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Why Not 'Russellism'?

alias 'MILLENNIAL DAWNISM'

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Why Not 'Russellism'?

Alias 'Millennial Dawnism'

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I

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

IT will be news to most people, whether believers or unbelievers, that the year 1872 was exactly the six thousandth year since Adam and Eve were suddenly created and placed in the Garden of Eden; that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ definitely happened in 1874; that in 1878 'the dead in Christ' rose 'first'; that all the prophets, apostles, saints, mentioned in the Bible, with all the faithful saints 'down to our own day,' were raised up, and are now 'possessed of the glorious spiritual bodies promised them'; that in the same year all the divine 'disfavour' of the Jews ended; and there began a period of 'favour' which culminated in 1914. That, further, in 1878—'the spring of that year marks the date when nominal church systems'—i.e. the ordinary Christian churches of to-day—'were spewed out,' so that 'from that time they are not the mouthpiece of God, nor in any degree recognized by Him.' That, further, in October, 1881, the 'special favour to Gentiles to become joint heirs with Christ and partakers of the divine nature' closed; that 'Babylon,' i.e. ordinary Christianity, fell; the days of vengeance 'arrived—a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.' Furthermore, that between 1910 and 1912 the 'great time of trouble began,' culminating with the end of the 'Times of the Gentiles' in October, 1914. Yet

more; that in 1914 the Jews 'were received into full divine favour,' whilst 'Earth's great Jubilee,' which began in 1878, ended with the 'overthrow of Gentile power'; the 'kingdoms of this world' came to a 'final end, and the Kingdom of God was fully established'; 'earth's present rulership' was 'completely overthrown'; 'the Gentile kingdoms' were 'ground to powder, and utterly removed, no place being found for them,' whilst 'Christ's Kingdom was fully established.'

In a word, 1914 ushered in the Millennium, and all the kingdoms of the world became the kingdoms of the returned invisible Christ. That year was 'the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect men'; so that the kingdom of God obtained 'full universal control, and was set up on the ruins of present institutions.' Also, before the end of that year, 'the last members of the divinely recognized Church of Christ, the Royal Priesthood, were glorified with the Head; whilst all the dead out of Christ began to be recreated, with a view to a second probation on earth. Meanwhile, the Jews were restored to their own land, and Jerusalem became the capital of the world, so that Abraham and the patriarchs, being recreated from the dead as visible glorified men—indeed, 'princes in the earth'—began their work as 'intermediaries between the world and the invisible Church, the New Creation.'[1]

[1] The repetition of inverted commas, or paragraphs spaced off, may prove tedious to the reader; but as limitation of space forbid the giving exactly every reference to pages from the six books, and yet, in face of such confident avowals, it is necessary to be exact, either of these signs in the following pages will mean that every such phrase or sentence is taken verbatim from the authoritative issues mentioned in the next section.

But if most of us have not been aware of these amazing happenings, how can we know that they have transpired? Or how can we be called upon to believe such marvels? Because we

> must bear in mind that all these things have been hidden by the Lord, in such a manner that they could not be understood or appreciated, until the due time had come; and then only by His earnest faithful children who esteem truth as more precious than rubies, and who are willing to seek it as men search for silver.

So that since 1878, when all the churches were 'spewed out,' the only saints who have thus sought for the truth and found it, have been the followers of the author of these announcements, an American known as 'Pastor Russell,' whose discoveries are summed up under the general name of 'Millennial Dawn.' But how does he know all this? Because 'the Lord more than two thousand years ago gave, through the Prophet Daniel, a clear description of the times in which we are now living.' Since, however, the testimony of Daniel and the rest of the Bible was not sufficient, a further revelation has been vouchsafed to Pastor Russell and his friends, in the construction of 'the Great Pyramid of Gizeh,' not far from Cairo. Concerning this we learn that—

> The fact that the Pyramid's secrets were kept until the close of six thousand years of the world's history, but that now it begins to give its testimony as the Millennial Dawn draws on, is in perfect harmony with the written Word, whose abundant testimony relative to the glorious plan of God has likewise been kept secret from the foundation of the world, and only now is beginning to shine forth in its completeness and glory.

But what if this alleged double testimony fails to impress, let alone convince, us? Only this, that we are among the 'many who profess to be watching, but are reading the prophecies through the coloured glasses of old and long-cherished errors, and with their eyes miserably crossed by prejudice.' But what if, undeterred by such an alarming diagnosis, we proceed to show how this whole scheme is a delusion, for all its overwhelming detail of confident quotations from the Bible and exact measurements in the Pyramid? Then, indeed, it will be on our part a display only of 'bubbles of self-complacency, pride, sarcasm, and folly, set afloat by those who think themselves to be somebody, and discredit the inspired revelation and those who stick closely to the Book.'

Alas, that is not all. Others also will undoubtedly exclaim—'What, controversy again—and between professing Christians? Why can we not let each other alone? If certain folk bearing the Christian name do claim to be special Bible students, and hold peculiar views, what does it matter so long as they live decent lives and give proofs of their sincerity? Why can you not let things go, and have an end of controversy, so as to give the world the comfort of a real Gospel?' One knows well that such questions will be asked, and that it will in many cases be useless to answer them. None the less, so long as Christianity is worth a moment's regard, it will be best to be in the Apostolic succession and heed the word addressed to the Philippians—'Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true—these keep well in mind.' So it must suffice here to reply that the Christian name is a mere matter

of convention in our English and American midst; that sincerity is no guarantee for truth; that a claim is nothing unless it will bear investigation; that so far from its being unchristian or unworthy to undertake such investigation, the New Testament abounds in instances of both exhortations and actions to that effect. Paul, we know, went so far as to say to the Galatian Christians:—

> There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any other Gospel than we preached unto you, let him be anathema.

And even John, the Apostle of love, wrote:—

> Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world. . . . Whosoever falls away and does not remain in the teaching of Christ, has not God. If any one comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, nor welcome him.[1]

Such exhortations are entirely in harmony with the whole attitude of the New Testament. The notion which is not seldom met with, that 'controversy' is always unspiritual and harmful, finds there no support whatever. At least half of the Gospels and Epistles is controversial; that is to say, it is concerned with maintaining truth against untruth. To do that, therefore, is quite as real and necessary a part of Christian faith and duty as the preaching of comforting sermons, or 'proclaiming the Gospel' upon the basis of wholesale unchallenged assumptions.

[1] 1 John iv. 1; 2 John 9, 10.

But even apart from general Christian principles, when a company of avowed Christian believers make it a part of their special creed, in our modern midst, to declare that all Christendom is in error; and that half a century ago God ceased to recognize any of the ordinary Christian churches 'in any degree'; and when it is found that the advocates of this conceit and falsity are going through the country and by various plausible devices are drawing after them no small number of followers, besides troubling very many more, then, if Aposto ic teaching and example count for anything at all, it becomes the duty of some one, whether he be thanked or scorned for his pains, to endeavour to save Christian faith from becoming a disappointment to those who cherish it, and a derision to those who turn away from it. For such reasons the following brief but careful and sufficient examination of Russellism, otherwise known as 'Millennial Dawnism,' is thus issued.

II

FACTS

It may be said without fear of exaggeration, that never before in Christian history has the word written of old to Timothy been so conspicuously fulfilled as in our modern midst :—

> The time will come when men will not endure healthy teaching, but with itching ears will heap up for themselves teachers after their own fads; they will give up listening to the truth, and will be swept away after myths.[1]

One has but to notice the number of announcements of religious services in the Saturday papers, alike in London and the provinces, to see how many and various are the tastes or convictions of religious people in these days. The list is, indeed, bewildering. To say nothing about foreign faiths which have their representatives in this country, Christianity is represented by Romanists, Anglicans, Free Churches —i.e. Wesleyan Methodists, Primitive Methodists, United Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Unitarians, Quakers, Plymouth Brethren, Christadelphians, Brethren of Christ, Swedenborgians, Spiritists, and others. From the East, we have the strange medley which calls itself ' esoteric Buddhism,' but is generally known as ' Theosophy.' Whilst from the West, Mormon missionaries have endeavoured to propagate, even in this country, something far worse than the Shakerism which preceded it. The two latest vagaries consist of large numbers of devoted followers of an ambitious woman and a

[1] Tim.

'pushing' man. The former call themselves 'Christian Scientists,' though their principles are demonstrably neither Christian nor scientific. The only true appellation for their creed is 'Eddyism,' seeing that it is neither more nor less, from beginning to end, than the religious imaginings of Mrs. Eddy. In like manner, 'Millennial Dawnism,' the latest American contribution to religion, ought certainly to be known as 'Russellism'; for it also is nothing else than the theological fancies of one 'Pastor Russell,' who claims to be the prophet of the age, and to supersede all other forms of Christian faith by his wonderful 'Plan of the ages,' based upon his interpretation of the Bible and the Great Pyramid.

It was first made known in this country by means of profuse and costly advertising in leading newspapers, which is still continued. Every one knows that in such journals large space as an advertisement for long sermons must represent great expense. Many, indeed, were driven to wonder what man or what Church could afford, to such an extent and for so long, to make known in such a way the peculiar doctrines which characterized these productions. 'Pastor Russell' was unknown in our midst; nor was it easy to find out much about him and his work in America. Soon after, however, further information was forthcoming, in the shape of gratuitous lectures given in the largest halls in all the best known cities and towns, under the title of the 'Photo-Drama of Creation,' illustrated with lantern slides and some moving pictures, and accompanied by gramophone descriptions. These latter, however, amounted to little more than an ordinary Sunday-school lesson programme, except for the introduction,

wherever feasible, of the peculiar tenets of Russellism. Large audiences naturally gathered to see pictures on religious themes without entrance fee or collection. What impression was made, it is difficult to estimate.

But the chief agent in the propagandism of 'Millennial Dawnism' has been, as one might expect, the press. 'The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society,' of Brooklyn, New York, and Eversholt Street, London, has issued numberless periodicals and booklets, including, it is said, five millions of tracts each month—more especially *The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, a semi-monthly, and *The People's Pulpit*, published both in Brooklyn and London. These are issued, for the most part, without any date attached, as is also *The Bible Student's Monthly*. They represent what is called 'The International Bible Students' Association,' which is connected with 'The People's Pulpit Association' and 'The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.' The following note is appended :—

> Brother Charles Taze Russell is President of all three of these organizations. Newspapers and the public often refer to him by the title Rev., Mr., and Dr., but he prefers to be known as 'Brother' or 'Pastor,' because these are Bible terms.

To him personally we will presently turn. Here it is most to the point that we should make special reference to the standard work of Russellism, from which all the references in the present scrutiny are taken. It consists of six good-sized volumes, comprising altogether more than three thousand pages, of well-printed matter, neatly bound in

brown cloth, and entitled variously:—(1) *The Divine Plan of the Ages*; (2) *The Time is at Hand*; (3) *Thy Kingdom Come*; (4) *The Day of Vengeance*; (5) *The At-one-ment between God and Man*; (6) *The New Creation.* They are all said to be 'Studies in the Scriptures—a helping hand for Bible students.' The circulation of these volumes, whether by sale or gratuitously, has been very large, if the appended figures may be trusted. On the opening page, indeed, of the first volume appears the statement '3,920,000 Edition.' What is meant is not clear. One can but suppose it to be that this edition completes the issue of that number of copies. All these volumes are translated into some other languages; of the first it is said translations are made into six other tongues.

Along with these are published also many volumes of sermons preached either by Pastor Russell himself at Brooklyn, or by some of his associates in the London Tabernacle. The notice accompanying the latter is as here given.

PEOPLE'S PULPIT

International Bible Students' Association.

LONDON TABERNACLE,
CRAVEN TERRACE, LANCASTER GATE, W.
Monthly 1s. per year. Sample Free.
Divine Worship every Sunday.
London Tabernacle.
11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 6.30 p.m.
Seats Free. No Collection. You are invited.

and the following invitation accompanies the printed issue:—

> In the midst of all the confusing voices of this evil day, the Lord's sheep will hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, and, following him, will not be left in the outer darkness of doubt and unbelief, but will be guided into all the truth now due to the household of faith. . . . Write to us at once if you feel a hunger and thirst for the bread of life and the living water; for Luke xii. 37 is now being fulfilled. We send sample tracts and papers free to applicants.

In all the six volumes referred to—more than three thousand pages for *7s. 6d.*—the same Preface occurs. It is to the effect that 'a great tidal wave of unbelief is sweeping over Christendom' through modern views of the Bible. In one issue the Higher Criticism is represented as the devil sitting on a chair, with a long tail, instructing a student from one of the colleges. Whence—'Our society, realizing the need, is seeking to do all in its power to stem the tide and lift up the Lord's standard for the people.' Like Mormonism and Eddyism, therefore, Russellism declares itself to be not an enemy to Christianity, but a friend. It is, as usual, the discovery of the only real and final Christianity.

It would be strange if this latest religious propaganda had not met with some effective opposition in the land of its birth. It has, indeed, been there vigorously dealt with. But, unfortunately, average American theology, with some few worthy exceptions, is definitely behind what the most careful and reverent modern thought accepts as true. So that the booklets which have been issued, like those of Messrs. Cook, Haldeman, Ross, Stephen, and others, though forceful and in some respects impressive, do not meet the situation. In fact, for the most part, they leave wholly untouched the main

fallacy of Russellism which lies at at the root of all else.

The greatest question of all for modern Christianity is the treatment of the Bible. It is here that the noxious growth of Millennial Dawnism makes its maybe well-meant but deadly blunder. From this all else flows, and the chief difficulty in dealing with its mischievous doctrines and misleading attitude is that vast numbers of those who, both in this country and across the Atlantic, are associated with Evangelical Churches, are more or less disposed to make the same mistake, and to anathematize rather than thank any man who endeavours to show them the truth. That difficulty, however, must not deter us from our task, but must be met as frankly as sympathetically.

