

COLLAPSE OF CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Thousands of books have already been inspired by the Great War, and many other thousands will doubtless yet be written. Only a few, however, will be given a permanent place because of intrinsic merit. Their worth will be determined by the spirit by which they are inspired, by the ability of their authors to comprehend the great problems involved in the war, and by the skill with which the facts are set forth and the solution of these problems presented.

While the following discussion is not a war book except in a very general sense, it was directly inspired by the war. It was written as the result of a conference of some of the officials of the National Reform Association who felt that the times demanded some such presentation of the principles of national life. This

INTRODUCTION

Association had its birth during the most trying period of our civil war. It came into being as the result of a nation-wide conviction that we as a people had forgotten God, and that the war was God's judgment for our national sin.

Ever since its organization the National Reform Association has been instant, in season and out of season, in pressing the claims of God and of Christ upon the attention of the people. This has been done with more than ordinary diligence ever since the outbreak of the great world war. This booklet is something of an index to the kind of work carried on by means of the press, the platform and the pulpit.

Of all the war books thus far published the writer does not know of one that views the world-problems involved from the standpoint here taken. And yet this is the only standpoint from which the whole field can be surveyed, the vexatious problems understood, the key to their

INTRODUCTION

solution discovered, and the conditions of permanent peace and prosperity perceived. This is the chief reason why thoughtful people are invited to peruse these pages.

A debt of gratitude is due former United States Senator Frank J. Cannon for suggestions of great value concerning the character of this discussion.

R. C. W.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....	5
I. NATIONAL INSUBORDINATION TO THE DIVINE ORDER.....	11
II. NATIONAL DESTINY DETERMINED BY NATIONAL CHARACTER.....	13
III. CHRIST ENTHRONED AS RULER OF NATIONS.....	19
IV. IMPLICATIONS.....	45
V. NATIONAL SIN.....	66
VI. CHRIST'S ADMINISTRATION.....	76
VII. HISTORICAL CONFIRMATION.....	89
VIII. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY COLLAPSE	110
IX. "NOW THEREFORE BE WISE, O YE KINGS".....	117
X. SUMMARY STATEMENT.....	122
XI. DIFFICULTIES.....	124
XII. CONCLUDING APPEAL.....	129

COLLAPSE OF CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

I

NATIONAL INSUBORDINATION TO THE DIVINE ORDER

Why do the nations rage,
And the peoples meditate a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against Jehovah and against his Christ,
saying,
Let us break their bonds asunder,
And cast away their cords from us.

He that sitteth in the heavens will
laugh;
The Lord will have them in derision.
Then will he speak unto them in his
wrath,
And vex them in his sore displeasure:
Yet I have set my king
Upon my holy hill of Zion.

COLLAPSE OF

I will tell of the decree:
Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my Son:
This day have I begotten thee.
Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations
for thine inheritance,
And the uttermost parts of the earth for
thy possession.
Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron:
Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a
potter's vessel.

Now therefore be wise, O ye kings:
Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
Serve Jehovah with fear,
And rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and
ye perish in the way,
For his wrath will soon be kindled.
Blessed are all they that take refuge
in him.

(The Second Psalm)

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

II

NATIONAL DESTINY DETERMINED BY NATIONAL CHARACTER

In the ancient Hebrew song just quoted there is placed in our hands the key to the destiny of nations. It is a warning to every nation, no matter in what period of the world's history it exists or on what continent it is located, that unless it adjusts its relations with the divine government in accordance with the fact that Christ is King, it will be broken to pieces.

The use made of this Psalm in the New Testament leaves no room to doubt its true import. It is a solemn admonition and warning to nations and their rulers because of their hostile attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ as the Ruler of this world; toward Jehovah who has delegated to him the authority to rule; toward his revealed will as the law

COLLAPSE OF

of national life. Unless this hostile attitude is abandoned, destruction awaits them.

Peoples and rulers are not here considered as mere private individuals. Nations as corporate bodies capable of right and wrong action are first mentioned. "Why do the nations rage, and the peoples meditate a vain thing?" This language implies that supreme political authority is vested in the body of the people, and that this national body is primarily responsible for the attitude of hostility to Christ. The fundamental principle of democracy is here recognized.

Rulers of all ranks are next presented in their official capacity, bearing a large share of responsibility for national insubordination to the divine order. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah and against his Christ." This public, national, official attitude of hostility to the Ruler of nations is the root

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

of all national evils and the cause of national downfall.

The description here given of nations in tumult most graphically sets forth the present world condition. The situation is appalling in the highest degree.

“Had I a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues,
A voice of brass and adamantine lungs,
Not half the dreadful scene could I disclose.”

Perhaps as never before there is “upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows, men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world.” But it would be a mistake to regard the present world conditions as altogether unprecedented. Nor does the Second Psalm predict national calamities of a nature that had never before occurred. Its declarations are in harmony with historical facts which always and everywhere characterize the divine government. Many a time in the past have

COLLAPSE OF

the fountains of the great deep been broken up and the windows of heaven opened to pour out torrents of divine judgments upon nations for their sins. One civilization after another has gone down into the depths of oblivion, and the fundamental reason was their hostile attitude toward the divine order.

The warning here uttered is accompanied by clear, pointed, unmistakable instruction, consisting of a declaration of the truths to which nations and rulers should give heed. If all ranks and conditions of men could be induced to ponder these truths the world would soon be in possession of the highest type of political wisdom. Men have been led to revise their political theories as a result of such study. There is reason to believe that the political systems of the world will be revolutionized when the knowledge of these truths becomes general.

The contents of the entire Psalm may be briefly summarized. The first stanza

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

gives a graphic description of the nations plotting together against the reign of Christ.

The second represents the Lord securely enthroned in the heavens laughing derisively at the vainglorious efforts of the nations to annul the divine decree whereby Christ was enthroned over the world. What a spectacle the inspired poet here exhibits to our view. How dreadful the tragedy in which this spectacle ends. And yet the nations do not take it to heart and learn wisdom. Nations and their rulers are still striving together to defeat the divine purpose and God on his throne scornfully laughs at their consummate folly. But that laughter is the prelude to judicial wrath.

The third stanza embodies the instruction to which nations must give heed or perish. It is the declaration of Christ himself announcing the decree whereby he is made Ruler of the nations of the world. "Ask of me, and I will give thee

COLLAPSE OF

the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Can there be any doubt about the meaning of these words? It is incipient rebellion to deny that they declare Christ's right to govern the nations and to bless or crush them according to their works.

The fourth stanza is an exhortation to civil rulers to submit to the authority of Christ, coupled with the solemn assurance that continued rebellion means national disaster, but that submission will bring national blessedness.

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

III

CHRIST ENTHRONED AS RULER OF NATIONS

A number of momentous questions here arise which must be answered. If all this is true, why are nations so slow to learn the lesson? Why do they risk ruin by persisting in their rebellious attitude? Have they as yet no conception of the truth so solemnly announced three thousand years ago? If not, why not? Why have not the ambassadors of Christ as his prophets to the nations proclaimed it to all the world? Since this has not been done it might be wise to inquire whether or not some mistake has been made about the meaning of this Psalm. Is it true that Jesus Christ is the world's Ruler and that the distress of nations is their just punishment for refusal to submit to his sceptre? And even if he is, may not this fact be a

COLLAPSE OF

mere theological dogma with which practical politics has nothing to do? Is it not folly to urge upon nations and their rulers the consideration of theological questions which belong only in the realm of religious controversy? These points must be considered with the utmost care.

The proof that Christ is the Ruler of nations must be presented first. That proof is found chiefly in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. It would be easy to marshal a host of proof texts from either one or both these divisions of the Bible, but the result may be more satisfactory if the general trend of Biblical thought can be discovered. In general the Bible is the record of the unfolding of God's purpose and plan concerning the world of fallen humanity. It presents the method whereby he intends to re-establish his kingdom on the earth. That plan is placed in the hands of Christ as Mediator between God and man who undertakes to carry it

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

through by the execution of the threefold office of Prophet, Priest and King. As Prophet he has commissioned his ambassadors to deliver a message to nations as well as to individuals. That message presents the law of national righteousness as the condition of national peace and prosperity. Nations need Christ as Priest because they have sinned in refusing to submit to that law, and their sins must be either pardoned or punished. This discussion has to do chiefly with the kingly office. In the Old Testament, which records the preparation made for the Advent of Christ, the kingly office was given such prominence that the Hebrews lost sight of almost all else and looked for a Messiah who would come as a conquering king. They were right in holding that his work would culminate in his enthronement, since both the prophetic and the priestly functions are subordinate to this end. But they were wrong in their conception of the char-

COLLAPSE OF

acter of his kingdom and of the steps whereby he was to reach the throne.

The trend of Biblical thought on this topic may be briefly outlined. The universe is one vast dominion of which God is King. The world is a province in rebellion. Through the seductions of satan the human race became estranged from God, and this estrangement is specially manifested in social and political life. One civilization after another has been overthrown because of opposition to the reign of God.

A new civilization, however, was founded with the call of Abraham. All nations had become hopelessly corrupt and God formed a new nation out of Abraham's descendants. This new civilization was based upon the principle of national subjection to God as Supreme Ruler and to His Will as supreme law. This principle was written into their national constitution and ratified by a solemn covenant. This principle must

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

underlie all enduring civilizations. Israel was typical of the kingdom of God on earth. It was the kingdom in miniature. It illustrates what all nations should be in their relation to the Divine Ruler and to his law. But this Divine Ruler into whose hands supreme authority is committed is always declared to be no other than Christ the Son of God. The kingdom idea is unfolded in connection with the career of the Hebrew Commonwealth. This was the supreme vocation of that nation. This vocation is fulfilled in history, prophecy and song. While these are often mingled together, they are three distinct literary forms whereby the divine purpose concerning Christ's authority over the nations is presented.

