

IEWS FROM THE TOWER.

THE *North American Review* has recently published four articles from the pen of Hon. Wm. E. Gladstone, ex-Premier of Great Britain, on the subject of Natural Immortality of the Soul. The subject is ably discussed, from records of earliest times to the present – Biblical and profane. He states his own convictions with becoming moderation. He believes that many confound "survival" of the soul, with "immortality" of the soul, but he does not so err. He sees that the resurrection hope was the one which the Lord and the apostles held out, that the Scriptures do not declare that probation terminates with the present life; that eventually some will "survive," some will be granted immortality and some become extinct in the second death.

We, of course, recognize no man, lay or cleric, as *authority* upon this or any other subject revealed in God's Word. Whoever speaks in harmony with God's Word deserves respect to that extent. It is the test. We are glad, however, that so able a thinker has drawn attention to the fallacy cherished by so many, and which is the basis of the eternal torment theory – natural immortality – immortality out of Christ. See our issue of Oct. 15, '95.

*

*

*

People who talk about the barbarism of the past, and the greater genius and ability of the present along lines of Evolution; and particularly all who talk about "Some Mistakes that Moses Made," are respectfully requested to carefully consider the following item: –

"The Prussian government has recently issued an order that the commissary of the army shall use no other meat as food for the army and navy except such as is slaughtered by the Jewish method. The tests made by the chemical and medical departments showed that such meats were far more wholesome and susceptible of preservation.

Notwithstanding this the anti-Semitic factions in Saxony and Switzerland enacted laws prohibiting the Jewish method of slaughtering. But 350 scientific non-Jewish authorities in physics and physiology in leading European universities have declared that the Jewish method is by far the most humane and best adapted means for obtaining animal flesh for food. Many intelligent Christians in European capitals use no meats unless the animal be slaughtered by Jewish methods."

*

*

*

The general M.E. Conference, recently held at Cleveland, O., demonstrated, what we have already called to attention, that a democratic spirit is at work in that denomination which ere long will transform it, removing the control from the clergy and putting it where God puts it, into the hands of the church.

Speaking of this a daily journal remarked.: –

"The next indication, and the most important up to this time, was the action of the seventh district during a meeting discussing lay representation. Almost at the opening of the meeting this resolution was introduced:

"Resolved, that it is the sense of the seventh general conference district that lay representation in the church shall recognize in some form the right of the members of the church to a voice in the election of their representatives.

"This alarmed some of the more conservative members, but it was not enough for the radicals, one of whom offered a substitute, which reads:

"Resolved, that we favor the election of all class leaders, stewards and trustees by direct vote of the adult members of the church. **[R1989 : page 132]**

"The substitute was lost, but the original motion was passed with hardly a dissenting voice. In the course of the debate there was much complaint of the concentration of power in the clergy, and although most of the speeches were guarded in form, their meaning was unmistakable. One clergyman who was present said that in the matter of church government Methodism is approaching Congregationalism, 'and must inevitably reach that point.'"

This will have a bearing upon the coming Protestant *federation*. As the people tend toward freedom and power, the ministers will all the more seek to hold their present position. Before long they will see that their interests will be best conserved by accepting the proffered hand of "the historic Episcopacy."

*

*

*

"When the priests spoke of the Czar as the God-selected man, the God-ordained man, my blood grew warm. It is not true that God selected this Czar to rule and rob a hundred millions of human beings. It is all an ignorant, barbaric, superstitious lie – a lie that pomp and pageant, and flaunting flags and robed priests, and swinging censers cannot change to truth."

– *Robert Ingersoll*.

Very rarely are we able to quote the great Infidel with approval; but we can endorse him heartily when he assails the theory of "the divine right of kings." Yet this same doctrine supports all the thrones of "Christendom." The Church of Rome set the example, followed by the Greek and the Anglican churches. Her head, the Pope, claimed authority as Christ's representative to supply the thrones of earth with rulers, and to call them divisions of Christ's Kingdom ("Christendom"). When the other systems broke away from Papacy, they carried along her doctrines and practices on many subjects, including this one.

