

[R4150 : page 83]

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

OUR LOSING FIGHT WITH THE CRIMINAL

"COMMISSIONER Bingham reports 4,470 arrests made by the Bureau of Detectives for felonies in 1907, against 2,091 in 1906. Convictions totaled 1,330. The increase in arrests for misdemeanors is still more startling: the total was 3,889, while in 1906 it was 910. There were 1,566 convictions. Chief Wilkie of the United States Secret Service reports 216 arrests, of which 160 were for counterfeiting. A substantial decrease in this crime is shown, largely due to the conviction of Irving Tolley, now confined in Atlanta, Ga., who was responsible for 50 per cent. of the raised notes. The most significant item in the report of J. C. Graveur, chief probation officer of the New York Court of Special Sessions, discloses 565 persons placed on parole. Only twenty failed to meet the requirements of their release.

"Society not only fails to hold its ground but it is losing in its warfare against the criminal. In 1901 the Government published the conclusion of Eugene Smith that our annual tribute to crime was \$600,000,000, and criminologists have recently computed a substantial increase. To our eternal disgrace, the United States leads all civilized countries in the number of homicides. Over 8,000 yearly is the average. William C. Clemens fixes New York City's quota at 240. In six years over 300 murderers have gone undetected. The Alabama State Bar Association has shown that in proportion to population there are twelve murders in New England to one in London; in California seventy-five [R4151 : page 83] to one; in Nevada 245 to one."

– *New York World.*

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The above is from an editorial and we have no reason to doubt its correctness. The facts set forth are open to speculation as to why they are true. It is well that we remember that this indictment relates to the most favored and most prosperous, most wealthy, most awake and most generally educated nation on earth. Looking at the ghastly figures, let us learn the lesson that worldly prosperity does not spell happiness, contentment, peace and joy. We have every reason to believe that similar results would show in every civilized land under *similarly prosperous* conditions.

The lesson to us is to emphasize the Bible's teaching that God alone can satisfy the soul; – that the Spirit of Christ is "the spirit of a sound mind." True, something should be credited to the fact that many of these murders, etc., were committed by emigrants suddenly transported into new conditions and unable to balance and adjust themselves to the new conditions. But why is it that the greater intelligence and opportunity do not make for peace and holiness instead of sin and crime? We reply, Because the chains of ignorance and superstition have been the blasphemous misrepresentations of the divine character and plan! These have caused the masses to fear and to hate God and his Book, which, it is claimed, reveals his plans as diabolical. Increased knowledge to such means doubt of all religious teaching – practically atheism or universalism, according to the bent of the mind.

While zealous missionaries are teaching heathen children our civilization and our popular travesties upon the religion of the Bible, they fondly dream of thus converting the world and fulfilling our Lord's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven." Alas! how blind we all have been not to have noticed these two facts: (1) That the numbers of the heathen in proportion even to the nominally Christian doubled last century; (2) That if we could bring all the heathen up to the

standard of our most civilized and most progressive nation it would mean that God's will would be less done the world over than it is now.

Let us console ourselves with the Bible's teaching, that the evils of our day, induced by greater worldly light and ambition, will end in their own destruction and prepare the way for the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF JESUS

The Christian Commonwealth of London is firmly committed to "The New Theology." It publishes Rev. [R4151 : page 84] Morgan Campbell's sermons and now one of its editors, Rev. J. Warschauer, M.A., D.Phil., thus answers, in the columns of the *Commonwealth*, a correspondent's question on the preexistence of Jesus: –

"In answer to a Scottish correspondent – to whom, by the way, I want to send a word of cheer, more even than a theological answer – I quite agree with his view, viz., that Jesus 'preexisted' only in the sense in which all men do, that is to say, in the mind of God, for whom there is neither past nor future, 'for all live unto him.' That our Lord had a conscious, individual existence prior to his birth some nineteen centuries ago, I see no reason for supposing. Having come into the world – with no more control over that event, as I hold, than other infants – and having reached maturity, he voluntarily adopted a certain course of action; but that he had determined upon that course in some previous heavenly existence, I simply do not believe."

