

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

HAPPY NEW YEAR, 1905.

GREETINGS, dear fellow Watchers! The great clock of Time marks another cycle, and shows us another day's march nearer Home – nearer to our "change," and contact fellowship with our Savior – nearer to the Kingdom and its blessings for all the families of the earth.

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!"

But, though thus rejoicing in the flight of time, it is not with us as with many of the poor world when they would express themselves similarly, perhaps at the moment meditating suicide. No, indeed! The love of Christ makes fresh our hearts, as a fountain ever springing, so that to the true children of God every day has the Christian's secret of a happy day and every year the same. We are greatly enjoying the present, with its songs and sighs, its pleasures and disappointments, its joys and discouragements, while waiting for and with the eye of faith looking for "That blessed hope, the glorious revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," and the wonderful riches of divine grace and blessing then to be showered upon the world of mankind under the New Covenant.

"It makes each trial blest" to realize that it is one of the "all things" promised to work for good to the Lord's Spirit-begotten children, who are being prepared for joint-heirship with their Lord in the great Kingdom which soon is to bless and uplift Adam and all his race. This is the secret which none but the blood-washed and consecrated, the spirit-begotten, can "comprehend." (Eph. 3:18.) These alone are able truly to sing: –

"Yes, happy every day has been

Since I am His and He is mine.
He leads me and I follow on
Directed through the Word divine."

Not that we are absolutely pure and perfect, any of us (except "pure in heart," pure in our intentions and desires), but that we by faith realize that our Redeemer's merit covers us, and permits us, if overtaken of a fault unwillingly, to apply for a share of the merit of "the blood" to cleanse our wedding garment from spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that our communion and fellowship with our Lord be never hindered except for a moment as it were.

Let us start the New Year properly, remembering the Apostle's words: "Set your affections on things above;" – not on earthly things. If they slip away through earthly attractions reset them, time and time again. Gradually they will become more strongly attached to the heavenly things; – gradually we will come to appreciate both more truthfully and find that –

"The joys of earth of little worth
Should not confine our thoughts to earth.
Why grasp at transitory toys
So near to heaven's eternal joys?"

Many adopted our suggestion of a text for 1904 with great profit, and now we suggest one for the year 1905 as follows:

1905 – MOTTO TEXT – 1905

***"Wisdom is the Principal Thing:
Therefore get Wisdom." – Prov. 4:7***

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***"The Wisdom that is from Above
is first Pure,
Then Peaceable, Gentle, Easy of Entreatment,***

***Full of Mercy and Good Fruits."* – Jas. 3:17**

Let us as "Children of the Highest" give earnest heed to the heavenly counsel as the essence of Wisdom. No matter how far advanced we may be in Christian character it will make us better to give earnest heed to this wisdom; – better husbands and wives, better parents and children, better colaborers, friends and neighbors! Let us be wise toward God, whatever fellowmen may consider us. [R3479 : page 4]

"THEY WILL ACCUSE ME OF HERESY."

These words are becoming quite familiar to those who get a glance at the public press reports. Yesterday it was Rev. S. T. Carter, D.D., who thus feared as he addressed the Nassau Presbytery, telling them that he no longer believes the Bible narrative of the fall in Eden, and a divine curse in consequence, and the need of a Redeemer to effect atonement for the sin and to again open to man a way of life: today it is Rev. Lyman Abbott, D.D., a Congregationalist, who expresses the same fear to Harvard College students, while telling them of his abandonment of the very same doctrines. How it shocks us to hear these aged veterans tell that they are no longer soldiers of the cross and followers of the Lamb. The cross to them was needless and the Lamb's blood was unnecessary.

But there is a ridiculous side to this serious question. These aged Christian ministers intimate to us that for a long time they have had their *unbelief*; – for a long time they have been too cowardly to confess it; – for a long time therefore they have hypocritically posed as believers when they were unbelievers! Alas that such a view of their course is the only one possible. Alas that we must fear that there are others in the pulpits of Christendom, many of them, equally pharisaical.

Rev. Carter feared that the Nassau Presbytery would accuse him of heresy! Is that meant as a joke? Does not this learned doctor of

divinity know the meaning of the word *heretic*? Did he claim that he is not an heretic and fear that the Presbytery would be falsely accusing him by calling him one? Let us see what the word heretic means, in plain English. We take the *Standard Dictionary's* definition: –

"Heretic (theological def.) An actual or former member of a Church, or one whose allegiance is claimed by it, who holds religious opinions contrary to the fundamental doctrines or tenets of that Church."

