

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

MAKING VOID THE WORD OF GOD BY YOUR TRADITIONS."

– MARK 7:13.

COMPARATIVELY FEW of the "common people" of Christendom realize how thoroughly the Word of God has already been rejected by the leading Doctors of theology. When, over twenty years ago, we pointed out from the Word of God that all classes of Christendom were about to be tested on the fundamentals of Christian faith, and that according to Psalm 91, a thousand would fall into unbelief to one who would stand faithful, some mocked – considering that no more absurd proposition could possibly be made. Apply this rule now to the 300,000,000 of Christendom and the number to stand would be 30,000.

In our last issue we noted that some candidates for ministerial office in the Presbyterian Church had publicly disowned belief in Adam and Eve as the first parents of our race – considering that portion of the Scripture mythical, unreal, untrue; and how the Elizabeth (N.J.), Presbytery finally passed such an one, – who purposes to become a missionary. Since then the subject has been considerably discussed in the secular and religious press, and so far as we have noted, generally in sympathy with the *unbeliever*; – generally in condemnation of those who called in question the unbeliever's right to acceptance as "orthodox." This is truly a peculiar world: any one who believes in the Second Coming of our Lord to be the King of earth, as foretold in the Scriptures scores of times, is "off-color," "tainted" or "non-orthodox," according to the bias of his critics. The man who denies eternal torment as both unreasonable and unscriptural, and who calls for proof texts from the Bible (not parable and symbolic statements, but literal), or who denies that the Bible offers immortality in any sense or condition to the wicked, and asks for proof texts, – is denounced as a

"heretic," as is also the man who declares that he believes in the Father and in the Son and in the Holy Spirit, and that these are *at one*, or in full harmony, but who denies that it can be true that they are *one in person*, or that the Scriptures so state, and invites proof texts. On the other hand, whoever professes to believe these things which the Bible does not teach, and which reason repudiates, and who denies the Bible record of creation, accepting instead the unscriptural theory of evolution, – that man is promptly labeled orthodox, and any unwilling to so concede are promptly denounced as unenlightened fossils. Surely this is what the Lord referred to as putting light for darkness and darkness for light – calling evil good, and good evil. – Isa. 5:20.

The following is from the comment of the New York *Independent*, one of the leading "orthodox" religious journals of the world: –

"We venture to say that there is not a competent educated professor of biology or geology in the obscurest Presbyterian college in the United States who believes that the Adam and Eve of Genesis were historical characters. One would have to rake all our colleges and universities with a fine-toothed comb to find such a teacher, and very few they would be. The belief, in scientific circles, of such an Adam and Eve is dead, and is no longer considered or discussed. Of course, the doctrine of a literal Adam lingers in popular belief, just as once did the belief in the world made in six literal days; but it is held by those who got their education a generation or two ago, or who never got any education at all. *The older men in the presbyteries, especially those who have, for one reason or another, dropped out of the educative stress of pastoral life, have not learned what the colleges now teach; and it is they that oppose their large ignorance to modern knowledge.*"

What plainer statement of present conditions could we ask? and from what higher authority could it come? Notice again the last sentence, which we have italicized: only old fogies – country

preachers and the unlearned – any longer believe the Bible to be God's revelation. To the "cultured" it is a book of fairy tales mixed with pessimistic nonsense of weeping prophets who never dreamed of the grand time coming when the trust-giants shall hold full sway and bring in the Millennium of wealth and aristocracy. Not knowing so much as these modern teachers, "higher critics," the prophets dreamed and wrote of [R3015 : page 164] a second coming of Christ, and of the establishment of a Kingdom of God under the whole heavens; – of a lifting up of the poor and the needy and a humbling of the great; – of a laying of righteousness to the line and justice to the plummet. Well, we prefer to be with the Lord and the Apostles: we prefer to believe "all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." – Acts 3:19-21.

The editor of the (New York) *Mail and Express*, not being a trained theologian and Doctor of Divinity, shows his "backwoods" ideas on the subject as follows: –

"It is one thing to say that the story of Adam and Eve is a myth, and quite another to say that it is false. Embodied in the Scriptural account in the first chapter of Genesis is the most profound bit of wisdom, the most searching dip into the springs of human action in the face of the great mystery of life and divinity that surrounds us, the most vivid revelation of the power of God and the helplessness, yet hopefulness of life, that all the world's literature has brought down to us. It is fundamental in many ways. That the guardians of religious doctrine should seek to hold neophytes to a belief in it is not to be wondered at.