III

AS TO THE FOUNDER

The question 'Who is this Pastor Russell?' cannot but arise, and must be answered with equal truth and charity. The American replies to his publications, above mentioned, certainly do not lack force. Dr. Haldeman declares that this new doctrine

> from beginning to end is one of the most terrific religious perils that ever came forth in the name of Christ, or sought to authorize itself with a 'Thus saith the Lord.' It is the peril of an audacious counterfeit and a concealed poison. It is the counterfeit of perverted truth and downright falsehood. It is poison of a subtilly distilled blasphemy.

But in these days strong invectives do not count for much. Something very definite must be known, both about the man who founded this vast movement and about what he actually teaches, to warrant such a philippic as the above.

First of all, then, about 'Pastor Russell' himself.

The Rev. J. J. Ross, of Hamilton, Ontario, was so moved with indignation at the spread of Russellism that he published in 1912 a leaflet against the whole procedure. For this, Pastor Russell brought an action against him in the Canadian Court of Law,[1] but the case was thrown out of court on the

[1] Full details of this action, together with the leaflet in question, in a small booklet entitled *Some Facts and More Facts about the Self-styled Pastor Charles T. Russell*, may be obtained from C. C. Cook, 150 Nassau Street, New York; also all the other booklets here mentioned and other publications bearing on this subject.

evidence furnished by Russell himself. In his published statement Mr. Ross has set forth the whole case, and completely justified his action. From him, therefore, we may safely take the following :—

> Though the name of Russell is quite familiar, very little is known about the man himself. Nothing is known of his parentage, nor of his early boyhood. We first hear of him selling shirts in Alleghany, Pa., having inherited this business from his father. He lectured on religious subjects from time to time, in various halls and churches, becoming known as 'the crank preacher.' He got a considerable following of the common people, and sold out the five men's furnishing stores which he owned, thenceforth devoting all his time to teaching and preaching his peculiar religious doctrines, and giving out that he himself was some great one.

We learn, further, that he received no college training, has no acquaintance with the original languages of Scripture,[1] and has no special knowledge of history or philosophy. He was never ordained to any church, in any way beyond his own adoption of the title 'Pastor.'

In regard to his domestic life, seeing that we have here no desire to dwell upon that, and yet are bound to tell the truth, it shall suffice to quote again from the pamphlet by Mr. Ross, seeing that it has been legally endorsed.

> Russell's domestic life was such as to make life intolerable to his wife, and to justify her in leaving him, and afterwards suing for a limited divorce, which one Court granted and a

[1] In the examination before the Court in March, 1913, he showed badly, inasmuch as he first affirmed that he knew Greek, but when a Greek New Testament was handed to him had to confess that he did not even know the alphabet. After which he owned that he knew nothing of Latin or philosophy

higher one on appeal confirmed, at the same time most severely censuring Pastor Russell for his conduct, which the Court described as insulting, domineering, and overbearing to a sensitive Christian woman.

The divorce was given, and the alimony granted to Mrs. Russell. Russell had considerable property in his own name. He tried to practise fraud upon his wife by transferring his property to corporations and societies over which he himself had absolute control.

This attempt at evasion was frustrated; also another such. In all the evidence it came out that—

First, his conceit, egotism, and domination were such as to make life intolerable for his wife. Second, that his conduct in relation to other women, if not immoral, was definitely improper. Third, that on one occasion he was silent to his wife for four weeks. Fourth, that he sought by most despicable means to isolate his wife from society, and designed to get her pronounced insane in order to put her away.

Into his business relations we need not here penetrate far. Mr. W. T. Ellis, editor of *The Continent*, who investigated Pastor Russell's indictment of Foreign Missionary work, says:—

I sought a prophet, and I found a business man. Instead of a humble seeker after truth, I found the cleverest propagandist of the age—a man before whom John Alexander Dowie, Mary Baker Eddy, Madame Blavatsky, Abbas Effendi, Elijah Sanford, and Joseph Smith, pale into puerile ineffectiveness.

That there must be some truth in this estimate, is manifest from the growth of Russellism, and from the way in which throughout the country it is able to provide gratuitous lectures and literature. As regards the proceeds from 'The Watch Tower

Bible and Tract Society'—'of which Pastor Russell is the head, and which society is the mother of all his other business corporations,' representing between four and five million dollars—they were in 1912 no less than 202,000 dollars.

When the *Brooklyn Eagle* made known the facts, as to his connexion with certain business companies, he brought an action against that journal. But under examination

> he was asked, 'Are any of these charges true?' 'They are not true,' was his most emphatic answer. 'Not true.' But when he was forced into the witness-box by the defence, and learned that we had the facts about these companies on hand, and the charters of them in our possession, he made a clean breast of the whole thing.

Then; in the face of such direct lying, what can be said against the final summary of Mr. Ross in this regard?

> This is the way it works. The international Bible students all over the world, and others who are foolish enough to do so, send their money into the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, which is Russell. A part of that money is used to pay the expense of circulating Russell's literature, paying his advance agents and 'Pilgrims,' which always means the glorifying of Russell, and the rest goes through to U.S. Investment Co., Ltd., which is also Russell, and is invested in lands, lots, timber, limits, houses, &c. You can see it is all Russell. It is claimed that he is many times a millionaire, and yet he has not one cent that we could find in his own name. If Mrs. Russell were not living, or if the divorce were not a limited one, permitting alimony, would such be the case? To ask the question is sufficient.

In the little booklet mentioned above, from which this indictment is taken, will be found other

details of reasons for a sombre estimate of the moral character of this man who professes to know and interpret the Bible better than all other Christian teachers, and does not hesitate to denounce all the churches as leading the people astray by false doctrine, the truth being that which only he and his associates, as 'the elect' of God, possess and dispense. Without pronouncing here any wholesale condemnation, one cannot but affirm that, despite the venerable appearance in leaflets and on posters, the personal character of this man does not bear out his assumption of superior sanctity, as one of God's 'elect,' specially chosen to judge the world during the Millennium. Nor does it predispose any careful thinker to believe that his peculiar teachings are—as he claims—so divinely inspired as to mean condemnation for all who reject them.

IV

GOOD POINTS IN 'RUSSELLISM'

It is difficult indeed to believe that in these days of ever-growing intelligence, millions of men and women could be so hoodwinked by plausible error as to become followers of a man, and devotees of a system, wholly and only bad. In all the known heresies of the past there has ever been some germ of truth, some elements of good, some sound wheat amongst the chaff. The Millennial delusion is no exception to the rule. However much we may deprecate the behaviour of the founder of this vast movement, as noted in the previous section, there are no sufficient reasons for bringing a sweeping charge of insincerity or hypocrisy against him and his associates. Sincere fanaticism has ever done more harm to truth than downright fraud or falsity. So here we will avoid imputing motives, and content ourselves with facts. Certainly there are practical reasons for asking, with Mr. Cook :—

> How does Pastor Russell win the crowd and get the money? He is literally drawing the crowd and getting the money in vast sums, for his advertising schemes are world-wide, and entail expenditures that stagger the minds of those who know the cost of such efforts.

But it is not sufficient simply to avow that 'Millennial Dawnism is about the flimsiest religion that has ever been unloaded on a gullible humanity.'

Nor does it by any means explain all the success of Russellism to say that—

> Give the average man a guarantee that there is no hell, and you will tickle him in the right place. Tell him that the heathen are not lost, and it meets his heartiest approval. He will wax eloquent in expatiating upon and defending such an easy-going, common-sense, satisfying religion, and will subscribe handsomely and voluntarily for its promulgation.

That may be American, in estimate as in style, but it does not meet the case, nor does it do justice to the accused. If what is known as 'orthodoxy' is true, it can afford to be both fair and charitable. There are quite sufficient reasons for dismissing Russellism, without either vituperation or injustice. It is impossible to study carefully these three thousand odd pages without noting some features which must provoke respect, if not admiration. It is only right to mention these before making plain the other side.

These six volumes undoubtedly represent a vast amount of labour on some one's part. Whether it be true or not that Pastor Russell's divorced wife wrote—as she claims—a large portion of it, it is simply impossible to question the great expenditure of time, and pains, and patience, which these closely printed thousands of pages represent. The style, moreover, throughout, is lucidity itself. If certain well-known Doctors of Divinity in British churches could be induced to take lessons herefrom, it would be greatly to the advantage of their readers and hearers. It might seem unkind to say besides, that these chapters are plausibility incarnate. But it

would be true; for so smoothly, easily, unhesitatingly, does the stream of exposition run on, that one cannot wonder at its making real impression on uneducated but sincere readers, wearied as they too often are with ordinary religious platitudes and obscurities. What, for instance, could be fairer than this?

> As seekers after truth it will not do for us to say, in view of these passages, that the majority of them seem to favour whatever view we incline to prefer, and then to ignore the others. Until we have a view of the matter in which every Bible statement finds a reasonable representation, we should not feel sure that we have the truth on the subject. One statement of God is as true and as firm a foundation for faith as a hundred. And it would be wiser to seek for a harmonious understanding, than to arrive at a conclusion or adopt a theory based on a one-sided interpretation, and thus to deceive ourselves and others.

The pity is that the method which here is so wisely condemned is that by which the whole structure of Millennial Dawnism is reared. Even in this apparently rational protest it makes itself manifest. 'One statement of God' is really a quiet begging of the whole question as to the true interpretation of the Bible.

But it must be owned that the writer or writers—undoubtedly the latter—of these volumes, have achieved a wonderful intimacy with the 'Authorized Version' of the English Bible, and in their more than five thousand quotations from it they display a marvellous ingenuity of application to their peculiar cause. Their whole method is, however, vitiated by one or two fundamental but

false assumptions, and it soon becomes plain that, starting from these assumptions, they have come to the Bible to find in it what they desired, not to accept what it actually conveys to an unbiased reader. The dexterity with which isolated passages are made to buttress their main scheme is, indeed, noteworthy. One cannot wonder that great numbers of well-meaning but uninstructed readers have been deeply impressed, or even carried away.

The most attractive note, probably, in the first appeal of this new Gospel to the world of half a century ago, was the strong denunciation of the 'orthodox' eschatology which then obtained amongst Evangelical Churches. Most of the stress of their preaching was then laid upon the doctrines of 'everlasting punishment' and 'eternal torment'—in some cases enforced and embittered by gruesome and repulsive details of physical sufferings, with added emphasis upon Calvinistic notions of election and predestination. The unsparing denial and denunciation of these doctrines undoubtedly procured Russellism an early hearing and brought him many converts. Then, on the positive side, the confident ease with which he marshalled his passages from Daniel and the Pentateuch, as well as from 'Revelation,' on behalf of his theories, could not but win the confidence of very many.

In some respects, it may be acknowledged, he did service to Christian truth and influence. His protest, occasionally, against the crass and childish literalness with which the figurative language of so much of the Bible was interpreted, was truly needed and timely. We have here no space to give instances, but the pity is again that in regard to some of the

most important and emphatic statements of Scripture, just where he should have been most of all true to his own protest, he utterly forsook it.

In regard to the much-disputed matter of Christ's 'Second Coming,' one paragraph at least demands quotation here, because it deals as plainly as gently with the lamentable fallacy which still obsesses the minds of myriads of good Christian folk. The notion that there must be in the future—and some insist in the immediate future—some overwhelming celestial cataclysm, some staggering spectacular physical catastrophe, in which the concluding words of the second letter attributed to Peter will find absolutely literal fulfilment, yet weighs upon the minds of vast numbers of modern believers, quite as influentially as did the corresponding delusion on the minds of the earliest Christian converts—including even the Apostles. Paul's first letters to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians bear indubitable witness to that fact.

> Some take Peter's statement literally, that 'the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and pass away with a great noise'; also the Revelator's description of the same events by a very similar symbol, 'The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together.' It would seem, however, that one glance upward, at the myriad gems of night shining through millions of miles of space, with nothing between to roll away or to take fire, should be argument enough in one moment to convince such that they had erred in supposing these statements to be literal—should convince them that their expectation of a literal fulfilment is absurd in the extreme.
>
> If we consider the wisdom and prudence of our Lord's methods of manifesting His presence to His disciples after His resurrection, as well as previously, it may help us to remember that the same wisdom will be displayed in His methods of revealing Himself at His second advent, both to

> the Church and to the world—methods not necessarily similar, but in each case well suited to His object, which never is to alarm or excite men, but to convince their cool, calm judgements of the great truths to be impressed on them. Our Lord's first advent was not a startling, exciting, or alarming event. How quietly and unobtrusively He came! So much so that only those who had faith and humility were enabled to recognize in the infant of humble birth, in the man of sorrows, in the friend of the humble and poor, and finally in the crucified one, the long-looked-for Messiah.

This conception is well applied to the last scene as recorded in Acts i. 11—'Shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go':—

> What, then, was the manner of His going? Was it with great splendour and with great demonstration? Was it not as quietly and secretly as was possible consistent with His purpose of having thoroughly convinced witnesses of the fact? None saw Him or knew the fact, except His faithful followers.

This is much sounder exegesis—whatever becomes of Millennial dates—than that which obtains at not a few Evangelical 'conventions.' And the sober support which Dr. W. N. Clarke gives to it in his invaluable volume on Christian theology, merits both much more notice and more acceptance than it generally receives.

> No visible return of Christ to the earth is to be expected, but rather the long and steady advance of His spiritual kingdom. The expectation of a single dramatic event corresponds to the Jewish doctrine of the nature of the Kingdom, but not to the Christian.[1]

[1] *An Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 444.

