethren and with others. We are not expecting justice from the Lord, for nothing that we have or done or could do would justly call for such exceeding great and precious things as he has promised us. And as we are expecting grace or bounty in so large measure we can well afford to be generous and liberal in our sentiments toward others--especially toward the household of faith, because they are our brethren and fellow-representatives of the Lord himself, from whom our bounty is to come; and toward the world without, because they have not the future prospects which we possess, and hence set their hearts upon the things of this present time; and we can well afford to accord them their full share of these or more, since we are so rich through our heavenly Father and our heavenly Bridegroom.

That the Apostle did not mean to be understood that the Lord's second advent might be expected momentarily, nor before his death, is evident; for elsewhere in his epistles he clearly sets forth his expectation to die, and to wait for the reward, the crown of righteousness laid up for him; elsewhere also he clearly intimates that the day of the Lord could not come until after the great falling away mentioned in the prophecies,

R3128 : page 8

and the manifestation of the Man of Sin, etc. (2 Tim. 3:7,8; 2 Thess. 2:2-10.) Evidently, therefore, his only thought in this exhortation, "The Lord is at hand," was, as already suggested--that we are living in the close of the reign of evil, that the dawning of the day of the Lord is not far distant, and that to the eye of faith it is so near that its influence should affect even the smallest affairs of the present life.

"Be careful for nothing" is the next exhortation; but since our English word careful has lost its original meaning, there is danger of error here. The word originally had the thought of being full of care--anxiety, trouble. The Apostle's words correspond exactly to our Lord's injunction, "Take no thought," and signify, Be not anxious, burdened, full of care. It is proper that the Lord's people should be careful, in the

meaning of the word careful as used today. We should not be careless, indifferent, loose in our conduct or words, but be circumspect.

Anxiety and burdens are unavoidable to those who are depending on themselves, their own wisdom, their own strength, their own skill; but the members of the body of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, adopted into the divine family, sons of God, are assured over and over again in the Word that if they abide faithful all things shall work together for their highest welfare. Why should they be burdened? Why should they feel anxious? He who guards their interests slumbers not. When Christians find themselves anxious, fearful, burdened, the evidence is that they are lacking in faith, and the probability is that they have either never grown to the point of having the proper faith in the Lord, or that they have allowed "earth-born clouds" and cares of this life to come between them and the Lord, so that they no longer have confidence that they are abiding in his love and in his care. All in such condition should go at once to the throne of heavenly grace, and to the divine promises, and obtaining mercy at the former, and feeding upon the latter, they should grow strong in the Lord and in confidence in him, and their corroding cares will give place to faith, confidence, peace of heart, whatever the outward conditions.

Such is the counsel of the Apostle--that instead of continuing in the anxious condition, we should lay all of our affairs before the Lord, supplicating his promised providential care, acknowledging our own lack of wisdom;--and gladly accepting his wisdom and the provisions of his love, we should make every request in a spirit of thanksgiving. This spirit of thanksgiving implies a recognition that the circumstances and conditions in which we are, have been supervised of the Lord, and that we are appreciative of his care and trust it for the future. Thanksgiving for what we have, and a full appreciation of the Lord's leadings hitherto and now, will preclude any anxiety for the future; for the thankful heart will conclude that he who favored us and redeemed us while we were yet sinners will much more favor and do for us now that we are his through the adoption that is in Christ Jesus.

The question may arise, Why will not God give us the things which he sees us to need without our making petition to him and claiming his promises? Undoubtedly because we need previously to come into the proper attitude of heart to receive his favors and to be advantaged by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude, as we shall see them by and by, when we shall know even as we are known. It is the same with natural hunger. Unless we were so constituted that the gnawings of hunger

would show us our need of food we would probably appreciate it less, even if we ate as much and with the same regularity.

If we have the foregoing described spirit of rejoicing and trust in the Lord, and make all of our requests, so far as we are able to discern, in harmony with his promise, and accept with gratitude and thanksgiving, whatever his providence may send us, then the Apostle assures us, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." The thought here is distinct. It is not our own peace that is referred to. We may by nature be more or less indisposed to peace, restless, dissatisfied, discontented, fearful, foreboding or quarrelsome; but, following the

R3129 : page 8

course outlined above, we learn to trust God in all of our affairs, and it is the peace of God--the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness and willingness to hold us by his right hand as his children--that comes in, to keep us from worry, from anxiety, etc. The thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It keeps the Christian's mind, so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion;--and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the divine power and wisdom and love. But it does not assure him of anything respecting his own perfection or worthiness of acceptance before God. This proper peace merely assures us of our standing in divine favor through Christ Jesus,--his worthiness, his sacrifice, his aid.

Now we come to the Apostle's grand summing up of the way in which the Christian is to set his affections--fix them, fasten them, hold them upon profitable things; that he may grow in grace as well as in knowledge and love of God. The Apostle points out that the

R3129 : page 9

will having been consecrated to the Lord, faith having been exercised in rejoicing and thanksgiving in all of the Lord's providences, the peace of trust having come in, the further steps in the development of character will be through guarding our thoughts: and this means also the guarding of our words and acts, because it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and that the whole course of life is directed. What, then, should be the trend of the Christian's thoughts after he has reached the grand development already outlined by the Apostle? It should be toward things that are true, having no sympathy with anything that is false or even exaggerated. Whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling

himself. Whoever cleanses his thoughts, and avoids exaggeration, etc., is in that degree purifying his mind and his entire character, and coming the more into touch and sympathy with the Lord himself, who is "the Truth."

Nor is it sufficient that we are sure of the truth of matters. We are to test them further, and discern to what extent they are honorable, noble; for although the Lord has accepted us, ignoble and imperfect, and has covered the ignoble features of our characters, and proposes to cover them to the end with his own merit, nevertheless, we cannot be in sympathy with the ignoble features of our fallen condition, but on the contrary must desire true nobility, and the highest standards of honor in our hearts, in our thoughts, in all of our dealings with our God and with our fellows. The test of honor is therefore to be applied after the test of the truth. The thing might be true, but Is it honorable to think about it or tell about it? is another question.

Another test we are to apply is, Are the things just? We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust, and we are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others from a different standpoint;--so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, forbearance, pity, helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we mature, that the lines of justice shall in no sense of the word be infringed by us with our hearts' approval.

Purity is another quality to be esteemed by us. We are to love and cultivate that which is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we will desire to drop it from memory, and this will only be accomplished by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness, and to esteem it. From our standpoint the impure, the unjust, the untrue, the dishonorable things, cannot appear lovely, desirable, worthy of emulation. When we would think on the purest of things we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely in his footsteps. The mind that frequently calls up the lovely perfections of the Lord and the truth, and is well filled by these, is guarded greatly against intrusions of unlovely and unholy things, contrary to the spirit of the Lord. The Apostle concludes the list, by referring to all things of good repute: things of any virtue or value, things in any degree praiseworthy--the noble words or noble deeds or noble sentiments of anybody,

we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward these ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed. We will become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.

How many (how few!) can say what the Apostle says in vs. 9? "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do!" This should be the standard of every Christian, because they each and all are representatives of the Lord, ambassadors for him; hence, so far as in them lieth, their conduct and words should be such as would be living epistles, read by the brethren and by the world to profit. No wonder the Apostle adds that, doing thus, "the God of peace shall be with you." So surely as he was with the Apostle he will be with all others similarly walking in the footsteps of Jesus.

"I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at length ye have revived your thought for me." These words seem to imply that their thoughtfulness for the Apostle, and earnestness to improve opportunities to serve him, had to some extent relaxed for a time and been revived. Then, as though fearful that his words might be understood as a reproof, he adds, "Ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity." How careful was this man of God not unnecessarily to wound the feelings of the brethren, and how careful we all should likewise be to let the love of God extend, not only to the degree of giving us liberal sentiments toward the brethren, but also to the extent of influencing our tongues and pens not to wound unnecessarily even the least of them.

R3129 : page 10

The Apostle hastens to point out that he is not complaining of want. He had learned to put into practice himself the lesson which he was just communicating to them, regarding rejoicing in the Lord,--to cast aside anxious thought and to approach the Lord in prayer and supplication in thanksgiving, and he possessed the resultant peace. In this condition of heart, however many may have been his necessities, he was not in want, for he was satisfied that the Father would provide the things which he really needed--and more he did not want; for, as he explains, he had learned the lesson, "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." We are not to be contented after the manner of the tramp or the indolent and shiftless, who would prefer to "live by faith," at the expense of others who

"labor, working with their hands." We are not to be content to allow the opportunities and talents and privileges which the Lord has given us to lie idly by, unused; but while using these talents and opportunities to the very best of our ability and intelligence, and while seeking in prayer and supplication, rejoicing and thanksgiving, to use them all as would please the Lord, we should be content with the result of such efforts.

We should conclude that our heavenly Father who feeds the sparrows and who clothes the fields with verdure is quite able to supply our needs in the manner and to the degree that would be for our highest welfare; and so, after having done our part to the best of our ability, we are to be thoroughly contented with the results --even if the results should be the barest necessities of life. But we are not to be contented with the barest necessities unless these are the best results obtainable from a reasonable and judicious use of opportunities and talents which the Lord has given us, consistent with our consecration to his service. "Be content with such things as ye have" does not ignore our talents and opportunities, for these are part of the things which we have,--the things which, as stewards, we are bound to use to the best of our judgments.

Surely the Lord was fitting the Apostle for a grand place in the heavenly Kingdom, when he gave him such a variety of experiences as are detailed in the 12th verse. Surely, as the Lord was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, that he might be a faithful High-Priest for the Millennial Kingdom (as well as to us now), so the Apostle, by his experiences, evidently was being fitted and prepared for a very honorable and prominent place in the Royal Priesthood of the same Kingdom. And so with us: if we find our experiences in life very checkered we may conclude that the Lord sees that we need both the heights and depths of prosperity and adversity to properly instruct us and qualify us for the position he designs for us in the future. Let us, then, as the Apostle did, learn how to abound, not allowing the abundance of earthly good things to swerve us from our consecration vows; and learn also how to be in want (need) and yet not to want anything beyond what the Lord's wisdom and providence sees best to give,--to be content.

The secret of the Apostle's success is stated in the last verse of the lesson. It was his close relationship to the Lord, his intimate union with him, his reliance

R3130 : page 10

upon him: he was abiding as a branch in the Vine, and was strengthened by the same spirit, and thus was enabled to do all these things and to pass through all these experiences with gratitude, with thankfulness, with rejoicing. Let us all thus learn to "Rejoice in the Lord alway."

=====
R3130 : page 10

TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN.

--ACTS 17:1-12--JANUARY 18.--

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet."--Psa. 119:105.

WHEN released from the prison at Philippi, Paul, Silas and Timothy went about a hundred miles direct to Thessalonica, the largest commercial city of that district--Macedonia. Nothing daunted by their experience at Philippi, apparently not even waiting for their backs to thoroughly heal from the wounds there received, Paul at once began a vigorous presentation of the Gospel. As was his custom, he went first to the Jews. The propriety of this course is evident: the Jews were familiar with the prophecies of the Messiah, and although making their home amongst the Gentiles, nevertheless, as the Apostle declares, they were continually hoping for the fulfilment of the grand promises made to Abraham, confirmed unto Isaac and unto Jacob, and that by divine oath, or affirmation.--Acts 26:7.

