

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

WISDOM FROM ABOVE THE NOBLEST SCIENCE

WE REPEAT that the wisdom from above is the noblest science and the best instruction. Well do the Scriptures say, "The entrance of thy Truth giveth light." Well did the Lord through the Prophet foretell of our day – The wisdom of their wise men shall perish and the understanding of their prudent men shall not be manifest. – Isa. 29:14.

The great Sir Isaac Newton, guided by the promise of the Lord through the Prophet Daniel, declared his belief in the possibility of rapid transit amongst men. Daniel the Prophet declared, "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." The philosopher, guided by his faith in God's Word, declared his belief that some day mankind would travel at the rate of fifty miles an hour. And yet the locomotive was centuries away, and the power of steam had not even been discovered. Nearly two centuries later, a worldly-wise man, scoffing at the Bible, scoffed also at the philosopher who would allow the Bible's suggestions to influence his expectations of the future. The infidel savant, Voltaire, called the Christian Newton "a poor old dotard, misled by that old Book, the Bible." We all know by this time which of these great men was the dotard!

Scientists are still guessing and still repudiating the guesses of each other. To such an extent is this true, that no scientific book written more than twenty-five years ago, except the Bible, is worth a penny. No college, no school, no professor, no man of learning, would recommend any scientific work of twenty-five years ago as being authoritative – scientific. But this failure of their brethren in the past in no way intimidates those who call themselves learned at the present time. They keep on looking wise and guessing just the same. They keep on laughing at the Bible and reviling it and speaking of its being unscientific and do not see its beauty and the real fulfilling of its

promises. They still have a fashion of breaking a chip off a rock, looking at it long and carefully and then declaring, with an air of wisdom, the hundreds of thousands or millions of years since that stone was soft mud and sand or gravel. They keep a stiff upper lip, knowing that they are merely repeating the words and mannerisms of their predecessors and teachers. They know, also, that the more astounding their statements, the more wise the laity will think them to be and the more they will honor them. Any man who can, by looking at a piece of stone, reckon up all the hundreds of thousands of years since its formation, must be a wise man indeed in the estimation of the street urchin, or the farmer and others, who, though more intelligent, have never done any thinking, but have merely swallowed the advice of others.

SOME WHO DO A LITTLE THINKING

This is the kind of trash that is dispensed in many of the school-books of our day. And when the students inquire, how, then, does it come that the Bible tells of only six thousand years of the history of man upon the earth? the professors merely sneer and smile at the simplicity of the question and say, You will know more about it before you graduate. You must study geology, biology, etc. There is, indeed, a small class of people who, without great pretention, do a little common-sense thinking and have intuition. Some of these, properly enough, take note of the fact that certain alluvial processes of our far West, when dug are soft and can be worked with a pick or a shovel, but in a very short time, when exposed to the air, become absolute stone. These same thinkers take note of the fact that humanity has learned in our day to combine various clays and gravels and to make therefrom concrete and cement stone work. These are asking with propriety, Why must we assume thousands or hundreds of thousands or millions of years for the hardening of the stones and clays which constitute the surface of our earth, when man knows how to produce such hardness in a few hours?

The celebrated "Mark Twain" had a good many grains of common sense in his make-up. It was part of his delight to poke fun at the pretensions of geologists respecting some of their theories. One of his amusing illustrations along this line discussed the Mississippi river and the changes known to have taken place in it within a few years. The supposition that similar changes had taken place every year for a thousand years would, he argued, imply that in that period the Mississippi river extended out and over the Gulf of Mexico several hundred miles. His irony was to the point.

It is not scientific nor wise to assume that the conditions of today or of this century or of many centuries have been true for thousands of years. Who does not know that for years the Missouri river has been so erratic in its course, so prone to cut new channels for itself, that farms in one State, by its changes of course, have been forced to be parts of another State. But geologists get so into the habit of guessing, and rely so much on the guesses of their predecessors, that they are slow to profit, slow to learn to base their calculations upon facts rather than fancies. "God is not in all their thoughts." His [R4825 : page 164] Word is neglected; hence the proper foundation for reasoning and judgment along geological lines is lacking.