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Thus the pendulum swings from one extreme to the other while the central truth is ignored. From holding and teaching that

Jesus was one of three Gods, one of a trinity of Gods, the next step usually is to the above extreme – the claim that he was merely a member of the sinner-race. Oh! how much more rational is the Scriptural teaching that our Lord was Jehovah's "only begotten Son," "the first and the last," by and through whom angels and men were created, in fulfilment of the Father's wondrous plan. How this, the Bible presentation, glorifies the Lord Jesus more than any other! As the Apostle declares, "To us there is one God the Father, *of whom* are all things; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom* are all things." See afresh the proofs in DAWN-STUDIES, Vol. V., "The Atonement," Chapters III. to VII.

HIGHER CRITICISM-INFIDELITY NOT SATISFIED

In the *Educational Review* Mr. Chas. E. Witter complains that agnosticism is not progressing rapidly enough in the Sunday-schools of the world. We quote:

"There can be no doubt that in many cases the teaching lags behind the real knowledge of the teacher. Many who have outgrown the crude and literal interpretations of earlier years, into whose minds religious truths have entered in new forms, are seemingly afraid to impart their real light to their young hearers. When they come before their classes in the Sunday-schools they feel obligated to give them, not the fresh views that have proved more satisfactory to themselves, but the traditional statements of orthodoxy in which most of them were reared. This may be due to a strained sense of loyalty to their church organization or to a feeling that these older views are commonly reputed to be safer for children, but in any case the results can be only bad. They are bad first of all because of the insincerity in the teacher himself. No amount of juggling and trimming for the sake of expediency can justify one in teaching as true what he knows to be false, in

teaching as fact what he knows to be myth. In the second place, such teaching is in the end ineffective. One cannot teach satisfactorily and effectually that which he only half-heartedly believes himself. The secret of the wonderful power that the religious teaching and preaching of the fathers had over their hearers was just in this fact, that they believed with all the intensity of conviction every word which they uttered. The results are bad, moreover and chiefly, because of the great wrong that is thus done to the child's future. The time must inevitably come to those young people who read and think when they will awake to the superficiality and falsity of such teaching, and when that awakening comes the reaction will probably be more radical than it would have been had they been properly enlightened in the first place. The pendulum will swing so far that in rejecting these feeble and narrow views of spiritual truths they will in many cases be led to reject all versions of them. That this is a real danger can be seen by daily observation. It accounts for the absolute skepticism and agnosticism of many, and it also accounts for the fact, often noted, that the most confirmed infidels frequently spring from just those narrow denominational schools and influences that refuse obstinately to open to the light of more modern and better conceptions of the religious life."

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Alas! this modern infidelity, styled "New Theology," is all too rapidly gaining a footing in our Sunday-schools! Are not children deliberately taught that the Genesis account of creation is a falsehood contradicted by "Science"? Are they not taught that the flood of Noah's day is a myth, and that Jonah never was swallowed by a whale? Are they not taught to give no heed to what the Apostle Peter calls "the more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn"?

True, these underminers of Biblical faith do not deny that there once was a great Teacher named Jesus, whose teachings have influenced the most enlightened quarters of the globe. That would be worse than wasting breath. Besides they want Jesus for a figurehead or rallying center for their "New Theology." But it does not take the honest child-mind long to draw the conclusion that when Jesus mentioned the flood of Noah's day and the fact that Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, and that he quoted from the prophets as inspired writings – that if these be false Jesus must have been a fraud and not the Son of God, else he would not have declared these truths. Not only so, it would imply that he was much less inspired and wise than were these modern wise men who claim to know so much. Alas! they are taking away from the children what little faith yet remains. "When the Son of man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?" – Matt. 12:40; 24:38; Luke 18:8.

PAID MUSIC IN CHURCHES

Rev. Charles M. Sheldon writes in *The Congregationalist* against the spending of money for Church music, as follows: –

"I see no reason why the finest singer or player in the parish should receive compensation for service rendered any more than the best teachers in the parish should receive money for teaching in the Sunday-school. I have in my parish a man who is a graduate [R4151 : page 85] of one of the best colleges in this country, who spent very many years in acquiring his education, who is a thorough scholar and a splendid teacher. He has a class in my Sunday-school. I do not think the thought of compensation for teaching that class ever entered his head. He is giving, however, out of the ripeness of his knowledge what it cost him many years and many hundreds of dollars to acquire. If he does

not expect anything for his service to the Church, which he gives as service, why should the man or woman who has spent years acquiring a musical education in learning to play or sing expect money compensation for it?

