

VIEWS FROM THE TOWER.

PRAISE from thankful hearts, to the great Giver of all good, should be the uppermost sentiment with all the children of the great King at the dawn of the New Year 1896. Our praise should be for mercies past, and no less for the exceeding great and precious promises which stretch out before all who in deed and in truth are under the protection of the precious blood and consecrated fully to the will of God.

"Give me a thankful heart,
Like, Lord, to thine!"

As a miser counts over repeatedly the gold he loves, and thus comes to value it more highly, so the children of God should count and recount the Lord's favors, and study their benefits, that they may appreciate them the more. The fully consecrated will, in the light of God's Word, find cause for thankfulness in the very things which once they would have reckoned as adversities; for they have learned that all things work together for good to them that love God [supremely], to those called according to his purpose. He who has freely given us Christ, shall he not with and through him freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:32.) Therefore, those who have rightly accepted God's "unspeakable gift" find in him abundant cause for thankfulness and rejoicing. Having in him the promise, not only of the life that is to come, but also of the present life (1 Tim. 4:8), they sing: –

"Christ for sickness, Christ for health:
Christ for poverty or wealth:
Christ for joy, and Christ for sorrow;
Christ to-day and Christ to-morrow:
Christ my Savior, Christ my Friend:
Christ my Treasure without end."

After considering our personal blessings and privileges and rendering praise therefor, let us, as members of his Church, render thanks for divine favor upon his people and his work, and upon our united, though feeble, efforts in connection with it shown in the annual report in our last issue: also for the privilege of being co-workers together with God in the great plan of the ages; – for the privilege of sharing now the reproaches of them that reproached him, and thus filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24); and for the glorious prospect that those who suffer with him for righteousness' sake shall reign with him, if faithful unto the end. Let us be thankful, too, that as the darkness settles down upon the world, "ye brethren are not in darkness;" and that, being enlightened, the very things which cause the hearts of the world to fail with fear, and for looking forward to those things coming upon the earth, are to us evidences that our deliverance draweth nigh; causing us to lift up our heads with hope, and our hearts with rejoicing.

The year, as it opens upon the Nominal Church, finds it flourishing as to numbers, influence and outward prosperity. "Rich, increased in goods, and having need of nothing," is its sentiment, as foretold by our Lord. (Rev. 3:14-19.) Never was there so much wealth invested in church buildings, equipments, choirs and minister's salaries. Never were the numbers of members so great, and never did they represent so much wealth. In addition, there is a general tendency toward union, federation, "confederacy," which is popularly considered an evidence of growth in grace. Never were there so many "young people" active in Christian work; and never so many "Boy's Brigades" learning the use of carnal weapons.

But inwardly what do we see? – We see **(1)** a few in every congregation who are perplexed, – who know not whether to think that the outward prosperity is genuine or artificial, who know not whether to condemn the majority **[R1911 : page 4]** for having lost the spirit and power of full consecration, or whether they should accept the verdict of the majority that they are "old fogy," and the old sermons, old

hymns, and old reverence for God and his Word and consecration of heart and life merely old-time nonsense. They hunger and thirst after righteousness sometimes, and try to satisfy their longings by listening to sermons which know nothing of either the cross or the crown, being prepared for the unregenerate "tares" who have no appreciation of those things.

Amongst her learned men in seminaries and pulpits the doctrine of Evolution has supplanted the Bible doctrine of the fall, the ransom and coming restitution. And her great men, with very few exceptions, vie with each other in destroying the faith which once they preached, – in discrediting the inspiration and truthfulness of the Bible, under the name of "higher criticism." This flood of infidelity has not yet reached the masses: when it does Psalm 91:7 will have its fulfilment; – thousands will fall from the faith now held by them credulously, but not understood, into mere social moralism, denying the fall and consequently the redemption from its condemnation, and all necessity for an imputed righteousness of Christ. This is the position of the leaders now, and both reason and Scripture indicate that "many will follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." The few years ahead are important ones, and demand the energy of all who are awake to the truth, to extend the helping hand before the falling away becomes general.