[R3480 : page 4]

This fits Dr. Carter's case exactly. He admits that he no longer believes the fundamental teachings of the Presbyterian Church, and that he no longer believes the fundamental teachings of the Bible respecting sin and its atonement, etc. He is a heretic, therefore, not only to the Presbyterian Church but also, and more important by far, he is a heretic toward God and "the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven."

But Dr. Carter's fears were groundless: Nassau Presbytery by a good majority decided that to brand him a *"heretic"* would be to brand the Presbytery the same. To say that Dr. Carter had been acting the hypocrite for years would be to charge themselves with the same dishonesty. So Dr. Carter's practical endorsement by Nassau Presbytery (one of the most influential in the land) must be understood by thinking people to mean that Nassau Presbytery is either totally or by majority composed of heretics who do not stand for the fundamentals of religion, neither as expressed in the Bible, God's standard, nor as expressed in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, which they have vowed to uphold and teach.

IS AN ATHEIST A HERETIC?

Dr. Lyman Abbott's pronunciamento has been published broadcast, but we give a liberal extract from it from the Pittsburg *Dispatch*, as follows: –

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Dec. 18. – Leaning far out over the pulpit in Appleton Chapel, his long white beard and flowing gown making him look like a veritable patriarch, Dr. Lyman Abbott, in a sermon to Harvard students to-night, broke away from the theology which to-day forms the basis of the faith of millions of orthodox Christians, and sounded the keynote of a new religion founded, not on the Bible, but on science and the out-reachings of the human heart.

"I wonder," he said, "if you students in Harvard will understand me when I say that I no longer believe in a great first cause. Tomorrow the newspapers will get hold of this and brand me as a heretic. My God is a great and ever-present force, which is manifest in all the activities of man and all the workings of nature.

"I believe in a God who is in, and through, and of, everything – not an absentee God, whom we have to reach through a Bible or a priest or some other outside aid. Science, literature and history tell us that there is one eternal energy, that the Bible no longer can be accepted as ultimate, that many of its laws were copied from other religions, that the Ten Commandments did not spring spontaneously from Moses, but were, like all laws, a gradual growth, and that man is a creature, not a creation."

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If we grasp Dr. Abbott's language it means, what all atheists hold, that there is no God, that in some unexplainable sense all nature is God, and that we are all the children of nature, God, by processes of evolution. Voltaire, Thos. Paine, and Robert Ingersoll never did such slight to justice and religion as this. They were too honest to wear a cloak of religion to conceal the poisoned dagger of infidelity for a close approach to permit spiritual assassination. Oh shame, shame! That a greyhaired man should wear the livery of a Christian minister, and the decorations of "Reverend" and of "Doctor of Divinity" to maintain his honor among men, and then, stealing into the Christian Chapel of one of the foremost colleges of the world,

should seek to assassinate the Bible and its God and Christ, and to put the poison of infidelity into the streams of culture where they would be most effective in poisoning the entire household of faith!

Dr. Abbott, also, is afraid he will be found out as a "*heretic*," but – wiser on the subject than Dr. Carter – he does not anticipate trouble from the ministry, who he well knows are generally "tarred with the same stick," – he fears that the newspapers will find him out. He is still more shrewd, for *knowing* that the newspapers would discern his heresy he doubtless wrote out the newspaper statement above with his own pen! Why? To deceive! To give the impression – this is not heresy, but the newspapers [R3480 : page 5] will know no better than to consider it so. What abominable hypocrisy in the name of Christianity! And yet at one time in our estimation Dr. Abbott was one of God's most sincere servants: we judge from his writings of thirty years ago. Verily a star, a bright one, is thus seen to have "fallen from heaven."

Surely we are witnessing the masterstrokes of Satanic craft as no time since the dark ages witnessed them. Then the Adversary used ignorance and superstition and priestcraft as his tools: now he transforms himself and poses as an angel of light. Taking advantage of the recoil of civilization against the monstrous and unscriptural errors of the past, he takes the torch of higher criticism and becomes leader, that he may attract attention to the opposite extreme – equally far from the truth.

