

## VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

A WRITER in the *Advance* facetiously points out the antagonism between the Bible and its true friends on the one side, and the Higher Critics on the other. But he does not seem to realize that the followers of these higher critics are in most of the pulpits and in the most influential pews of Christendom; – that the secret of the prevalent skepticism and indifference of professing Christians is *doubt*. It is not the loud and foul-mouthed infidelity of a century ago; but much more insidious and dangerous, because it has a "form of godliness" – much more deceptive to such as are sincere truth-seekers. The writer says: –

"Beyond any question some unknown writer gathered up the legends of his time and used them to describe a hero, whom he named Abraham. A later writer used the same legends, but he called his hero Isaac. Without doubt all these stories were invented to account for the supremacy of Israel over Edom." So said a Rev. Dr. in his 'lecture' to some fifty ladies of his church a few days since – in a Congregational church not far from Boston! At the close of the lecture, among others this question was asked: 'Doctor, do you believe that any such persons as Abraham and Isaac ever lived?' 'Well, I don't know,' replied the Doctor. 'It is quite possible that persons bearing those names have lived, but probably these names represent nations or tribes. I should say that the weight of best modern scholarship is against the theory that any such persons as Abraham and Isaac actually lived.'"

Being from the backwoods and not familiar with the "best modern scholarship," I was wont to exclaim, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it!"

What a pity that Isaiah could not have heard a course of lectures like these before he prophesied! Then he would have

been spared the mortification of making such a reference as we find in his prophecy – Chapter 41:8: "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend." And another blunder worse than the first: "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him!" But it may be that "the best modern scholarship" will discover, if indeed it has not already proven, that no such prophet as Isaiah ever prophesied or lived even! This would do much in clearing the way for a solid foundation for our faith!

It is a great pity also that Matthew could not have heard or read a few lectures concerning the "higher criticism" before he wrote his book; for he would have omitted the first chapter which has deceived so many ignorant souls since his time! A great many people have lived in times past and "fell on sleep" believing that in some way Jesus was descended from Abraham! Alas, what ignorance! Why could not the wise men of the East have discovered this new knowledge ages ago?

Moreover, what a help it would have been to Jesus if He could have known the "last word of our best modern scholarship!" He would not have been deceived, nor would he have deceived others by quoting from those "old legends," as He did in Matt. 22:32: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob!" Nor would He have said: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad. I say unto you before Abraham was I am." John 8:56,58. Then think of the unfortunate Stephen! Had he only known the results of "the best modern scholarship" he never would have spoken as he did in Acts 7:5 – and so might have saved his life! If he was ignorant or so foolish as to rehearse as true a lot of "legends" about people who never lived, why should not the multitude gnash on him with their teeth, stop their ears, run upon him with one accord, cast him out of the city and stone him to

death! James too was deceived and quoted as a fact a passage from those same "old legends": Jas. 2:23. [R2875 : page 292]

But the most deluded of all those poor, ignorant men, who lived and worked in the first century was Paul! How unhappy he must be even in heaven (if there is any heaven), if he now knows the "last word of best modern scholarship!" His ignorance first appears in quoting the same "old legend" that fooled James in his letter to the Galatians – 3:6. He repeats the myth in his letter to the Romans – 4:1-4. But worse than this, in the ninth chapter he digs up and palms off onto the innocent and unsuspecting Romans a whole string of "legends!"

Ah me! Four years of preaching and working does not seem to have brought any more light into his benighted mind! for then he wrote that strange epistle to the Hebrews! Who can read the eleventh chapter of that epistle in the light of "the best modern scholarship," with any degree of allowance for the ignorant writer?

Poor Paul! – To think of the sermons written and spoken from the "legends" quoted by Paul in that chapter is enough to give a man spiritual nightmare! And the preachers have believed those stories to be true, and so have deceived their flocks. "The blind leading the blind!" These deluded preachers have cited Abraham for an example of faith, living, saving faith, lo, these centuries past! And yet Abraham never lived! To buttress their sermons on prayer, these same preachers have quoted again and again Abraham's petitions as found in the "legends" recorded in Gen. 15, 17 and 18! What a debt of gratitude we owe to the "higher criticism," that our eyes have been opened and that with the very beginning of this glad new century "the best modern scholarship" has brushed away the myths and "legends" of the ages and given us a "new theology" founded upon the latest researches of "the higher criticism!"

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The serious feature of the matter is, that Christian people in general are but "babes" as respects a knowledge of God's Word, and hence liable to lose their little all of faith; especially when the doubts are suggested by their leaders, to whom they have been taught to look too implicitly for guidance in matters of faith.

