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EDITORIAL NOTES

Dr. Taliaferro Thompson in Korea.

Dr. W. Taliaferro Thompson, Professor of Religious Education in Union Seminary and Editor-in-chief of THE REVIEW, is in Korea, where he is giving a series of addresses on Sunday School organization and methods, and Young People's work before the missionaries and native Christians. Dr. Thompson went out under the joint auspices of the World's Sunday School Association and the Foreign Missions Committee of the Southern Presbyterian Church. He is addressing missionaries and native Christians of the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches, the Northern and Southern Methodist Churches, the Canadian Presbyterian Church, and the Australian Presbyterian Church. He will spend a month at the Methodist Seminary of Korea and a month at the Presbyterian Seminary. He is to go from one end of Korea to the other, and, before returning, will attend the annual meeting of

THE SECOND COMING.

BY THE REV. THORNTON WHALING, D. D., LL. D.,
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Seminary, Louisville, Ky.*

All Biblical students are agreed that this doctrine occupies a large place in the New Testament teachings. It is mentioned hundreds of times in the Gospels and the Epistles. It is the central theme in the closing book, which fitly crowns the progressive revelation found in the Scriptures. The goal of the aspirations of Christians and Church alike is the triumphant return of our Lord. God's saints ought to be "that manner of person" who are "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the Day of God" (2 Pet. 3:11-12).

It is unfortunate that there should be so much division of opinion on the great and blessed theme, and the writer desires to present very briefly an irenic discussion of the Scriptural truth on this subject, on which he hopes and believes there may be very general agreement.

I. The Second Coming is to be personal and visible.

The return is not presented in the inspired Word as a gradual process, but as a sudden, startling and triumphant event. As Jesus ascended, the angel said to the Apostolic witnesses, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). The truthful angels would scarcely have asserted the personal, visible return of Jesus, unless they had sure and convincing knowledge of the fact. Our Lord himself so believed (Luke 17:22-30), for he represents his return and revelation as symbolized by the flash of lightning that "out of the one part under heaven shineth unto the other part under heaven." No process is possible here by way of evolution or gradual development, but swift consummation and immediate accomplishment is the necessary suggestion. Paul shared this view (I Thess. 4:16).

II. The Second Coming is to be glorious and transcendent.

There are seven events which are to precede or accompany or follow the Second Coming. I make no attempts to co-ordinate them as to their succession. They are (1) The rapture of the saints (I Thess. 4:15-17), (2) The resurrection of the dead (I Cor. 15:23-30), (3) The appearance of the Man of Sin and the Great Tribulation (II Thess. 2:1-4), (4) The conversion of the Jews (Rom. 11:25-26), (5) The prophecy of the "thousand years" and the "first" resurrection (Rev. 20:1-9), (6) The "Palingenesis" which is to result in the "New Heavens and the New Earth" (2 Pet. 3:10-13. Paul confirms Peter very wonderfully in Rom. 8:18-23), (7) The Final Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46).

Truly the age of miracles is before us. All seven of these transcendent events are connected with the return of our Lord and the establishment of his perfected Kingdom—the glorious Kingdom of Prophecy and the Apocalypse. But the order in which these events are to occur is not fully disclosed, and the "plans," "charts," and "programs" which seek to decipher their succession in no case command assent beyond a limited circle; and in many cases have been revised by their own authors as history has disproved the decipherment. The plan of the ages (*prothesin ton aionon*) is in none of these ambitions and illusive charts; but, as the wise Paul by inspiration tells us, is in "Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:11). When Jesus returns, he will integrate these seven events into splendid unity by sublime and transcendent fulfilment, which will issue in the Kingdom of Glory, and the descent of the City of God into the new and redeemed world. Jesus did not intend his disciples to know the "Chart of the ages," for in answer to Peter's question as to time and order of events the reply was, "It is not for you to know the time and the seasons" (Acts 1:7). It would not give spiritual power to gratify craving curiosity by disclosing "time and seasons," for such power is the alone result of the enabling and indwelling Spirit. The period of the occurrence and the order of succession will be revealed in glorious and sublime fulfilment; but until the fulfilment arrives "it is not for you to know."

III. The Second Coming is imminent or impending.

It is the golden goal which is to terminate this present age. But when the terminus will be reached Jesus declares to be unknowable (Matt. 24:36; Mk. 13:32). His injunction therefore is, "Watch for ye know neither the day nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh" (Matt. 25:13). His consistent teaching on this theme is that the duty of incessant watchfulness rests on the fact that his return may occur at any moment, "at even or at midnight or at the cock-crowing or in the morning" (Mk. 13:35).

If as Post-millennialists assert there is a long and uncertain interval of more than a thousand years to precede the "Parousia," then watchfulness would be make-believe and impossible; for watchfulness does not mean activity and work alone, but such activity inspired by expectancy of the "Parousia," while the very work is in process of execution. If, as some Pre-millennialists assert, there is an interval of more or less uncertain duration, marked by the occurrence of one or some of these Scriptural events, which must occur before the "Return," then equally, real watchfulness becomes inane and sleepy, and Jesus is indicted when he declares that his coming may occur at any time during the 24 hours of our day or this age, as our mathematics or measurements might compute (Matt. 24:42).

The motivation of this mighty truth rests on its possible occurrence at any hour. The glory of the triumphant goal is not to be relegated to come far-off date, but illumines with its splendor the prosaic duty of every passing moment. It makes life worth living to know that Jesus is coming "in all the glory of his Father" back to this sin-cursed and war-torn earth; and it transfigures with Heavenly radiance each day and hour to say, perhaps even now "the sign of the Son of Man" is in process of writing on the face of the sky.

"Bring near Thy great salvation,
 Thou Lamb for sinners slain;
 Fill up the roll of thine elect,
 Then take Thy power and reign;

Appear, Desire of nation,
 Thine exiles long for home;
 Show in the heavens Thy promised sign,
 Thou Prince and Savior, Come."

THE BIBLE AND EVOLUTION.*

BY DUNBAR H. OGDEN, D. D.,

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Ninety-two years ago a young Cambridge graduate named Darwin began a voyage around the world in H. M. S. Beagle. During five years of observation in many lands there was planted in the mind of this young naturalist the germ of the evolutionary hypothesis which now dominates the student world.

As they enter the High Schools and Colleges of our land, multitudes of young people from Christian homes are being challenged by this theory, and unless they have been wisely taught by parents and pastors their religious faith is greatly imperilled. To perplexed minds I desire to pass on certain ideas that have been helpful to me. What I write may be painful to some; but it may steady the faith of others. My purpose is wholly constructive."

What is Evolution?

In the Standard Dictionary we find seven uses of the term evolution, five of which bear more or less directly upon the question we are considering. If then a man says he believes in evolution, in order really to know his mind we must ask him what he means by evolution. He may mean merely *development*, from which Herbert Spencer has carefully distinguished

*See Editorial Notes for brief appreciation of Dr. Ogden's article.