But we are neither surprised nor dismayed by such "falling of the stars from heaven," and the consequent "shaking" of the foundations of society as respects religious things. No; the Master foretold it all, and, as our older readers well know, we have been expecting these things for thirty years, and noting their gradual approach.

So far as the Lord's cause is concerned we would not even change matters; for although it will soon produce demoralization in nominal Christendom, it will result to the advantage of the Lord's true people,

"Israelites indeed." We are in the "harvest" of the Gospel Age, and while "wheat" and "tares" have grown together in the past, the Lord is seeing to it that now they must be manifested as totally different, that the "wheat" may all be reaped with the sickle of Truth and be gathered into the heavenly "garner." In proportion as the eyes of our understanding open and we see these things, we may indeed lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our deliverance draweth near!

HIGHER CRITICISM AFFECTING ROMANISM

It would appear that *Romanism* also is seriously affected by "modern scholarship," otherwise "higher criticism" or refined infidelity. Papacy's claim of Infallibility makes her specially vulnerable. The following from the higher critical viewpoint appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*:

"The conclusion – painful as it is – that one is compelled to draw is that Rome regards the maintenance of her absolute authority, unlimited in its sphere and exercise, as the one thing to be fought for at all costs, even at the cost of the loss to the church of the great majority of her children. This is the spirit, and this the temper, which brought about the Reformation; it does not spring from 'ineradicable confidence' in the future of the church, but rather from a well-grounded fear that the claim of Rome to absolute, infallible, and unlimited authority in all matters will not stand the test of history, and can not be maintained except by the rigorous repression of individual initiative and independent thought.

"The position in which the individual Catholic is placed by the policy of his rulers is one of grave difficulty, and nowhere is the situation more acute than in France. In the English Catholic body few of the laity, and fewer still of the clergy, take any interest in intellectual matters; but there are signs of grave mischief among the younger laymen even in England. They have been trained to draw no distinction between the Catholic faith and its scholastic expression, or

the insecure historical basis upon which their teachers have founded it.

"The natural consequence is that, in so far as those who have been educated in this way become convinced of the strength of the critical position, their hold on the faith is likely to be weakened. Rome has weakened it still more by declaring that any attempt to find a synthesis between the critical position and the faith is unlawful for Catholics."

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But Rome will not be as much shaken as Protestantism in this respect. She has her grip upon the people through priestcraft and superstition, and it will hold to the "bitter end," when anarchy will down all. Meantime it will be all the more trying upon intelligent Protestant Christians, loyal to the Bible, to find the great Antichrist system on their side, defending the Bible, with all the "worldly wise" in opposition. The Lord, however, knows how to sift and shake his professed Church so as to gather out of it all things that offend and they that do iniquity.

LACK OF CANDIDATES FOR MINISTRY.

Two conventions of Christian workers have been held recently to consider the dearth of Ministerial candidates. The **WORLD'S WORK** says on the subject: –

"There is no real 'dearth' of students for the ministry. There is a slight back-set at the present time, but it is not so great as has occurred in other years, and reports of attendance of students in the theological seminaries, when compared with similar reports twenty-five years ago, show a marked and marvelous increase.

"In some quarters there is a deterioration in the quality of students, but the reports are not altogether unanimous. Methodists and

Episcopalians report a decided increase in numbers and in quality, and other religious bodies vary in localities and colleges in this respect.

"There is a marked change in the sources of supply. The West and South provide a much larger proportion of students than the East. The response is greater in the newer regions than in the old, in the country than in the city, in the small churches than in the larger."

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It would seem, however, that there is a danger even more serious than that resulting from a lack of proper candidates for the ministry. Mr. Tomlinson wrote to twenty "successful pastors," asking whether, if they had their lives to live over again, they would select the work they are now doing. Seven replied "Yes" enthusiastically, three were undecided, nine gave emphatic negatives, and one declared that if he could avoid being "ordained," he would be glad to take up the work. **[R3481 : page 6]**

Reading between the lines it would appear that the consciences of the majority of ministers are causing them pain which they would be glad to be rid of if they knew of an equally honorable and remunerative engagement open to them. Having lost their *faith* they are not happy in their *unbelief*, and are ashamed of the hypocrisy of their position. Why do they not follow the examples of Drs. Carter and Abbott, you ask? Oh! their case is very different: Dr. Carter is on the superannuated list and not in contact with nor dependent on the public. And Dr. Abbott is quite independent as the editor of a prosperous journal. The others, many, many, are waiting to see how the public stands the heretical utterances of the independents, hoping some day that it will be safe for them to follow the same course without loss of position and income and honor of men. The general public does not comprehend the situation – "None of the wicked shall understand" (Dan. 12:10) – they call it "theological hair-splitting anyway." But the Lord's true sheep, who have believed in him as

their *Redeemer*, will know and will understand, and the coming cleavage will awaken them and prepare them for the Light and Truth in fuller measure than they have yet received them.

