

Friday afternoons and Saturdays. Am doing very nicely and am making expenses, and so feel satisfied to continue. Again thanking you for so kindly remembering me, I am, with much Christian love,

Yours in the harvest work,

ALBERTA CROSBY,—Colporteur.

Dear Brethren:—

You will find enclosed my first report. It covers, as you see, somewhat more than half a month, but I hope you will accept it as it is and make allowances for mistakes or omissions, remembering that it is new to me. It shall be

my effort to make each report more satisfactory than the last. Your words of instruction and encouragement have, I assure you, been greatly appreciated. It seemed to me that I esteemed the Colporteur work a great blessing and privilege, but since reading the report in the January 1 **TOWER** I feel much ashamed and pray the heavenly Father for a like earnest zeal as that shown by the Colporteurs in Jamaica and Costa Rica. May the heavenly Father's blessing attend all your labor of love in the new year.

Your Sister in the Anointed One,

ELLEN ZELLER,—Colporteur.

. XXVIII

ALLEGHENY, PA., APRIL 15, 1907

No. 8

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

AKING WITH TONGUES AS A MODERN RELIGIOUS MANIA

Speaking with tongues has been a feature of recent revival meetings held in various cities of Ohio. As reported in the secular and religious press these manifestations have taken the form of articulate but unintelligible utterances for the most part. In one instance, however, a young woman is reported to have "babbled for nearly an hour in what is said to be the Greek language," though in her normal condition she disclaimed all knowledge of the ancient tongue. These involuntary utterances appear to be a part of the sign manual of the "Apostolic Faith Movement," which we are informed by a writer in *The Wesleyan Methodist* (Syracuse), "originated in the Pentecostal experiences of Evangelist Charles F. Parham and collaborators in Topeka, Kans., in A. D. 1900, January 1." At that time a Miss Agnes Ozman, a member of the Bible school previously founded by Mr. Parham, "received the gift of the holy Spirit and spoke with other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance." On January 3 following "twelve students were filled with the holy Spirit, and spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, while some in the room were said to have been seen cloven tongues of fire as they appeared on the day of Pentecost." In these events is said to reside the origin of a more or less wide-spread movement frequently referred to as the "present Pentecost." The adherents of this movement make the claim that "speaking with tongues" is "the only Bible evidence of the baptism of the holy Spirit." An examination of the manifestations was made by S. A. Manwell and reported by him in *The Wesleyan Methodist* (February 20). He writes as follows:

"Those with whom the writer has talked who claim this gift, say that the spirit takes possession of their vocal organs and uses them as he wills, while their minds are at rest. They say they are conscious that their vocal organs are being used, but do not know how, nor do they know what they are saying. They have no power to stop speaking when once the spirit possesses them. In the meeting I attended, two women were thus wrought upon. One remained in that condition four or five minutes; the other but a few seconds. The first indication I had of anything out of the ordinary was a low muttering sound without articulation. This muttering lasted but a few seconds, then the voice raised to a more natural tone and volume and it would be hard to imagine how a more rapid succession of sounds could come from the mouth of a human being. For the most part, these sounds appeared to be articulate, but if she spoke a language no one knew it. She herself knew not the meaning of any sound she made. In the same series of meetings on another occasion, another lady was similarly possessed, and when it was time to go home her tongue was yet speaking, and instead of taking a street car, as she had formerly done, she walked, not desiring to enter a car with her vocal organs beyond her control. If I remember correctly, her tongue did not cease until she had nearly or quite reached her home. Some are said to have spoken in as many as twelve different languages, but in all this I had no evidence that what they uttered were languages of earth or heaven. That these people were sincere in their belief that the spirit of God was moving them, I have no doubt. They believed they were talking a foreign language."

In trying to "identify" this movement Mr. Manwell quotes Isaiah respecting "the spirits that peep and mutter," with this addition: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Certain other historic phases of aberrant religious manifestation seem, according to Mr. Manwell, to classify with the present outbreak. Thus:

"History records that during the early part of the last

century, the affliction known as the jerks raged with violence. Young men and women were seized with it and fell in convulsions. Wicked men were seized, swearing at every jerk. Some not affected with the regular jerks ran through the woods till exhausted; others crawled on the ground as a religious exercise; while some jumped and some barked for the same reason, and a few spoke in 'unknown tongues,' from which facts arose those obscure classes of sectaries derisively known as Jumpers, Barkers and Mutterers. . . .

"It is also a matter of history that in the early days of the Mormon Church, whole days of 'speaking meetings' were devoted to it. We find that the claims made by the Mormons are the same now being made by the 'Apostolic Faith Movement.' Mr. Parham says, 'We truly are in the days of the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.' In an announcement of the 'origin, purpose and methods of the movement,' we find the following: 'Handkerchiefs blest in behalf of the distant sick.' We do not remember that many people since the days of Paul have dared to go to this extreme. We are forcibly reminded that a few years since a man by the name of Schlatter practised sorceries, blest handkerchiefs, and otherwise played with the credulity of the people, so much so that special railroad trains were run to carry the hundreds of sick to him for healing. That Paul had extraordinary power of this kind we do not doubt, but what promise or intimation have we that such power would be continued? If this one feature of the movement were all, it would be enough to brand it as a counterfeit.

"In these days the devil is working in every possible way to destroy the work of Christ. 'He comes as an angel of light, deceiving if possible the very elect.' He counterfeits everything that is good. Many honest souls are being deceived and the work of God is hindered. In the meeting where I made my observations not a sinner was converted to God, and I am credibly informed that the manifestation of the so-called 'tongues' brought no conviction to sinners, but to the contrary, the number thrown into doubt and greater unbelief was greater than those who professed to have the 'tongues.'"—*Literary Digest*.

LIKENS PROTESTANTISM TO A CERBERUS

"Protestantism is a modern kind of Cerberus with 125 heads, all barking discordantly," says the Rev. Charles Edward Stowe, son of the late Harriet Beecher Stowe, and himself a prominent Protestant divine, being pastor of the Central Square Congregational Church at Bridgewater. He is of the opinion that in many respects life was brighter in the so-called "dark ages" than it is today. This condition is due, he says, in part to the many sub-divisions of sects and creeds in religion.

He exceedingly regrets the condition of Protestantism in America and England today, there being, according to him, 125 different sects in these countries. "There is great unrest and hunger among the Protestants of today that refuses to be allayed by critics or aesthetics," he says:—

"There were but few, very few colonists in numbers, and their material wealth was entirely inconsequential; how can we account for the stupendous influence which this tiny commonwealth exerted and still exerts on the history of mankind?

"There is one, and only one, possible answer to this question. It was their devotion to the invisible, the eternal, the moral order of the universe, the glory of God! They endured, and yet endure, as seeing him who is invisible. All the history of mankind for them centered about his cradle and his cross, and for them there were none of those unusual benefits and privileges which we enjoy in this enlightened age, of being illuminated by the dark wisdom of the blind

moles and bats of a godless, Christless scholarship that burrows in the holy ground of Sinai and Calvary alike, finding there only common dirt.

"Alas! It is only too true that the heavenly city which our Puritan fathers yearned for and sought with prayers and tears has become to many of their Christian descendants a frigid city of ice palaces, built of pale negations, cold, cheerless, shining in a pale winter sun with an evanescent glitter of a doubtful and unsubstantial intellectual worth.

"The full, rich, glorious Christ of Catholic Christianity has been dragged from his throne by these 'advanced thinkers'—God save the mark!—and reduced to beggary. A pale, bloodless, emaciated Syrian ghost, he still dimly haunts the icy corridors of this twentieth century Protestantism, from which the doom of his final exclusion has been already spoken.

"Then in their boundless arrogance and self-assertion they turn upon those of us who still cry with Thomas before the Risen One, 'my Lord and my God,' and tell us that there is no middle ground between their own vague and sterile rationalism and the Roman Catholic Church. If this be so, then for me most gratefully and lovingly I turn to the Church of Rome as a homeless, houseless wanderer to a home in a continuing city.

