

## VIEWS FROM THE TOWER.

THE Prophetic Conference mentioned in our issue of October 1 has just been held (December 3-6) in Allegheny, instead of in Pittsburg and at the date first proposed. Four of its sessions were held in the Fourth U.P. Church, and the remainder in the First Presbyterian Church, opposite the Bible House.

Although not a conference in the sense of interchange or discussion, its meetings were very enjoyable to all interested in the second coming of our Lord.

The speakers, mostly Presbyterians and United Presbyterians, included Bishop Nicholson, of the Reformed Episcopal Church – all men of ability – and much truth was set forth. So far as we noticed (and it gave us great satisfaction), every speaker acknowledged the Bible as the *only* inspired authority, and appealed to it as the only test of what they presented, and many of them scored the "higher critics;" and the value of our Lord's sacrifice at Calvary was also made prominent, as the only basis of true faith and of our acceptance before God.

We were disappointed, somewhat, that after pointing out clearly, from the Scriptures, that our Lord's second coming will not be after the conversion of the world, but before it, and after showing ably that all of God's past and present dealings, for six thousand years, are but preparations for the Millennial Kingdom, the speakers seemed to overlook the most important part of this subject; viz., What will be the character and extent of the *work* of Christ and the Church for the world of mankind during the Millennium? But then we must remember that these dear brethren do not yet see that the full meaning of the *ransom for all* is a full opportunity for eternal life for all. They hold that those of mankind living at the time of the establishment of the Kingdom will be blessed with special opportunities for coming to a clear knowledge of the truth, and thus of attaining everlasting life in "the only name;"

but they do not see that the "blessed hope" extends to the millions and billions of earth that have gone into the tomb without either faith in or knowledge of "the only name." Thank God! we can see that the "ransom for all," given by our Lord, included those who are prisoners in the great prison house of death (*sheol – hades*); and that by and by, in promised "times of restitution" (Acts 3:19-21), the prison doors shall be burst for them by the great Redeemer (Isa. 61:1) and "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth" "and they that hear [obey] shall live [everlastingly]." (John 5:25.) And to ascertain which will "hear [obey]," all must stand before the great white throne of justice, then established, and be judged [tried] according to the things written in the "books [of the Bible]" (Rev. 20:11,12), even as the Church is now being judged during the Gospel age.

We were pleased to note the reverent interest of so many of our fellow citizens, and are more than ever convinced that there are thousands of true "sheep" in Babylon whose eyes and ears will yet open to the good tidings of great joy for "*all people.*" After the various sessions several of our brethren were active in distributing OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS – "Bringing Back the King," and "Do You Know?" which were well received, some inquiring for more for their friends. One or two of the speakers made some caustic references to the OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS and to MILLENNIAL DAWN, but this we feel sure was only because their eyes are only partially open to the truth. In most of them we feel that we could discern a large measure of the Master's spirit, by which together with their faith in the Redeemer we recognized them as brethren in Christ, even though they cannot yet venture to bear the reproaches of the whole truth. **[R1903 : page 284]**

We believe that good will result from the Conference. Already many are inquiring for more light, and we are giving it to them as best we are able. We fear that some of the dear friends in their zeal for the truth offend and separate many who need our help and whom we desire to assist. The Bible expresses some hidden truths in very forceful

language – "mother of harlots," etc. – but it is our judgment of the Lord's will that, while we are not to shun to declare the whole counsel of God, we should do so as wisely and lovingly as possible, and instead of adding repulsive vehemence, to such strong passages of the Lord's Word, as would make our hearers misjudge our motives, we should "speak the truth in love" – explaining such passages in their kindest rather than in their severest light, showing that not persons but systems are referred to. We urge that all remember to copy our Lord, of whom it was written, "Grace is poured into thy lips." "His mouth is most sweet." Let all the cutting be done by "the sword of the spirit," the Word of God.

As a further comment on the Conference, which we believe will interest you all, we give below an article by the Editor, published in the *Pittsburg Post*, Dec. 9: – "To the Editor of The Post:

"It is reported that I approached the Prophetic Conference in Allegheny and requested an opportunity to present views in opposition. The impression thus given is very erroneous, and I crave a little of your space wherein to correct it.