"A myth is but old, old speech. All things are spoken in some shape before they are written. The myth is the spoken, elder Scripture. Not all myths are entitled to become Scripture; but this one was so entitled – and it is true. If anything possesses authority in this doubting age, this record does. There may be more wisdom in the act of simple

dominies who require rigid adherence to its letter than in the proceedings of those who treat it with flippant doubt."

This learned editor, in his anxiety to "straddle" the subject and to please both parties, has used the word *myth* in an unusual and unauthorized manner, which merely shows that he and others are well *shaken* in their credence of the Bible, tho not yet ready to abandon it completely. We quote the Standard Dictionary's definition of this use of the word *myth*, as follows: –

"A fictitious or conjectural narrative presented as historical, but without any basis of fact; hence, an imaginary or fictitious person, object, or event; as Santa Claus is a myth.

"The difference between *legend* and *myth* is now well known....The *myth* is purely the work of imagination, the *legend* has a nucleus of fact."

"*Synonyms, Antonyms and Prepositions,*" says: –

"A *legend* may be true, but can not be historically verified; a *myth* has been received as true at some time, but is now known to be false."

How long will it require for people to learn that the Bible is so thoroughly one, and its story one, that a repudiation of one part means the repudiation of the whole? For instance, some may reason that the truth or falsity of the story of Adam and Eve and their original perfection in their Eden home, has no bearing upon the general plan of salvation presented in the Scriptures; but in this they greatly err. If there was no *fall* from holiness and perfection, there could be no need of a Redeemer to *ransom* him and his posterity from such a condemnation; and the promised blessing of a restitution of man to Adam's primeval estate would be an absurdity.

But let the good work go on. For, as the Apostle said in his day, – "There must be heresies also among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest." (I Cor. 11:19.) Much more is this the case now: the "harvest" time of separating wheat from tares having come this seems to be the Lord's method of hastening it in its due season. "None of the wicked will understand, but the wise shall understand." (Dan. 12:10.) The wise toward God, counted fools by the wisdom of this world, will begin to open their eyes to the true situation as this breach grows wider. They will begin to "inquire for the old paths," and then will be in the right condition to hear and heed the true Shepherd's voice and to comprehend with all saints the divine plan of the ages. These ("not many") are hungry for it now, but are deterred by the misrepresentations of the shepherds of Babylon whom they trust too implicitly, – taking their word without proving it by the Word of the Lord.

RUSSIAN SOLDIERS REFUSE TO SHOOT AT MOB.

The following quotation from the London *Pall Mall Gazette*, indicates that already the great "European public school" (the standing army), is learning its lesson and getting ready for the coming conflict:

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"During the demonstration in the Hazan Square, in St. Petersburg, a detachment of infantry was called upon to fire upon the crowd. The men thrice refused to obey, and were marched back to barracks, no inquiry being subsequently held. Similar incidents have occurred elsewhere. With universal service, the army is only the people in uniform. Any popular feeling must, sooner or later, touch the army, and if the soldiers cannot be depended upon to shoot, the game of absolutism is up."

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THE NEXT GREAT RELIGIOUS AWAKENING.

The Rev. Dr. John Watson ("Ian Maclaren"), in a recent widely quoted sermon at the London Wesleyan Mission's anniversary, noted the fact that in late years great spiritual revivals have been lacking in England and that the present temper of mind is not prepared for such revivals. He went on to say that he believed we are on the eve of a great revival, but that it will be primarily a social revival, inspired by the religious spirit. What if God be calling on men, he asked, not to build more churches, but to secure better and purer homes for His people? To cleanse communities of liquor saloons and haunts of vice? To see that every man for whom Christ died should have a fair chance to do honest work with honest pay, and to have a home where he can live in decency with wife and children? May not these be the most efficient means to bring men into conscious fellowship with God?