"We are hungry for God, yea, for the living God, and hence so restless and dissatisfied. The husk of life's fruit is growing thicker, and its meat thinner and dryer every day for the vast majority of our people. In many and important respects life was brighter in the so-called 'Dark Ages' than it is today. The seamless robe of Christ is rent into hideous fragments and trampled in the dirt.

"It is not all good that we have inherited from our Puritan and Pilgrim sires. We have been talking about civil and religious liberty as if that were the only thing in the world. Noting the use the average man and woman makes of this boasted liberty today, one is inclined to think it would be far better for them if they had less liberty and more law."—*Boston American*.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

"There are others beside economists who have turned to psychology in order to explain great movements, economic, socialistic or governmental. The master of them all is Gustave Le Bon, author of the famous study on the 'Psychology of Crowds.' In that work are the full explanations of such phenomena as this country is now witnessing in the ever-increasing hostility to corporations, corporation managers, bankers, capitalists and men prominent in affairs. There is usually, unfortunately, a basis for the fearful antipathy which is finally engendered among the 'crowd' against the leaders. But this antipathy, small in the beginning is fostered and cultivated by pure reasoners and demagogues alike, until each offence, big or little, is magnified into some monstrous crime. Calm men are converted into ravening wolves, reasoning creatures lose their sense of proportion, mere suspicion becomes confirmation of dreadful offences and men are condemned unheard and executed unshriven. The French Revolution is a case in point, a psychological demonstration, and the spirit of one is developing now."

* * *

There is truth in the above clipping. We are not defending thefts great or small, but readily agree that public indignation is apt to be unjust—not only in including the better with the worse, but also in showing no mercy on the erring, even though it would be conceded that the majority would have done the same if they had possessed the opportunity. We cannot suppose that the rich of other lands are superior in morals either. They may have seen less opportunity, or have not been exposed to such a searching public examination.

However, all this is exactly what the Bible led us to expect. A revealing from the housetops and a consequent breaking down of the respect of the masses for the upper classes, whose wealth is more and more coming to be recognized as illegitimately secured. Thus is our present Lord guiding in the affairs of earth toward the great climacteric of selfish and embittered anarchy—the predicted "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation."

We agree, then, that G. Le Bon is quite correct in his declaration that crowds and classes are often moved *en masse* to do things that would not be considered by them as individuals, and that the experiences of the French Revolution will be duplicated throughout Christendom. Thank God that we can see a silver lining to this cloud: that it will be followed speedily by the rise of the great Sun of Righteousness to heal and bless and enlighten "all the families of the earth."

GET THEM TO STUDY MILLENNIAL DAWN

The Westminster Teacher publishes with implied approval the following item from the columns of *The Baptist Teacher*:—

A LAMENTABLE LACK

"Never were there so many Bibles in the world as there are today. And never was the Bible so much praised. Never were there so many Sunday schools as now, and the one great purpose of the Sunday school is the study of the Bible. Yet even among the teachers in our Sunday schools the ignorance of the Bible is nothing less than deplorable; the proportion of gray heads among them is comparatively very small. The great majority of them are but novices in the Christian life, and they have enlisted in this service not because of any special fitness for it, but because there was a lack of teachers, and their youthful zeal prompted them to enter a door that seemed to open up a field of usefulness. But their zeal was not according to knowledge. They were utterly unfurnished for so responsible a task. They have been doing the best they could—poor things! . . . How few of our Sunday school teachers have any conception of Scripture truth in its entirety—in its glorious symmetry! How few of our Bible school teachers have any definite knowledge of the way in which our Bible, as we have it, came into being—of the canon of Scripture, of the proofs of the authenticity of the Scriptures, of the meaning of the inspiration of the Scriptures, of the relation of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and the meaning of all this hullabaloo that has been lately raised about the 'higher criticism.' When confronted with questions raised by modern skepticism they are dumb and ashamed because of their utter ignorance. And these questions are apt at any time to be raised in the very classes that they teach. They have never had the advantage of any theological training, and why should they be expected to answer them?

"Now something ought to be done to remedy, if possible, this lamentable lack, and that teachers themselves should first be taught, so that when they come to teach they should not 'mutter and peep,' but speak with no uncertain sound, and not only know, but know that they know, and so be able to render to every man that asketh them a reason for the hope that is in them."

A PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER'S POINTED CRITICISM OF HIS CREED

The *Toronto Evening Telegram* gives the following as the language of Rev. Dr. Carter in regard to the Westminster Confession of Faith:—

"The Westminster Confession in fact says that God is a monster; modern theology says that he is not. Tamerlane built a pyramid of two thousand men of the garrison of Herat, laid in brick and mortar, and history calls him a monster for doing it. Lord Jeffreys presided over the 'bloody circuit,' in which he condemned 700 to execution, and he stands scorned and by himself on the scroll of England's Chancellors. But Tamerlane and Jeffreys were sweet souls compared with a God who could condemn a whole race to endless torment for a single sin.

"Readers of 'Lorna Doone' will remember how the robber Doones of Bagworthy looted a farmer's cottage and found a little babe in its cradle. One of them called to his comrade to have a game with him. He tossed the infant to the other, who caught it upon the point of his pike. We call these men fiends, but they were bright angels and seraphs compared with a God who could send millions of infants to eternal torments.

"The moral sense of the people is shocked by the shilly-shallying of the Presbyterian Church as to the Confession. The present connection of the Presbyterian Church with the Confession, if it were not so serious, would be a farce; being so serious, it is a crime. A sham theology is sure to make a sham religion."

GETTING READY FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Our amazement is excited by a proposition to convert two-fifths of the area of the United States from arid lands into fertile farms. Yet this stupendous enterprise is seriously entertained by the youngest division of our government. It contemplates nothing less than the ultimate solving of the 50,000,000 acres of waste comprising the great American desert. The undertaking will involve the expenditure of \$1,500,000, but it will create \$2,350,000,000 worth of taxable property, and will provide homes for 3,000,000 of our future population. This is the prospective goal to which the bureau aspires, and its engineers declare that it is attainable within the present half-century.—*Merchants' League Advocate*.

THE WILDERNESS PATH

Beside me walks—O hallowed thought!—
The Maker of the Universe,
The God and King of Heaven and Earth—
My Father! Tenderly he leads
My stumbling steps. I hear rare words
Of wisdom, warnings of the snares
On right and left; encouragement
To overcome the obstacles
Which here and there obstruct my way.
And as he brings before mine eyes
Grand visions of the glory bright
Awaiting (if I hold in him
My confidence firm to the end,
Inspiring me with promises
Of grace abundant for each need)
I oft forget the landscape drear,
And dangers imminent, and walk
In ecstasies of light and hope.

Now brightly shines upon my path
The glorious sun! The air is fresh
And sweet, and hopes run high of what
I shall accomplish for my Lord.
The melody within my heart
Has tuned my lips; and songs of praise
And gladness tell the peace and joy
Which they alone can feel who know
The secret of his will, and walk
In child-like trustfulness therein.

And still, when chilling mists enshroud,
And storms my wondering faith appal,
I know that he is nigh and will
Preserve my steps. Why should I fear
As landmark after landmark fades
To shadow, and I find myself
Alone with him who knows them all?
Can I but wait with shoulders bent
And visage set, until he calm
The tempest, and the way be cleared?
Then, stronger for the test endured,
Shall I by his unchanging grace
The paths of peace again pursue.

O Lord, how precious is this walk
With thee! Nor height, nor depth, nor length,
Nor breadth, nor creatures near or far,
Can separate thy child from thee.
Strong in thy strength, I tread
On scorpions, quench the adder's fang,
The roaring lion subjugate.—
E'en tempting angels, clothed in light,
Are powerless to work their charm,
Since Christ in me doth conquer all.

