

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

CHRISTIAN NATIONS PERPLEXED

OUR dear friends, who do not believe in a future Millennium, attempt to prove that we are now enjoying the blessings of Christ's Kingdom, and point us to the Christian nations of the world, called "Christendom." They are greatly perplexed when we inquire why if Christ is King he should have different forms of government, and why his different governments for centuries have fought each other and today are wasting the blessings of our day on armies and navies and fortifications?

Alas! the name "Christendom" is a delusion. Satan is still "the prince of this world" and the term "Satandom" would be the truer title. But our "wily" Adversary is so crafty that he puts darkness for light and deludes the poor world. Thank God that soon Satan shall be bound for a thousand years that he may deceive the nations (peoples) no more, until the thousand years are finished. – Rev. 20:3.

Meantime, however, some useful purposes are being served by the military expenditures. Employment is being given to millions of men not only in military and naval services, but also in the building of guns and forts and battleships, – the mining of the ore, the smelting and rolling of the steel, etc. And not the poor, but the rich, foot the bills in taxes. The following from the *Atlantic Monthly* is interesting: –

CAUSE OF NATIONAL DEFICIT

All the *great nations are today facing deficits*, caused in *every case by the military and naval experts*. Into what a tangle the finances of Russia and Japan have been brought by militarists is known to everybody. Germany has, in a single generation, increased her national debt from eighteen million dollars to more than one billion dollars. The German Minister of Finance looks wildly around in search of new sources of national income. Financial experts confess that France is approaching the limit of her sources of revenue. Her deficit is created by her army and navy. The British government is always seeking for new devices by means of which to fill a depleted treasury. Her Dreadnoughts keep her poor. Italy has for years staggered on the verge of bankruptcy because she carries an overgrown army on her back. Even our own rich republic faces this year a deficit of over a hundred million dollars, largely due to the one hundred and thirty millions we are spending on our navy. Mr. Cortelyou has called our attention to the fact that while in thirty years we have increased our population by 85 per cent. and our wealth by 185 per cent., *we have increased our national expenses by 400 per cent.*

MANY SECESSIONS FROM THE GERMAN STATE CHURCH

Ecclesiastical circles in Germany are much exercised at the rapidly increasing desertions from the State Church.

Although the process of official separation from the Church is one of the greatest difficulty, delay and expense, it is computed that in Berlin alone considerably over 10,000 persons have severed their connection with the Church during the past year. So

great is the number of those who are notifying [R4351 : page 83] their intention to terminate their membership that special offices have been opened in Berlin to receive their applications, which now number between 300 and 400 daily. These applications are almost altogether from members of the Lutheran Church, and hardly affect the Roman Church at all. Added to this is the significant fact that the numbers of communions, baptisms, and church marriages are rapidly diminishing. It is computed that for every five marriages celebrated five years ago in church and registry office only three are now celebrated in both places, the other two being satisfied with a civil ceremony alone.

Among the working classes, especially those attached to the Social Democratic party, there exists a bitter hostility to the clergy and all institutions which they control. The clergy have not shown themselves sympathetic to democratic wishes, siding on almost all occasions where conflict exists between poor and rich, between possessors and dispossessed, with the class in power. There is, moreover, a widespread feeling that the clergy are paid far too high salaries, yet notwithstanding this large additions have been made recently to their incomes.

Much dissatisfaction is also felt at the methods employed by the ecclesiastical authorities in *collecting those dues assigned to them by law. Defaulters are as ruthlessly treated as though their debt were a civil one, and it not infrequently happens that defaulters' goods and chattels are sold to meet church demands.*

But probably the chief cause of the movement against the Church is the spread of agnosticism among all classes of the population, and the fact that even in those universities where until recently an orthodox theology was taught, there are now few chairs from which ultra Liberal views are not proclaimed. – *London Daily Chronicle.*

OCCULT PHENOMENA

The newspapers far and near are publishing the following item, which can be understood only from the Bible standpoint, namely, that humanity is beset by the fallen angels ("demons") except as protected by the divine power. And that now, in the end of the age, as a part of the great test or trial of the world, the divine protection will be relaxed in considerable measure. And that as a result occult phenomena will increase human delusions with a view to various ensnarements, mental and physical. The "very elect" will be shielded by the Truth and by its holy Spirit, keeping their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Matt. 24:24.) We read: –

"Fred E. Foskett, a young machinist of Orange, Mass., has attracted the attention of Prof. James, of Harvard, and other leading members of the Boston branch of the American Society of Psychological Research, who gave him tests recently.

"The first of the tests was held at the home of Prescott F. Hall on Saturday afternoon. Prof. Wm. James and several well-known professors were there, and test conditions as nearly perfect as possible were made. Foskett was seated in the center of a room before a small table. There he performed every feat of the Hindu fakir and the Buddhist adept.

"On the table was an ordinary kerosene lamp with a chimney and a flat wick, a pan and several quarts of alcohol. According to the reports of those present, Foskett succeeded in every test. *The first test was made with ordinary sulphur matches.* Foskett lighted half a dozen, one after the other, [R4351 : page 84] holding them with one hand so close to the fingers of the other that the flames curled around them. He then lighted the lamp and held his hands above the wick, while the flames curled over them and the soot completely blackened them.

