

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

We learn with regret that our reports of the progress of Socialism at home and abroad have been misunderstood by some to signify expectation that Socialism may be the Lord's way of bringing in the blessings of the Millennial kingdom. Our position seems difficult for some to understand. We believe that many of the ideals of Socialism are good;—more than this, that many of those ideals will be realized in the kingdom as they are now realized in heaven. But, we dispute the ability of Socialists to put those ideals into effect and make them continuously operative.

Why so? Because of sin;—because selfishness, the reverse of love, is born with all men;—and because nothing but a thorough conversion (such as few experience) and subsequent instruction in the school of Christ (such as few now enjoy) could possibly so correct the natural heart as to make love—the golden rule—its law.

No doubt many Socialists believe that their desires for Socialism are actuated by love, and not by selfishness; but such should not forget the Scriptural declaration that "the heart is deceitful above all things." Those clamoring for Socialism are generally such as believe that their temporal interests would be improved, or, at least, not injured, by Socialism. Remarkably few are advocating Socialism or anything else to their own disadvantage. We are not finding fault with this *natural* conditions; only God's saints love to the extent of self-sacrifice for the good of others. We are merely pointing to this evidence that the advocates of Socialism cannot claim to be actuated by love, but by selfishness;—we are merely proving our position, that even if Socialism were established it could not last, because selfishness would continually prompt each to work either for his own advantage, or else to work as little as possible.

Possibly a very few may be found working for Socialism and against their own interest: it is not for us to decide; but it is possible that ambition or combativeness have as much, or more, to do with their sacrifices than has love of mankind. The point we make is that Socialism is not practicable under selfish conditions; and that the *voluntary* Socialism which the Lord will introduce will not be attained until the close of the Millennium, when the selfishness of the fallen condition will have given place to perfect love and the full image of God;—all the incorrigibly selfish being destroyed in the second death. The Socialism of the Millennium will not be *voluntary*, but enforced by the rule of the "rod of iron"—Rev. 2:27.

Our reason for keeping track of the progress of Socialism now is, that we expect that it, or something akin to it, is about to deceive the world into looking for a Millennium of its own, and lead them unconsciously to, and then over the brink into the anarchy and "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." We cannot wonder that this "will o' the wisp" should attract and ensnare many of "the groaning creation" who long for better things for themselves and neighbors; and we should and do sympathize with such very keenly; but for any one who has had his eyes opened to the divine plan for the blessing of the world, through Christ and his church, in the Millennial kingdom (invisible to the world), to be attracted to Socialism would be a distinct evidence of his going into the "outer darkness" of the world—away from the inner light of divine revelation given to the church.

CONDITIONS IN GERMANY

The London *Spectator* editorially reviews the German situation, and the evidences seen there of a political or a social revolution—all, be it marked, based on selfishness. It says:—

"Professor Mommsen, whose opinion has great weight in Germany, has issued a remarkable manifesto. He says that 'the overthrow of the Imperial Constitution is rapidly progressing.' The Reichstag and the Emperor alike are being subjected to the absolutism of an alliance between the Tory landlords and the priests. That is revolution and worse than personal government, because the autocrat would be impartial. All parties, in fact, are becoming revolutionary. The Liberals would like to convert the supreme head of the state into a 'first official,' after the English pattern, and 'that is revolution.' So is the desire of the Centre to reconvert Germany to Catholicism. So is the desire of the German squirearchy to restore aristocratic rule, and degrade the Emperor to be only first among his peers. And finally, so is the desire of the Social Democrats that every workman, without regard to his work, should receive out of a general pot the same quality of soup as his neighbors. The only remedy is for Liberals and Social Democrats to unite in resistance; but that requires a modification in the ideas of each, which the Social Democrats in particular, who seem bent on 'political suicide,' will be slow to concede. We are not so hopeless as the Professor; but certainly the trend of events in Germany is towards Cæsarism in the hands of a Cæsar whose

considerable powers of mind are rendered partially useless by perpetual hurry."

ABOUT OUR PROSPERITY

The Pittsburgh *Gazette* editorially says:—

"While the United States is enjoying unexampled prosperity, England is feeling the pinch of hard times. Accounts agree that in the poorer parts of London and in some of the industrial centers in the provinces there is an exceptional amount of distress. It is admitted that the year now closing has been marked by a decline of industrial prosperity and that there is an unusually large per centage of unemployed workmen, for whose relief during the winter special exertions will have to be made. Similar news comes from Russia. Famine prevails in the province of Finland, and in all industrial centers there is great suffering owing to lack of work. It is reported that workmen in important towns are glad to get work for 35 copecks a day, equal to 23 cents. The depression in England is largely a reaction from artificial stimulus of war expenditure, and in Russian it is a recoil from over production and over trading in connection with the rapid expansion of the empire. Germany is beginning to emerge from the depression that overtook her industries some years ago, but the recent tariff legislation, hostile to the commercial treaties which stimulated her industrial progress, has clouded the prospect again. The industrial prosperity of the United States is the admiration and envy of the world."

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We receive many queries respecting the probable duration of present prosperity. That question no human being can answer satisfactorily. The world's wars being over and the great war expenditures stopped, would naturally mean that prosperity has already crested and is on the decline. But who knows what may come of the Venezuelan trouble or similar difficulties with other states, through the new program of the great powers that the claims of private bondholders against the smaller nations may be collected by force? Who knows that this program and the "Monroe Doctrine" may not clash so as to bring about one of the greatest sea wars of modern times? Or something else, of which we as yet have not a surmise, may come forward suddenly to give business a fresh spurt.