"I have always felt proud of the fact, I hope in a right way, that in our average Church for eighteen years we have never paid a cent for the service of musicians, [R4152 : page 85] either for playing or singing, accepting what was offered as service, and very many times it has been of the very best that the parish afforded. I know of a Church which has in its parish one of the finest lawyers in the State, and whenever that Church wants a public address or an inspiring talk to its young men it calls upon this member of the Church for service. He does not ask for pay, although he can get the highest price in the lecture-field when he goes out to give a public lecture. I think the more we dignify the service in the Church by drawing into it the finest talent we possess, and offer it as service, we increase the Church's efficiency, and very often the money that is spent for musical service or for flowers or decorations could be better used, it seems to me, directly in doing missionary work or in adding to the real effectiveness of the Church in ways where the money is more needed.

"I hope I shall not be misunderstood in all this. What I mean is that the Church has a right to the finest service that can be rendered to it by its members. There is no man or woman so talented or so gifted in the parish that he ought not to feel that the finest he has can and should be offered upon the altar of religion."

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Very good! Very true! But why not return to apostolic usage also in the matter of a paid ministry? If singers and Sunday-school teachers should serve from love and not for pay, should not as noble a spirit actuate the preachers? Why not have the abler

members of every congregation give public addresses on the Scriptures or conduct Bible studies which would bring out more of the true teachings of the Word and stimulate research?

POPULAR RELIGION VS. BIBLE RELIGION

The editor of the *Christian Advocate* (New York) tells us that he has been looking at the signs of the times and finds hardly a single point of harmony between the common standards and those of the Gospel. This he thinks "should awaken every sincere Christian to a thorough self-examination by Gospel standards and to determine to keep as far from evil as possible." We quote: –

"It would be wise for every member of a Christian church and every minister thereof to read carefully what Christ said of his religion, his disciples, the method of preparing for the future life, and the intimations that he gives of the judgment and eternal destiny, instead of occupying themselves entirely or chiefly with the contemplation of great church edifices, great organs, great colleges, great Sunday-school parades, great hospitals, great congregations, great movements and great statistics.

"Popular religion today avoids all conflict with the world. Against the grosser immoralities, indeed, it lifts up its voice; for it is respectable to do so, and a large proportion of all connected with the Church are above the more degrading forms of vice. But against pride-producing and extravagant fashions of the world it utters but a faint protest, or none.

"Popular religion seeks wealth with as much greediness, and grasps as eagerly after honor, and runs as swiftly after pleasure as does the world. A large majority of the professors of Christ's religion seek their intimate associations in worldly society, and never think of lifting up their voices against the prevalent folly and dissipation. It is not in the least embarrassing for the most

gay and thoughtless to be thrown into the company of Christians of the popular religion type. Days and weeks may pass away and no mention be made of Christ or of anything he ever did or said, or which might lead persons to think of his religion.

"Popular religion has a very easy conscience, as is shown by many things. It makes a distinction between equally binding duties, performing those which are convenient, agreeable, and in harmony with the natural instincts or dispositions, and neglecting others which require self-denial. Thus there are many possessed of large incomes who will pray and sing, but will not contribute their means to the support of the Gospel. Others are willing to contribute liberally but pay no attention to the spiritual work of the Church. Popular religion enters upon doubtful enterprises if they promise large pecuniary rewards. It makes every form of excuse for neglect of duty. The merchant and mechanic declare themselves to be too busy. The contradiction between this and Christ's religion is expressed in the words, 'Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God and his righteousness.'

