

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

THE "HELL CYCLE" STARTED

IN "THE WESTMINSTER," a Presbyterian journal, Philadelphia, Reverend H. H. Barstow predicts a return to "The Hell Cycle." He says:

"We ministers have easily caught the cue from the popular demand, and have fed the people the love of God and the beauty of holiness and the doctrines of sweetness and light – shall I say it? – ad nauseam."

He believes that the signs of the times indicate that "the pendulum has touched its limit in that direction; that the cycle of hell-fire – figurative, yes, but for that reason all the more awful and appalling – is due once more." Are we to understand the gentleman to mean that the preachers merely watch the popular sentiment that they may preach what will please the majority of the people? Does he mean that it was because of the popular demand which he mentions that he was preaching the love of God, the beauty of holiness, etc.? Evidently he has been preaching more of it than he believed, as is indicated by his nausea in connection with these teachings. His nausea is somewhat relieved now, and he feels a little more free to speak against the beauty of holiness and the love of God because he realizes that the "popular demand" is turning his way again and bids fair for another hell-fire cycle.

This is what we have feared for some time – that a great many preachers are merely endeavoring to find the popular demand, and are proportionately careless respecting the will and Word of the living God. They have been telling the people of their dreams respecting politics, woman's rights, social fads, etc., and

sending them off wholesale to a dreamy heaven quite contrary to the Word of God. The people are waking up to a realization of the fact that they have been fed ad nauseam something unsatisfying, and an increasingly large proportion of the intelligent, especially of the male sex, no longer attend such preaching. Reverend Barstow believes he has the secret, and that "popular demand" is moving toward a love for hell-fire for other people, and that if he gets in on the tidal wave soon enough it will score him a big success.

Perhaps the gentleman is mistaken. We believe he is, and that he will find it out before very long. In our opinion many people are getting awake, so that they begin to know the difference between dreams and realities, and are wanting something more substantial. Their craving is in line with the divine direction, "He that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath my Word let him speak my Word." – Jer. 23:28.

After calling attention to the wave of sentiment in favor of pure politics that is sweeping over the country and the general arousing of the public conscience on the subject of graft, the gentleman says:

"This is our revival, the answer to our prayers. And this is the cause and heart of it. What is true in the civic sphere is just as true in the spiritual, and the two are not to be separated. I firmly believe that the hearts and consciences of the people are ready for the preaching of judgment on sin, without dilution or reservation, given with the clear note of Christ to the Pharisees and laid hot upon life for this world and the future: 'How can ye escape the damnation of hell?' Let love glow undimmed – but let justice flame. The fear of the Lord is still the beginning of wisdom; and some will never learn wisdom unless fear be stirred. The Felixes of the home, the mart and the throne need to tremble at the message of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come,

and we all have them in our congregations. Let the hell-fire cycle strike once more."

So this is the revival that has come in answer to prayers – not a revival of the Lord's saints to renewed zeal in self-sacrifice on behalf of the divine Word and plan, nor a conversion of sinners to repentance and reformation of life and consecration to God, but merely the arousing of the spirit of righteous indignation against trusts and boodlers – an indignation which is usually fraught with anger, malice, hatred, strife, etc. This is what one minister at least has been preaching for, and is now rejoicing that his prayers have been heard. It is well that he states himself so exactly: on **[R3757 : page 116]** our part we see the uncovering of rottenness in political and financial circles highly esteemed amongst men, and to us it reads that we are in the day that the Lord referred to when he said that whatsoever things were hidden would be made manifest.

This manifestation of the hidden corruption of the hearts of the respectable, the wealthy, the influential, is not, so far as we know, leading others to paths of righteousness, but rather exciting their bitterness and resentment – that others have had the advantage of greater opportunities for the accumulation of vast wealth by unscrupulous means, and chagrin on their part that the opportunity had not been their own, and the determination that if they cannot at some time in the future find a prospect for accumulating vast riches in some such manner they will be ready to wreck the interests of those who have fared better. From our standpoint this uncovering of the weaknesses of human nature means loss of confidence in the rich and influential generally, and spells eventually the hatred which ere long will fulfil the prediction, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." – James 5:1. **[R3758 : page 116]**

It strikes us as quite pharisaical on the part of the majority of mankind to make a great ado over the shortcomings of the rich, when in their own hearts the majority well know that the only reason they did not do likewise was that they did not have the opportunity. God forbid that we should say that there are no honest people in the world, but our experience with humanity leads us to the conclusion that the majority have their price – some higher and some lower. Experience, too, shows that those who decry cupidity in others are themselves frequently found wanting when tried in the balances. For instance, one of the most prominent of these life-insurance presidents went into office as a thorough reformer; he heartily reprobated the shortcomings of his predecessors. Do we not usually find it the same with politicians? The reformer of one election needs to be reformed at another election. The trouble is that the whole human family is weak and imperfect through the fall, and while they would do good evil is present with them, and the temptations which assail are more than their characters will stand. As for the stronger characters in the world, those moulded and fashioned by the power of divine truth, they are rarely put in such positions of honor and trust, being too much out of harmony with the world and its spirit to be chosen. Even the preachers are accused of wire-pulling in connection with their securing desirable charges and principal offices in their denominations.

