

The Northwestern Lutheran

Rev. C. Bauer
95 N. Ridge
Kansas
Jan 15

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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ADVENT

Hark! the glad sound, the Savior comes,
The Savior promised long:
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.

On Him the Spirit, largely pour'd,
Exerts His sacred fire;
Wisdom and might, and zeal and love,
His holy breast inspire.

He comes, the prisoners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before Him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

He comes, from thickest films of vice
To clear the mental ray;
And on the eyes oppress'd with night,
To pour celestial day.

He comes, the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace,
T' enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim;
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With Thy beloved Name.

COMMENTS

Lost Members During the last five years the Presbyterian church lost 250,000 members; included in this number are only those that were actually suspended from their churches. The thousands that are practically lost but have not yet been officially severed from the church-body would perhaps increase this number to still more astounding proportions. These figures are shockingly large, but calm second thought will tell most observers that their fears for the church are not even realized by these figures because they appear too small when one considers the indifference with which the church is received to-day. What these numbers tell of the Presbyterian church, similar numbers would tell of every other church; and we would not venture to assert off-hand that our Lutheran church would fare very much better, if figures for comparison were available. The committee reporting these startling results of their inquiries to the general assembly gave as causes for the loss "the growing love of pleasure; disregard for the Lord's day and the Word of God; the increasing craze for amusements,

and the influence of worldly company." This implies that the causes are such as operate in our time and under present conditions and that the remedy lies in that sphere. Luther's explanation of the Third Petition states the causes for the hindrance of the Kingdom more clearly and correctly: "The will of the devil, the world, and our flesh will not let us hallow God's name," and in the Sixth Petition: "The devil, the world, and our flesh deceive us and seduce us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice." These evil forces are not dependent upon any conditions of time or place and the losses our churches suffer to-day are to be traced to no other causes. That sinful nature asserts itself so shamelessly and that independence of any church is getting to be the rule rather than the exception is alarming but it should not be surprising. In seeking the remedy we must not let our alarm hasten us to ill-advised measures. If we can but answer one question affirmatively, then we can rest assured that we have done everything that could under any circumstances have been done to change matters, and that question is this: Are you preaching the pure Word of God? Where that is done, God Himself is taking the wayward in hand and if they thrust His helping hand from them, they are beyond the reach of any other help—for other help there is none. To combat the spirit of amusement by offering counter attractions, to attempt to fill the churchpews by shutting off the other places where people might go on Sunday, will never change their nature and will never make them love the Word of God. Yet that is just what churches are frequently doing; for the sake of immediate and ostentatious results they try to make progress by sailing before the wind, but the wind which fills their sails is a hurricane and they will find when they seek to escape from its path that there is no escape; the breakers ahead will have their toll.—What are we doing in the face of the general decay? We are preaching the Word. Thank Heaven, we are not yet trying to do more!
H. K. M.

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Reforms in Russia In Russia the sale of vodka, the highly alcoholic national drink, has been a government monopoly. It has been said that the government, to stimulate its extensive use and make the revenue from it larger, has insisted upon a high percentage of alcohol. Now the government of its own accord establishes absolute prohibition. The

little that we know about the new order indicates that the abuses of former times have been checked, temporarily at least. As a humanitarian measure it must be commended and is on a plane with the prohibition of opium traffic by China; but we need not be misled to think that a higher sense of responsibility is developing in the Russian government, it is plainly a move to secure greater returns in other directions. Russia has found it expedient to temper its autocratic severity in other directions—always for very good reasons, but always for the benefit of some of its many subjects. Jews and Lutherans alike are thankful that a recent order went into effect which permitted every locality to establish churches, schools, and institutions without serious restrictions. This means much to our Lutheran brethren. To keep down the number of congregations, Lutherans were forced to remain under one pastorate even when their number reached 25,000 souls, or more. Petitions for new organizations and institutions were delayed so long in official routine that it was practically impossible to get one through the various offices. In Lodz, which is in the center of the Russian-German battlefronts, the German Lutherans form a very large part of the population of 400,000—yet they are permitted to have but two congregations! Now, to win their allegiance the Russian government has granted them a measure of liberty. When our college in Watertown was built 50 years ago, our representative, The Rev. J. Bading, went to these very churches to seek financial aid for the undertaking and the appeal was not in vain. Subsequently we have received even more valuable aid from our distant brothers, for quite a number of our pastors came over from Russia as young men and studied at our institutions and have shown themselves to be faithful servants of the God they were taught to worship in Russia whom now they preach in our own country.