All of these kingdoms have over and over again demonstrated their unlikeness to Christ's Kingdom; cruel, selfish and bloody they all have been and are, and the Czar's is one of the worst of them. At the recent coronation of the Czar and Czarina this false doctrine of the "divine right" of kings to squander the substance of their subjects was illustrated. The gown worn by the Czarina is reported to have cost two hundred thousand dollars; the carriage in which she rode was "worth almost its weight in gold"; the harness of its six horses cost eighty thousand dollars; and every thing else was proportionately gorgeous and wasteful. The forty millions of dollars wasted in this vain coronation show were wrung from his poor subjects, who in their ignorance almost worship him. To charge the misrule of earth upon our gracious Creator from whom cometh every good and perfect gift is blasphemy. Thank God! very shortly now the world will witness the close of "the times of the Gentiles" and the beginning of "the times of restitution." The desire of all nations will come when "the powers that be" shall give place to him whose right the Kingdom is, and who will cause that God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

*

*

*

"The excitable and superstitious people of Madrid have distinguished themselves by a gorgeous religious ceremony as a means of invoking the aid of the Almighty in bringing to a speedy close the devastating Cuban war. It is said to have been a most striking and singular demonstration. At least one hundred and fifty thousand persons joined in the religious procession which marched the streets of the city, so say the dispatches, while nearly the whole of the population showed signs of deep enthusiasm.

"But what avails such religious mummery. The prayers that ascended bore no plea for justice or mercy, but implored instead that Spain might triumph in her cruel and barbarous warfare against a people striving to throw off the chains of slavery, and establish their own independence."

As we clipped the above from a secular journal we thanked God that he is raising up, outside the nominal churches, those who can see principles of justice, and point the people to them.

* * *

The subject of baptism is being stirred up considerably in various quarters. While two congregations of the "Disciples" or "Christian" denomination (which has always made "baptism for the remission of sins" its specialty) concluded to receive members without baptism, the Methodists are discussing the removal of the rule which for years has prevented its membership [R1990 : page 132] from practicing immersion, if they had been sprinkled in infancy. One minister who favored the change remarked that this rule had driven thousands of Methodists into Baptist churches.

The following will show that Presbyterians also are forced to consider the subject. The result no doubt will be that within a few years all denominations will remove restrictions, and permit each individual to choose for himself. And this in turn will prepare for the great confederation which will take form and power just before the total wreck of Babylon. The matter referred to is a second letter from Rev. A. T. Pierson to the Philadelphia Presbytery, which the *Philadelphia Press* says was in substance as follows: –

"I had foreseen that my course might compel a change of denominational connection, but I have preferred that such sundering of former ties should become necessary by your act rather than mine.

"I can only say that to submit myself to baptism as a believer had come to be a condition of my peace and of unclouded fellowship with God. For years the conviction grew upon me that the basis of infant baptism is traditional and ecclesiastical, rather than Scriptural; and side by side with this conviction grew another; *viz.*, that by New Testament standards baptism is the [R1990 : page 133] act of a believer confessing Christ as Savior and Lord, and by typically

claiming identification with him in his death, burial and resurrection. Hence I came, somewhat slowly and reluctantly, I confess, to the conclusion that I had never been baptized in a New Testament sense, and, therefore, should yield my implicit obedience to a plain command.'

"It must, however, be my solace that whatever discord it may create in my business relations, it has brought conscious harmony with God, consistency with gospel teaching and practice, and liberty to preach a full gospel message, from which nothing is eliminated by a tortuous exegesis. As your action in my case seems to compel my withdrawal, perhaps you will forbear with me if I first state briefly why I have previously stated that 'this act was not meant by me as a change of denomination.'