Another strong point in the protest of Russellism which very many of us cannot but deem as alike good and timely, is its unflinching denunciation of priesthood or sacerdotalism, in all its forms, as foreign to the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. That there are many sincere Christian believers who will not endorse this, we are quite aware. But the utmost exercise of Christian liberty and charity must not prevent our expression of conviction that in this respect Russellism is right, and the Romanism —which herein virtually includes High Anglicanism —is wrong, so long as we have any regard for the New Testament. Assuredly no one will call in question the assertion of these volumes that 'the responsibility of those who have undertaken the Gospel ministry in the name of Christ is very great.'

In many other matters these writings are undoubtedly on the right side. The vigorous and unsparing protests against the evils of drink, selfish extravagance and wasteful luxury, the miseries and devilries of war, the crying wrongs of our present social system, are all set forth in their true light as contrary to the Gospel of Christ no less than to the wellbeing of men. Even in regard to Socialism, the brief reference is much more sensible and true than one often finds in orthodox religious circles.

> Socialism differs from Nationalism in that it does not propose to reward all individuals alike. It differs from Communism in that it does not advocate a community of goods or property. It thus avoids the errors of both, and is a very practical theory, if it could be introduced gradually and by wise, moderate, unselfish men.

On some such lines most surely, in coming days, Evangelical individualism will have to express itself, if Christianity is to count for anything nationally or internationally.

These few hints must here suffice to show that the rapid spread of Russellism, on both sides of the Atlantic, is not merely due to clever propagandism beguiling the unwary, but also in some real measure to attractions other than those suggested by its American critics. In spite of the unattractive personality of its founder and the demonstrably wrong principles upon which it is based, there is gold mixed with the dross. Even as we proceed to show its mistakes, we cannot but acknowledge the apparent sincerity as well as intensity of conviction which permeates the whole, and may well serve to attract anxious inquirers who are dissatisfied with ordinary churches and their methods. The utmost anathema which would seem to be justified is that expressed by the Apostle Paul in his dealing with certain opponents of the true Gospel in his day—'I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.' The reasons for so dismissing 'Millennial Dawnism' we now proceed to consider.

V

THE CLAIMS OF RUSSELLISM AND ITS REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Like all other abnormal religious developments, Millennial Dawnism is due to the influence of one strong human personality, and seeks to justify its existence by strictures on the forms of Christianity already in existence. It is scarcely necessary to point out how these two features have characterized all the most noticeable modern religious cults, as in Shakerism, Mormonism, Eddyism, Theosophy. So far, indeed, as personal influence goes, all branches of the Christian Church, and Christianity itself as a whole, are results of its effectiveness. In the present case Millennial Dawnism is Russellism. It has been growing under Pastor Russell's guidance for some fifty years, and has all the time been protesting vigorously against current forms of Christian belief. These protests have taken final shape in the volumes we are considering. The general mildness of the language and suavity of the style do not lessen the severity and comprehensiveness of the reflections—sometimes even sneers—at the ordinary churches of to-day and their work.

> The nominal Church of to-day, because of her mixed condition, the Lord calls Babylon—confusion. The nominal Church contains many hypocrites who have associated themselves with her because of her honourable standing in the eyes of the world, and who, by their conduct, are making Babylon a stench in the nostrils of the world. . . . Babylon holds so many doctrines contrary to God's Word.

The great human systems called churches have never been more than nominally the Church. They all belong to a false system which counterfeits, misrepresents, and hides from the world the true Church, which is composed only of fully consecrated and faithful believers who trust in the merit of the one great sacrifice for sins.

The 'fully consecrated and faithful believers' are, of course, only those who have accepted the interpretations of Pastor Russell. In the constant and severe indictment of Romanism, Protestants also are largely included.

While many faithful souls, ignorant of the real state of the case, have reverently worshipped God within these Babylon systems, nevertheless this does not alter the fact that they are one and all 'harlot' systems. Confusion reigns in them all, and the name 'Babylon' aptly fits the entire family—mother Rome, daughters, and accomplices, the nations styled Christendom.

The most learned and prominent among them have written massive volumes of what they term Systematic Theology, all of which, like the Talmud of the Jews, is calculated to a large extent to make void the Word of God—to fetter free thought and honest reverent investigation of the sacred Scriptures, with a view to simple faith in their teachings regardless of human traditions. The masses drift off in the popular current towards infidelity in its various forms —Evolution, Higher Criticism, Theosophy, Christian Science, Spiritism, or other theories, denying the necessity and merit of the great Calvary sacrifice.

Sincere truth-seekers will most quickly convince themselves that Christian people in general have for centuries, in thought at least, been adding to the Word of God, much to their own confusion.

A mill is a place where food is prepared; the ministers and theological schools do the grinding of the spiritual food for Babylon, and turn out very poor grist—not clean provender. The food supplied is largely husks and chaff, which will not sustain spiritual life and strength, and each

> grinder is obliged to prepare what is given him by his own denomination. He cannot hold his position and yet provide clean provender for the household of faith.

In reply to his own question—'What shall we say of those who blaspheme God's holy name by teaching doctrines of devils?'—'the hollow mockery of Christendom's false pretensions'—the writer of vol. iv kindly predicts, on the authority of Rev. xviii. 21, and Jer. li. 61, 64, that Christendom,

> with all her boasted civil and ecclesiastical power, with all her assumed dignity, wealth, titles, influence, will be cast into the sea (the restless sea of ungovernable peoples), to rise no more. Her destruction will be fully accomplished by the end of the appointed Times of the Gentiles, i.e. by 1915.

There is no need of words to refute these wholesale slanders. But they do not dispose one to welcome the claims of superiority which follow naturally in their wake. In brief, they are as follows, and will be best considered under two heads—(1) The estimate and treatment of the Bible, and (2) The doctrines resulting therefrom.

As to the Bible, the main claim—which we will estimate presently—is that only Pastor Russell and his disciples either appreciate or understand the Bible. Consequently they alone are qualified to teach its meaning and lessons. In the Preface which is found in each of the six volumes this is quietly assumed, and these 'Studies in the Scriptures' are said to be so complete and satisfactory that in regard to any modern difficulty all that is necessary is

sit down and read the short study on that subject, and the whole matter of your question will be fully and satisfactorily settled; and if your doubt ever again arise, come over and read the same afresh.

The whole attitude cannot be more fairly and truly expressed than in Pastor Russell's own words—from *The Watch Tower* of September 15, 1910:—

If the six volumes of the Scripture studies are practically the Bible topically arranged, we might not improperly name them 'The Bible in an arranged form'; that is to say, they are not merely comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself, since there is no desire to build any doctrine or thought on any individual preference, or any individual wisdom, but to present the entire matter on the lines of the Word of God.

Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see also that if any one lays these Scripture studies aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, if he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them, and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood the Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he has merely read these Scripture studies with their references, and had not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.

Upon this deliverance Dr. R. A. Torrey—who will not be accused of pandering to modern views or new theology—says:—

When any man makes such claim as this, it is unnecessary to read or listen to anything more that he has to say. By such a statement he proves himself to be beyond question a charlatan and religious impostor. This is simply the old Papal error in a new form.

But the completeness of his claim to a monopoly of truth in regard to understanding the Bible, is yet more manifest from his own explanation :—

> Though the Bible contains no direct statement that the seventh thousand year will be the epoch of Christ's reign, the great Sabbath Day of restitution to the world, yet the venerable tradition is not without a reasonable foundation. . . . The reader must not expect to have passages of Scripture pointed out in which these matters and dates are plainly written. On the contrary, he must bear in mind that all these things have been hidden by the Lord in such a manner that they could not be understood or appreciated until the due time had come, and then only by His faithful children who esteem truth as more precious than rubies.

The faithful children, of course, are those who, as above intimated, let the Bible go unread in order to follow the leading of Pastor Russell's 'Studies.' This is a large claim, and we will consider it fairly and fully.

For the moment, however, it is necessary to have before us the other claims which naturally arise out of the foregoing. If he alone possesses the true clue to the interpretation of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, it stands to reason that only he can teach the truth concerning all those matters which rest ultimately upon the Bible for their foundation. For awhile we will postpone the actual detailed statement of his distinctive tenets, and note only his general claim. It may, indeed, be expressed in a sentence. All other Christian teachings are wrong, and only those doctrines are right which are enunciated by the true Church—the 'little flock,' as they are often called—i.e. those who follow Pastor Russell and his 'Scripture Studies.'

One statement, which is typical, in his own words, will suffice.

> The Church of the Gospel age is frequently spoken of in the Scriptures as a New Creation—its ultimate members, the overcomers, being specifically mentioned as 'New Creatures' in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. v. 17). Unfortunately, however, it has become customary with fully consecrated Christians, as well as with others, to read the words of divine inspiration in a mazy-hazy manner which fails to give to its utterance their real import, and deprives the reader of much of the blessing and comfort and instruction which might be his if he but pursued a more reasonable course, and were more thoroughly filled with the spirit of discipleship—with a desire to comprehend the divine revelation.

When it is borne in mind that 'the Church of the Gospel age' consists only of Russellites, the enormity of the claim which is thus—as throughout all these volumes—so plausibly stated, becomes too manifest to need comment. It can be very briefly expressed—

> The temple of the Lord are we,
> And heathen all beside.

Whether such a claim is justifiable remains to be seen.

There is, however, another claim which cannot be overlooked, to which a large portion of vol. iii. is devoted. The last seventy pages of that section are occupied with an elaborate attempt to justify the assertion that the Great Pyramid of 'Gizeh,' in Egypt, near Cairo—as already hinted—constitutes 'a Bible in stone,' to such an extent and in such a manner that every detail of Russellism's exposition of Scripture is there anticipated and expounded.

> God showed signs and wonders in Egypt when He brought out Israel in triumph; but He also set signs and wonders there which remain 'even unto this (our) day.' The Great Pyramid, we believe, is the principle (*sic*) one of these

> very signs and wonders; and it now begins to speak to scientists in their own language, and, through them, to all men.

Much reference is made to the labours of Professor Piazzi Smyth and Robert Menzies, whence this claim is said to be derived.

> Soon it became apparent that the object of its construction was to provide in it a record of the divine plan of salvation, no less than the record of divine wisdom relating to astronomical, chronological, geometrical, and other important truths. However, not having discerned the scope and completeness of the plan of salvation revealed in the Scriptures, these gentlemen have thus far failed to note the most wonderful and beautiful features of the Great Pyramid's testimony in this direction, which we now find to be a most full and complete corroboration of the 'plan of the ages,' and the times and seasons therewith associated, as taught in the Scriptures and presented in this and the preceding volumes of the Millennial Dawn Series. And further, we see that this storehouse of knowledge, like the major part of the Bible store, was kept purposely sealed until its testimony should be needed and appreciated.

It is 'conjectured' that Melchizedek built this Pyramid by means of Egyptian labour in the year 2170 B.C. And the Scripture description of it is said to be found in Isa. xix. 19, 20. From this it is but a short step to say that—

> This ancient structure being thus repeatedly referred to in the Scripture, we cannot doubt that, if questioned, this witness of the Lord in the land of Egypt will bear such testimony as will fully correspond with His written word.

That is, with Pastor Russell's interpretation of it. For

> it is remarkable that, like the plan of the ages in the written word, this stone witness kept silence until now, when its testimony shall shortly be delivered to Egypt—the world. But the saints, the friends of God from whom He will hide

> nothing, are privileged to hear the testimony of this witness now, before the worldly mind is ready to appreciate its testimonies. Only when ready to obey the Lord can any appreciate His witnesses.

Here, again, it must not be forgotten—the few specimens given above are only typical of a host of utterances to this effect—that only those who follow Pastor Russell's 'Studies' are the 'saints and friends of God who obey the Lord.'

So that there is really neither room nor need to quote more concerning the scope and significance of the claims made by this latest candidate for the religious devotion of modern humanity. It is not necessary for us to enter into the elaborate series of quotations which are adduced as corresponding so exactly with measurements in the Great Pyramid. The same plain principles which exhibit the falsity of the ingenious attempts to get Millennial Dawnism out of the Bible, will suffice no less to explode the plausible but misleading delusions connected with the 'miracle in stone.' Both schemes alike are well calculated to impress a certain type of religiously disposed minds; but under calm and rational scrutiny in the light of modern knowledge which cannot be gainsaid, they are seen to be such 'cunningly devised fables' that Dr. Torrey's summary can hardly be pronounced too severe:—

> Doubtless there will yet be some blinded dupes who will still hold to him, just as has been the case with every other religious impostor and false prophet and fraud throughout the centuries, even when they were totally discredited by the failure of their predictions. But all real lovers of the truth and all well-balanced men and women will wash their hands of Russell and his predictions and his societies for ever.

VI

THE DISTINCTIVE DOCTRINES OF 'RUSSELLISM'

In the remarkable propagandism which has sent forth millions of publications from the Brooklyn centre of 'The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society,' throughout this country as well as America, there is not a little to be admired in the way of devotion and system. Seeing, moreover, that it is all done in the name of Christ and Christianity, it becomes the more necessary that a definite idea should be obtained as to what those specific doctrines are, upon which Millennial Dawnism bases its claim to be the only true church and its right to denounce all others. It is not easy to state in succinct form notions which are elaborately diffused throughout three thousand pages, but under seven heads we will here state, with brief and dispassionate carefulness, the substance of this new Gospel which aims at superseding all other Christian faith. When this is clearly before us, we will in the next section estimate it.