H. K. M.

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The Season of Charity More than other years this year stimulates our charitable impulses. Our larger cities—and even the smaller—offer abundant opportunity to extend the helping hand. The war has caused suffering to such an extent that we hardly dare realize it; much of this suffering is far beyond our ability to alleviate, but that makes us more eager to heed appeals that show where we may help. Some puny minds seal their hearts against all such appeals by asserting with sickening unction: Charity begins at home. Most of them mean that home is the three cubic feet, more or less, which their selfish bodies occupy. We have often camped on the trail of these charity-at-home people, but either they have no home or else they were in no haste to begin with their charity even at home; their charity usually died at birth, it never got old enough to die of exposure. Indeed,

charity begins at home, but it does not end there—it must begin somewhere and it must begin at home when the Christian is a baby and then it must go out as soon as it can walk, and as soon as it can run it must run far and wide, and when it is too old to run or walk it must send substitutes. A sure way to choke charity to death is to restrict it, if it is to grow and remain healthy it must have air, a plenty of fresh air. All this is not to mean that there is to be no judgment in the dispensing of it, on the contrary, practice in this as in other things makes perfect and with practice you will surprise yourself at the ingenuity you develop in applying your efforts. Practice will also make it plain and plainer that as a Christian the effective charity is the charity that you practice with full Christian intent. Your Lutheran institutions and missions will appear to be so close to you that you will find there ever so many opportunities that you have overlooked but which require your attention, and you will not feel yourself impoverished when other appeals are made to you, you will have found by experience that you can well afford the luxury of additional enterprises. You can only learn to give by giving; in every congregation, those that are most difficult to approach for any charitable cause are those who have never given, and those who have given most liberally are those that are sure to respond again. And the measure of earthly possessions is not at all the scale by which giving can be measured. As for giving "more than one can afford," there have been cases where "liberal" people have spent more than they should have spent on some hobby of theirs, but if one-half the caution now used for fear of giving too much were applied to guard against giving too little,—charity would have to stop for want of a suitable objective. Our Thanksgiving Day sermons have reminded us that the supreme thing we are thankful for is our salvation through Christ our Lord, most of the sermons also told you that quite naturally your thanks for that greatest of all blessings might show to what extent you have gained possession of this heavenly gift; he who has the saving faith must show a little more than a mere trace of joy for such unmerited grace. And quite naturally one continues to be thankful even if Thanksgiving Day be past, and his thankfulness shows not only in hymns and prayers but also in deeds which consist of the many charitable practices. If the coming Christmas season makes it easier for you to win your heart over to the exercise of this greatest Christian virtue, so much the better, but do not let days and months pass before you permit it to be aroused again.

H. K. M.

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German Day of Prayer On November 18th the Protestant churches of Germany observed a day of penitence and prayer. This is an annual institution with these churches but there can

be no doubt that it was more generally observed and entered into this year than for many years past. We read that even in the general conduct of the population the character of the day was reflected; churches were filled to overflowing, all amusements and business houses were closed, even the newspapers were not printed on this day. This universal participation seems to bear out the reports that we heard since the beginning of the war, that the people of Germany are again going to church. Now is the chance for the preachers of Luther's land to give the people what they must hear and will hear in these terrible times: the Word as Luther preached it. If the day of penitence and prayer led the men and women of Germany to true penitence, then Germany has won more than a dozen wars. The day of penitence and prayer has been an institution in Lutheran lands since the Thirty Years' war and there is hardly a country that has been ravaged by war as often as Germany in all the time since then. So far it has been spared the horrors of invasion, but it is paying for its exemption with the life-blood of its sons. It is the daily prayer of Christians that for all nations engaged in this deadly strife there may be a speedy end to this almost unbelievable sacrifice of human life.

