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I. SPURIOUS RELIGIOUS EXCITEMENTS.

It is believed all thoughtful Christians are alive to the fact that religious excitements, which consist of temporary movements of the emotions devoid of any saving operation of the Truth on the reason and conscience, are equally frequent and mischievous in America. This judgment not seldom expresses itself in very queer and inaccurate forms. Thus: good brethren write to the religious journals grateful accounts of a work of grace in their charges, and tell the Editor that "they are happy to say, the work has been purely rational and quiet, and attended by not the slightest excitement." They forget that the efficacious (not possibly, tempestuous) movement of the feelings is just as essential a part of a true religious experience, as the illumination of the intellect by divine truth; for indeed, there is no such thing as the implantation of practical principle, or the right decisions of the will, without feeling. In estimating a work of divine grace as genuine, we should rather ask ourselves whether the right feelings are excited; and excited by divine cause. If so, we need not fear the most intense excitement. This misconception is parallel to the one uttered by public speakers, when they assure hearers that, designing to show them the respect due to rational beings, and to use the honesty suitable to true patriots, "they shall make no appeal to their feelings, but address themselves only to their understandings." This is virtually impossi-

## OUR COUNTRY.

OUR COUNTRY: ITS POSSIBLE FUTURE AND ITS PRESENT CRISIS. *By Rev. Josiah Strong, D. D.* For the American Home Missionary Society. Introduction by Prof. Austin Phelps, D. D. Seventy-Fifth Thousand. Baker and Taylor Co., 9 Bond Street, New York.

Americans, according to our author, are living in extraordinary times—times in which volcanic forces are rapidly accumulating in the hollow centre of this Republic. As Dr. Strong depicts these eruptive forces, not in poetic and imaginative language, but in the unvarnished prose of facts and figures, it is difficult to see how the general upheaval can be delayed many years longer. Among the perils which he notes, the following are the most potent:

1. *Immigration.* Under the influence of the attractions of this country, and the causes which are expellent from Europe, there is a mighty annual influx of foreign-born people into the United States. The rate of in-flow is constantly increasing. It is largely from the ignorant, immoral, irreligious and pauper classes of the overcrowded European continent. For example, sixty per cent. of the saloon-keepers are foreign-born. They are importing among us all sorts of political, social and religious ideas. Any thoughtful man can see the danger, which threatens on many sides, from this motley-minded population.

2. *The Liquor Power.* This can thrive only by wrecking homes, and good homes are at the very base of a good civilization. According to *The North American Review*, the whiskey-interests are supported by \$1,000,000,000. It is thus a tremendous power at the polls, in legislative halls, in the court-room, in business houses, in social circles. All this vast power is evil and unscrupulous, and is a foe to the best institutions of the land. Prohibitory and local option laws, here and there, are restraining this influence, but the slowness of progress along this line reveals the strength of the liquor party.

3. *The wealth* of this country is simply phenomenal. "In 1880 it was valued at \$43,642,000,000; more than enough to buy the Russian and Turkish Empires, the kingdoms of Sweden and Norway, Denmark and Italy, together with Australia, South Africa, and all South America—lands, mines, cities, palaces, factories, ships, flocks, herds, jewels, moneys, thrones, sceptres, diadems and all—the entire possession of 177,000,000 people." We are threatened with Mammonism, materialism and luxuriousness. What Matthew Arnold said about Chicago, may be said about our whole country—we are "too beastly prosperous." But the chief danger from wealth, so far as it affects the political fabric, springs from what has been called "the congestion of wealth." Our enormous riches are rapidly being amassed in the hands of corporations and a few individuals. These vast sums enlarge themselves very rapidly every time they are turned over. They are largely under the control of the speculator, who, in no sense, is a producer of wealth.

He handles money already made. Hence these sharp collisions between labor and capital. Monopolies and money-tyrants, far more oppressive than the average slave-master before the civil war, are springing up very rapidly. This friction will increase until there will be an insurrection against this plutocracy. Labor organizations and "strikes" are unmistakable "signs of the times."