Not only were the Jews, acquainted with the prophecies and looking for their fulfilment in a Messiah, better prepared than other peoples for the message of the Gospel, but, additionally, it was part of the divine will that the first offer of the Gospel should go to the Jew, the natural seed of Abraham, who was, by divine intention, to have the first opportunity of becoming a part of the spiritual seed. Furthermore, the Jewish synagogues were ostensibly conducted on a liberal plane, anyone of reasonable ability being free there to show what he could of the teaching of the Scriptures. Thus the Apostle met with the Jews on three Sabbath days; and, according to his own narrative, he labored with his hands for temporal necessities between times. (1 Thess. 2:9.) It was during this stay of probably three to six months that he twice

R3130 : page 11

received financial aid from the brethren at Philippi.

The result of his labors was the nucleus of a flourishing church, to which two of his epistles were addressed. The Apostle's attitude toward these brethren may reasonably be taken as the criterion of his general attitude toward all of the Lord's dear flock. He dealt not with them as a lord or master amongst slaves or subordinates; but, using his own words, he was gentle toward them, as a nursing mother to her children. (1 Thess. 2:7.) He admonished, comforted, instructed

them, "as a father doth his children." (1 Thess. 2:11.)
He lived an unblamable, unselfish life in their midst,
giving them the Gospel, and with it his very life.--
1 Thess. 2:5-8,10.

The method of the Apostle's teaching is expressed in the statement that he "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures," opening and showing forth "that it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead." The Greek word used signifies that the teaching was in the nature of a dialogue. He appealed to the Scriptures, offered explanations of their meaning, pointed out how this meaning found its fulfilment in the experience of our Lord, and heard and replied to queries and objections. Like other Jews, these had, of course, thought chiefly on the Scriptures which predict Messiah's glory and Kingdom, and the grandeur of the position of Israel as his people, dispensing blessing to all the families of the earth. The Apostle pointed out the other Scriptures which spoke of "the sufferings of Christ," and how it was necessary that he should redeem the world before he could properly deliver it from the power of sin and death. We may be sure that he had the prophetic statements well in mind, and also the various types of the law, and that these were called up in order before his hearers, and the evidences adduced that our Lord fulfilled these; and not only that his death was necessary, as typified in Isaac, but also his resurrection from the dead, that he might be the distributor of the mercies of God. The word "opening" carries with it the thought that these Scriptures had been closed previously, and this is in harmony with the statement of Luke, when mentioning the Lord's discourse with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, it is declared that he "opened unto them the Scriptures," saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer."--Luke 24:26,46;
1 Pet. 1:11.

The work to be done today very closely resembles that which was done by the Apostle as here recorded. There is need for us to go with the "meat in due season," first of all to those who have already been the recipients of divine favors and great advantages every way, to open to them other Scriptures which are now due to be understood;--which show the grand purposes of our heavenly Father in connection with the blessing of all the families of the earth through the Church glorified; and that the glorified Church, under its glorified Head, Christ Jesus, is to constitute the Kingdom of heaven, the divine agency for the blessing of all. It is appropriate that we adopt largely the same plan that the Apostle did, and reason with people out of the Scriptures, opening them before their minds gradually, that they may catch some glimpses of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan. Nevertheless, we know that it will be now even as it was then--that only those

who have "an ear to hear" will hear, and that the others will be stirred up to antagonism, bitter envyings, jealousies, etc.

The Apostle's work was evidently well done, his arguments effective--the result was that some of them (Jews) were persuaded and took sides with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks quite a good many,--who had been feeling after God and who probably had realized that there was more true religion with the Jew than elsewhere,--were now, because of having less Jewish prejudice, more ready than their Jewish friends to hear and appreciate the Gospel of Christ. Of the chief women of the city, too, quite a number were influenced by the message, and became followers of Christ.

Christian people in all denominations today are claiming great liberty--that they are not sectarian, and that all who love the Lord have fullest opportunity to worship with them. But we find that if we take them at their word and attempt to reason with them out of the Scriptures respecting the things now due to be understood, pointing out that we are in the dawn of restitution times, that the Millennial Kingdom is about to be ushered in, and that Christ is not only the Priest who redeemed his people with his blood, but is shortly to be the great Prophet and King who is to rule and instruct the whole world of mankind, the majority are unable to receive this--it is too contrary to their preconceived notions. Especially do the leading ones, the preachers and elders and Sunday School superintendents, feel that they must oppose the truth; that they must not admit that there are in the Word of God "things new and old--meat in due season for the household of faith." Their objections are often inspired by jealousy or envy, as they note that the message of grace appeals to the hearts of some of the very best of their number, and some of the very best outside their number --of the world.

None like to complain, after having boasted of Christian liberty and fellowship;--they murmur that our preaching of the good tidings of great joy is proselyting --"attempting to steal their members," etc. They exclaim, "Why do you not go to the slums, instead

R3130 : page 12

of coming in amongst us to steal away our best members, our ripest wheat?" We answer that a similar charge of proselyting might with equal force have been brought against our Lord Jesus and against the apostles. The Apostle, as we see, wherever he went, sought for the most religious and most intelligent people, instead of seeking for the most ignorant and the most degraded. Why? Because he well knew that the Gospel he had been sent to proclaim was not intended of the Lord to convert the world, but to gather out of the world a "little flock," a people for the Lord's

name. (Acts 15:14.) He knew that the Gospel he had to preach would not appeal to the most degraded hoodlums of society; on the contrary, it would appeal most to intelligent people,--and he presented it in as logical, reasonable and intelligent a manner as it could possibly be set forth. It is still proper for us to pursue the same course, and the conditions today of proclaiming the second presence of the Lord, and that the time is at hand for the establishment of the Kingdom and for the gathering of the elect wheat into the barn, can better be presented now to the intelligent, thoughtful, devout people in all the various sects, and of the world, than to others.

Evidently the discussions of those three Sabbath days were all that the Jews as a whole could endure; --apparently the ministers of the truth, thenceforth excluded, went to the house of a prominent believer, Jason, and from there continued their propaganda,--possibly holding meetings at his house. Meantime the opposing Jews at Thessalonica received information from their brethren, opponents of the truth at Philippi, respecting these servants of the Lord, and the message they carried;--and, doubtless, the Adversary persuaded them that they were engaged in a noble cause when they gathered a rabble of market-loungers, "roughs and toughs," to raise a commotion, and as a mob to

R3131 : page 12

make an assault upon Jason's house, to take the Apostle and his companions before the authorities and have their work stopped. So some of a similar class in spiritual Israel today feel toward the truth and its servants, if we may judge from the epithets sometimes used. The inciting of Sunday school scholars to tear up religious literature and throw the fragments at the distributors is about on a par with the conduct of those Jews of Thessalonica in inciting a mob--the difference between their day and ours of more general intelligence and better police regulations being taken into consideration. A disinterested spectator would be inclined to query--What can be the evil teachings of the WATCH TOWER publications, that would lead a professedly "liberal servant of God" today to feel such an animosity against them? We would only reply that we know of nothing contained in this literature that should arouse any but the warmest sentiments of love toward God and toward the brethren and toward the world in general. It might similarly be questioned in the minds of disinterested persons why reputable Jews and rabbis should incite a mob against the Apostle and his companions? and why the high-priest and Scribes and Pharisees incited the multitude against our Lord? Pilate, evidently was in this position when he inquired respecting our Lord, "Why, what evil hath he done?" It is because the Lord's message was one of grace and truth that he was

hated and crucified. It was because the Apostles and their co-laborers were telling forth the same message of the grace of God in Christ and the blessings yet to come through them, that they were maligned and opposed; and it is the same Gospel, the same good tidings, the same joyful message, of which Christ is the center, the Kingdom and the blessings for all the world of mankind the circumference, that is hated and maligned today;--not by the world, but by those who professedly are God's people.

Not finding Paul and Silas, the mob dragged Jason and others of the believers before the rulers. The charges were very serious ones--inciting to anarchy and treason--turning the world upside down, and teaching that there is another king, Jesus, whose kingdom is to be universal in due time. While these charges were fraudulent as respects the true standpoint, they nevertheless had in them a sufficiency of truth to make them appear serious. It is true that the Gospel of Christ is revolutionary in its character; that whenever it enters the heart of a man it keeps turning things upside down continually, until it is either ejected or has produced a transformation of heart and life. There is no peace between right and wrong, or light and darkness, in any heart. Peace can be secured only by giving way either to the light or to the darkness; either to the truth or to the error; and since the error is the more popular, the more general, the majority choose peace along that line. The Lord's people, however, the sincere lovers of righteousness, can have peace on no other terms than those of loyalty to the Lord and his Word, and the principles of his righteousness. The same is true in respect to all the affairs of the world. It is the Gospel of Christ, the Gospel which will be a Gospel of peace in due time, that at the present time, because of evil and ignorance in the world, is setting on fire the very foundations of "the present evil world," and will ultimately result in the great figurative conflagration which shall consume this present order of things, political, financial, social, religious,--that upon the ruins of present institutions the Lord may shortly erect his Kingdom of righteousness--with peace upon proper foundations of justice and love.

R3131 : page 13

We must not be surprised if this Gospel of peace has the same influence today as it had in the days of our Lord and of the apostles. Mark the effect of the precious message at Thessalonica and at Philippi and elsewhere. Mark the effect when the message was delivered from the lips of him who spake as never man spake, and of whose wonderful words it is recorded that "all the people bare him record and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out

of his mouth." Nevertheless, however graciously stated, the truth is a sword which penetrates in every direction, and which, as our Lord foretold, frequently sets parents against children and children against parents, because the darkness hateth the light and opposeth it in every possible manner.

The decrees of the emperors respecting riots and treason were very strict, and all rulers were held rigidly to account. Hence, when the charges were made of anarchy and treason, both the multitude and the rulers were "troubled;" the multitude, because more or less of a riot had occurred, seemingly because of treason;-- and this might lead to the taking away of some of the city's privileges and liberties, its loss of commerce, etc. The rulers were troubled because they were in danger of being called to account unless they took active steps for the repression of anything resembling treason. They knew, nevertheless, that the charges were fabrications, and, hence, got out of the difficulty by placing Jason and his companions under bonds to keep the peace--to see that similar riots did not occur again. This necessitated the sending of Paul and Silas away as quietly and as quickly as possible.

It need not surprise us to have, at no distant day, charges of anarchy, etc., made against those who today are proclaiming present truth, the harvest message, the establishment of the Kingdom, etc. It might be claimed against us that we are not sufficiently in accord with Caesar's government, the kingdoms of this world; that we do not manifest sufficient interest in the elections, nor in the militia, etc.; and that our teaching that the Lord is about to establish his Kingdom, and that it will be set up at the expense of all present institutions, which will fall in a time of trouble and anarchy, implies sympathy with anarchy. The charges would be no more true in our case than in the case of the Lord and the apostles; nevertheless, it may be used as a powerful weapon some day, and if it is we must trust to the same God who guarded the interests of his cause then, and who is equally able to guard it now. We may be sure that the door of opportunity for proclaiming the good tidings will not close until the true "wheat" shall have been found, until the elect shall have heard the message that is now due, that they should come out of Babylon and be gathered to the Lord, instead of being bound to human institutions.

