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GATE CITY JOURNAL

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Episcopal Church Notes

The Rev. M. Goldie, Arch Deacon for the missionary district of Eastern Oregon (succeeding Dr. Van Walters) will hold evening service in the Parish Hall, Nyssa, on Sunday evening, April 8, 1923, at 8 o'clock p. m.

All denominations are cordially invited to attend.

Open Forum

EXPLAINS SCRIPTURES

Ontario, Oregon, April 2.-Editor Journal.—In our former article, on the infallibility of the Bible, we gave numerous Scriptures to prove that the inspired writers did not expect the end of the world during their lifetime, consequently did not teach error. Now we will explain certain passages which seemingly refute our former citations.

The Bible is harmonious and complete on every subject treated therein and until we have a view of the matter, in which every Bible statement, on every subject, finds a reasonable representation, we should not feel sure that we have the truth on the subject. Now we will examine the Scriptures given in refutation of those previously presented by us. We omit verses 15 and 16 as we are not now discussing the manner of his coming. I Thes. 4-17 reads, "Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds," Paul's use of the pronoun "we" does not prove that he expected the Lord to come during his lifetime for the true followers of the Lamb are one in

heart and purpose, bound together in love and are "we," the church, from the apostles to the last member of the body. Acts 2:29 does not indicate a shortness of time. It reads: For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord, your God, shall call."

I Cor. 7:29-31. "The time is short." More than four-sixths of the 6000 years of the reign of sin and death had passed. The time remaining was short compared with the time passed. There was work for the church, as mentioned in Acts 15:14-17. As to what is stated in this chapter in regard to marriage, it is not a proof that they were deceived. Paul was speaking of the true saints (then and always a small number) and not to the world of mankind. The command to the world is to "multiply and replenish the earth." Then he says he was not speaking by inspiration but was giving his opinion to anyone, then as now, who desired to be unhindered in the work of love for the Master. He continues to say if they marry they have not sinned and speaks against any who would forbid marriage.

Acts 4:32-35 speaks of the Christians at Jerusalem having all things in common. Many had been made destitute by persecution. Others were prompted by brotherly love to share their all with the needy. No one was coerced. This idea was not advocated anywhere else and is nowhere commanded, though Paul says he "shunned not to declare the whole council of God," Acts 20:27. Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives for lying. They could have kept a part, or all, of their wealth had they been honest about it.

Mark 9:1. There be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. Surely the Teacher was not telling, as a positive fact, something he knew nothing about and which was not true. Let us read further. Verses 2-5. And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, James and John and leadeth them up into an high mountain . . . and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining . . . and there appeared unto them Moses and Elias, and they were talking with

Jesus—a glorious vision of the kingdom in power. And Peter later states "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God, the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.'" And this voice we heard when we were in the mount. This prophecy was fulfilled in six days after being uttered. II Peter 1:16-18.

Matt. 24:34 Our Lord's great prophecy in this chapter and Mark 13, Luke 21, briefly covers 18 centuries of the church's history. The question asked as to when the temple would be destroyed was passed over lest they associate that event with his second coming. War, famine, pestilence showed them the time was not very near. The abomination of desolation spoken of in verse 15 is identical with the "Man of Sin" pointed out by Paul in II Thes. 2:2-3, which has been long years gaining its standing in the "holy place." We can see that Christ did not mean all to take to take place during the lifetime of the then living generation, but uses "you" as Paul uses "we." The signs of his coming (the first signs) to show his children he would soon be present were described and this generation living contemporaneously with these events shall not pass 'till all be fulfilled. So now we see the Apostles did not prove themselves fallible by making erroneous statements as to the Lord's presence.

We now give some positive Scriptural statements proving their infallibility: All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. II Tim. 3:16-17.

The Apostles wrote the New Testament Scriptures. If "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" then the writings of the Apostles are surely infallible.

When speaking to the disciples Christ said: Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" etc. Matt. 18:18. Certainly infallibility.

And God hath set some in the body, first Apostles, etc. I Cor. 12:28. See also Jno. 17:6 and 12-14-24.

So we again affirm that the four Scriptures suggested as antagonistic to the other plain Scriptural statements which we gave, proving that the Apostles did not expect the second advent of our Lord during their lifetime and did not so teach, are in harmony with all other Scriptures on the subject when rightly understood.

E. T. FOLGER.

THE CHANGING CHURCH

Editor Journal.—If your editorial writeups furnish a correct clue to your convictions, which I do not doubt, you are clearly under the impression that the church of today is, and in fact for a long time has been, in a moribund condition, so mentally dormant that little, if anything can be done to arouse it from its deep hibernation; so bound hand and foot by traditions of the past that for it change and progress are impossible.

In this I beg to differ with you, at least insofar as change is involved. Change and progress are not necessarily synonymous, so with your permission, I will touch briefly on a few changes which have occurred in the church during comparatively recent times, leaving the matter of progress to another letter.

Those of us who can remember back for a quarter of a century will recall the fervor of the preachers of that day in trying, as they put it, to "save the lost." In other words, their great mission seemed to be to preach hell fire at every available opportunity, with the object of frightening their hearers into joining the church, "snatching a brand from the burning" it was then called. Their lurid descriptions of the place of future punishment frequently had a very deplorable effect on the nerves of all but the most hardened sinners. But now, that style of preaching has passed into the discard. Instead of hell fire we have social service, boy scouts, girl guides, parties of every name and nature furnishing amusement in big games, and with such frequency that the rising generation really hasn't got time to worry about the serious matters that engaged the attention of their fathers. Perhaps it is just as well, but it has been a big change.

Two or three generations back the church of that day and old John Barleycorn were on friendly enough terms. Liquor was taken as a matter of course. From the passive recognition of J. B. in those days, to the fanatical violence of the present day churchman when the conversation swings around to the topic of "beer and light wines" is a change of no small magnitude.

Within the memory of living men large sections of practically all the churches could, and did, prove to their complete satisfaction that the institution of slavery was ordained of God, necessary for the ruling race, and of great benefit to the spiritual health of

the slaves. Who would advance such doctrine now?

A few years ago churches were composed exclusively of members who were such because they believed certain things. Of course those things varied somewhat in the different denominations, but correct belief there had to be or no membership, and without membership the future was exceedingly doubtful, to put it mildly. But a change has come over the church in this respect also. Nowadays anybody who chooses to attend services occasionally, regardless of belief, is practically recognized as one of the number. Liberality of thought and action have largely displaced the old biblical doctrines upon which our fathers leaned so heavily. Understand that I am not saying that the change is for the better; only that it has taken place. An instance may be seen right under your own nose, in our own local church, when a committee of business men represent the outside interests on the church board. These men may be, and as far as I know are, professing Christians and all that, but the point is that they are not on the church board as such, but as representatives of what a preacher a few years ago would call the "world."

Thus the "world" has bored its way into the inner circle, where its representatives hold equal authority over sacred things with the regularly ordained shepherds of the flock.

Shades of the departed fathers in Israel! What would Calvin or Wesley say if they were with us today?

Yes, Mr. Editor, church thought is being changed, even revolutionized. Have patience. You may see more changes in the next few years than you look for, perhaps even enough to satisfy you. May they all be for the better.

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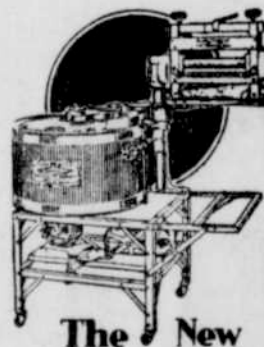
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