The Rev. Dr. Josiah Strong, of New York, takes the same position in his new book, "The Next Great Awakening." All great religious revivals in the past, declares Dr. Strong, have come as the result of "the preaching of a neglected Scriptural truth which was precisely adapted to the peculiar needs of the times." Wesley and Whitefield, in an age in which religion seemed to be given over to outward and formal observances, preached the need of "conversion," the conscious beginning of a new spiritual life. Charles G. Finney, at a time when "the divine sovereignty of God was held in such a way as to destroy all appreciation of human freedom," thundered forth "the neglected **[R3016 : page 165]** truth of man's free-agency and guilt, and the retribution due to sin." Moody, following close upon the Civil War, when "millions of hearts were longing for consolation," preached "the love of God." And now, declares Dr. Strong, the church is on the verge of a new spiritual awakening:

"It is quite obvious that the great questions peculiar to our times are social. The industrial revolution has produced a social revolution; we have passed, within three generations, from an individualistic to a

social or collective type of civilization. Relations which a hundred years ago were few and simple are now becoming many and complex. New questions concerning rights and duties are being asked. Society is gaining self-consciousness, which marks one of the most important steps in the progress of the race. We are beginning to see that society lives one vast life, of which every man is a part. We are gaining what Walter Besant calls 'the sense of humanity.' We are discovering that life is something larger and farther related than we had thought; and with this perception of wider and multiplied relations comes a new sense of social obligations. That is, a social conscience is growing, though as yet it is uninstructed.

"The wonderful increase of wealth and of knowledge during the past century has served to create a new discontent and to kindle a new hope. It has transferred the golden age of the world from the past to the future; and this golden age, yet to come, constitutes a new social ideal.

"The social ideal of Jesus is precisely what is needed to inform and spiritualize and perfect this new social ideal, and the social laws of Jesus are precisely what is needed to educate the new social conscience."

Dr. Strong interprets the "social laws of Jesus" under three main heads, as follows:

(1) The Law of Service. Our substance, our time, our powers, our opportunities are all entrusted to us for service. Life itself is a sacred trust, and the whole life of every disciple of Christ is to be spent, like that of his master, in the service of the kingdom, and in hastening its full coming in the earth.

(2) The Law of Sacrifice. The spirit of sacrifice gives all, and longs for more to fill the measure of the world's sore need. It is the high prerogative of conscious and intelligent man to offer conscious and intelligent sacrifice. He receives according to his need that he may

give according to his ability; receives food that he may give strength, receives knowledge that he may give it forth as power.

(3) The Law of Love. This is the supreme social law, the great organizing, integrating power, precisely as its opposite, selfishness, is the great disorganizing, disintegrating, anti-social power. Disinterested love is divine; it is the love that God is, and makes possible Christian service and Christian sacrifice.

Dr. Strong proceeds to ask whether either church or society is making any serious attempt to realize these fundamental Christian laws, and he answers in the negative. "To be enthusiastic about the church in its present condition," he says, quoting the words of Professor Bruce, "is impossible." The church has become "a very respectable institution which must be 'sustained.'" It is doing "much to conserve the heritage of the past, but not much to mold the future." Dr. Strong continues: –

"Let us suppose a church somewhere, whose members have such an enthusiasm for humanity that when they lie awake nights they are planning, not how to make money, but how to make *men*. Their supreme desire is to help the world in general and their own community in particular. They are striving daily to remove every moral and physical evil; trying to give every child who comes into the world the best possible chance; longing and working and praying and spending themselves and their substance to save men from sin and ignorance and suffering. Let us suppose the whole church is co-operating to this end. What a transformation such a church would work in any community! How it would 'reach the masses'! How it would grow! How it would be talked about and written up! Men would make pilgrimages to study its workings and its success. Yet such a church ought not to be in the least degree peculiar. This is simply the picture of a church whose membership is imbued with the social ideal of Jesus, and has taken seriously his social laws of service, sacrifice, and love; and this picture ought to be the likeness of every Christian church

in every community. If it were, how many hours would it be before the kingdom would come with blessed fulness?" – *Digest*.

INEFFECTUAL LABORS AMONG NAVAJO INDIANS.

A Christian minister and his wife who left a Colorado pastorate six and a half years ago to do what they could to civilize and Christianize the Navajo Indians, gives the following report:

"We cannot either civilize or Christianize this tribe of Indians. We are not sure we can accomplish that for a single one of them. We cannot overcome the barriers of ignorance, superstition, barbarian language and physical contour of the country, that in every way prevents practical and effective evangelistic work. We cannot go beyond individual and domestic adaptabilities and limitations, which in so many ways determine our place and our calling.