H. K. M.

JESUS CHRIST THE TRUE MESSIAH

Again the season has arrived when the Christian people pour forth their joyful feelings by singing such stanzas as these:

"Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who hath truly kept His Word,
And the sinners' Help and Friend
Now at last to us doth send.

"What the fathers most desired,
What the prophets' heart inspired,
What they longed for many a year,
Stands fulfilled in glory here."

The season of Advent points back to the prophecies of the Old Testament; and it is well for us to turn to them, inasmuch as they are predictions of that One Person, decreed by God in eternity to come into the world in due time for the accomplishment of the greatest of purposes, for the establishment and rule of a universal and perpetual kingdom on earth, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, that is Jesus Christ the promised Messiah.

To turn to the prophecies of old is indeed necessary. The destructive criticism in our days discredits them entirely, either by declaring them as mythical, or applying them to a fictitious Messiah. It has gone so far as to state that there are no predictions at all concerning Christ in the Old Testament. Such a denial leads to and is linked with the denial of Christ

Himself, especially the denial of His Deity and His work on the cross.

All must concede, however, that if all circumstances belonging to the Messiah's appearance, and if all characters suiting His Person, and the work to be performed by Him together with whatever was to be consequent upon His presence and accomplishments, correspond to the person, life and deeds of Jesus, and cannot possibly be attached to any other person that has appeared in the world's history, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter—then, truly, Jesus of Nazareth, whom we acknowledge, was and is that Messiah.

Now that Jesus was indeed that Messiah is evident in the first place from the following circumstances belonging to the Messiah's appearance. First the time in which he was to appear. This is foretold by the patriarch Jacob, saying, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Till the captivity, all along from David's time, the sceptre or political power was in Judah, until Judah was brought into subjection to the Roman Empire, just at the time of our Savior's birth, and Judah was at that time taxed for the first time as one of the Roman provinces, while at the time of His death the Jews expressly owned, "we have no king but Caesar." Hence it is undeniably inferred, that our Lord Jesus is He that should come, and that we are to look for no other. For as the Messiah was to be "the desire of all nations," Haggai 2: 1, so Jesus did come then, when by God's decree a general expectation and desire looking to His coming was raised in the world, particularly in Israel. It was the fulness of time of which St. Paul speaks Gal. 4: 4. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son."

Other circumstances accompanying the coming of Messiah which did also exactly correspond to the appearance of our Savior Jesus, are the family, out of which, the place, where, and the manner in which he was born.

He was to be an Israelite, according to the promise made of old to Abraham, that in "his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed"; Gen. 22: 18. and according to Moses's prophecy, "The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." Deut. 18: 15. He was to come out of the tribe of Judah, as the patriarch Jacob had foretold. Particularly was He to rise out of the family of David, for, as Isaiah said, he was "to be a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch going out of his roots"; "a righteous branch, according to Jeremiah, whom God would raise to David." Note also the irrevocable promise ratified by God's oath, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne unto all

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generations." Now, accordingly, that Jesus came out of this tribe and family, is expressly affirmed by the angels at His birth, and positively attested by His parents and kindred, and is furthermore assured by the geneologies of Christ, carefully preserved and produced by the evangelists. Neither does it appear that Jesus' adversaries ever contest this point, but seem by their silence to have granted it as easily and evidently proveable by authentic records and testimonies. Yea, the people were generally informed of and possessed with this sentiment. "Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David" was a popular saying in St. John.

More precisely yet for the place of the Messiah's birth, it was to be the town of Bethlehem, for thus the prophet Micah has foretold, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5: 2. Now that Jesus should be there born, God Himself took especial care, ordering it by His providence, that by imperial edict the world should be taxed, or registered; and that in obedience to such decree the parents of Jesus should be forced to go from their distant place of habitation unto Bethlehem, the place of their tribe and family, so that Jesus might be born there at the time decreed by God.