(1) The one great main claim of Russellism, from which all else flows, is that it alone understands and truly interprets the Bible. To it the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute 'God's Word' in the most absolute and comprehensive sense. With the exception of a few references to a 'Diaglott' translation, which is itself the property of Pastor Russell, and is of no critical value whatever,

all the quotations are taken from the version of 1611—though in some cases, by no means in all, its mistakes are corrected, i.e. whenever it will help the theories of Millennial Dawnism. These 'Bible Studies' embody the 'wonderful way' in which, through Russellism,

> God by His Spirit has been bringing numbers of His people into a clearer understanding of Bible truths, cleansing the Word from the dust of centuries, bringing out things new as well as old for examination, clinching and dovetailing its various books so that it can be seen that not a single one can in anywise be done without, and causing the whole Scripture to shine forth in all its undimmed glory as the one great, glorious, all-sufficient, perfect Word of God to our fallen but Christ-redeemed world.

Thus the whole Bible is, to use the old term, so 'verbally inspired' that any portion may be taken to apply anywhere, for any purpose, with equal authority. No critical notice whatever is taken of the Revised Version — it is, indeed, scarcely ever mentioned—but on every possible occasion criticism is denounced, and the 'Higher Criticism' especially is said to be the work of the devil. The opening chapters of Genesis are so literally true, historically and scientifically, that any thought of the modern suggestion of evolution is to be utterly scorned.

> We find that the Word of God most absolutely contradicts this entire theory, so that no harmony is possible between the Scripture teaching and the teaching of evolution—science falsely so-called. Whoever believes in the evolution theory, to that extent disbelieves the Scripture theory. To whatever extent people hold the theory of evolution, to that extent they are off the only foundation for faith which God has

provided ; to that extent they are prepared for further errors which the Adversary will be sure to bring forward, presented so forcibly that they would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect.

When the whole Bible is thus taken, without any qualification, as the 'Word of God,' its teaching must reveal a 'plan of the ages,' and this plan it is the purpose of these 'Studies' to make clear. It does so 'from an altogether different standpoint from that of any other work'—the special subjects being 'the coming of our Lord and the prophecies and symbolism of the Old and New Testaments.' The Book of Daniel is to be taken as unrolling the future as surely and clearly as Genesis reveals the past. The voice from *The Watch Tower* is :—

Do you know that the Lord more than two thousand years ago gave, through the Prophet Daniel, a clear description of the times in which we are now living ?

Do you know that the Bible, in referring to this present time as 'the time of the end,' does not signify the destruction of the earth, but the end of the present dispensation, after which a new age will be introduced—the Millennium ? 'The earth abideth for ever.'

Do you know that, according to the Scriptures, 'the time of the end' above mentioned began in A.D. 1799, and will continue until A.D. 1915 ?

Do you know that God promised that in this 'time of the end' in which we are living, the wise (toward God, not the worldly wise) should understand the hitherto secret things of His plan and Word ? And do you wish to be one of God's humble 'wise virgins' ? (1 Cor. iii. 18–20).

Do you know that *Millennial Dawn*, vol. i., is reclaiming more infidels, helping more sceptics, and establishing more Christians, than any other book in the world ? It is indeed a 'Bible key' and a 'helping hand for Bible students.'

Do you know that the Lord is raising up many who are

> voluntarily giving their time and going from house to house to call attention to these matters, and that if 'one of the least of these' the Lord's 'little ones'—an angel or messenger of the truth—should at any time call upon you and be received in a spirit of meekness and love, he will show you free of charge the 'Chart of the Ages,' the examination of which will help you rightly to divide the word of truth and to apply and understand all Scriptures, and thus prove a lasting blessing to you?

Fifty-five of these 'Do you know?' inquiries have been sent forth in millions of copies; the above are fair specimens. All these avowals concerning the Bible, with all that flows from them, are said to be repeated, as we have already noted, in the 'Great Stone Bible' of the Pyramid.

(2) The doctrine of God deduced from the Bible thus considered is simply Unitarian, as will be manifest when we notice what is said concerning Christ. Here the following statement will suffice :—

> The Scripture teaching concerning the Holy Spirit is that it is not another God, but the spirit influence or power exercised by the one God, our Father, and by His only begotten Son.
>
> Does not every intelligent person know that if God is one in person, He cannot be three? and that if three in person, there can be only one sense in which the three could be one, and that not in person but in purpose, in mind, in will? Verily, if it were not for the fact that this trinitarian nonsense was drilled into us from earliest infancy, and the fact that it is soberly taught in theological seminaries by grey-haired professors, nobody would give it a moment's consideration. How the great Adversary ever succeeded in foisting it upon the Lord's people is the real mystery.

(3) Unitarianism always seems to help for the moment by clearing the thought of God, but inevitably leaves upon our hands an inscrutable problem

as to Jesus Christ. In this respect Russellism, however, outrages Unitarianism quite as flagrantly as Trinitarianism. According to it, the real origin of the Jesus of the Gospels was the Archangel Michael. He was the beginning of the creation of God, and was created a spirit being by the divine fiat In obedience to the will of God he gave up his pirit being and was born of the Virgin Mary as an ordinary human being. Thus he became a perfect man, as perfect as Adam was before he fell, and had only one nature, the same as Adam's, during all his earthly life.

> Our Lord Jesus changed His nature when He left the glory of the Father and became a man, taking our nature. He changed His nature again when He sacrificed Himself as a man, and was begotten as a New Creature at the time of His baptism at thirty years of age. It was this New Creature, no longer earthly but heavenly, that was resurrected on the third day, and received a body as it pleased the Father—a spirit body. He received immortality only at His resurrection, and as a reward for His faithful obedience to the Father's will to the extent of self-sacrifice unto death, even the death of the cross.
>
> Thus it appears clear from God's own revelation on the subject that only Himself and His only begotten Son possessed this quality of immortality at the time the Apostles wrote their Epistles. Indeed, had the Only Begotten been immortal sooner than at the time of His exaltation, He could not have been the Saviour of the world, because He could not have died, and, under the divine arrangement, to be our Redeemer He must die.

At His death, like all other men, He ceased to be. In other words, He was annihilated. His humanity was destroyed for ever. Thus He was never raised from the dead, and there was never any real

resurrection. What that word means to Russellism is that on the third day God caused Him to be recreated as an invisible spirit. His body was never raised, but probably dissolved into gases. Whenever He appeared afterwards to His disciples, it was in a body and clothes which were specially created for each occasion. But He only became immortal and divine at His re-creation. He has no longer any connexion with human nature, but is an invisible spirit. Still He is called the Second Adam, and is now the Father of mankind from 1914 to 2914, when the Millennial reign will end.

(4) As to man and human nature.

> The Bible view is the only consistent one, and hence the only truly scientific and orthodox view of this subject. Going to the Genesis record of man's creation, we see that the body was formed first, but it was not a man, soul, or being until animated. It was not a man but a corpse. In Adam's case it, of course, required no laboured effort on the part of the Creator to cause the perfect organism which He had made to breathe the life-giving oxygen of the atmosphere.

In like manner Eve's body was literally made out of Adam's rib, and caused to breathe so as to become a 'living soul.' This happened quite suddenly, exactly six thousand and forty-four years ago. As a result, Adam and Eve were absolutely perfect—physically, mentally, morally—because 'all God's work is perfect (Deut. xxxii. 4).' Though, unfortunately, 'the flood completely obliterated all evidence of the genius and handiwork of the perfect father of our race.' Still, he was not in any sense immortal, but was only capable of going on with his animal

life, if he had had continued access to the trees of life in the Garden of Eden.

> When he sinned God drove him from the garden lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the trees of life, and eat, and live for ever (i.e. by eating continuously) (Gen. iii. 22). How the fogs and mysteries scatter before the light of truth which shines from God's Word!

Consequently the death-sentence for his disobedience meant the entire cessation of his being, because he was cut off from the chance of living. In this there is no difference between him and the animals. All alike perish when they die.

> The curse brought the death of all mankind . . . This death-curse rests upon us from the moment of birth, and hence demonstrates the fact that it is not the result of our individual sins, but of inherited sins—a curse or blight which has reached us from Father Adam by heredity.

'The dying has been a gradual process with the race in general,' but in all cases the dead have been extinguished. Except for a few who have been recreated since the Millennium began, in 1914, all the 50,000,000,000 who have died are now out of existence. But

> during the Millennial age the resurrection (i.e. the new creation) is to be a gradual process; inch by inch, as it were, mankind will be raised up, up, up out of the mire of sin, out of the terrible pit of degradation and death, to the grand height of perfection and life from which he fell in the person of Father Adam.

As to how God could in resurrection reproduce the millions of earth completely, so that each will know himself, and profit by the memory of present life experiences, all things are possible to God, and

David referred prophetically to this very process in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm.

(5) In face of this curse it is most of all necessary to ask, What, then, was the 'Atonement' of Jesus, and what did it accomplish? To this theme the whole of vol. v. is devoted. The pith of it all may, however, be put into short space. Adam and Eve were quite perfect, yet through wilful disobedience they became liable to the curse, which was death, i.e. extinction of being. So the entire human race became in the same sense 'children of wrath.' For four thousand years God justly executed the sentence of His law, in that all men died without mercy. But in the death of Jesus,

> by virtue of the ransom paid to justice, a transfer of man's account has been made, and his indebtedness, &c., is wholly transferred to the account of the Lord Jesus Christ, who paid to justice the full satisfaction of its claims against Adam and his race. Thus Jesus, by reason of this purchase with His own precious blood, is now in consequence the Owner, Master, Lord of all.
>
> One object in this arrangement for Adam and his race was the annulment of the death-sentence which prevented love from any efforts to recover the condemned.
>
> Another object was the placing of the fallen race beyond the reach of divine justice, and under the special supervision of Jesus—who will ultimately turn over to the justice of the divine law all who show their desire for harmony with justice, but who will then be so perfected as to be able to endure its perfect requirements.

(6) Thus we come to a true and full meaning of 'salvation,' in the Christian sense. In order to do no injustice to Russellism in this regard, it will be well again to quote rather than summarize.

God's plan of salvation for the general race of Adam is to extend to each member of it, during the Millennium, the offer of eternal life upon the terms of the New Covenant sealed for all with the precious blood of the Lamb. But there is no suggestion anywhere that immortality, the divine nature, will ever be offered or granted to any except the elect church of the Gospel age—the 'little flock'—the 'Bride, the Lamb's wife.' For the others of Adam's race the offer will be restitution (Acts iii. 19, 21) to life and health and perfection of human nature—the same that Adam possessed, as the earthly image of God, before his fall from grace into sin and death. And when at the close of the Millennium (A.D. 2914) all the obedient of mankind shall have attained all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ, then all, armed with complete knowledge and experience, and hence fully able to stand the test, will be severely tested (as was Adam), but individually (Rev. xx. 7 to 10), and only those found in fullest heart-sympathy, as well as in outward harmony with God and His righteous arrangements, will be permitted to go beyond the Millennium into the everlasting future, or world (age) without end—by continuing to eat food. All others will be destroyed in the second death—'destroyed from among the people' (Acts iii. 23).

(7) As it is thus impossible to separate salvation from the Millennial age, or to consider the future without also appreciating the present, let us now finally see what Millennial Dawnism seeks to spread throughout the world as the only true and reliable Christianity.

An accompanying chart is given to show in summary how—by elaborate calculations—it appears that the year 1872 was the exact six-thousandth year from the creation of Adam and Eve. Hence the seven-thousandth year of the world began in 1873. In 1874 the Second Coming of Jesus took place, invisibly but really.

In 1878 the period of the 'disfavour' of the Jews

ended. 'The exact year of Israel's rejection we know—yes, even the very day.' So now we know the exact time of their reception into favour. The spring of the same year, 1878, marks the time when 'nominal church systems were spewed out, and ceased to be in any degree recognized by God.' From that date to 1914 the Gospel age was ending and woes preparing for all Christendom. But in that year also 'all the Apostles and all the dead who had consecrated their human nature to the Lord, and lived the perfect Adam life, were recreated and changed into spirit beings like the Lord Jesus.'

The year 1881 was the close of the special favour to Gentiles, the close of the high calling to them to become joint heirs with Christ and partakers of the divine nature. Between 1910 and 1912 came the times of great trouble which culminated with the end of the times of the Gentiles in 1914—two thousand five hundred and twenty years from 606 B.C. That date was 'the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect men.' Then—according to Russellism—there was the 'full establishment' of the kingdom of God, and the final end of the kingdoms of this world—'the Gentile kingdoms were ground to powder, and utterly removed, no place being found for them.'

From all of which it would seem that—since the Bible has given infallible directions, and its long-hid secrets are now infallibly revealed by Russellism—the following results have to be acknowledged by all seekers after truth.

The only true Church of Christ consists of those who accept Millennial Dawnism.

> Only this church has been thus far really benefited by the Atonement, but the teaching of the Scriptures is that this church shall constitute a priestly kingdom or royal priesthood with Christ, the Royal Chief Priest, and that during the Millennial age this royal priesthood shall fully and completely accomplish for mankind the work of removing the blindness which Satan and error and degradation brought upon them.

In this work they are being helped by Abraham and the patriarchs, who have been recreated as visible glorified men. These are 'princes in the earth,' and are acting 'as the intermediaries between the invisible Church and the world.' In 1914 the Jews were restored to their own land, and became the head of the nations, Jerusalem being now the capital of the world.

It is important also to note that with the arrival of 1914 this—according to Russellism—came to pass :—

> In harmony with all the rest, is the statement of Scripture that the first work of Christ in connexion with His Millennial reign will be to bind or restrain Satan, that he shall deceive the nations no more for the thousand years.