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"If these twenty men be fairly representative," says the New York *Evening Post*, "the problem is not only how to get men to preach, but how to keep them preaching." The editor, evidently a "higher critic," proceeds to say:

"The causes that deter men from becoming clergymen are today pretty obvious. The old prejudice, that 'learning hath always been an enemy to the gospel,' is still alive. Indeed, the struggle between rigid ecclesiastics, on the one hand, and scientists and scholars, on the other, first over evolution and then over the higher criticism, has dealt a severer blow to the Church than the gentlemen who now so gracefully acquiesce in the new doctrines imagine....The old contest is not forgotten, especially while the reactionary religious press keeps up its din about the higher criticism. Young men, viewing the past and the present, scrutinize the ordination vows, and frankly say they will not put their necks into the noose."

ASSAULTS ON ST. PAUL.

Higher Critics and Evolutionists find serious obstacles in the clear statements of the great Apostle Paul in the New Testament. No wonder then that he is discredited by them. It is their frequent claim that they take Jesus' statements and not St. Paul's – that the latter and not the former taught concerning Adam's fall and the consequent "curse," and the need of an atonement for sin, etc.

Seemingly they are willingly ignorant of our Lord's statement that all were "lost" – that he "came to seek and to save that which was lost." They also ignore his statement that the Son of man came "to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:28.) They forget that it

was our Lord who said to the unregenerate, "Ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do;" and "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." They forget his declaration, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." They seem not to see that this teaches that all except believers will perish and that the thing to be believed is the ransom effected through our Redeemer's death on the cross.

The above utterances by our Lord are remarkably clear and explicit when we remember how few of his utterances are recorded; and that because it was not due time until Pentecost to pour out the holy Spirit, so it was not due time until then to clearly explain the "mysteries of the Kingdom," and hence it is written that our Lord opened his mouth in parables and dark sayings, leaving to his Apostles, later, under the ministration of the Spirit, to understand and explain to others "all things whatsoever he had spoken" darkly, – "the deep things of God."

Recently a German professor made a bitter attack upon Paul along lines above indicated, and another, Professor Feine, answered him quite well. We below quote from that answer: –

"It must be regarded as the settled conclusion of honest research that Christianity, from the outset, was a religion that aimed at man's redemption. Not Paul, but the founder of Christianity, put this stamp upon the faith. It is true that the great apostle, in his elaboration of the doctrine of justification, nowhere directly appeals or refers to an utterance of Jesus on this subject. Even in his discussion with Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:14-21), we do not find that Paul recalls for the benefit of Peter any particular word of Jesus on the topic under discussion. But notwithstanding all this, the germ of Paul's doctrine of justification is to be found in the teachings of Jesus himself.

"Jesus recognized the universal depravity, and was constantly calling men to repentance. He preached, as John the Baptist did before

him, not that certain classes, or a few, must enter into the Kingdom of God through repentance, but that all, without exception, must do so. (Matt. 18:23 *seq.*) In this thought lies the foundation of Paul's doctrine of justification, altho he developed this doctrine more emphatically than Jesus himself did.

"Again, the fundamental, Pauline doctrine that the call to Christianity and, indeed, our entire Christian life, are a gift of God's grace, has also been taken from Jesus. The latter spoke of the Kingdom of God as a gift from on high, to be given to all for whom it had been prepared.

"According to Jesus, the Kingdom of God is something already attainable in the present life, while Paul maintains that judgment by justification has already been determined. But even in this apparent contradiction may be recognized two sides of one and the same doctrine.

"The essential contents of Paul's doctrine of justification [**R3481 : page 7**] can be traced back to Jesus himself. It was not Paul who raised up the cross of Christ as the only means of salvation. Jesus himself had declared his death to be necessary for the salvation of mankind."

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