In view of the Lord's teaching regarding this subject, and of how the wisest presentation of it may be ultimately misconstrued, it behooves everyone who would serve the truth faithfully to be as careful as possible not to be misunderstood;--to let it be clearly understood that we neither participate in nor advocate anarchy of any kind; but, on the contrary, are standing for righteousness and the highest of all laws, the divine

law; and that we believe that the poorest of laws are better than none, and that the anarchy that will inevitably come upon the world, according to divine predictions, will be a great curse, a great disadvantage in many respects; and that the only reason why we are able to look upon it with any degree of complacency is because of the assurances given us in the Lord's Word that it will be speedily followed by the Kingdom of God's dear Son;--in power and authority, to fully control all the turbulent elements.

Leaving Timothy at Thessalonica, Paul and Silas journeyed about fifty miles to a rather obscure Grecian city, called Berea, and, according to their custom, realizing that the preaching of the Gospel of Christ was their chief business, they lost no time in engaging therein. Again they sought the Jews in the synagogue, and this time found some specially susceptible to the truth, referred to as "more noble than they of Thessalonica." The Greek word used here for "noble" seems to imply persons of noble birth, a higher and nobler class than those of the more commercial city. Nobility of character is favorable, wherever it is found, and from whatever cause, and true nobility implies reasonableness, as distinguished from prejudice. The Bereans were reasonable, professing to believe all that was written in the Law and the Prophets; to be looking for the Messiah; etc., and they welcomed the servants of God who sought to draw their attention particularly to the "things written aforetime." With all readiness of mind they began to examine the Scriptures, not merely on the Sabbath days, but daily,--to see how well the Apostle's arguments were supported by the testimony of the Law and the Prophets. As we should expect, many of so noble a class accepted the good tidings. Indeed, the wonder is that any person of noble and reasoning mind, once becoming acquainted with the glorious message of God's love and mercy in Christ--his plan for selecting the Church now, and by and by of blessing all the families of the earth through it--could disbelieve or could attribute such a Gospel to any human source. Surely its internal evidences are convincing that it is not of man nor by man, but of the Lord.

=====

R3131 : page 14

QUESTIONS OF GENERAL INTEREST

CHRIST THE FIRST FRUITS.

Question.--Does the word "first fruit" in 1 Cor. 15:20-23 refer to our Lord Jesus only or to the Christ,

Head and body?

Answer--Our Lord Jesus, as represented in verse 20, was certainly the first fruit of all. If we were speaking of summer fruit and would say that strawberries are the first fruit of the season, we could also pick up the first ripe strawberry and say, This is the first fruit. So it is true of our Lord Jesus, the

R3132 : page 14

first fruit, and also true of the Lord and the Church together, that they are the "first-fruit unto God of his creatures."--Jas. 1:18.

Verse 23 refers to the entire Church (the Christ, head and body) as the first fruit, because the discussion is with reference to "every man in his own order," and not with reference to our Lord Jesus personally. The Lord Jesus and the Church, which is his body, united in glory will constitute the first fruit, the first resurrection (the overcomers being partakers of his resurrection. Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:4. Compare 2 Pet. 1:4.) "Afterward they that are [who shall become] Christ's at [during] his presence;" that is, after the close of the Gospel age and the glorification of the Christ will come the second order or class of those to be "made alive."--Vs. 22.

Verse 22 takes in all who shall be "made alive;" that is, all who shall ever come to perfection of life, eternal life. It declares that these shall attain this life by virtue of being "in Christ," even as all men who were in Adam lost life.

These verses ignore entirely all who, when brought to a knowledge of the truth, reject it and wilfully choose sin; and they are in harmony with other Scriptures which declare that "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."--1 John 5:12.

The description of verse 23 relates, therefore, entirely to the Millennial age, which will begin with the glorification of those who have become Christ's during the Gospel age and including the perfecting of the remainder of those who shall during the Millennial age accept Christ and the life which is in him. Verse 23 reaches, therefore, down to and beyond the final trial at the end of the Millennial age, represented in Rev. 20:7-10; and verse 24 represents the everlasting condition after the world shall have been blessed with the knowledge of the truth, and the opportunity of coming into Christ as the "City of Refuge," and after all who would corrupt the earth (all not in full accord with the divine spirit of truth and righteousness--Satan and his servants) shall have been destroyed in the Second Death. Then the mediatorial reign of Christ will terminate, and he will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father.

Notice that, in harmony with the context, verse 22

should read, "As all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive." This passage is very frequently misused to prove the everlasting salvation of all men irrespective of their acceptance of Christ as their Redeemer and King. But, thus translated, this passage is in perfect accord with the remainder of the Bible, which everywhere declares that, "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."--1 John 5:12; John 3:36. The Greek text also supports this rendering, and no other view of verse 22 could be reconciled with the context, verses 23,24.

The difficulty with many, however, is that they have never noticed the full sense of the words life and made alive in the Scriptures. The whole world is reckoned as already dead--because under sentence of death through Adam; and unless they eat (assimilate and appropriate by faith) the flesh (sacrificed humanity) of the Son of Man, they have no life and can have no life. (John 6:53.) And those who do so "eat" are said to pass from death unto life now, reckonedly, but the actual making alive of such, as stated in our text, will be in the Resurrection morning. And so it will be with the world in general during the Millennium: they will be awakened by the great Redeemer in order that each may have the offer of everlasting life, on condition of becoming Christ's, accepting his gracious work for them in the past and his regulations for their future. Thus they may "eat" his flesh--appropriating his merit and receiving thereby his strength and life. They will be accounted or reckoned as beginning to live from the time that they begin to "eat," but they will not be fully alive, perfect, until the close of the Millennial age of trial or testing.

THE BEGINNING OF OUR RESURRECTION.

Question.--In regard to the resurrection of the Church, is it proper for us to consider this in any sense of the word beginning at the time of our consecration, and as progressing during the period of our sojourn in these mortal bodies, and as being complete when we awake in the Lord's likeness? or should we apply the word resurrection as concerns the Church merely to that great change which will consummate our perfection in glory, honor and immortality?

Answer.--The Scriptures frequently refer to the Church as not only having died to the world and the flesh, but as having already been quickened together with Christ, as already risen with him to walk in newness of life. (Col. 3:1; Rom. 6:11.) This might, of

course, be considered by many a figurative start to the resurrection life, but if we are reckoned as new creatures in Christ it implies that the old creature, the old nature, is dead, and, hence, that a new will, or nature, has been started, begotten--that the new creature which God proposes to raise up has started in its upward course. This in no sense of the word applies to a fleshly resurrection, but merely a rising of the spirit of the mind above earthly things to a relationship with the heavenly and spiritual, in which it is declared to be at rest and associated with Christ in heavenly conditions, merely waiting for the new spiritual body, which God has promised shall complete the new creation with such as are faithful to their obligations as new creatures in walking, not after the flesh, but after the spirit, to the extent of their ability.

It is not the flesh, either in the present or the future, that is to be raised, but the new creature, whose resurrection life is already started, and to which God will in due time give a body as it hath pleased him.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CHASTISEMENT?

Question.--I must ask you to set some of us right on the subject of chastisement as recorded in the 12th chapter of Hebrews. Your writings on the subject have been read, yet there are some here who cannot altogether harmonize the matter. It is contended on the one hand that the chastening of the Lord which we as sons must experience, according to your teaching, consists in the tribulation difficulties, the spoiling of our goods, our names, the breaking of ties of friendship which we have enjoyed, the willingness to be called fools for Christ's sake,--in short, the enduring of all things which Christ endured, and also some sickness and pain in the flesh.

It is contended on the other hand that that cannot be construed as the chastening of the Lord, since the word chastening means to correct, to set aright when we have erred; it is contended that all these things come to us because we have taken the right way, and that the closer we try to remain at the side of the Lord, and the more we cut loose from the world, the severer will be the persecutions, the more contempt will the world heap upon us, and the more will it scorn us, even as it scorned him. It is furthermore contended, that the chastening which, as sons of God, we must experience is directly of God, since the Scriptures (Heb. 12) declare so, and that the things mentioned before do not come to us at the hand of God, but are heaped upon us by Satan and the world; that these things must be expected and must be borne with patience, that thus we are polished, and are building character, and are

being prepared for the place that we shall some day, by the grace of God, occupy in his glorious temple.

Now, all of this, it is contended, is as far from the chastening of the Lord as day is from night, since the one is from God and the other from Satan. Now, the chastening of the Lord is explained thus: the Apostle in his writing to the Hebrews (12th chap.) compares the spiritual with the fleshly, saying:--"Should we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?" It is contended, therefore, that the chastening which the sons of God must experience is a chastening of the new spiritual being, which is as yet only in its embryo, or begotten condition, and is yet to be developed. Being weak, it is sometimes overcome, but when it regains its position from the error or sin into which it had been lured, it is grieved, and as the Word declares, it is indeed chastened or corrected, causing it sorrow and pain; but which afterwards yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Having come to the Father with grief and tears, and finding grace, it returns once more to its journey, rejoicing. Having learned the lesson and being rightly exercised by its experience it is more watchful and prayerful, and in the future yields more of the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

The question is asked: Was the stoning to death of Stephen a chastening of the Lord?

Answer.--Using the word chastisement in its broad sense of trial, or trying experience, we should say, Yes. Using the word chastisement in its narrower sense of penalty or correction for wrong-doing, our answer is, No. To my understanding the chastisements of the Lord include both of the kinds you specify--not only correction when we have erred from the way --the Lord's rod and staff disciplining us,--but, also the experiences which we receive along life's pathway when we are not straying, but seeking diligently to learn the lessons necessary to our preparation for the Kingdom. The word "chastisements" and the word "corrections" amongst mankind generally carry with them the thought of previous transgressions, for which these are punishments; but this is not necessarily the limitation of thought contained in these words. As new creatures we are begotten to a new nature, which is far higher every way than our present nature; so that even if we were free from all human imperfections (and we are free to the extent that we are covered by the merit of Christ's righteousness) we would still need correction, that is, to be made right, to be made fit, to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light--the divine nature. These chastisements or corrections are in the nature of instructions and tests necessary for our development for the higher plane of life to which we have been called. Our Lord Jesus, for instance, was a son

of God, and, if a son, then, as the Apostle says, he was chastened, "for what son is he that the Father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisement,...then are ye bastards and not sons." (Heb. 12:7,8.) Our Lord Jesus was a true son, and hence had his share of chastisements. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." (Isa. 53:5.) While these chastisements and stripes were necessary for our redemption, they were necessary also to our Lord's preparation for the high station of glory, honor and immortality to which he was called. Thus we read that "he learned obedience by the things which he suffered." (Heb. 5:8.) The sufferings or chastisements or corrections were necessary to his glorification. And so it is with us, his brethren: our sins are graciously covered through the merit of his sacrifice; by faith we are accepted as every whit whole, and by faith our sacrifices are accepted, "holy, acceptable unto God." (Rom. 12:1.) Our chastisements, therefore, are not in the nature of penalties for the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh, which Jesus has graciously covered for us; but our standing as new creatures is on the perfect plane, and the majority, at least, of our chastisements, like those of the Master, our elder Brother, are disciplinary, and to the intent that we may be ultimately complete in him, meet for the "inheritance of the saints in light."

