

## VIEWS FROM THE TOWER.

CHRISTIAN (?) Italy, like other Christian (?) nations of Europe, has been trying to do its duty to the heathen of Africa to teach them something of modern civilization, as represented in the liquor traffic and in land-grabbing. Italy felt that duty called her to conquer and "protect" the Abyssinians; – that is, she would "protect" such as she did not destroy with her modern implements of warfare, that they, as her slaves, might be heavily taxed and help her to live in luxury and pay the interest on her present enormous debt. But the Abyssinians surprised the world by nearly exterminating the army invading their home. In view of this they may be regarded as less "barbarous" than Italy had supposed, and as not needing Italy's civilizing taxation.

Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia as early as 330 A.D., but it was of the corrupt type so early prevalent, and represents many of the errors of the Romish, Greek and Armenian systems. But Protestant missionaries and Bibles published for them by the British and Foreign Bible Society have done much to elevate their moral and religious standing. What will the Abyssinians now think of the British assisting the Italians by advancing upon them the Egyptian army?

The following from *La Figaro* purports to be a letter from Negus Menelek, king of Abyssinia, to Mr. F. S. R. Clark, an English missionary, Feb. 3, some little time before the Italian army attacked him and was defeated. We quote as follows: –

"You are mistaken in believing that I do not care for your prayers. All prayers of believers are dear to me, even when they come from the children of Europe. Not all are aggressors in my kingdom; not all commit the iniquity of attacking those whom they hope to find weaker than themselves: not all have bent the knee before Baal, the god of destruction and the slaughterer of brothers. Many, I am sure, still truly adore the God of the cross, the God of justice and of peace. With them

I feel in perfect communion of faith, and I am happy that they pray for me, for my household and for my people.

"I only wish they would make truth dwell in the sanctuary, and that instead of a mutilated gospel, which explains the confusion and the infidelity of the peoples of Europe, they would return and lead others back to the true gospel which began with the creation of the world.

"By what right do they efface the whole portion of it which precedes the coming of Jesus Christ, and have they done away with what God established for all time?

"What you call the Old Testament is as true as the New, and what is contained in it must be respected and observed by those who follow Jesus and the apostles, announced by the prophets.

"Never did Jesus abolish the distinctive mark of his race, since he was subject to it by his mother on the eight day. [*Circumcision*, still practiced by Abyssinians.] To suppress that which God established "from age to age and from forever to forever" is to weaken the faith, is to furnish the same spectacle shown by the Christians of Europe. It is not only without that they use violence, but also within, against the Jews who are, nevertheless, Christian souls, and to whom we owe our Savior. There are more than 300,000 of them in my kingdom, and, though they enjoy almost complete independence, they are obedient and industrious subjects. They never conspire, pay all tributes, and respect our abuna as much as do the Christians. If they are worse in Europe, it is because the Christians, too, are worse. Our Lord Jesus forgave them on the cross: why should we persecute them? You [English], at least, do not persecute them. May the other Christians of Europe imitate you.

"What you need is to return to our God, to observe all his ordinances, to no longer separate Moses and the prophets from the apostles or St. Peter from St. Paul. Whoever wishes to serve God must

humble himself and obey. You know that, envoy of God. Teach it in Europe and Asia. I am having it taught in Africa.

"May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Menelek."

[R1968 : page 92]

Little as we have in common with any of the so-called "Catholic" systems of Christian religion – the Greek, Roman, Armenian and Abyssinian – we nevertheless consider it a shame that, if the Armenians cannot be protected from the Mohammedan Turk, the Abyssinians must be scourged by Roman Catholic Italy, backed by Protestant and enlightened Britain, while civilized France has just finished a conquest of Madagascar, which for some time has been known as "the *first* heathen nation converted to Christ" in modern times. The heathen pay dearly for their acquaintance with civilization and so-called "Christian nations." Evidently selfishness is the basis of all this injustice. All this, however, may be a necessary experience to prepare men for the true Kingdom of Christ.

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In Chicago a number of Presbyterians broke away from the Fullerton Ave. Church, and, with "Rev. Dr. John Rusk," organized an independent congregation known as the "Church Militant." This Church, in order to emphasize their Christian (?) liberty, recently invited Col. Robert Ingersoll to *preach* (?) to them. Mr. Ingersoll did so on Sunday, April 12. The public press account is as follows:

"With a prelude that included an invocation, the repeating of the Lord's Prayer in unison, the reading of the tenth chapter of Luke, beginning with the twenty-fifth verse, the singing of a Hosanna, of "Nearer my God to Thee" and "America," Col. R. G. Ingersoll stepped to the rostrum of the Church Militant and for nearly two hours

expounded to the congregation his views upon 'How to Reform Mankind.'