It is not necessary to introduce into this discussion any of the problems concerning the structure of the Old Testament. It is assumed that all classes of scholars believe that it contains distinct teachings about the kingdom and that

COLLAPSE OF

those teachings are still further unfolded in the New Testament. Our principal aim is to discover its teachings on one point, namely, the kingly authority of Christ over all nations.

The key to many of the mysteries of the divine kingdom is found in the promise made to Abraham when God called him to be the founder of a new civilization, which promise was repeated no less than seven times. In its final form it may be here quoted and should be carefully pondered: "By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The history of Israel comprises merely the preliminary chapters touching the fulfillment of this promise. The conquest of Canaan was typical and

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

prophetical of the conquest of the world by Christ and his people. The seed in whom all nations are to be blessed is certainly Christ himself. The fact that the literal Israel never achieved the conquests here promised, the fact that the kingdom has been taken from that nation, and the additional fact that Christian people are declared to be the true Israel, sustain these positions. Under this promise the whole purpose and plan of God with reference to his kingdom on earth are carried forward to their consummation. Old Testament history therefore unfolds the truth that Christ is the Ruler of the world.

Christ is the central figure in all the prophetic books, and not many of them close without a glowing description of his conquest of the world and the establishment of his authority over all nations. There are two classes of prophetic announcements; those that present the kingdom in general terms, indicating that

COLLAPSE OF

it embraces all nations alike, and those that employ Jewish phraseology just as though the Jews are to rule the world and all other nations are to share the blessings of the kingdom by yielding them obedience. Both of these conceptions cannot be literally true and it is important to discover which one is according to the mind of the Spirit. Let the prophets who declare the universality of Christ's reign over all nations on equal terms speak first.

"I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto the Son of man, and he came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13, 14.)

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

“And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” (Daniel 7:27.)

“There is none like unto thee, O Jehovah; thou art great and thy name is great in might. Who should not fear thee, O King of the nations? For to thee it appertaineth.” (Jeremiah 10:6, 7.)

This is the tenor of the prophecies which employ no Hebrew phraseology but which declare the sovereign authority of Christ over all nations. But since Israel was employed to set before the nations of the world an object lesson on matters relating to the kingdom, it is but natural that Hebrew terms should be employed to a large extent in the unfolding of the kingdom idea. With this thought in mind let us read some of the announcements concerning Christ's au-

COLLAPSE OF

thority over the nations in which such phraseology is employed.

Seven hundred years before the event Isaiah made this proclamation: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this." (Isa. 9:6, 7.)

The prophet Zechariah made an announcement which both Matthew and John declare was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It is in these words: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salva-

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

tion; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth.” (Zechariah 9:9, 10.)

It has already been stated that it is important that we discover whether it is the divine purpose merely to re-establish a Hebrew kingdom over which Christ is to reign, or whether all nations are to be admitted to the privileges of the kingdom on equal terms. The narrow conception is rendered impossible by the general terms employed even in connection with the Hebrew phraseology. The kingdom is to be world-wide, is to extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth, is to embrace all nations. But when it is remembered that Israel was the kingdom

COLLAPSE OF

in miniature, that miniature being a copy of the kingdom in its completeness, the true view becomes apparent. And this view is rendered still more certain when it is remembered that the verbally literal view cannot possibly be intended. A single passage of this class, taken from among many, will confirm this statement. It is too long to quote, but it is found in the nine closing chapters of the prophecy of Ezekiel. He foretells the return of the scattered tribes of Israel, the rebuilding of the temple and the city of Jerusalem, the redistribution of the land, and the restoration of the old order. But the new temple is to be as large as the entire city ever was; the city is to be as large as the whole land of Palestine; and yet the land is to be distributed among the twelve tribes after the necessary allotment to the priests and Levites. All this plainly indicates that the old barriers and boundaries are removed, that restored Israel is the redeemed world, that the

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

kingdom of Christ embraces all nations, and that all that is distinctively Jewish has waxed old and is reduced to the vanishing point. (Heb. 8:13.)

In the light of the facts already presented we can understand the Hebrew national songs, and they in turn throw additional light on the reign of Christ. They are not national songs in any narrow sense, but are rather songs of the King and his kingdom. The twenty-second Psalm gives a description of the sufferings of Christ on the cross. This is followed by the announcement that as the result of his suffering all nations are to submit to him. "All ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto Jehovah; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is Jehovah's and he is the Ruler over the nations." (Psalm 22:27.)

In another of these songs it is said, "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of

COLLAPSE OF

the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render tribute; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." (Psalm 72:8-11.)

Again his complete conquest of the nations is described. "The Lord at thy right hand will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He will judge among the nations. He will fill the places with dead bodies; he will strike through the head in many countries." (Psalm 110:6.)

Such is the trend of Old Testament thought concerning the authority of Christ over the nations.

What is the prevalent kingdom idea of the New Testament? John the Baptist began his work by announcing that the kingdom was just at hand. The kingdom was the principal theme of the preaching of Jesus. It is the first note and also the

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

last of the book of the Acts. It is the dominant thought of the Epistles. It is the Alpha and the Omega of the book of Revelation. Let us develop this conception of the New Testament with some degree of fullness. The four Gospels give the testimony of four witnesses to the fact that Jesus is the Christ foretold in the Old Testament. They do this by showing that he exactly fulfills all the prophecies relating to his person, his office and his work. Our concern now is with those which relate to his kingship.

Matthew begins and ends his testimony by showing that Jesus is the promised King. Let no one be disturbed by the fact that men are often quoted as calling him "the King of the Jews," "the King of Israel," and that the superscription placed on his cross by Pilate was, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." These expressions denote the narrow human conception of his dominion. He himself never placed any such limitations

COLLAPSE OF

on his realm. Let us listen to his own words. "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." (Matthew 28:18.) This is Christ's final word concerning the extent of his dominion after three years of public teaching and miracle working. It includes both heaven and earth. Our chief concern now is with his authority over this planet. This final announcement is in harmony with all his former teachings as recorded by all the four Evangelists. He had declared that "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all nations." (Matthew 24:14.) This language implies that his authority extends over all the nations of the world. He had also announced that the Father had sent him into the world, not to judge the world but to save the world. (John 3:17.) The world which he came to save is the world of humanity, the Kosmos, the orderly arrangement of mankind in families and

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

nations. Most of the kingdom parables embody the same thought, as is evident from Christ's own interpretation of some of them in which he declares the field where his kingdom is established to be the world, all of which is to be transformed by the principles of righteousness.

But it is everywhere set forth in Scripture that there is opposition to Christ's rulership and that there is an age-long process required to bring the nations into subjection to the divine order. The exercise of the judicial function is thereby made necessary on the part of God, and this too has been delegated to Jesus Christ. "For neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath given all judgment unto the Son, that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (John 5:22, 23.) "And he gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man." (John 5:27.)

With Christ's conception of his own kingly authority in mind it will not be

COLLAPSE OF

difficult to obtain a proper view of the kingdom teachings of the remainder of the Scriptures. That conception dominates the thought of all subsequent New Testament writings. Luke informs us that to his disciples Jesus "showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3.) Being thus instructed, they proclaimed the same doctrine. It may be worthy of note that while Jesus never mentioned the church except on two occasions, but had much to say about the kingdom, his disciples seldom mentioned the kingdom, but had much to say about the church. For this, among other reasons, some regard the kingdom and the church as the same, the term kingdom presenting it as viewed by God from above and the term church describing it as viewed by men. This theory has nothing to sustain or commend it. King-

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

dom and church are not the same though they are closely related. The term kingdom is used in the Bible in two senses. Sometimes it means realm and sometimes it means reign. The realm over which Christ reigns is the universe, but our chief concern is with this rebellious province called the world. The reign is the actual exercise of his authority, either in wrath or grace. The church is the chief instrumentality whereby witness is borne to individuals and nations that Christ is King and that they should yield him obedience. It is the instrumentality whereby reformatory movements on the part of citizens are brought into existence. The book of the Acts records the planting of the church, and the Epistles present the principles and methods, developed along the lines laid down in the gospels, whereby its work for the propagation of the truth concerning the kingdom is to be carried forward.

COLLAPSE OF

The kingship of Jesus Christ is the key that unlocks all mysteries. The apostles used it to explain the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and declared that in that wicked deed in which Jews and Gentiles joined the Second Psalm had a fulfillment. (Acts 4:25-27.) Peter used it to explain the opening of the door of salvation to Gentile converts, declaring that "He is Lord of all." (Acts 10:36.) One of the accusations brought against Paul and his companions was that they said that besides Caesar "there is another king, one Jesus." (Acts 17:7.) The last word given us about Paul's work is that for two years in Rome he was "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 28:31.)

But what was Paul's doctrine of the kingdom and of the kingship of Jesus? We are not left in doubt. He declares that God put all things under his feet, and that he must reign till their subju-

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

gation is complete. (I Cor. 15:25-27.) Again he declares that God raised Christ from the dead, "and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority, and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet." (Eph. 1:20-22.) In another place he declares that because Christ humbled himself and died on the cross "God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:8-11.)

When Paul wrote his epistle to the Colossians the seeds of the Gnostic heresy which vexed the church for ages had already begun to germinate. That heresy

COLLAPSE OF

is a vain attempt to bridge the chasm between God and the material universe, to solve the problem of evil, and to disclose the method of deliverance from its power. The Gnostics held that evil is inherent in matter and that it could not therefore have been created by God. They filled the chasm between God and matter with imaginary emanations from God. The farther removed these emanations were from the divine source the weaker they became. One of the last and weakest they called the Demiurge, and upon him they laid the responsibility for the creation of matter. These supposed emanations filling up an imaginary chasm between God and the material universe they called the Pleroma. But Paul anticipated this heresy even in its most complete form. He showed that Christ is the solution of all these vexatious problems. "By him all things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible,

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him the whole Pleroma should dwell." (Col. 1:16-19.) Christ's authority over all things, nations as well as other beings, is the one universal solvent whereby all the mysteries that vex us are to be determined.