"What we can do is to wait on God by prayer, believe his Word, follow him wholly, and try at least to prepare the way of the Lord in the hearts of the children, that he entrusts to our care. Perhaps, after a while we can have access to some of the older ones, through the children, or the children may be able to do it, when they have themselves learned the Gospel, and we have passed on to our reward.

"Will not our friends all pray often, that the Word of the Lord may have free course and God be glorified among this poor heathen people? And the work that we do, be wholly unto his pleasing, and the accomplishment of his will?

"We are not so much concerned over the question as to what good we can accomplish here, as we are about our own conformity to God's purposes and methods of work for us, and our appointed part in the fulfilment of his Word. It is his 'counsel that shall stand.' (Isa. 46:11.) He 'has spoken, and he will bring things to pass; He has purposed and he will do it.' If, therefore, we can only know, morning by morning, our place and work and really be co-laborers with him in the fulfilment

of his purpose; and if we will honestly and loyally 'walk as Jesus walked,' intent only on pleasing our Father, we shall feel that we have at least approximated the fulfilment of our calling, though to human sight it may seem that we have spent all our strength for nought, and all our labor has been vain."

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We heartily sympathize with these dear fellow-servants in their disappointment, but believe that their **[R3016 : page 166]** efforts and labors have not been in vain; – that they themselves have been blessed, because they self-sacrificingly have sought to do the Lord's will – to be co-laborers with him. We trust that they and others like them may soon learn "the way of the Lord more perfectly"; – may soon learn of the Divine plan of the ages. Then they will see that the poor Indians are in no danger of eternal torment; but will in God's "due time" (during the Millennium – I Tim. 2:6) be brought to a knowledge of the truth in a way they cannot bring it to them now. The same great plan of the ages will show them that our Lord Jesus and his apostles did not carry the gospel to the most degraded nations, but to the most intelligent people they could find. And that the gospel is intended now only to select an "elect" or bride class as their Master's joint-heirs in the coming Kingdom – who, jointly with their Lord, shall "bless all the families of the earth." But their labor, honestly tho not wisely spent, shall not be in vain in the Lord. He is speaking now to all such, and they will hear and will know the great Shepherd's voice. **[R3017 : page 166]**

ROME'S POSITION IN THE COMING CONFLICT.

In accord with the Pope's recent Encyclicals, Roman Catholic newspapers and clergy are seeking to unify all Roman Catholic societies, and to put them on more of a political basis; and are correspondingly opposing Labor societies and especially Socialism. The object evidently is to make every Catholic vote here count for the interests of Rome, as in Europe – only more so, on account of our more

liberal laws. A prominent Roman Catholic bishop recently expressed in public the conviction that ere long Catholics will be in practical control of the United States government. Nor was this an idle boast. If the Romanist vote can be controlled solidly by their clerics they could ask almost anything they please of politicians and be sure of getting it, – from one party if refused by another.

We are not to forget either that the Scriptures clearly show that Church influence (Protestantism cooperating with Catholicism) is soon to gain control of Christendom and rule the world with an iron hand. The combining of the Catholics may soon lead to semi-political combinations amongst Protestants – Good Citizenship Leagues, etc., for which Christian Endeavor, Epworth League and similar societies, are preparations. All this is in full accord with the desire now so prevalent to have a Church Trust or combine for the "control" of the world's spiritual interests. All this, as our constant readers well know, we consider part of the *evil* which the Lord is permitting, and which will result in the complete collapse of present institutions in anarchy; – preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven.

BISHOP QUIGLEY ON SOCIALISM.

As indicating the line of battle outlined, we quote from Bishop Quigley's address as printed in the *Catholic Union and Times*, Buffalo, N.Y., as follows: –

"As a political party Social-Democracy is a recent importation from continental Europe. Here, as there, its avowed object is the creation of a new order of things totally destructive of the existing social, political, and economic conditions under which we live. The attainment of this new order of things is to be effected by political agitation in the main, but revolutionary and violent methods are freely urged by its leading advocates as soon as the masses shall be sufficiently organized to cope with the powers of capital and class.

"Everywhere this movement is characterized by unbelief, hostility to religion, and above all, uncompromising and bitter hatred and denunciation of the Catholic Church. Its official programs, the platforms of its party conventions, the public utterances of its leading advocates, its newspaper organs and periodicals, breathe hatred and threats against revealed religion, its doctrines and institutions....