"Popular religion professes timidity whenever called upon to take part in the services of the sanctuary, a timidity never shown in performing conspicuous, remunerative or honorable public duties or functions of importance in the Church. Popular religion disregards the most solemn vows. Every member of the Christian Church has assumed the weightiest obligations. Every baptized person in the Methodist Church vows to 'renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same.' When there is a controversy between them, popular religion places temporal interests before spiritual. It evinces this in the kind of preaching it likes and in the mode of its life. It would rather attend public amusements, political meetings, social companies, or spend the evening in business calculations than to discharge the plainest Christian duty. Popular religion never agonizes before the Lord in secret,

never sets apart hours for meditation, never reads the Bible for devotional or life-regulating purposes; seldom observes family prayer, never does [R4152 : page 86] anything really inconvenient for Christ's sake, and almost wholly eliminates the element of self-denial."

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Alas! how true is this arraignment of Babylon of every denomination. The fault lies in false doctrines, which, under the lash of fear, have gathered to the Christian standard millions whose credulity is now giving place to a refined infidelity.

Note the contrast in those who are the Lord's true sheep and who are now hearing the Great Shepherd's voice in the Millennial morning dawn. How zealous, how self-sacrificing, how willing to give their time, influence, money – yea, life itself – in the service of the "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people."

Yet we do not boast! Nay, we admit that we can never do enough to show our appreciation of the God of love and his wonderful plan of the ages. We realize that we are not profitable servants, but on the contrary are our Lord's debtors to a degree that an eternity of his service will only continually increase.

"MIRACLE WHEAT"

The public press is telling of the origin of "Miracle Wheat" in answer to prayer. The description has the earmarks of truth to it, in that it gives the address of the man whose prayers are said to have been answered – "K. B. Stoner, a farmer of Fincastle, Botetourt county, Virginia." It would appear from the account that the original stalk of wheat appeared in the midst of a crop of the ordinary kind, but with "142 heads of grain." We quote: –

"Mr. Stoner was amazed. It seemed incredible. When a Frenchman, in 1842, announced that he had discovered a species of wheat in the Mediterranean country which produced four heads to the plant, people said he was crazy.

"But here was a plant with 142 heads!

"Naturally Mr. Stoner carefully preserved the heads, and the next year sowed the seed, continuing to do this each year, for he realized he had discovered a phenomenal brand of grain. And each year his amazement increased.

"That first year after discovering the plant he got 2000 grains. In 1906 he got sixteen bushels, and has now raised the crop of wheat, all carefully preserved for seed, to 800 bushels.

"What is most remarkable about the wheat is this: Whereas there is produced in the wheat sections of that country an average at the best of seventeen bushels to an acre, the average yield of the "miracle wheat" during the last three years has been fifty-six bushels to the acre; and whereas from eight to ten pecks of seed are required to plant an acre in Virginia, Mr. Stoner uses only two pecks, and, in comparison to the yield of ordinary wheat in the neighborhood, which is eight bushels for each bushel of seed, Mr. Stoner gets about seventy-five bushels for one. An ordinary stalk of wheat covers about four inches of space. The miracle wheat covers twelve.

THE GOVERNMENT REPORT

"Last year United States government officials became interested in the remarkable wheat and sent Assistant Agriculturalist H. A. Miller to examine it. In his report he declares:

"The wheat, which came from an unknown source, has been grown in the nursery every year since that time, and also has been grown under field conditions the last two years, giving excellent results. The yield has been from two to three times the yield of other varieties grown on the farm under the same condition of culture, except the rate of seeding, which was two pecks to the acre, while other varieties were sown at the rate of eight to ten pecks per acre, which is the common practice of farmers in the vicinity.

"Milling tests have been made of this wheat, and its quality seems to be as good as, if not superior to, other varieties of winter wheat.'

[R4153 : page 86]

"The average height of the wheat, according to the report, is four feet four inches.

"It is said that the Russian government has secured an option on the wheat, and will buy a consignment of 80,000,000 bushels when that quantity shall have been raised. During the next year the seed will be distributed among farmers in Virginia and North Carolina, who will raise it and preserve the seed, keeping the seed only for planting until the required amount will have been produced. By next fall, it is believed, 30,000 bushels will have been produced."

IS IT RESTITUTION WHEAT?

If this account be but one-half true it testifies afresh to God's ability to provide things needful for the "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." – Acts 3:19-21.

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