Lord, hear my prayer, and ever keep
In me this constancy of faith.

—R. B. HENNINGES.

MEMORIAL SUPPER REPORTS

Excellent reports of Memorial observances are reaching us by every mail. We give below a few samples. Evidently a great blessing and refreshment have been experienced, as usual. Our Lord's blessing, promised to the twos and threes meeting in his name and "doing this" in remembrance of his death and of their fellowship in his sufferings, has again been experienced.

At Allegheny the report shows smaller than last year for two reasons: (1) Because it was on Thursday night some found it impossible to attend who got out last year on Sunday night. (2) We got a more accurate numbering this year than last. However, in respect to the holy joy of this last occasion, it was by far the most blessed of all our experience. It was good to be there! and the sacred blending of sorrow and joy then experienced we believe will long abide in many of our memories.

The attendances of 15 or over reported up to going to press, are as follows:—Waukesha, Wis., 15; Chattanooga, Tenn., 15; Fort Wayne, Ind., 15; Waterbury, Conn., 15; Dubuque, Iowa, 15; Weatherford, Tex., 16; Niagara Falls, 16; Carbondale, Pa., 16; Spokane, Wash., 17; Easton, Pa., 17; Muncie, Ind., 17; New Albany, Ind., 17; Clio, Mich., 17; Rockford, Ill., 18; Big Sandy, Tex., 18; Harrisburg, Pa., 19; Lancaster, Pa., 19; Magnet, Ind., 21; Jacksonville, Fla., 21; New Brunswick, N. J., 21; St. Petersburg, Fla., 21; Knoxville, Tenn., 22; Worcester, Mass., 22; Mansfield, O., 22; Hartford, Conn., 23; Hamilton, Ont., 24; Allentown, Pa., 25; Canton, O., 27; Louisville, Ky., 28; Wheeling, W. Va., 29; New Brighton, Pa., 30; Baltimore, Md., 31; Schenectady, N. Y., 31; Buffalo, N. Y., 34; Binghamton, N. Y., 36; Richmond, Va., 36; Kansas City, Kans., 38; Tiffin, O., 39; San Antonio, Tex., 40; Altoona, Pa., 40; Denver, Colo., 41; Youngstown, O., 42; St. Joseph, Mo., 47; Dayton, O., 48; San Francisco, Cal., and vicinity, 50; Marquez, Tex., 50; Seattle, Wash., 52; Scranton, Pa., 60; Cincinnati, O., 60; Columbus, O., 65; Providence, R. I., 65; St. Paul, Minn., 66; Toronto, Ont., 79; Cleveland, O., 94; St. Louis, Mo., 95; New York, N. Y., 102; Washington, D. C., 115; Los Angeles, Cal., 133; Philadelphia, Pa., 146; Boston, Mass., 190; Allegheny, Pa., 451.

We subjoin a few samples of the many interesting letters received, as follows:—

Dear Brother Russell:—

The Church at Weatherford observed the memorial. We were blessed spiritually, and I think all felt the importance of the occasion. Sixteen partook of the emblems representing our Lord's broken body and shed blood. Two brethren came 200 miles to participate in the Lord's supper and two came 100 miles. Tears of joy were shed and the occasion was one of solemnity. We renewed our vows of consecration to our dear Lord, realizing that we are nearing the end of these precious meetings. Yes, dear Brother, the time is short. May

God bless you with such blessings as he sees are best for you and all the colaborers, is the prayer of us all.

Your humble servant in the Lord,

WILSON SUTCLIFFE,—Texas.

My Dear Brother:—

I am writing a few lines to tell you that ten of us met at the appointed time to celebrate our Lord's supper, and we had a blessed season, certainly the best communion we ever had. One dear brother who had not yet withdrawn from the Methodist Church, and was with us for the first time, said he had thoroughly enjoyed the meeting. One dear sister came about thirty miles from the country and was nearly all day in getting here. A brother left his work eight or ten miles away, and reached us just in time. There were a few others whose hearts were with us, I know, and were unable to attend.

I believe I can say truthfully that all here are growing in knowledge and love for the Lord and for his brethren. We have of late been feeding on the truth more than ever. Thanks—yea, many thanks to that servant who is sending out to the household of faith meat in due season, especially these Berean lessons.

We are all striving to follow in the footsteps of the Master as we see them; willing, yea anxious to share the cup with him, and we know what it means. And soon we hope to drink the new wine with our Lord in his kingdom. We remembered you all in our prayers. We know that we cannot help to bear our Lord's cross, but we can and will, D. V., help to bear that of the brethren, knowing that the Lord will reckon it as done unto himself.

We notice that we have a Pilgrim coming this way, Brother Mitchell. Thank you very much. We will welcome him, and pray that the Lord may use him here for his honor and glory. We would all like to have a visit from Brother Russell, but we know that you must have your hands full. With Christian love to all I am,

Yours in Christ,

CHURCH AT TRURO,—Can.

Dear Brother Russell:—

I am sure you will be glad to know of the little gathering last night in Muncie to commemorate the death of our dear Redeemer. There were seventeen of us met together in remembrance of Him, all but five of this number having come into present truth during the past few months, and thus partaking of the supper for the first time, with the right understanding of its significance. We first sang Hymn 122, and after prayer read as Scripture lesson Mark 14:1-50, then spoke briefly of the memories which gathered round the anniversary of our Lord's death, calling attention to the Father's love and our Savior's sacrifice; to the significance of the bread and the cup, and to his invitation to us to fellowship, to take

part with him in his death. Then, after giving thanks for the bread and cup, respectively, the friends were served, and after singing Hymn 276 we went out.

We had a most solemn, impressive and blessed season with the Lord, remembering in our prayers all the dear brethren, yourself in particular, and praying that another anniversary may find all of us more fully developed in the spiritual life, and more meet for the kingdom.

With Christian love from all the friends here, including the writer, I am, as ever,

Your brother and fellow-servant,

G. B. RAYMOND,—*Ind.*

Dear Brother:—

Our little class at Columbus celebrated the Memorial of our Lord's death last night, six being present and five participating. Some were prevented from being present by reason of a storm. And as we remembered our beloved Pastor, and all the balance of the flock, known and unknown, and especially those we have met and known in the flesh, and with whose trials and afflictions we were more or less acquainted, our hearts grew warm in gratitude and love to the Father for the past experiences of our lives which made this occasion possible for us. With great regard,

Your brother in the Lord,

G. M. HUNTZINGER,—*Kan.*

THEM THAT HONOR ME I WILL HONOR

Genesis 41:38-49.—May 5.

Golden Text—"If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God."—James 1:5.

Joseph's three years' experience as a prisoner, most of it as the superintendent of the prison, undoubtedly brought to him a rich experience of patience and sympathy, and tended to confirm and deepen those beautiful elements of his character manifested in his boyhood. The Lord had him in training for a great work: not only was it appropriate that his character should be developed, but also that his faith should be tested and made very strong. We have seen that although he trusted the Lord implicitly, this did not hinder him from appealing to Pharaoh's butler, whose dream he interpreted favorably, asking him that when restored to the king's favor he would remember Joseph's kindness to him as a prisoner and speak a word in his interest to secure his liberty. Perhaps he expected much from this man, who certainly would have had many opportunities for requiting his kindness, yet two years rolled around without relief—two years in which, nevertheless, Joseph maintained his confidence in the Lord and waited patiently for the outworkings of his plan.

There could be no better illustration than this for the proper course of all who belong to the new creation. In a special sense all of our interests are the Lord's, because we have presented ourselves to him wholly, unreservedly, and have been accepted as members of the body of Christ. It is for such to remember the Master's words, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of," "The Father himself loveth you," "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand," "All things shall work together for good to them that love God." While, therefore, it is proper for us to make use of any and every reasonable means for the securing of what we consider to be our best interests, we are not to rely upon these but upon the Lord, and to wait patiently for his time and his way for our deliverance from every evil condition.

