

State of the World

Signs of the Times [Cdn]
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By Thomas A. Davis

PROFESSOR JOAD, the English author and philosopher, relates the following interesting incident:

He was in London's famous Hyde Park, listening to one of the "soap-box orators" talk of Christianity. As usual there were the inevitable number of hecklers trying to catch the speaker off guard in order to amuse themselves and the audience. One of them, a particularly down-at-the-heel, unwashed individual, called out, "We have had Christianity for two thousand years, and look at the state of the world."

Quick as a flash came the answer, "We have had water for six thousand years, and look at the state of your neck."

Amusing? Yes, but how applicable to life and religion. That Hyde Park speaker, in his homely way, struck straight at the heart of the trouble, not only of the individual, but of the world, when he made that remark.

Let us, as our heckling friend requests, "look at the state of the world." On one hand we see the almost unbelievable destruction wrought by war, with myriads homeless, hungry and ragged. On the other hand we see nations disrupted by strikes, unrest and political tension, while in between is a fearful weapon, poised to blast millions into a dread eternity in a split second of time. Truly there is, "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26.

But can these world conditions be attributed to a lack in Christianity, as our critic suggests? Can it be that it was of no avail, the life and death of Him who, "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant; . . . and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"? Philippians 2:7, 8. Can it be that the power of the Being which created the universe is insufficient to save a world?

We believe that the words recorded in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew as spoken by Christ Himself, contain the answer. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chick-

ens under her wings, and ye would not!" Verse 37.

"Ye would not!" Here is our answer. The source of the troubles of to-day is found, not at the heart of an inadequate Christianity, but in the hearts of men, stubborn, hard, self-sufficient men.

Many are very prompt to criticize Christianity. It is always easier to destroy than to build. The very people who find fault with the teachings of the Bible are the ones who know least about them, and who have never tried to practise them. Those who have tried the principles of living outlined in the textbook of Christianity—the Bible—will testify that *there* is to be found the solution to the troubles of the tired, burdened soul. They say it because they have experienced it in their own lives, and that which can help the individual can help the world. We are all but units of the whole.

How quickly the international situation would ease up if all the nations agreed to take as their guide, not their own selfish aims, but that supreme axiom set down by Christ, which we rightly call the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." How quickly boundary disputes and labour troubles would end! How swiftly the hungry would be fed, the naked clothed, the homeless sheltered!

Surely the world needs cleansing, a washing away of the filth of generations of sin. Only the blood of Jesus, "which cleanseth us from all sin," and for which there is no substitute, can effect this for us. Let those who so desire look for salvation to the world and its institutions, " . . . with their thumbworn creeds, Their large profession and their little deeds."

For us there is One altogether lovely, who calls us from the midst of the cares and perplexities of this life, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Let us express a prayer to-day in the words of the old hymn:

"Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole,
I want Thee forever to live in my soul,
Break down every idol, cast out every foe,
Lord, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."