=====

SEMI-MONTHLY.
VOL. XXIV. JANUARY 15, 1903. No. 2

CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower..... 19
 Infant Damnation Still Believed..... 19
 The Bible Defended..... 20
 Meaning of Increase in Socialist
 Vote..... 21
 Roman Catholic Triumphs..... 22
 What Judge Grosscup Sees..... 22
 Depicted Horrors of Hell..... 22
 "There Were Giants in Those Days"..... 23
 "Hold Fast That Which is Good."..... 23
 "This Ignorance God Winked At."..... 27
 Our Earnest Desire..... 31

LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY
"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

--OR TO--

BRITISH BRANCH--131 GREEN ST., FOREST GATE, LONDON.

PRICE, \$1.00 (4s.) A YEAR IN ADVANCE, 5c (2-1/2d.) A COPY.
MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:--

Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER, will be supplied FREE, if
they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting
the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

=====

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

=====

R3135 : page 18

WITHDRAWAL LETTERS.

Those of our friends who have been considering the propriety
of their obedience to the call, "Come out of her, my
people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive
not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4; 2 Cor. 6:17; Psa. 50:5), may be
hesitating in the obedience because of uncertainty as to how
best to inform their congregational associates of the scriptural
reasons for their withdrawal from the nominal system. For
the benefit of these, we have on hand in good supply a form of
Withdrawal Letter, worded plainly, but kindly, and well calculated
to arouse greater interest in the same precious truths
which have made us free with "the liberty wherewith Christ
makes us free." The letter is so arranged that the addition of
signature and date makes it a personal one to all to whom it is
sent. Each member of the congregation should receive one,
with one or two appropriate tracts, enclosed in a Missionary
Envelope. We are pleased to supply free plenty of these Letters,
envelopes and tracts to serve all your friends.

TO FILL A LONG FELT WANT.

From time to time friends have enquired whether we supplied
stationery suitable for correspondence with other friends.
To meet this demand we have prepared and have now in stock

a good supply of blue bond letter paper, 8-1/2 x 11 inches, with appropriate scriptural heading. This we supply at 25c. per lb., postage 15c. extra. A pound contains a little over 100 sheets. With the Missionary Envelopes this will constitute excellent material for correspondence.

=====

R3133 : page 19

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

INFANT DAMNATION STILL BELIEVED.

THE movement for Presbyterian Creed revision, it should be remembered, is amongst those of the Northern Synods only. The Southern Presbyterians constitute a totally separate body of Presbyterians. (There is only one body of Christ.) In this connection note the following comment from the columns of the Southwestern Presbyterian in criticism of a published communication. The editorial note follows:--

"Note by the Editor in Charge.--The statement in the above communication, that 'our church as a whole doth verily believe' that it 'is taught in God's Holy Word that all infants dying in infancy were given by the Father to the Son in the councils of the Deity before the foundation of the world, as a part of the reward of his atoning sacrifice,' is wholly unwarranted. The church's belief is found, not in the deliverance of one Assembly, but in its Standards alone, and not until these are changed is any one warranted in saying that the church believes in the salvation of all infants dying in infancy. As the Standards are now, they are absolutely silent on that question, because the Scriptures are silent on it. We may hope that it is so, but the Scriptures do not declare it. When the Psalmist says: 'The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies' (Psalm 58:3), it does seem to imply the possibility that the children of the wicked perish with their parents.

"But our Standards do neither affirm or deny it. They only affirm, as the Jackson Assembly declares, that the elect who die in infancy, 'are saved in a different manner from adult persons who are capable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word,' leaving it an open question whether the children of the wicked are saved or not, inasmuch as this is one of the things of which Moses says: 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children, that we may do all the words of this law.'--Deut. 29:29."

Closely in line with the above is the following from the editorial columns of the Central Presbyterian, (Richmond, Va.):--

"Presbyterians are becoming united on the old subject of limitation of the atonement. In relation to the merciful inclination of God, it was unquestionably co-extensive with our race. In relation to his justice, it was designed for believers exclusively. The whole trouble has always been due to our incapacity to reconcile the sentiments and purposes of an infinite being. The Bible does not confound them. It assures us that 'God does not willingly afflict' his people, and yet he does afflict them. Of course, he may unwillingly destroy his enemies. But we cannot comprehend such facts, any more than the modes of divine justice."

These editors, be it remembered, are advanced thinkers, too, as compared with the masses of their readers. How sadly they lack the "key of knowledge!" (Luke 11:52.) Referring to the Scripture quotations of the first (Psa. 58:3.): how evident it is that it is true--that heredity marks everybody, more or less, from birth! The difficulty is a certain theological theory, which has no Scripture foundation--which claims that every infant is immortal and that the present life, long or short, favorable or unfavorable, constitutes the only chance ever to be enjoyed for reforming character and becoming fit for a happy eternity, and hence that children of the wicked, conceived and born in sin and depravity (as are all mankind, more or less), are unprepared for an eternity of bliss, and, hence, must spend that eternity without bliss--in pain and horrors. Grant the false premise and it does not take long to reach this conclusion. But let these same reasonable men rid their minds of the false premise and go by Scripture alone, and they would have no difficulty in

R3133 : page 20

reaching a reasonable and Scriptural view of the subject. They should note that no infants are born immortal, but that the truth is as the Scriptures declare, God "only hath immortality." Then they will be prepared to see that death does not mean life; and that destroy does not mean preserve: that when God declared, "All the wicked will he destroy," he meant it. When he declared, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," he meant it. The penalty upon father Adam and through him upon all his race is a death penalty; and children and all die because of Adam's sin (Rom. 5:12); and the worst, therefore, that could befall the children of the wicked would be--death.

Now, then, what is the Scriptural hope for the children of the wicked? We answer that it is exactly the same as for the children of the saints, viz., that Christ Jesus our Lord tasted death for every man when he tasted death for Adam; because all were under Adam's

sentence of condemnation to death. It was one man's sin of disobedience that brought the penalty upon all; and, consequently, the ransom of the one was the ransom of all; as it is written: "He is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the Church's sins], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The children of the wicked were, therefore, redeemed in the most absolute sense;--from the entire condemnation of death. Indeed, none but sinners were redeemed, for "Christ died for the ungodly;" --all are ungodly, all sinners; hence, all die, and all need to be redeemed, else they would have no hope of a resurrection.

In the Millennium (the resurrection age) infants of believers would have a little the start of infants of unbelievers, in that they will have less depraved organisms when awakened; but under the grand raising-up processes then at work, such disadvantages would soon be overcome, and all will be brought to a full knowledge of the truth and to full opportunities for complete restitution (Acts 3:19-23) back to all that was lost by father Adam for himself and all his posterity. In that day it shall no more be a proverb that the fathers ate a sour grape [sin] and all the children's teeth are set on edge; for then "every man [who shall die] shall die for his own iniquity"--"the soul [person] that sinneth it shall die."--Ezek. 18:2,4; Jer. 31:29,30.

How reasonable are God's ways! and how plainly they are stated in the Word,--for those who have the eye and ear of faith;--to those who are hearkening to the divine Word rather than to the creeds of the dark ages.

In respect to the second quotation: It shows how confusing and unsatisfactory error is to its warmest votaries. Honest minds and good hearts strive in vain to reconcile the idea of justice and good sentiments and purposes with the creating of millions of creatures with the foreknowledge that for any cause their existence would be everlasting misery,--torture. The marvel is that intelligent men will stick to such inconsistencies --simply because they are old and hoary. Why is it that they cannot go back to the still older theory of the Bible,--beautiful, simple, reasonable, grand? Is it because Satan is blinding them with fear;--fear that good, reasonable, just thoughts toward God and interpretations of his Word are delusions of the Adversary? Ah, yes; the Lord foresaw it all, and declares, "Their fear toward me [is not of me; I have neither done nor said anything to merit such sentiments, but] is taught by the precept of men."--Isa. 29:13.

THE BIBLE DEFENDED BY PROF. G. F. WRIGHT, LL.D.

"Since the Bible is a revelation through the medium of human language it must be interpreted in accordance with accepted literary standards. It is addressed to persons who are supposed to have ordinary

R3134 : page 20

understanding and common sense, and who can justly be expected to give it the treatment which would be considered fair in the interpretation of any other literary document. The interest in the Bible is largely kept up by the fact that it is so varied in form that it never becomes monotonous. We find in it not only history, biography and genealogies, but poetry, parables, fables, highly-wrought rhetorical addresses and appeals and prophetic forecasts of the future.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE GENERAL.

"One of the most important rules of interpretation is that ordinary language should be interpreted according to the known nature of the subject. It is always assumed that the person addressed has a considerable amount of knowledge which can be made the basis of instruction and further enlargement. This can be illustrated by an analysis of almost any sentence which can be written. When, for an example, the word 'Bring' is used, it has a wide latitude of possible meaning, which is limited in each instance by the implied but unexpressed conditions known to the speaker and the person addressed. If it is said, Bring me the book, the book will be brought by main force. If the judge says, Bring in the prisoner, the sheriff will come in with the prisoner walking at his side, impelled only by such show of force as is necessary to overcome the reluctance of the prisoner's will. If a mother says to her son, Bring your friend home with you to tea, he would be a very strange boy who should think that, in order to obey the command, he must take his friend up in his arms and carry him, or gird on a sword and pistol to compel attendance. By a simple invitation he will accomplish the purpose. All the force necessary is that which will accomplish the object.

"No greater mistake can be made in the interpretation of language than always to insist upon the strictly literal or etymological meaning of the words.

R3134 : page 21

All language is more or less figurative. Words come to mean what usage and the context put into them and make them mean. For example, the word 'manufacture' literally means made by hand--that being the

significance of the Latin words composing it. But now hardly anything is made by hand. Yet we still go on speaking of manufacturing all sorts of goods and wares.

"A hundred years ago the coats we wore were literally manufactured. The wool was shorn from the sheep by hand, and our grandmothers carded it into rolls, spun it into yarn and wove it into cloth by hand. Now, on the contrary, the wool is shorn from sheep's backs in Australia by a machine, and is dumped into steamers by great hoisting apparatus, and unloaded at Liverpool in the same manner, and is thence transported by rail to one end of a great 'manufactory,' so called, where it is delivered over to machinery of various and complicated character, which turns it out at the other end cloth ready made for the tailor. He would be a dull interpreter and a carping critic, who should insist that any one who said that this cloth was manufactured by Jonas Barnes & Co., must be supposed to mean that Jonas Barnes & Co. actually made the cloth by hand. Everybody knows that Jonas Barnes can be correctly said to manufacture all the cloth that comes out of his manufactory, even though he does nothing but sit in his office and issue commands. For it is a well known principle of interpretation that a person is properly said to do whatever he accomplishes by his agents. General Grant captured General Lee at Appomattox, though he did not himself fire a gun, and was far in the rear of the army when the actual capture was made. But he is properly said to have done whatever was accomplished by the army which he directed.

BIBLE LANGUAGE FIGURATIVE.

"Applying these and other similar principles to the interpretation of the Bible will at once relieve its writers of a great number of absurd charges of ignorance and inconsistency, and unfold a profound, harmonious and exalted conception of nature which may well command the admiration of all classes who are privileged to read and study it.

"The poetical imagery which describes the attributes and actions of the Creator is so bold and striking that it would seem impossible for any person of common sense to degrade it to the low level of mere literality. When the sacred writer speaks of the Lord as accomplishing something 'by the strength of his right arm,' or of his 'causing his face to shine upon us,' it would seem impossible that any person of ordinary experience in the use of language should insist that these expressions necessarily implied that the Divine Being exists in human form and actually has a face and arms and fingers like a man, even though the Psalmist does speak of the heavens as 'the work of God's fingers.' With equal reason the mere literalist would have to say that the Psalmist thought the

Lord had feathers and wings, since it is said that he shall cover those that trust him 'with his feathers,' and shelter them 'under his wings,' while a little before in this same Psalm (Psalm 90) it is represented that the Almighty has a 'shadow' under which his children may abide.

