

## **VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.**

### **SIGNS OF DEGENERATION.**

**"LOVERS OF PLEASURE MORE THAN LOVERS OF GOD."  
– 2 TIM. 3:4.**

DR. HALL, President of Union Theological Seminary, New York, declared recently: –

"We all rejoice in the remarkable growth and the excellent features of American civilization, and we are pleased at the relatively good state of the commonalty of the people, but a deeper examination of the social side of our American life reveals a situation that causes anything but satisfaction.

"It is a matter of consternation and deep concern to us that the moral standard of American life is deteriorating. In the hustle and bustle of every-day activity we have astonished the world, but morally we are rapidly going astern – so rapidly that one is dumfounded at the contrast of a visit to some of the countries of the Old World.

"I am an optimist through and through, but I am not a stoneblind optimist. I feel and I know from observation that religion has little, if any, part in our American civilization today. This is a lamentable state of affairs, and it behooves each and all of us to do all we can to help stem this tide of indifference. Our home life is not what it should be, and it is not to be wondered at when we realize the general apathy of the people as regards their spiritual welfare."

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Doctor Hall should have expected just such results from the teaching of Evolution and Higher Criticism in "Union" and other Theological Seminaries. And it is only beginning, too. For twenty

years the Doctor and his coadjutors have been sowing the seed of unbelief: now they are surprised at the first samples of the crop. They have failed to gauge up the ordinary layman as more *honest* than their clerical brethren: when they lose faith in the Bible and supernatural religion they will soon drop the forms and ceremonies associated therewith. Some clerical higher critics and agnostics would do the same were they not looking for honor and "gain every one from his own quarter," or denomination. – Isa. 56:11.

### **THE PRAYER-MEETING TEST.**

"It is a common thing in village and rural districts to find churches where the prayer meeting has not even a name to live. It is just as common to find in towns and cities among the larger churches where the membership goes up into the hundreds to find, comparatively speaking, a handful of people, mostly women, gathered in the weekly prayer-meeting, when scores if not hundreds might reasonably be expected to be present. The situation is one of concern, if not of alarm, and unless a remedy is soon found, that meeting of the Church which above all others is vital to its life and work will have gone out of existence. We do not believe that either the necessity for the prayer meeting or its genuine usefulness has gone, but we are persuaded that many of our people need to be reconverted regarding its responsibility and value to themselves and the community in which they live."

– *Canadian Baptist.*

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Yes, the prayer-meeting test is a good one. Wherever true Christians find it possible to meet for mid-week communion with the Lord and with each other, they will surely have pleasure in so doing. The Spirit of the Lord will constrain them and his Word will encourage them, – "Where two or three of you are met in my name, there am I in the midst."

We are glad to say that the Allegheny congregation has this evidence of spiritual life. Six meetings of this nature are held every Wednesday evening in the various districts contiguous to Allegheny. The attendance ranges from seven to thirty, and those most regular in attendance are usually the most earnest and most spiritually alive. Our hope is that this love of prayer and praise and communion with each other on [R3449 : page 324] spiritual themes and experiences of the week may be more and more a characteristic of all of "this way" – of all WATCH TOWER readers.

### **CONGREGATIONALISTS ALARMED.**

"Congregational leaders, especially those in the West, are alarmed over the showing just reported made by their body in the states of Illinois, Iowa and Michigan. In all three states Congregationalism lost in membership last year, and in two of them in Sunday-school attendance. The leaders referred to are pointing out to their brethren that in these states conditions are best fitted of all states, New England not excepted, for Puritan growth. Yet there has been less. The membership in all states is 120,000 in round figures, or a little more than one-sixth of the entire Congregational membership, and almost exactly the membership of the same body in Massachusetts. These leaders are asking the cause and the remedy. The former they give as too much higher criticism and too little real religion. They point out that these states are filled with educational institutions."

– *Secular Press.*

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The thing which seems to strike the alarm bell in religious clerical circles is any sign of falling off in numbers. That is a sore spot. It means fewer preachers or less salaries, and naturally awakens alarm. The numbers and wealth are too great now. If the "wheat" could only get together and study God's Word and learn something

of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the great divine plan of the ages and the love which it exemplifies, they would be blest richly, and the great bulk of well-meaning but unconsecrated and unbelieving tares could better be dispensed with. "Fear not, little flock." "Not many great or wise or noble hath God chosen" – to be heirs of the Kingdom which shortly now will be set up in power and great glory to bless the "tares" and "all the families of the earth."

### **THE PANIC OF 1913.**

"There is something almost uncanny in the thought that panics in the financial and commercial world have a habit of recurring at such regular intervals that, if not prevented, we, here in the United States, are doomed to suffer another cataclysm in the business world in 1913. It would seem that, given [R3450 : page 324] nine years' warning, we ought to be able to forestall such a catastrophe. Yet we are stared in the face by the fact that during the last one hundred years the United States has been visited by periodical convulsions of the kind described, at intervals of almost exactly twenty years, with premonitory symptoms of derangement at or about midway intervals. The first real panic in the domestic commercial world in the nineteenth century was in 1814 – the outcome of the war of 1812, the exclusion laws and the embargo; the next was in 1837-39, following the United States Bank convulsion, wild-cat banking and speculation in land, with 33,000 resultant failures, more than three times the average annual total today; after that came the big reversal of 1857, consequent on over-expanded banking credits and tariff legislation; and next, the disturbance of 1873, caused by over-speculation following the civil war; and finally, the most serious panic in our history, in 1893, due to over-extended credits in commercial and other lines. Punctuating these five plunges into the region of unreasoning fright there were minor panics: those of 1818, 1826 and of 1829, due to tariff legislation upsetting business; that of 1848, which was a reflection of the disturbed conditions in Europe; one in 1864, which was lost sight of by the turmoil incident to the closing

