

## **KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.**

SINCE the Lord has so graciously led his consecrated people into the knowledge, not only of his wonderful plan of salvation, but also of its times and seasons, it is important, especially in this eventful period of transition, that we keep our eyes open to observe the accurate fulfilments of prophecy now being brought to pass. Indeed, with open eyes, one can seldom glance over a daily newspaper without seeing some verification of the sure word of prophecy in the direction of a widespread expectation of some great revolutionary change in the social and religious conditions of the whole world.

Even those who have no knowledge of the divine plan of the ages and its systematic and precise times and seasons are now reading the signs of the times so clearly as to approximate the time of their issuance in a new order of things within but a year or two of the time prophetically indicated. They see that a great revolutionary change is not only inevitable, but imminent; though they are quite at sea in their prognostications of the final outcome, believing as they do, that the shaping of the destinies of nations and individuals is in the hands of the present generation of "Christendom," instead of in the hands of him whose right it is to take the kingdom and to possess it forever, and whose time is come. – Ezek. 21:27.

As a single illustration of this, out of many that might be adduced, we present to our readers the following able and significant address of the Rev. Dixon, of New York, on

### **THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION.**

His text was Matt. 16:3, – "Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" He said: –

"History seems naturally to divide itself into periods. These periods of history have characteristics which distinguish them from the centuries which precede and the centuries which follow the era of the crusades as clearly and distinctly marked in medieval history. The period of the French revolution in like manner has its special characteristics, and is clearly defined in the history of the world. So in ancient times there were centuries of development which are distinctly marked. There are, upon the other hand, the crises of transition between the great historic centuries of development. These periods of transition are the seed times, while the great centuries of revolution and construction are the harvest times of history.

"The nineteenth century is peculiarly a century of transition. It is a period of preparation. It has been one of tremendous development, and yet it is the development of a promise rather than the fulfillment of that which has gone before. The most marvelous development of the nineteenth century is the prophecy it gives of the twentieth. With all our wonderful achievements there is nothing so wonderful as the universal hope inspired in the human breast that we will do something better in the near future.

"The import of action in a period of transition is of inestimable importance. What is impressed upon the character of this age will constitute the elements of strength or of weakness in the new century that is to be born. That which is now shaping the forces that shall dominate the life of the twentieth century must **[R1619 : page 52]** partake of permanence. In many respects it will be decisive.

"There are certain elements in our current life which reveal to us the fact that the century before us must be constituted in its social, economic and political life upon a new basis. This must be so,

(1) "Because of the rapidity of material progress during the past generation and its speed in this generation. The elimination of time **[R1620 : page 52]** and space has been one of the most remarkable

developments of our period of invention, and the period of the world's invention is the latter part of the nineteenth century.

"In the eighteenth century the world was divided into isolated continents and isolated nations. There was little intercourse, and what there was came through the slow travel by sail on water and stage on land. The facilities for gathering news and distributing the history of different nations among one another were of the most meager kind.

"All this has been changed in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The world has literally been made a great whispering gallery, and every nation gives its quota to the day's story. There is no longer isolation of any sort. England and America are to-day in closer contact than were Massachusetts and New York in the eighteenth century. It is possible for a man to leave America in one week and visit the dead civilizations of the east in the next. It is possible for a man at his breakfast table to know all the important events that happened the day before in every nation of the world. We cross the ocean in less than six days. We go round the world in two months, and we come in contact with the current of the life of all people and all nations.

"Our civilization is a symposium. The very delicacies of our table are the products of the whole earth. What we eat, what we wear, what we place in our homes are the joint product of the effort of the world.

"The problem of time and space has within a few years been practically annihilated. The use of steam and electricity has brought the world thus in close contact. But the speed with which we are making progress even in annihilating time and space is so great that it is possible within the next generation that the rate of travel will be increased from four to five-fold at least. It may be possible for the children of the next generation to have their suburban homes 500 miles from the place of their daily business. Such an achievement would mean the development of the city until it shall literally cover the whole earth.

"In mechanical developments our rate of progress has been a marvel during the past generation, but it is more marvelous to-day. Armies of men and women now give themselves exclusively to the work of mechanical invention. Our daily life has been literally revolutionized by mechanics. What our ancestors did by hand, we do by machinery. This tremendous force, brought into play by cranks and wheels and levers, is the development of the world's life. The bureau of statistics in Berlin estimated in 1887 that the steam engines at that time at work in the world represented not less than 1,000,000,000 workingmen. That is to say, the steam engines at work in 1887 did more than three times the working force of the entire earth. Their earning capacity at that time was three times greater than the muscle power of the world.