"All this emphasizes the fact that human nature has remained practically unchanged from the beginning. The use of language, which is the most characteristic peculiarity of man, has been practically the same in all ages. In early times, as in the present, men knew how to use figurative and rhetorical language, so as to make it effective, and it is altogether probable that they had that knowledge of the nature of things derived from the ordinary experiences of life, which we call commonsense, and which enabled them to understand that when God is spoken of as their 'Sun' and 'Shield' and 'Strong Tower' the words conveyed an exalted spiritual significance far richer and fuller than their mere literal meaning.

"When, therefore, we approach those portions of the Bible which deal more directly and specifically with the constitution of the universe and the creation of the world, we need not be surprised to find language used in the manner which is fitted to give us a most exalted conception of the significance of the facts without either tying us down to the dull literal meaning of words or necessarily conveying false conceptions to sincere and thoughtful inquirers."

MEANING OF BIG INCREASE IN THE SOCIALIST VOTE.

We clip the following extracts from the Chicago Record-Herald:--

"No one thing in the recent election attracted more attention than the great increase in the Socialist vote. People of all classes have been asking one another, What does it mean? What was the cause which led 300,000 people to give their votes for the principles of Socialism, and what does it portend for the future? The most diverse interpretations have been put upon it. To some it is a threatened danger, to others a promise of hope. All admit that from now on Socialism will be a factor that must be dealt with in the political struggles of America. A party which holds 300,000 votes and elects five members to the legislature in Montana, and three in Massachusetts, and comes close to election in a large number of other places, and unlike the Populist party and most other so-called minor parties, it shows no tendency to concentration in special localities, and is certain to be a force worthy of consideration.

"This sudden growth does not owe its origin wholly to the active propaganda which has been carried

on. On the contrary, the growth of this propaganda is in itself almost as much a sign of the growth of the conditions which produce Socialism as it is the cause of the Socialist vote....

ENTERS TRADES UNIONS.

"One of the most striking phases of its recent development has been its sudden growth among the trades unions. Everyone who has paid the slightest attention to events in the labor world must have noticed the marvelous increase in the membership and strength of organized labor. But step by step with this growth in the size and power of the unions has gone a corresponding increase of the Socialist sentiment within those unions. The declaration of the 150,000 members of the American Labor Union for Socialism at their convention in Denver a few months

R3134 : page 22

ago and the close vote at the American Federation of Labor at New Orleans much more recently are two instances in point.

"The Socialist party, therefore, arises as a distinctly class party. It does not arise as a result of preaching class hatred, as its enemies would declare, but arises because capitalism has developed class antagonisms. So far from seeking to perpetuate class hatred, the Socialist party is the only party which distinctly sets itself about abolishing the class antagonisms which give rise to class hatred by the only possible means--the abolition of the economic antagonisms from which these classes arise....

GREAT GAINS EXPECTED.

"The Socialist party may be expected to make tremendously rapid gains within the next few years because of the fact that the extremely rapid evolution to which reference was previously made has caused the economic development of this country to run far ahead of the propaganda movement of Socialism. The economic development has now made the interest of the mass of workers identical with the aims and objects of the Socialist party. It only remains for the propagandists of Socialism to point out and demonstrate this fact to this mass of workers to secure their support. This it is doing at a very rapid rate. The circulation of its publications is growing at an almost astounding rate, while the number of agitators grows even faster.

"Moreover, there is this which differentiates the Socialist party from every other party, in that practically every member is a propagandist and the work of carrying on campaigns is not left to the party machine.

For these reasons the rapid growth of Socialism in the last election is but a foretaste of what the future will bring forth."

* * *

The German Kaiser has just surrendered to the Agrarian party, and, contrary to his preference, has agreed to a tariff on food;--to escape the Socialist dilemma and preserve the farming element as his friends.

ROMAN CATHOLIC TRIUMPHS.

A prominent Protestant writer and church historian, Dr. Kolde, discussing the recent progress of Romanism, in the Neue Kirchliche Leitschrift (Leipsic), says:--

"Few people, and only those who study modern facts in the light of church history, have any appreciation of the phenomenal advance made by the Catholic Church during the last decades, especially as a power in the political world and in the conquests of new spheres of thought and life. It is by no means a pleasant thing for Protestants to contemplate; but it is an undeniable fact that not since the days of Innocent III. has the papal system unfolded such splendor and power as in the present time. Not the Catholic princes, but rather the Protestant rulers are the ones who are trying to surpass each other in honoring the shrewd sage now occupying the throne in the Vatican, although it is this same sage who has repeatedly called the Reformation a 'pest.'

"In other respects the church has grown phenomenally. Each year the number of those who swell the ranks of the religious orders grows by the thousands, and in the German empire alone there are now 40,000 of these. Not since the days of the Reformation have these orders, especially of the Jesuits, developed the strength they evince in our days. The Catholics control the parliaments and they make our laws, and in countries like Germany, where church and state are united, they even pass the laws regulating the affairs of the Protestant church. With every day the principle is gaining more and more ground that it is not ability and efficiency, but the attitude toward the Catholic Church, that opens the way for candidates for positions in the state service. The statesmen of Europe are largely and in many cases mostly influenced in their international politics by the views that may prevail in the Vatican; and what is

more remarkable, that which the ambitious Innocent III. failed to attain, and that against which even Catholic princes and bishops have constantly protested, namely, the assigning of the position of judge on international difficulties to the Pope--this has been first voluntarily yielded to the Vatican by the leading Protestant powers of Europe, Prussia and Germany, the former of these also having been the first to recognize the Curia as a political power on equal footing with other powers, by sending an ambassador to the Vatican."

WHAT JUDGE GROSSCUP SEES.

"It is certain that, as never before in our history, there are several millions of men and women brought up in the industrial trades who are now without property interest in the trades they follow. No less a man than Webster said that the freest of governments will not long be acceptable if the tendency of the laws be to create a rapid accumulation of property in a few hands, rendering a majority of the population dependent.

"If this be true, it has come about that the same years which brought us riches and greatness as a nation have brought with them an internal disorder, which, if allowed to go on, will endanger the stability of the government itself."--Judge Grosscup at Lincoln, Neb. Dec. 15, '02.

DEPICTED HORRORS OF HELL.

London, Dec. 7.--A dispatch from Rome to the Daily Mail says:--

"A scene, which few who witnessed will ever forget, was enacted at the Church of San Carlo Alle Mortelle, in Naples, today. A sermon was preached on 'Hell.' The priest in charge arranged a realistic accompaniment to the preacher's words, and had men concealed in various parts of the church. Some were in the sacristy, some in the confessionals, and others behind the altars. The church was darkened. The preacher depicted in vivid colors the horrors of hell. At proper moments there were flashes of blood-red light, and the concealed men rattled chains, screamed,

R3135 : page 23

howled and made other hideous noises, supposed to typify the torture of the damned. The congregation was largely composed of the ignorant and peasant class. They are superstitious to a degree. The performance

was entirely too realistic for them.

"Women began to get hysterical, laughed, cried and screamed. Soon the entire congregation was in the throes of abject terror. Men, cowering with fear, ran to the doors, burst them open and fled. Panic then seized all, and a terrific rush was made to the streets. Women and children fainted with fright. Men and women fought like beasts to escape. Many were injured, some seriously. The police were called, but the affair had ended. A police order has been issued preventing any further sermons on 'Hell' with such terrible trimmings."

"THERE WERE GIANTS IN THOSE DAYS."

"Who is J. Pierpont Morgan? He is not only the world's king of finance today, but the greatest financier in all history.

"He has a voice in the control of properties capitalized at \$6,488,500,000--more wealth than was ever before in the hands of one man. This amount is greater by over \$1,000,000,000 than the entire annual revenue of the 43 principal nations of the world. It is greater by almost \$2,000,000,000 than all the world's gold, coined and uncoined. It is greater by almost \$6,000,000,000 than the gold coin and gold certificates in the United States treasury, and the amount (\$550,000,000) in that treasury at present is unprecedented.

"As the head of the world-wide transportation trust, with 16 steamship lines and 44 railroad systems, with 300 of the largest steamships and 30,000 passenger and freight trains, the two branches representing a land mileage of 108,500 and a sea tonnage of 12,000,000, he is the grand stage-driver and ferryman of the world.

"He is, says the World, the one man on earth whose life has been insured by English investors and speculators for \$2,000,000 who paid therefor a premium of 9 per cent. The same fraternity insured the life of Queen Victoria for \$2,000,000."--Banking World.

=====

R3135 : page 23

"HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14-28--JANUARY 25.--

OUR LESSON is a summary statement of the proper attitude for the Lord's people to maintain in order that they may grow in grace and through faithfulness finally come off conquerors through their

Redeemer. Although addressed to the saints at Thessalonica, these noble words have been a source of strength, encouragement and discipline to the faithful in Christ Jesus from their writing to the present time. No child of God can afford to ignore nor to neglect these words of divine counsel, and in proportion as each of us gives heed to them our lives will surely be the more Christ-like, and we will thus be the more pleasing to the Lord, and eventually make our calling and election sure to joint-heirship with him in the Millennial Kingdom,

R3136 : page 23

and its glories and its service to the world of mankind. Let us take up these apostolic injunctions seriatim.

Not the elders alone are exhorted by the Apostle, as though they were a separate class, exercising control and treating the brethren as their wards; he addresses the "brethren"--the entire Church, including the sisters also. But this does not signify that the counsel would not apply specially to the elders; because they were selected as amongst the brethren most advanced in Christian doctrine and practice, and as the representatives of the Church, to specially look after the interests of the Lord's flock. These apostolic words apply to each member of the flock in proportion to his capacity and ability, but would naturally come with special force to the elders who, under God's providence, had the oversight of his Church, "to feed the flock." (Acts 20:28.) While, therefore, all the brethren are to see to the carrying out of the injunctions here given, the elders in every Church should feel a special responsibility respecting them--a responsibility derived from the position they occupy as representatives of the Church,--its standard-bearers.

The unruly are here contrasted with the feeble-minded or faint-hearted and the weak. The divine arrangement is full of order as well as full of liberty; and, rightly understood, liberty can best be conserved by order; and order best be maintained through a reasonable recognition of personal liberty. The mistake frequently made, not only by earthly law-givers and disciplinarians, but also in the Church of Christ, is along the line of extremes, either in one or the other of these directions. Some misunderstand liberty to mean lawlessness, disorder, unruliness. Others with equally good intentions, no doubt, are disposed to carry order and obedience to rules to such an extent as to dwarf the individual liberties of the flock. Great grace is needed along this line, to prevent friction amongst the Lord's people--to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of love and peace.

We are not to have such false ideas of personal liberty as would ignore rules, law, order, in the assemblies of the Lord's people; and those disposed to be

unruly, self-conscious, thrusting themselves forward, without the request of the Church, need to be held in check--to be "warned"--to be shown that their course is contrary to the spirit of the Lord and all the arrangements instituted by the apostles, his representatives. They need to be "warned" also that their course would mean injury to the Church, instead of blessing and peace

R3136 : page 24

and joy and development; and injury to themselves, in that it would develop in them a combativeness or self-esteem, already too large, and might thus not only work injury to the cause, but hinder themselves from attaining the character-likeness necessary to a share in the Kingdom.