WAIT PATIENTLY FOR HIM

The Lord's time and method for delivering Joseph from the prison transcended all of Joseph's expectations; and lifted him from the prison to the palace of the greatest nation of that time. It came about eventually through the mediation of the butler, but to the latter's shame it was not because of his appreciation or thoughtfulness. Pharaoh had two dreams which impressed his mind deeply, and he earnestly sought the interpretation of them. He dreamed of seeing seven cows come up out of the river Nile, very fat, and feed upon luxuriant grass of the river side; next he saw seven lean cows come up out of the river, and they devoured the seven fat ones, yet seemed none the fatter themselves. This dream was followed by another in which the king saw a stalk of Egyptian wheat, known as compound wheat; its top was exceedingly large, dividing into seven distinct branches or spikes, indicating a most prolific yield; and following it came up another stalk, with seven thin ears or branches, of the kind common to a time of famine, when lack of moisture and a southeast wind would injure the crop and make it worthless. This last stalk of seven branches devoured the first one.

We are to remember that the Lord in those ancient times gave important dreams not only to some of his own people, as in the case of Joseph, Daniel and others, but also sometimes to the heathen; for instance, to Nebuchadnezzar a dream of the golden image, and again of the fruitful tree, and in the present instance Pharaoh's dreams. We are not to wonder, then, that the king of Egypt desired assistance in the interpretation of his dreams and called for it of the wise men of his court, who, however, were unable to offer any satisfactory solution. After we have Joseph's interpretation the whole matter seems so simple and plain that we wonder that the wise men and priests had not guessed it: but thus it is with our wisdom; it seems simple after we have it, understand it and appreciate it. Thus it is, too, with the in-

ventions of our day. We wonder why they were not thought of centuries ago.

We are sure that the world is not inclined to give proper credit for wisdom to the great Revealer of secrets, and we are sure, too, that the majority of Christian people are not sufficiently inclined to honor God in respect to such matters. Could the world but realize what we see from the Scriptures—namely, that the present activity of thought along the lines of invention are of divine prearrangement as elements of the "Day of God's Preparation" for the Millennial kingdom—how it would prick its bubble of pride in our present-day wisdom; how it would show us most effectively that all wisdom comes from above, and that we might be groping almost as blindly as our ancestors were it not that the Lord's due time has come for lifting the veil and helping us to develop the forces of nature as a preparation, not only for the kingdom, but also a preparation for the great time of trouble by which it will be introduced.

"IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM"

When the wise men of Egypt were unable to interpret Pharaoh's dream, his butler naturally enough called to mind his own dream and how accurately it had been interpreted by the kind and sympathizing Joseph, and his own promise to do something for the interpreter, and his neglect until this time. Perhaps he was not entirely to blame; he could only be useful to Joseph when God's time for favoring the latter had come. When Pharaoh heard the story of the wonderful interpretation of the dreams of his butler and baker he sent with haste to the prison, eager to know the meaning of his own dreams. Here we have a further test of Joseph's character. Let us notice carefully how he demeaned himself in the presence of the king. Was he haughty, boastful, self-assertive? Did he throw around himself a mystery and seem to call from the recesses of his mind some deep wisdom? Not so. He was the very personification of modesty, and when the king expressed the hope that he could interpret his dreams he answered, "It is not of me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer."

Here we have one of the secrets of the greatness of Joseph: he honored God, and was therefore of the kind whom God is pleased eventually to honor and exalt. How the Scriptures bear out this thought! Mark our Master's words, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, he that exalteth himself shall be abased." (Luke 14:11. Mark the Apostle's words, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet. 5:6.) O, that we all might have this lesson deeply impressed upon our hearts and minds, so that with us it will be true, as with Joseph, in harmony with the instruction, "In all thy ways acknowledge him."—Prov. 3:6.

While such an acknowledgment of the Lord is proper in all the affairs of life, it certainly is especially appropriate in connection with the study of the divine Word and any attempt to give an interpretation thereof. Let none of us speak as of ourselves, nor appropriate wisdom to ourselves, but rather, with hearts full of gratitude to the Lord for blessings received, let us acknowledge him and his Word and his arrangements in connection with his truth. Especially is this appropriate in those who occupy positions of responsibility in the Church—whom the holy Spirit has made overseers to "feed the flock of Christ." To whatever extent self-seeking is indulged, to whatever extent the honor of men is craved, the Lord as the fountain of wisdom and the channels which he uses in dispensing his truth are ignored or belittled by any of us, to that extent we may be sure we are in a dangerous situation and not likely to make real progress in the good way.

SEIZING FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Pharaoh related his dreams, and after hearing them Joseph promptly gave the interpretation and explained that the two dreams were one—that they taught the same lesson: that thus the Lord had indicated to Pharaoh that there would be seven years of very bountiful harvests which would be followed by seven years of drouth and famine, in which all the surplus of the first seven years would be necessary for the preservation of the lives of the people. A lighter-headed man than Joseph, a man who felt that in interpreting the dream he had confounded the wise men of Egypt, had done a wonderful thing, would have been so overwhelmed with the sense of his own importance that he doubtless would have stood there and received the king's thanks, and have passed out a free man, to be noted by the people as the wise man.

The humility of Joseph was not merely assumed: his crediting of the wisdom to the Lord was the genuine sentiment of his heart, so that he did not feel thus elated when he had delivered the Lord's message, but with coolness and self-possession he proceeded to suggest to the king what might be the proper steps to be taken so that the dream might indeed prove a blessing. He said, "Let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years; and let them gather all the fruit of those seven years as the property of Pharaoh, to be kept in store in cities for use in the seven years of famine that will follow." We cannot suppose that Joseph had the slightest suspicion that he would be the one appointed to this work. It would be a most unnatural expectation that Pharaoh would take from the prison a man of foreign birth and exalt him to a station above the other officers of his empire. Yet this is just what Pharaoh did, and it is here that our lesson proper commences.

COULD WE CHOOSE MORE WISELY THAN GOD?

Addressing his court officers Pharaoh said, Could we find such another one as this Joseph, in whom is the spirit of God, to be at the head of this great work of preparing for the years of famine of which God has thus forewarned us? Not waiting to have the consent of the officers of his court, but after the manner of the time as an autocrat, he decided the question and said to Joseph, "Forasmuch as God has showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: thou shalt be over my house [kingdom], and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt."

So thrilling a transition from slavery and the dungeon to the governorship of the greatest country of the world, and honor and distinction and power next to those of the king, outrivals the pen of fiction in the most attractive novels. It seems so wonderful that it is difficult to believe its truthfulness. Hence it is well for us to remember that while such transitions would not be possible under the democratic conditions of our day and country, they were not out of harmony with the conditions of their time and place. For instance, we know that Daniel was a Hebrew captive and slave, and yet that he was chosen by Nebuchadnezzar to be one of the rulers of the empire of Babylon. We remember also that Daniel was brought to the king's notice in a very similar manner, namely, by the interpretation of a dream. Professor Sayce says, "It was not an unheard-of thing for a Syrian to be thus raised to the highest offices of the Egyptian State, and in the days of Hyksos' dominion it was naturally easier than when a dynasty of purely native origin was on the throne. . . For many centuries during the Mohammedan age none but a slave could govern Egypt." We are also reminded that in 1852 the prime minister of Persia, the second in rank in the kingdom but first in power, was the son of a donkey driver; and that the Sultan of Turkey once rewarded a poor dentist who relieved him of pain by making him a peer of the realm.

