

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

SPIRITUALISM is steadily asserting itself.

The Boston *Journal* of May 28th, reporting recent utterances of Rev. M. J. Savage, says: –

"TALKED WITH WHITTIER.

"In a quite recent sermon Dr. Savage declared that he had talked with the late poet Whittier and knew that he, too, believed in the essentials of Spiritualism. Longfellow, too, he classified with him, and cited his famous line: 'There is no death; what seems so is transition.' Most of the poets, he thinks, have shared the Spiritualist conception of the life beyond this one.

"The other day,' said Dr. Savage, 'the papers contained a long account of the belief of Dr. Lyman Abbott and of Dr. Hillis, who is his successor. Both believe all the essentials that Spiritualists believe, only both were very careful to guard themselves against believing in such vulgar and foolish things as rappings on a table. For the life of me I cannot see what there is so foolish and degrading in rapping. If you are in one room of a hotel and I am in another, I am not so impolite as to go into your room without rapping to find out whether you want to see me. If some one from the other world is near me and wants to see me, is it so dreadful that he should call my attention by rapping? I have been asked as to the nature of communications from the other side. I've had what purported to be hundreds of them, and I say that they are pretty much on a level with my daily mail. I get some foolish and some malicious communications, and again some noble and intelligent ones in my mail every morning. So it is with those from the other side. If we can get rid of the old idea that the moment a man dies he is either a devil or an angel, we will see that this is just as it would be likely to be – the communications being on

a level with things as they are now. If I should die here in this pulpit I should not expect to be in the next moment more foolish or more wise than I am now."

The matter of the faith of Whittier, Longfellow, Abbott and Hillis is stated as tho it were exceptional among Christians: on the contrary, it is the rule: the exception is to find those who deny these propositions among clergy or laity. All believe that the dead are *not dead*, but more alive than ever before. All think and speak of them as being near to the living and interested in their welfare; but only Roman Catholics directly invoke their aid in prayer, except Spiritualists who go still further and claim to converse with the living-*dead* or *dead*-living. (Which would be the less absurd statement?)

It should not surprise us, therefore, that Christian people, long accustomed to this fallacy (that the dead are alive without a resurrection), are stumbling into Spiritualism, utterly blind to the fact that its manifestations are the work of demons who personate the dead to draw attention away from the Scriptural teaching that the Christian's hope is – the resurrection of the dead at the second coming (presence) of the Redeemer when he will exercise his office of Lifegiver.

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Rev. B. E. Austin, D.D., of the Methodist Church of Canada was deposed for heresy on June 1st, after a trial by Conference at London, Ont. Respecting the matter Dr. Austin said to the reporter of the Toronto *Globe*: –

"If I had elected to leave the Conference in ignorance of just where I stood on the subject of Spiritualism, I would have been in the church to-day, but, as I was charged with teaching it, I thought it only fair to defend my own views on it, and against the advice of my friends I addressed the Conference. I did not wish to be in the church

and hold views which were contrary to its teachings, and I decided that if the church was not broad enough or liberal enough to let me in, I wanted to be out of it. While I valued my standing in the church, I value my liberty much more. I wished a large personal liberty. [R2483 : page 148]

"My views are the result of years of study and investigation. I became interested in the study of psychology through teaching it in class work at Alma College, and five or six years ago I became convinced, not that the current theory regarding Spiritualism was correct, but that underneath all the deception and artifices practiced throughout the country under the name of Spiritualism there was a great deal of natural phenomena. As Principal of Alma College I became specially interested in investigating mental sciences both theoretically and experimentally. I read the works of scientists like Sir William Crookes, Alfred Russell Wallace, Zollner and others, who have been making long and patient researches into this subject, and I finally became convinced that telepathy and clairvoyance were positive facts, and that there were many phenomena that were not explained even by them. The question of the origin of these phenomena then arose. One theory held by a great many people in the church is that it is all devilry; then there is Carpenter's theory of mental cerebration, and the other theory that the phenomena are caused by the spirits of the dead, or so-called dead. Investigation and study convinced me that the last was the only theory to fit the case. I was led up gradually to a firm conviction in this truth."

As the Doctor declares, the fact that some good people cry "devilry," while teaching doctrinally what supports reasonably nearly all the claims of Spiritualism, is not enough – should not be enough for reasonable minds. Only those who get the Bible teaching on death and on Spiritualism are prepared to see conclusively that it is demonism.*

*See *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritualism?* – 10c., or loaned *free*, this office.

DR. BRIGGS AN UNWELCOME EPISCOPALIAN.

Dr. Charles Briggs, famous as a leader among "Higher Critics" and for his determined endeavor to remain a minister of the Presbyterian Church after confessing himself out of accord with it, has been received into the Episcopal Church: but quite a few Episcopalians do not welcome him. Bishop Seymour declares himself forcefully on the subject as follows: –

"I agreed cordially with the Rev. Dr. Briggs in his rejection of Calvinism, but I as cordially revolted from his trying to remain a Presbyterian minister after he had publicly renounced the characteristic teaching of Presbyterianism. This shocked my moral sense. ...This view of the Rev. Dr. Briggs touching Holy Scripture may be true. I do not stop to inquire, since the truth or falsehood of the Rev. Dr. Briggs' theory does not touch the issue. He believes it to be true, and avows his belief in oft-repeated publications. This is quite enough. With such convictions, I cannot understand how any man who accounts himself an honorable and upright man can enter the ministry of the church.

