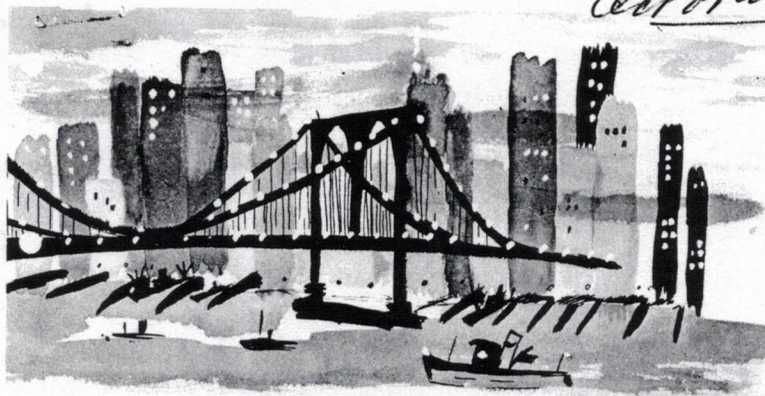


October 170.



"Watchman,
what of the night?"

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12

TIMES AND SEASONS

When we consider the statement made in 1892 that "the loud cry of the third angel *has already begun* in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ",¹ we are prone to question and to doubt as to whether this statement did indeed apply to that very hour. Could the happenings which took place in the last decades of the 19th Century actually meet the prophetic requirements of the loud cry? Prior to 1892, the church had been instructed through the servant of the Lord that certain things would take place prior to, and during the time of the loud cry. Protestantism would "reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power."² The results of this compromise would lead to "a national act" which would "give vigor to the corrupt faith of Rome."³ This was to be countered by the people of God going forth to proclaim the Sabbath more fully. The Holy Spirit would manifest Himself in this work of the church.⁴ The arguments were to have been already presented; and thus the proclamation was to be energized "as was the midnight cry of 1844. . . by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God."⁵

What were the times and seasons which marked the period from 1888 when the unique message of righteousness by faith was introduced to this church at Minneapolis till the close of the 19th Century?

In the very year 1888, there appeared in the Friday, February 3, edition of the New York Tribune, a report by cable from London quoting a telegraphic dispatch from Rome which appeared in the Times relative to President Cleveland's jubilee gift to the pope presented by a group of American pilgrims. The telegram quoted

these pilgrims as addressing the pope as follows. After reminding him that his favorite theologian, Thomas Aquinas had "written true and beautiful things concerning republicanism", they said:

We beg you, then Most Holy Father, to bless this brave young republic which has achieved so much in a single century. Bless the land discovered by your saintly compatriot, Christopher Columbus. Bless the wise and manly President of the United States. And kneeling before you we beg your Holiness to bless by your apostolic benediction ourselves and our people.⁶

The correspondent who sent the telegram from Rome indicated further that the pope was much surprised when he learned that the majority of these American pilgrims were Protestants. The reporter of this copyrighted article in the New York Tribune reacted to the London dispatch and stated that there were some Americans who would like "to know how far these pilgrims were authorized to speak as they have done in the name of the President, and who empowered them to offer the homage of the American people to the pope."⁶ Thus on the very "eve" of the momentous General Conference Session of 1888, there was evidence that Protestants were reaching across the abyss to clasp the hand of Rome.

Events were to follow swiftly. In the previous thought paper, we have already documented the enactment of the first National Sunday legislation in 1892. This was achieved by the united influence of the Protestant churches in the United States. The controversy over the Sabbath Question was reaching the national scene. Other factors were also at work by which the Sabbath would be projected as an issue before the populace.

The organization of trade unions, and labor violence marked the final decades of the 19th Century. The unionists not only received the support of individual Protestant clergy, but Catholic approval at the highest level was manifest. Cardinal Gibbons, archbishop of Baltimore, placed his influence on the side of the union organizers. This was backed by the papal encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, issued by

Leo XIII in 1891, which gave approval to the trade union movement.⁷ Side by side with the Catholic Church's interest in the labor movement was their projection of the Sunday issue. In 1889, Father T. Enright wrote in The Industrial American that "the Bible says, 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,' but the Catholic Church says, 'No, keep the first day of the week,' and the whole world bows in obedience."⁸ In 1893, there appeared four editorials in The Catholic Mirror, official organ of Cardinal Gibbons. Every known argument was presented in regards to the Sabbath Question. These were republished in tract form. In the final article is found that classic admission used so frequently - "The Catholic church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday."⁹

In the same year - 1893 - Dr. E. T. Hiscox, a Baptist clergyman, read a paper before a Baptist Minister's meeting in Saratoga, N. Y., entitled, "The Transference of the Sabbath." In it he stated:

To me, it seems unaccountable that Jesus during three years' intercourse with His disciples, giving the disciples instruction as to His kingdom, constantly coming into contact with the Sabbath question, often discussing it in some of its aspects, freeing it from its false glosses, and teaching its true nature and purpose, never alluded to any transference of the day. Also during the forty days of His resurrection life, no such thing was intimated. Nor so far as we know did the Spirit, which was given to bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever He said to them, deal with this question. Nor yet did the inspired Apostles in preaching the gospel, founding churches, counseling and instructing those founded, discuss or approach this subject. Of course I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of Paganism, and christened with the name of the Sun-god. Then adopted and sanctified by the Papal apostacy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism, and the Christian world, . . . But in those early days, when Christian ritualism largely received its form, the mould in which it was cast was rather Pagan than Jewish, as preferred by a carnal and secularized Church establishment.¹⁰

In the March, 1894 issue of The Catholic World, there appeared an article entitled, "Paschale Gaudium". The following admission was stated:

The church took the pagan philosophy and made it a buckler of faith against the heathen. She took the pagan Roman Pantheon, temple of all the gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs; so it stands to this day. She took the Pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday. She took the pagan Easter and made it the feast we celebrate during this season.¹¹

In explaining the reason for such action, the article further states:

Sunday and Easter day are, if we consider their derivation, much the same. In truth all Sundays are Sundays only because they are weekly, partial recurrence of Easter day. The sun was a foremost god with heathendom. . . There is, in truth, something royal, kingly about the sun, making it a fit emblem of Jesus, the Sun of Justice. Hence the church in these countries would seem to have said, "Keep the old, pagan name. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified." And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus. ¹¹

One year later - 1895 - in response to a letter sent to Cardinal Gibbons by J. F. Snyder of Bloomington, Illinois, the Cardinal's Chancellor replied that "of course the Catholic Church claims the change [of the Sabbath] was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her. And *the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters.*"¹²

Finally in 1899, Father T. Enright again enters the controversy. This time he offers \$1,000 for a single Bible text for Sunday sacredness. The offer reads:

I hereby offer \$1,000 to anyone who can prove to me from the Bible alone, that I am bound under pain of grievous sin to keep Sunday holy.¹³

This could have electrified the whole discussion. This writer can testify as to how a similar offer made during a Sunday controversy in Toronto, Ontario in 1949 over the Canadian Lord's Day Act, produced a response so great that it was impossible for him to answer all the calls about the Sabbath. Additional ministerial help was supplied by the conference during the period of agitation.

As one surveys the material written on the Sabbath question during the final decades of the 19th Century, there was nothing missing which was needful to give a full and complete picture of the issue. Truly the arguments were being presented,

and that by recognized religious authorities. What was the missing element? The Church of the Living God! Jones sensed the import of the hour, and during his 1893 General Conference studies noted the purpose of the Laodicean message as it related to the Loud cry. He quoted:

It [The Message to Laodicea] is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and *to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel.*¹⁴

Then Elder A. T. Jones added - "That is where we are. While the message is preparing us for the loud cry, God is sending angels everywhere to prepare people for the truth. And when we go from this Conference with this message *as it is now*, the people will hear it."¹⁴

But our spiritual forefathers did not go forth from that conference with the conviction of the "now" time as Jones presented it! How will we react if and when God gives us another chance? Will we continue in Laodicean blindness?

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- ¹Ellen G. White, Review & Herald, Nov. 22, 1892
 - ²Ellen G. White, Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. IV, p. 405
 - ³Ibid., p. 410
 - ⁴Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 33
 - ⁵Ellen G. White, Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. IV, p. 430
 - ⁶New York Tribune, Feb. 3, 1888, p. 1. Photo-copy obtained by writer from Library of Congress, Washington D C.
 - ⁷Dexter Perkins & Glyndon G Van Deusen, The American Democracy, pp. 355-356
 - ⁸Quoted in Facts of Faith, p. 289
 - ⁹The Christian Sabbath, 4th Edition, (Catholic Mirror: Baltimore, Md.) p. 29
 - ¹⁰Photo-copy of paper given by Dr. E. T. Hiscox to F. C. Gilbert containing presentation which Gilbert heard Hiscox present at Minister's meeting.
 - ¹¹William L. Gildea, "Paschale Gaudium", Catholic World, March 1894, p. 809
 - ¹²Quoted in Facts of Faith, pp. 292-293
 - ¹³From Photo-copy with original signature, dated June 16, 1899
 - ¹⁴General Conference Bulletin, 1893, p. 179

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