THE GALLEY HILL MAN

Some twenty-three years ago a human skeleton was found imbedded in clay sand eight feet below the gravel which, we are assured, appeared to be in its original state. The finder of this, of course, felt sure that he had found a treasure, and in order to be a treasure and valuable it must be classed as very, very ancient. All theories and imaginations respecting a flood tide of the River Thames, or respecting a burial, must be discouraged. The find must be a valuable one for the sake of the finder.

The next thing necessary to be found was a gray-haired professor who also should be made famous. Dr. Keith, conservator of the Royal College of Surgeons, was the man of the hour. He has become famous

through the wisdom he has displayed and the information he has given to the world in respect to mankind. He declares that the skeleton found belongs to a man who lived one hundred and sixty-four thousand years before the time when the Bible says Adam, the first man, was made in the image of his Creator!

We sit appalled at such wisdom. If we dared ask so great a man a small, trifling question, which, perhaps, any foolish person would know how to answer, our question would be, "How long, O sage, may we suppose the bones of an ancient Briton might have continued in good preservation had they not been ruthlessly disturbed?" We might further ask whether or not a sandy loam might be considered a favorable burying ground, so that corpses in general would not disintegrate and go to dust in a comparatively few years? Surely a miracle must be claimed by Prof. Keith for the preservation of these bones, so as to give him an opportunity of enlightening the world respecting **[R4826 : page 164]** the Briton of one hundred and seventy thousand years ago!

But the Professor hedges a little. He first says what nobody could dispute, namely, "No accurate estimate could be made of the age of a skeleton." But the professor was too scientific to stop with that sensible remark. He goes on: –

"We must judge of the past from what we know of the present, and on this basis the land movement is a slow one, for so far as can now be told, the level of the river has scarcely changed since the Roman period. If, then, a movement of a foot be allowed for each thousand years, one may with some safety assign a period of at least one hundred and seventy thousand years to have elapsed since the high level terrace was laid down at Galley Hill. Further research will probably show that the period is much longer."

Here the generous professor leaves room for some ambitious rival to come forward and claim a still greater miracle – that the bones of this skeleton were miraculously preserved for millions of years.

Nevertheless, "The Word of the Lord standeth sure," writes the Apostle.

As another illustration of the exactness of scientific men and of the reliance we may place upon their conclusions, note the following:

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Prof. Hauser recently found in Southern France a human skeleton. He thought and studied very carefully over the subject to ascertain as nearly as possible the exact minute at which the corpse had been deposited. His conclusion, after this deliberation, was that it had been where he found it for a hundred thousand years – more than sixteen times as long as man has been upon the earth, according to the Bible.

But now comes Prof. Klattsch of Brescia who, after a similar amount of thinking, studying, etc., to find the exact moment, tells us that the skeleton was deposited four hundred thousand years ago. Of course, it makes no difference to the poor man whose skeleton it was or what these professors say, and it makes even less difference to us, except as the little discrepancy of three hundred thousand years proves to us the "exactness" of "scientific" attainment along such lines. The more we see of the foolishness of men, the more we should rely on the wisdom and Word of God. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

Let us, dear readers, be willing to be smiled at incredulously by Dr. Keith and others. And let us smile back again good-naturedly and stick to God's Word and trust, with good assurance, that in the dawning of the Seventh Thousand-Year period Messiah's Kingdom will be established and the blessings of mankind begin and the shadows of ignorance fade away, and God be found true and many wise men mistaken. – Rom. 3:4.

CHICAGO DISSATISFIED WITH REVIVALS

For three consecutive seasons Chicago has supported an expensive evangelistic campaign, having sought the leadership of the greatest men in this field. And, in turn, says *The Christian Century* (Chicago), Torrey, Gipsy Smith and Chapman have "inspired and disappointed the hopes of Chicago churches that this city might be stirred with new religious life."

