

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER. LYNCHINGS PRECURSORY TO ANARCHY.

THE prevalence of an anarchious spirit has for some time past been manifesting itself in the lynching of reputed criminals. The law-supporting and law-defying elements seem to clash in some men's minds, and the lynchers merely try to gratify both at one time. They gratify their desire to violate law and still their consciences with the thought that they are meting out justice. Doubtless the same mixture of sentiment accompanied the religious stake-burnings and rackings of the past; the victims were declared by high Church dignitaries to be "heretics," propagators of "monstrous doctrines," "injurious to the Church and the State." To the ignorant these charges justified any and every torture in their destruction. Doubtless there would again be danger to those dubbed "*unorthodox*" were it not for the Babel of doctrine now prevailing, which renders it difficult to determine where the lines of "orthodoxy" could be drawn to the satisfaction of a great majority. Who knows that in the near future, under the proposed *consolidation* of Christian religions (which we have for the past twenty years predicted from the Scriptures, and which comes closer yearly), this condition may not be reached – that mobs may not burn "heretics"? The Scriptures lead us to expect some such anarchistic conditions now, – preceding the establishment of the Kingdom.

THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS ON MOB VIOLENCE.

Governor Durbin of Indiana not only called out the state militia to suppress a lynching, but under his commands the mob was scattered with considerable loss of life. The President of the United States, in an open letter, thanked him for his vindication of the law. We make liberal extracts from his letter as follows: –

My Dear Governor Durbin: –

Permit me to thank you as an American citizen for the admirable way in which you have vindicated the majesty of the law by your recent action in reference to lynching. I feel, my dear sir, that you have made all men your debtors who believe, as all far-seeing men must, that the well-being, indeed the very existence, of the republic depends upon that spirit of orderly liberty under the law which is as incompatible with mob violence as with any form of despotism. Of course mob violence is simply one form of anarchy; and anarchy is now, as it always has been, the handmaid and forerunner of tyranny.

I feel that you have not only reflected honor upon the state which for its good fortune has you for its chief executive, but upon the whole nation. It is incumbent upon every man throughout this country not only to hold up your hands in the course you have been following, but to show his realization that the matter is one of vital concern to us all.

All thoughtful men must feel the gravest alarm over the growth of lynching in this country, and especially over the peculiarly hideous forms so often taken by mob violence when colored men are the victims – on which occasion the mob seems to lay most weight, not on the crime, but on the color of the criminal. In a certain proportion of these cases the man lynched has been guilty of a crime horrible beyond description; a crime so horrible that as far as he himself is concerned he has forfeited the right to any kind of sympathy whatsoever.

The feeling of all good citizens that such a hideous crime shall not be hideously punished by mob violence is due not in the least to sympathy for the criminal, but to a very lively sense of the train of dreadful consequences which follow the course taken by the mob in exacting inhuman vengeance for an inhuman wrong. In such cases, moreover, it is well to remember that the criminal not merely sins against humanity in inexpressible and unpardonable fashion, but sins

particularly against his own race, and does them a wrong far greater than any white man can possibly do them....

Moreover, every effort should be made under the law [R3241 : page 356] to expedite the proceedings of justice in the case of such an awful crime. But it cannot be necessary in order to accomplish this to deprive any citizen of those fundamental rights to be heard in his own defense which are so dear to us all and lie at the root of our liberty. It certainly ought to be possible by the proper administration of the laws to secure swift vengeance upon the criminal; and the best and immediate efforts of all legislators, judges and citizens should be addressed to securing such reforms in our legal procedure as to leave no vestige of excuse for those misguided men who undertake to reap vengeance through violent measures....

But even where the real criminal is reached, the wrong done by the mob to the community itself is well nigh as great. Especially is this true where the lynching is accompanied with torture. There are certain hideous sights which when once seen can never be wholly erased from the mental retina. The mere fact of having seen them implies degradation. This is a thousand fold stronger when instead of merely seeing the deed the man has participated in it. Whoever in any part of our country has ever taken part in lawlessly putting to death a criminal by the dreadful torture of fire must forever after have the awful spectacle of his own handiwork seared into his brain and soul. He can never again be the same man.

This matter of lynching would be a terrible thing even if it stopped with the lynching of men guilty of the inhuman and hideous crime of rape; but as a matter of fact lawlessness of this type never does stop and never can stop in such fashion. Every violent man in the community is encouraged by every case of lynching in which the lynchers go unpunished to himself take the law into his own hands whenever it suits his own convenience.