The exaltation of Joseph from the condition of a slave and from a dungeon to be the second person of power in the world suggests to us further the typical character of Joseph's life. Did not our Lord Jesus take a bondsman's form? and did he not enter the great prison-house of death? and was he not suddenly raised up to the throne—to be next to the Father, the Governor of the universe? And did not the experiences of Jesus under God's providence have to do with preparing him for his great work of the future, the blessing of the whole world? And as Joseph saved the lives of the people of Egypt, will not the antitypical Joseph save the lives of the world? While thinking along these lines let us remember, too, how we are invited to be members of the body of Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. (Rom. 8:17.) With this thought in our minds, the trials, the

difficulties, the sufferings of this present time, its afflictions, disappointments, may all be endured with cheerfulness if we have the proper faith—knowing that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.

"UNTO HIM EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW"

When the time came for King Pharaoh to introduce the new governor or prime minister of the empire to the people he first provided for him suitable apparel, to indicate the rank; next, the second state chariot, and, third, that he should be escorted in parade before the people by criers, who should announce his rank and call upon the people to bow the knee—to acknowledge him as the king's representative. How this reminds us of the Apostle's words respecting our Lord Jesus and his high exaltation after his trials were concluded. Paul says, "Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth." (Phil. 2:9, 10.) And while we contemplate this high exaltation of the Master let us not forget that his bride is to be joint-heir with him in all of his glory, honor and immortality, and that the privilege of becoming members of the bride class belongs to the "called, chosen, faithful," the "very elect" of this Gospel age.

If we could but have this in mind continually, what manner of persons would we be in all holy conversation and godliness—how trifling all earthly pleasures and sorrows, all riches and poverty, all weakness and debasement would seem to us! so intense would we be in our desire to make our calling and election sure to those exceeding great and precious promises. Pharaoh gave Joseph a new name, the meaning of which is suggested to be something like—Deliverer from death by the bread of life. We remember how our dear Redeemer said of himself, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." God provided in Jesus the bread of life, by which the whole world may be saved eventually from Adamic death if they but eat of the divine Word, appropriate its lessons and experiences, under the ministry and discipline of the great Redeemer during his glorious kingdom. And all this was considerably illustrated in Joseph's course as the governor of Egypt.

DID JOSEPH ENSLAVE THE EGYPTIANS?

Some have severely criticised Joseph's course in dealing with the people on this occasion, but we find no criticism of it in the Scriptures. His first work was to journey throughout the entire land of Egypt, select suitable sites as granaries, and to give contracts for the building of these. Then throughout the seven years of bountiful harvests he first of all collected from the people their usual tax of one-fifth of the produce for the king. Additionally he bought from the people with the king's money all the surplus grain they could spare and thus laid up vast stores of wheat. When the years of drouth and famine came the people in turn were glad to buy from the government the very same grain that they had previously sold. We have no intimation that an exorbitant price was charged for the wheat, no intimation that advantage was taken of the people.

But after the people had spent their money still the famine prevailed, and Joseph, the governor, purchased their cattle and all the people had, which thus became the property of the king. This was not an ideal condition according to our conception of matters, because it left too much of a centralization of power and authority in the hands of an autocrat; but if we could imagine divinely appointed and divinely guided and divinely willed kings and priests in the world, such an autocratic power would be one of the very greatest blessings imaginable to all the people. Indeed we know through the Scriptures that this will practically be the condition of affairs that will prevail during the Millennial age—that the world will not be asked to vote for its rulers and to determine its laws, but simply be required to obey the great Governor of divine appointment, unto whom every knee must bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.

Here, then, in Joseph we see another illustration or type of the Christ of glory and the manner in which he will bless the world. Our Redeemer has already laid up in store a complete provision of the bread of life, sufficient for every member of our race. In him was life, and he gave it on our behalf. We who are now accepted as his members, and who at once receive this life by faith when we accept him, and will receive it actually in the first resurrection, are the predecessors of the world in the matter of these blessings. Only the little flock is now being developed, now being fed, now passing from death unto life, through accepting the bread from heaven—only the bride and the virgins, her companions. The great work which God has in mind, and for

which he has appointed our Redeemer, is the work of saving the world, and the time and means for this salvation of the world is the Millennial age, the reign of the kingdom of heaven amongst men.

THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN

During the Millennium the great Provider of the bread of life and his associated bride will dispense to the world, through the agency of the ancient worthies, the bread of life as they will need it and be able to appreciate it. Day by day and year by year, during all that time, the world must bow the knee to the great ruler and representative of Jehovah. And during all that time they will be required to give up one thing after another for the attainment of the eternal life, until finally, at the end of the Millennial age, all who remain—not cut off in the second death—shall have given their property, their all, including themselves, in exchange for the eternal life represented by this living bread that came from heaven, of which if a man eat he shall never die.

The abundance of corn gathered by Joseph typically assures us of the abundance of God's provision for granting eternal life to every member of the human family willing to receive it from the Son upon the terms of loving obedience to the extent of full surrender. While the surrender of the will and of all that we possess to a fellow mortal would be a very dangerous matter indeed, against which we should properly strive, it is not so as respects the Lord. He is the grand exception. To give ourselves wholly and unreservedly to him is to bring to each of us, through his blessing, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and to have him mould and fashion our characters with all our interests of life to our highest welfare and his glory. What a blessed prospect then is before the world! and how we who by faith eat of this bread in advance, and participate with the anti-

typical Joseph in all of his trials and sufferings for righteousness' sake, may rejoice in our privilege.

'IF ANY MAN LACK WISDOM LET HIM ASK'

Our golden text should not be forgotten here. Surely we all lack wisdom, and we appreciate our lack the more as we come to clearly and yet more clearly appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of God's loving provision for us in Christ.

Once life was to us a maze, like as to the remainder of the world,—a round of duties and responsibilities for which we could see no adequate result or reward. We are born, we eat, we drink, we sleep, we learn in the school, we labor, and, to a greater or less extent, we enjoy our life of mingled labor, suffering and pleasure, but appreciate not the purpose of all these. Now, with increasing wisdom from on high, some of us see with the eyes of our understanding the great divine plan of the ages, and the divine purpose and loving-kindness toward us in Christ Jesus, and that we shall be heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Redeemer if so be we suffer with him.

Seeing this has changed the entire current of life for us. Now, indeed, to be living is sublime—full of interest, full of importance. The days, hours, go swiftly by, and we feel them none too many for the grand purposes of God which we see are being accomplished in us and for us, and with which we are in fullest accord and sympathy. Still, we lack wisdom, and the more we gain the more we see we still lack. We need, therefore, to continually go to the fountain of all grace and wisdom and truth, that we may profitably use each experience of life as it comes to us, to the intent that ultimately we may come off conquerors—yea, more than conquerors—through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.—Rom. 8:37.

"BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL"

Genesis 45:1-15; 50:15-21.—MAY 12.

Golden Text—'Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.'—Eph. 4:32.

The climax of Joseph's story is reached in this lesson. Truly no one can read the simple narrative in the Bible and not be blessed by it. The present lesson dates twenty-two years after Joseph came into Egypt a slave. Seven years of bountiful harvests had passed, and the second year of the famine seven had come. If we are inclined to wonder why in all those twenty-two years Joseph had not communicated with his aged father, remembering especially that he had plenty of opportunity for so doing after he became governor of Egypt, let us remember also how particularly his affairs were guided of the Lord, and that quite possibly in this matter he was acting under divine direction. He evidently was expecting his brethren, knowing that the drouth and consequently the famine extended to Palestine and over a wide range of country. Through trusted servants a watch was evidently kept for the Hebrews, anticipating that the famine would drive them to Egypt for supplies. Thus on the arrival of the ten sons of Jacob Joseph was immediately apprised of the fact. They were arrested and brought before him, treated with suspicion and accused of being spies, and put into prison for three days.

Joseph, the governor, addressed them through an interpreter, that he might the more thoroughly conceal himself, and that they might be more frank in their utterances in his presence. He interviewed them after they had spent three days in prison, and heard their admissions the one to the other that their adversity in this matter was esteemed as a judgment from the Lord on account of their wrong course toward their brother twenty-two years previous. He noted that they still remembered his cries as they had put him into the pit to die; he perceived that the matter had made a deep impression upon their minds, and that they were now in a different attitude of heart. He kept one of their number as a hostage and gave the others a small amount of food, bidding them return and, as a proof of their story, to bring with them the younger brother whom they had mentioned, assuring them that with this proof of their sincerity they would be privileged to traffic without interruption.

