

AS VIEWED BY OTHERS.

A SELECTION.

"The time will come when Bible prophecy with its chronology will be confirmed by history in so exact and signal a manner that malice and infidelity alone will be able to deny its inspiration. Then, too, the world will have had its last say, impiety will have let fall its last mask, intolerance will have practiced its last cruelties, superstition will have descended the lowest round of idolatry, faith will have won on the scaffold its most brilliant victories, and in presence of the last great revolution history will have learned from prophecy to comprehend and to judge itself. The transformation which it will experience will be so complete that a very small remnant will be found of what the world to-day calls its Philosophy.'

"Thus wrote Frederic de Pougemont, the earnest Swiss pastor, nearly a generation ago, and behold, we are already standing upon the threshold of the days to which he alluded.

"They must be blind indeed who fail to read the warning written upon the walls of the modern temple of theology. In its continued subdivision into sects the Protestant church has had its strength so decimated that, as the Master long ago predicted, it is doomed to fall. – Matt. 12:25.

"We, Protestants, are prone to draw invidious comparisons against Rome, while she in turn [R1295 : page 45] points out the ever-widening breaches which divide our house against itself! Just where the balance of error actually resides is hard to tell. The fact is, the spirit of Laodicea presides over the whole city of modern Babylon, whatsoever be the particular ward in which we dwell, and the cry should now go up throughout all its precincts, '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.

"This is the midnight cry itself, and it appeals to all 'the wise,' wherever they are domiciled, to *go out* to meet their coming Lord, and to take naught with them but that oil which burns with the bright flame of faith in the integrity of the whole Bible. That we ourselves are dwelling in this Laodicean Babylon is patent to all who are familiar with the methods upon which its '*primaries*' are conducted, nor can we fortify our assertion better than by quoting once more from our trenchant Swiss pastor, who wrote as follows of a state of the Church, in his day future, but now, alas! only too realistic: –

"The closing epistle of Christ to the seven churches (Rev. 3) is directed to Laodicea. It corresponds to the time of Jewish phariseeism and sets forth the state of the Protestant nations at the Lord's return, when there will be little or no faith left on the earth. The missionary zeal of the church of Philadelphia, which at one time inflamed the whole mass of reformed Christianity, will have subsided into lukewarmness. The whole area will be Christian, and pride itself on its profession. A high standard of morality, an upright life, a conservative creed, will be never so *popular*. There will be no open enemy of Christ, as in Philadelphia, no outspoken infidel; only phariseeism and lukewarmness, only the happy medium between impiety and pietism. There will be a little faith, but not too much; a profession of orthodox principles confined within wise limits. There will be some **[R1295 : page 46]** fear of God, but much fear of men; great respect for the Bible, but enough good sense to keep men from viewing its doctrines, its precepts and its denunciations in a serious light; society wholly given to the acquisition of temporal blessings, and yet diligent enough in public worship not to doubt the pardoning mercy of God.

"They will consider themselves very rich in spiritual life, even as having need of nothing. But the Lord will *vomit lukewarm Laodicea*

from his mouth. He will not fight against her, as against Pergamos, and Thyatira. He will not judge her like Sardis; but he will wholly cast her off with scorn, and leave her to her wallowing in the mire. Still, she is a church, and oh, mystery of grace! He even speaks to her of *love*. He counsels her, rebukes her, treats her like a child subjected to salutary discipline: 'I would that thou wert cold *or* hot.' 'Be zealous, therefore, and repent.' He offers her a *collyrium*, that she may open her eyes to her *wretched state*; the white raiment of his righteousness, that the shame of her nakedness may not appear; gold tried in the fire of faith, that she may be truly rich. But his offers will not be accepted by the vast majority of the Laodiceans; few of them will ever hear his voice when he stands at the door and knocks to invite his guests to the bridal supper. Those, however, who in the midst of the universal apathy have persevered in love to the end will receive the highest honor of all the faithful: they will sit down with Jesus on his throne.

"The church of Laodicea is no far-fetched type; it mirrors the Protestant world to-day, and its distinct presence is not one of the least of the sign-posts that guide the weary pilgrim along his midnight highway."

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