So far as the Scriptures guide us, we expect the climax of the great time of anarchious trouble in October, 1914. Our opinion is that so great a trouble would necessarily last in violent form at least three or four years before reaching that climax. Hence, we expect strenuous times by or before October, 1910. And this agrees well with the corresponding and typical trouble with which the Jewish age ended.

Reasoning backward from 1910 A. D. we are bound to assume that the conditions leading up to such violence as we then expect would include great financial depression, which probably would last some years before reaching so disheartening a stage. We could not, therefore, expect that depression to begin later than, say, 1908. Our reasoning is that a depression beginning *now* would culminate too quickly for the dates we consider fixed by Scripture, and that there is not sufficient time for a depression and then another boom and another depression before 1910,—notwithstanding the rapid changes of our day. These reasons incline us to expect a prolongation of present prosperity for a couple of years more. It is because we see no other cause than war likely to sustain present prosperity, that we are on the lookout for one;—and not that we favor or sympathize with wars.

CATHOLICISM IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Recent reports indicate that the movement among the Filipinos to throw off the yoke of the Roman Catholic church is progressing rapidly. They have established the "National Filipino Church" modeled after the pattern of the Church of England. They have chosen as its archbishop "Father Aglipay," an excommunicated Catholic priest, and the movement is taking well with the people who for so many years have been under the oppression of the monks and friars, both socially and financially. The latter have gotten into their control vast estates and many of the most profitable plantations, as well as all the church property, schools, etc., with money wrested from the people for performing funeral and wedding and christening services, and for masses and penances, under the pretext of saving them from untellable torture in the future.

The people have seized many of the church buildings, claiming (we think, properly) that they were built with their and their fathers' money and labor and belong properly to them; and they are holding these by armed force and using them for worship according to their lights. Both parties—the people and the friars—are appealing to the American Governor Taft to decide for them. Neither party seems able to understand how church and state are distinctly separate with us. The Gov-

ernor advises both parties that he can and will do no deciding of the question—that the courts of justice must settle the dispute. Bloodshed is feared.

DISESTABLISHMENT MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND

The "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage" is making itself heard. Its Secretary recently said:—

"The education bill and the rapid drift of the Anglican church Romeward are the pivotal points of the campaign. We contend that the bill is the creation of the state-maintained clergy and that it mulcts the people for the benefit of a limited class. We also contend that such an act would be impossible were the religious system independent of the state. The bishop of London's vehement protest against Romanist ritualism in several Anglican churches comes opportunely to aid our agitation. We hold that such evils are inherent in an official church which relieves the clergy of responsibility to the people and insures them life tenure. Unless guilty of gross breaches of immorality, Anglican ministers can teach anything, from agnosticism to transubstantiation, and remain perfectly secure in their clerical strongholds. The majority of them are deeply Romanists, but the English masses are thoroughly Protestant. When the people and not the state have control of the clergy the Romeward tendency will cease.

STATESMEN'S VIEWS ON ZIONISM

Lord Salisbury: "Zionism is destined to succeed in spite of the opposition it encounters. The Jews are capable of establishing a model government at Palestine, and raising the commerce of Asia Minor to an unprecedented height. If but forty per cent of the Jews were converted to the project, it would become an assured reality. There is no reason why the Sultan should object to the establishment of an autonomous Jewish government within his dominions. There is enough energy and perseverance in the race that has resisted oppression for 2,500 years to accomplish the purposes pursued by Zionism."

Ex-Premier Bourgeois: "The Jewish nation is too individual, too dissimilar, to other nations, to lose itself in assimilation. Zionism is essentially war upon Antisemitism—a phenomenon even more injurious to the dominant nations than to the Jews themselves, for it has a demoralizing effect, fostering hatred and checking the growth of the liberal spirit. The Jews are now reasserting themselves as a new-born nation and vigorously proclaiming their status as one. We may expect much from them, as they possess much intellectual power, Zionism is to be hailed as the solvent of Antisemitism, which will lose its *raison d'être* with the unification and rehabilitation of the scattered and oppressed race."

THE TRUE FOLD NOT A PEN

JOHN 10:1.

Many of the Lord's sheep are penned in behind various creeds of men and thus hindered from obtaining the food and exercising the liberty which Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, intended they should have. It is contrary to the will of the great Chief Shepherd that his sheep should be separated from *each other* by pens, and hindered from the proper liberties of the fold. There is one general enclosure behind which all the *true sheep* of this age and flock will be found; and to it the Lord informs us there is but the one *door*—himself.

We might assume that all know something about this *one fold* and its *one door*; but this would be a mistake; many are so confused by the numerous man-made folds of Christendom that they confound these with the true. Some "wolves" are disappointed to find that the good Shepherd who gave his life for the "sheep" has provided certain limitations beyond which the sheep cannot go if they obey his voice (his Word), and beyond which they do not desire to go if they are actually his sheep.

Let those who like call this true fold, with its well-defined walls, "a man-made pen";—those who enjoy its security, enjoy also its liberty. It has one and only one wall, great and high, which so far has kept out the "wolves," except such as pretend to be sheep—who come arrayed in sheep's clothing. This wall is *faith in Christ* as man's *ransom-sacrifice*—finished at Calvary.

None whom that fence excludes are "sheep." And behind that simple, yet strong, creed-fence there is all the liberty proper for the Lord's "sheep";—though probably not nearly enough for the "goats."