"Not only was it very natural preference not to have changed my church relations after forty years of such identification, but I have ventured to hope my divergence from Presbyterian doctrine and usage might not be deemed radical and fundamental. Even while doubting the legitimacy of infant baptism, I have never questioned the right of parental covenant or the privilege of infant consecration, nor, indeed, the peculiar relation sustained by the children of believers to the Church of God; but I cannot see the warrant for applying to infants an ordinance meant for regenerate believers, and implying a voluntary putting on of Christ.

"It seems to me to lower the dignity of baptism to encourage a loose administration of a sacramental ordinance, and to lead to at least a modified form of baptismal regeneration, however the latter may be disclaimed.

"While thus holding substantially the same views as most of the godliest Presbyterians I have known, it is not yet clear to me that my Baptist brethren have a Scriptural warrant for making immersional baptism the condition of church membership and of approach to the Lord's table, which implies, also, a serious barrier to fellowship with

other denominations. Hence, while largely sympathizing with the Baptist position in other respects, I had hoped that the body of disciples to which I had so long been attached might prove sufficiently flexible to allow me to continue among them.

"Had I this act again to perform I would only do it more promptly, for in the nature of the case there could be no motive prompting it but a desire to fulfill all righteousness.

"If, after the hearing of this final statement, the Presbytery still regards my position as a renunciation of my life-long connection with the Presbyterian body, I can only request that my name be erased from the roll as one who has withdrawn to another body of Christians, and I will return the letter which your action has revoked.' Dr. Pierson concluded by thanking the Presbytery for its 'very considerate course' toward him."

The Presbytery was as much in doubt as before as to what action it should take, and held the matter for further consideration.

* * *

A missionary in India notes that the census of 1891 revealed the fact that while 500,000 had been nominally converted from 1881 to 1891 there had been an increase of population of 30,000,000 during the same period. In this he sees the futility of hoping to convert the world by present agencies. He is now hoping and praying – "Thy Kingdom come."

* * *

We live in a day of wonders and rumors of wonders. The most skeptical age is fast becoming the most credulous in all matters related to invention. It is an enforced credulity. The following, from the *Philadelphia Press*, relates to the latest marvels. Should it prove true, it will render useless present power machinery – such as engines,

boilers, etc., and throw out of work nineteen coal-miners out of every twenty.

"In addition to the magic names of Edison and Tesla two other electricians now claim attention. They are McFarlan Moose and Dr. W. W. Jacques. Mr. Moose has attacked the glow lamp problem and seems to have solved it, getting light without heat, and Dr. Jacques has attacked the coal pile and gets electrical energy, which can be used for any purpose, by the direct oxidation of carbon without the loss of energy through heat, as occurs in the ordinary combustion of coal. By heating carbon with caustic soda and passing air through the liquid mass of soda Dr. Jacques obtains 82 per cent. of electrical energy from his coal, which burned in a boiler in ordinary manner would give only 6 per cent. of electrical energy.

"This is revolutionary enough, to be sure, but Mr. Moose seems to cap it at the other end of the wire, for he is able to take the ordinary commercial current of electricity, and, by using a converter in a vacuum, to transform it into a current of such a character that it will light up a vacuum tube with a beautiful glow. His converter, the electrician says, costs but \$1 against Tesla's \$10,000 oscillator, and the amount of energy that is represented in actual illumination is vastly increased. Not only that, but his entire apparatus is simplicity itself."

Mr. Edison also has a new and powerful light – an X-ray light – from a "Crooke's tube." The lights, and powers, and machinery for the Millennium are rapidly preparing, and the whole world bears witness and marvels, but believes not in the great event. Mistaught, it is facing to the West instead of the East. Heeding the "traditions of the elders," it is looking to its own efforts to establish righteousness, and sees not the Millennial dawn, the plan of the ages consummating, the time at hand, the Kingdom come, and the day of vengeance near, to be followed by the results of the great ransom – "times of restitution."