The Word of God clearly shows us that so great a falling away from the faith is to be expected here, in the end of the age, as will justify our Master's words, – "When the Son of Man cometh [is *present*] shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8.) These are the "perilous times" mentioned by the Apostle, and of whose deceptions our Lord said, – "If it were possible [if they were not divinely aided] the very elect would be misled by them." – Matt. 24:24; compare 2 Thes. 2:10-12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

The only safe-guard for the Lord's people now is the "present truth" with which the Lord is so bountifully supplying the "table" of his fully consecrated people. God has so arranged the outward evidences respecting the Bible that the world and all who have the spirit of the world can find plenty to cavil at and stumble over. The Lord's intention was and still is that only from the *inside* can his Word and plan be seen in their true beauty and strength. He intends it to be "sufficient, that the *man of God* may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." But who are genuinely *men of God*, is the question. The difficulty is that many professing to be men of God are men of their own – not consecrated: and many of the consecrated are consecrated to a particular work or theory or sect instead of to God. Now the "hour of trial" has come which will show the real standing of each one professing godliness. God is now making it quite possible for every "man of God" to be thoroughly furnished, fully equipped, at the same time that he is permitting the Adversary to bring in error like a flood. – Isa. 28:2,18-20; 59:19.

In view of these conditions let all whose eyes are open, all who see where we are and what is coming, be alert first for themselves that they may be of the "brethren" who will see and be delivered, by giving the more earnest heed to the things which God has shown us, lest we let them slip; and secondly, for all who give any evidence of being "brethren," to assist them as much as lieth in us. Thus we may make our own calling and election sure, and minister *grace* to all with whom we come in contact. – 2 Pet. 1:10; Eph. 4:29.

### **THE OUTLOOK – WAR AND PROSPERITY.**

As our readers are aware, we credit the prosperity of the world during the past three years very largely to their wars, which have put hundreds of millions of dollars into circulation among the people, and stimulated manufacturing, shipbuilding, etc., at a cost of an increase of public debts, which, being put into the shape of negotiable bonds, is practically an increase in the world's circulating medium – money.

Our principal reason for looking for a further period of prosperity and inflation is, that in our judgment [**R2876 : page 292**] there is scarcely time enough to permit a panic and period of general prostration and then another period of prosperity and inflation and another panic, etc., by the time which we think the Scriptures indicate as the time for the great cataclysm of trouble; by which the present institutions of Christendom are all to go down in anarchistic chaos. The culmination of the trouble in October 1914 is clearly marked in the Scriptures;\* and we are bound therefore to expect a beginning of that *severe* trouble not later than 1910; – with severe spasms between now and then.

\*See **MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOLS. II., III.**

Should the severe trouble come in 1910 we may infer that it will be preceded by a period of gradual financial and social

disturbances, similar to those of the past, and leading on toward the condition of desperation then, or sooner, to be reached. For these reasons we expect the present wave of prosperity to roll on a little while: and since it could not do so without war, or something of the kind, to put more money and more bonds into circulation – therefore we look for war, possibly numerous small wars, possibly great ones. It is a time for wars and rumors of wars, and of crying Peace, Peace; but the end is not yet, – a more pronounced *federation* of Protestantism is first to be expected, and a consequent persecution of such as will refuse to worship it. [R2876 : page 293]

In harmony with the foregoing, read the following extract from that very conservative London journal, "*The Spectator*:" –

### **"THE LITTLE CLOUD."**

"One grand difficulty of the past, the insufficiency of useful products, is being rapidly obviated. The world is being searched for more pleasant things, and with the new facilities for intercommunication the search is well rewarded. As regards food, indeed, always the first of human preoccupations, the world has been pooled, and where absurd laws do not interfere bread is now so abundant and so cheap that the age-long ascendancy of those who by owning the soil controlled its production is threatened, and will probably disappear. It is more than probable that the speed of human transit, and the inherent power of the instruments used by man to lighten toil, will be enormously increased – a new and lighter accumulator of electricity would effect that at once – while it is possible that the fertility of the earth itself, the locked treasure-house of all things, may be materially increased. The energy of white mankind, relieved of many superincumbent weights, has been developed beyond precedent, and the highest men of science see dimly that even man's power of thinking may be enlarged by a comprehension of laws as great as gravitation

which are still hidden from his ken, but the filmy veil of which shows an inclination to disappear. The "rolling back of the heavens" in the fifteenth century, on which thinkers and rhetoricians have so often dilated, would hardly expand man's conceptions more than an accurate and fairly full comprehension of the nature and properties of the all-pervading though invisible substance which we have agreed to call the ether.

"In the midst of all these facts and prospects men remain silly, and a new and serious danger bewilders all who can think. The white world may fling its future away for the gratification of its spites and greeds. The nations have become conscious of each other, and they snarl. The fierce jealousies, the fiercer greediness, the distrusts fiercest of all, which in history are seen to have divided the dynasties, now divide the peoples. Each is as angry when it sees another gain anything as a dog when it sees a bone in another dog's mouth. Each thinks itself injured when another is enriched, and, what is worst of all, each believes in its heart that every other is plotting astutely and carefully to deprive all rivals of that which they possess.