"From one of these tests to another Foskett went, while the scientists held their breath and watched every motion until he came to the climax. In this he poured a quart of alcohol into the basin, lighted it and then washed his hands, bathing them for nearly ten minutes in the burning fluid, washing it up over his arms and to his face – literally bathing himself in blazing alcohol. That completed the tests for Saturday. As soon as they were finished the physicians present examined Foskett, and they could not find the slightest trace of a burn or blister. Foskett then told them that the flames did not give him the slightest sensation of burning, that he felt comfortably warm and pleasant, and nothing more.

"The second tests were made at the home of Prof. James in Cambridge, and under the same conditions as the day before. Considerable mystery is thrown about them. Mr. Hall said they were so startling that he did not care to discuss them until they had been tried again. Another scientist who was there said that Foskett performed all of his experiments of the day before, and then **'ABSOLUTELY AND POSITIVELY DEMATERIALIZED.'**" *"He seemed to dissolve into thin air as we watched him. Was gone forty-one seconds and then materialized."*

ANOTHER INSTANCE

A brother in Present Truth had a peculiar experience lately. He was called to the house by cries of Fire! He found that the lighted lamp had fallen over on the bookstand. The oil was blazing over the little table, burning the books, etc. In desperation he carried the stand out and threw it, lamp, books and all, into the snow. The blaze encircled his arms and came into his face and he expected to be terribly burned. To his surprise not even the hair of his arms was singed.

After smothering the burning carpet he went to pick up the things thrown into the snow and found his WATCH TOWER Bible and Diaglott *still* burning, whereas the Bible of his wife (a Methodist) was not at all burned, though on the same table.

The wife reasoned that this was a mark of God's displeasure against our publications. We argue reversely, that it marked Satanic displeasure.

This reminds us of the case of a young man obsessed of evil spirits. A brother in the Truth heard of his case and called to advise him how to get rid of the evil spirits – taking along the *Spiritism* pamphlet and a copy of the WATCH TOWER. When he attempted to enter the room where the youth was, the latter became so agitated that the Brother retired. Later he entered without the literature all right. By conversation he got the youth to exercise his *will* against the spirits and finally got him reading.

Gradually he regained his freedom, and when last we heard, he was rejoicing in the Lord and had symbolized his full consecration by water baptism.

ANOTHER HARMONY SUGGESTION

Some who have visited the Bible House and participated in our morning hymn and prayer, and the subsequent thanksgiving at the breakfast table and reading of "The Vow" and discussion of the MANNA text offer a suggestion. They desire "The Vow" in some form convenient for reading with the MANNA, and to know the numbers of the hymns to be sung, that they may join with us in voice as well as in heart.

Undoubtedly this spirit of *oneness* and brotherhood will increase as we get the love of God more and more shed abroad in our hearts. The Bible House Family – henceforth

the "*Bethel Home*," deeply reciprocates these precious sentiments, and will sing and pray and discuss with the more pleasure because of this fresh evidence of the oneness of the family of God everywhere.

Our worship hour is 7:00 a.m., except Sundays, at 8:00 a.m. We have long given the *choice* of hymn to each in turn. Hereafter we will permit each to choose in advance and publish in advance the choice monthly, as follows: —

BETHEL HYMNS FOR APRIL
(1) 19; (2) 121; (3) 155; (4) 105; (5) 198; (6) 193; (7) 7; (8) 179; (9) 176; (10) 224; (11) 263; (12) 307; (13) 312; (14) 233; (15) 208; (16) 325; (17) 119; (18) 87; (19) 144; (20) 268; (21) 114; (22) 273; (23) 116; (24) 63; (25) 313; (26) 4; (27) 72; (28) 194; (29) 93; (30) 217; (31) 264.

Our provision for copies of "The Vow" for use in the MANNA book is in the form of Book-marks, described on second page of this issue.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S SERMONS

Some of the dear friends appear fearful lest Brother Russell should become popular and then vain. Take no anxious thought on the subject, dear friends. Leave matters in the Lord's hands. He can give you rest and keep you from stumbling either into cold opposition or even lukewarmness.

As already expressed, our expectation is that the Truth will have a very brief season of wonderful prosperity, which will draw

the attention of Christendom to it through the pens and tongues of friends and foes. Even so it was in the close of our Lord's ministry, until the "rulers" said, "The world is gone after him," and took counsel to kill him. As the change of sentiment came quickly and those who hailed our Lord as King five days later cried out "Crucify him," so here the change may come quickly also.

What the *Newspaper Syndicate* now handling Brother Russell's sermons may sometimes say of him in laudatory terms, by no means represents Brother Russell's humble estimate of his own talents. Publishers must be allowed to use their own ideas of what they publish and how they introduce it. They recognize the fact that the sermons are striking a responsive chord with many of their readers; and they must make the unresponsive feel that there is merit and dignity in the service so that they will not oppose it.

Brother Russell has tried sending out the sermons without his name – merely as sermons from Brooklyn Tabernacle. But some of the newspaper publishers object to this, declaring that the *personal* feature is necessary. Let us then worry less over each other and specially guard our own hearts in this evil day; lest any root of bitterness and fault finding spring up to turn us aside. In a word, let us leave to God his supervising work and look for and thankfully use the opportunities he may be pleased to grant us in his blessed service. We "hold the Head" when we thus recognize the Lord's headship of his own work. Any other attitude is dangerous.