The outlook amongst the nations is unrest – "fear of those things coming upon the earth." Never were they so well prepared for strife, yet never did they so much dread it, and with good cause.

The Far Eastern question, in which all the great nations of the world are interested, as well as China, Japan and Russia, is still unsettled; it is merely eclipsed for the time by the Turkish or Eastern-European question. Turkey has long been known as "the sick man" amongst the nations; and the Great Powers of Europe, all anxious to get hold of his possessions, fear each other. Constantinople has one of the choicest harbors of the world, and, in the hands of progressive

people, would be of inestimable importance. It is coveted by Russia, which is practically an inland country, her Baltic and Arctic sea ports being ice-locked for a considerable portion of the year.

The nations of Europe fear any increase of Russian power or influence, as likely to overshadow their own; and hence have aided Turkey to resist her powerful and acquisitive neighbor, Russia. It was for this reason that the Crimean war was fought, and, for Russia's limitation, one of the terms of that peace stipulates that no foreign warships may pass through the Dardanelles without permission from the Turkish government, Russia's ships being the only foreign [R1912 : page 4] warships that would probably desire to pass. Hence Turkey is called "the buffer kingdom." The "sick-man's" government, always execrable, has since become still worse, and Russian intrigue has fostered rebellions. But these seceding provinces were not allowed to fall into Russia's hands, nor into Austria's. The great powers met and decided to organize a line of petty principedoms between Turkey on the one side and Austria and Russia on the other. These are Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia and Montenegro.

The recent massacres of tens of thousands of Armenian Christians (Catholics, slightly different from the Roman and Greek Catholics) in the Sultan's dominions is probably due either to the breaking down of the thoroughly corrupt government, or else to conspirators in power, who hope to secure the overthrow of the present government by "the powers," and thus to gain some personal advantages. The Sultan, once very tractable to the wishes of Great Britain, believing her a friend, is now distrustful, and fears that, as she has taken and held Egypt, she may intend now to grasp Syria and Palestine.

The English people clamor for interference for the protection of life and order, and do not in general realize the importance of Turkey as a "buffer;" and their rulers fear to mention it lest it should stir up Russian pride and precipitate an undesirable conflict. Russia stands waiting, as for a rich morsel, but preferring to get it at a cheaper price

than war. The situation is greatly strained every way. If it results in war, the Turks will make a stern resistance, and after their fall, Russia, with her army already on the spot, will be unwilling to let go, especially as she now has the French navy for an ally on the sea. This would be likely to involve all Europe, and perhaps Japan, in a war such as was not since there was a nation.

But while the outlook is threatening, and many consider it sure that such a general European war will break out during this year, we do not share their fear. Turkey may be still further dismembered, or even entirely cut up, but the *general* European war will certainly not come for several years yet; not for ten years, we feel quite confident. If it be asked upon what evidence we reckon, we answer, (1) Upon the divine prediction of Rev. 7:1-3, that the "Four angels" (agents) must hold back that great storm *until* the truth shall first prepare or "*seal* the servants of God in their foreheads [intellectually]." (2) Upon the fact that the Scriptures clearly teach that first the union or federation of Protestants shall take place, and enable them to act conjointly with Papacy in support of "the kings of the earth and their armies," before the great overthrow of all government will take place. Whenever the *general* European war occurs, we may feel tolerably sure that its outcome will be world-wide anarchy, accompanied eventually by all the horrors of the French Revolution – worse by far than those perpetrated recently in Turkey. Of that time the prophet declares every man's hand shall be against his neighbor; and our Lord says that unless those days should be shortened (by the setting up of the elect in the kingdom) there would be no flesh saved. – Zech. 8:10; Matt. 24:22.