"Although admission was strictly confined to ticket holders, the street in front of the theatre was blocked with people long before the opening of the doors, and even after the interior had been packed more than a thousand men and women besieged the entrance. On the stage were 400 or more representative citizens, including nearly every member of the Appellate and Superior judiciary and several county officials, delegations from every medical and law college and institution of learning in the city and suburbs, and a number of retired preachers. Every sect and denomination of importance, without exception, had its representative.

"When Col. Ingersoll made his appearance, arm in arm with Rev. Dr. Rusk, there was loud applause. In the prayer that followed the musical exercises Rev. Dr. Rusk asked for a special blessing on Col. Ingersoll as one who was endeavoring to show the world how this life might be made one of usefulness and joy. Rev. Dr. Rusk invoked a dispensation for Col. Ingersoll's wife and children, and in his introductory remarks spoke of the agnostic as "the man who is endeavoring to do this world good and to make it better." Rev. Dr. Rusk added that this was no time to reason, no time to disagree with the faiths of men or beliefs of men, when they were trying to make the world better than they found it. No matter, he said, whether a man believed in God or not, if he expounded the truth.

"As Col. Ingersoll stepped to the rostrum he was welcomed with applause that lasted for over a minute. His text was from Shakespeare, "There is no darkness but ignorance." He discoursed fluently on the evolution of intellect and the necessity for education; on the evils of war, showing that it costs \$6,000,000 per day; on how to lessen crime by teaching criminals "the *naturalness* and harmony of virtue." [A difficult lesson for intelligent men to learn. All of their experiences attest the contrary, and agree with the Scriptures that to the *natural* man

virtue is quite unnatural. ED.] He advocated homes for all the people, proper, useful education, etc., and then gave his views of what a church should be, as follows:

"Now it seems to me that it would be far better for the people of a town having a population of 4,000 or 5,000 to have one church, and the edifice should be of use not only on Sunday, but on every day of the week. In this building should be the library of the town. It should be the club house of the people, where they could find the principal newspapers and periodicals of the world. Its auditorium should be like a theatre. Plays should be presented by home talent, an orchestra formed, music cultivated. The people should meet there at any time they desire. The women could carry their knitting and sewing, and connected with it should be rooms for the playing of games, billiards, cards, and chess. Everything should be made as agreeable as possible. The citizens should take pride in this building. They should adorn its niches with statues and its walls with pictures. It should be the intellectual centre. They could employ a gentleman of ability, possibly of genius, to address them on Sundays on subjects that would be of real interest, of real importance.

This is a "natural" man's mistaken conception of what *Christ's* church should be. He rejects Christ, and cannot be expected to have his spirit or mind on the subject of what, why and how his church is "called" "out of the world." And alas! the Church, two thirds full of unconverted, "natural" men, see no better than this Infidel teacher. Indeed, to "natural" men the advice of "natural" men must appear more reasonable and more consistent than the teachings of the Word and spirit of God. It does not surprise us, therefore, to see many **[R1969 : page 92]** turned from the truth unto fables (2 Tim. 4:4), and congregations and denominations moving from the hopes and methods set before us in the gospel to hopes and methods of their own misconceptions and unbelief.

But the close of the address pictured the *real* Church of God glorified, in a manner and degree little realized by the orator, who meant rather to describe Nature – his god. He said: –

"The firmament inlaid with suns is the dome of the *real* cathedral. The interpreters of nature are the true and only priests. In the great creed are all the truths that lips have uttered and in the real litany will be found all the ecstasies and aspirations of the soul, all dreams of joy, all hopes for nobler, fuller life. The *real* church, the *real* edifice, is adorned and glorified with all that art has done. In the *real* choir is all the thrilling music of the world; and in the starlit aisles have been, and are, the grandest souls of every land and clime." – Compare Eph. 2:21; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:4,5; Rev. 3:12; 21:22; Matt. 13:43.

The "Church Militant" convinces us that it is free – not only free from Sectarian supervision and creed bondage (a good thing), but *free also from Christ*, a very dangerous freedom. Yet it is still true that truth only can make "*free indeed*." Whatever the state of their hearts, if Christians at all, they sat for two hours in the seats of the scornful [R1969 : page 93] and took counsel of the ungodly. The blessed of the Lord do not so, as is particularly stated in the first Psalm.

How this circumstance shows the blindness of Christ's professed followers, that they who should be the light of the world should be so dark that they feel their need of, and request the instruction of one whom the god of this world hath blinded; who is so blind that the light of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord has not yet penetrated his mind; – almost as blind as the "fool" mentioned in Psalm 14:1. Verily, Mr. Ingersoll chose a good text, There is no darkness like ignorance; and if, as the Scriptures declare, "The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," then Mr. Ingersoll is still in gross darkness, the "True Light" not having shone into his heart. What could he know or teach of the true hope for the groaning creation?