Again, we might refer to the state and conditions, in which the Messiah was to appear, and which were described by the prophets to be a state of external meanness and obscurity, of poverty and wretchedness, in the eyes of man, in order to see how exactly the environments of Christ during His sojourn on earth agree therewith.

But we must above all consider the doctrine the Messiah was to teach the world. What was that doctrine? By inspiration and in the name of God the promised One was to reveal the eternal counsels of God concerning the salvation of man, He was to set forth, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which no other revelation was to be expected, in short, He was to institute a religion consummate in all re-

spects, which should bring fallen man into perfect relation to God, proclaiming deliverance from sin and all its curse, and eternal salvation to him. "I will," says the Lord unto Him, "put words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him; and it shall come to pass, whoever will not, hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." Deut. 18: 18, 19. Furthermore the Messiah says: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God." Isaiah 61: 1. Again, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." Isaiah 52: 7.

Considering the doctrine which the Messiah was to proclaim to the world, can we fail to see the very doctrine Jesus taught, and the religion He established on earth? Who besides our Savior ever taught a doctrine that corresponds to the doctrine of the Messiah? Was not the preaching of Jesus a gospel, or message of good and joy; declaring the special goodwill of God, and His merciful willingness to be reconciled to sinful mankind, offering peace and pardon to all that are sensible of guilt, and penitent for their sin; imparting rest, comfort and liberty to all that are weary and afflicted with burdens and griefs; taking off all grievous yokes of servitude and sin; and in their stead implanting into their hearts the grace of a new and willing obedience; ministering all sorts of blessings needful for succor, relief, ease, content, and welfare; filling the hearts of those who sincerely embrace it with child-like faith with present joy and raising in them glad-some hopes of future bliss? The message Christ brought from heaven was indeed the most welcome news that ever was proclaimed on earth, well deserving that auspicious gratulation from the angel—"Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Yes truly, the doctrine of Jesus is a doctrine of salvation unto all people, the religion He instituted a universal religion, meeting the entire need of a sin-sick world.

Hence we may reasonably assert, that the doctrine taught, the religion instituted by Jesus in God's name, are the very same which the predictions concerning the Messiah do refer to, as the last revelation which should ever come from God, as also is intimated Hebrews 1: 1, 2. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

Coincident with the teaching of such doctrine was

also the performance of miraculous deeds ascribed to the Messiah. What deeds was He to perform according to the prophecies of the Old Testament? He was to perform the greatest miracles which the earth had ever seen. In the thirty-fifth chapter of his prophecies Isaiah says of the Messiah and His time, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."

More than this: He was to do works far surpassing all that ever before was undertaken by any person in the world: He was to vanquish all the powers, and to confound all the policies of hell; he was to subdue and subjugate all the world; to make the greatest princes to stoop, and to submit their sceptres to His will; He was to erect a kingdom spiritual in nature, universal in extent, and perpetual in duration, the subjects of which should live together in amity and peace in safety and prosperity; wherein truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. See Ps. 2., Isaiah 60, Ps. 46.

What of the miracles and works of Christ? To this day Christians can challenge the world to show them a man in the entire history of the world who so perfectly came up to all the requirements of the promised Messiah as did Jesus of Nazareth. Works indeed He performed of a stupendous greatness and difficulty, so that the people witnessing His works exclaimed, "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these this man doeth?" More than this, through His work of redemption He established the Kingdom of God on earth, the holy Christian Church, which shall endure to the end of all time.