year of the War of the Rebellion; the Eastern commercial and banking credit derangement in 1884, the echo of the Barings' failure in 1890, and last, but not least, among these disturbances of a so-called minor class, the wrenching liquidation or deferred panic of 1903. This brief review makes it plain that some not well-understood psychological or sociological law has, for a century past, exercised an unerring influence to produce the cycles of prosperity, panic and liquidation which have scared the domestic business world. It likewise emphasizes, in a way that should come home to every banker and business man, that in 1913 it is certain that the twenty-year variety or major panic will be due. There was not much in the Mississippi or South Sea Bubble enterprises which was not duplicated in kind at least in that which underlay the violent liquidation in prices of securities that so marred the fortunes of millions in the year just elapsed. The theory has grown apace, in view of the liquidation without panic in 1903, that with stronger and bigger banks, chains of banking houses, clearing houses, combinations of industries and mercantile enterprises, panics may be prevented, just as civilization has found panaceas for various ills to which the flesh is heir. But fright, which is the basis of panic, is like a thief in the night. It may seldom be foreseen. No solvent bank or merchant could meet all its or his obligations if asked for peremptorily, at the instant. The undue expansion of credits, by either, in proportion to reserves, in an emergency, is always likely to precipitate a crisis, after which the house of cards falls. The dangers of company promotion, over-capitalization, undue expansion of credits have been and still are too often overlooked. Nine years is a long while in which to prepare to avoid a given contingency. It also furnishes time in which to grow prosperous and careless, and in which to forget."

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The above clipping, we believe, is from *The Saturday Evening Post*. We print it not for its own sake as an item merely, but also because it so closely coincides with our expectations, based on the

divine Word – regarding the ending of "Gentile Times" in October, 1914, when will follow the "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation;" – the anarchious period which will in divine providence be followed by the Kingdom rule of everlasting righteousness.

Our readers will recall that for the past two years we have expressed the opinion that there would not [R3450 : page 325] be time for a general panic and its following years of depression and then another gradual rise and another panic before 1914, and that we therefore looked for only a temporary lull of the world's prosperity now (such as is now being experienced) followed by a period of reasonable prosperity of growing proportions lasting for some years. We advise the consecrated, however, to take heed not to be overcharged by cares of this life and the pursuit of riches. Seek first the Kingdom. So long as we can realize ourselves *heirs* of it we can feel "rich toward God." "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

### **THE TREASURES OF ETHIOPIA.**

It has long been known that King Menelek of Abyssinia, Africa, claims to be a lineal descendant of Solomon through the Ethiopian Queen of Sheba; but the evidences of this have only recently been discovered by H. LeRoux, a French scientist. LeRoux obtained permission to visit the islands of the Sacred Lake, where he discovered, in a semi-ruined monastery, documents written on ancient paper parchments (papyri) dating back to the time of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon and ascribing to him the paternity of the first King Menelek.

Our informant declares that LeRoux is in great favor with the king, or negus, Menelek, and has been granted permission to negotiate the construction of a railroad into Abyssinia and to make further explorations on the islands of that sacred lake, Zonai. These islands, which, until the day when visited by LeRoux, had never been

seen save in the distance by any white man, are dotted with ancient monasteries, most of them in ruin, and only a few of them inhabited by ignorant monks, who have no knowledge or power to comprehend the importance of the treasures that are contained within the walls of their abode. For it is known that at the time of the great Mohammedan invasion about 400 years ago, all the sacred relics and the treasures of the nation, all the historical records and, in fact, everything of value, was bundled off to the monasteries on the island of Zonai and concealed therein order to protect them from being carried off and destroyed by the Moslems.

It is a matter of tradition in Abyssinia and of belief in the scientific world of Europe that the original Jewish Ark of the Covenant, containing the Mosaical stone of Tables of Law and all the other treasures of the Temple of Solomon, which disappeared from Jerusalem at the time of the so-called Jewish captivity, were despatched by the Jewish high priests for safety to Abyssinia. It is generally believed that the Ark of the Covenant, along with all the other relics contained in the holy of holies of the Temple of Solomon, will be found in some of these monastery islands of Lake Zonai.

### **JAPAN AND CHRISTIANITY.**

That the Japanese are not becoming Christianized but merely civilized, note the views of a Japanese university professor, quoted in the *Booklovers' Magazine* as follows: –

"Our empire has salted all the seas that have flowed into it. The West cannot hope to Christianize Japan when our ambition is to Japanize Christianity, and to carry the new doctrines, the gospel of rational ethics, to the millions of Asia, and, in time, to all the world. We shall go to China – in fact, we are already there – with a harmonious blending of the best precepts in Buddhism, Confucianism, Bushido, Brahmanism, Herbert Spencer, Christianity and other systems of thought, and we shall, I think, have little trouble in awakening the naturally agnostic mind of the Chinese to the

enlightenment of modern free thought. What the Far East needs is a religion as modern as machinery. We have had more gods than were good for us. We believe that a cosmopolitan gospel, tolerating the existence but minimizing the potency of prayers, offerings, shrines, temples, churches, litanies and gods, and dwelling more on the time that now is and the relation of man to man, will create a wonderful reformation in Asia. We confidently believe that it has been assigned to Japan to lead the world in this new intellectual era in the progress of mankind."