"The advance in the application of mechanical power to the problems of life since 1887 has been most marvelous of all. Since that time electricity has taken in large measure the place of steam in a thousand avenues of life, and where the steam wheel made one revolution the electric motor makes ten. If we increase at this rate during the next generation the working force of the world, it will be possible to do all the work necessary for the production and distribution of economic goods within a few hours of every week, if society can be organized upon the co-operative rather than the competitive basis.

"It can be seen at once that it is impossible for society to receive each day this tremendous army of wheels and levers without causing a radical disturbance in the existing social order within the near future. Labor organizations in their blind ignorance have fought the introduction of machinery in the labor of the world. But as they become educated they will not be slow in seeing that the work of the world can be done by machinery in a few hours when that machinery is harnessed by a co-operative social order.

"The developments of science during the past generation have been so marvelous that we literally live in a new world because of those

developments. Each day reveals new wonders. The present rate of progress, if maintained, will give a civilization in the early part of the twentieth century the very outlines of which no prophet can foretell to-day. The only problem is: Can the present rate of progress be maintained in the discovery of nature's secrets by those who are searching for them? The probability is that it will not only be maintained, but accelerated; for where there was [R1620 : page 53] one man in search of the secrets of nature for useful ends twenty years ago, there are 1,000 men to-day searching with might and main for these secrets to give immediately to the world as a practical contribution to its social and economic life. Speculative science has everywhere given way to practical science, and the man of speculative mind cannot refrain from making the application even on the page of his philosophic speculation.

(2) "The growth of cities has been so remarkable within the past generation, and is so rapidly increasing in the present, that it presages a new life in the near future – a new life, social, economic, religious. A glance at the development of the cities within the past decade and a comparison of each decade in the century will reveal that the growth of the city has been one of the marvels of modern life.

"In 1790 the population of the United States was in round numbers 4,000,000. The population of the cities at that time was in round numbers 131,000 – 3.35 per cent of the whole population, leaving a rural population of 96.65 per cent. In 1890 we had a population of 62,000,000. The population of the cities had grown to 18,250,000, about 30 per cent of the entire population as contrasted with 3 per cent in 1790. The city has grown, in short, to dominate the life of the century. The rural district has lost its power. The scepter of import has been transferred to the streets of the great cities, and from the streets it has sunk to the gutters, and the dives, and the sewers.

"The domination of city life over rural life is one that cannot continue long without a radical change in the whole social order. The

growth of the city means the growth of the darkest elements of our life, at the expense, for the time being, of the saving elements. The growth of the city means the growth of the active principles of our civilization. The city is the center of activity. It is the center of good and the center of evil. It means, therefore, the necessary intensification of life. It means the intensification of crime. The development of crime within this latter part of our century has been put out of all proportion to the progress of law and order. We have 7,000 murders in America and 100 legal executions.

"The daily record of our crime is something appalling to the heart of those that love their fellow man. The generation of criminals who have served their term in penal institutions is increasing with marvelous rapidity. A penal colony within the body of civilization is something with which we have never before been confronted. The number of convicts of various degrees which are at present adding to the slum population of our cities is something beyond computation. Corruption in society, in government and in commerce has increased in geometrical proportion to the pressure of life.

"We have to-day the most corrupt civilization in some respects that the world has ever seen. If we take our own city of New York as an example in the development of political life in the close of the nineteenth century, we will have food for the philosopher and the philanthropist. In the past generation in this city corruption ruled in municipal life, but it was a corruption so manifest that public indignation could be aroused and the criminals brought to justice. The Tweed regime was routed in short order when once its rascality was made a matter of public comment and public suspicion. But this generation has reached a point of scientific development in public crime of which Mr. Tweed never dreamed. Tweed was a thief who rose from the lowest walks of life to roll in luxury, to sport his diamonds and his carriages out of public plunder. But he was a clumsy thief.

"To-day his successor in office is the boss of our political life. He is the most important factor in our American politics to-day.

"A few years ago he was a prize-fighter, a general sport, and he was poor. To-day he lives in a palace, he owns magnificent rural estates, he sports the finest blood horses in America and his wealth must be estimated by the millions. He holds no public office and has no visible means of support, save as the boss of a political club organized for plunder in a great city.

"Not only have we such corruption before our eyes and absolutely master of our municipal life, but more – they add insult to injury. The people are unmercifully taxed to fill the pockets of these thieves, and the masses of the people in the cities must bear the burdens.

"What is true of New York is true in a smaller degree in nearly all of the great cities of America to-day. This intensification of life has brought us the marvelous increase of wealth and the painful increase of poverty. Our life to-day may be termed the tropics of civilization. It is probable that the Astor estate alone has reached \$500,000,000.

"There are single individuals in this city whose income cannot be less than \$20,000,000 a year.

"There are 1,000 men in this city whose wealth is vastly over \$1,000,000.

"There are a dozen men in this city who can, if they will, both control the financial [R1621 : page 54] development of the nation and dictate its political policies by the use of their money.