We should be reasonably well prepared now for the examination of the book of Revelation, that we may discover its teachings concerning Christ's kingship. That book contains many things hard to be understood, but its testimony on this matter is remarkably clear and unmistakable. Christ is introduced as "the Ruler of the kings of the earth." (Rev.

COLLAPSE OF

1:5.) "He is Lord of lords and King of kings." (Rev. 17:14.) "He hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. 19:16.) In I Timothy 6:15 this is mentioned as one of the titles the invisible God. But since all the Mediatorial authority of Christ is delegated by the Father it is evident that this dominion which belongs primarily to the Triune God is placed in the hands of Jesus Christ.

In the body of the book of Revelation there is exhibited a series of dissolving views representing the age-long conflict which is to determine the rulership of this world. Satan appears as the leader of the hosts of darkness, who has usurped authority and claims dominion over all nations. (Luke 4:5-7). Christ stands forth as the rightful ruler and wages a warfare to dispossess the usurper. Intimation is given at various stages of the conflict as to the final result. At a

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

certain important epoch great voices are heard in heaven announcing that "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever." And then other voices say, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast; because thou hast taken thy great power, and didst reign." (Rev. 11:15-17.) In the closing scenes we are shown the complete overthrow of all anti-Christian systems, both ecclesiastical and political. The Son of God rides forth with many crowns upon his head and leads the hosts of righteousness to complete victory. This achievement is accompanied by the voice of a great multitude, "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth." (Rev. 19:6, 11-16.)

Last of all we have a description of the New Jerusalem coming down from God

COLLAPSE OF

out of heaven, the spreading forth of a new heaven and the establishing of a new earth. All this is a highly figurative announcement of the reformation of human society, the erection of civil government on the heavenly plan, and the establishment and acknowledgment of Christ's authority over all.

The trend of New Testament thought concerning the kingdom is therefore quite plain. The four gospels exhibit Jesus as the promised King. The Acts and the Epistles present the Church organized, trained and equipped for the conflict in support of his right to reign. The Book of Revelation presents a series of views of the conflict. The contending forces are the armies of Christ and of Satan. The issue to be decided is, Who shall wear the crown of dominion over the world? The result of the conflict is the submission of all nations to Jesus Christ.

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

IV

IMPLICATIONS

The fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Ruler of nations is the one imperial thought thus far presented. The proofs advanced show that his enthronement is an accomplished fact, that he is now actually swaying his royal sceptre over this world, and that the nations are unwilling to receive and acknowledge him as their King. These proofs also show that Christ's rulership of the world fills a place of supreme importance in the purpose and plan of God relative to the human race. These facts manifestly imply that Christ as the Ruler of the world reckons with nations and their governments as well as with individuals.

A further implication is that in the administration of the government of Christ nations are viewed as real entities, not mere imaginary or artificial beings.

COLLAPSE OF

It is also implied that they possess moral character, that they have their existence in the sphere of Christ's moral government; that they are not controlled, like the winds, the tides, the heavenly bodies, by mere physical law, but are subjects of moral law; that moral forces operate in their development, and that their weal or woe depends upon their attitude toward Christ as King and the moral laws under which he has placed them.

The fundamental idea here involved has often been expressed by saying that nations are moral beings or moral persons. It may not be wise or prudent to insist at all times upon the term moral person as a descriptive designation of a state or nation. But it is to be regretted that a certain type of mind seems unable to grasp the significance of the term or to perceive its fitness to express a most profound political principle. Without wasting words on the mere phraseology

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

best suited to designate the nation as a subject of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, let us proceed at once to inquire concerning the fact itself. Are the implications already stated logically necessary and true? Does Christ deal with nations as real entities possessing moral character, capable of receiving rewards and penalties? Or do we speak in figurative language when we so describe them? While it may be admitted that Christ is in some sense King of the world, is he after all King of nations in any sense that has a practical bearing? Is not the whole content of his kingship as far as men are concerned exhausted when it is declared that he is the lawful ruler of individuals? And are not all human obligations toward him as King discharged when individuals submit to his authority? Is it not a waste of words to urge upon men the idea that he is King of nations and that they as nations are under some sort of an obligation to him as King?

COLLAPSE OF

Because of the prevalence of the ideas involved in these questions it is necessary to enter into an investigation that the facts may be disclosed. According to the view expressed above concerning the teachings of the Second Psalm, national weal or woe depends upon national attitude toward Jesus Christ. It is of supreme importance therefore that we find out whether that attitude which determines national destiny is anything more than the attitude of individuals, or whether it is the attitude of the nation viewed as a distinct entity, having moral character and owing duties to the Supreme Ruler.

It is certainly clear to every fair-minded person that mere theorizing about this matter will never bring the truth to light. Nothing but facts should be permitted to influence our minds in seeking the right conclusion. And certainly no fair-minded person will undertake this investigation with a decision already

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

formed and then seek to manipulate the facts in such a manner as to support that decision. There must be an honest, thorough, intelligent examination of all the facts bearing upon the point at issue, so that when the investigation is completed we may know certainly whether nations are moral beings, existing within the sphere of Christ's moral government, under well-defined obligations to him as King, and whether they are rewarded or punishment according as they fulfill or fail to fulfill these obligations.

There is a deep-seated conviction in the minds of men that such is the case. It is only when they enter the arena of debate, or when they are seeking to evade the logical, practical conclusions that certainly must follow the admission of the doctrine that nations are moral beings, that men venture its denial. Instinctively men everywhere think and speak of nations as real entities, possess-

COLLAPSE OF

ing a moral character of their own. Instinctively they act upon this conception. There is an element of truth in the theory that civil government originates in a natural instinct. Certainly we cannot say that men proceed to erect civil government just as the beaver builds his dam or as bees construct the honey comb. But it is just as natural for human beings to live in society and to construct civil governments as it is for the lower animals to follow their native instincts. There is no such being as a man without a country. In most people this attachment to country shows itself in patriotism. But patriotism is shown not by seeking to derive all possible personal benefits from the country, but by willingness to sacrifice comforts, property or even life itself for the country's welfare. In time of personal danger we instinctively seek to preserve our lives. But when the life or wellbeing of the nation is imperiled we

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

are willing to give up our own lives that the life of the nation may be preserved. If self-preservation is the first law of nature, the salvation of the nation is the first law of social humanity, and is higher and more imperious than the law of individual safety.

But what is this being which we call that state or nation, which claims our devotion and the sacrifice of life itself? In spite of argument to the contrary men persist in regarding it as a moral entity, and their patriotism bears witness to this settled conviction. What is here insisted upon is that men shall act consistently with themselves and not seek to evade the practical conclusions that must flow from this conviction. If the state is something that may claim such devotion, it is surely something of which the Divine Ruler takes notice and with which he reckons in his moral government. If this is not so, a most important

COLLAPSE OF

section of our lives lies outside the boundaries of his kingdom.

This conception of the state as a moral entity is an essential element in the most profound political philosophy. It is true that certain modern political writers deny that the state is a moral person or that it sustains any relation to moral law.

One of our own American writers declares that "divine or moral sanctions have no application to political matters." Another says that "We must hold to the principle that the state can do no wrong." But even the advocates of this non-moral theory, while denying that the state is a moral person, strenuously maintain that it is a legal person, having an intelligence and a will of its own. It is difficult for some of us at least even to imagine a being who is a person at all who is not a moral person. How can a state act within the sphere of law and not perform acts that are right or wrong? How is it possible for men endowed with a

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

moral nature and having a moral standard for the guidance of individual life to train themselves to the habit of not judging the acts of the state according to the same standard? But the best expounders of the philosophy of human society hold that nations are moral entities and as such are subjects of the moral government of God. If this were not so, if the non-moral theory mentioned above is to be accepted, what would follow? If Christ deals with men only as individuals, and if there is a sphere known as the political into which his moral law and government do not reach, evidently individuals while acting in that sphere are free from moral restraint. This is the theory on which many proceed. This theory is productive of wide-spread immorality. It brings down upon nations the annihilating strokes of Christ's iron sceptre.

Important evidence is furnished by the science of international law. In this

COLLAPSE OF

department of thought and life individuals and their rights drop almost entirely out of sight. They are considered only as involved in the rights of the nation. National rights and consequent national obligations furnish the subject-matter which engages the attention of students of international law. These are the supreme interests to be considered by the representatives of various governments in treating with one another. This is well expressed in the following quotation from the works of Daniel Webster. In 1842, when he was Secretary of State, he wrote officially as follows: "Every nation, on being received, at her own request, into the circle of civilized governments, must understand that she not only attains rights of sovereignty and the dignity of national character, but that she binds herself also to the strict and faithful observance of all those principles, laws and usages which have obtained currency among civilized states, and

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

which have for their object the mitigation of the miseries of war.

“No community can be allowed to enjoy the benefit of national character in modern times, without submitting to all the duties which that character imposes. A Christian people, who exercise sovereign power, who make treaties, maintain diplomatic relations with other states, and who should yet refuse to conduct their military operations according to the usages universally observed by such states, would present a character singularly inconsistent and anomalous.” (Webster’s Works, Vol. VI, pp. 437, 438.)

But if a state is not a moral being how can it have rights and owe duties to other states? If it is difficult to construct a science of civil government possessed of any value apart from the principle that the state is a moral being the difficulty becomes an absolute impossibility when we try to construct a science

COLLAPSE OF

of international law. It was in connection with the development of this science that the term moral person as applied to the state first came into use. In his "History of European Diplomacy," David Jayne Hill says that "it had long been the custom to treat kingdoms and principalities as personal possessions of the ruling prince and as a legitimate field of conquest by those who were at war with him. But in the sixteenth century a new conception of the State developed. That new conception consisted essentially of the principles that the State is an organism, a moral entity, possessed of moral qualities." (Vol. II, p. 517.) This new conception developed just when international law was becoming a real science.