In the same way the use of torture by the mob in certain cases is sure to spread until it is applied more or less indiscriminately in other cases. The spirit of lawlessness grows with what it feeds on, and when mobs with impunity lynch criminals for one crime, they are certain to begin to lynch real or alleged criminals for other causes....

The nation, like the individual, cannot commit a crime with impunity. If we are guilty of lawlessness and brutal violence, whether our guilt consists in active participation therein or in mere connivance and encouragement, we shall assuredly suffer later on because of what we have done. The corner stone of this republic, as of all free governments, is respect for and obedience to the law. Where we permit the law to be defied or evaded, whether by rich man or poor man, by black man or white, we are by just so much weakening the bonds of our civilization and increasing the chances of its overthrow, and of the substitution therefor of a system in which there shall be violent alternations of anarchy and tyranny. Sincerely yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

LAWLESSNESS ON THE INCREASE.

On this subject the *Jewish Exponent* says: –

"'The earth was filled with violence.' (Gen. 6:11.) Are these words less true today than they were in the days of which the Bible speaks? Mob violence, race hatred, the subjugation of weaker nations – these things are accepted almost as matters of course by a large section of humanity. Each outbreak of lawless violence furnishes the fuel to kindle anew the flames of passion and of hatred, until respect [R3242 : page 356] for law and authority is derisively mocked at and whole communities bow in helpless impotence before the cruel, brutal instincts of the unbridled mob.

"The truth of the matter is that all good men must have the courage of their convictions and their religious professions in instilling the lesson of respect for the law. The mob that burns a negro

at the stake, even though he be guilty of the most heinous crime; the officer of high rank who ruthlessly orders his subordinates to burn and kill, even when a state of insurrection prevails; the private soldier who applies the fiendish water-cure to an uncommunicative prisoner – all these are alike enemies of human society. To condone their offense is simply an invitation for the inauguration of the reign of lawlessness, which in the end must result in the triumph of anarchy and the rule of the unreasoning mob. Failure to visit condign punishment for such offenses must eventually result in the paralysis of legal and orderly forms of government. 'Cruel and unusual punishment' is forbidden by the Constitution of the United States, which therein speaks not only the language of governmental authority, but voices the divine protest against man's inhumanity to man.

"The questions arising out of these recurrent exhibitions of lawlessness go to the root of all religious and ethical principles. To ignore them is the worst form of religious cowardice. To excuse or defend outbreaks against the fundamental law is the most dangerous because it is the most insidious form of treason. Civilized society cannot exist where offenders against the laws of the state are not tried calmly, fairly, dispassionately; nor can religion exercise its proper influence over the consciences of men unless it teaches them imperatively to yield a ready obedience to the constituted authorities. This is a lesson that all sections of the people must learn. Unless they learn it speedily, dark and sorrowful days are in store for those who love their fellow-men."

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The Apostle foretold that evil men and seducers would wax worse and worse, and that disobedience to parents, headiness, boastfulness, and love of pleasure more than love of God, would mark nominal Christian sentiment in the end of this age. And if so, what wild excesses may we not anticipate from those who have not even

"the form of godliness"? The Scriptures clearly indicate that the result will be world-wide anarchy – lawlessness.

For three reasons all who are of the Truth should be specially on guard that the influence of their every word and act should be in accord with law and order and peace. (1) It is the command that each shall so far as possible "live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18), and be not a "brawler" nor a "striker" nor a "busybody." (Titus 3:2; 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:15.) (2) Such "moderation" (Phil. 4:5) will commend the gospel we preach and give us the greater influence in its service. (3) The time may come when the mob spirit will be incited against us as it was incited against the apostles and other early Christians. And although **[R3242 : page 357]** we should rejoice in a martyr's death if God so willed, we should do nothing to encourage or abet such lawlessness. The Master's word is, "In your *patience* possess ye your souls!"

WAR IN MACEDONIA, BULGARIA AND TURKEY.

Present appearances are that war has started in earnest in the Balkans, and no human being can say where it will end. To us it appears wholly political, and not a war against Christians by Mohammedans. So far as we are able to judge the Christianity of that region is of a merely nominal sort. The *Gazette* gives a fairly good summary of the situation as follows: –

"Bulgarian and Macedonian agitators have perpetrated continuous outrages in the hope of inflaming the masses, and apparently they have succeeded in exhausting Turkish patience. The Turk has only been restrained up to the present time by the order of the Powers to keep hands off Bulgaria and to introduce prescribed reforms in Macedonia. The cables now indicate that the Turk has thrown off this restraint and proposes to at once inaugurate a campaign of pillage and slaughter, inciting fanatical Mohammedans to exterminate the Christian trouble-makers.