Further, while it is wrong for under-shepherds or anyone else to erect denominational fences inside this true fold, or to entice the "sheep" into them, and thus to restrain their liberties within the fold,—it is not only proper, but a part of the true under-shepherd's duty to protect the flock within the true enclosure of the true fold, from the "wolves in sheep's clothing" wherever found. No doubt it was as a type of the true Shepherd of the Lord's flock, that David [*i. e.*, the Beloved], while defending his flocks, slew a lion, and a bear, and delivered the sheep of his charge.

Our Lord, the great Chief Shepherd, set an example to the under-shepherds; and all true ones of his appointment must needs have the same spirit or soon lose their office. It was he who forewarned the true sheep, saying, "Beware of false prophets [teachers], which come to you in sheep's clothing [professing to be of the Lord's flock, but in reality not such, because they do not trust in the great sacrifice offered for all for their sins] but inwardly they are ravaging wolves [who would destroy your faith in the *ransom*, and thus destroy you as "sheep"]. But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd, . . . seeth the wolf [the false teacher] coming and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf [the false teacher] catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. . . . I lay down my life for the sheep."—Matt. 7:15; John 10:12-15.

It is not the approval of the "wolves," in sheep's clothing or without it, that is to be courted by the under-shepherd. He will, however, have the approval of the Chief Shepherd, and of all the developed sheep who have their senses exercised by reason of use. The Apostle Paul battled hard against

such false teachers, who affected to be believers, "sheep," while they were not such. Speaking on this subject he said to the Elders (under-shepherds) of the church at Ephesus:—

"I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all. . . . Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the holy spirit hath made you overseers [shepherds] to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood [—faith in which purchase constitutes them 'sheep']. For I know this, that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you [in sheep's clothing, of course, otherwise they would not be received], not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking contrary things [things different from what I, Paul, have taught] to draw away disciples [followers] after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."—Acts 20:26-31.

The Apostle Peter, too, made a similar appeal to the under-shepherds, saying, "The elders which are among you I exhort. . . . Feed the flock of God, as much as in you is, taking oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a willing mind." "But as there were false prophets [in the past—'wolves in sheep's clothing'] even so there shall be false teachers among you, who *privily* [deceptively, covering the real purport of their teachings] shall bring in [to the fold] damnable heresies [errors leading to condemnation and rejection] even denying the Lord that *bought* them. . . . And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of."—1 Pet. 5:1-4; 2 Pet. 2:1, 2.

The Apostle John also cautions us, saying: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. . . . He that *abideth* in the doctrine of Christ [that the Son of Man came to give himself a *ransom* for all—Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6] he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you [as a would-be teacher of the 'sheep'] and bring not this doctrine [of the *ransom*, taught by Christ], receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed [or who even indirectly helps to spread the 'damnable heresy' that we were not *bought* by the Lord] is partaker of the evil work [of him who publicly and openly does so]."—2 John 8-11.

Thus we see that the duty of under-shepherds to protect the flock from deceptive wolves, as well as to feed them meat in due season, has been recognized from the start;—because from the start there have been such wolves. And since the holy spirit gave special warnings that in the end of the age "evil men and leaders astray" would wax more and more bold, and that through their instrumentality Satan would propagate error, and affect to be a messenger of light, is it not due time for all the sheep to recognize these facts, and not to be deceived by "feigned words" and "fair speeches"? The true sheep must not judge of fellow sheep by the pelt; for a wolf can wear a sheep's pelt: they must learn to note the Shepherd's voice and manner—directly through his Word, and indirectly through those whom he shall use as his representatives to "*feed the flock* over which

the holy spirit of God hath made them overseers [shepherds]."

Not only did the Apostle Paul thus direct the under-shepherds, but he points out the advisability of this to the flock, since it is thus that the Chief Shepherd leads and feeds and keeps his flock.—Heb. 13:17; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 12:27-31.

Let us stand fast, therefore, in that liberty wherewith

Christ hath made us free;—allowing no one to pen us up by human creeds; neither allowing any to lead us out beyond the bounds fixed for us by the Chief Shepherd, into liberties, licenses and speculations that he never authorized. Let us abide in him, keeping ourselves in the love of God, as saith the Apostle.

PAUL AT CORINTH

ACTS 18:1-11.—FEB. 8.

"Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 3:11.

Athens did not prove to be a very successful field for the Apostle Paul's labors. He quickly perceived that, although its citizens were chiefly engaged in hearing new things and in philosophizing on every subject, including religion, nevertheless, the tendency of science and philosophy, falsely so-called, so occupied their attention and so satisfied their minds that they were not as ready for the truth as some others less highly educated and less philosophical. The Apostle's experience in this respect coincides with that of all who, in sincerity, preach the Gospel of Christ stripped of all human invention and philosophy. His experience illustrates his declaration that God does not choose many great or wise or learned, according to the course or standard of this world, but chiefly the poor of this world socially, philosophically and financially, to be heirs of the kingdom; because this class is more inclined to receive the faith and to become rich therein.