John Bassett Moore, in his masterly work on international law consisting of eight volumes and published by authority of the government of the United States, informs us that "Pufendorf propounded the idea which has been so generally

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

adopted, of treating the state as a moral person, endowed with a collective will." (Vol. I, p. 14.) Pufendorf, it is true, belonged to the seventeenth century, but Hugo Grotius, his great predecessor, who was born in 1583, treated the state as a moral being having rights and owing duties to other states, although he does not use the term moral person. From that time down to the present it has been the general practice of writers on international law thus to conceive of the state. "Moral character manifested in a proper regard for the rights of other nations is considered a necessary condition for admission into the family of nations." (Wilson and Tucker's "International Law," 5th ed., pp. 45, 46.) Wheaton's "International Law," the fifth English edition of which has been issued since the outbreak of the great world war, declares that "Every state has certain sovereign rights, to which it is entitled as an independent moral being;

COLLAPSE OF

in other words, because it is a state.” (Part Second, Chapter I, p. 87.)

It is evident, therefore, that states appear in history as real moral beings, that they have rights and owe duties, and that they treat one another on the basis of these recognized facts. It is impossible for nations to have any dealings with one another except on this basis. Is it possible that the Divine Ruler of nations ignores all this in his dealings with men? Christ's administration of the divine kingdom cannot be understood if these facts are not duly considered. No mere dealing with individuals could reach all the deeds done by nations. And no attempted explanation of divine providence which ignores Christ's dealings with nations as such comes within a thousand leagues of unfolding some of the most important events in human history.

The authority which a state exercises, usually known as political sovereignty, shows most conclusively that the state

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

must be a moral being and is a subject of the moral government of Jesus Christ. That the state does actually claim and wield supreme authority over property and life needs no proof. It either has or it has not the right to this authority. If the claim is wrong, if no state has the right to make it, it is a most outrageous usurpation of a divine prerogative. How can the Divine Ruler overlook such usurpation? Kings and kaisers who claim to rule by divine right are usurpers. They are doubly criminal. They rob both God and man. The claim of sovereignty for the individual is also usurpation. If political sovereignty belongs anywhere it belongs to the people viewed as a state. This is the true doctrine of democracy. Every democratic state makes this claim for itself. Does it thereby invade without warrant the realm which God has reserved for himself? And if it does, will not the Divine Ruler avenge himself on every such state?

COLLAPSE OF

But all right-minded people without exception believe that states have the right to wield the tremendous authority called sovereignty. Without raising at this point the question of its origin, must not the Divine Ruler hold them accountable, whatever may be the origin? Is it possible that there are within the realm over which God reigns by Jesus Christ these great national powers rightly claiming and exercising supreme control over property and life, and yet not accountable to that Divine Ruler? Such an idea is too absurd to require refutation. No one can believe in a God at all and hold to such a theory. Even the heathen knew better than to hold such views. Horace declares that "Powerful sovereigns reign over their own subjects, and the Supreme Being over sovereigns themselves."

When the true origin and location of political sovereignty are considered and given due weight, the evidence that

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

nations are moral beings and are subject to the government of Jesus Christ is seen to be overwhelming. According to the Constitution of the United States, the people are sovereign. They ordain and establish the Constitution. This is the first principle of democracy. It requires no argument to convince American citizens that this is as it should be. To make the world safe for democracy is one of the great purposes of the war with Germany and her allies. In fighting for this principle we are fighting for our country. But in what sense are the people sovereign? There is a superficial and generally vague idea that the people are sovereign as individuals, and that the individual can take his share of our political sovereignty and do with it as he pleases. But he does not proceed very far along this path until he is checked by the officials of the state. Not even communities, cities or any other fraction of a state has the right to wield supreme

COLLAPSE OF

political authority. Where then does sovereignty reside? In the body of the people viewed as a unit. As detached individuals we have no sovereignty at all. On this point all the writers on political science are agreed. Sovereignty is indivisible. It is vested in the state viewed as a great moral entity.

But how did the state come to be invested with this tremendous authority? The old theory, known as the Social Compact theory, which held that it originates in the surrender by each one of a portion of his natural rights, has been discarded. There is no need now to give it any consideration.

The prevalent theory today is that this sovereign authority of the state is the product of evolution. It may readily be granted that evolution has wrought wonders in the life of states. It has brought into existence the great world powers of this modern era, but it did not create political sovereignty. Those civil

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

powers that existed in the dawn of civilization, and which modern statesmen do not deign to call states, were as truly sovereign as are the most highly developed powers of today.

The only satisfactory answer to the question as to the origin of this authority is that it is delegated by God. This is the second principle of democracy. We are told by very high authority that God made man in his own image, male and female made he them, and gave them dominion. (Genesis 1:28.)

"There is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1.) In the light of these facts, how is it possible for any intelligent being to think of nations as existing outside the realm of Christ's government?

It may seem unnecessary to produce additional proof of a proposition already well sustained by argument. But the mass of men have not yet been moved to action in harmony with this proposition.

COLLAPSE OF

They treat it as though no national action is required. Let us then listen to the voice of Scripture. With wonderful uniformity the Word of God represents nations as moral persons, possessing moral character, subject to God's moral government, receiving rewards and penalties according to their works. The quotations here given are only a few selected out of a vast volume of similar utterances. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any nation." (Prov. 14-34.) "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity." (Isa. 1:4.) "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it: if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

they do that which is evil in my sight, that they obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." (Jer. 18:7-10.)

In accordance with the principle underlying these prophetic proclamations, the sentence of judgment goes forth against sinful nations, and their civilizations, which have been built up by centuries of effort, are dissolved into dust and ashes. Isaiah announced the "burden" of Babylon, of Egypt, of Tyre, and of all the nations that opposed the kingdom of God, and their civilizations crumbled because they repented not. The names of modern nations may be written into those ancient prophecies, and unless they submit to the reign of Christ their doom may be read in the dust of buried cities where the wild goats dance and in the stones of ruined palaces which have become the habitation of wolves and jackals. (Isa. 13:21.)

COLLAPSE OF

V

NATIONAL SIN

To persuade the multitudes of right-hearted people that evils of a gigantic nature exist and that these evils imperil any state in which they are permitted to prevail unchecked, is not a difficult task. It is difficult, however, to convince them that there is one specific evil which is the root of all the evils by which the nations of the world are cursed. That fundamental evil is national Godlessness. It is impossible to cure our manifold ills so long as this fundamental, organic, constitutional evil remains.

There is no conscious purpose on the part of the writer to minimize any one of the specific evils which are so widely deplored and for which many are seeking a remedy. Our sole aim is to get before the minds of the people a correct diagnosis of the case, that they may know the real

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

cause of the world's miseries and, knowing this, to know the remedy and how it should be applied.

Let the most prominent and damning of national sins be passed in review, that our contention may be made clear and become firmly established. Of all these national ills, none has received quite as much attention as the liquor traffic and its attendant evils. This traffic has been so frequently arraigned at the bar of public opinion and has been so generally found guilty of all the crimes forbidden by the moral law that it is not necessary to go through the process again. It is now simply awaiting the day of execution when as a legalized business it will pass out of existence. It is the curse that has doomed many a nation in the past. It is one of the sins which God means to destroy by the great war and by the voice of the people exercising their sovereign right with reference to the suppression of such wrongs. But

COLLAPSE OF

this evil is the natural offspring of national Godlessness. How could a Godly nation legalize a traffic that breaks every precept that God has ordained and destroys human souls on which the image of God was portrayed?

Sabbath desecration is a national evil of stupendous proportions and is claiming our attention because of its damaging effects upon public morals and because it imperils the very existence of the nation. While nearly every civilized country and nearly every state in the American Union has its Sabbath law, the most of these laws are woefully defective because of their numerous exceptions to the application of their prohibitions. While works that can be shown to be works of necessity or mercy should be excepted, and while no one should be required by law to perform acts of religious worship, all secular activities that can be arrested during the weekly rest day, even though there may

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

seem to be a diminution of financial returns, should be brought under the operation of the law. Especially should the law forbid on that day the various forms of public amusement which are directly responsible for much of our national irreligion and immorality. More especially still should the national government itself set an example of Sabbath keeping by ceasing all activities on the first day of the week in its various departments except such as are absolutely necessary. The standard of action should be, not public convenience, not the opinions or prejudices of Godless citizens, but the moral law as revealed in nature, history and the written Word. All these sources of knowledge unite in proclaiming the need of a weekly day of rest, and by the almost unanimous consent of Christian people that day, by divine appointment, is the first day of the week. There is a close connection between Sabbath keeping and public morality. It fur-

COLLAPSE OF

nishes the chief opportunity for moral training. Its desecration means moral bankruptcy. Free government cannot be maintained if the people are morally depraved. Nations have perished because they lost respect for the day of sacred rest. Godlessness, however, has been the primary cause.

Deflections from the true standard of family life are among the most disastrous of all the ills that afflict the human race. So long as the relation of the sexes is maintained at a high moral level there is little danger of a nation losing its virility. But if the stream of life is poisoned at its source there is no power that can prevent national decadence until that fountain head is cleansed. Besides some of the common forms of vice which will be suggested to the mind of each one, the most common manifestation of this damning sin is laxity in the legal regulations of the marriage relation. In the last special report on

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

marriage and divorce prepared by authority of the government of the United States it is shown that there is a marked increase in the number of divorces granted from year to year as compared with the population. This increase is exhibited to the eye by a series of maps, and the report adds: "Divorce is thus represented in these maps as if it were a dark cloud gradually gathering over the country." (Part I, p. 16.) One of the lamentable features of the situation is the fact that in the aggregate we have about twenty-five causes for divorce recognized by law, and that even in states where the law is somewhat strict the courts are lax in its interpretation.