"The new hunger for comfort, the new knowledge of the external world and the riches it contains, unite with the new freedom and rapidity of intercommunication to produce a hatred of rivals at least as strong as the ancient hatred of races or religions. Great nations are ready to fight to the death for transmarine acquisitions, for privileges of trading, and above all for profitable monopolies. Governments are forced to "interfere," usually with menace, to secure concessions for their subjects. The popular papers are full of profits about to be pilfered away. The more popular the representative the more angrily he pleads for objects which, in plainer language, are large profits to be reaped by his constituents. If the State buys anything abroad he is furious; if it is indifferent to a foreign tariff he is in despair; if it does not prevent a rival railway he asserts, and almost believes,

in treachery in his rulers. It is impossible for him to believe that the claims of others may be well founded, and the imputations in which he indulges resemble nothing so much as those of priests against heretics, or scholars against each other in the Middle Ages.

In short, while the Governments are tranquil the peoples hate each other to the point at which the maintenance of peace becomes daily a more difficult performance. The spirit infects all countries alike, even Great Britain, usually so free in her inner pride from any impulse either of envy or apprehension; and if it cannot be allayed there will in the end be war. And war in England or with America now fully included in the circle of jealousies, would mean the disappointment for half the century of all the hopes with which it begins, the waste of the new resources upon competitive and skilful killing, and the diversion of all powers of thought from conquests over Nature to conquests over each other. Everything, in fact, in the time is propitious except the nature of man, which in its new freedom from the pressure of suffering is allowing the freest play to some of his meanest instincts. So far as safety and progress are concerned, the world has gained little by the exchange of royal ambition as the driving force in politics for popular jealousy and greed."

### **WHAT OTHERS ARE COMING TO SEE.**

The "*Grocer's Criterion*" (Chicago) commenting on the fruit and vegetable scarcity resulting from the general drouth of the past Summer points out that this means deprivation to the poorer classes, and high prices for life's necessities, etc. It then concludes, –

"The cost of living everywhere will be enormously increased all over the country. With the coal trust putting up the price of coal and other trusts advancing the cost of the necessaries of life, the outlook for the masses is not very encouraging. The labor



situation has not improved and there is a growing feeling of discontent among the poorer classes in every manufacturing locality.

"We have been enjoying a long period of prosperity, but over-reaching greed will soon result in bringing about an industrial revolution. Success has turned the heads of ambitious promoters, and they desire to control and monopolize the business of the world, which will eventually end only in universal disaster. We believe that the beginning of the end of the present era is at hand. We look to see want, misery and suffering in the near future. We expect to hear of outbreaks, riots and bloodshed at almost any time, and the conditions are ripe for a bloody conflict between capital and labor.

"The long drought will tend to aggravate the parties to the present struggle.

"We can not reasonably expect the difficulties now existing to be soon amicably or justly settled. Greed is apparent and uppermost and is crushing labor with [R2876 : page 294] an iron hand; labor is struggling for its very life with a fair prospect of being overcome – yet there are no immediate signs of a panic. There may be a slumbering volcano beneath us, but it has not yet burst into fiery eruption. Business men everywhere are entrenching themselves to meet the emergency when it comes, and to this conservative policy we may attribute the present calmness in the commercial world and the absence of anything like a panicky feeling among business men."

*Watch Tower* and *Millennial Dawn* readers have seen the above conditions for these many years in the light of the divine Word. The Editor has been proclaiming these things for nearly thirty years. It is an evidence of the ripening of the matter when the worldly can see them without the secret light of God's Word, – clearly discernible only by the "royal priesthood" in the "holy"

place, in the light of "the golden candlestick." But our sorrow for the world in view of its coming catastrophe is mitigated by our knowledge of the grand results to be thus brought about under the administration of the coming Kingdom of Messiah. Praise God then even for "the day of wrath!"

## **PALESTINE'S MINERAL WEALTH.**

### COMMERCIAL AWAKENING OF THE HOLY LAND PROMISED UNDER THE TURKS.

Washington, Aug. 6. – The Department of State has received from Ernest L. Harris, Consular Agent at Eibenstock, a report on the mineral treasures of Palestine. The report says:

"Valuable mineral treasures have recently been discovered in Palestine, so it is safe to say that the industrial awakening of the Holy Land is no longer a dream. It is true that the greater part of the once flourishing country is a barren desert. The lines of communication are miserable, and traffic is unsafe, aside from the one railroad from Yafa to Jerusalem.

"The newly discovered mineral deposits lie on both sides of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. The salt deposits of the Dead Sea could be developed into an industry. The most important of all the deposits is [R2877 : page 294] phosphate. At present the phosphate mines of Florida almost supply the world's demand. The immense fields of phosphate to the east and west of the Jordan need only better means of traffic and communication in order to insure the development. This, it would seem, is not far distant, as the Turkish Government is planning a continuation of the Yafa-Jerusalem Railroad, and steamboats are already plying the Dead Sea."

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