Leaving Athens, the Apostle journeyed about forty miles to Corinth, a prominent city of Greece, though very different from Athens. It was a commercial city, noted for its manufactures, architecture, paintings, Corinthian brass, or bronze, etc. It was much less moral than Athens, much less refined, much less given to the study of religious themes, but, nevertheless, a better field for the Gospel. Where religious forms and ceremonies become popular they are apt to have correspondingly the less weight and force. Where sin, immorality and irreligion are popular, those minds which have a religious trend are apt to be freer, more open for the truth, because unsatisfied by formalism, and because they more keenly recognize righteousness by its sharp contrast with the sin abounding. Similarly today, the truth is likely to receive a cooler reception amongst those whose religious sensibilities are to some extent satisfied by forms and ceremonies: truth usually makes better progress today in places where to some extent irreligion seems to have the upper hand (as in Corinth), and where, therefore, virtue is at a higher premium. The heart most ready for the truth is the one which is not satiated and stupefied with religious formalism; but which realizes to some extent the exceeding sinfulness of sin and longs for the righteousness which is of God. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness is induced by such conditions. Like the Apostle, we are to discern the most fruitful fields, and spend our energies upon them, leaving the other fields for a more convenient season, whether it shall come during the present age or during the Millennium. The Apostle apparently stayed but a few days at Athens, but abode a year and a half at Corinth—the irreligious city, where he found many honest-hearted people, to whom the Lord directed the Gospel through him.

The Emperor Claudius Cæsar was reigning at this time, and the historian says that he "drove the Jews from Rome, because they were incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain Chrestus." This was about the year A. D. 52, about twenty years after Pentecost, and it is surmised by some that the historian wrote Chrestus instead of Christus, a less common name, and that his reference was to dissensions among the Jews respecting the principles of Christianity, which by this time had doubtless reached Rome. That Christianity was already established in Rome before Paul's going there seems to be implied by his expression, "I am ready to preach the Gospel to you who are at Rome also." (Rom. 1:8-15) The supposition is that Aquila, a Jew, with his wife, Priscilla, a Gentile, who were amongst those driven from Rome, had received the message of the Gospel, and that the Apostle going to Corinth found Aquila readily by reason of their being of the same craft or trade—tent makers.

It was customary at that time that the sons of all the upper class of people should learn a trade, however well educated otherwise. St. Paul's trade as a tent-maker stood him now in good place, enabling him to provide for his necessities, while preaching the Gospel of Christ. From his own explanation of the matter we learn that even after a considerable number of believers had been gathered at Corinth as a church, the Apostle maintained himself by his trade—not because it would have been a sin for him to have received money and support from the believers there, but because he hoped that the gospel

would commend itself more to many if its chief expounder were seen to be laboring not for the meat that perisheth, nor for wealth, but preaching the Gospel without charge—laying down his life for the brethren. There is a lesson in this for all of the Lord's people who have talent as ministers of the Word. Our object, like that of the Apostle, should be seen to be that "we seek not yours, but you."—2 Cor. 12:14.

The Apostle evidently lost no time in showing his colors—engaging with as much wisdom as possible in the preaching of the Gospel to the Jews and Jewish proselytes from amongst the Greeks in their synagogue. He was not in this an intruder, for such was the custom of the synagogue;—that any person of ability had the privilege of giving an exposition of the teachings of the law and prophets. The Apostle was a man of some ability, and apparently in every city he at first was welcomed; the subsequent hatred of himself and his theme being the logical result of the wrong condition of heart on the part of those who heard—their unwillingness to receive the truth in the love of it—their preference for the traditions of the elders, with their more or less error, rejecting the light of the truth as it came to them. We find similar conditions today in Christendom, and are following the Scriptural precedent when we preach as closely as we can to the synagogues of our time, and as nearly as possible do as the Apostle did—reasoning with and persuading the attendants at divine worship. Under the usages of our time it would be improper for us now to attempt such a discussion or reasoning inside church buildings. The nearest approach we have is through the printed page, on the pavement, near the churches,—but far enough away to avoid reasonable prejudice and opposition. Let it be noticed also that the proper method of presenting the truth today, as in the Apostle's time, is not by haranguing, but by reasonable presentation—appealing to the testimony of the Word of God in a logical and a reasonable manner. Let us rejoice that we find ourselves in such good accord with apostolic methods, and resolve that we will refrain from any other methods, however popular they may be with those who follow not with us.

How long the Apostle continued in this way is not distinctly declared, but in his first letter to that church, written some time after, he remarks, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling; and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the spirit, and with power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The word "weakness" in this text may be properly understood to imply that the Apostle was physically weak, possibly for a time ailing to such an extent as to be unable to work at his trade, because, referring again to the matter (2 Cor. 11:9) he intimates that for a time he was in want. This noble soldier of the cross was evidently permitted of the Lord to have a little season of measureable discouragement, when the sunshine of divine favor was to some extent beclouded by temporal difficulties: probably his physical weakness to some extent produced melancholy—"trembling with fear." He had no thought of abandoning the warfare in which he had enlisted himself even unto death, but apparently his recent experiences at Thessalonica, at Berea and at Athens, were causing him to wonder whether or not he was too aggressive in the presentation of the Gospel—whether or not he was inclined needlessly to bring upon himself persecution, and was thus perhaps interfering with the Lord's work, rather than helping it forward, as he desired. Now he was, for the time, at least, disposed to be extremely careful how he presented the message—how that, as our Golden Text expresses it, there is no salvation, no harmony with God, no eternal life by the law, nor by any other means than through the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was about this time that the Lord comforted and encouraged the Apostle by the arrival of Silas and Timothy, whom he had left in Berea. They brought with them not only the comfort and encouragement of a good report of the work behind them, the fruitage of his labors, but additionally brought presents from the brethren, which supplied his necessities, and caused his heart to rejoice because of the evidence of their brotherly love, and that the Gospel had reached their hearts

and even down into their pocket-books. The presence of these two fellow-helpers, in whom he had so much confidence, was a refreshment of spirit to the Apostle. Their coming not only brought physical strength, but an energy of spirit—an increased earnestness and force to his preaching: he no longer felt so timid, trembling, fearful. This is still true amongst the Lord's people—the strongest of the brethren need the help, the encouragement, the assistance of others. The Lord has so arranged it that we may not feel ourselves entirely self-sufficient, and that even our proper leaning upon the Lord shall seem to require also the co-operation, encouragement, sympathy and love of the fellow-laborers in the vineyard.