Our Lord did not tolerate unrighteousness or injustice in any sense of the word, and his most scathing criticisms were hurled against the Pharisees because of their hypocrisy, because they pretended to be better than they really were. This gives us the thought that in the Lord's estimation honesty is one of the noblest traits of character, and that it would be more pleasing in his sight for his followers to acknowledge that the whole world is imperfect through the fall, that all need the divine mercy, and to point each other forward to the glorious Kingdom of righteousness which the Lord alone can establish, than that they

should self-righteously point at the few evil-doers who had good opportunities, and attempt to justify the majority of the race as though they were perfect, sinless.

Let us watch and pray against the temptations which lie in our path: let us sympathize with the exposure of everything that is sinful; but let us not glory in the righteousness of the majority, who have not been found unfaithful because they have not been tempted in any considerable measure. Let us sympathize with the stopping of wrong doings while sympathizing also with the wrong doer and with the whole world in its depravity. Let us remember that the world has not the advantage of the higher ambitions and the new nature which are possessed by the Lord's consecrated followers and let us have sympathy with them, while hoping and waiting and praying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

EVOLUTION IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The world, perhaps, holds no other such single collection of scientific curiosities as can be found in the British Museum. Gallery after gallery, cabinet after cabinet, and mile after mile of shelving, exhibit a bewildering array of beasts, birds, fishes and moving creatures of every kind, stuffed and preserved, along with prehistoric relics, fossil forms and all the various specimens of organic life.

Here would be the place of all others for the scientific skeptic of the day to trace the lineage of which he boasts, and to demonstrate his descent from the prehistoric monkey. But, unfortunately, the men who have the greatest opportunities do not always make the best improvement of them; and a large proportion of the talk about scientific infidelity comes from men who know nothing of science. The editor of the "New York Evangelist" publishes the following article containing the

testimony from Mr. Etheridge, who stood at the head of the Natural Science department of the British Museum:

"Our friend and fellow-traveller in Palestine, Prof. George E. Post, is, as our readers are aware, a man of extensive attainments and wide and acute observation of facts and phenomena – in short, a man of science in the true sense. On the alert for whatever is worthy of study, it was a matter of course that while recently in London in quest of instruments and apparatus for the Medical College at Beirut, he should spend some portion of his time in the British Museum – that immense storehouse of all that remains to us of the arts, the learning and life-conditions of the ages. Treated with the utmost courtesy by the large circle of noted men and scholars, Dr. Post very naturally, in the course of his visits to this great centre of attraction, came in contact with Mr. Etheridge, than whom no one is more able to interpret and sum up whatever is there to be seen. Indeed, he had a special errand with him, and it thus [R3758 : page 117] fell out, in common phrase in a good sense, that the recognized British expert in all these matters was 'interviewed' by our American missionary and man of science as to his conclusions, his summing up of the bearings of the entire deposit there collected in the department of Natural History, and set in order as nowhere else in the world. And thanks to a correspondent, a former colleague of Dr. Post, we have here an account of Mr. Etheridge's conclusions. They are given only in summary, but are clear and satisfactory as to what may be learned from a full study of the remains of all pre-historic periods. Their decisive bearing on the controversies of the day will be apparent to all. It is seldom that so much that is significant and entitled to great, even conclusive weight, is embraced in the same space: "London, Aug. 2, 1885.

"Yesterday I was in the Natural History department of the British Museum. I had business touching some fossils which I found in the Lattakia Miocene and Pliocene clay beds, and about

which I wrote an article which appeared in "Nature" last year. Mr. Etheridge, F.R.S., kindly examined and named them. I was anxious to hear what a first-rate working scientist, with perhaps the largest opportunity for induction in the world, would say on Darwinian Evolution. So, after he had shown me all the wonders of the establishment, I asked him whether, after all, this was not the working out of mind and Providence. He turned to me with a clear, honest look into my eyes, and replied, "In all this great Museum there is not a particle of evidence of transmutation of species. Nine-tenths of the talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation, and wholly unsupported by fact. Men adopt a theory and then strain their facts to support it. I read in all their books, but they make no impression on my belief in the stability of species. Moreover, the talk of the great antiquity of man is of the same value. There is no such thing as a fossil man. Men are ready to regard you as a fool if you do not go with them in all their vagaries. But this Museum is full of proofs of the utter falsity of their views."

"I have condensed very much, but you may spread this out over twenty minutes, and imagine what a comfort it was to hear it. I do not propose to surrender yet even to theistic evolution, which seems to me at best a bad name for God's creation."

Now we want to hear the verdict of bar-room scientists, saloon geologists and horse-shed philosophers, who are more anxious to establish a connection with the monkeys and baboons than with Adam, who "was the son of God."

– From "The Armory."