The brethren properly enough associated their experiences in the dungeon with those of Joseph, and evidently took to heart the lesson of their wrong course. Although in a previous lesson we saw that these men with one exception were murderers in their hearts, we will see further in the present lesson a marked change in their characters. This was brought about perhaps partly by their father's grief over the loss of Joseph, and partly, no doubt, by their own remorse

in respect to their wrong doing. Thus an evil deed is not always a precursor of further evil, but sometimes becomes the pivotal or turning point of character. What Christian has not had an experience along this line—that his point of failure, demonstrating his weakness in some particular line of character, has really been to him a valuable lesson, making him the stronger in that particular, the better able to stand future trials and temptations from the same quarter. Thus all of our experiences in life rightly received (even life's stumbling-stones) may prove to be stepping-stones to better things.

TEN VERY CHANGED MEN

On arrival at home their experiences were related to their father Jacob, who now also mourned the loss of Simeon, the hostage, but utterly refused to allow Benjamin to go from him. It was here that Reuben, noting his father's sorrow, offered himself and his children as hostages for the safe return of Benjamin. It was not until the famine pressed them sorely and starvation stared them in the face that Jacob consented to allow Benjamin to go with his brethren to Egypt, upon the assurance of Judah that if anything happened to him he would bear the blame. How evidently these men had learned sympathy from their father during those twenty-two years. Once so indifferent that they brought trouble upon him, they now were willing to pledge their own lives for his comfort. We are to remember that these men were the heads of the tribes of Israel, some of whose children were the most notable in history: for instance Levi was the father of the entire priestly tribe including Moses and Aaron; Judah was the progenitor of David and Solomon and Jesus our Lord. It was evidently a part of the divine purpose to give these men a great lesson in connection with their father, the famine, etc.—a lesson that not only would be beneficial to themselves but have an influence upon all future time.

Arrived back in Egypt from their father's house, the ten brethren were astonished when they were directed to enter the governor's palace. The money for their previous purchase they had found in their sacks when they emptied them, and this they explained to Joseph's steward, saying that they had brought it back with additional money for the purchase of more wheat. Their trepidation was lest it should be claimed that the money was stolen, the penalty for theft under the Egyptian law being slavery. Joseph's steward gave evidence of having to some extent his master's confidence and some knowledge of his religion, for he answered

them kindly, "Peace be unto you: the money returned to you was from the God of your father." He further restored their confidence by bringing Simeon to them at liberty. They washed and prepared for dinner at the governor's house, as they were instructed. What could it all mean?

Farmers, they felt strangely out of place in the palace, and queried why the governor, who had treated them previously as spies, should now treat them so generously. Their astonishment grew momentarily as they noted the peculiarities of the situation: the seats assigned them were in the order of their birth, and when portions were sent from Joseph's separate table they noted that five portions were sent to Benjamin, as indicative of the governor's favor especially upon him. They knew not that the governor, able to understand their tongue, was listening to know whether or not they still were envious, or how they would receive this manifestation of special favor to the younger brother. They stood the test. They showed that their envy was dead, that they rejoiced in their younger brother's favor.

Yet another step of testing was to be taken: the men were allowed to depart with their supplies, but into one of Benjamin's sacks of wheat upon his beast the steward by direction placed the governor's silver cup, and then, ere the men had gotten far from the city, they were overtaken by the palace guard and accused of dishonorable conduct, rendering evil for good in the theft of the "divining cup" of the governor. They all professed their innocence, and declared that if the cup were to be found not only the one who had it should be a slave but the entire company. The search for the cup began with the eldest and concluded with the youngest, Benjamin, the cup being found in his sack. We can well imagine the dismay upon the brethren; they all returned, although the steward said he wanted only the culprit for his slave. How could they face their father Jacob and tell him of this calamity? Returning to the palace the governor, Joseph, was still there. They prostrated before him, and knowing the futility of protestation as to innocence they spoke of the matter as a calamity and resigned themselves to their fate as bondsmen.

The governor replied, "Not so! we of Egypt are not unjust to take you all for bondsmen for one man's fault. Let the guilty one serve, the rest may go free. Return to your home and your families and take with you your wheat." Then it was that Judah, once hard hearted in respect to his brother Joseph and his father Jacob, addressed the governor a most pathetic plea, which for its simplicity and directness and pathos stands out preëminently amongst all the records of history. He detailed to the governor the circumstances connected with the bringing of Benjamin, his father's grief in parting with him, his assurance that it would mean the hastening of his death if anything happened to him, the fact that he, Judah, had become surety for his brother, etc.; then he concludes, "Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad as a bondsman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren, for how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me, lest peradventure I shall see the evil that shall come on my father?"—Gen. 44:18-34.

THE SILVER LINING OF THE CLOUD

The final test put upon the brethren by the Lord and by Joseph was met successfully. It was demonstrated that they were changed men, that instead of coldness, indifference and gross brutality, they were tender hearted, sympathetic and willing to suffer one for the other. The time, therefore, had come for the clouds and shadows that had been over them for some time to break away. Joseph, the governor, could refrain himself no longer. He ordered the place cleared of the attendants that he might be alone with his brethren—the matter was too sacred for the eyes of others. The time had come for him to throw off his reserve and reveal himself to them. Alone with them he wept, and his voice shook with emotion as he told them who he was and how their designs against him of twenty-two years before had, under God's providences, been overruled for his good. What wonder that the guilty men trembled now as much or more than ever. What resentment might their brother feel against them? how might he now requite them evil for evil, and send them to the house of bondage or to the dungeon?

But through his tears of joy Joseph spoke graciously to them; and, at first disposed to flee, they gathered to him as he said, "Be not grieved with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God sent me before you to preserve life. . . . So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God, and he hath made me a life-giver to Pharaoh. . . . Haste ye and go up to my father and say unto him. Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt, come down unto me, tarry not." A more dramatic scene could scarcely

be imagined, yet through it all runs the thread of simplicity and honesty, and above all the spirit of love and mercy, which could emanate only from the one great instructor, God, and could be exemplified only by those who have been near to him and received his instructions.

"TENDER HEARTED, FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER"

Had Joseph been a saint of this Gospel age, begotten of the holy Spirit and illuminated thereby through the manifold revelations of the divine purpose and character as we have them in the Bible, his conduct would still be worthy of the very highest type of Christian development. But when we think of the circumstances and conditions under which his character was developed, in a heathen land and with but a small revelation of the divine character and plan, we stand amazed. Do we not properly say to ourselves, while studying this lesson, What manner of persons ought we to be considering our great advantages every way? Would we have proven as noble and generous as Joseph under the same circumstances and conditions? If not, why not, except that we have not made the proper use of the lessons provided us in the school of Christ? And we know that unless we do learn these lessons and develop at heart such a character of mercy and generosity we will not be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—not be acceptable to the Lord as members of the elect, the bride class.

When sending them home Joseph kissed his brother Benjamin and tarried with him quite a while, the two weeping upon each other's necks. Then came the turn of the other ten brothers. How would he deal with them? Surely he would not manifest the affection of kissing them after the custom of eastern lands, because surely he could not feel toward them a perfect love and good will. But he did kiss every one of them, and since the matter was neither of constraint nor for effect, it evidenced the fact that his heart was full of generosity and loving kindness. "Blessed are the merciful," they are the kind to whom the heavenly Father will be pleased to extend his mercy and his favor. They are the only ones who will be in a proper attitude to receive the great blessing of the kingdom—others not having developed this character for mercy will be unfit for the exaltation whatever may be their portion.

"AM I IN THE PLACE OF GOD?"