Who that has borne any measure of labor and heat of the day in the Gospel service cannot sympathize with this thought? Here, then, is a way in which many of the Lord's dear people who have not themselves the largest amount of talent or opportunity for service may be co-laborers and assistants in the Gospel work. The Apostle mentions these helpers in the same breath with the more able servants of the truth, saying, "Ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became the companions of them that were so used."—Heb. 10:32, 33.

Encouraged, revived in spirit, the Apostle was bolder now to tell the Jews and Greek proselytes plainly that there is no salvation except through Christ. The effect of this plain declaration was that he was no longer made welcome in the synagogue, and the opposition becoming violent, he shook his raiment, as an indication that he had nothing further to present, and would discontinue the discussion, declaring that their responsibility rested with themselves; that he had done all in his power to preach the good tidings to them first, as was proper; but that now henceforth, according to the scriptural declaration, the message should be proclaimed outside the synagogue, to any who had ears to hear it and hearts to receive it. The new meeting was started close to the synagogue, to the intent that the message he had already delivered might be impressed more and more upon those who had heard it—that they should not forget his declaration that the promise made to the fathers was in process of fulfilment in Christ, and those who accept him.

One of the chief men of the synagogue, and various of the people at Corinth were favorably impressed by the Gospel message, and the church of Corinth thus took its start in the house of Justus. The believers testified their acceptance by baptism—the true baptism of consecration, we may be sure, first, but also the outward symbolic water baptism, which would be a testimony to others and which is referred to in this lesson.

The Apostle, still mediating the propriety of greater moderation in preaching Jesus and the resurrection, was by this time, perhaps, feeling fearful of further difficulties with the Jews, and the trouble they could stir up with the authorities. Doubtless he had in mind previous experiences, and was debating mentally whether or not he should leave before the persecutions set in,—whether or not it was the Lord's will that he should be so courageous in the presentations of the truth as to awaken further hostilities against himself and all the brethren. The Lord came to the assistance of his faithful servant, and instructed him in a dream that he should neither leave nor hold his peace—that there were many people there of right condition of heart to receive the truth.

It is an encouragement to us to note this, another evidence that the Lord himself has supervision of his own work, and guides those who are truly his servants,—who seek not their own will nor their own honor, but to glorify him in their bodies and spirits which are his. The necessity for such admonishing by dreams is less today than in the Apostle's day, because the Word of the Lord is now complete, and in the hands of his

people in convenient form, that they can, through the experience and instruction of the apostles, know what to expect and how to do;—whereas the Apostle was treading a new path and needed to be guided therein. We of today may know assuredly that it is the Lord's will that we should exercise wisdom in the presentation of his Word, and that grace should be poured upon our lips, that they may minister blessing to the hearers; but that we shall not hold our peace nor flee to another city until persecution has come to such a pitch as to almost necessitate removal.

We should not dare to say that the Lord might not use a dream today to instruct and guide his people, as he did the Apostle, but we do say that there is less necessity for such special direction, since the general directions of his Word are now explicit and amplified. We do suggest, however, that as the Apostle says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," so we may well say to ourselves, Believe not every dream, but test the dream—whether it be of God or not. A dream must never lead us in opposition to the written Word of God, but if it can be understood in harmony with the Word and its reasonable interpretation, we should rejoice in it and be thereby encouraged to follow the Word. If the dream agree not with this Word it is because there is no light in it. (Isa. 8:20) We are confident that many dreams are not of God, the majority probably being of indigestion, and some quite probably of the evil one. Hence, we have the more need of care that we follow not a dream, because it is a dream, but at very most permit it to direct us to the plain instruction of the Lord's Word.

The Lord's promise that no man should set on the Apostle to hurt was fulfilled; for, although a disturbance was created and he was taken before the magistracy, no violence was done him, and the case was dismissed by the Roman governor. As with the Apostle, so with us; in the Lord's wisdom varying experiences may be to our advantage. Sometimes it may be advantageous to us and the cause that we should seem to be defeated and forced to flight. We may rely, however, that the Lord understands the situation fully, and will not permit his work to be disconcerted and interrupted to its real disadvantage. Long ago some one said, "I am immortal until my work is finished;" and we may rely upon it that this is practically true of all engaged in the Lord's service—that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." He will use and protect and guide them in their affairs, in ways that will be to his pleasure, and eventually to their highest welfare,—to the intent that all of his good purposes shall be accomplished.

Why, then, should we fear what man may do unto us, or be distressed in regard to the Lord's work, as though Satan, or any other evil power could prevail against it? Nevertheless, it is for us to show our devotion, not only by our zeal, but also by our prudence. While God knows what will prosper, he declares of us, "Thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that"—therefore, we are to proceed in the Lord's work as though the entire responsibility rested upon us, but in our hearts are to recognize that the entire weight and responsibility rests with the Lord.