"What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he?" He is the promised Messiah, the anointed One, the Savior of the world, and besides Him there is none other. This our faith is attested by the fact that Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies concerning the Messiah in His own Person and by His own authority. In all His teaching, except when in the synagogue of Nazareth He pointed to His message of the Kingdom as fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, He did not base His Messianic claims on any special prophecies. He ever based them on what He was, on what He said, on what He did; on the message of love from the Father which stood incarnate before them in His Person, on the opening of the Kingdom of heaven to all believers, on the forgiveness, the peace, the salvation, which He brought. That was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. And because He was the fulfillment of all, therefore was He the Messiah promised. J. J.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

III.—Period of Revival 1820-1866

(Continued)

The trend toward union brought the synods which had kept aloof from the union with the General Coun-

cil into closer touch. In 1867 a colloquium between the leaders of the Missouri Synod and that of Iowa took place. The questions of chiliasm, "Uebertragungslehre," and open questions, were considered but no thorough understanding was reached. Later on in the seventies an energetic warfare against the Iowa position was carried on by Prof. F. A. Schmid, who, in the service of the Norwegian Synod, was professor of theology at the Missouri theological seminary in St. Louis, and the chasm between the Synodical Conference and Iowa was widened. Even then the Fritschels broached the questions on conversion and predestination, which later on became the points of discussion in the Predestination controversy. They favored the Melanctonian view which tries to explain why one man is converted before the other by searching into the innermost soul of men. In that connection they used the word "Selbstentscheidung." For this they were antagonized more than was their due because they did not mean all that the word may imply. But they cannot be cleared of the reproach that their position was not the clear straightforward and sound position of Luther.

In the meantime the Wisconsin Synod had a colloquium with the Missouri Synod in 1868 which resulted in complete union of the two bodies. After an attempt to bring Iowa and Wisconsin together was frustrated in 1869 at the meeting of the Wisconsin Synod in Helenville, the largest of all the general bodies of the Lutheran Church in America was formed in 1872: the Synodical Conference. The synods uniting were Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin, Norwegian, Minnesota, and Illinois. The last two had been in the General Synod and then in the General Council.

Illinois was absorbed by Missouri. The small Concordia Synod of Virginia and the English Conference of Missouri united with the Synodical Conference and were later on also absorbed by Missouri.

In 1877 the great controversy on Predestination broke out.

Before we enter upon this history a remark of general historical interest is appropriate which will lead to a right estimate of what we shall hear.

There is a doctrine of predestination in Scripture taught by the prophets and the apostles. It is the highest expression of the Gospel as the doctrine of reprobation is the highest expression of the Law. Every strong mind, religiously interested, must and will settle this question and in so doing the innermost attitude toward the ideas which are proclaimed by Scripture concerning sin and grace will bear upon the final settlement. It is therefore a matter of historical necessity that the question of predestination should occupy the minds of the church in general at those times when the interest for doctrinal things is at its highest. The greatest theologians have always coped with this problem and have given strong utterance to

their views about it: Augustine, Calvin, Luther. And their utterances right here constitute the final test as to whether they have understood the very essence of the Gospel.

Augustine, 354-430, was the first after the time of the apostles to proclaim this Gospel of predestination. But he did not express it in its full clearness, because he mixed with it an element of Law, saying that predestination works both ways, unto salvation with some and unto damnation with the others. In the Middle Ages this question was dealt with, but not so as to come to a clearer expression. Catholicism did not foster the clearer statement of one single Scriptural idea. In the time of the Reformation it was Calvin who developed Augustine's idea in the wrong direction, saying that God elected some to salvation and the rest to damnation, in order to show the greatness of His love on the dark background of His wrath. He accordingly created men with the purpose of letting them fall into sin, so that he might demonstrate his love as aforesaid. So Calvin in this discussion exaggerated the wrong confusion of Law and Gospel which at a much earlier date we find in Augustine.

It was Luther who corrected Augustine's teaching by keeping carefully to the statements of Scripture. Before the foundation of the world God has elected those that are saved. That is the Gospel of love. It is God **alone** who saves us. There is no particle added to this by anything in man. The other question concerning those that are damned, has no place in this discussion, because it is a question of the Law. It is therefore wrong to say that from the predestination of those that are saved follows the damnation of the rest. These others are damned because of their resistance against the work of the Holy Ghost through the Gospel. This is expressed in another doctrine which is something altogether different from the abovementioned Gospel. That is the doctrine of reprobation. And that is a doctrine of Law.