One of the most astounding features of our civilization is the existence of a sect calling itself "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," one of whose fundamental beliefs is the divine right of polygamy. This organization, to which the name "Mormon" is generally given,

COLLAPSE OF

claims to be the veritable kingdom of God, and is governed by a priestly hierarchy which claims to rule by divine right. It is even claimed that this hierarchy is destined to supersede all civil governments. While the laws of all the states of the Union forbid polygamy, the practice has not been abandoned by the deluded advocates of this system. To our shame it must be added that in a number of the western states it is connived at by public officials as well as by politicians generally. Courts of law are often subservient to the dictates of this Mormon hierarchy. The extent of the havoc thus wrought upon public morals is truly alarming.

If the history of the nations of the past throws any light upon the destiny of other nations, the conclusion cannot be avoided that destruction awaits any nation that fails to guard the sanctity of the home and the purity of the family relation. The prophets of this sham

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

religion, together with the advocates of a larger liberty in the dissolution of the marriage tie, are conducting the nation along the highway that leads to destruction. One of the alarming conditions resulting from the slaughter of millions of men by the great war is the almost world-wide disregard of the divine law regulating the relation of the sexes. After the Thirty Years War polygamy was legalized by certain European governments to replenish the depopulated countries. A situation even worse than legalized polygamy, if such a situation is possible, is already known to exist under the tacit approval of the German government and with the sanction of many individuals in other countries. For the sake of humanity, if for no other or higher reason, there must be made a vigorous, united, uncompromising protest against all such crimes. Nations have perished because of these damning vices in the past, and there is no way

COLLAPSE OF

for the guilty to escape the righteous judgments of God. Like all other national evils, this evil is the fruit of national Godlessness.

While national sins are many, there is one national sin from which they all spring, and that sin is forgetfulness of God. It is true that almost every nation has a form of Godliness, but the most thorough scrutiny of their organic laws and governmental policies will fail to discover the presence of those principles which have to do with the relation of civil government to God. There is even an implicit denial of that relationship in the common doctrine of political sovereignty and in the manner of its exercise. In their pride and loftiness it is common for nations to ignore all moral restraint, practically repudiate the reign of God in the political realm, and exalt themselves to a place among the gods by the usurpation of divine prerogatives.

The indictment of the prophet Isaiah

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

against Babylon may be brought without any modification against some of the nations of the present day. "Thou saidst in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; and I will sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to Sheol, to the uttermost part of the pit." (Isa. 14:13-15.) Let it not be supposed that these words may be applied to Germany alone.

COLLAPSE OF

VI

CHRIST'S ADMINISTRATION

It is difficult to see how any unbiased mind can deny the main proposition of the preceding discussion, namely, that Jesus Christ is the Ruler of nations. It is equally difficult to see how the implications of this proposition can be denied, namely, that nations are real moral beings, having a character of their own, and that as such they are subjects of Christ's government. But we are now confronted with the problem of Christ's administration of the government of the world. Has he entered upon that administration yet, or is it an event yet future? Two questions here arise: the first relates to the fact of Christ's administration, the second to the manner of it.

There is a class of good people, loyal to their divine King, zealous for his honor, who hold that while Christ is

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

truly the rightful ruler of this world he has not yet begun to reign. Since he is the Prince of Peace they cannot be convinced that he reigns over a world so completely ravaged by war. Not only war but a vast multitude of other evils fill the world with misery and sorrow, and they conclude that the reign of Christ has been indefinitely postponed. But if Christ is not administering the government of the world, who is? Surely it is not left without a supreme ruler. No difficulty is escaped by saying that the Supreme Deity is the administrator. It is no more difficult to explain the existence of evil in the world in harmony with the reign of Christ than it is to explain it in harmony with the reign of God.

A certain class of irreverent skeptics make merry over what they claim to be the failure of the gods to rule the world successfully, and declare that it is time to take it out of their hands and commit

COLLAPSE OF

it to the hands of men. This means that we should banish the idea of a Supreme Ruler together with all religious conceptions from our lives and carry on all human affairs in the light of human wisdom alone. But one of the charges brought against the nations and their rulers in the Second Psalm is that this is the very thing they have been trying to do and that this is the source of all the trouble.

It should be observed that the proofs which establish Christ's right to the dominion of this world also show that he has already entered upon the administration of his kingdom. The tenses of the verbs used to tell us of his exaltation leave no room to doubt this fact. He HATH put all things under him. But these declarations are also accompanied by others equally clear which tell us that all things are not yet subdued under him. This does not mean that nothing is subdued, but only that some things are not,

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

and he must reign till the conquest is complete. (I Cor. 15:25-27.)

In the interest of clear thinking let us attend to certain important distinctions. The term kingdom, as already stated, may denote either a realm or a reign. It is used in both senses in the Scriptures. The realm over which Christ reigns is the universe. "He is Lord of all." This world is a province in his kingdom, but it is a rebellious province. If any object to the word rebellious we may substitute the statement that the world is not in right relation to Christ the reigning king. There are two parts of the kingdom of Christ, one of which is in loyal subjection to him and the other is not.

While the world in general has failed to adjust its relations with the Supreme Ruler in accordance with the principles of his government, some individuals and some institutions are loyal to him in a commendable degree.

On a preceding page two aspects of

COLLAPSE OF

Christ's exercise of authority were briefly mentioned which must now be more fully considered. These may be designated the dispensation of judgment or wrath and the dispensation of grace. A proper regard for this distinction will deliver us from much confusion and error. It is the first of these that gives trouble to certain minds because they have only a partial and therefore an erroneous conception of Christ's authority. Strange though it may seem to be, men hold thoroughly antagonistic views on this matter. Some are wishing for the "day of the Lord" when he will visit the wicked with overwhelming destruction, while others deny that such a day has any place in Christ's programme. There is an apparent discrepancy even in the utterances of Christ himself concerning this matter. At one time he said that "God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him." (John 3:17.) At

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

another he declared, "For judgment came I into the world." (John 9:39.) At one time he said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." (John 12:47.) Again he said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." (John 12:31.) The correct interpretation of these utterances will throw a flood of light on Christ's administration of the divine government of the world. The first of the quotations given above is taken from the account of the interview of Nicodemus with Jesus. Nicodemus may be taken as the type of that class who desire the day of the Lord when he will visit wicked men and nations with overwhelming judgments. Like the great body of Jews of his day, he regarded the Jews as the kingdom of God in a peculiar and even an exclusive sense. He had no doubt about his own place in that kingdom. Like other Jews, he expected a Messiah who would pour out

COLLAPSE OF

judgments upon all other nations and exalt the Jews to a place of supreme power and glory. He wished to know whether Jesus was the long looked-for Messiah and whether he had come on this mission. With this desire uppermost in his mind he sought an interview with Jesus. He began by complimenting Jesus as a great teacher and miracle worker. Jesus ignored the compliment and answered the ruler's question before he asked it. "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except one be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God." By these words he informs this Jew that he is not yet in the kingdom and the only way in is by the new birth. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." By these words he informs him that even the believing Gentile may enter the kingdom by the same door. "God sent not the Son into the world to judge the

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

world, but that the world should be saved through him." By these words he declares that the special and primary mission of Christ is not a mission of judgment, as the Jews expected it to be, but a mission of mercy and salvation; first, a mission of salvation for all individual believers, whether Jew or Gentile (John 3:16); second, a mission of salvation for the world of mankind, for human society with its divine institutions, the family and the state. (John 3:17.)

In perfect harmony with this part of Christ's mission is the other part denoted by the term judgment. How can judgment be dispensed with in a world where both individuals and nations refuse to receive him as their Saviour? Having finished his saving work, therefore, and having commissioned his ambassadors to go and proclaim the message of salvation for men and for the world, his work of judgment upon the world at once began. Hence he could say at the

COLLAPSE OF

close of his public ministry, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Those who find fault with this part of the divine programme should consider how essential it is for the accomplishment of the divine purpose, and how large a place it fills in the divine plan. It is Christ's province to decide judicially all the disputes between nations and to award them their just deserts. "He will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:4.) This text plainly teaches that nations engage in war with one another because of their unrighteousness, and that when they submit to Christ's arbitration of their disputes they will find no more use for implements of war. But the road to

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

peace is a long one and the judgments of Christ are necessary to bring it about. And those judgments must be accompanied by the infliction of the penalty upon the Godless. "The history of the world is the judgment of the world." Christ himself declared that he came, "not to send peace but a sword." (Matthew 10:34.) Certain forms of evil cannot be cast out even by prayer and fasting. Force is necessary.

It is declared concerning this feature of Christ's reign that it compels his enemies to lick the dust. (Psalm 72:9.) Of this king it is written: "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He will judge among the nations, he will fill the places with dead bodies; he will strike through the head in many countries." (Psalm 110:5, 6.) Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream brings out the fact of Christ's exercise of judgment in the destruction of the nations of

COLLAPSE OF

the world. In his dream the king saw a great image with a head of gold, breasts and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay. These different parts and elements represented the different successive world empires and the separate nations into which the last, the Roman empire, was divided. A little stone, representing the kingdom of Jesus Christ, smites the image on its feet and reduces it to powder. (Daniel 2:31-45.) Turning to the New Testament we find that the book of Revelation represents Christ on the throne, administering the divine kingdom, directing in the pouring out of divine wrath upon all associations of men ecclesiastical and political which refuse to submit to his reign.