"The test is much more than the declaration which the candidate signs and the vows and pledges which he makes before the altar of his God, and in the most solemn and critical hour of his life it confronts him and will continue to confront him while he lives, in every, or almost every, public service in which he participates. The rubbish and debris theory of the Bible places the Rev. Dr. Briggs in a most frightful position now that he has been ordained. The Bible supplies two lessons for morning and evening prayer daily throughout the year, and it saturates with its language and ideas the offices and services of our Book of Common Prayer. There is no branch of the church which makes more copious use of Holy Scripture than does that one in which the Rev. Dr. Briggs has just been ordained a presbyter, at his own earnest request, and **[R2484 :**

page 148] in spite of protest and warning for his own sake as well as that of others.

"This Holy Book, as we regard it, is, in the estimation of the Rev. Dr. Briggs, a holy book hidden, unknown beneath an incrustation, an accumulation of myth, fables, legends, stories, and to some extent worse material – in a word, dust, debris and rubbish, and this dust, debris and rubbish he and all the clergy must serve up to the people as the Word of God in the public offices of the church. How can any man with one spark of religion in him voluntarily place himself before God and man in such a position? I confine myself to one point, and to one point alone, and I rest upon no question taken from its context, but upon a fundamental position deliberately taken and publicly avowed by the Rev. Dr. Briggs.

"It is true that the Rev. Dr. Briggs professes love and reverence for the Bible, but it is not our Bible, the Bible published by our Bible Society and read in our churches; it is a hidden Bible, an unknown Bible. The kiss of Judas was more conspicuous than the betrayal. A general profession of veneration and love does not condone repeated stab thrusts which are designed to destroy life.

"It has been said that any church is honored by the admission of the Rev. Dr. Briggs into its fold. Alas, the Rev. Dr. Briggs may be, and probably is, all that his admirers represent him to be, but neither he nor any other man, be he saint, confessor or martyr, can honor the Church of God. The church can do without us, but we cannot do without the church.

"Again, there are men who seem to be afraid if they do not profess sympathy and agreement with this higher criticism that they will be regarded as ignoramuses or idiots. Let me tell all such persons that there is a worse fate than that – it is to be accounted a fool by God.

"In conclusion, I wish to press the point that the ordination of the Rev. Dr. Briggs is most of all a moral issue, and brings into view Almighty God, with whom all who shared in that service must deal, if not now, ultimately at the last great day. God may be 'far above out of our sight,' and we may say in our hearts: 'Hush, God will not see.' But this is a sad, fatal mistake. God will not be trifled with. He is patient, but no man can be guiltless who takes his name in vain. 'So, then, every one of us must give account of himself to God.' Must, not may, give account of himself, not of others, to God, who cannot be deceived, not to man, who can be imposed upon and misled."

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SOWING TO THE FLESH – IN THE CHURCHES.

We regret to note the multiplying evidences that the nominal churches are more and more losing sight of the Scriptural idea of the Church of Christ – that it is a company of called-out ones, separated from the world and united to each other and to the Lord as "members in particular of the body of Christ," whose present duty it is to edify one another and to build one another up in the most holy faith. The false view, that the Church is now to effect a social uplift of the world, is largely responsible for this. The remedy for the malady is the *truth*, that the election and education of the Church is the duty of the present age except as the light shining out from these saintly ones shall "reprove the world;" and that the Lord's time for the social uplift will be the Millennium, which he will bring about in his due time by the exaltation to glory and power of the Church, whose election will then be complete. In illustration of the misleading influence of a false theory note the following, published in the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* of May 30th: –

"PRIZE FIGHTS IN A CHURCH.

"New York, May 29. – The idea of special features to attract young people to church, which has gone as far as dancing classes in

several places, has gone a step further in the Protestant Episcopal pro-cathedral at No. 130 Stanton street, of which the Rev. Dr. Charles Briggs is to have charge.

"Boxing matches and a wrestling bout were introduced with the approval of the authorities of the pro-cathedral and under the eye of the Rev. Mr. Paddock, the vicar, who seemed to enjoy them. The contests were held in the basement for the Young Men's club, one of the many organizations of the pro-cathedral. There was a smoker, music and recitations. Then a ring was improvised.

"At the opening Kid Rowling of Buffalo and Kid Floss of Avenue A boxed three tame rounds, and a draw was the decision. The boys carried out the custom of the ringside, and vociferous cheers, hisses and catcalls filled the large room.

"Then came the real event of the evening. 'Fellows,' said Announcer Gambert, 'I now introduce to you with great pleasure Dick Wunderlick, ex-champion welterweight, and Phil Kelly, the coming welterweight. They will box three rounds, and in the last introduce their original 'knockout,' which has been imitated by many, but successfully copied by none.' Three strictly professional rounds followed, and in the last round, Kelly delivered the realistic 'knockout' blow.