On account of the inferiority of men's understanding, which cannot penetrate to the understanding of the last recesses of God's mind, there is in the discussion of these Scripture-problems always a danger of mixing up Law and Gospel. Augustine did not escape this danger but stumbled in his assertions. Calvin fell squarely into the snare. Luther adhered strictly to God's Word and took upon himself the scorn of critics who said that his logic was defective. But he kept the Gospel clear of foreign elements.

In the neighborhood of these men there always arose a class of theologians who tried to avoid the hard statements of Augustine and Calvin by the same process of logical thinking. They must necessarily fall into the same snare, namely to mingle the Gospel with Law. They direct their attention to men and try to find there the solution of the problem. Pelagius, the contemporary of Augustine, said, man works out

his own destiny. Some men are better than others. That makes the difference. There were others at the same time, the Semi—or half—Pelagians, that compromised saying, those that are saved make the difference by using the power of grace which is given to them by the Holy Spirit. Arminius, the opponent of Calvin's teaching, held about the same views as the Semi-Pelagians, with an added tinge of rationalism. In the wake of Luther there arose the teaching of Melancthon. Melancthon is not a Semi-Pelagian but his doctrine amounts to about the same thing. It was called Synergism. That means that he lays stress on the cooperation of men through the power of grace to bring about the result of salvation which is attributed to **God alone** in Paul's teaching of predestination.

J. PH. K.

(To be continued)

MILLENNIAL DAWN

A COUNTERFEIT OF CHRISTIANITY*

By Professor William G. Moorehead, D. D.,

United Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Xenia, O.

6. **The Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ took place in October, 1874.** (Vol. II, 187, 199; 234-245.) This startling announcement is reached by a process of chronological and mathematical reasoning founded partly on the Hebrew Jubilee years. Of the results of his calculations Mr. Russell entertains no misgiving. He is persuaded, or affirms that he is, the Lord actually came to our earth in the fall of 1874 and He is now present here. (Vol. II, 240.) Accordingly, the glorified Son of God has already been in the world personally and literally for thirty-seven years! In reading this amazing statement which is made again and again one stares, and rubs his eyes and stares. Old-fashioned Christians have for centuries believed that the glorious advent of Christ will be accompanied by the most majestic tokens of the Divine Presence and the most stupendous changes and revolutions in both earth and sky. They are profoundly convinced that the Word of God warrants such anticipation; nay, it is because of the Lord's own testimony touching this mighty event that they thus believe and expect. But this period of thirty-seven years since 1874 differs but little if at all from any other thirty-seven years during a thousand years. Nay, the student of history could point out period after period in the last five hundred years marked by immensely more tragic events than any of this.

As if to put us on guard against being deceived by plausible arguments and evidences of His presence our Lord has with most solemn words warned us: "Then

* Taken from "The Fundamentals," vol. 7, with kind permission of the Testimony Publishing Company.

if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or Here; believe it not. . . . If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, He is in the inner chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of Man" (Matt. 24: 23-27, R. V.). Mr. Russell refuses to accept the word "lightning," and he substitutes for it "bright shining," and makes it refer to the sun's rising. He does so to escape the idea of the suddenness of the advent as symbolized by the lightning's flash, for this rendering would contradict his theory that Christ's "presence" is gradually disclosed, that He may be long on the earth and but few (the Dawnists only) be cognizant of the stupendous fact. As usual he is totally mistaken. Every version examined (five English, three Italian, the Vulgate and the Spanish); every Lexicon (Thayer, Green, Liddell and Scott, Sophocles, and Vincent's Word Studies), translate the Greek word "lightning." Attention is called to this particular instance of mistranslation of Scripture for the reason that it is but a sample of the uniform effort to empty every text of its true meaning if it in any wise denies Millennial Dawnism. Scores of such abuses of Scripture as the above are encountered in these books; nay, the characteristic features of this vicious system betray Biblical perversion at every point.