We have not yet heard whether or not some of the brethren in Chicago improved the opportunity to offer to the congregation, as they came out, some of the truth in printed form, but if they did not they missed a grand opportunity. There probably were some of the really truth-hungry children of God there, who, starving for lack of true food for their souls, are looking and feeling after it in a wrong direction. All men are awaking, and all as they awake are hungry: Satan will supply them poisoned food in abundance and under favorable conditions; let us who have the truth redouble our activities if we hope to hear our Master say, Well done! good, faithful servant,... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

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The Christian Denomination, otherwise known as "Disciples," have very rigid ideas respecting baptism (immersion in water). They teach that immersion is the door to justification, or forgiveness of sins and acceptance as God's people. They lay stress upon the Apostle's statement in Acts 2:38, and fail to notice that he spoke to the Israelites, already God's people (verse 36), and not to the Gentiles. They overlook the fact that it is faith, not water, that justifies. – Rom. 5:1; 4:2-4,13,22-24. See TOWER for June 15, '93.

The Cedar ave. Disciple Church, Cleveland, having recently broken over the unwritten law of the denomination, and having received into membership a Christian man who had not been immersed, a great stir has ensued, and, as a sign of disfellowship, the donation of this church to the *Foreign "Christian" Missionary Society* was refused. But nevertheless the influence is spreading, and the South Side Christian Church of Indianapolis is also receiving members who have not been immersed.

The result will no doubt be a disruption of the denomination, for its membership will be started to thinking; just as other circumstances are arousing thought in other denominations. It is all a part of the shaking and waking up, proper to this time of "shaking" (Heb. 12:28),

that the true Christians of all denominations may get free from denominational thralldom; henceforth to be bound, not as members of human institutions, but each as a branch in the true vine – Christ. Instead of unions in cliques, societies and denominations, bound tighter and tighter to prevent disintegration, each individual Christian must stand free from all human alliances, that he may be most completely united to Christ, and, in fellowship and bonds of love only, with all who have Christ's spirit. The fall of Babylon means the setting at liberty of those whom God calls "My people." – Rev. 18:4.

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Abbe Courbe, parish priest of Dion, Vichy, France, has just published a book, which he distinctly states is done with the consent of his superiors, in which he presents the view of a future Millennium. (This is the very opposite of the Roman Catholic theory, which all along has claimed that it was fulfilled during the period of Papal triumph, from the eighth to the eighteenth century, closing with Napoleon's triumph, which it claims began the "little season" of Rev. 20:3,7. This book may be an attempt to "hedge" a little, and indicates at least a *doubt* as to the previous interpretation.)

The title page of the book, translated from the French, reads as follows: –

"The great occurrence ("coup") with its probable date. That is to say the great chastisement of the world and universal triumph of the Church, which will probably occur between Sept. 19 and 20, 1896. The secrets of La Salette compared with the prophets of the Bible and other authorities."

As here indicated the author expects a one-day (24 hour's) battle, whereas we see from the Scriptures that it is a forty-year battle day, begun twenty-one years ago, whose latter part is to be a time ["day"] of trouble such as never was before. (Dan. 12:1.) Like the bloody predictions of others for this year, this of course will fail. The year will



doubtless bring its share of troubles, but much remains to be done before the great revolution shall occur which will wreck society.

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Electrician Thos. A. Edison has developed the "Roentgen ray" or "X ray" to such a degree that in a recent experiment he was able with his naked eye to look through an eight-inch block of yellow pine and see the outlines of his fingers. He has still greater hopes of future experiments.

Professors Pratt and Wightman have conceived that these penetrating rays might be utilized not only in locating diseases but also in curing disease by killing the disease germs. They have been experimenting with the germs of Diphtheria, Cholera, Influenza, Typhoid fever and Consumption; and report excellent results. They believe that the X-rays will kill these germs or *bacilli* and thus stop the dreadful ravages of these diseases. These things are telegraphed throughout the world, yet how few realize their meaning – that the long-promised "times of restitution" [R1969 : page 94] are approaching and that our *present* Lord is thus making ready for blessing the world physically, by natural means, which are none the less of his providence.

If any one wonders how restitution could possibly rejuvenate the aged, let him read of a sample case, possibly granted for the purpose of illustration, as follows: –

"Middlesboro, Ky. – Mary Crabtree, who will be 91 years old the 15th day of August, is now in possession of all her faculties, has cut a new set of teeth, and can read without glasses. The most remarkable fact of all, however, is that her hair, which was snowy white, began to turn dark again eighteen months ago, and now is of a dark, glossy brown, just the color it was when she was a girl of eighteen." – *The Philadelphia Press*.

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