

EDITOR AT THE INTERNATIONAL PURITY CONGRESS

A FEW weeks ago, Governor Glynn, of New York, appointed the Editor of THE WATCH TOWER a delegate to represent New York State at the seventh International Purity Congress, to convene in Minneapolis, Minn., November 7th to 12th. We attended the Purity Congress and there met a number of noble men and women, who are fighting valiantly to stamp out the various forms of disease and vice which are vitiating mankind with alarming rapidity.

On Sunday, November 9th, we were appointed by the Purity Congress Arrangements Committee to speak at the Schubert Theatre, Minneapolis, under the auspices of the local class of the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION. The house was crowded. Our topic was, THE WAGES OF SIN AND THE REWARDS OF PURITY, from the text: "*The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*" – Romans 6:23.

ONLY GOD CAN GRANT THE VICTORY

We did not enter into statistics to prove that sin is in the world and manifesting itself in many forms – in political corruption, physical corruption, or disease, moral corruption, or impurity, and their various ramifications. We endeavored to probe deeper, to show why human beings are born into the world with sinful propensities or tendencies. After finding the cause, the source of sin, we discussed the remedy, and pointed out why all good people should be united in their opposition to sin and in their endeavor to stamp it out; although experience has proved that none of the world's panaceas really *cure*.

Humanity must continually combat, only to find that sin, impurity, breaks out in other places or in other forms. It is like fighting fire or a plague. To cease fighting is to be overwhelmed. However, in the midst of the battle for purity, while convinced that eternal vigilance is necessary, and then only partially effectual, it is interesting to know that all on the side of purity are fighting on God's side, and that in His own time and way He will come to our rescue and grant a complete victory. So complete will be the victory that there will be no more sighing or crying or dying; no more sorrow or pain, because there will be no more sin, no more impurity. Heavenly conditions will have come to earth, which then will be a world-wide Paradise. – Isaiah 35.

We admitted that this view of the situation is the very reverse of the popular theory of Evolution. Thinking people are more and more coming to realize that the wonderful blessings of our day, material and intellectual, do not uphold the theory of the Survival of the Fittest, and of general progress, physically and intellectually. The trend is downward. Imbecility, insanity and moral degeneracy are on the increase, and especially manifest in the families of the rich and the educated. The progress of our day must be accredited to God, and should be considered as marking the inauguration of the New Era, Messiah's Kingdom, so long promised.

GOD IS NOT RESPONSIBLE

The Bible alone explains the present situation. It alone tells us why so many go astray. Children are born with evil, immoral instincts, against which themselves and society must continually war. In Psalm 51:5 we read, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Here is the explanation. We inherit our tendency toward sin, and some inherit more of it than others. Few have realized the sacredness and responsibility of parentage. Few parents have realized how much they have to do with the moral and physical status of their children, not merely in the

training of them after they are born, but in the qualities which are given to them at the time of their begetting and during the period of gestation.

Let none get the thought from what we have said that any child can be born perfect, either physically, mentally or morally. The seeds of sin and degeneracy were implanted further back than our immediate parents. As physical likeness persists from grandparent to grandchild, so do moral traits and tendencies, impurities of blood and of ideals. The Bible takes us away back to the first man and the first woman, tells the story of their disobedience to God, and explains to us that when Adam and Eve became sinners, they thus cut themselves off from fellowship with God and came under the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." Then started the downward trend, which has been increasing in momentum ever since.

God created man perfect, in His own image and likeness, the Bible assures us, and everywhere we see corroboration of this fact. In nearly every human being a certain amount of moral character still persists, notwithstanding the 6,000 years since the fall. In some more and in some less the Creator's character likeness is observable; but all are sinners, all come short of the glory of God – short of the Divine likeness originally granted to our race. God is not responsible; for as the Scriptures declare, all His work is perfect. (Deuteronomy 32:4.) He was fully justified in separating from Himself our disobedient first parents and sentencing them as unworthy of His favor and everlasting life, under the decree, "Dying, thou shalt die."

Ever since, the race has been under the reign of Sin and Death. More and more has sin gained control. And the natural tendency of all sin is death-ward. It has not been improper that mankind should seek through medicine and surgery and in every manner imaginable to relieve himself of the burdens of Sin and Death. The effort has developed noble characters in the world. **[R5360 : page 362]**

The fight against Sin and Death is still being prosecuted. Nevertheless, our physicians realize that the mental and physical ailments of the race are increasing, multiplying; and that their study, knowledge and skill are unable to keep pace. Our Purity Congress assures us of the same things along the lines of immorality. We must not relax our efforts for an instant. Every good man and every good woman should be alert to counteract as wisely and forcefully as possible, the influence of this reign of Sin and Death. As we contemplate the work which is being done in this direction, we rejoice to see so noble an army battling for the general good. We admire all sincere laborers for reform in any direction.