Our lesson skips over that part of the narrative which relates to the coming of Jacob and his household in wagons sent for them by the governor of Egypt, with the full knowledge and consent of Pharaoh the king, and how they were settled in the land of Goshen and prospered there. By and by the aged Jacob died in the land of Egypt, but was taken for burial back into Palestine. The funeral over, Joseph's brethren were in some trepidation. Joseph's course in rendering so much good in return for so much evil seemed so unnatural that they feared that it was only a temporary matter for their father's sake, and that now since his death they would be entirely out of favor with the governor. They came to Joseph again and, apologizing for the past, asked assurances of his forgiveness, telling him they were the servants of God and that they were quite willing to be Joseph's servants also. Note the noble answer they got:—"Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now, therefore, fear ye not; I will nourish you and your little ones," and he comforted them, speaking kindly to them.

Generous Joseph! Not a complaint, not a bitter word, only excuses for their villainy. Since the matter had worked out good why should he think evil of the agencies or agents which God had permitted and used? His expression, "Am I in the place of God?" signifies, Is it for me to judge you or attempt to punish you in any manner? Is it not God alone to whom you have responsibility in this matter? and if you can make the matter right with him it already is right with me, for vengeance belongeth unto the Lord and not to his creatures, all of whom are more or less imperfect in one way or another.

Let us apply this lesson each to himself, not only as respects the brotherhood in the church of God but also in regard to the dealings with our brethren in the flesh and with our neighbors. What matters it to us whether they meant us evil or meant us good, have we not God's assurance that all things are working together for good to them that love him—to the called ones according to his purpose? And this being the case, why should we have the slightest anger or resentment against the persons or instrumentalities in any way used of the Lord in connection with our affairs. Those who thus trust in the Lord, and they only, are able to properly view and meet the affairs of life, and they alone are able

to rejoice in tribulation, in persecution, in suffering for righteousness' sake, because they know, as the Apostle assures us, that all these things are working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and that present difficulties and trials are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us by and by—when we with our dear Redeemer shall sit upon the throne of earth for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION"

If the story of Joseph, his sufferings and exaltation to power as the governor of Egypt next to the king, represents the story of Jesus and all those who follow in his footsteps in the narrow way of self sacrifice and suffering, incidental to their exaltation to power in the kingdom of God under the whole heavens; and if the preparation and afterward the distribution of the wheat, the bread of Egypt, for the saving of the lives of that whole people represents well the blessings and glorious opportunities that are to come to the world of mankind during the Millennial age through the glorified Redeemer, it does not seem amiss to suppose that Joseph's eleven brethren are somewhat typical also. We are to remember that it was his own that received Jesus, not those who cried, "Crucify him, his blood be upon us and upon our children."

We perceive that in the Lord's providence that nation has passed through severe experiences and ordeals since. We may hope that these are proving beneficial, and that ere long the famine for the Word of the Lord will reach them and cause them to come to the great Governor for the bread of life. The Scriptures intimate that this will be the time of "Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), but he will be delivered out of it. The Apostle assures us of the same, saying that God's gifts and callings he will not repent of or alter, and that ultimately the natural Israelite shall obtain mercy through the favor of the spiritual Israelite. (Rom. 11:30, 31.) The Prophet (Zech. 12:10) takes up the theme, and tells us of how they shall yet look upon him whom they have

pierced, and how they shall mourn as these brethren mourned, and how then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and upon their manifestation of repentance his forgiveness, and how ultimately their sins and iniquities he will remember no more—that instead he will be very gracious to them and kiss them.

We close this lesson with the Apostle Paul's exhortation of our golden text, "Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." The more we each realize our own indebtedness to the Lord for the forgiveness of our sins and for our adoption into his family and for the blessings that come to us as the sons of God, the more should we seek to copy after his glorious character and be copies of our dear Redeemer, the essence of whose character is nothing less than justice to every one—with as much additional of love and mercy as we can possibly attain to. The larger our attainments of this God-like quality the more pleasing we will be in the Father's sight and the better fitted for joint-heirship in the heavenly kingdom, in the dispensing of the bread of life to all the world of mankind.

He who sees not these things and follows not this course according to the Apostle's word is blind and cannot see afar off—cannot see and appreciate the blessings which the Lord has promised to those who faithfully copy him. Those who do see, find the eyes of their understanding opening more widely day by day to the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth understanding; and to make this progress in joyful appreciation of our benefactor, our Lord assures us means a corresponding growth in benevolence, kindness, gentleness and mercy to those with whom we have to do. While this rule must obtain, especially in the household of faith, it will also extend not only to our own immediate relationship in the flesh, but also to our neighbors and friends—yea to our enemies and to the brute creation. All of these will more and more realize the changing of our characters and dispositions, and it will be to their general blessing as well as to our joy.

BEHIND A FROWNING PROVIDENCE

Exodus 1:1-14.—MAY 19.

Golden Text—"Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distress."—Psa. 107:13.

Our present lesson treats of the virtual enslavement of the nation of Israel and their tribulations connected therewith. Our preceding lesson showed Joseph the governor of all Egypt, and the coming of his father Jacob and his entire household to live in the land of Goshen, a portion of Egypt well suited to herdsmen. This, we are informed, was with the full knowledge and consent of the reigning monarch. The entire family of Jacob, surnamed Israel, at this time consisted of seventy souls, persons, but since these are all said to have come out of the loins of Jacob, we are to understand that the actual number exceeded seventy perhaps considerably, the additional persons being probably wives and servants.

The record (v. 6) that Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation, seems to cover a lapse of considerable time, since Joseph himself lived seventy-three years after the coming of his father and brethren to dwell in Egypt, and apparently until his death Joseph was the governor—next to the king. Meantime the Israelites under special divine providence multiplied greatly. The number of adjectives used to express this increase intimates that the writer recognized the multiplication as abnormal, miraculous. He declares (1) they were "fruitful," that is prolific; (2) they "increased abundantly;" (3) they "multiplied;" (4) "waxed exceeding mighty;" (5) "the land [Goshen] was filled with them."

ANOTHER KING WHO KNEW NOT JOSEPH

From the time Jacob entered Egypt until the exodus was two hundred and fifteen years, and the wonderful increase is shown by the statement of Numbers 1:45, 46 that the Israelites, exclusive of the tribe of Levi, numbered 603,550 of twenty years old and upward, capable of military duty. These figures imply a total number, including women and children, of some two or three million persons. This was at a time when there arose a new king which knew not Joseph. Excavations made in Egypt show that it was about this time that the government of Egypt was revolutionized. In Joseph's time, and for quite a while before, it had been governed by what were known as the Hyksos or shepherd kings—supposed to have been invaders and not of pure Egyptian stock. The revolution brought in a change of dynasty, supposed to have been commenced with Rameses I. It is quite generally claimed

amongst scholars that Rameses II. was the Pharaoh who specially harried the Israelites in the endeavor to prevent their increase in numbers and influence, and his son Menephtah I. is supposed to have been the Pharaoh reigning at the time of the exodus of the Israelites.

The change of dynasty brought the change of ambitions and methods, and Rameses II. is credited with having been the most wonderful builder of great edifices of his time. It is doubtless in connection with these expensive public improvements that the Israelites were so rigorously treated. The method employed was not that of chattel slavery, as was practised in the United States and elsewhere until recently, but a slavery of a different kind: Solomon similarly oppressed the Israelites, though not with the same degree of severity and rigor, in conjunction with the building of his palace, the public roads, temple, etc. The method was to demand a certain percentage of the younger, stronger, vigorous males to serve without pay and on very scanty rations in the work on the public buildings, cities, etc. The same method is today employed in some parts of Africa, particularly by the Portuguese, who taking possession of certain portions of the dark continent, demand a certain amount of service from the natives, who are marched off in bands as slaves and hired out for a period of time to the gold and diamond industries without pay except the plainest food. The sum paid by the miners to the Portuguese government for the use of these poor creatures is credited up as taxes for defraying the expenses of their oppressors.