The Northwestern Christian Advocate (Methodist, Chicago) recently undertook a questionnaire addressed to the various Chicago pastors of its denomination, "asking each to tell what results the recent Chapman-Alexander meetings brought to his church, his community, and the city as a whole." When these pastors frankly state that, "for the most part, the results are negligible in their churches," observes *The Christian Century*, "it is time for some one to arise and ask if the \$50,000 spent in this evangelistic campaign could not have been spent to better advantage for the Kingdom of God." The replies of forty Methodist preachers are thus summarized:

ADDITIONS TO MEMBERSHIP

Twenty-two report "none"; one reports ninety; one reports forty; one reports thirty-six; one reports thirty; one reports twenty-one; one reports twenty; and the remaining twelve show lesser numbers aggregating thirty-four. Total for forty churches, 271.

ADDITIONS TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL

Thirty-five report "none"; one reports six; one "cannot tell"; one has "largest [attendance] in the history of the school"; one "cannot accommodate any more"; one, "some increase."

ATTENDANCE UPON MORNING SERVICE

Thirty-six report "no increase"; one reports an increase; one, "the congregation fills the house"; two, "slight increase."

ATTENDANCE UPON EVENING WORSHIP.

Thirty-eight report "no increase"; one reports "some increase"; one reports "best we have had."

ATTENDANCE UPON MID-WEEK PRAYER-MEETING

Thirty-five report "no increase"; two report "better attendance"; two report "some increase"; one reports "gratifying increase."

INCREASED RELIGIOUS INTEREST IN CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

Twenty-one report no change; thirteen report "slight increase"; five report "marked increase"; one reports the influence to have been less than favorable.

The meetings are declared "profitable," but "they did not reach the class it was hoped they would." "Relatively few of the unconverted were present." One man declares that "the people were not stirred by the meetings and Christians attended for the most part from a sense of duty."

– *Literary Digest.*

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TAMENESS EMPTYING THE CHURCHES

"Speaking the truth in love" does not suit the combative natures of two of our religious contemporaries. That plan is all very well, exclaims the editor of *The Congregationalist and Christian World* (Boston), but speaking in that mild temper is "tame when compared to speaking the truth in the heat of controversy." This editor finds no simile within his own sphere of activities to express his feeling of the weakness of one method as contrasted with the other, so he boldly sets them forth as "basket-ball compared to a prize-fight with

knuckles." "*The decline of religious controversy is surely one reason for the falling-off of Sunday-morning congregations at church,*" he asserts. Dr. Buckley, in *The Christian Advocate* (Methodist, New York), echoes approvingly and adds that "the decline of religious controversy also has a great effect on *evening* services." He finds the smiles used by *The Congregationalist* "highly original and expressive," going on to supply some more himself:

"When Christianity dispenses wholly with controversy it will be like a sleeping man – harmless and helpless; it will be a sad spectacle.

"We were entertained at the house of a friend in New Hampshire, where Henry Ward Beecher was spending a day or two. It was his birthday and he was jubilant.

"He conducted prayers, and his utterances were equal to any of his published prayers in beauty, simplicity, and comprehensiveness.

"*Immediately* after he arose, he called the writer to him and pointed to a large picture hanging on the wall, representing a huge mastiff sound asleep with a piece of meat placed before him, and a lap-dog quietly drawing it away. Said Mr. Beecher, pointing to the sleeping mastiff, 'That is Orthodoxy,' and to the little dog, 'That is Heterodoxy.'

"So it is and ever will be. Controversy was the life of Paul's works – *polite* controversy, *brotherly* controversy; but strong in exposing error and building up the truth. The Epistles are full of controversy. Moreover, many of Christ's sayings were strictly *controversial*.

"It is more than a fine art to combine in one sermon the forcible overthrow of an error and a heartfelt appeal; but it is possible to attain unto it."

– *Literary Digest*.

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