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AN OLD ERROR.

One of the remarkable religious heresies of modern times is that held by the so-called "Soul-Sleepers." They believe that the whole human being dies, or sleeps, when dissolution comes. They hold that there is no real distinction between the body and the spirit; that the word "spirit" as used in the Hebrew scriptures is reference to man, means "breath." They look for the resurrection of those that die, but the immortality or continuation of existence spoken of by inspired writers, will only be enjoyed by those who are in Christ. All others will be destroyed. Some of them argue that all who die will be resurrected, but that the saved will enter into everlasting life, and the rest will perish; and others of them, contend that none will be raised from the dead but those who, through acceptance of Christ as the Savior, will gain that eternal glory.

It is not our purpose to enter into any discussion of this subject at present, but to call attention to the fact that these peculiar notions are not new to the later part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, but were entertained and advocated strongly over a hundred years ago. In the first issue of the New York Evening Post, November 16, 1801, the following extracts from "The American Citizen" were published by request, with some comments which partook more of a political argument against the believers in that doctrine just prior to a city election, than of a refutation of the theory advanced:

"The immortality of the soul remains unsupported by any evidence, either direct or analogical, and, considered as a cause, is inadequate to its supposed effects. The phenomenon which this hypothesis is framed to account for, is the thinking power in man; a power or quality which it is supposed cannot belong to matter; a supposition which is not well supported; for, that organized matter can and does think, may be proved by analogy, which is the only kind of evidence the subject will admit of."

"The doctrine of the resurrection, as taught by that transcendental philosophy, which was confirmed by that fact which raised a Lazarus from the tomb, evidently supposes man to be wholly material."

"It is of those opinions of mankind in theology which have the least evidence in favor of the probability of their being truths."

"When it is asserted that certain positions are truths which are devoid of evidence sufficient to prove that they are truths, it is surely an evidence of philosophy in man to think that they are truths, in such a manner as they are mistaken."

"By referring to the scriptures it will be found that Christ taught that it is a lie, and that men would sleep eternally if he was not to be awakened by the Governor of the Universe."

The comments added to these paragraphs declare that they are contrary to sound reason, and to the Holy Scriptures, but offer no further evidence against them than those contained in this one extract:

"Christians—do you believe that for you to die will be gain? That when absent from the body you will be present with the Lord? Are not these truths your support and consolation under the evils of life, and the prospect of death? Do you not wish to live under the continual influence of them, and to have them impressed upon the minds of your children? What then are you to think of writings intended to shake your faith, to destroy your hope, and leave you to wander in awful darkness and uncertainty?"

The advocates of the Soul-Sleeping theory quote a great deal of scripture which they think gives color to their views, and they often puzzle people who are not familiar with Holy Writ by the construction which they put upon those citations. The latter-day Saints, being blessed with "a more sure word of prophecy" than the dead letter of ancient writings, know that the theory entertained by those sectaries is incorrect. Direct revelation in this age of the world affirms the existence of the spirit of man as an entity, which when incorporated is fully conscious, intelligent, capable of progress and waiting for the restoration of the physical body which will be regained in the resurrection. These divine communications in modern times are in full accord with the teachings of the prophets and of the Savior and of His Apostles in former ages. Upon them believers in the revealed word of God can implicitly rely, and they need not be "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine."

THE POWER OF PREJUDICE.

The violent agitation against the proposal to translate portions of the New Testament into modern Greek, is something difficult to comprehend in the United States. Dispatches from Athens tell of murderous excitement, requiring the intervention of the military authorities to quell the turbulent demonstration. It is stated that 20,000 persons assembled at the Greek capital, that the premier's life was attempted, and that in the riot sought to be quelled by the military, seven persons were killed, thirty severely injured and others slightly wounded.

The civil and religious liberty enjoyed in this republic should be appreciated by all who receive its benefits. It

stands out in bold relief, when contrasted with such scenes as those depicted in the telegrams from Greece. Here everybody is free to believe and practice religion, according to his own views and inclinations, within the limits of law and the rights of his fellows. It is difficult for us to see wherein anybody could be injured by the translation of the books called the Gospels from one language into another. Revisions of former translations have been published here, and each individual is left to his own choice as to whether he will accept as the nearest to the original. If the same freedom were permitted in Greece, or any other country, no one would be compelled to accept or even read that which would be published.

The power of prejudice is wonderful. That thousands of persons should become infuriated over the bare proposal to make ancient scripture readable to the common people, is amazing in view of the progress of free thought and the liberty of speech and of the press, to which we are accustomed in this great country. Yet there is something closely akin to this in the excitement that is raised against the missionaries of the "Mormon" Church, in their preaching of the principles contained in the New Testament. And this is not only exhibited among the uninformed masses in rural populations, but is shown in religious circles of the highest respectability and the most advanced culture. It is seen in the pulpits and biases forth in the press. It is just as senseless, and in some instances quite as violent, as that described in the account of Athenian tumults.