So that, although Satan may have been loose—most folk will think so—when the Germans wrought their unutterable devilries in Belgium, he was bound when he same villains deliberately murdered all the innocents on board the *Lusitania*. And the whole German nation which rejoiced thereat, must have all the credit of it, without any share being due to Satan. The same applies to all the infernal devices which have since disgraced their military leaders, as well as dishonoured their army, and all the unmeasured lies which have distinguished

their Government, from the Kaiser and Bethmann-Hollweg downwards. It is something to know that Satan is not responsible for these.

The future—as Russellism asserts—is perhaps sufficiently outlined in the paragraph above quoted. But the following statement from the same source will complete the picture. It must not be forgotten that we are now in the Millennium. The processes above specified are now going on, and will continue until 2914. What then? This.

> Thus at the close of the Millennial age, by the year A D. 2914, the world will be fully back in the divine favour, fully at one with God, as mankind was representatively in harmony at-one with God in the person of Adam, before transgression entered the world; but additionally they will possess a most valuable experience with evil, for by it they will have learned a lesson on the sinfulness of sin, and the wisdom, profit, and desirableness of righteousness. Additionally also they will possess an increase of knowledge, and the wider exercise of the various talents and abilities which were man's originally in creation, but in an undeveloped state. And the lesson fully learned by all we may presume will stand for all time applicable to other races yet uncreated, on other planets of the wide universe.

The above summary constitutes a true and fair statement of what is now being promulgated throughout the civilized world as the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is not merely in this country and America that the vigorous propaganda mentioned above is being carried on. The first volume of the 'Studies in the Scriptures' announces that it has also been translated into German, Swedish, Dano-Norwegian, French, Italian, and Greek. So that there would seem to be more than sufficient need that this most

elaborate, pretentious, and plausible system should be scrutinized as thoroughly as charitably. The plain fact that if Russellism is true, all the other Christian churches are false—mere blind leaders of the blind—ought to be enough to protect any one who sincerely and carefully probes it from being accused of uncharity, or credited with any other motive than the desire to serve His cause who said, 'If you remain faithful to My teaching then truly are you My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'

VII

THE ERRORS OF 'RUSSELLISM'

In the case of any rational student of the Bible, one might truly say that the bare statement of Millennial Dawnism should suffice for its definite and emphatic condemnation. For that reason pains and space have been taken in the foregoing pages to allow it, as far as possible, to speak for itself. But all men are not rational in religion, and often are so least of all in their treatment of the Bible. Hence it cannot be enough in presence of widespread error simply to let it 'severely alone.' The policy of *laissez-faire* may sometimes be wise, but not always. Sheer denunciation, again, is as ineffective as contempt, for purposes of truth. Even when some cults and their advocates appear to be beyond reasonable reply, it is still necessary for the sake of others to deal rationally, as well as plainly and patiently, with their weird extravagances. That undoubtedly is the mind of Christ. It is also the only way in which in these days truth of any kind can be maintained.

It may be definitely owned that we speak here from the standpoint of a liberal Evangelicalism. This may be left for justification to other occasions. It is quite in place here because the propaganda of Millennial Dawnism naturally appeals most to those who have sufficient religious conviction to grant Pastor Russell his premisses. He makes no attempt to convince any, save those who already accept in

fullest sense the inspiration of the Bible. The 'evangelical' attitude, however, needs, in our day, careful statement. Those who have neither time nor disposition for large volumes of theology may find in the little manual recently published by Dr. Garvie[1] an admirable expression in succinct form of what is really connoted by evangelical doctrine in the light of to-day.

It is most necessary to say plainly that neither Russellism nor any other modern form of faith can be truly or wisely estimated by the standards of 'orthodoxy' which prevailed a century or even half a century ago. The world of Christian truth has no more stood still during recent years than the worlds of science and philosophy. Whatever be the developments or difficulties of Christian belief in our midst, they are not to be settled by simply quoting our fathers, any more than by waving the sacerdotal hand. Hereupon Dr. Garvie has well said, speaking from the truly evangelical standpoint:—

> I am entirely opposed to the mental indolence and cowardice which seeks a refuge from intellectual difficulty and labour, in either ecclesiastical authority or mystical intuition. To arrest the process of thinking is a voluntary humility of a rational personality which deserves only condemnation. Even to accept the Christian faith as historically given either by the Bible or the Church, and to decline to relate it to science, philosophy, and criticism, is to show a distrust of the reasonableness of the Christian revelation.
>
> The Evangelical Alliance in its credal basis attempts to perpetuate some articles of belief which we cannot now hold at all, or, if we hold at all, must express in different language. Only a liberal and progressive evangelism can answer the

[1] *Manuals for Christian Thinkers—The Evangelical Type of Christianity*, by Dr. A. E. Garvie (Charles H. Kelly).

cry out of the depths of some bewildered minds and bruised hearts.[1]

There can be no doubt that Millennial Dawnism, with all its wild imaginings, has troubled, and is troubling, great numbers in ordinary Evangelical Churches.[2] But if these all think that the sufficient answer to it is simply to reiterate the exact creeds of our fathers, or hurl anathemas at any who depart from prearranged 'standards,' they have yet very much to learn—and to unlearn.

All this finds its most pressing application as to the Bible.[3] The real difficulty in dealing with Russellism is that its fundamental error, which makes void the whole complex structure of his much-vaunted 'plan of salvation,' is shared yet, to no small extent, by a large number of Christian believers whose sincerity is beyond question. The general attitude towards the Jewish and Christian Scriptures of very many besides the members of the Bible League, is the same as that of Russellism. The only real difference is in the general thoroughness

[1] pp. 116, 59.

[2] I have received many letters for some time past from all parts of the country asking me to include it in this 'Why Not?' series, but hoped it might prove unnecessary.

[3] The true modern evangelical appreciation of the Bible as against not only the sneers of Russellism at the Higher Criticism, but the general attitude of the Bible League and others, is sufficiently stated in the following easily accessible works:—*The Bible, Its Origin, Significance, and Abiding Worth*, Dr. A. S. Peake (Hodder); *The Bible, Its Origin and Nature*, Dr. Marcus Dods (T. & T. Clark); *The Inspiration and Authority of Holy Scripture*, Dr. Monro Gibson (Free Church Council); *Sixty Years with the Bible*, Dr. W. N. Clarke (T. & T. Clark); *Shall We Understand the Bible?* T. Rhondda Williams (A. & C. Black); *An Introduction to the Scriptures*—The Temple Bible—late Bishop of Ripon (Dent & Co.); *What is the Bible?* Dr. J. Warschauer (Jas. Clarke). There are, of course, many others, but these are sufficient for any unprejudiced student.

with which the latter applies the principles assumed, and in the exegesis of certain particular passages. In both cases the assumption holds that the Bible is so utterly, equally, verbally inspired, in all its parts, as to constitute it in every sense the absolutely perfect 'Word of God.' This is really the crux of the whole issue. But the time has come to say plainly, for the truth's sake, and for Christianity's sake, that upon the principles of those who speak and write as if all the truth concerning the Bible and Christian faith was so absolutely known to our fathers, that we have neither right nor power to alter one jot or tittle of their theological conceptions, evangelical Christianity can no more be maintained than Russellism can be disproved.

Apart from the latter's blunders and misrepresentations, which will be presently shown, its greatest harm and danger is that it seeks to rivet for evermore upon the minds of modern men and women and children an estimate and use of the Bible which could only result to-day in the rejection of the Bible altogether by thoughtful people. Especially by our young people whom we are ever seeking, through improved educational methods, to train more and more thoroughly in modern knowledge. Such a procedure rings the knell of Christianity for the century before us. Whatever else Christianity is, it must be modern, if it is to survive. That is, it must be correlated with 'whatsoever things are true.' The Apostle who wrote that would not shrink, we know well, from its most thorough application to the science and philosophy and history of to-day. Neither tradition nor venerable associations, neither creeds nor standards, nor anything

else, can be retained for Christianity, if in any respect they are now shown to be contrary to fact or reason. Nowhere more nobly has this principle been expressed than in the words prefixed to the first number of the *Minutes* of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

> What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles? If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest investigation.

If, for instance, we assume here, in our liberal evangelicalism, the inexpressible religious value of the Old Testament, and the substantial reliability of the New, it is not because our fathers thought so, or because trust deeds affirm it, or because our standards say so. It is because these Scriptures have been put into the crucible of modern inevitable and necessary scrutiny, and have come out of it all the more precious for what has resulted therefrom. The very fires of criticism which by Russellism and many mistaken believers are denounced as wickedly destructive, have merely consumed the dross of antiquated traditions and theories of inspiration which were never true, and have left us the pure gold of truth which no modern atmosphere can corrode. To say that the Bible is not inspired would, no doubt, shock many sincere believers other than those who look for the Millennial dawn. Nevertheless, it is the real truth. No book, no writing, was ever inspired. That is the fundamental error. It was, or is, the writer who is inspired. There are valid reasons for affirming that the writers of the sixty-six portions that make up the Bible were in a real sense inspired. But there are no reasons whatever for

declaring that they were all equally so; or that they made no mistakes; or that they were thereby enabled to exactly anticipate modern science; or that all they wrote is equally true concerning God, or binding upon the consciences of all men, especially Christians, to the end of time.

In plain point of fact they were not all equally inspired; and they did make mistakes; and the one feature of the Bible which now stands out more clearly than any other is that there is definite and unmistakable progression in all that relates to the true knowledge of God and His will for men. The manifest progressiveness of the revelation does not disprove the inspiration of the Biblical writers. What it does disprove is a theological theory of inspiration which, under special circumstances, was brought to the Bible by our fathers, and not learned from the Bible itself. That theory of verbal inspiration, with all that it involves, is the very pith and marrow of Russellism, as it has been, and yet is, of many other pernicious notions under the Christian name, which have hindered the real coming of Christ's kingdom more than all the assaults of unbelief combined.

For which reason the time has fully come to say, quite unequivocally, that for the true 'evangelical type' of Christian faith, some former conceptions of the Bible and of theology must be as definitely given up—i.e. given in exchange for something truer, and therefore better—as in days gone by Christian believers had to give up the Ptolemaic astronomy which satisfied Paul and the Apostles, and adopt that of Copernicus and Galileo.

One instance, specially germane to any scrutiny

of Millennial Dawnism, we may well quote from Dr. Garvie's excellent little book.

> The theories of original sin and total depravity cannot be defended to-day, and need not be defended, as they are not the foundation on which the evangelical representation of the Christian message needs to be built. The story of the Fall, in Gen. iii., is now admitted generally as not literal history; and although Paul undoubtedly regarded it as literal history, it is certain that the doctrines of original sin and total depravity, as they were afterwards developed in Christian Theology by Augustine, Luther, Calvin, go far beyond anything Paul ever thought or taught.
>
> Evangelicalism has been entirely misled by a dogmatic and not a moral or religious interest, when it has assumed that the plan of salvation rested, and must rest, on the story of the Fall, or the doctrines of original sin and total depravity based upon it. Christ never in His teaching alludes to that story. He simply assumes that men are sinful, and need forgiveness; lost, and need salvation.[1]

If this be so—and it is not too much to say that it is accepted and endorsed by almost all educated Christian thinkers of to-day—then the whole foundation of Russellism is gone at one stroke, and the complicated structure of theological details built upon it comes clattering down to a mere heap of religious verbiage. As for the special Millennial inferences which formed the pinnacles of his system, beyond his mere assertions there is no reason whatever to think that it was definite part of the divine plan to contradict beforehand what Jesus Himself so plainly said in response to earnest inquiry—'It is not for you to know times or epochs, which the Father has reserved within His own authority.'[2] Nor are there any grounds whatever, other than an

[1] pp. 60, 61, 64. [2] Acts i. 7 (Weymouth).

inflated pietism on his part, for the idea that to Pastor Russell there have now been imparted—'in due time,' as he claims—sacred secrets which have been hidden from all the true saints and servants of God in past and present generations. This, of course, is the usual claim of all adventurers into occult regions in the Christian name. One has only to acquaint oneself with the strong declarations of Joe Smith, Ann Lee, Mary Ann Girling, Alexander Dowie, Mary Baker Eddy, to become quite familiar with the form of religious monomania which in recent as in ancient times comes at intervals upon certain individuals. It is ever the same, and is to the effect that all humanity has been kept waiting from the beginning for this one special and final revelation. How soon Christianity began to suffer from this malady, is witnessed by the words of the beloved Apostle protesting against the Gnostics of his day. They form still, when interpreted in the light of the rest of our New Testament, the wisest counsel that can be given to the churches of the twentieth century.

> Beloved, do not trust every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are really from God; for many prophets that are false have gone forth into the world. This is how you will recognize the Spirit of God—every spirit which confesses faith in Jesus Christ as having come in real human nature is from God, and every spirit which does not so accept Jesus is not from God. This, indeed, is the mark of the Antichrist which you have heard was coming; and now it is in the world already.

In this spirit and on these principles we will now proceed to test Millennial Dawnism. It may be well to keep to the same order in which we have already

stated its specific doctrines. Here we point out their definite falsities. Every item of the following indictment can be abundantly supported by quotations from the six volumes mentioned; only considerations of space prevent their being here printed *in extenso*.

I. As to the Bible

(1) Russellism's reiterated reference to the Bible as God's Word is, we have seen, of such a kind as to affirm by implication a theory of verbal inspiration which has long since been shown to be unwarranted, by the common consent of all the ablest modern Christian scholars. It is simply not true that all parts of the Bible are equally inspired and authoritative, applicable to Christian times or binding upon Christian consciences. So that the way in which it is handled by Russellism, and picked portions applied to anything and everything, irrespective of context or natural significance, is wholly unjustifiable. On such principles the Bible may be made to prove anything.