The gracious aspect of the reign of Christ is that which we most desire and for which we labor and pray. But the two are very closely connected. In truth there is a dispensation of grace in

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

connection with the dispensation of wrath, and though when we pray we may specially desire nothing but the tokens of mercy God may answer by terrible things in righteousness. (Psalm 65:5.) The destruction of Egypt was a dispensation of wrath toward the Egyptians but it was of the nature of grace toward Israel. The destruction of any tyrannical government may be brought about by fearful judgments, but it is a matter of grace to those who are thereby delivered from oppression. Moreover, both individuals and nations may be turned to God by Christ's judicial dispensations. "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9.) Grace reigns in the highest degree, however, wherever the gospel takes hold of human hearts and lives and transforms them; wherever human society is elevated to a higher spiritual level; wherever civil governments are in any degree

COLLAPSE OF

brought into harmony with the will of Christ. Only when men and nations are so far transformed that they will make the laws of heaven the rule of life on earth will this aspect of the reign of Christ be fully inaugurated.

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

VII

HISTORICAL CONFIRMATION

If the positions here maintained are true it is reasonable to expect confirmation of them in the world's history. It is with the utmost confidence that we turn the pages of the history of past ages, for the events there recorded afford unmistakable evidence that nations are subjects of the moral government of the Divine Ruler; that they prosper if they are righteous, that they perish if they refuse allegiance to him. Emphasis must here be laid upon certain facts which often escape the notice of historians. A beginning will be made, however, with one outstanding fact which none can overlook and about which there can be no dispute. That fact is that nations perish. They have their day and cease to be. History consists largely in the account of the rise, development, pros-

COLLAPSE OF

perity, decline and fall of nations. With them have likewise perished civilizations of no mean order. Archæology is unfolding before our astonished eyes the wonderful achievements of nations thousands of years before the birth of Christ. At least four thousand years before Christ came into the world the human family had attained a high degree of civilization. Art and science flourished. Men of letters were no less renowned than men of war.

The problem which now presents itself for solution is, Why do nations perish? It is no answer to say that the weak are overcome and swallowed up by the strong, because the mightiest of the great empires of the past have lost their might and finally have been brought down "to the uttermost parts of the pit." If our problem demanded an answer to the question, Why do weak nations perish? or Why are the weak swallowed up by the strong? no special difficulty would

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

be experienced in stating the answer. But we must go deeper and discover the cause of the decadence of nations the most powerful and the overthrow of civilizations the most advanced in all things material.

There was a time when thinkers of repute held that national life is subject to the same laws that prevail in the vegetable and animal worlds. They begin to be, they grow, they flourish for a season, they decay and die, and all this according to a fixed law of their being. But no thinker of any standing today holds to this theory. It is now well understood that the nation has within itself the fountain of perpetual youth. That fountain is the family. If both fountain and stream are kept pure there is no reason why a nation may not live while the sun and moon endure.

It is a common belief that intelligence is the one infallible safeguard of national

COLLAPSE OF

wellbeing. This conception is wrought out at great length by Buckle in his "History of Civilization." But many of the great nations of the past went down when at the height of their intellectual renown.

Nor can it be maintained that mere material progress, the accumulation of wealth, the equitable distribution of the proceeds of labor, will of themselves safeguard a nation against hostile forces. Neither will battleships, fortifications, artillery and a mighty host of armed men, of themselves give stability and perpetuity. Material things have their proper place in the equipment of nations for their mission, but there is need of a spiritual force as a guarantee that the material prosperity may not become the cause of national downfall.

It has been said that one chief cause of the decay of the Republic of Rome was the decline of the national spirit. Men of wealth ceased to take an inter-

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

est in the affairs of the commonwealth. But what is the national spirit? This question pierces even to the dividing asunder of the very joints and marrow of national life. We must discover what is the chief of all the forces that combine men into nations and that operate to maintain such a union. The consensus of expert opinion is that that force is religion. "Looking simply at the matter of fact, and without any question about its bearing, we find that nations and governments and religions have everywhere a connection not only most intimate, but one which has thus far shown itself indissoluble. This connection is no more, and no less, apparent in the earliest than in the latest periods of history. It is the most prominent historic fact of all time." (Pres. Julius H. Seeley.) "Christianity is essentially a political principle, and a political power. It is constructive of the state, and bears in itself the power of forming the state,

COLLAPSE OF

and of developing it to its full completeness." (Rothe.)

If religion is the chief force in the erection of states, the decay of religion is the chief cause of their downfall. In a general way this sentiment is a part of the political creed of the vast majority of intelligent citizens. It finds expression in many ways. In the Ordinance of Government enacted in 1787 it is stated in these words: "Religion, morality and knowledge, being essential to good government and the happiness of mankind, etc." The National Security League, in answering the question "How shall America prepare for its gigantic task?" says, "First, we must cultivate as never before, our belief in a Divine Providence, which is not our 'unconditional ally,' but which requires us to know right from wrong, good from evil."

Doubtless such expressions will be differently understood and differently viewed by different persons. Some may

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

impatiently reject them as unworthy of serious thought. Some may take alarm, thinking that their acceptance would bring back the days of union of church and state, the Inquisition and the death penalty for heresy. Some will accept them in a broad and general way without thinking them through to discover their depth of meaning. A few may happily grasp their full significance and their absolute necessity for the stability and prosperity of a nation. To turn this small number of the elect into the majority is a task worthy the efforts of the finest talent in the land. There is something here involved that has never yet been seen or attempted by any people.

To unfold this thought that the nation needs religion and the morality that must accompany it, let us do some thinking along historical lines.

It is the testimony of history that national calamities are divine judgments

COLLAPSE OF

for national sins. Most of our great historians unconsciously bear witness to this fact. They tell of the development of nations, their increase in wealth and power, the working of the leaven of political corruption and crime, followed by inevitable destruction. When weakened by internal corruption they become an easy prey to the newer powers that have not lost their virility. Byron in "Childe Harold" gives expression to this law of decay in the following words:

"There is the moral of all human tales;

'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past;

First freedom, and then glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption, barbarism at last."

The name of any nation of the past might be substituted for Nineveh in the solemn announcement of the prophet Nahum: "And Jehovah hath given commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image; I will make

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

thy grave, for thou art vile." As the prophet Isaiah was commissioned to announce "the burden of Moab," "the burden of Damascus," "the burden of Tyre," the burden, in fact, of all the nations that in those days opposed the cause of God; as the prophet Amos was commissioned to proclaim the downfall of all existing nations, not excluding Israel, because of their national sins; so their successors in these last days are commissioned to warn existing nations that unless they repent they shall all likewise perish.

One or two illustrations taken from the great mass furnished by history will establish our contention. The essential facts concerning the city of Carthage and the Carthaginian empire are well known to all students of history. Carthage was undoubtedly the richest city of antiquity. It antedates the city of Rome by a hundred years. It was founded by Phoenicians from Tyre. In

COLLAPSE OF

the course of time the Carthaginians carved out an extensive empire with the sword. The religion of the people was the same as that of Tyre and Sidon. The principal gods were Baal-Moloch, and Tanith or Astarte. The first was the fire god, rejoicing in human sacrifices and in parents' tears. The second required and even consecrated immorality on the part of her worshippers. These were the abominations for which the inhabitants of Canaan were to be cast out, and the sentence of condemnation extended even to Carthage on account of the perpetuation of these evils by the Carthaginians. Sladen says that Carthage should have imposed her culture upon the world, that she should have been the centre of the world's empire, that all literature should have been written in her characters. But she failed because she was not worthy of this honor. Her citizens knew not how to be patriotic. But no people can be patri-

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

otic after they have become morally corrupt, and moral corruption follows close upon the heels of Godlessness. Doubtless there was the spirit of vindictiveness in Cato's "Delenda est Carthago," but after all Carthage was doomed because of sin.

"Delenda est Carthago, let the tear
Still drop, deserted Carthage, on thy bier;
Let mighty nations pause as they survey
The world's great empires crumbled to decay;
And, hushing every rising tone of pride,
Deep in the heart this moral lesson hide,
Which speaks with hollow voice as from the
 dead,
Of beauty faded and of glory fled—
Delenda est Carthago."

One of the questions which engaged the attention of heathens and Christians in the days of the decline of the Roman empire related to the cause of this decline which was apparent to all eyes. The heathen sought to place the blame on Christianity, but the effort failed. Gibbon has sometimes been represented as

COLLAPSE OF

ascribing the fall of Rome to the influence of Christianity, but this is a wholly false representation. He says, "The decline of Rome was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness. Prosperity ripened the principle of decay; the causes of destruction multiplied with the extent of conquest; and as soon as time or accident had removed the artificial supports, the stupendous fabric yielded to the pressure of its own weight. The story of its ruin is simple and obvious; and instead of inquiring why the Roman empire was destroyed, we should rather be surprised that it had subsisted so long." (Ch. XXXVIII.) It is only necessary to add a more specific statement to the effect that the empire was hoary with sin and had to be destroyed to make room for a more Christian civilization.

In his Fast Proclamation, dated March 30, 1863, President Lincoln gives expression to this solemn truth. He declared

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

that "it is proven, by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord," and that "we know that, by his divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world." For this reason he said, "may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God."

In his second inaugural address he declared that there was a close connection between the civil war and the sin of slavery. Then he added, "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this

COLLAPSE OF

mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said: 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.' "

History bears witness to the fact that the root of all national sin is forgetfulness of God. This thought should be made very plain because it is the very heart and core of this entire discussion. It is hard to convince the masses that it is so. They do not readily admit that God has been forgotten, or that such forgetfulness can bring such dread calamities.

Paul was stating a great historical fact when he declared concerning the race of men that when they knew God they

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks, but became vain in their reasonings; that they refused to have God in their knowledge; that because they thus dismissed God from their minds and lives, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind to do those things which are not fitting. The result is that they have exchanged the truth of God for a lie, that they are given over to passions of dishonor, and that human society is corrupted at its fountain head, the family. (Rom. 1:28-32.)