Our Golden Text gives us the central theme of the Apostle's preaching on every occasion. It would be a poor text for Higher Critics, for Evolutionists, for Theosophists, for Christian Scientists, and for most other of the new gospels so numerous in our day. Let hold fast to the same message which the Apostle preached, which recognizes no other foundation than Christ, and no other church and no other salvation than that built upon that foundation. Other structures, built upon other foundations, are anti-Christian, however smooth their philosophy, however arrayed in a garment of light to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

"KNOWLEDGE PUFFETH UP; BUT LOVE BUILDETH UP"

1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-33.—FEB. 15.

"Let us, therefore, follow after things which make for peace."—Rom. 14:19.

About three and a half years after the Apostle Paul left Corinth he wrote to the church there the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and our present lesson concerns one of its important topics. The question of religious liberty, and the propriety or impropriety of eating meat which had been offered to idols, might at first seem unnecessary to discuss; but, as the Apostle handles the subject in our lesson, he develops from it a valuable lesson along general principles, valuable to the church now, as well as then, in connection with various other matters.

Some of the Corinthian church had evidently made considerable progress in knowledge, and heartily appreciated the fact that since an idol is nothing, meat offered to the idol can-

not in any sense of the word be injured. Nevertheless, in the conference of the apostles at Jerusalem it had been specially recommended to the church at Antioch and to all Christian converts from the Gentiles "that they should abstain from meats offered to idols." Some of the brethren at Corinth perceived that there could be no sin in the eating of such meat where their consciences were not violated, and concluded that the admonitions of the Apostles were not a law to the church, but a recommendation, and had proceeded to use their liberties—to eat meat offered to idols, thinking, perhaps, thus to show not only their Christian liberty, but also that they entirely disregarded an idol.

It will help us to sympathize with them to remember that they were in daily contact with heathen neighbors who would repeatedly invite them to feasts, entertainments, weddings, etc., at which they were sure to be served with food that had been offered to idols, and which was supposed to be the better therefor. To abstain, under such circumstances, would mean more or less of an insult to their friends, and the practical ostracism of themselves. Some of the brethren took the view that they could partake of such refreshments without the least injury to their consciences, and at the same time show their heathen neighbors that they were not narrow and bigoted, but broad-minded;—or perhaps explain the matter by saying, "Your God is nothing anyway, and could not injure the meat."

The Apostle intimates that the majority of the church had such knowledge as enabled them to discern that an image of wood or stone, being no god, could neither improve nor injure the food in any sense or degree; but that this knowledge did not necessarily mean a great growth in spirituality. A very small mite of soap will make a large air bubble; and so, a comparatively little knowledge might puff one up greatly, without any solidity of character. He points out the advantage, therefore, of measuring oneself by growth in love, rather than by growth merely in knowledge—though, of course, to be great in both knowledge and love would be the ideal condition. The same lesson the Apostle inculcates further on (1 Cor. 13:2) asserting "though I have all knowledge and have not love I am nothing." Knowledge without love would be an injury, and to consider it otherwise would imply that real knowledge has not yet been secured; but, says the Apostle, to the contrary of this, "If any man love God, the same is known to him,"—acquainted with him. We might have a great deal of knowledge, and yet not know God, and not be known or recognized by him; but no man can have a large development of true love in his character without personally knowing the Lord and obtaining the spirit of love through fellowship with him. Hence, the getting of love is sure to build us up substantially (avoiding the inflation of pride) in all the various graces of the spirit, including meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, knowledge, wisdom from above and the spirit of a sound mind.

Having laid down this premise, the Apostle proceeds to build his argument thereon, and to show that although it is true, as claimed, that the idol could do no injury to the food, nevertheless with Christians love must have the last word on the matter. Love, after securing knowledge and liberty, will look about to see what effect the use of liberty might have upon others; and would perceive that by reason of differing conditions of mental strength, perception, reasoning faculties, etc., all could not have exactly the same standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of principles. Love, therefore, would forbid the use of knowledge and liberty if it perceived that their exercise might work injury to another.

True, there is only one God, and idols, therefore, are nothing as gods; nevertheless, the appreciation of idols as gods had become so ingrained in the thought of many that it would be impossible for them fully to divest themselves of some respect for the idols—impossible for them to eat meat that had been offered to idols without the feeling that in some sense of the word they had done wrong—had been contaminated or injured by the unholy associations. This would be true also of food offered to the heavenly bodies worshiped as gods—the sun, moon and stars.

Knowledge is beneficial;—"To us there is but one God, the Father;" of, or from whom, as the first cause or Creator, all things came, including ourselves; and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, by, or through whom all things, including ourselves, have been brought into existence. The knowledge which would enable us to discern this matter clearly would assuredly be of advantage. But some dear brethren did not possess ability to reason clearly from this premise, and they had a claim upon their stronger brethren under the law of love.

We must pause a moment in our consideration of vs. 6, not because the Apostle's language is in any measure obscure; but because the adversary seeks continually to wrest the Scriptures, and to misrepresent their plain teachings, and thus to mislead the Lord's flock. We refer to the false teaching abroad today, that this statement, "Of whom are all things," signifies that all the sin, all the wickedness, etc., of the world are from God; are his direct work, traceable to him as their author or fountain. Surely it is nothing short of blasphemy for anyone who has first tasted of the good Word of God, and has been made a partaker of the holy spirit, thus attribute to God the various evils which, throughout the Scriptures are uniformly condemned, and which God declares he will ultimately—"in due time"—destroy! The Scriptures are clear in their statement that "all his work is perfect;" that "God is not the author of confusion;" that "God tempteth no man," and is not in accord with any suggestion to

the effect that evil may be done so that good results may follow. (Deut. 32:4; Rom. 3:8; 1 Cor. 14:33; Jas. 1:13; 1 Pet. 3:11) It is in full agreement with the declaration that "all his work is perfect," that having made Satan a perfect being, as also he made our race perfect, representatively in Adam, God has not hindered his free moral agents from taking a course of sin in violation of his commands. His wisdom and power are such that he will eventually bring a blessing out of these evils to those who are not in sympathy with them, but the evils themselves, yea, and "all the wicked, will he destroy."—Psa. 145:20.