"Social-Democracy denies the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, eternal punishment, the right of private ownership, the rightful existence of our present social organization, and the independence of the church as a society complete in itself and founded by God. Therefore no Catholic can become a Social-Democrat. Therefore no Catholic can become a member of a Social-Democratic organization or subscribe for or in any way contribute to the support of a Social-Democratic newspaper organ."

THE REPLY OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

Under the caption, – "Shall the Church Rule the Labor Movement?" *The Worker* of New York City says: –

"The bishop's charge is a sweeping one. We now challenge him, as bishop or as honest man, to prove, not the whole, but one-hundredth part of what he has alleged. He can not do it, for it is not true. Our national party platform is printed in this paper; let readers search there for 'hatred, denunciation, and threats' against the Catholic Church or any other. We have in our ranks, not only men holding to the beliefs of Protestant churches, but men belonging to the same communion with Bishop Quigley and wearing the same cloth of priesthood. In the Socialist movement we ask no man his creed. We demand only his faithful adherence to the working class in its battle with the forces of capitalism....

"Bishop Quigley, let us advise you to reconsider your action. Your attack is an unprovoked one, for the Socialist party makes no attack upon you or your church or your beliefs. But if you persist in

the attack, let us tell you that there is no organization on earth that can fight as we can. Bismarck has measured strength with us, and failed. Russian czars and French dictators have tried to crush our movement, and they have failed. You will not succeed.

"There is nothing more fearful than the fires of religious prejudice and antagonism. We have sought to let them slumber till they should at last die out. Beware how you stir them up. The people of America are patient and good-natured; they endure much. But at heart – Catholic and Protestant and Jew and Atheist alike – they hold dear the principle of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. Once awake them and it will not be well for him who attacks that principle.

"The Democratic party may be afraid of you, bishop. The Republican party may be afraid of you. But the Socialist party is not afraid of you, because it is right, because it stands for all that is best in American history and in the world's history, and because it knows that, the fiercer your attack, the greater forces will you rally to our side."

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A PECULIAR ITEM FROM A CATHOLIC JOURNAL.

"How can we describe it so as to make it real! Some day this old earth will be perfect. Sin and wrong, passion and conflict, danger and weakness will be driven away, and only the good and the beautiful things will remain. Some day our powers will be unlimited and we can do just what we purely desire. No mistakes then in reaching the highest ideals! No failures in bringing the noblest sound with musician's finger, or the most glorious scenes from artist's brush! No misunderstandings or misconceptions, no criticisms to cut and hurt; for our work will be perfect. Some day our friendships will be rich and lasting and without disappointment, and heart will touch heart with an enduring love." – Rev. F. W. Tomkins.

WHAT HIGHER CRITICISM HAS DONE.

A writer in the *Washington Post*, summarizing an article on this subject in the *Outlook*, says, among other things, of the higher critics' *useful* (?) work, –

"The divinity of Christ is retained, but in a new sense. He is divine just as all men have that spark of divinity, although not to such a marked degree. His divinity rests not on proof texts of doubtful interpretation, but on the evident manifestation of his whole life.

"The plan of salvation is not founded on a vicarious sacrifice where God bargains to accept the punishment of the innocent for the sins of the guilty. Redemption is the result of repentance, a psychological process thoroughly logical, and in the light of human frailty perfectly adequate.

"Our faith in future life is not less firm, although our conception of immortality is not so clear. The wonders of the hereafter, so vivid to the Indian, who believes in his happy hunting grounds, do not present themselves in a definite form, and this may seem to many a distinct loss. Its compensation is found, however, in the fact that we do not regard the attainment of heaven our only aim in life. Right for right's sake, with the barter element eliminated, cannot be less noble than living up to the best that is in us, with the hope of reward or the fear of punishment continually hanging over us."

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We can see no reason in the world why any infidel or agnostic in the world should object to Higher Criticism; but we do see every reason in the world why true Christians who trust for salvation in "the precious blood of Christ" should disown all fellowship and brotherhood with such unbelief. Yet some good men as well as many others, have fallen into this error: the only safeguard against it to a reasonable mind is the Divine Plan of the Ages. We must do all in our

power to get it into the hands and heads and hearts of such before the error catches them; for those who once get the poison of human philosophy into their hearts, and reject the ransom, are, so far as observation goes, beyond help in the present age.