David was stating a profound historical truth when he said that the wicked shall be turned back into Sheol, and all the nations that forget God. (Ps. 9:17.)

President Lincoln was announcing a most deplorable fact when he said of the United States in the third year of the civil war, "We have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multi-

COLLAPSE OF

plied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own."

There are various ways and degrees of forgetfulness of God. Nations may forget God and still keep up the outward forms of religion. They may forget God while they are worshipping at the shrines of many gods. They may forget God in national affairs while religious activities in church life are at flood tide.

In what manner and degree have the nations of the world forgotten God today? That they have forgotten him follows from the existence of immorality and vice. The great war is God's voice thundering forth his judgments upon the world for its Godlessness. It would be altogether aside from our purpose to charge the sin of Godlessness upon the church except in the one particular to be presently mentioned. Never in all the

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

Christian centuries has there been such mighty effort on the part of the church to enroll recruits in the army of the Lord. But God is forgotten in social, in commercial and in political life. Not of course by everybody, but these departments of life are certainly not Christianized. Our chief concern just now is with the sphere of politics. God is forgotten as the God of nations. There is not a nation on this planet that has correctly adjusted itself to the great principles of political science announced in the Word of God. It is forgotten that nations derive their existence from God; that their sovereign authority is delegated by Him; that Jesus Christ is appointed as the administrator of the divine government over the nations; that the moral law as revealed by God is binding upon the nations in their transactions with one another as well as in their management of internal affairs. This is the solemn indictment that must

COLLAPSE OF

be brought against every nation on God's footstool, and the great war is God's judgment for national Godlessness.

The indictment to be brought against the church is not that it has failed to preach righteousness to the individual, but that it has failed to preach national righteousness. One half of the gospel message has not been proclaimed by the great body of ministers of the Word. They are Christ's Ambassadors to this world, and yet they fail to announce the fact that Christ is the Ruler of the nations of this world. "O that they were wise, that they understood this."

History furnishes manifold evidence of the reign of Christ over the nations. It cannot be shown that history alone could have revealed the truth that Christ is this world's King. But since it has been revealed by all the prophets and apostles who have spoken since the world began, history furnishes ample confirmation of the fact. This is the key that

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

unlocks all historical mysteries. There is no real Philosophy of History apart from this truth. Jesus declared that in these last days there would be wars and rumors of wars, that nation would rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and so it has come to pass. Only one directly connected with the government of the world could have made such a prediction without expressing the least doubt of its fulfillment. Jesus said "All authority hath been given unto me both in heaven and on earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations." Only as the Ruler of nations could he have thus spoken, and only by the direct exercise of the authority here claimed could he have opened the doors of all nations for the admission of his ambassadors. Near the close of his public ministry Jesus declared that the judgment of the world was about to begin, and it began by the fall of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews for their rejection of him, the fall

COLLAPSE OF

of the Roman empire, followed by the dread calamities that have befallen most of the nations of the world. It was predicted by Daniel that the kingdom of Christ would smite the great world empires and reduce them to powder, and the smiting began and earth resounded with the crash of falling thrones. It was foretold by Ezekiel that God would overturn, overturn, overturn, till the Messiah should come, and that to him the exercise of rulership would be given. This overturning has long been in progress. Christ declared that he came, not to send peace on earth, but a sword. And the sword has been unsheathed in every generation since those words were spoken. It is true that he also declared that he that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword, and many have mistakenly supposed that in these words he condemned all war. What he condemned was wars of aggression whereby the territory of one nation is extended by robbing another.

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

He placed the seal of his approbation upon such wars as have for their object the restraining of the power and the thwarting of the purpose of such nations. How else could they perish by the sword? It was predicted that "He will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." This is the final and glorious outcome of his reign, and the pathway leads across many a battlefield. The lesson of history is confirmatory of the truth that Jesus reigns. In the sublime words of Jean Paul Richter, "This Jesus, the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, has, with that pierced hand of his, lifted the gates of empire off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still rules the ages."

COLLAPSE OF

VIII

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY COLLAPSE

Of all the world tragedies of which history furnishes a record, there is none that equals the tragedy of this first quarter of the twentieth century. It seems that all civilizations in all lands have suddenly collapsed. The earth trembles with the tread of millions of armed hosts rushing to the conflict. The heavens are rent with the thunderbolts of war and the air reverberates with the hurtling hail of shot and shell. The earth is no longer able to cover the multitudes of the slain. All the atrocities of all the past ages of barbarous warfare have been reproduced with all the added horrors that an age of science can invent. The resources of language utterly fail to give an adequate description of the diabolical deeds done by a nation which boasts of its superior Kultur.

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

What is the cause of this modern collapse? This problem has received world-wide consideration, but the last word has not yet been spoken. It must be viewed from a number of different angles. On certain fundamental points there can no longer be a difference of opinion. There is no room to doubt the ambitious purpose of Germany to rule the world. This vainglorious aim is vigorously expressed by the Kaiser himself in these words: "From my childhood I have been under the influence of five men — Alexander, Julius Caesar, Theodoric II, Frederick the Great and Napoleon. Each of these men dreamed a dream of a world empire; they failed. I am dreaming a dream of a German world empire, and my mailed fist shall succeed." To defeat the mad purpose of Germany the allied nations and the United States entered the war. The Kaiser's dream was inspired by the

COLLAPSE OF

spirits from the pit and his programme must be defeated.

But even if the purpose of Germany should, through the adversities incident to war, be greatly modified, that purpose still transcends the legitimate rights of any state, and the righteousness of the cause of the Entente Allies shines forth as clear as the noonday. The world is weary of the reign of autocrats who claim to rule by divine right. There is a rising tide of democratic feeling throughout the civilized world and all thrones are tottering and some have already fallen. But the world is not safe for democracy until the divine right of the people to rule is established. This can be done only by the crushing of the militaristic, autocratic powers of the world. This present collapse is the collapse, not of things of permanent value, but of those that are doomed to perish because they are perishable. It is the voice of God who says, "Yet once more

- CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain." (Heb. 12:26, 27.)

This exceedingly suggestive quotation invites us to view the present collapse from the divine or religious standpoint. It is not an uncommon thing to hear the assertion that God is not in this war. A certain type of mind utterly fails to comprehend how a beneficent, all-powerful God can be in any way connected with an event so horrible. But God was never in anything more completely, manifestly and righteously than he is in this war. The truth is that this war is God's final and supreme argument that he rules in the affairs of men and demands recognition. It is his voice rebuking the nations for their ungodliness. Nothing

COLLAPSE OF

but war will cure some of the evils with which nations are cursed.

Three evil spirits control German thought and inspire the ambitions of her rulers. The first is the spirit of rationalism which teaches the all-sufficiency of the human intellect, involves the rejection of the supernatural, and inspires the dream of the super-man. The second is the spirit of a Godless philosophy which explains the whole problem of being without a Creator or Divine Ruler. The third is the spirit of a non-moral system of civil government which finds no place for the moral law in the political realm and makes the state a law unto itself. It rests on the heresy that might makes right and teaches that weakness is the state's one unpardonable sin. It removes all the "nots" from the Decalogue, regards war as an absolute necessity, and declares the right of the state to break its treaties at pleasure. It justifies all the atrocities committed by Germany

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

since the beginning of the Great War on old men, women and children.

God is in the war, showing by the collapse of such a civilization the awful consequences of constructing society on such principles. All the nations need the same lesson because they have all erred in a measure. We are appalled by the dread calamities that have befallen the world, but they are only the ripened fruit of the tree of evil, the bitter stream from the poisoned fountain, the result of the collapse of the house built upon the sand.

How shall the challenge of the present crisis be met? To whom is it addressed? Not primarily to the Church but to the state. Evidently therefore it cannot be met by increased activity in evangelistic and missionary work for the purpose of getting souls safely out of this world into heaven, important as that may be. The challenge must be met primarily by those to whom it is addressed, by rulers

COLLAPSE OF

and peoples squaring themselves with the eternal principles of righteous civil government. It must be met also by religious ambassadors as God's prophets to the world proclaiming this neglected half of the gospel message.

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

IX

“NOW THEREFORE BE WISE, O YE
KINGS”

It seems evident that if the nations are to enjoy permanent peace and prosperity something must be done that has never been done before. The true remedy for the world's ills has never yet been tried. This statement may need some qualification or explanation. Doubtless there is general agreement among Christian people that religion is the great remedy for war and all other troubles by which the world is vexed. Many will say that while we have tried religion we have not tried it fully and what we need is more religion. A similar idea is expressed by others when they declare that the nations need God, because it is declared in Scripture that the nation is blessed whose God is the Lord. What we need therefore is to get God on our side and all will be well.

COLLAPSE OF

Something of the same thought is expressed by others who declare that Jesus is the great need of the world and that we must evangelize the masses not only for their individual salvation but also for the welfare of the nation.

There is a profound truth expressed in each of these statements, and yet not one of them tells us specifically what is needed to put the nations in right relation with God. They are all too general. They lay no obligation on the nation itself as a moral being owing allegiance to Jesus Christ. When it is said that the nation needs religion, faith in Providence, God on our side, Jesus Christ as the Saviour of society, about all that is meant is that it is beneficial to the nation if the masses of the people are personally pious. Just as it is a good thing for the individual to live in a religious atmosphere, so it is a good thing for the nation to be enswathed in a religious atmosphere. This is certainly true, but what

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

must the nation do to get the full benefit of religion; the benefit of having God as the God of the nation and Christ as its Saviour? It is a fine thing for the individual to live in a religious environment, but he himself must do something positive if he is to be saved. It is a splendid thing for a nation to be enswathed in a religious atmosphere, to have plenty of religious sentiment all around its institutions, but the nation itself must do something positive if it is to be saved. What is the obligation of a nation toward God?