But while some might need thus to be warned and held in check, others, faint-hearted and weak, would need aid, support, encouragement;--naturally backward, diffident, lacking in combativeness and self-esteem, they need to be pushed to the front a little, in order to bring out what talents they really possess, for their own encouragement and for the blessing also of the entire household of faith.

"Be patient toward all" seems to imply that the better balanced amongst the Lord's people should look with sympathy upon and exercise patient forbearance toward the classes above mentioned;--not only toward the weak and those who lack courage, but toward all; including those who have too much courage and self-push. The Scriptures repeatedly admonish us, "Ye have need of patience," and day by day the advanced children of the Lord realize the truthfulness of this, and come to appreciate patience as one of the chief Christian graces. (1) Growth in knowledge helps us to grow in this grace of patience, for as we appreciate more and more the heavenly Father's patience with us it helps us to apply the same principle toward others. (2) As we come to realize the great disaster that is upon our race as a whole--our fallen condition and how the fall has affected some more in one manner and others more in another--some chiefly mentally, some chiefly physically, and some chiefly morally, it enlarges our sympathy toward our fellow-creatures, and thus increases our patience in dealing with them. This is particularly true in respect to the household of faith, in which we recognize amongst those whom God has graciously called, some more blemished, perhaps, than ourselves in some particulars--though we may be more imperfect in others. The thought that our heavenly Father has favored and called anyone should make us extremely careful how we would co-operate with the Lord in respect to the call, and be as helpful as possible to all those who are seeking to walk with us in the footsteps of our Lord in the narrow way. We certainly should have special patience, therefore, with the brethren.

--Rom. 14:15; 1 Cor. 8:11.

"See that none render evil for evil unto any."

This exhortation has a special force when we remember how much evil treatment was heaped upon the followers of our Lord at that time; and that the writer himself, as well as those specially addressed, had suffered much on account of their faithfulness in dispensing the Word of the Lord, the Word of life, the good tidings. The exhortation means that the Lord's followers are not to attempt to retaliate upon their enemies by doing them evil in return, or in any manner to "get even with them." The Lord's exhortation is that we seek to render good in return for the evil we receive, and includes our language as well as our conduct, we are not to give word for word, railing for railing, accusation for accusation, slander for slander any more than blow for blow. It includes also our very thoughts, for we are not even to render anger for anger, malice for malice, envy for envy. Two evils can never make a good--two wrongs will never make a right. Our sympathy for our blinded enemies is to cultivate our patience and forbearance toward them in thought, word and deed.--1 Pet. 2:21-23.

The Lord's people, so far from ever turning aside to render railing for railing or evil for evil, are uniformly to "pursue that which is good"--that which is right, that which the Lord approves. This will mean that each member of the Royal Priesthood will pursue righteousness to the extent of his ability--pursue every good and noble sentiment, and seek to live as nearly as possible up to the high standard of righteousness, perfection, exemplified absolutely in our Lord. This pursuit of goodness is to be maintained not only amongst the brethren, where all are professing the same pursuit, but also toward others--in our dealings with the world. Some of the world can learn more of the gospel through witnessing our avoidance of evil and our constant pursuit of righteousness, than by anything we can say to them;--and possibly as they discern the new life in us they may gradually come to have "an ear to hear" the message of good tidings which has wrought this change in us.

The worldly spirit does not approve this part of the Apostle's counsel, but urges, rather, that we should treat others as they treat us--that we should "give as good as we get,"--meaning that we should give as bad as we get. By way of saying as good a word as they can in their own favor along these lines they sometimes accuse the Lord's followers of cowardice. Courage is one of the noble qualities of humanity, and it is quite a trial to some to be considered timid or lacking in courage; and to such this enjoined restraint of word and act is a particular trial. It is not true, however, that the Lord's counsel tends to effeminacy or lack of courage. This matter is well stated in the language of another, as follows:--

"One feature which stands out clear in the society founded by Christ and his apostles is the extraordinary heroism which was shown in the face of death and tortures, not only by men, but by feeble women and tender children. It amazed the heathen magistrates who were striving after fortitude by the aid of philosophy. It amazed the wild savages, who mistook gentleness for

R3136 : page 25

cowardice, when they found it was harder to terrify the missionary who came with the Gospel than the invader who came in battle array. Quiet endurance may be more heroic than violent resistance, and the Christian law of bearing personal insults and injuries meekly tends to the development of the highest courage and truest manliness. There is nothing more courageous, more heroic, in all history than living up to this precept."

"Rejoice evermore" is the same exhortation that in our last lesson we saw the Apostle sending to the Philippians. The Christian's rejoicing is not hysterical, but founded on established principles, upon promises and comforting assurances of the divine Word which stands firm amid all the storms and trials and shocks of life.

"Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." Only somewhat advanced pupils in the School of Christ are prepared clearly to comprehend this exhortation. Having surrendered their wills and all of the interests of the present life to the Lord, exchanging earthly interests for heavenly interests, the Lord's people are less disposed than others to pray unceasingly for earthly good things. Having set their affections on things above, their prayers are in respect to those things,--the heavenly robe, the heavenly food, the heavenly favor. Their prayers are specially for such leadings of divine providence and such assistance of divine grace as will enable them to rejoice always in such experiences as their gracious Lord may deem best for their spiritual development. More and more they find their prayers to consist of thanksgiving for blessings already received, as well as for those yet to come, which they grasp by the hand of faith.

Their prayers are without ceasing, in that, having the condition of heart which is in fellowship with the Lord and fully devoted to the doing of his will, they not only implore his blessing at the beginning of each

R3137 : page 25

day, and present their thanks at the close of each day, but in all of life's affairs they seek to remember that they have consecrated their all to the Lord, and by faith look up to him in all of the affairs of life;--and in proportion to the importance of their undertakings

they, by faith, realize the association of God's providence with all the interests of life and give thanks accordingly. This is the will of God concerning us;-- he wills that we live in such an attitude of constant regard for his will and for his blessing;--and he wills it in respect to us because it will be the condition most favorable to our progress in the narrow way, and which will best assist us in making our calling and election sure.

Having stated succinctly the Church's proper attitude toward the Lord to be one of continued rejoicing, prayer and thanksgiving and acceptance of his divine providences, the Apostle next briefly admonishes them respecting their attitude toward each other in the Church, in their feasting together on the Word of the Lord;--saying,

"Quench not the Spirit.

"Despise not prophesyings.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

"Abstain from every form of evil."

By following these admonitions, their fellowship in the Lord would be the more profitable--they would, as a congregation of the Lord's followers, be helped onward the more toward the grand standard to which we are called. The spirit of the Lord amongst his people is compared to "a flame of sacred love" for the Lord and all connected with his cause: this flame is enkindled through the divine message in each one individually, when begotten of the holy spirit, and appertains, therefore, to the Church collectively, under the guidance of that spirit. In proportion as the church grows in knowledge and in love and in fellowship with the Lord this "flame of sacred love" will make it a light in the world,--as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. This is a different figure from the use of fire as a symbol of destruction.

True, the flame of sacred love does not consume and destroy sin, but sympathy with sin; sin is not a part of the new creature, which opposes it and desires to have it consumed,--that the light of righteousness and truth may shine the more brightly. This "flame of sacred love" may, indeed, consume our mortal bodies, as living sacrifices in the service of the truth; but with such a consumption the new mind is fully in accord, and rejoices, realizing that it has in heaven an enduring habitation, and counting it all joy to be reckoned worthy to suffer for the Lord's cause. The more this "flame of sacred love" burns, individually and collectively in the Church, the greater will be the progress in all good things. Hence we are to be specially on guard, that our words and conduct and the general management of the interests of Zion in our midst shall permit this spirit of love to have free course in all our hearts and lives--that it be not quenched either with false doctrines or forms and ceremonies, or too rigid rules or by worldly spirit or by cares of this

life or by any other thing, circumstance or condition under our control.

The Church is not to despise prophesyings: the Apostle does not mean that we are not to despise the prophecies of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit--it would be unnecessary to caution the Church on that subject. The exhortation is, not to despise prophesyings that may be done in our midst. As we have previously seen, the gift of prophecy in the sense of foretelling coming events was to some extent in the Church in the Apostle's day, as one of the gifts of the spirit, to mark out

R3137 : page 26

the Lord's people and to assist in establishing them at a time when the inspired messages of the Lord were unavailable. We find, however, that the Apostle frequently used this word "prophecy" in respect to public utterance, declamation, preaching. The early churches were accustomed to having general gatherings for their mutual assistance and upbuilding, and may have been in danger of thinking more of the gifts of miracles and tongues than of connected and logical discourse respecting the truth. The Apostle points out that without discarding the other blessings, this one should not be despised--our Lord was a preacher; the apostles were preachers, and the Lord has since raised up instructors amongst his people. Hence, such service should not be despised or ignored.

We live in a time when the very reverse of this is true; when the danger is rather that too much time and too much attention may be given to preaching, and not sufficient to the other methods of inculcating truth and encouraging the Lord's flock, "edifying and building up yourselves in the most holy faith"--when too much reliance is apt to be placed upon a leader and a connected discourse.

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." However much they should ever come to respect prophesyings, or public preaching, the Lord's people should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without proper examination and criticism: they should prove all things that they hear, should exercise discrimination of mind, as to what is logically and scripturally supported, and what is mere conjecture and possibly sophistry. They should prove what they hear, with a view to holding fast everything that stands the test of the divine Word, and shows itself to be in accordance with the holy spirit; and they should as promptly and thoroughly reject whatever will not stand these tests. Alas! the Lord's people today greatly need to give attention to this exhortation; for much is being presented in the name of the Lord and as the teaching of his Word that is neither logical nor scriptural--that is supported neither by the letter

nor the spirit of the Word;--much that is not good, and should be rejected. With such a discrimination prevailing amongst the Lord's consecrated ones, how much of the chaff of nominal "orthodoxy" would be rejected, and what a hungering and thirsting and searching there soon would be for the good Word of God, that would stand these tests! Let us diligently heed the Apostle's exhortation on this point.

"Abstain from every form of evil" (Rev. Ver.) gives the Apostle's thought. There are various evils which present themselves; some in their true hideousness, and some under a cloak of hypocrisy--some openly and boldly admitting their evil character and endeavoring to decoy the Lord's people into sin; others, garbing themselves as angels of light, would seek to mislead and to deceive. The exhortation is that everything that is evil, whether it have a good form or a bad form, is to be resisted and opposed. We may not say with some, "Let us do evil that good may follow." The Lord's people must be loyal to the principles of righteousness, under any and all circumstances. To do otherwise would be surely to undermine the character which they are seeking to build up.

To abstain from every appearance of evil is another thought--a different one from what the Apostle's words in the original would warrant; nevertheless, they represent a sound principle. We surely should abstain not only from evil things, whatever their form or garb, but we should abstain so far as possible from doing things that we know to be good, which our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider to be evil things. The spirit of a sound mind dictates that not only evil in its every form, but everything that has an evil appearance, even, should be avoided--that our influence for the Lord and the truth may be the greater.