Everybody in this free land should prize the liberty guaranteed by our national Constitution and echoed in the fundamental laws of the several States. This can only be perpetuated and maintained by fully recognizing the rights of our neighbors, and protecting them in the enjoyment of those rights, with as much zeal and consistency as we exercise in defending our own. It is proper that we should oppose that which we believe to be false and injurious to mankind, but before we engage in hostilities to it, we should become fully informed as to its true character and purpose, or we may find ourselves, in as senseless and unjustifiable an attitude as that in which the infuriated students and populace of the Grecian capital appear.

Some of the excited assailants of the "Mormon" people and their faith, particularly men professing to be ministers of the Gospel of the Savior, are really under greater condemnation for the course they pursue, than are the mistaken Greeks, because they have been raised in a free country and trained to believe, not only in the spirit of true liberty but in the precepts of the Golden Rule. Intolerance and prejudice are the same in all ages, and are as much to be deprecated in the United States as in far away Greece or in any land of barbarism.

RELIGION FOR THE ELITE.

Religious revivals are quite common in this country, and usually consist of a sort of mental intoxication, caused by copious draughts of spiritual exhortation administered by enthusiasts engaged in the business. They seldom accomplish anything really beneficial. They do not increase the sum of human knowledge or aid in its diffusion. They simply make a disturbance of the mind which often produces other disturbances of a physical character. But there is a new kind of revival in the far-famed city of Chicago.

The new excitement is manifested in a unique way. A class has been formed among the ladies of the North Side, who meet with it every Saturday. By those who do not belong to it, the movement is called the "Bible class for the elite." Only the high-toned and wealthy join the charming circle. Rich dresses, loves of hats, artistic collars and elegant saucers and capes, are the chief features of the assembly. The wearers come in carriages and vehicles of the latest styles, and their last gathering, it is said, represented fully fifty million dollars. Chicago claims to take the cake for the richest Bible class in the world.

We suggest for this select gathering, a careful study of the Sermon on the Mount, and particularly those portions in the 6th chapter of Matthew. Also Matthew xix, 16-24, with James i, 1-6. What a difference there is between the Christianity of Christ, and the modern kind of which the Chicago Bible class for the elite may be regarded as a fair sample!

THE OFFICE OF PREACHERS.

A contributor to the November Arena, Mr. Stanton Kirkham Davis, has some timely suggestions regarding the office of the preacher. He asserts that the religious inspiration of the day no longer comes from the pulpit, for the reason that the preachers, as exponents of dead creeds, have nothing to offer the public. "It is for the preacher to proclaim the truth on the authority of his own insight and experience. To repeat it on hearsay is nothing," Mr. Davis then goes on to say of the preacher:

"Pre-eminently it is his office to offset the pernicious belief that inspiration has ceased to flow to the world—that the book of Truth is closed. And this he can do only by being himself the voice of truth. It is largely because he has become a mere echo that shallow men have concluded inspiration has ceased, and there is nothing left to do but repeat what has already been said. It rests with the preacher to disprove this by his inspired utterances—free and clear as in the morning of the world. He of all men should be the champion of inspiration, for in virtue of this only has the office any good reason for being, and without this he is but a reader. Let him show that Scripture is not all written, nor Truth all revealed. To do this he himself must add some lines."

The truth contained in these lines should be self-evident. It should need no demonstration. And yet it is one that is unanimously denied by the occupants of the Protestant pulpit. That is its fatal mistake.

In every field of inquiry, it is clear to all that what is known is but as a drop out of the infinite ocean of truth. Geographers are still busily pursuing their investigations, and almost every day some new truths are revealed to them, concerning the globe we inhabit.

Astronomers learn something constantly about the universe. Chemists find new elements and new combinations of elements. Archeologists add daily new facts to their store of knowledge. The same may be said of botanists, zoologists, linguists, historians. Every science is progressive. New facts are brought to light everywhere, modifying old theories and necessitating the formation of new. Theologians alone present themselves to a modern world, amid rapidly shifting scenes, in an antiquated garb and seriously claim that the science to which they are devoted is stereotyped, admitting no change, no new facts, no progress.

The claim is preposterous. It is contradicted by common sense. If preachers are ambassadors to men, they should have a special mission, a particular message. Otherwise, their office as ambassadors would be without meaning. But a particular message, for instance to the American people in this age, must of necessity be different from the message sent to the Hebrews at the time of Isaiah, or Daniel. Common sense teaches that a man who comes with no other word from on high than that given thousands of years ago, and with no personal credentials, cannot be a special messenger to this generation. What is needed now is infallible guidance in the new conditions that confront the human family.