There is general agreement among the right in heart that President Wilson uttered a most noble sentiment when he declared that the world must be made safe for democracy. It is generally agreed also among the same class of people that democracy, or the sovereign right of the people to determine their own form of government, is a right that ought to be guaranteed in the organic

COLLAPSE OF

law of each and every nation. If any nation wishes a kaiser, or a king, rather than a president, let the people so decide. The title of the chief magistrate will not affect the fundamental principle of democracy. But it is clear that this principle of democracy must not exist as a mere sentiment. It must find definite expression in some authoritative document, just as it does in the constitution of the United States. But it seems never to occur to the minds of many people that there is a divine as well as a human side to democracy. It means that supreme political authority is vested in the people. That is the human side. It means also that it is vested in the people by Almighty God, and that the people thus clothed with authority are placed under the rulership of Jesus Christ. This is the divine side. This principle must find expression if democracy is to be made safe for the world. As we cannot afford to let the human side of democracy exist

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

as a mere sentiment, but must give it expression in fundamental law, even so we cannot afford to permit the divine side to exist as mere sentiment, but must give it expression in the same fundamental law, and in the same clause of that law. If this is not done our system of democracy is imperfect, in fact, is seriously, even fatally, defective. This is our interpretation of the command to be wise and kiss the Son. This is the way to escape that moral degeneracy which has wrought the ruin of the great nations of the past. This is the remedy for the defects of the nations that are now brought to the verge of ruin by the great war. This is the way to appease the wrath of the Supreme Ruler, for that wrath has already been kindled. This step is necessary if democracy is to be made safe for the world.

COLLAPSE OF

X

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Of the things here written this is the sum.

1. Almighty God has given nations their being, has clothed them with authority and has placed them under the rulership of Jesus Christ who holds them amenable to the moral law.

2. Nations are moral beings, because they have a moral character of their own and are rewarded and punished accordingly.

3. Since nations are clothed with sovereign authority which involves the right to wield dominion over both property and life, they cannot escape the judgments of God if they abuse their power.

4. Thus far in the world's history nations have failed to adjust themselves to these fundamental facts, and national immorality follows fast upon national

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

irreligion or the corruption of national religion.

5. National obligations cannot be met by the mere submission of individuals to the Supreme Ruler.

6. National welfare depends upon national acceptance of the fundamental, religious principles of political philosophy.

7. Any system of democracy which ignores God, Christ and the moral law is fundamentally and fatally defective, and must either be reformed or perish.

8. The organic law of every nation should embody, in the same clause which declares the political sovereignty of the people, an acknowledgment of God as the source of their authority to establish a government, of the Lord Jesus Christ as the administrator of the divine government of the nations, and of the divine will as supreme law in national affairs.

9. History furnishes ample confirmation of all these affirmations.

COLLAPSE OF

XI

DIFFICULTIES

There are certain difficulties to be reckoned with by our Christian population in seeking to bring the nation to the acceptance of the principles here enunciated. They may be classified as follows:

1. Failure of the multitude to attach due importance to these principles. It is very easy for people to believe that guns and battleships, and shells and armies and navies constitute the chief reliance of a nation and very hard for them to believe that the attitude toward God makes any difference.

2. Prevalence of the idea that all religion is personal and that the state has nothing to do with it but let it alone. It seems hard for many to understand that there is such a thing as national religion.

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

3. Fear of invading the rights of non-Christians. It is held that this land is the refuge for the oppressed of all nations, and that the government therefore must assume a neutral position on religious matters. The following distinctions should make this matter clear. (1) Every individual has his own individual religious rights which the state may not deny or invade. (2) The state as a moral being has its religious rights which the individual may not deny or annul.

4. The size of the task here contemplated. To awake an entire nation of more than a hundred million people to a realization of the claims of Jesus Christ is a hard task. But it must be done or we will perish.

5. The general tendency to devote all reform energy to what are termed practical reforms rather than to reforms that deal with fundamentals. It would be a great mistake to undervalue practical reforms. But to undervalue reforms that

COLLAPSE OF

have to do with fundamentals is a mistake equally great. We believe that all needed reforms of a practical nature should be pushed with energy. But this should be done in a way that will show the need of making a radical change in the formal statement of our democratic system. The abolition of the liquor traffic, the reformation of our marriage and divorce laws, the movement for the preservation of our Rest Day, and all similar efforts to lift our national life to a higher level—should be advocated on the basis of the Christian principles of civil government. The war to make the world safe for democracy should be prosecuted with the utmost vigor until the whole system of autocracy is shot through and through and so completely riddled that it can never be made to do service again. But this should be done in the name of a democracy that can claim a divine right to be and to do this valiant work for the

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

freedom of humanity and for the glory of God.

6. The belief that since church and state are completely separated in the United States our government is not founded on any religious basis; and that because this country is an asylum for the oppressed of all nations it would be a violation of our fundamental idea to incorporate any religious principle in the national constitution. In reply it must be said that on the face of it this contention seems to be true. There is no clearly stated religious principle in the constitution. But that is the very charge we bring against it and the reason why it should be amended. Men have no right to devise a new system of governmental authority in conflict with the system revealed by God. Godlessness on the part of a nation is the beginning of national decadence. But we have the testimony of Justice Story and others that the founders of this republic had

COLLAPSE OF

no thought of making it Godless. Moreover, this country can be a safe asylum for the oppressed only when it finds protection under the King of kings. Why should the nation be placed in jeopardy by yielding to the secular pleas of Christless aliens?

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

XII

CONCLUDING APPEAL

The foregoing discussion aims primarily to present the obligations resting upon the state as a moral being, the certainty of national ruin if those obligations are ignored, and the assurance of national tranquility, prosperity and perpetuity if they receive due consideration. The effort has been made to show that these national obligations cannot be discharged by individuals acting as individuals in the individual sphere of life. But the discussion must not be brought to a close without a presentation of the obligations resting upon individual citizens. The argument which proves the existence of a weighty national obligation does not establish the non-existence of individual obligation. On the contrary, our obligation as citizens is made all the more clear and emphatic.

COLLAPSE OF

Lines of political activity are hereby indicated which have not been hitherto perceived by the multitudes, and perhaps but dimly seen by a chosen few.

1. There is an obligation resting upon each individual to regulate all political action by the principles here set forth. This is so evident that it scarcely needs proof. But what a revolution in political life would be effected if this were done.

2. Citizens should employ their talents in the inculcation of these principles. This should be done as an act of patriotism. How can one who loves his country keep silent when national ruin threatens because of failure to conform to the principles of national righteousness? Ministers of the gospel especially should know themselves to be God's prophets bearing a message both to individuals and nations and should lift up their voice like a trumpet to point out the obligation resting upon them and the sin and

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

danger of neglecting God's call. Ambassadors of the kingdom of heaven to the kingdoms of the world have neglected one-half of their message and as a result the world is cursed with Godlessness, overwhelmed with the dread calamities of war, and plunged into the abyss of world-wide national despair. We have a message from God to the nations. Let us not fail to deliver it in this day of national peril, lamentation and woe.

3. There should be a combination of citizens in a movement to secure the amendment of the constitution of the United States whereby the principles here maintained shall be incorporated in that document. There should be similar movements in all other nations. There are multitudinous organizations for the purpose of securing almost every conceivable social and political reform. In so far as these organizations aim at real practical reforms, are organized on a proper basis. and pursue right methods,

COLLAPSE OF

they are to be commended. But most of them fail to grasp the great fundamental principles on which all genuine and lasting reform must rest. There is one organization, however, which aims especially to secure the very ends here proposed. The National Reform Association came into existence in the darkest days of our civil war. It grew out of the conviction that our nation was under the scourge of God because our national religious obligation had been neglected. For more than half a century it has been proclaiming the principles here set forth and the obligation resulting therefrom. Since the outbreak of the great world-war it has been urging these principles upon our nation with quickened energy, and, in so far as opportunity has been found, leaders of thought in other nations have been addressed upon these vital issues. It is confidently believed that here is the one substantial basis on which all practical reforms must rest. This is the

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

touchstone which determines the validity of all such reforms. It furnishes the solution of the labor problem and all the kindred problems by which the nations are vexed and perplexed. It is the only basis on which international problems can be settled and world-wide, permanent peace secured. Let all the people who love righteousness and peace unite in this effort in behalf [of national reformation.

4. None should be deterred from participating in such an effort by the specious plea that unbelievers in Christianity would be wronged by a distinctively Christian acknowledgment in the national constitution. No one is wronged until his rights are infringed upon. No one can claim the right to perpetuate a defective constitution just because it is in harmony with his distorted views. If Christianity is true the proposed Christian amendment is true. Unbelievers have no rights which

COLLAPSE OF

override the rights of a Christian people to frame their government in harmony with their beliefs. In 1872 at a meeting in Cincinnati to advocate the proposed Christian amendment, Mr. F. E. Abbott, then one of the leading skeptics of our country, asked and obtained permission to present objections to the movement. He began by saying, "I respect this movement very sincerely. It seems to me to have the logic of Christianity behind it, and if I were a Christian, if I believed in Christianity, I do not see how I could help taking my stand at your side." If an avowed infidel is able to see that the logic of Christianity leads to the conclusions presented in this discussion, surely Christians should have a vision no less clear. And since national weal or woe is determined by the national attitude toward the principles and obligations here presented, and since the attitude of the nation is determined by the attitude of individual citizens, nothing

CHRISTLESS CIVILIZATIONS

remains to be added to the argument. If the nation is to be secured against the perils that threaten its ruin it must avow the principles of national righteousness and conform its conduct to those principles. If this is to be done there must be concerted, aggressive, persistent activity on the part of the people.

“Shall an ultimate nation, God’s own child,
Arise and rule, nor ever conquered be;
Untouched of time, because, all undefiled,
She makes His ways her ways eternally?”