For example, Paul's three supernatural accompanists of the advent, the "shout," the "voice of the archangel," and the "trump of God" (1 Thess. 4: 16) are all symbols and denote the agitation, dissatisfaction, and restlessness everywhere manifest throughout the civilized world since 1874! So we are oracularly told. If this be all the Apostle meant, then we must confess that the "majesty of the prediction is lost in the poverty of its fulfillment." Let one other text be mentioned—Rev. 6: 16: "Fall on us [cover, protect] and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne." "The thought is that of protection, not of destruction. . . . The real fulfillment is already beginning."

Furthermore, according to the plain teaching of Scripture the resurrection of the saints takes place at the Lord's Coming. (1 Cor. 15: 51-57; 1 Thess. 4: 13-18.) It appears also that the two events are contemporaneous and simultaneous; the Lord's Coming, even before He reaches the earth, effects the rising of sleeping saints and the transformation of living believers, when both together are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.) We are assured that this majestic event will occur in "a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15: 51). Millennial Dawn likewise teaches that the resurrection takes place at the Lord's advent, but not

immediately; four years lie between the Lord's "presence" on earth and the resurrection of the saints; the one occurs in 1874, the other in 1878. (Vol. III, pp. 234-5; 302-306.) We read: "That in the spring of 1878 all the holy apostles and other 'overcomers' of the Gospel age who slept in Jesus were raised spirit beings, like unto their Lord and Master." . . . "The Lord Jesus and the risen saints already here [are] engaged in the great harvest work." . . . "Such is the present situation: the great Judge has come—not as at the first advent, in a body of humiliation, for sacrifice, but in the plenitude of His power as a spirit being." "And while we conclude that their resurrection is now an accomplished fact, and hence that they as well as the Lord are now present in the earth, the fact that we do not see them is no obstacle to faith when we remember that, like their Lord, they are now spirit beings, and, like Him, invisible to men." Since 1874 Jesus Christ has been dwelling on the earth; since 1878 the risen saints have also been sojourning on the earth; and no mortal has the slightest inkling of it save C. T. Russell and his followers!

All this is sufficiently astounding, but these notions stand not alone. Other marvellous things are encountered in the volumes we are reviewing. "The spring of 1878 marks the date when the nominal church systems were 'spewed out' (Rev. 3: 16), and from that time (A. D. 1878) they are not the mouth-pieces of God, nor in any degree recognized by Him" . . . "We recognize A. D. 1881 as marking the close of special favor to Gentiles—the close of the 'high-calling,' or invitation to the blessings peculiar to this age—to become joint-heirs with Christ and partakers of the Divine nature" (Vol 235).

It requires courage or recklessness to make the above statements. For thirty-three years the evangelical churches have been without Divine recognition, "spewed out" of the Lord's mouth! And yet during this same period the Gospel has been carried into the most hopelessly degraded and ignorant sections of our planet by the most devoted and truly apostolic servants of Jesus Christ since the first century. For thirty years all special favor to the Gentiles has ceased! This in the face of the most fruitful years of missions for almost ten centuries. The Dawnists have matchless courage. For bald assertion their equals it would be hard to find. (To be continued)

THE PREACHER AND HIS PAY

It is very easy to stir up sympathy for a minister and his family, if they are in need. If a minister is sick, or if he is an old man who has given his life to the Gospel, the discovery of his need seems still sadder. The office mail brings not infrequent appeals from ministers or their wives, telling of dire want. It is hard to think of a sadder spectacle than a faithful old

minister and his wife, who have bent their backs beneath the burdens of the church, who have toiled on through joys and sorrows, their hair whitened by age and work and care, their limbs unsteady, brains and bodies and souls weary, being forced to acknowledge that those whom they once served have forgotten to aid them. It often happens that the old parishioners are far away. They are among new friends to whom they dread to confide the fact of their want.