"This war of extermination is exactly what the Bulgarian agitators have been trying to bring about. They do not believe that Russia and Austria will permit the Turks to annihilate the Christian population of the Balkan states. Their program is first to have Bulgaria declare war in behalf of the Macedonians and to keep the turmoil going until Russia or Austria, or possibly both, shall intervene. Their ultimate object is to have the Balkan territories taken from Turkish rule, and it is not improbable that Turkey's resolution to begin active operations will lead to that result. The Powers have not wanted to be mixed in the matter, but they may find it impossible to stay out, for once the Turk is started he knows neither reason nor humanity.

"If Russia becomes involved, there is little doubt it will endeavor to make Turkey pay as the price of hostilities the surrender of Constantinople and the Bosphorus. That will let Russia down to the Mediterranean. It has long desired to reach that goal. It was prevented from securing it at the conclusion of the last war with Turkey by the interference of the other Powers of Europe. Since then it has avoided conflict in order to develop its financial position and industrial resources. But if Russia is forced to fight for the restoration of peace on its Balkan borders it will not be cheated again. It will take over the direct management of the turbulent territory, and it will take along with that troublesome charge its coveted outlet to the southern sea. Hence the situation may fairly be regarded as a very serious one."

BURNED LIVE KITTENS.

HUMANE SOCIETY CHARGES A WOMAN WITH A HORRIBLE ACT OF CRUELTY.

Mrs. Fannie Salmosky of No. 1534 Pike street is charged with cruelty to animals by Humane Agent Edward Thompson before Alderman G. F. Oyer. It is said that on Wednesday some boys put a grape basket in her yard containing five small kittens. The woman heard the kittens crying, and after locating them in the basket ordered

her little son to put the basket in a fire that was burning in the street. The boy took the basket and threw it in the flames. The kittens began to feel the heat of the basket burning and set up a loud cry. The woman was arrested and gave \$300 bail for a hearing.

– Pittsburg *Gazette*.

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Does it not seem remarkable that, in our day, when such anti-cruelty sentiments so generally prevail and the cruelties of the dark ages are so generally condemned, that the creeds of those times still have their votaries, who somehow consider that they honor God in ascribing to him a character for cruelty and cruel designs against his human creatures such as quite overshadow the meanest cruelties known to the most depraved of earth? Oh, shame! Let God be true though it prove every creed of men a lie! Let us get back to the Bible and assure ourselves that the Lord is truthful when he says: "Their fear is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of men." – Isa. 29:13.

A reexamination of the subject will show that misconceptions of the Bible's teachings are built upon an unconscious violation of language which makes of such words as perish, lost, lose life, destroy, death, etc., mean their very *opposites*, viz., preserve in torture everlastingly. When we learn to give words their true meaning, and learn that in parables the fire is as symbolic as the sheep and goats and wheat and tares; and that the Book of Revelation is wholly symbolic, and that its "lake of fire and brimstone" is *explained* to mean "the Second Death" (Rev. 20:14), then our eyes will begin to see out of the smoke and confusion of mystic Babylon. Then we can see God's true character, and love and praise him with our whole heart.

"DANCING PREFERRED TO DEVOTION."

Prof. Goldwin Smith, whose repute as a man of letters is world-wide, remarks as follows: –

"Methodism in England is downcast at finding that the increase of the Church has only been one per cent. Leaders complain that zeal is growing cold, that whist is preferred to class meetings, and dancing to devotion. The original enthusiasm, which wrought such wonders in its day, has done its work and is now spent. There is no use and there is considerable danger in struggling to keep up the hollow forms of it. The ordinary man must have pleasure, whist, valseing or whatever it may be; without it not only would life be dreary, but character would sour. A reasonable share of it in innocent forms is almost as necessary as food. Nor does it interfere with spiritual life, if by spiritual life is meant a life of aspiration to a character superior to our animal wants and desires. The [R3242 : page 358] Methodist Church on this continent seems to have recognized the fact, and to be cultivating in various ways the element of social enjoyment in the religious union. Its danger here, and a serious danger, is that into the place of spiritual aspiration may creep social and political ambition."

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