In closing, the Apostle pronounces his benediction. It is an invocation--the expression of his heart's desire on their behalf--that the God of peace would sanctify them wholly. He thus emphasizes the fact that God is not a God of confusion, anarchy, turmoil and disturbance, but a God of peace; and that in proportion as we are taught of him in the School of Christ we will become lovers of peace, and the peace of God will dwell in us and will abound in us more and more, and cause us to be not unfruitful in regard to holy character, and will make us advocates and promoters of peace in our words and deeds. As it is written, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Peace in the heart, manifesting itself in the look and word and conduct, is, as the Apostle intimates, an evidence of whole or complete setting apart, and that God's spirit has come into such a sanctified heart and is filling it with his peace, the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

"And may your spirit, soul and body be preserved

entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (R.V.) The Apostle could mean this only in respect to the Church, as a whole, and not concerning the individual members; because he surely did not expect the Christians at Thessalonica without exception to live until the presence of the Lord, even as he did not himself expect to live until that time, and so declared. (2 Tim. 4:7,8; 2 Pet. 1:12-15.) The Apostle is not, therefore, to be understood as speaking of the spirit and soul and body of each individual Christian at Thessalonica, but respecting the spirit of the Church,

R3137 : page 27

the soul of the Church, and the body of the Church. In other words, his desire was that the Church at Thessalonica might continue to the full end of the Gospel age as a noble and faithful congregation of the Lord's body, full of his spirit and courageous in his work. As a matter of fact, we know that the Apostle's good wishes, or prayer did not come true; for this congregation, like the others he planted, died out: not heeding with sufficient care his injunctions and exhortations, not proving all things, not holding fast the good, not abstaining from evil, not being sanctified wholly, the spirit of the Lord in their midst was quenched, and as a congregation it died, or ceased to be--the light having

R3138 : page 27

blessed and confirmed some, passed on to other quarters, seeking those "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."*

"Faithful is he that called you, who will also do it." The fact that the Thessalonica Church has not been kept in accordance with the Apostle's prayer, is not to be charged to unfaithfulness on God's part, but to neglect and unfaithfulness on the part of those whom the Apostle addressed, or their successors in that congregation. So it is with every one of us who has been called of the Lord. It is for us to hear and to heed the Lord's message through his servants, if we would make our calling and our election sure. If not disposed to hear his message in the way he has sent it, the fault lies at our own door. Faithful is he who called us, who would rejoice to do for us abundantly better things than we could ask or think, if we accept his provisions in faith and follow the directions of his Word.

"Brethren, pray for us." There was nothing of the pope or lord about the Apostle--no feeling of such a superiority to the others of the Lord's flock that he could pray for them to their advantage, but needed not their prayers. Similar is the spirit of all who are in the proper relationship with the Lord--a spirit of humility and appreciation of all the household of faith, and of their petitions at the throne of grace--a realization that

the humblest of the Lord's people has access to the throne of heavenly grace, and may there obtain mercy and find strength to help in every time of need.

"Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss." This was the ancient style of greeting, corresponding to our present style of saluting with the hand or with the hat or by shaking hands. The custom of men kissing each other is still followed in eastern countries. The Apostle's thought is that there should be thorough cordiality amongst all who claim membership in the body of Christ, and that this fellowship should be manifested by the accustomed form of greeting,--whatever reasonable form that might be. Possibly he meant--"I greet," etc., implying that he would love to be with them and greet them personally, and now did so by letter.

Before invoking the Lord's blessing upon the Church, the Apostle charged most strongly that this epistle should not be considered as a private message or letter to those in whose care it was sent, but that it should be considered as his address to the entire company of the Lord's faithful, and should be read to them all. The Apostle seemed to fear that there might be a spirit of censorship amongst the leading brethren which might lead them to preserve his letter to themselves, and to dole it out second-hand to the Church, either as a whole or such parts of it as in their judgment would be prudent. Such a spirit on the part of the elders in any Church would be reprehensible. God's Word is for God's people, and whoever would hinder its flow would surely offend the Master himself. That the elders at Thessalonica were faithful is apparent from the fact that the epistle was delivered to the Church. Some today need caution along this same line: many preachers and teachers have discerned in The Plan of the Ages the light of the Millennial dawn, but, instead of heralding it to others, have sought to hide it from the Lord's people that they might use it as a personal illuminant to cause themselves to shine before their flocks. They consider this cunning,--"wise and prudent,"--forgetting that the Lord declares that he hides his deep things from the wise and prudent and reveals them unto babes. (Luke 10:21.) True to our Lord's words, this class rarely makes much progress;--the truth passes on and ere long they are in comparative darkness;--because they received not the truth in the love of it, but in the love of self. (2 Thess. 2:10.) Loyalty to the Lord and to his flock and to his Truth, through whatever channel it comes, demands that it shall be heralded by each of us to the extent of our ability and in its purity and as speedily as possible,--consistent with the condition and interests of those for whom the Lord intended it--his flock. Shepherds who feed themselves and not the flock are warned by the Lord of his displeasure, and could not be expected to thrive spiritually, or otherwise to enjoy the light of the Lord's face.-- Ezek. 34:2,7-10.

*What is the Soul, What is the Spirit, and What is the Body
of Man? is treated in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. V., chaps. 8 and 12.

=====
R3138 : page 27

"THIS IGNORANCE GOD WINKED AT."

--ACTS 17:22-34--FEBRUARY 1.--

Golden Text--"He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection."

PERSECUTION followed the Apostle to Berea, where we, in a previous lesson, left him teaching a very noble class of inquiring and searching minds. His enemies in Thessalonica discovered his whereabouts, and at once began to create a disturbance --no doubt believing that thus they were doing God service. The Apostle's own experience as a persecutor of the body of Christ must have helped him to

R3138 : page 28

very charitable views of those who so viciously pursued him. The evidences of coming trouble were so strong that the Berean friends feared to have him embark at a regular port, at which he might have been recognized, and the direction of his journey anticipated, and thus prejudices might have gone with him or before him into new fields; they, therefore, secretly hastened him to the near seashore where he obtained coastwise shipping for Athens. The Apostle, as the chief spokesman, "drew the fire" of his enemies to such an extent that their hatred seems to have been confined to him alone--not affecting Silas, his companion, nor Timothy, at this time his assistant or servant. The latter two were left behind, to strengthen and encourage the believers, whose faith already had been established.

Under these circumstances the Apostle arrived at Athens, once the world's capital in every sense of the word; but still its capital in respect to science and art and theology and schools of general instruction--its commercial and political influence having gone to Rome with the imperial control. To Athens came the youth of wealthy families of the world, and many others possessed of a special craving for wisdom,--to avail themselves of the teachers, studies and lectures--practically the only means of instruction at that time.

Without a miracle no other one of the apostles would have been competent to secure a hearing before the Athenian Council of the Areopagites--composed of the teachers of the various schools of learning, and generally

speaking, of the reputedly wisest men of the world. That the Apostle Paul, without letters of introduction, without political or other influence, serving as such, should succeed in a few days in obtaining an invitation to address this august body of men, indicates clearly that he was a man of remarkable talent, as well as learning. These natural qualities in him were reinforced by the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the divine revelation, the true Gospel. The Apostle lost no time in beginning his special work: true, he first made a general inspection of the chief features of the city's attractions, noting its numerous public statues to the gods, whose number Pliny gives as over three thousand in the time of Nero. It was while making this inspection of the city and considering how best he could launch the gospel message there, that his attention was drawn to one altar erected "To the Unknown God." He kept this as a text for his principal effort when the time should be ripe, and meantime, as usual, he began his ministry by going into the Jewish synagogues; but apparently finding little interest here he resorted to the public squares and markets, and discussed religious topics with the numerous students and others who gathered there.

Amongst those who heard him were some of a cynical turn of mind who said, Let us listen to what this babbler is saying; the word "babbler" signifying seed-picker, inferentially meaning that the Apostle had gained a mere smattering of knowledge, picked up some seeds of thought from others of the great teachers, and was now attempting to set himself up as a teacher. Others, disposed to persecute, said, He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods;--for to set forth any strange gods in Athens was a crime, it being held that they already had them in plenty, and that to admit that any one could present a new god of which the Athenian teachers knew nothing, would be an insult to their learning and evidently a fraud. This, together with the Apostle's talents, secured for him a hearing before the Areopagites, or Council of the Learned. It was this Council which had the power to sentence to death anyone who should attempt to set forth strange gods in Athens; and hence the Apostle's hearing before them was probably, more or less, in the nature of a trial for life, because he had been preaching Jesus--an unheard-of god amongst the Athenians up to this time--and the resurrection.

The Apostle's theme is worthy of our notice. Under the divine guidance he seemed to have a way of approaching the pith of the gospel most directly, and these words of our Golden Text, "Jesus and the resurrection," really embraced the whole of the gospel preached. The world, under divine sentence, was dead or dying: the redemption price, our Lord's ransom sacrifice, had just been paid, and the hope to be built upon his work and to be announced to the people was the resurrection of the

dead--that our Lord's death was the purchase price for the sins of the whole world, and that as a result, in God's due time, an awakening of the dead shall

R3139 : page 28

come, and eventually the full raising up to the perfection of life of all who will accept the Redeemer as their leader and guide. This is the gospel which should still be preached, but which, by reason of various errors that crept in during the dark ages, has been beclouded and forced out of its way to such an extent that remarkably few lay any stress whatever upon the grand doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; and some are even dropping from their teachings "the ransom for all" given by Jesus.

We can picture before our minds the Apostle addressing the Council of Mars' Hill, composed of "the noblest blood of Athens, the first politicians, the first orators, the first philosophers; accordingly the most august, not only of Athens, but of Greece, and, indeed, of the whole world, under whose supervision 'came the transactions of the popular assembly, religion, laws, morals and discipline.'" Now the Apostle had use for the text he had found. He must prove to these men that he was not the setter forth of a new theology, but an

R3139 : page 29

old one. He at once brought forth his argument, not in the discourteous language of our English Common Version, intimating that his auditors were ignorant and superstitious, but, on the contrary, in complimentary language, which we paraphrase: he said to them;--"I perceive that more than others you Athenians have respect for whatever is divine. The conviction of this came to me as passing through your city I beheld the various evidences of your devoutness, and amongst other altars noticed one with the inscription, "To the Unknown God." Information regarding this God I am setting forth. He is the God that made the world and everything therein, and is the Lord of heaven and earth, too great to dwell in any temples made with hands, for he is the Lord of heaven as well as earth; neither can he receive service at our hands, for he needs nothing which we have to give, but is the author of life and breath and all things; who himself created every nation of men dwelling throughout all the earth --and even all their affairs are subject to his regulations and appointments.

Thus did he set before them the greatness of the true God, in contrast with their numerous gods whom they feared or hated, revered or placated, and whose vices and frequent impotency they admitted. The Apostle thus brought his teachings within the rules and regulations, as being not a new teaching, but a

fuller declaration of a God already recognized by his hearers. And indeed, so high, so noble, so great a thought of God, must have impressed his hearers favorably. We cannot doubt that the teachings of the Jews, supplemented by the gospel presentations, have done much to lift the minds of men out of the deep degradation which came upon them soon after the flood, as explained by the Apostle.--Rom. 1:20-32.

A God who was not merely the God of one nation or of one city or of one precinct, but who had created all races and nations, and had had to do with the rise and fall of nations, was certainly a very different God from anything that had ever been heretofore suggested to the minds of these philosophers; for although the Jews had preached the same God, undoubtedly their presentation of him as the God of the Hebrews must have favored the impression that each nation had its own god or gods, demanding its worship, reverence, sacrifices, etc.