"The wrestling match was between Mike Zimmer and George Burke, the instructor of the gymnasium attached to the church.

"The Rev. Mr. Paddock said that doubtless many people would not approve of such amusements in such a place, but he said the aim was to hold the young men's interest and keep them off the street."

"I SUPPOSE THEY CALL THAT HERESY."

Rev. F. W. Gunsaulus, D.D., of Chicago, preaching recently, is reported to have said: –

"The fact that the spirit of holiness and truth enters into man with the power of a divine comfort is proved as much in the songs of the Wesleys as in the Psalms of David.

"A man must believe that God has vacated his throne, and that the ascended Christ has ceased to guide human events, and that the holy spirit is dead, if he does not feel within his own inspired nature that the inspiration with which the soul of Lincoln trembled and was yet steadied when he wrote the Emancipation Proclamation is greater and diviner than the inspiration with which Joshua commanded the massacre of a prostrate foe."

Dr. Gunsaulus said, after the address: "I suppose they call that heresy."

This may have been said in a bombastic spirit, with the desire to create a little cheap sensation; or it may have been uttered in all sincerity. If the latter, it only serves to show how blind are the "Doctors of Divinity," selected at good salaries by "orthodoxy" to confuse the people and mislead them into the ditch of skepticism.

The gentleman's words, whether so intended or not, will give to the average reader the thought: "Dr. Gunsaulus believes that Wesley's hymns were as much inspired as the Psalms of David, and in the same manner and degree." Dr. G. may privately deny any such sentiment, but the thousands who read his statement in print will be influenced to discredit the inspiration of the Scriptures in proportion as they are babes in knowledge of God's Word and pin their faith to those who are "highly esteemed among men."

All true Christians partake of the spirit of the Lord – the spirit of truth, of gentleness, of patience, of kindness, of love: for "if any man have not the spirit [disposition] of Christ, he is none of his." The Wesleys, we doubt not, had much of this same spirit, and we may discern considerable of it in their writings, prose as well as verse, with some admixture of what we consider error, which cannot have

been, as it is not now, in agreement with the spirit of truth. But in the Psalms of David, written long before Pentecost by one who never received "the spirit of adoption," we find a totally different *inspiration* from that which fills and guides the Church as its members become emptied of "the spirit of the world."

The Apostle Peter explains the difference exactly, saying, "Holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit" – mechanically – often, if not always, without knowing why they wrote what they did, or what it signified. The Apostle declares this in so many words, saying, that they sought the [R2484 : page 150] significance of their own utterances, but were not granted an explanation, but were informed that "not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister." (1 Pet. 1:12.) How else could we account for the prophetic utterances of the Psalms, descriptive of our Lord's death and resurrection and of his coming Kingdom and of the great time of trouble by which it will be introduced? Can we go thus to the writings of the Wesleys or others since the apostles? Surely not! Hence the blindness of those unable to discriminate, or the criminal negligence of those who pose as oracles of God and yet would mislead the blind into the ditch.

Respecting the comparison between Joshua and Lincoln: Here again evil is done; the blind are misled by the suggestion that the Bible presents Joshua as an *inspired* man. Nothing of the kind is true. Joshua was no more a prophet than Lincoln, so far as the Scriptures inform us. Both were good men so far as we know them: both, so far as we know, were used of the Lord in accomplishing his purposes. Lincoln was led of divine providence and the exigencies of the war to proclaim the liberty of the slaves; – as a war measure, to enlist the sympathies of the millions of slaves for the Northern cause and to proportionately [R2485 : page 150] discourage the Southern cause. God's hand was behind Lincoln's course, unquestionably, and he did his part courageously and no doubt was brought into that place for that purpose and because he was such a man as the Lord could use.

But it is very doubtful if the honored President realized to what extent his Emancipation Proclamation was forced by divine providences.

With Joshua the case was different: he was not guided by *circumstances* and *necessities* of the war he was conducting, but was definitely directed respecting what should and what should not be done to the enemy. The matter was not left to his choice in any sense. Those against whom he fought had already been sentenced to destruction; because "the iniquity of the Amorites" had come to the full. – Compare Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:24,25; Deut. 9:4-6; 18:12.

The difficulty with Christian people, in re the destruction of the Amorites, lies in their misapprehension of the facts and of the future operation of the divine plan of the ages. They think of the slain Amorites as going to a hell of eternal torment; instead of which they went to *sheol*; of which the Scriptures declare, "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave [*sheol*], whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:10.) They think of Joshua as cutting short the probation of the Amorites to all eternity, whereas their probation for everlasting life had not begun; nor did such a probation for life or death everlasting come to anyone until after our Lord had redeemed all from the "curse" of Adam's transgression, by the sacrifice of himself.

Evidently the "key of knowledge" by which the divine plan may be understood is as thoroughly lost to the Doctors of Divinity of our day, as it was to the Doctors of the Law at the first advent. (Luke 11:52.) The people should know this and should seek the "key of knowledge." Seek, and ye shall find! Knock, and it shall be opened unto you!