(2) The assumption that the opening chapters of Genesis are to be taken as literal history and exact science is altogether unwarranted. They are neither; and any thesis which rests on such an assumption is therefore necessarily false. The truth concerning the first two chapters is unanswerably expressed by the late Dr. Driver.

> The writers to whom we owe the first eleven chapters of Genesis report faithfully what was currently believed among the Hebrews respecting the early history of mankind, at the same time making their narratives the vehicle of many

> moral and spiritual lessons, yet there was much which they did not know and could not take cognizance of; these chapters consequently, incomparable as they are in other respects, contain no account of the real beginnings either of the earth itself, or of man and human civilization upon it.[1]

To take the third chapter as literal history, is, as soon as the narrative is honestly faced in its detail, grotesque in its childishness and blasphemous in its implications. Yet this foolish proceeding is really the main pillar of Russellism.

(3) The constant denunciations of modern science, with special reference to evolution, are equally unwarranted and unworthy. It is easy enough to reply that our fathers 'held the Scriptures to be given by inspiration of God, and to all gainsayers answered—Let God be true and every man a liar.' That is precisely the principle upon which the Christian Church ages ago murdered Bruno and persecuted Galileo. It blindly begs the whole question as to what inspiration means, and it illustrates once more the vicious practice just mentioned, in chopping a few words of the Apostle out of their necessary context, and attributing to them a meaning which he never for one moment intended. To say, as another religious journal does, that—

> The Darwinian theory of evolution overlooked such multitudes of facts, and is now so widely rejected, that the path has been smoothed for a penitent Church to return to the Bible as a little child,

is even worse, for it is simply false. Evolution is not merely a 'Darwinian' theory, but the general conclusion of all the ablest men of science living.

[1] *Genesis*, p. xlii.

Darwinism may be criticized to the uttermost, but with it evolution does not stand or fall. Whilst so far from being 'widely rejected,' no man of science, with any claim to regard, can now be found who rejects it. Nor is it in these days desirable that the Church should come back to the Bible 'as a little child.' The Apostle's ideal is not only much higher, but absolutely essential, if the Christian faith is to endure. 'Howbeit in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men.'

(4) Equally unwarranted and unworthy are the reiterated sneers (they are nothing less) of Russellism—and some others—at the principles of criticism in general, and the 'Higher Criticism' in particular. This is not the place to discuss at any length what these much-abused terms mean and involve.[1] In the abler words of a scholar whose verdict might well be taken as final:—

> I think it can be shown that criticism, so far from throwing doubts upon either the uniqueness of Israel's true knowledge of God or the personal influence of God as producing this, certainly proves the former, and leaves us with the latter as its most natural and scientific explanation. Or to put this otherwise—the most advanced criticism provides grounds for the proof of a divine revelation in the Old Testament, at least more firm than those on which the older apologetic used to rely.[2]

In spite of all the innuendoes, and even anathemas, which Russellism and some others think fit to hurl against the more thorough examination of the

[1] I have stated the case with fair fullness in two chapters of *Why Does Not God Intervene?* and elsewhere, in answer to questions, in *The Bible in Modern Light*. Both these can be obtained of C. H. Kelly.

[2] *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*, Dr. G. Adam Smith, p. 115.

Bible, the summary of Professor W. J. Moulton remains true—and significant.

> In their broad outlines the results of modern criticism have secured the allegiance of nearly all the scholars of all the Protestant churches, and seem to be impregnable. The task of the future will be much more to interpret than to disprove these results.[1]

(5) The whole method of quotation exemplified in these volumes is unjustifiable on rational grounds. By 'rational' is meant only what the Apostle meant when he said—'In mind be men.' What is perpetually done in the five thousand references to the Bible made in these six volumes is to cut out any verse, anywhere, that admits of being verbally applied to some one of the elaborations of the scheme, and claim its support as a 'Scripture proof.' Nothing would be easier than to fill these pages with instances. Take one case only, obtained by opening vol. ii. quite at haphazard at this moment. What do we find?

> *Dan. ix. 25.*
>
> The fall of A.D. 1874, where the Jubilee cycles point out that our Lord was due to be present, corresponds to the time of His baptism and anointing by the Holy Spirit, when He became Messiah the Prince (Dan. ix. 25) and began His work of reaping the Jewish harvest.
>
> The spring of 1878 marks the date when the nominal church systems were 'spewed out' (Rev. iii. 16), and from which time they are not the mouthpieces of God, nor in any degree recognized by Him.
>
> Now trouble is impending over nominal Christendom, but the storm is stayed until the wheat is garnered, until God's messengers seal His servants in their foreheads (intellects) with the truth (Rev. vii. 3).

[1] *Thirty-ninth Fernley Lecture*, p. xviii.

Have these three verses, thus appealed to, anything whatever honestly to do with the matter in hand? No; nothing whatever. It is simply a case of tying attractive fruit on to a barren tree, in order that the tree may seem to have naturally borne the fruit. There is no exaggeration in saying that this is what is done in these volumes thousands of times.

(6) A further extension of the same vicious proceeding appears when, on almost all these pages, the writer takes in hand to interpret what he quotes. These interpretations form, indeed, the veritable bricks and mortar of the whole elaborate structure. Again it is not too much to say that, with really few exceptions, the method and matter of interpretation are alike forced, artificial, and false throughout. If only space permitted, here should be given definitely before the reader's eyes one hundred and fifty instances—carefully selected—of this procedure. It would be easy to multiply them. But as that is not practicable, the few following specimens are submitted, as being truly typical of all the rest. They are found equally in all the six volumes, and are all alike, viewed as professed expositions, unwarranted and misleading. They are simply made to fall in with notions to which they have no real application whatever.

Rev. vii.

As intimated, aside from those who, falling from the position of the elect, go into the second death, there is yet another class brought to our notice as failing to make their calling and election sure, but who will not go into the second death because they have not sinned wilfully in gross immorality, nor in denying the merit of the precious blood. This class we have already referred to as the 'Great Company'

> who will come up 'out of great tribulation, and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb'; but while gaining a spiritual nature and a great blessing, and a participation in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb as guests, they will nevertheless lose the great prize which is to go to the very elect only—the faithful overcomers, those who will follow the footsteps of Jesus rejoicingly and heartily (Rev. vii.). This great company fails to maintain its place in the elect—fails to be of the very elect—because of insufficient zeal; therefore the Captain of our Salvation will lead these to a spiritual blessing—to perfection on a lower plane of spirit being because they have trusted in Him.

Is this an exposition? No; it is nothing but a verbal imposition in the interests of the scheme of Millennial Dawn. Precisely the same applies to all these which here follow, and the list may be extended to any length.

> *Matt. viii.* 22; 2 *Cor. i.* 10; *Rom. viii.* 24.
>
> Our Lord's estimate of life and death is illustrated by His words, 'Let the dead bury their dead; go thou and preach the Gospel.' Here unbelievers are referred to as still dead, because of having no union with the Life-giver; while the believers are equally referred to as alive, though they are saved from death as yet only by hope, and cannot experience the actual delivery from the power of death until the resurrection.

Acts iii. 19 is a favourite quotation, occurring many times. It is always taken from the version of 1611—which is manifestly a blunder, and is corrected in the Revised. But no notice is here taken of the latter; for a manifest reason—it would plainly contradict Russellism. In all the quotations, moreover, the word 'restitution' is carefully employed.

There shall ultimately come to mankind at the second advent of our Lord great 'times of refreshing'—times of restitution of all things which 'God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.' Whoever may think the Apostle Peter was preaching a doctrine of evolution when preaching the Gospel of restitution must have closed his eyes and stopped his reasoning faculties; for if the original condition of man was that of a monkey, or if it was anything whatever inferior to our present condition, the Apostle would have been the veriest fool to hold out as a grand hope and prospect times of restitution, for restitution means a restoration of that condition which previously existed.

2 *Pet. i.* 4; *Rom. viii.* 10.

The Bible view honours God in revealing to us His mercy and magnanimity towards man in his fallen estate in the provision for man's redemption and for his restitution to his original condition, at the hands of his Redeemer, during the Millennium. But a fruitful source of confusion in the minds of Christian people when studying the nature of man, and particularly when attempting to obtain the scriptural views upon the subject, is their failure to distinguish between mankind in general and the Church, the 'little flock' which God is selecting from amongst men during the present age, and fitting and preparing for new and superhuman conditions—spiritual conditions. Failing to 'rightly divide the word of truth,' they apply to all men the statements and promises of the Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, which are addressed only to the Church class, and which have no bearing whatever upon the restitution hopes held out for mankind. These 'exceeding great and precious promises' are proportionately as untrue of the world as they are true of the Church. Thus, for instance, the Apostle's words—'The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness' (Rom. viii. 10)—which apply only to the Church, the special and peculiar conditions of the call of the Church during this Gospel age, is interpreted to mean the same with respect to all humanity.

In appreciating this it must be borne in mind that throughout these 'studies' 'the Church' means only the followers of Pastor Russell. All the rest of the ordinary Christian churches as we now know them are included under the term 'Babylon,' which is said to be the New Testament symbol for Christendom.

> Is it at all surprising that this mass of four hundred millions professedly constituting the Church of Christ, and calling itself His kingdom—'Christendom'—is disowned by the Lord, and by Him given the more appropriate name 'Babylon' (mixture, confusion)?

Acts iii. 19, 23, as already intimated, appears again and again. This is a fair specimen :—

> Another text frequently misapplied to the world which belongs to the Lord's consecrated people says :—'We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us' (2 Cor. iv. 7). Here the Church alone is referred to—those who have received the treasure of the new mind, the new nature. The highest possible aspiration ever to be opened to humanity according to the divine word of promise is 'restitution'—to be restored to the full perfection of the human nature, lost in Eden, redeemed at Calvary (Acts iii. 19, 23).
>
> 2 *Cor. iii.* 12.
>
> Likewise heavenly beings are described as spirit beings, i.e. invisible beings possessed of power, intelligence, &c. This is applicable not only to God, of whom our Lord said—'God is a Spirit,' but it is applicable also to our Lord Jesus, since His resurrection, for of Him it is declared—'Now the Lord is that Spirit.' It is applied also to angels and to the Church which is assured that in the first resurrection each overcomer shall have a spirit body.

A fair type of incorrect quotation even from the older Version, along with an utterly unwarranted

exegesis, is found in reference to Ps. lxxxv. 12. Let the reader turn to this Psalm and mark its natural application—'Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase'—and then note the exposition of Russellism. The question in hand is—Can the earth in future ages support such a Millennium as is suggested? The last century closed, it is estimated, with 1,531,639,150 people living.

> Now with this large allowance and liberal estimate everywhere, what can we say respecting the ability of the earth to furnish these habitation and food? Remembering the Lord's promise that in the Millennial period 'the earth shall yield her *increase*,' and that the desert and wilderness-places of the earth shall become as a garden of Eden, we may safely estimate upon all the land, which we find, according to recent estimates, to be 57,000,000 square miles, or over 36,000,000,000 acres. What would this mean as to space for each individual who has ever lived in the world—i.e. 28,441,126,838 persons? It means that there would be twelve hundred and seventy-five acres for each little village of two hundred families. Quite a sufficiency of room, all will agree, under the new conditions promised. But if more space be necessary, with faith we will readily see that it will be quite within the divine power to raise vast continents from the depths of the oceans, or, indeed, to give a literal as well as a symbolical fulfilment to the declaration—'There shall be no more sea.'
>
> *Rom. xii. 2.*
>
> The bringing of every thought into harmony with the mind of God is a gradual work. The Apostle terms this process transforming work, saying—'Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed (to the heavenly nature) by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. . . . It is commonly believed that when a man is converted or turned from sin to righteousness, and from unbelief and opposition

to God to reliance upon Him, that is the transforming which Paul meant. Truly that is a great change—a transformation; but not the transformation which Paul here refers to. That is a transformation of character; but Paul refers to a *transformation of nature*, promised to believers *during the Gospel age*, on certain conditions, and he was urging believers to fulfil those conditions. Those thus transformed are reckoned new creatures, begotten of God, and partakers to that extent of the divine nature. This new divine mind is the earnest of our inheritance of the complete divine nature—mind and body. Some may be a little startled by this expression 'a divine body'; but we could not imagine either our Divine Father or our Lord Jesus as merely great minds without bodies. Theirs are glorious spiritual bodies, though it doth not yet appear how great is the glory, and it shall not until we also share the divine nature.

Isa. xxxv. 8.

The way back to actual human perfection is to be made very plain and easy; so plain that none may mistake the way; so plain that the wayfaring man and those unacquainted therewith shall not go astray.

Here we see that 'the way of holiness' is represented as being the way back to be humanly 'perfect,' as Adam was. The exegesis is false, and we will consider the case of Adam presently.

Lev. xxvi. 17, 18, 24, 28.

'And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto Me, then I will punish you seven times more (further) for your sins.' This threat of 'seven times' of punishment is mentioned three times. The connexion in which the seven times are threatened indicates that they include a final and conclusive punishment upon that people, after the other chastisements had repeatedly failed to reform them permanently. These *seven times*, therefore, refer to the length of time during which the Gentiles should rule over them. And to this period of seven times our Lord undoubtedly referred when speaking of the 'times of the Gentiles,'

Mark well here, as being thoroughly typical, the worth of 'therefore' and 'undoubtedly.' Of such flimsy stuff as this, the whole structure of Millennial Dawnism is built up.

1 *Cor. xv.* 8.