In vs. 26 and 27 the Apostle implies that the Lord's ordering of the national affairs had something to do with the propagation of the knowledge of himself, and so we find it has been. The bringing of the world under successive empires--the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman--had tended to unify the race to some extent, and to make more possible the promulgation of the gospel. During the Grecian period the Greek language was spread abroad throughout various lands, and it still maintained its supremacy as the language of the world, although the reins of government had passed to the hands of the Romans, under whose pushing, warlike power the world in general would be brought much closer together than it had ever been from the time of the confounding of tongues at Babel. All this had occurred at the proper juncture of time as concerned God's favor to Israel, according to the flesh, the birth of Jesus, his crucifixion and the gathering of the ripe "wheat" from that nation, and the scattering of the remainder. All these things were, under divine supervision, working in the interest of mankind, "that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us." The Apostle would assist his hearers in finding this true God, who was to be found of them, and whom they had indicated their desire to know when they erected the altar referred to.

Describing the true God further, the Apostle assured his hearers that none could live or move or have existence, even, aside from the power and good intent of this great God. His words are equally truthful, whether we restrict them to the imperfect existence of the present time and the dying condition of the world, with but a spark of life, or whether we apply them in the fuller sense to the Lord's provision for the future by restitution processes and arrangements. Still wishing to offset the thought that his message was a new

one, the Apostle declares that certain Grecian poets had practically expressed this thought in saying, "We are also his offspring." Carrying the mind, then, to the logical conclusion, he urges that if we are the offspring of God our thoughts respecting divinity should not lead us to make or to worship images of any kind, all of which are professedly of man's device.

The Apostle's method is worthy of our imitation. All wise people distrust novelty, and incline to say that whatever is valuable has long been. We, like the Apostle, should endeavor to show that the true gospel is not a new theology, but the old theology; not a new gospel, but the old gospel,--the one foretold to Abraham; the one announced by the angels on Bethlehem's plains as "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people;" the one declared by the Lord Jesus himself and by all his apostles. In proportion as we would show that errors prevail today, which had their origin in the "dark ages," we must show that we are not forging a new theory equally erroneous, but that we have discarded the errors of the dark ages, and have gone back to the first principles and precepts and instructions of the gospel, as announced by the Lord and his authorized representatives, the apostles.

An explanation was necessary as to why this great

R3139 : page 30

God who had created all nations, and was directing their welfare, had neglected to send word to the Athenians until now. The Apostle did not go into a full explanation of the matter, with which his hearers would not have sympathy--he did not attempt to show how God in the past had merely been giving the world lessons in respect to the wages of sin, neither did he mention how Abraham's seed had been selected as the line through which divine blessings were to be carried eventually to all the families of the earth, and that God had been dealing with the natural seed of Abraham for the preceding eighteen centuries, making types of them and through them illustrating the progress of the divine plan as it shall ultimately be carried out. He did not explain, either, how that Christ offered himself to this nation of Israel, and (in harmony with the divine foreknowledge) had been rejected, and that now God was seeking a spiritual seed of Abraham--spiritual Israelites--to take the place of the broken-off branches of the fleshly house.--Rom. 11.

He contented himself with the bare statement of the truth, that in times past God had "winked at" or overlooked or disregarded and paid no attention to the idolatries of the world, but that now the time was come for a change of dispensation;--that now God was sending his message to them, and to all who had ears to hear, commanding repentance from sin and turning from idolatries to true worship and righteousness.

Quite possibly, though the account does not state it, the Apostle explained that the foundation or basis of this call to repentance was the fact that Christ had been a propitiation (satisfaction) for the sins of the whole world--clearing men thus from the original condemnation of death and alienation from God, and permitting the return to his favor of whomsoever would.

The word "because" commencing vs. 31 has a special significance which should not be overlooked. God calls upon all men to repent and reform, because he has appointed for them a day of judgment--a day of trial or testing. Not a trial for testing or judging whether or not they are imperfect and fallen, for this God already knows, even better than we do, and his Word expressly declares that "There is none righteous, no, not one." Such a trial, such a judgment day, therefore, to see if any were righteous, would be a farce. The object of the day of trial or judgment referred to by the Lord is totally different from this.

It is to be a trial day or judgment day to see, to test, to prove which of the world of mankind desire fellowship with the Lord, desire to be obedient to him, desire to walk in his ways. The Millennial Age is this trial day, and the Lord assures us that a full opportunity shall be granted to each and every member of the race to hear, to know, to comprehend his goodness, his love, his redemption of the world through Christ, and his willingness that they should come back into fellowship with him--back to a condition in which he could justly accord to them everlasting life. God could not reasonably command any to repent and return until the ransom was paid at Calvary, because it was his own law that had forbidden them to have fellowship with him, and that law must first be satisfied; and because he could not reward with life everlasting any

R3140 : page 30

who would seek his face, until he had made provision through the death of Christ for the payment of the death penalty against the race and through his resurrection for the times of restitution.

It is a further part of this blessed assurance that the judgment or trial of the world will be "in righteousness"--under a reign of righteousness when the besetments of the Adversary and his deceptions will be at an end, and when, therefore, a clear and explicit knowledge of the Lord and of the truth will fill the earth, as the waters cover the great deep. What a gracious gospel the Apostle had to preach! It was so good, indeed, that he had to be guarded in his expression of it;--too good for his hearers to appreciate, with their debauched ideas of the cruelty and perversity of the gods--even as it is too good to be appreciated today by those whose minds have been more or less confused by the horrible theological nightmares coming

down to us from "the dark ages."

The Apostle was proceeding logically to show that the resurrection of Christ from the dead was God's assurance to all that he would ultimately carry out this great plan of blessing the world, by granting to each member of it an individual trial or judgment for life, under the favorable conditions of the Millennium; and that the resurrection of Christ was not only God's attestation to men that his sacrifice has been satisfactory, but was also necessary, that our Lord Jesus as the risen and glorified Son of God might exercise in due time "all power in heaven and in earth," and thus bring about the great Thousand-Year Judgment Day, or "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21.) But with this his hearers, who must have been amazed with the logic of his argument, and must have wondered how their various disciples would be influenced by the new teacher, and to what extent they would lose caste, as being less logical or less lofty in their sentiments, found occasion for an expression of dissatisfaction, and of thus logically casting aside the entire argument--dismissing it as unworthy of further consideration.

Their objection rested on the resurrection, which the Apostle made so prominent, so indispensable to the carrying out of the entire plan of God; indispensable,

R3140 : page 31

first, as to the Redeemer, that he must rise from the dead, ere he could be the agent of Jehovah in prosecuting the work of blessing the world; necessary to the world of mankind, that they might come forth from the tomb and be granted a knowledge and opportunity of restitution or resurrection to all that had been lost by Adam's disobedience. When the resurrection was mentioned the occasion for expressions of derision was furnished, as though they would say: We knew that there could be no thorough-going philosophy superior to our own; we were on the look-out for the weak point in the argument of this speaker who sets himself up to be a teacher, and now we have found it;--the resurrection! Nonsense! Whoever saw or heard of a resurrection from the dead?

Others of his auditors were less violent in their expressions, but agreed that they had heard enough for the present--implying that the argument was not very satisfactory when it needed to be supported by a resurrection hypothesis which, to them, seemed very much less reasonable than their own philosophies,--that a man never died, and that when he appears to die he really becomes more alive than he ever was before. From their standpoint of view there could be no resurrection of the dead, since there were none dead,--all being more abundantly alive from the moment of apparent

death. This has been the point of contest between the Scriptures and those who hold to them as the Word of God, and all other theories advanced by and backed by the Adversary and in accordance with his original deceptive statement, "Ye shall not surely die." Those who would be on the Lord's side must accept the Lord's statement, "Ye shall surely die;" must admit that it is true; must admit that it was necessary that Christ should die, as our representative and substitute, to free us from the condemnation of death, and must admit also that only by a resurrection of the dead can we come back again to life,--to absolute perfection and full harmony with God.

However, one member of the Council of Mars' Hill (the Areopagite Society) had been deeply interested in the truth he had heard; also a woman of some distinction, and others with them;--for although the Society alone occupied the place of prominence in such discussions, the people in general were privileged to surround the court. The Apostle's experience here, as elsewhere, like our own, demonstrates the fact that at the present time not many have ears to hear the Word of the Lord; not many are seriously "feeling after him if haply they might find him." The majority are blinded by the god of this world, Satan, through various traditions, heathen and Christian, so that they cannot discern the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the true gospel. At the present time it is not given to all to see and to understand (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11), but we thank God that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped; and then the preaching of "Jesus and the resurrection" will mean a great blessing, and all shall come to the knowledge of the truth, from the least to the greatest, as the Lord, through the Prophet, has declared.--Jer. 31:33,34.

=====

R3140 : page 31

OUR EARNEST DESIRE.

All who love the Lord love all who are sincerely his brethren--"begotten again" (John 1:13). And all who love the brethren have a burning desire to do them good--to assist them into the light and joy and peace of present truth. Our readers very generally agree that the MILLENNIAL DAWN is the best of all helps, and next to it ZION'S WATCH TOWER. We use tracts, etc., merely with those whose desire for the truth is doubtful--to stimulate an appetite for more, and that we may learn who they are. These tracts we can supply you in any quantity free. But we are specially anxious that all of the Lord's followers should read the DAWNS and TOWERS. We, therefore, make the

following offer, good throughout 1903:--

Anyone on the WATCH TOWER lists may send us the addresses of friends who promise to read the DAWN if loaned them free of charge, and who promise to return it (postpaid) at some time during the year--or to pay for it, or to send us a letter stating that they have read it with interest and profit and desire to retain it for future reading and reference, but are too poor to pay for it. In the latter case, we will write them, making the book a gift, instead of a loan. We have long pursued this plan, except that heretofore we have required that the request come direct to us--whereas now we propose accepting the request through our readers. Furthermore, anyone already on our lists may send us in the names of any of their friends who will express to them a desire to receive the WATCH TOWER for three months, but do not feel that they can afford to pay for it. Such of these as you can assure us are true Christians and have already manifested interest in present truth, we will enter for the balance of the year, at your request, free. This differs from our ordinary offer, in that heretofore we have required that all entered either free or on credit shall write their requests directly to us: we find that some have been denying themselves the visits of the TOWER because of backwardness in asking. Such should be assured that we have a Lord's poor fund which pays for these papers and that it will afford us pleasure to send it to them; that, indeed, it grieves us to learn of any interested in "this way" (Acts 9:2), being for any reason deprived of the regular visits of the TOWER.

With these liberal terms at your disposal we surely ought to have a list of 30,000 by this time next year. Remember, however, that you must write us that these friends requested that their names be thus entered--otherwise we could not list them. We must live up to the letter and spirit of the postal rules.

Our provision of last year holds good for 1903, viz., that any one now on the TOWER list may send us four six-months trial subscriptions for one dollar.

We still advise that subscribers take advantage of our special offer of cloth-bound DAWNS postpaid by us at 25 cents each. No other books in the world are sold at such a price;--any volume, any language. This special concession is to offset the fact that adverse postal rulings no longer permit us to send the paper bound editions singly at less than 20 cents per volume, even wholesale.

=====