4. *Socialism*. This is a disorganizing power to which other causes have been contributing factors. It finds many of its boldest adherents in the citizens of foreign importation or of foreign extraction. Its high endeavor is to reconstruct society. It would change the present competitive system into a co-operative one. Its cardinal doctrines is: "From each according to his abilities; to each according to his wants." It is consequently a levelling principle. Moral, political, social and religious institutions must go down before it. No moral principle will deter its advocates from the use of infernal means for accomplishing their ends. As this doctrine of socialism is spreading, and yearly receiving new applications, it is obvious that it is impelling on to revolution.

5. *Romanism*. "In 1800, the Catholic population was 100,000. In 1884, according to official statistics, it was 6,628,176. At the beginning of the century there was one Catholic to every 53 of the whole population; in 1850, one to 14.3; in 1870, one to 8.3; in 1880, one to 7.7." "From 1870 to 1880, the churches of all evangelical denominations increased 49 per cent., while Catholic churches multiplied 74 per cent." "The average annual growth of the latter from 1870 to 1880 was 176,733, while from 1883 to 1884 it was 231,322." But why refer to Romanism as a cause of national alarm? Because every cardinal, archbishop and bishop in the Catholic Church is required to take an oath of allegiance to the Pope, in which he swears: "Heretics, schismatics, and rebels to our said Lord (the Pope), or his aforesaid successors, I will to my utmost persecute and oppress." Lafayette, himself a Romanist, said: "If the liberties of the American people are ever destroyed, they will fall by the hands of the Romish clergy." Rome is tolerant only when she dares not be intolerant. Hence the fear at the rapid increase of the Pope's adherents in this country.

Put all these things together and other facts which Dr. Strong mentions, and he will be sustained in the opinion that our Republican institutions are destined shortly to be tried to their utmost.

In our judgment, all these evils are but the logical results of a radical misconstruction of the great announcement in the Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal." Hence the government has no right to put limitations upon immigration, nor to check the liquor traffic, nor to limit the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a single management, nor to regulate those evils which give a pretext to socialism, nor to check the growing power of Rome, which is an enemy to her dearest institutions, nor to enact and enforce Sabbath-laws, and so on. The principle of abolitionism, which put this interpretation upon

Constitution for a special purpose, is now bearing fruit. The government, without contravening this interpretation, is powerless to protect itself.

To prevent this mighty upheaval, which the above facts prophesy is near at hand, Dr. Strong points to Christianity as the only adequate power. If the masses, whether home or foreign born, could be imbued with the evangelical principles of the gospel, they would be under the most powerful restraints known to human society. If the minds and hearts of capitalists could be filled with the doctrines of God's word, they would hold their wealth as the trustees of God, and distribute it according to the precepts of religion. There would be no need for any socialistic agitations, for applied Christianity would equalize all things to the satisfaction of all citizens. Hence the profound need of evangelization.

But the Church cannot carry out her high commission in this matter without adequate means to project, sustain and advance her enterprises. God had the power and wisdom to have devised a method of Christianising the world without the employment of human agents and means, but as a matter of fact, he has sovereignly chosen to work out this great result through a Church which has necessary expenses. He requires men to hold their property as his stewards, and so much of it as his Church really requires to prosecute her work to a complete success, God requires his creatures to bring into his treasury. The Church has a right, a divine right, to be liberally supported in the accomplishment of that great work whereto God has called it.

The book is a powerful plea for Home Missions. It may be termed the *patriotic* argument for this great cause. The very life of our Republican institutions and fabric depends upon its success. This alone can save us from the fate of the Republics of ancient Greece and Rome.

The little volume is a powerful demonstration of the absolute importance of the Christian religion. Nations, with all their wisdom, wealth, armies and navies, cannot long survive without it. We wish this volume, so attractively written, and so full of profound and practical information and suggestions, were in the hands of every American citizen.

R. A. WEBB.

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## VIII. RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

HIS STAR IN THE EAST, a study in the Early Aryan Religions. *By Leighton Parks, Rector of Emmanuel Church, Boston.* 12 mo., pp. 292. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1887.

A volume as beautifully printed and bound as even the Riverside Press is capable of, and written in most fascinating style, with some