"In the first place, I made no such request; nor did I authorize anyone to make it for me; nor did I know of any such intention on the part of my friends. Indeed, so far from desiring to oppose the gentlemen, I have heard as many of them as possible, and with great interest and pleasure. I am glad, indeed, that truths so important are handled in so scriptural a manner, and glad, also, that so many of our fellow-citizens are availing themselves of these privileges. The speakers are certainly far in advance of Christian thought in general on this subject of the long-promised Millennial kingdom.

"As many are querying what are our points of difference, I will state them briefly.

"(1) The conferees hold that our Lord Jesus is still a man, and that his return will be in the flesh.

"I hold that the Scriptures teach that he is no longer a man, a fleshly being, but that he is now a spirit being, as he was before he was made flesh; that he humbled himself, and took the fleshly form of a servant only for the 'suffering of death' (Heb. 2:9); that, having accomplished man's redemption by the sacrifice of himself, he was glorified with the glory he had with the Father before the world was; and that hence he is not to be expected to return a flesh and bone [R1904 : page 284] being, but a spirit being. When made flesh he was made lower than the angels, but now, highly exalted by the Father, he is far above angels. (Phil. 2:9; Eph. 1:20,21.) Hence his coming as a spirit being would not be visible to men, as he declared before he died, 'Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more.' (John 14:19.) The Apostle also declares that we know Christ after the flesh no more (2 Cor. 5:16); and even at his second coming, 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' (Heb. 12:14.) He assures us, however, that the holy ones shall be changed and made like Christ (spirit beings), and that, when 'changed,' they shall see him as he is. – 1 John 3:2.

"(2) The Conferees hold that the Kingdom of God will be a fleshly kingdom, with an earthly court, of which Christ and his saints in the flesh will be the kings, etc., associated with which will be the kingdom of Israel – all fleshly and all visible.

"I hold that the Kingdom of God (Christ and the saints) will be a spirit kingdom, as invisible as that of Satan, the present 'prince of this world' – because it will be composed of spirit beings. The power will be everywhere present, ruling and overruling, for the welfare of the redeemed world during the 'times of restitution.' (Acts 3:19-21.) First blessed under the Kingdom will be Israel, whose fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (not spirit beings, but resurrected and perfect men), shall be recognized by Israel and all the nations as the 'princes' (Psa. 45:16) of earth, and as the representatives of the invisible spirit kingdom of Christ. Hence it is written: 'The Kingdom of God cometh

not with observation – neither shall ye say, Lo, here! or lo, there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is [to be] in your midst [everywhere].'

"(3) The conferees hold that the 'Man of Sin' of 2 Thes. 2:3-8 has not yet come, and they are looking for and expecting him daily, rather than expecting the Lord. They expect that this wonderful human being will pervert the hundreds of millions of India, China, Africa and the islands, and (no less wonderful) the civilized millions of Europe and America to believe in him as God; so that all (Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Brahmins and Christians) except the elect Church will worship him as the Almighty God. And this stupendous work, and much more, he is expected to accomplish in less than seven years from the time he makes his debut.

"But to me such expectations are both unreasonable and unscriptural. It is unreasonable, in my judgment, to suppose that while millions of Christians and millions of money have failed to make any impression upon the heathen millions in eighteen centuries, one literal 'man of sin' could ever, under any circumstances, accomplish such a work. And as for the civilized nations, they daily grow less reverential toward both God and man; and nothing would seem to me more improbable than that a short seven years should witness so radical a change, and that a human being would be mistaken for God and be worshiped as God by all except the 'saints.' True, a miracle could be performed; but God works no miracles of that kind.

"As to the unscripturalness of such expectations, I am prepared to furnish to all who will request it, the evidence that this passage of the Scriptures (which to my brethren seems to necessitate such an incredible exposition) has already been fulfilled in every particular. These brethren, instead of looking for the 'Man of Sin,' should recognize him, and should now be looking for the 'parousia' – the presence – of our Lord and the setting up of his Kingdom.