Of course there are general principles of revealed religion that remain through all ages and apply to all peoples. They do not change nor can they be ignored or set aside. It is the special truth fitted to existing circumstances, the particular divine message to each generation that are here considered, and that are evidently requisite now as much as in any former period.

The history of the past clearly shows that God, in all ages has given to His children the new revelations needed at each particular time. Why should this age be an exception? Our earliest ancestors were guided by divine revelation first in the garden, and then in their new surroundings outside their primitive habitation. Enoch had revelation to guide him in the performance of his work upon earth. Noah was given a special message to his contemporaries. Abraham, Moses, Samuel, the prophets, Ezra, John the Baptist, and the Apostles, all had special messages and were guided by new revelations in the deliverance of them to the world. Theology during that long period of time was progressive. New facts were brought to light all the time, and new light was shed upon facts already known.

It cannot be denied that there are periods in human history when the light of inspiration has shone but dimly, or when it has been extinguished altogether. The cause of this has always been the rejection of the divine message delivered. It is an abnormal condition, owing to enmity against God, just as the cessation of diplomatic relations between nations is the consequence of hostility and a refusal to affect reconciliation. But that is by no means a proof that revelation is not needed.

In the past it was clearly predicted that revelation should be given to men in the last days, in the form of prophecies, dreams and visions, all through the abundant outpouring of the Spirit. There should also be "wonders in the heavens and in the earth" before the "terrible day of the Lord come." (Joel 2: 28-32.) But modern theology says this is impossible. There is nothing new to be revealed. The Scriptures are complete. The heavens are for ever sealed. God spoke in past times, to speak no more.

This, we say, is the fatal mistake of modern preachers. For while they hold such views, they will close their ears and hearts to the evidence of heaven. They will refuse to examine their credentials with a mind open to conviction. They will induce their followers to hate and persecute God's servants. They will repeat history, acting as some extent the parts of Ahab and Jezebel, Herod, Annas and Caiaphas, Pilate and Nero. That is the terrible consequence of the denial of the Scripture doctrine concerning revelation and inspiration.

CASTE SUGGESTED.

The London Spectator has kindly taken up the so-called negro problem in the United States, and proposed a solution which few will regard as correct. That journal endorses President Roosevelt's much discussed courtesy to Booker T. Washington, "as a noble and courageous act," but at the same time it expresses the wish that it had not taken place because it believes that "a recognition of the non-existent equality of the races is not the best way to kill the white prejudice against the black."

Then the Spectator proceeds to state what to its philosophic mind presents itself as the best solution. The whites and the blacks, it says, should avowedly form themselves into two castes like the Hindoos and Mussulmans of India, with no intercourse except on the common business of life. In the opinion of our London contemporary the ballot should be temporarily withdrawn from the negro, although every office except the presidency should be open to him, but the whites should be entitled to demand a trial by a white judge. "Under these conditions," says the Spectator, "the races would develop peaceably until the color rules were felt to be inconvenient and swept away."

Now the fact is that in some sections of this country strong efforts have been made to draw a caste line, and that has but increased the trouble. Henry Waterson has recently said that there is no drawing room in this country in which the black man is in place, and as far as that statement expresses a general sentiment, it shows that the spirit of caste distinction is, and has been, actively at work. Even in the matter of worship, caste has been established, and in the matter of law and politics the line has been drawn with fire and blood. But all to no good purpose. The trouble grows. There is no immediate prospect of the color rules being swept away.

Of course, in this country we have a Declaration of Independence that says something about the equality of human beings, and a Constitution that

recognizes colored Americans as citizens enjoying equal rights with others, and these documents do not permit us to copy, directly, the social institutions of India. But caste and class distinctions grow nevertheless more and more pronounced, and the result is far from peace and tranquillity. It is rather the opposite, for the reason that the ostracized classes here do not submit quietly as they do in India. They insist that they too have rights which others are bound to respect.

There is no doubt that the race problem here is one fraught with danger, but if it is ever to be solved right, it must be by some other means than the recognition of the caste system as an American institution. It would disappear entirely if the golden rule were applied to the various phases it presents.

Reciprocity's advances do not seem to be reciprocated.

New York is very much prouder of its horse show than of the show it made of Tammany.

Commissioner Jones believes that he has solved the Indian problem. This being a free country a man may believe what he chooses.

Every Maine hunter should be made to wind a horn three times before shoots that others may hide themselves until the danger is passed.

The St. James Gazette says that English actors are "coarsened" by visits to the United States. The coarseness probably arises from the over-repletion of their purses.