'Last of all He was seen of me also—as by one born before the due time' (1 Cor. xv. 8—literal rendering). As the resurrection of our Lord was His birth from the dead to the full perfection of spiritual being (Col. i. 18, Rom. viii. 29), so the resurrection of the Church, the body of Christ, is here and elsewhere referred to as a birth. Paul's statement means that he saw Him as we shall see Him—as He is; he saw Him as all the body of Christ shall see Him, but before the due time, before he was born from the dead, and therefore before able to endure it—yet as each one so born shall in due time see Him.

To call such exegesis as this childish is far too mild; it is utterly false, and correspondingly misleading to such as do not know better.

Isa. lii. 7.

'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings.'

The Church [that is, Russellism] is thus enabled to point out to the world the cause of the trouble [which closed in 1914]; to announce the presence of the new Ruler [Christ, who came in 1874]; to declare the policy, plan, and object of the new dispensation, and to instruct the world as to the wisest course to pursue in view of these things. It is to this mission of the 'feet,' or last members of the Church, who will declare upon the mountains (kingdoms) the reign of Christ begun, that Isa. lii. 7 refers.

Every honest reader of the chapter thus mentioned can see for himself that the words quoted have no such reference whatever.

Again, as to *Ps. xlvi.* 6 :—

The same thought—viz. Christ as taking control—is expressed by Daniel when he says—'Then shall Michael

> the great Prince stand up.' To stand up signifies to assume authority, to give commands. See 'ariseth' (Isa. ii. 19, 21).

This, in spite of the utterly unmistakable declaration of the prophet himself at the beginning of this chapter—'The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.' So much better than the prophet does Pastor Russell know to whom these words refer. But again:—

> Another illustration of this symbol is from David, who says of Christ prophetically—'He uttered His voice, the earth melted.'

Whereas any honest reader of this Psalm (xlvi.) will see that there is in it no reference to Christ at all.

One specimen should perhaps be given of the way in which all through these six volumes the writer interpolates passages, in quotation, to serve his own notions. In the following instance 'the great trouble' and 'this great day' refer to the time between 1878, when ordinary churches were to be rejected of God, and 1914, when the Millennium was to begin.

> Isa. xxxi. 1, 3, referring to the great trouble now impending, says, Woe unto them that go down into Egypt (to the world) for help (for worldly ideas and plans and for counsel as to how they should act in the crisis of this great day), and stay on horses (who endeavour to ride the old false doctrinal hobbies); and trust in chariots (worldly organizations), because they are many; and in horsemen (the great leaders in false doctrines), because they are very strong; but who look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord (for the safety and victory in this day of trouble will not be with the multitude).—Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not

> spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out His hand (His power, the power of the truth and other agencies, as He will do shortly), both he that helpeth shall fail, and he that is helped (by the powers of Egypt—the world's ideas) shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

This is precisely the same method as is adopted on most of the pages of Mrs. Eddy's conglomeration entitled *Science and Health : A Key to the Scriptures*. The 'key' consists, there as here, in interpolating pseudo-explanations just where you please and as you please, so as to make the writer mean anything in the world but what he did actually mean.

It would be as useless as wearisome to prolong this list. All that needs here to be plainly understood is that these specimens of Russellism's interpretation of the Bible are quite true to all the rest which cannot here be printed. No comment surely is needed, beyond marvelling, with genuine lamentation, that in these days millions of people should have been led to regard this pious piffle as a fair and honest way of treating the Bible.

(7) One case calls for special though brief attention. The Book of Daniel is well known to be the happy hunting-ground of all forms of Millenarianism in the Old Testament, just as that known as 'Revelation' is in the New. It is impossible and equally unnecessary to follow the devious ways of interpreters in regard to both these.[1] But it may be well to add to the foregoing just these two or three

[1] Should any reader desire sensible as well as scholarly guidance in regard to these much-distorted portions of the Bible, he cannot do better than study the late Dean Farrar's volume on Daniel in *The Expositor's Bible* (Hodder & Stoughton) ; and, for Revelation, the little volume by Dr. Anderson Scott in *The Century Bible Series* ; together with *The Book of Revelation*, by J. T. Dean (T. & T. Clark).

specimens of the way in which, out of the last two chapters in Daniel, a 'clear description of the times in which we are now living' is obtained.

As to chapter xi. :—

> The time of the end—a period of one hundred and fifteen years, from A.D. 1799 to A.D. 1914, is particularly marked in the Scriptures. 'The Day of his Preparation' is another name given to the same period, because in it a general increase of knowledge, resulting in discoveries, &c., paves the way to the coming Millennium of favour. The last forty years of the time of the end is called the end or 'harvest' of the 'Gospel age,' as we read in Matt. xiii. 39, 'The harvest is the end of the age.'

All this is sheer assertion, save that the attempt to fasten upon Christ's words the vagaries of Russellite interpretation, borders on the blasphemous.

Into Pastor Russell's attempt to find the exact fulfilment of these difficult verses in the evils of the Papacy, and the career of Napoleon, we cannot, of course, here enter. It is a purely arbitrary and quite unwarranted exegesis. Nothing is easier than to say :—

> Verse 31 connects with the thought of verse 27, and we recognize it as referring to the more successful of the two powers in the Roman Empire—Papacy.
>
> When it comes to the very important point of noting where Papal dominion was broken, it is but reasonable to expect that Napoleon, the leading character associated with this change, should be marked out by a description of his peculiar characteristics. Such a description we do find, and Napoleon Bonaparte's career corresponds exactly with that description. Verses 31–35 describe Papacy, its errors and abominations, and the Reformation and its little help, yet partial failure through flatteries.

This is all pure conjecture, whose only recommendation is that it suits the chronology of Millennial

Dawnism. Whilst as to interpretation, the follow ng must suffice, as assuredly it ought to do :—

> Verse 37, 'He shall neither regard the god (ruler) of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god (ruler), for he shall exalt himself in opposition to all.' Not only did Napoleon not respect the god of his fathers, Papacy, but neither did he regard favourably any of the Protestant sects, here represented as women. As the one true Church is symbolically called the Bride of Christ, and as the Church of Rome in unfaithful alliance with earthly empire is called a harlot, so the various Protestant sects are called women.

By the side of this pitiful nonsense, the late Dean Farrar's thoughtful and scholarly volume on Daniel is as refresh ng as it is honest.

(8) Biblical chronology necessarily plays a large part in the Russellite scheme. The latter is, indeed, so far as figures are concerned, 'fearfully and wonderfully made.' The calm assurance with which, no matter how far back in the dimmest antiquity, exact dates even to a year are announced, is truly noteworthy. The writer is verily a great deal too sure. Says he :—

> We have found a clear and connected line of chronology from creation to the beginning of the Christian era—in all, a period of four thousand one hundred and twenty-eight years, which, together with eighteen hundred and seventy years of the Christian era, make six thousand years from creation to the year A.D. 1873.

He has to own, indeed, that his dates do not agree with those of Archbishop Usher. That, of course, is so much the worse for Usher—who is dismissed with the pious sentence, 'We rely on the Bible alone believing that God is His own interpreter.' When

it also becomes too manifest to be denied that there are numerical errors in 'God's Word,' then the conclusion is :—

> Such a mistake could easily occur, but God has so guarded His Word that the few trivial errors of copyists are made very manifest, and the full harmony of His Word gives ample foundation for faith.

The final summary—except as to the Millennium, which we consider later on—is :—

> So then, whereas Usher dates A.D. 1 as the year 4005 from the creation of Adam, it really was, as we have shown, the year 4129, according to the Bible record ; thus showing the year A.D. 1872 to be the year of the world 6000, and A.D. 1873 the commencement of the seventh thousand-year period, the seventh millennium or thousand-year day of earth's history.

It is all too true that to myriads of men and women animated by sincere desire to know Christian truth, these assertions, made in such strong confidence, have been largely impressive. And most Russellites, together with not a few in Evangelical Churches, will neither welcome nor accept the true answer to all this waste of words. But the plain truth must be told, viz. that it is all delusion together. For there never was, as an actual historical fact and a definite date from which all following years might be reckoned, a sudden creation of an individual named Adam and his wife named Eve. We know that to-day as surely as we know that the sun does not go round the earth, in spite of anything said in the Psalms. So then, apart from the actual facts of European history, which we shall presently see crush into foolish fragments all the vaticinations of Millennial

Dawnism—on sheer grounds of our indubitable modern knowledge, the foundation-stone of the whole Russellite chronology disappears as mere religious imagination, and the whole structure based upon it comes to naught save a confused heap of words and figures. Not only does every educated man to-day know this, but all our children, in all the schools throughout the land which deserve the name, are being taught it. So truly is Mr. George Jackson warranted in saying :—

> It is, indeed, hardly less than cruel to allow young men and women to grow up in the belief that these early chapters of Genesis are literal history, and afterwards to send them to a University. There are multitudes who have felt themselves driven silently and sadly to surrender the faith of their fathers, because that faith has always been presented to them bound up with doctrines concerning man and the universe which they now know to be false. If, therefore, the Church is to have any Gospel for such as these ; if she is to keep the sons she has, and recover those she has lost, she must learn to restate her faith in terms that will not clash with that wider knowledge into which the Author of all truth is to-day leading men.[1]

In simple but well-supported words, Dr. G. A. Smith sums up the case which in itself alone puts an end—for all to whom truth is anything—to the vagaries of Russellism.

> The Book of Genesis fixes the building of the Tower of Babel in 2564 B.C., or, if we take the Greek data, in 3166, and asserts that till then the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. Yet we have discovered inscriptions in three languages of different families, Sumerian, Babylonian, and Egyptian, which are all earlier than either

[1] *Studies in the Old Testament*, pp. 97, 98.

> of these dates. Clearly, then, on this ground of chronology alone, we cannot regard the early chapters of Genesis as actual history.[1]

(9) Here, then, manifestly, our scrutiny of Millennial Dawnism might well come to an end. But as error always dies hard, it will be best to go on patiently to estimate other features which are noticeable in this latest pseudo-Gospel.

The assumption that a universal flood 'completely obliterated all evidence of the genius and handiwork of the Father of our race' is a necessity for Russellism, because of its doctrine of human nature, which we must soon consider. But it is nevertheless utterly unwarranted. Mr. Jackson is again entirely justified in saying :—

> That some terrible local cataclysm which once overtook the original seat of the Semitic race lies behind our Old Testament story is probably true. But the narrative as it stands is plainly unhistorical. Probably no intelligent person now believes in a universal deluge which submerged the tops of the highest mountains over the whole earth.[2]

Yet that is what the words distinctly say—'All the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered.' So then, Russellism—together with some other such Bible theories—must simply take its choice. It must either give up once and for all its foundation principle, viz. to take as literal history the opening chapters of Genesis; or, it must reduce Christian faith to sheer blind superstition by compelling it to accept what every educated man, woman, and child living, now knows to be not only untrue, but unthinkable.

[1] *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the New Testament*, p. 91.
[2] *Studies in the Old Testament*, p. 112.

(10) Again, the claim which Pastor Russell makes to a superior and unique understanding of the Bible is entirely unwarranted. That a remarkable mechanical acquaintance with the Scriptures is shown in these volumes, no one can deny. But it is altogether the knowledge of the letter, used with measureless ingenuity to prop up a theory which starts, as we have just seen, from really false premisses. This ingenuity is manifest not only in the irrelevant quotations and misleading interpretations noted above, but in the poor attempts at critical display which are found on these pages. We will take only one or two as specimens.

Rev. xx. 5. This verse is a very awkward one for Russellism, because it says so distinctly—'The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.' But as Millennial Dawnism insists that earth's dead are all being recreated gradually during the whole Millennium—from 1914 to 2914—it passes the ingenuity even of Pastor Russell to square it with his theory. There is, therefore, only one course open, viz. to get rid of it. So then, this is appended :—

> In this verse, the words 'But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished' are spurious. They are not found in the oldest and most reliable Greek MSS., T. Sinaitic, Vatican Nos. 1209, 1160, nor the Syriac MS. Many passages in modern copies are additions which do not belong to the Bible. Since we are commanded not to add to the Word of God, it is our duty to repudiate such additions as soon as their spurious character is established.

This is very plausible; but, apart from the false reference to Rev. xxii. 18—which says nothing

whatever about adding to 'the Word of God,' but only refers to the preceding messages in Revelation itself—it is very far indeed from being critically settled that chapter xx. 5 is an insertion. In fact, all the best editions of the New Testament, both in Greek and English, include it. In Greek, Lachmann, Tichendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, Nestle, Souter; and in English, the Revised Version, Dr. Weymouth, *The Twentieth Century New Testament*, and Dr. Moffatt. So that it simply comes to the opinion of Pastor Russell against the consensus of modern scholarship. And that opinion, apart from its critical worthlessness, fully explained by the necessity of his peculiar doctrine.

Again, as to *Ps. viii.* :—

> The perfection of man as created is expressed in Ps. viii. 5—'Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.' Heb. ii. 7 is a quotation from Ps. viii. 5, and a critical comparison of the Hebrew and Greek texts can leave no doubt as to the import. The idea clearly expressed is a little lower in degree than angels.

'No doubt as to the import' is true, but unfortunately for Pastor Russell that import is quite contradictory to his assumption. In the first place, no reference whatever is here made to the creation as a definite bygone event. Secondly, nothing whatever is here said or implied as to 'perfection.' Thirdly, 'a critical comparison shows that the quotation in Heb. ii. 7 is taken not from the Hebrew at all, but from the Septuagint. Fourthly, that the Hebrew words are wrongly rendered in our 'Authorized Version,' and mean only that which now appears in the Revised—'Thou hast made him

but little lower than God.' Concerning this verse the well-known and rightly esteemed commentary of Jennings and Lowe remarks :—

> There can be no doubt that the only admissible rendering of the Hebrew is, 'Thou hast made him little less than divine.' The lesson is the dignity of human nature as compared with the rest of creation. But it has nothing whatever to do with 'Adamic perfection before the Fall.'