"I must, of course, take exceptions to the peculiarly horrifying expectations of Bishop Nicholson – that our sun will shortly meet with

an accident, which will so intensify its heat as to kill off all of earth's population except the few who shall hide among the icebergs. The good Bishop has gotten unduly excited. There is no danger of such calamity. Prophecies now in course of fulfilment, which would be interfered with by such a program, are our sure guarantee. Even the bishop must concede that the time between now and 1897 is very short for this, in addition to his 'Man of Sin' program, and the return of the Jews to Palestine.

On the other points, I am in substantial accord with [R1904 : page 285] the utterances of this Conference. And while I should be very willing to discuss these points of difference, either publicly or privately, with these or any other earnest Bible students, at any time, I totally disown any hostility toward these gentlemen and their worthy themes.

"It may be expected that I should make some reply to Prof. Morehead's strictures upon my publications, called MILLENNIAL DAWN. When the gentleman says that these deny the bodily resurrection of our Lord, etc., and that they teach that Christ 'was here in 1874 and will be here again in 1914,' he greatly errs, and, no doubt unwittingly, bears false witness against his neighbor, as the thousands who have read MILLENNIAL DAWN could testify. But his charge, that our Lord Jesus Christ was created, has enough truth in it to require an explanation.

"The Professor holds that our Lord Jesus is one and the same person as the Heavenly Father; and the difference of names merely represents different offices and characteristics of this one being.

"To my understanding of the Scriptures, the oneness existing between the Father and the Son is not a oneness of person but of sentiment and will, just as the true Church of Christ, although of many persons, is ultimately to be one – not one person, but one in faith, hope, knowledge and service. Thus our Lord prayed for the Church – 'that they may be one as we are.' (John 17:12,21.) Scriptures proving that

the Father and Son are not one in person are numerous, and familiar to all. And, if they are two persons, which was first, according to the Bible, the Father or the Son? The names themselves explain: Father signifies sire, life-giver; Son signifies offspring. To this thought the following and all scriptures agree.

"Our Lord Jesus' words were: 'My Father is greater than I.' (John 14:28.) 'The Father hath sent me.' (John 5:37,27.) 'Not my will, but thine [Father] be done.' (Luke 22:42.) 'Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' (John 17:5.) 'To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.' (Rev. 3:21.) The emphatic apostolic statements are that the Heavenly Father was the Creator of our Lord Jesus. Hear their testimony – He is the 'first born of every creature' – literally 'first brought forth of all creation.' (Col. 1:15.) He was the 'beginning of the creation of God.' (Rev. 3:14.) He was not only the beginning but the ending; not only the first, but the last, of Jehovah's direct creation. (Rev. 1:17; 2:8.) This 'Only begotten of the Father,' in whom dwelt all the Father's fullness, was designed in all things to have preeminence above all others – that all should 'honor the Son even as they honor the Father' (John 1:14; 5:23; Col. 1:19); and hence, as the Father's representative, 'all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.' (John 1:3.) To this agree the words of the Apostle 'To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we by him.' – 1 Cor. 8:6.

"Speaking of the Millennial kingdom, the Apostle declares that God the Father subjects it to Christ, and that when by his reign evil shall be subdued, Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; that Christ our Lord will be subject to the Father. – 1 Cor. 15:24,27,28.

"We commend the Scriptures cited to the careful consideration of the thoughtful. 'Thy word is truth!'

"Thanking you in advance for your courtesy, I subscribe myself,  
yours respectfully,

CHARLES T. RUSSELL."

[R1912 : page 285]

### **LEAD THOU ME!**

Lead thou me ever! Lead thou me!  
Dark is the way; by faith alone I tread.  
Thus in each age thy saints have walked with thee,  
Content to "bear the cross," as thou hast said.  
Dead to the world! Alive, dear Lord, to thee!  
Oh! well we know, dear Savior, thou art near,  
And though the way be dark, love knows no fear.

Lead thou me ever! Lead thou me!  
And as by night the pillared fire did shine,  
O'er Israel's path to the dividing sea,  
So now thy light serene illumines mine.  
And armed with peace divine, thy saints can stand the strain,  
E'en though they wealth and honor must resign;  
For we endure with thee, with thee to reign.

FROST JOHNSON.

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