"The poverty of the poor is in like manner increasing to the degree of starvation from day to day.

"While 1,000 men in this city estimate their wealth at over \$1,000,000, it can be safely said that there are 100,000 people in this city who are hungry for bread every day in the year. The number of

people who sleep on boards, and who drift about with nowhere to sleep, approximates 100,000 daily. The children of this generation of paupers seem to increase with greater rapidity than the normal rate of the increase of the average population of the world.

"While the evil elements of life have thus been intensified, we take hope from the fact that the better elements of life are also being intensified. The heroism of this life in its crying wants, its needs, is as brilliant in the individual examples as at any time in the history of the world. While crime and corruption and debauchery have increased in the city, the army of self sacrificing men and women who are willing to give their lives for the betterment of mankind daily increases.

"The number of women that have poured their lives into the current stream of active endeavor has been, within the last twenty years, increasing as never before in the history of the human race. According to the report of the census of 1880 there were in America among women who earned their daily bread outside of domestic service the following numbers in different professions: 110 lawyers, 165 ministers, 320 authors, 588 journalists, 2,061 artists, 2,136 architects, chemists, pharmacists; 2,106 stock raisers and ranchers, 5,145 government clerks, 2,438 physicians and surgeons, 13,182 professional musicians, 56,800 farmers and planters, 21,071 clerks and bookkeepers, 14,465 heads of commercial houses, 155,000 public school teachers.

"This was by the census of 1880; but by the report of the last census of 1890 there is recorded the remarkable fact that in these ten years the army of women who earn their daily bread outside of their homes now reaches the enormous total of 2,700,000.

"For the first time in the history of economics woman has entered as an active factor. Her influence in developing the history of the next generation can but be marvelous. Her influence in molding and fashioning the life of society when thus brought in active contact with its working force cannot be less than it has been in other spheres where



woman's influence has been felt when woman's position is recognized as it should be in the world of economics.

"We stand upon the threshold of an economic evolution, of a new social order. It means, sooner or later, that woman will be emancipated from the slavery in which she has labored in the past, in an unequal struggle with man, and that society in its working force will be elevated, refined and humanized by her touch, her sympathies and her life.

(3) "The rise of the common people to political equality in government with the traditional ruling classes has been accomplished within this century, and is but the beginning of a revolution that is not yet accomplished. Robert Mackenzie says: 'Sixty years ago Europe was an aggregate of despotic powers, disposing at their own pleasure of the lives and property of their subjects. To-day the men of western Europe govern themselves.' Popular suffrage, more or less closely approaching universal, chooses the governing power, and by methods more or less effective dictates its policy.

"One hundred and eighty million Europeans have risen from a degraded and ever dissatisfied vassalage to the rank of free and self-governing men. This has been an accomplishment which has simply put into the hands of the common people the weapons with which they will fight their battles in the twentieth century. The battles are yet to be fought, the revolution is yet to be accomplished. They have simply been given the ballot, and the consciousness of their power has only begun to dawn upon them.

"In the early part of the twentieth century we may surely look for a sufficient diffusion of intelligence to bring this tremendous mass into the aggressive assertion of the fullest rights of manhood. Hitherto they have been dominated by bosses, by tricky politicians, and they have followed skillful leaders blindly.

"So intense are becoming these elements that they cannot continue longer without an explosion. The lamp has been lit and has been left burning. A woman in a western home during the war sent a servant into the cellar with a lighted candle to look for some object. The servant returned without the candle. The housewife asked where she had left it. She said she had left it in a barrel of sand in the cellar. The housewife remembered that there was a barrel of powder standing open in the cellar. Without a moment's hesitation she rushed below and found that the ignorant girl had thrust the candle down into the loose powder and left it burning. [R1621 : page 55] She carefully lifted it out and extinguished it.

"The movement for universal suffrage in this century has placed the candle of knowledge, without a candlestick, in the loose powder of the common people. This light of knowledge is burning closer and closer, and the heat is becoming more and more intense with each moment. There is no power on earth, under the earth or above the earth that can remove that candle from its position. By a law as sure as the law of gravitation, the flame is approaching the powder, nearer and nearer every day. When it reaches the end, that is, the point of actual, conscious contact with their mind – there will be an explosion that will unsettle thrones and traditions, whether occupied by the Czar of Russia or Richard Croker I. of New York.

(4) "The universality of education is a factor in the closing of the nineteenth century which must make a new world in the twentieth.

"We have now entered upon the democracy of letters. Hitherto in the history of mankind knowledge was confined to the few. The higher professions were open only to the sons of distinguished men. Now they are opened to the child of the state born and reared in obscurity and disgrace and poverty. There is no limitation to the possibilities of human endeavor, because education has been brought within the reach of all. In America we have 13,000,000 children in our public schools.