The Apostle proceeds in his argument to show that it is not the food that we eat that makes us acceptable to God, neither our abstaining from any particular food. Our relationship to God is that of the new creation, a heart relationship; and the blessing which the Lord gives us is as newly begotten children,—not along the lines of the flesh, but along the lines of the spiritual and heart development, which shall ultimately be perfected in the resurrection.

True, "whom the Son makes free is free indeed," and we all should "seek to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free;" but it is also true that we need to be on guard lest we use our liberty in such a manner as would stumble others more weak than ourselves,—not so able to use the liberty of Christ discriminatingly. The liberty wherewith Christ makes free may be viewed from two standpoints: If it gives us liberty to eat without restraint, in a manner that the Jews were not at liberty to eat, it gives us liberty also to abstain;—and whoever has the spirit of Christ and is seeking to follow in his steps has already covenanted to the Lord to use his liberty, not in the promotion of his fleshly desires, ambitions and appetites; but in self-sacrifice, following in the footsteps of the Master, seeking to lay down his life, even, on behalf of the brethren—for their assistance. How different are these two uses of liberty! Its selfish use would mean self-gratification, regardless of the interests of others; its loving use would prompt to self-sacrifice in the interest of others.

But why?—what principle is involved that would make it incumbent upon one whose conscience is clear to consider the conscience of another? Why not let the person of the weak conscience take care of his own conscience, and eat or abstain from eating as he felt disposed? The Apostle explains that this would be all right if it were possible; but that the person of weaker mind, feebleness of reasoning powers, is likely to be weaker in every respect and, hence, more susceptible to the leadings of others—into paths which his conscience could not approve, because of his weaker reasoning powers or inferior knowledge. One might, without violation of conscience, eat meat that had been offered to idols, or even sit at a feast in an idol temple, without injury to his conscience; but the other, *feeling* that such a course was wrong, might endeavor to follow the example of his stronger brother, and thus might violate his conscience, which would make it a sin to him. Every violation of conscience, whether the thing itself be right or wrong, is a step in the direction of wilful sin—it is a downward course, leading further and further away from the communion and fellowship with the Lord, and into grosser and grosser transgressions of conscience and, hence, possibly, leading to the second death. Thus the Apostle presents the matter: "For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth,—the brother for whose sake Christ died."

The question is not, Would it be a sin to eat the meat offered to idols? but, Would it be a sin against the spirit of love, the law of the new creation, to do *anything* which could reasonably prove a cause of stumbling, to our brother;—not only to the brethren in Christ, the church, but even to a fellow-creature according to the flesh?—for Christ died for the sins of the whole world. It is a very serious crime against the law of love and against the Lord's injunction, to cause one of his brethren to stumble (Rom. 14:13, 21; Matt. 18:6), but it would also be a crime in his sight for us to stumble others,—to hinder them from becoming brethren, and of the household of faith. Hence, it is clear that although knowledge might remove all prohibition of our consciences and all restraints of our liberty, yet love must first come in and approve the liberty before we can exercise it. Love places a firm command upon us, saying,—Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. Love, therefore, and not knowledge, not liberty, must finally decide every question.

Let us take our stand with the Lord, and determine that so far from using our liberties in any manner that might do injury to others we will refuse so to use them; and will rather *sacrifice* them for the benefit of others;—even as our Master, as our Redeemer, gave all that he had. Let us adopt the words of the Apostle in the last verse of this lesson, and determine once for all that anything that would injure a brother we will not do—any liberty of ours, however reasonable in itself, that

would work our brother's injury, that liberty we will not exercise; we will surrender it in his interest; we will sacrifice it; we will to that extent, on his behalf, lay down our life for him.

There is, perhaps, occasionally a danger of misapplication of this principle; as, for instance, the Doukhobors might say to us, We regard that it is wrong to eat any meat and wrong even to use the skins of animals for shoes, and you are to condescend to our weak consciences in this matter, and ought not to eat meat or wear shoes either. We answer that that is not a similar question to the one which the Apostle has explained in which we should surrender our liberties. On the contrary, the Word of the Lord and the customs of society are all opposed to these bewildered people, and to yield to their mental unbalance on this question would be to assist them in a wrong direction. Our abstaining from eating meat or from the wearing of shoes would in no sense of the word help them to better views; nor does our eating of meat or wearing of leather in any sense of the word *interfere with their consciences*. Other brethren have an antipathy to the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, as there used to be people who objected to having meeting places heated and provided with comfortable seats. These may sometimes abuse the Apostle's argument, claiming that their consciences are injured by the liberties of the brethren; and that such liberties should be abridged in their interest. Our answer to them must also be,—that they misapply the Apostle's argument: it is not his meaning that the Lord's people are to favor the mental crotchets of each other in such a manner as would be the general injury of the church. Superstitions are not to be encouraged in the church, nor its spiritual advantages and liberties sacrificed on account of them. Nevertheless, love must always have a voice in all of the affairs of the Lord's people; and even such as would mistakenly impose upon their brethren upon the score of weakness, should be treated with love, and their objections, etc., should be reasoned upon. They should see that they have full liberty to do any and everything that the Lord requires of them, abstaining from every appearance of evil, and that their brethren should be accorded the same privileges. If they cannot conscientiously sing with instrumental music or sing hymns, let them keep silence, or for the time do their singing at home. Praising God with instruments is a very different question from eating in an idol's temple.