Consul-General Dickinson has sent an ultimatum to the brigands who hold Miss Stone captive. In all probability it will prove to be nothing more than an antepenultimate.

The rays of the New York Sun are beginning to fall upon President Roosevelt. It warns him not to disturb the harmony that reigns in New York. But ex-rays will have no influence over Mr. Roosevelt.

The very best thing the St. Louis exposition directors can do is to settle their disputes at once and avoid them altogether in future. Their only result can be to injure the great fair and give the management anything but an enviable name.

Lord Curzon has crossed the Burma frontier on the road to Mandalay. If the journey becomes wearisome, the viceroys can sing Kipling's famous ditty, "On the Road to Mandalay," and that will make the journey pleasanter and the road shorter.

Mayor-elect Low of New York is besieged by office seekers and place hunters. One day this week five hundred called on him. They all seem to be imbued with the old idea that the swiftest and safest way to reform is to "turn the rascals out."

King Alexander slaps Queen Draga's face. The prince consort quarrels with Queen Wilhelmina and causes her a serious illness. The veriest brute in the lowest scale of society could do no worse. There are not the touches of nature that make the whole world kin.

A St. Louis man has cast President Roosevelt's horoscope. He says that "the military spirit will continue to pervade the land, for Mars elevated the hero of San Juan and he will have a tender regard for the disciples of the god of war." The President will not have altogether smooth sailing, however, for in Congress there will be great liability of unusual opposition. He must look out for "plots, schemes, intrigues and humiliations." Any student of American politics knows that that part of the horoscope which says the President will not have altogether smooth sailing is absolutely true.

No man in the United States has been more abused than Richard Croker. And now he comes and huris defiance against his abusers. "The clergy and the reform slanderers always have it in for me," says Mr. Croker. "They told all kinds of lies about me during the campaign. Now this crowd is in power. They have the whole city government and the district attorney's office, and I here and now publicly defy them to prove what they have said of me. They called me a common thief, they said I had never obtained a dollar honestly, that I have no business and all that. They lied, and they know they lied! Now let these puppet men come forward and make their charges good or let them take them back. That is the honest course for them. I dare them. I defy them. They have placed me in a wrong position before the public, and if they are men they will prove their charges or back down publicly." The "def" is in rather strong language, but it seems an honest one and it is no more than fair that the great Tammany boss should be convicted or vindicated. But how he must have been goaded to talk like this!

ON RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

Chicago-Record Herald.
In his interesting discourse on the question, "Is the Pulpit Free?" Rev. Frederick C. Priest got at the root of the matter when he said that the preacher should be a specialist and should attend to his specialty. Within the limits of that specialty and the creed that he professes, his freedom is as perfect as human freedom can be. He is always secure in the approval of his parishioners when he preaches a thoroughly Christian sermon, founded on the moralities and the promises of the gospel, and more than that, it is by such sermons alone that he can best help, comfort and inspire his hearers. But the peculiar respect which he commands as a specialist vanishes immediately when he goes out of his sphere to talk dogmatically upon questions of secular controversy about which he may know much less than some of his auditors.

Baltimore Sun.

Natural wisdom may be illusive; earthly science may mistake; human reason is fallible and often builds on unstable foundations. We may be justified in viewing with distrust whatever we hold on human and natural bases, but the word of God is eternal, immutable and infallible—endureth forever. "Heaven and earth may pass away but My Word shall not pass away." Whatever rests on His word partakes of His immutability, and its certainty is of highest possible grade. The testimony of men is great, but the testimony of God is greater. For God is not only infallible in His wisdom,

Z. C. M. I. SPECIAL

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ANNUAL CARPET SALE.

We offer another bargain opportunity in House Furnishings, during the Week commencing Monday, Nov. 18.

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BEST CARPET BARGAINS OF THE YEAR:

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In his last book Adolf Harnack, attempting to analyze the fundamental religious ideas of our Lord, places great emphasis upon the fact that in the thought of Jesus the kingdom of God is "something supernatural, a gift from above, not a product of ordinary life." When this statement is compared with what Harnack says about miracles—though he treats them with the greatest freedom—we see, though he does not affirm it, that in his mind there is a far closer relation between "the gift from above" experienced in regeneration and the record of the miraculous in the New Testament, than even orthodox thinkers have usually asserted. The miracles are something more than the credentials of a messenger; they are the manifestation in the domain of space and time of that spiritual realm which transcends all our limitations. The miracles are more than the credentials of a person; they are also credentials of the kingdom of God. At bottom, however, this is only a restatement of the doctrine of Paul that the power which effected the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, is the same power that accomplishes the regeneration and sanctification of the believer.