This means that the next generation will be a new people. With this wide diffusion of knowledge has come the scientific spirit of inquiry.

"New blood has been brought into our world of science, our world of philosophy. Men no longer reason by the standards of Aristotle and Plato. They do not ask what has been taught by the great men of the past and stop there. They do not seek authority for action. They search for truth itself. They refuse to be bound by the traditions of the past. The time was when knowledge was confined to a certain clique in society. They had their own peculiar ideas. They were educated in their own peculiar schools. They thought in ruts. Their minds never traveled beyond certain well-defined limitations, and in consequence they traveled in a circle continuously.

"With the universal diffusion of knowledge and the introduction of new spirits in the field of investigation all this has been changed. Nothing is now settled save that which is settled upon the basis of proved fact. Every tradition, every theory, every creed must stand the test of this investigation. Every theory of State, every notion of society, every theory of religion must be resubmitted to this court of last adjustment – the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

"For the first time in the history of the world this spirit dominates the educated mind. Hitherto we have simply clung to the past with passionate and blind devotion. Now all things are being made new. All things are being brought in question. Nothing is accepted as authoritative because it is ancient. The creeds of Christendom are all undergoing radical revision. The traditionalists may resist with all their power – they fight against the stars.

"The creeds of the world within the next generation will be fixed on facts, not fancies. Superstition and tradition are being destroyed with a rapidity that will give the world a new religion within the next *twenty years*, and that religion will be the Christianity of Jesus Christ in its simplicity as Jesus lived it and preached it.

"The barriers of national lines and prejudice have all been broken down. The heathen world is now in vital contact with the Christian world and the Christian world's civilization.

"A hundred years ago Japan was utterly isolated from the rest of mankind. There was a law in force providing that 'no ship or native of Japan should quit the country under pain of forfeiture and death; that any Japanese returning from a foreign country should be put to death; that no nobleman or soldier should be suffered to purchase anything from a foreigner; that any person bringing a letter from abroad should die, together with all his family and any who might presume to intercede for him.'

"Every heathen nation has been opened to Christian influences and to the advance of the civilization of Christian nations. Not only this, but they have of necessity been compelled to study modern science. Japan stands to-day practically within the pale of modern civilization. I took my seat in the Johns Hopkins University around the seminary table, in the study of political and social science, with young Japanese students from the capital of Japan. China is studying the methods of the modern world and introducing of necessity **[R1622 : page 55]** modern inventions. The whole human race is thus of necessity being brought into vital contact, and this for the first time in the history of mankind.

"Thus the universal spread of education among all people ushers us immediately upon a new era in the history of mankind. We are not satisfied with the present attainment. The workingman's child who receives the same education as the millionaire will not be content **[R1622 : page 56]** to be his slave in the next generation, and there is no power of Church or State or society that can hold him so, for there are no traditions that can bind him.

"President Andrews, of Brown University, says: 'If anything has been made certain by the economic revolution of the last 25 years, it is that society cannot much longer get on upon the old libertarian, competitive, go-as-you-please system to which so many sensible

persons seem addicted. The population of the great nations is becoming too condensed for that.'

"Bishop Westcott, of Cambridge University, says: 'On every side imperious voices trouble the repose which our indolence would wish to keep undisturbed. We can no longer dwell apart in secure isolation. The main interests of men are once again passing through a great change. They are most surely turning from the individual to the society.'

"Another writer says: 'We are now approaching a crisis. No human wisdom can predict its shaping any more than it can prevent the issue. The air is full of auguries; even our fiction has become very precisely apocalyptic. It is theoretic prophecy, anticipating the realization of perfect scientific and social economics – the paradise of outward comfortableness.'

"William T. Stead says: 'Everywhere the old order is changing and giving place to the new. The human race is now at one of the critical periods in its history, when the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and the flood of change submerges all the old established institutions, in the midst of which preceding generations have lived and died.'

"It is impossible to educate the human race without at the same time lifting it into the consciousness of the resistless power of numbers. We are now about to enter upon the period of activity which will be the result of this universal consciousness of the inherent power of manhood. Who can foretell its results?

"The child of the hodcarrier to-day is better trained than kings and princes in the not very far past. All the dishes placed on the table of Louis XIV. were tasted in presence of the king before he would touch them, and each guest was supplied with a spoon for the purpose of helping himself from a common dish. Anne of Austria, the queen who was celebrated for her beautiful hands, it is said, once gave a piece of

meat to her neighbor, which she had just taken from her plate with her fingers, and allowed him (and this was the point which the historian recorded) as a special favor to lick off what remained on the hand.

"The child, of the commonest workingman, that attends our public school is more cultured in all the essentials of real civilization than were kings and queens and princes in the eighteenth century. When the common herd are thus lifted to the position of kings, they will not be long in fitting themselves with a crown."

-----