A somewhat similar question to this one which the Apostle decided, may come before us today in respect to attendance at public worship in the nominal churches, Protestant and Catholic—including the propriety of partaking of the "sacrament" or the "Mass." On such a question each has personal liberty; each should be fully persuaded in his own mind, and follow the direction of his own conscience. In our judgment it would be a much more serious offense to partake of the Mass in Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic or High Episcopal church services, than to sit in an idol temple and partake of the foods offered to the idols; because the Mass is particularly an abomination before the Lord. (Heb. 7:25; 10:14) As respects participation in the Lord's Supper, as observed by the majority of

Protestants: We could see no harm in this of itself;—those participating might intelligently reverence and worship God in such a manner, even though realizing the inappropriateness, according to the Scriptures, of such a celebration. We would, however, think that a regular participation in the services of Babylon and in her misinterpretation of the Lord's Supper would be reprehensible;—injurious to our spiritual progress, and dangerous also in the stumbling of some weaker in their discernments. Our advice, therefore, would be that on the one hand we do not feel such a restraint that we would fear to enter a nominal church building to hear a service there; and on the other hand that we do not seem to give our assent to their errors by regular attendance and participation—except at such meetings as would afford us full opportunity for the presentation of the truth.

Another illustration of this principle in our times, is found in the liquor question. There will be no dispute that it would be wrong for any man to get drunk—to lose his senses, and additionally to render himself liable to do injury to others, and surely to dishonor his Creator. The question of liberty comes in only respect to the use of liquors in such a manner as would work no dishonor to God and no injury either to ourselves or to our neighbors. All recognize the fact that intoxicating liquors are a dangerous temptation to the world in general, and our suggestion to the brethren who feel that they have full power of self-control in the use of liquors, is that they apply the argument of the Apostle in this lesson, and determine whether they could not more honor the Lord and help those who are weaker than themselves by using their liberty in the direction of total abstinence,—sacrifice of rights,—rather than by using it in moderate drinking.

So far as we are able to discern, intoxication is one of the most terrible evils scourging our race at the present time. Many are so weak through the fall, by heredity, that they are totally unable to resist the control of intoxicants, if once they yield to them. Is it too much to ask of those who have consecrated their lives to the Lord, to righteousness and to the blessing of others, that they should deny themselves in this matter, and thus lay down some liberties and privileges in the interest of the brethren, and in the interest of the world in general?

Similar arguments might be urged respecting the use of tobacco, cards and the various implements which the Adversary uses in luring mankind into sin. The whole, be it noted, is the argument of love. In proportion as we grow in the graces of our Lord, in his spirit of love, we will be glad, not only to put away all filthiness of the flesh for our own sakes, and to be more like the Lord, but also, at the instance of love, we would desire to put away from us everything that might have an evil influence upon others, whatever we might consider our personal liberties to be in respect to them.

Our Golden Text is in place here—it appeals to all who have become new creatures in Christ. "Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace"—for the blessing of others and for our own blessing and upbuilding as new creatures in Christ, members of his body.

"IN MY NAME"

[Reprint of poem in issue of June 1, 1894, which please see.]

LETTERS OF INTEREST

DEAR AND HONORED SERVANT OF CHRIST:—

You may recollect having received a letter from me about a year ago, when I was in India; also, how, after ordering a copy of the MILLENNIAL DAWN, I returned it, having given up as darkness what had seemed light to me.

Your kind letter of January 9th, 1902, expressing your sorrow that I had turned aside "to the husks, theories and creeds of men," caused conflicting thoughts to arise in my mind again. Former Scriptures that had taken hold of me, revealing the utter destruction of the wicked in the second death, came with power to my soul, and I found myself in doubt concerning the "orthodox" view. In this state of conflict I cried to the Lord for light. The following verse of Scripture caused me to know that God would in his own time show me clearly which was truth:—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine." I decided when I had leisure I would study the Scriptures on this point of doctrine, using Dr. Young's Concordance only to help me find all verses treating on the subject. Just then I was busy preparing to return to Ireland for a rest. After searching and comparing Scripture with Scripture, I became fully convinced of the truth of the second death; and of the non-existence of the soul of either saint or sinner from death till the resurrection.

I confessed this to the elders of the assembly with which I was in fellowship, and to other friends and evangelists. They expressed their deep sorrow, and some denounced me as a heretic, saying they "believed all would accept this doctrine of the devil ere the Man of Sin would be revealed."

The elders (known as "Open Brethren") assembled to examine me, and decided that I should be excommunicated—delivered over to Satan! 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; 2 John 7-11, were the Scriptures read to exclude me from their fellowship. Some were in tears, but were obliged to submit to the authority of the brethren, which is equal to the authority of the church of Rome.

In the midst of these trials the Lord filled my heart with his own perfect peace, and saved me from having a bitter thought against those whom I knew were walking in darkness and therefore did not know what they were doing. Since being excluded, I have met a few Christians who are like-minded, so I am not so isolated here as I was in India. One of my sisters, a brother and a brother-in-law see the truth and are suffering for it. There are some who are seeking more light and in many ways the Lord is opening up doors of service.

The missionary friends had hoped that after a rest I would return to N— next year. But as I have written to these, they