Christian charity can help these worthy soldier-saints. The churches are constantly becoming more interested and active in providing for the toil-worn pastors. But is there not a better way? Why not give them a fairer compensation during their days of strength? Why not make it possible for them to make some provision, as other men do, for the inactive years ahead? Above all, why not pay up promptly what we have promised to pay them?

Many a faithful pastor receives for his own and his family's support little more than a young girl stenographer or a grocery's boy. The matter of the big salaries to the big preachers does not enter here. The small and middle-sized congregations, prosperous but thoughtless, they need this exhortation. Find out what your preacher needs. Don't neglect him. Don't drop behind in your payments. Encourage enthusiasm in him by being enthusiastic in supporting him. Look up some of your former pastors who have moved away, and find out how matters are faring with them. Help and lead your local church in doing its duty by its present pastor and in finding out the needs of its former pastor; help your denomination in the noble work of providing for its Gospel veterans, so that age shall not find them unsupported, forsaken, broken-hearted.—Christian Herald.

FISHING IN ROILED WATERS

The Roman Church is an adept at fishing in roiled waters. During the great European conflict it has its eye on the main chance. Cardinal Manning's claim, uttered forty years ago, that Catholicism will regain its temporal sway on the Continent in a universal war, is even at this early stage of the war in a fair way of being realized. In at least three countries Romanism has either regained lost ground, or has made a strong plea for restitution of former privileges.

In England the Home Rule bill, which establishes Ireland under a parliament of its own, hence a parliament predominantly Catholic, was pushed through, and was signed by the king on September 18, thus putting it on the statute book. Premier Asquith, in asking for immediate action, urged the point that to postpone the passage of the bills till after hostilities had ceased would have a deplorable effect on the Irish all over the world, and on **Irish enlistments** for the war.

Mr. Bonar Law, the leader of the Unionists, charged the Government with trading on the loyalty of his party, and served notice that the issue would have to be met when the war was over, and that then Ulster could depend upon their support in whatever steps the Ulstermen thought necessary to maintain their rights. However, the bill is now a law of the realm, and the Irish Catholics may be counted upon to resist to the uttermost any attempt of the Protestants of Northern Ireland to retain their independence of an Irish parliament.

In Germany the chancellor has yielded to the demands of the Jesuits for the repeal of the law which curbed their power in the German Empire. He has declared inoperative the sections of the law which prohibited the Jesuits from establishing their society on German soil, and which even forbade the wearing of the garb of their order by such Jesuits as were German residents. This marks the termination of a quarrel of long standing between Germany and the papacy, and the Jesuits are jubilant.

In France the Church of Rome, according to a recent cablegram, is bringing to bear all its influence upon the government to the end that it modify its present attitude of hostility to the Church. Its plea is based upon the patriotic services rendered by the priests and nuns on the battlefields and in the hospitals.

As the political phase of the great conflict develops, Roman efforts in the direction of regaining for the papacy its position of command in the European concert will not be wanting. The wily politicians of the Vatican will suffer no opportunity of extending the influence of the hierarchy in the council of nations to be lost, even if the late Cardinal Manning's hope of seeing the pope again recognized as a temporal ruler will fall short of realization.

G. in Lutheran Witness.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Roman Catholic Decrease

The "Northwestern Chronicle," one of the most conservative Roman Catholic papers in the Western United States, declares that the Roman Catholic Church is losing ground in this country. It says: "The great archdiocese of New York was reported in the Catholic Directory of 1904 as containing 1,200,000 Catholics, and in the Catholic Directory of 1914 as containing 1,219,000 Catholics, and in the decade past, 2,000,000 Catholic immigrants have landed at the port of New York. Then, according to the official report, there were 200,000 Catholics in the archdiocese of Cincinnati in 1904, and 200,000 in 1914. The total increase in ten years is nothing. Take the fine old Catholic diocese of Savannah. Ten years ago it reported 20,000 Catholics. To-day it reports 18,340 Catholics—a loss in ten years of 1660. Comment is unnecessary."—Ex.