IS NOT GOD INTERESTED?

As we realize our own deep interest in the welfare of humanity, it would seem strange if our Almighty Creator were not Himself interested in the race which He made and which He justly condemned to death. The Bible points out that God still loves the world; and that He has a great plan for human recovery from sin, sorrow and death. The perplexity of Christians in the past has arisen from not taking a sufficiently broad view of the Divine character and Plan. Once we wondered why God did not more particularly bless reformers and use His power for the overthrow of the vicious and the corrupting elements of society. But now the light of the Millennial Morning is dawning. The Bible explains why God has permitted the reign of Sin and Death; and the understanding of this mystery is a blessing.

The Bible teaching concerning the penalty of sin is not what was taught us in the creeds of the Dark Ages. The teachings of the Bible show that there is indeed a terrible penalty upon sin, but not the penalty of eternal **[R5361 : page 362]** torture, which we once supposed. The wages of sin is *death*; and *everlasting life* is a *gift of God*, to be bestowed *only upon believers*, through Christ. Hence the wicked *cannot* get everlasting life. "They shall *perish*;" "All the

wicked will He *destroy*." But how many are really wicked? is the question. How many prefer sin to righteousness? How many would rather be right than wrong, were it not for the depraved tendency which prevails in themselves and the influence from others to which they are susceptible?

SATAN, SIN AND DEATH TO BE OVERTHROWN

With considerable elaboration of Scripture we pointed out that God loves His creatures deeply – not merely the Church, but the world. He loved mankind "while we were yet sinners." God is proceeding with a great Plan of Salvation, which will reach every member of the race and bring to each an opportunity of full recovery from sin and death – either in this life or in the next. To this end Christ died for all. Since Pentecost the work of God has been the calling, testing, proving of a select class, a very loyal and very faithful class, to be joint-heirs with Jesus in a glorious Kingdom of Righteousness. This Kingdom is to be established in the earth, and is not only to overthrow Satan, Sin and Death, but to restore to human perfection all who will prove willing and obedient, under the light and opportunity then to be granted.

In the meantime, the reign of Sin and Death has not been valueless. It has given most instructive lessons, both to angels and to men, respecting God's holiness and the reasonableness of His requirements. It has demonstrated that all of God's creatures must be holy, pure, in order to enjoy His blessings, which He provides for no others. Those who have some knowledge and appreciation of righteousness should be on the alert to serve righteousness, purity, Truth, in proportion as they perceive these and see the terrible results of sin and impurity. The whole world should know that only the earnest followers of Christ will gain the great prize of joint-heirship with Him in His Kingdom. Nevertheless, of the whole world it is true that "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

In other words, as any serve sin, and debauch themselves and others, they degrade themselves in proportion to their knowledge and wilfulness in the matter. And in proportion as any seek to live justly, purely, soberly, in that same degree do they benefit others, and prepare themselves for a more favorable condition in the Resurrection. Although all fall asleep in death, each will come forth in the great Day of Resurrection, which will last a thousand years. They will come forth in more or in less favorable conditions, with more or with less shame and contempt, to receive few or many stripes, or punishments, according as they knew or did not know the Master's will – the way of righteousness.

URGES DILIGENCE IN BIBLE STUDY

If the Bible story were more fully understood, its reasonableness would appeal to larger numbers, and its influence would be a blessing, physically, morally, in every way. Let us be diligent in Bible study, along unsectarian lines. Getting near to God means to come in touch with the power of God, which gives the victory over sin in the heart, and which will fit and prepare true Christians for the great work of the future when they will be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, their Lord, in that Kingdom which is to bless all mankind, and for which we pray: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven."

In the meantime, those in preparation for the work of the future, and co-laboring with God in the work of grace in their own hearts at the present time, should be glad to participate according to their opportunities in all moral reforms of the present time, or at least sympathetically to uphold the hands of those who are engaged in these reforms; as, for instance, the International Purity Federation.

SEED-TIME AND HARVEST

We are sowing, ever sowing,

Something good or something ill
In the lives of those around us –
We are planting what we will.

Not a word we say falls fruitless,
Not a deed we do decays;
Every thought and word and action
Will be found in future days,

When perhaps the hand that sowed them
Shall itself have ceased to be;
Still the *record* of their being
Will live on eternally.

Grant, then, Lord of all the harvest,
That the seeds we daily sow
May refresh the hearts of others,
Spreading blessing as they grow.

May each thought and word and action
Be the growth of *Christian love*,
To be found in coming ages
In Thy garner-house above!

Treasured there, in Thine own keeping,
Just to prove our love was *true*;
For the *motive* gives the value
To the meanest thing we do.

Charlotte Murray.

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