We have gone into this matter at some length, because "Adventists" are industriously teaching that when Turkey falls the Lord's second advent and the burning up [R1912 : page 5] of the world will immediately follow. This has long been their mistaken theory, often disappointed. They fail to see that our Lord is a spirit being, whose second advent, glory and power, will be spiritual, not fleshly; that his Millennial *parousia* – presence – will be invisible to men; and

that his kingdom will be the invisible power that shall use the nations to overthrow one another, and thus prepare men for the reign of the Prince of Peace. – See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., page 103.

Much more dangerous looking, to our view, is the threatened rupture between Great Britain and the United States. Related by ties of blood and history and language and religious sentiment, a war between these countries would be a specially sad picture. Yet the consanguinity of the two nations in some respects increases the danger; for both are courageous, both boastful and proud, both full of resources, and both confident of ability to teach the other "a needed lesson;" and neither is willing to give an inch, nor to acknowledge an error. Yes, we must admit, there is great danger of a war, which would be a disgrace to the two nations which, more than any others, should be able to settle disputes justly and amicably. Nevertheless, we do not expect war. We have great confidence that the British government will find a way to arbitrate its dispute with little Venezuela. Such a course would be very much to their credit every way. Yet thoughtless public opinion, with "brag and bluster," may force Lord Salisbury to say and do things very contrary to his own judgment. It is safe to assume that the United States Government dare not, and will not, retreat from the essentials of its present position.

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Matters get wonderfully mixed up sometimes. For instance, it was the peaceable, order-loving Christian people who insisted that British diplomats and, if necessary, gunboats should exact of China reparation for the murder of Christian missionaries, and who secured the execution of seventeen Chinese rioters. It is the same class of peace-loving people who are now urging Lord Salisbury to begin a war at once upon Turkey – in defense of the poor Armenians. Even the most ardent peace advocates must admit that, in Turkey's case, everything possible seems to have been done to avoid war; and that it is merely a question of time until the Turks will utterly exterminate the Armenians,

if "the powers that be" do not interfere with physical force. The perplexing questions are: would it be more righteous and honorable to go to war or to permit such atrocities?

What should be the attitude of God's fully consecrated saints upon this subject? Should we favor war and bloodshed in a good cause, or a peace that would leave fellow creatures exposed to such atrocities? What would our Lord do or say on this question?

We believe that he would repeat his former words, – "They that take to the sword shall perish by the sword." "Do good to them that hate you and persecute you." "If ye suffer for well doing, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth on you." "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight." These instructions, however, are not for the world individually or nationally, but for the saints who would walk in their Lord's footsteps. Of these our Lord said, "Ye are not of this world; for I have chosen you out of the world and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit."

The governments of the earth, although largely dominated by Satan, "the prince of this world," and although in no sense kingdoms of God, nevertheless have a lease of power from the Almighty, which carries with it a certain responsibility;* they are to be "ministers of justice" fully authorized to "bear the sword" and use it, as the Apostle Paul points out. (Rom. 13:1-4.) So, then, let the nations do their part, and let God's consecrated "little flock" remember their Master's words, "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world," and abstain from the use of carnal weapons, and from counseling others to use them, and instead be "fervent in spirit serving the Lord," and using the sword of the spirit, the Word of God. The "saints" thus appear to the world unpatriotic; but this is unavoidable. We have become *aliens* so far as all present earthly governments are concerned; we are citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and hence "strangers and pilgrims" here. Filled with the spirit of the Captain of our salvation, we cannot be otherwise than opposed to the destruction of human lives, our desire on the

contrary being to save them. If *compelled* by the government to enter the army, we should "go" (Matt. 5:41), but probably could get into the hospital service.

See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., p. 259; VOL. II., p.73.

The fact not generally recognized is, that the Scriptures lay down a particular rule for the saints – the law of Love to God and man – while the world is left to its own expediency. The Church alone is on trial: the world is merely gaining an experience, whose failures will prepare the worthy to appreciate the Millennial reign of righteousness, under the law of Love.