ISRAEL PERSECUTED YET PROSPERED

King Rameses II. was evidently a very ambitious man who feared and prepared for wars with his neighbors, to the north and east especially. Hence he built fortified cities, "store cities," where food and implements, chariots, etc., were held in readiness for use on emergency for repelling foes expected from that quarter. The land of Goshen inhabited by the Israelites, was in the same general direction, and this presented a double cause for fear. The Israelites held aloof from the Egyptians, not intermarrying or otherwise amalgamating. They were animated by certain hopes of their own future greatness, of which, no doubt, they sometimes boasted. What should be done with this people? was the query of Rameses II. Although the Egyptians were more numerous, the king is repre-

sented as saying, "They be mightier than we." Dwelling largely with their flocks and herds in the open air they were probably a stronger, more rugged race than the Egyptians. Even to the present time the natural seed of Abraham seem to have the Lord's blessing upon them physically in good degree. The king did not meditate driving the Israelites out of Goshen—no! that might prove a troublesome and expensive operation. Besides, he was shrewd enough to realize that if he could use that people as his slaves they would do much for the enrichment of the Egyptians by furnishing labor at the mere nominal cost of the commonest sustenance.

The first step was to take the most rugged from their homes and families for service in the Egyptian public works under taskmasters who were directed to work them so hard as to make their lives burdensome—to wear them out or drive them to suicide. In Central Africa quite a great many of the natives impressed into public service after this manner have been known to commit suicide rather than continue their toil unrewarded. But the increase of the Israelites continued more and more, and Rameses II., fearful of trouble with them, commanded the midwives to murder all the male children at birth. Not succeeding in this, he displayed far more cruelty than the notorious Herod, who slaughtered the babes of Bethlehem, for Rameses II. commanded every parent to slaughter his own male children, and held responsible all who failed so to do. It was under these trying conditions, we remember, that Moses was born, and it was this rigorous law that prevented his parents from rearing him at home, as their own lives would have paid the penalty of the preservation of his. Apparently, in spite of everything that the king did, the Israelites flourished, and this persecution, we remember, continued until Moses was eighty years of age, and as God's representative delivered the people.

CORROBORATIONS OF THE BIBLE NARRATIVE

In confirmation of the Bible record, in recent times the ruins of the city of Pithom have been discovered and it corresponds exactly to what should be expected. It evidently was a large warehouse, and apparently its only openings were at the top. Scholars describe the city thus:—

"Pithom was discovered in 1883—4 by M. Naville, near the Suez canal, and about twelve miles west of Ismalia. The town is altogether square, enclosed by a great wall 22 feet high and measuring 600 feet around each side. The area contained within the wall is estimated at about ten acres. Nearly the whole of its space is occupied by solidly built square chambers divided one from the other by brick walls from eight to ten feet thick unpierced by window or door or opening of any kind. The access to these chambers was from the top. Granite statues were found representing Rameses II. Amongst the inscriptions occurred the name of the city, Pi-Tum (Pithum) meaning 'the house of Tum,' the Egyptian god of the setting sun. An unfinished temple of Tum was also found. Specimens of the brick can be found in the British Museum and the Metropolitan Museum in New York. They are usually four to eight inches square and one and a half to two inches thick, unbaked, but very hard. An especial confirmation of the Bible story, and proof that this is one of the very cities that the Hebrews built, is the fact that the lower courses of these walls and for some distance up are of well-made brick with chopped straw in them; but higher up the courses of brick are not so good the straw is long and scanty, and the last courses have no straw at all, but have sedges, rushes and water plants baked in the mud."—Exodus 5;6-18.

THE VALUE OF THESE EXPERIENCES

Whoever regards these experiences of Abraham's posterity as amongst the ordinary vicissitudes of life to which all mankind are subject, makes a mistake. To rightly understand the history of Israel we must remember that the divine purposes as represented in the Oath-Bound Covenant made with Abraham were behind and intermingled with all of Israel's experiences. And more than this, the natural seed of Abraham were to furnish a type, illustration, picture, of the experiences of spiritual Israel on a higher plane. Looking first at the effect of the bondage and tribulation upon natural Israel we can readily surmise that they served to make that people of much stronger character than they otherwise would have been. To be a subject race would undoubtedly help to develop, in many at least, a humility of mind which was

markedly illustrated in the person of Moses, who is declared to have been the meekest man in all the earth.

Furthermore, their tribulations would tend to bind them in sympathy more closely together as one nation, one people. Additionally their rigorous treatment as slaves would impress upon them more than ever their Abrahamic heritage in the promise of the Lord that they should be a great people and ultimately be used of him in the blessing of all the nations of the earth. This properly enough led them, as we read, to cry unto the Lord in their sore distress. Who can estimate the value of these lessons given to this nation at the very beginning of its existence—a nation from which the Lord designed to develop some of his chosen servants, amongst whom would be the Messiah himself and his chosen apostles, the foundation of the new dispensation, spiritual Israel. Well has the poet said that behind a frowning providence God hides a smiling face. The Israelites had an experience of this kind: for a time divine favor was hidden from them, but the Lord was merely waiting for the appropriate time to be gracious to them, in a time and in a manner that would be most favorable to them and most in accord with his own arrangements for the blessing of themselves and all mankind.

The Psalmist in the golden text touched the vital point of Israel's experiences. Before being used of the Lord and prepared for further great things at his hand Israel needed to learn dependence upon him. And not only they but all of us have learned that trouble is a great teacher: that it appeals to the heart far more than does prosperity; that it points us to the Lord as the great care-taker. The Prophet has declared that before he was afflicted he went astray; and similarly Israel evidently would have been far more astray if deprived of the tribulations which led them to call on the Lord, and which brought to them his deliverance out of their distresses at the hands of Moses, the mediator of the Law covenant.

LESSONS FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES

Very similar are the lessons which the spiritual Israelites are day by day receiving individually in the great school of experience. How often does the Lord allow Egypt, the world, to oppress those who are his. This oppression sometimes comes along financial lines and sometimes socially. It is sometimes severest in the home, at other times in the shop. The great oppressor typified by Pharaoh is Satan. He is the great taskmaster. To what an extent he has gained a power over the flesh of those who are trusting in the Lord alone for deliverance! And who will doubt that the great adversary's special attacks are not upon the world and the wicked, but upon those who are the Lord's peculiar people, upon those who are his jewels, who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice, and whose deliverance at the hands of the antitypical Moses, Christ, he has promised. Harken to the Master's words, which assure us that in all of our tribulations we may reckon on his sympathy and loving interest and his power to make all things work together for our good. Let us give attention, too, to the prayer he taught us, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." And again the Apostle's assurance that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with every temptation will provide a way of escape.

As the effect of Israel's tribulation was to turn their hearts toward the Lord and to lead them to cry out for his promised assistance, so all of our trying experiences with the world, the flesh and the adversary and the bondage of sin and death—all these appeal to the new creatures in Christ who have the Father's promise. All this leads us more and more to look unto the Lord from whom cometh our help, and to wait for his Son from heaven, and to expect the deliverance of the groaning creation at his second advent. Is it not true, then, that present distresses and tribulations are all working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if we are rightly exercised thereby? And if as true Israelites we have confidence in the Abrahamic promise, we have it, as the Apostle describes, as an anchor to our souls both sure and steadfast, entering into that which is beyond the veil, whither our forerunner is entered for us—and made atonement for us—and from whence he provides us the blessed deliverance which we hope soon to experience in the resurrection change, when in a moment, the twinkling of an eye, we shall be made like him, see him as he is and share his glory.

Soon shall restitution glory
Bring to earth a blessed rest;
And the poor and faint and weary
Shall be lifted up and blest.

Just beyond the coming trouble
See the reigning Prince of Peace!
Lo! God's kingdom now is coming,
And oppression soon must cease.