1 *Pet. iii.* 18, 19, 20, are confessedly difficult verses to interpret. But whether we accept the suggestion of Drs. Rendel Harris and Moffatt, and read, 'It was in the spirit that Enoch also went and preached to the imprisoned spirits,' or not, it is certain that the attempted exegesis of Pastor Russell is false. It exhibits, indeed, a grammatical blunder which would bring serious trouble to any boy in a Greek class at school. 'He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit,' says the Epistle. But the Russellite comment is :—

> In this passage the words 'in the' and 'by the' are arbitrarily supplied by the translators, and are misleading. The Greek reads simply 'put to death flesh, quickened spirit.'

So that to this superior critic there is no difference at all between the nominative case in Greek and the dative. It is this latter which is found here, in both words, beyond question. Hence his pseudo-correction is merely an exhibition of his own ignorance. But it is nothing to Russellism to ride rough-shod over grammar, if the exigencies of Millennial Dawnism require it.

One other illustration of this last remark must suffice. 1 *Cor. xv. 22* is rightly rendered in our

English versions, 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' But this would not suit Russellism; hence

> the declaration of our common version Bible that 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,' is manifestly a mistranslation. Standing in that form it is in conflict with other Scriptures which distinctly limit the number of those who shall be made alive through Christ. The mistranslation favours the doctrine of universal salvation. Other Scriptures, however, make plain that only those will enter into life who do the will of the Father which is in heaven.

So, in order to support the peculiar tenets of Millennial Dawnism, it must be rendered, 'As all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive.' But any honest reader of his Greek Testament can see not only that our common version is right, but that here Russellism first ignores the whole context—which is not dealing with salvation at all, but only with resurrection, quite a different matter; and then, to suit its own convenience, has the impertinence to invert the order of Paul's plain words, so making him again say something quite different from what he intended.

(11) The special attempts at exposition which Russellism exhibits are of no more account than his critical efforts. Considerations of space forbid more than brief illustration. Whether the story of Dives and Lazarus be taken as a parable, like that of the unjust steward, or, as some insist, as a literal history, there is nothing to recommend Pastor Russell's exposition except the requirements of Millennial Dawnism. The most natural interpretation is surely that which emanates from the

context, and continues the lesson of the unrighteous steward. And if allegorical interpretations are to be heeded, at least they must come within the limits of common sense. But what does Russellism teach? That—

> The rich man symbolizes the Jewish nation. His clothing of purple represents royalty. The fine linen symbolically represents righteousness. The sumptuous fare represents the gracious promises of God through the law and the prophets to the Jews. Lazarus symbolizes the Gentiles who were outside the Jewish covenant. The dogs which licked his sores represent Gentiles in general. The rich man, the Jewish nation, took sick, and the dying process began from the time of our Lord's crucifixion. The death of the nation occurred in A.D. 70. The death of the beggar occurred three years and a half after the Cross, at the end of Israel's specified seventy years of special favour. Lazarus, accepted to Abraham's bosom, means that all of that class outcast from the Jewish nation, but hungering for the crumbs of divine favour, were adopted as Abraham's seed or children of his bosom—he typifying God. How has this rich man (Israel), dead as a nation but alive as a people, appealed to Father Abraham to have Lazarus cool his tongue with a drop of water? It came when the Jews of this country in a general petition requested the President of the United States to co-operate with other Christian nations and intercede on behalf of their members in Russia that they might have more liberty and less persecution.
>
> If we look for the rich man's five brethren, we find them. There were twelve tribes of Israel, but the rich man was composed mainly of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. Now, if the two tribes were represented in the one man, the other ten tribes would be properly enough represented in his five brethren. The suggestion of the parable is that nothing would be done for them.
>
> Here, dear friends, we have a consistent interpretation of this parable, and it relieves our minds greatly.

So it does ours. For when we hear of millions of people being 'taken up' with Russellism, we cannot

but wonder at first whether there must not be something in it. But from such performances as this we are driven to Carlyle's estimate of the people of these realms. For we not only find that there is something in Russellism, but that it is a something which makes us feel profoundest pity for those who are led away by such childish delusions.

It will only be necessary to mention, without detail, other two similar instances. Concerning the parable of the ten virgins we are told :—

> One of our Lord's parables was given expressly to illustrate this period of waiting, i.e. from the disappointment of 1844 to the realizations at the end of the '1,335 days'—the fulfilment of which came exactly in October, 1874.

Concerning the four pages in which the particulars of this utterly gratuitous assumption are set out, it is mild criticism to say that they are but fit for waste paper. The fact that 'millions of copies of *Zion's Watch Tower*' have been circulated is but another instance of the fulfilment of another prediction, timeless, indeed, but true, concerning the people who 'will not endure sound doctrine, but will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside to fables.'

Mention has been made above of the way in which Russellism appeals to the Great Pyramid of Ghizeh, as not only a Bible in stone, but as the complete corroboration, according to the divine plan, of Pastor Russell's interpretation of the Bible. It would be easy enough to go *seriatim* through Study X. in vol. iii., which is given up to this theme, and show its preposterousness; but it would be sheer waste of time, in spite of Professor Piazzi Smyth and Mr. Robert Menzies.

> Call to mind that the Scriptures showed us that the full end of Gentile power in the world and of the time of trouble which brings its overthrow will follow the end of A.D. 1914, and that some time before that date the last members of the Church of Christ will have been 'changed,' glorified.

If, then, the Great Pyramid does so exactly corroborate that, as is here made out, all one can say is so much the worse for the Pyramid. For we shall see in a moment what an utter delusion this prediction has proved to be. Finally, if the same estimate of this strange structure does indeed demonstrate the following, it sufficiently condemns itself. For there is no more warrant in the Bible than in science or philosophy, for such false imagination. It is sheer baseless pietistic delusion.

> So then, the relation of the location of the 'Pit' to the axis, if it have any significance in connexion with the arrangements of the Pyramid above it, would seem to indicate that the second death—endless, hopeless destruction—will be the penalty, not only of the wilful sinfulness of men who during the Millennial age of blessed opportunity will refuse to go on to human perfection, but also of any of those sanctified during the Gospel age who wilfully reject Christ's proffered and previously accepted robe of imputed righteousness.

II. As to God

As this is not a treatise on theism or theology, it must suffice simply to state those conceptions of Russellism, in regard to the main elements of Christian faith, which are, from the standpoint already indicated, as misleading for ordinary people as they are false. True evangelical doctrine, as

we have seen, puts aside all notions of verbal inspiration. None the less, but all the more, it regards the Bible as the truest and most precious of all religious records, embodying reliably the progressive revelation of God to humanity through the special training of the Jewish nation, and culminating in all that Christ was and taught and did. But although the Christian belief in the eternal and universal Fatherhood of God comes through Christ alone, it neither rests upon a few picked passages, nor is it the only truth concerning God conveyed by the New Testament. Here it is enough to recall the fact that, with the exception only of Socinians formerly, and of Unitarians in modern times, the Christian belief through all the ages, as in all the churches at the present time, is in the Triune God. How the thought of God developed in the early Church as the whole revelation of Jesus grew upon them, with all that the doctrines of the Holy Trinity involves, is matter for another occasion. There are plenty of rational and sober treatises to justify and expound it. For a brief statement of it nothing better can be found than the section[1] given to this theme in Dr. W. N. Clarke's volume on *The Christian Doctrine of God*, from which we need now quote no more than these few words :—

> If we could set forth all that the historic doctrine of the Triunity attributes to the Father, we should be setting forth all that is conceived to be true of God, and the doctrine simply affirms that His fullness is developed, as it were, or brought into relations and modes of action in the Son and the Spirit. . . Despite its mysteriousness this doctrine has made God seem more intelligible to men, and has helped

[1] pp. 227–248.

> to bring Him nearer to the hearts of His children. By its declaration of the real entrance of God into humanity, and the taking of manhood up into God, it has placed a crown of glory upon human nature, and has helped in giving practical effect to the dignity and freedom of man. This is its glory, that it has stood as a foundation that sustained the faith of ages, and supported a worthy life.[1]

This whole doctrine, however, as indicated above, Russellism dismisses with a scornful wave of the hand and a contemptuous epithet. It is merely 'Trinitarian nonsense.' With that disdainful dismissal, of course, goes also any thought of the Holy Spirit in the usual Christian way. With unmeasured assurance it is declared that—

> There is absolutely no ground whatever for thinking of or speaking of the Holy Spirit as another God, distinct in personality from the Father and the Son.

This is, indeed, to speak in all the confidence of ignorance—if the writer does not know better than thus to talk of 'another God.' If he has any acquaintance at all with the teaching he denounces, then his indictment is hypocritical. For, apart from the Christian treatise just recommended, there is overwhelming testimony that the ordinary Christian faith does not regard the Holy Spirit as 'another God.' Even the old formula 'three persons in one God,' however inadequate as to the term 'persons,' is perfectly plain in its avowal that the doctrine of the Trinity does not inculcate Tritheism. All that we are here, however, concerned to show unmistakably is that Russellism is Unitarianism. The nobility of many Unitarians no one calls in question.

[1] pp. 235, 239.

Only it is altogether necessary that those who follow Millennial Dawnism should know definitely what they are doing. This will be the more definitely emphasized when we go on to consider what Russelism teaches concerning the person of Jesus Christ.

III. As to Jesus Christ

There has probably been more discussion as to the person of Jesus than any other theme in the whole realm of religion. The conceptions of Russelism have certainly the merit of originality, in that no other system of Christian doctrine has ever formulated such before. In estimating them it is not necessary that we should become encyclopaedias of theology. The true evangelicalism for which we here speak is quite as loyal to New Testament teachings as any Millennial Dawnist claims to be. On all rational principles, indeed, the dismissal of the methods of Russellism is the only way to any appreciation of or regard for the whole Bible, in the days that are before us. Neither the true doctrine of the person of Christ, nor any other essential element of Christianity, can be based upon a few picked texts wrenched from their context and made to fit into a certain theory, regardless of all to the contrary which a fair and full induction would involve. The general evangelical belief in the person and work of Christ is based upon such an induction. It is the result of the combined testimony of Gospels and Epistles, viewed impartially in the unsparing light of our latest knowledge through history and criticism—where 'criticism' only means careful scrutiny and honest acknowledgement of facts.

It is on such firm ground that we stand, when we affirm that whatever else the Russellite notions concerning Christ may be, they are not what the New Testament teaches.

We have already specified these notions; it only remains to point out that, taken one by one, they are altogether contrary to what Jesus Himself taught, and His Apostles developed.

(i). The identification of 'Michael' in Dan. xii. 1 with Christ is entirely fictitious and unwarranted—mere Russellite imagination. 'At that time' in that verse has no reference whatever to any Millennial dawn; but naturally and plainly, as Dean Farrar has pointed out, to 'the days—about the year 153 B.C.—of that final effort of Antiochus against the holy people which ended in his miserable death.' But to go further, as Russellism does, and declare that Jesus was none other than the incarnation of the Archangel Michael, is even more revolting than false. Equally false is the assertion that 'in obedience to the will of God Michael gave up his spirit being, and was born of the Virgin Mary as a human being—Jesus Christ.'[1] It is pure assumption on the part of Russellism, only apparently justified by ignoring all witness to the contrary in the Gospels, that Jesus in His earthly life was merely human, and precisely like Adam was before he fell; that He was only begotten a 'new creature' at thirty years of age, at His baptism; that when He died, like all other mortals who die, He became absolutely extinct—His whole being was utterly destroyed; that what the Gospels speak of

[1] See Dr. Haldeman's summary for an impressive statement of the whole case, in brief (C. Cook, New York).

as His resurrection was really His re-creation—this we shall have to notice more fully in a moment; that this re-creation had nothing whatever to do with His human nature, but made Him to be for evermore an invisible spirit being; that then for the first time He became partaker of the divine nature; that the body and clothes in which He appeared to the disciples were specially created for the occasion each time; that as an invisible spirit He came again the second time in 1874, the second Adam, the Father of mankind, during the Millennial age. All this is but the spurious concoction of Pastor Russell; and no one item of it will bear honest scrutiny in the fair and full light of New Testament teaching. Until the Gospels and Epistles are ruled out of court as witnesses, the Christ of Millennial Dawnism is in unthinkable contradiction to their whole testimony.

IV. As to Man, and Human Nature

We have seen how the whole scheme of Russellism falls to pieces with the inevitable removal of its main premiss, viz. the taking as literal history and exact science of the first three chapters of Genesis. But it is necessary in the interests of Christian truth to set its teaching in clear light as to human nature, so that its falsities may become as apparent as they ought to be. From its estimate of the opening chapters of Genesis, Millennial Dawnism insists upon the following items in regard to humanity. Seeing that every one of these specific assertions is false, it is the more necessary to state them unequivocally.

(i.) That Adam and Eve were created suddenly,

exactly six thousand and forty-four years ago, in a definitely local Garden of Eden. For man, a corpse was first made, and then vivified; for woman, a literal rib was taken out of sleeping Adam, first fashioned into a lifeless body, and then also vivified.

(ii.) That as a result of such creation both of them were absolutely perfect, because Genesis reports that 'God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.' And because 'the Scriptures declare, "His work is perfect."'

(iii.) That though he was absolutely perfect in all respects, he was only mortal, and had to live by eating of the trees of the garden. Also he fell by eating of a tree of knowledge which he had been forbidden to touch.

(iv.) That the penalty for eating of that tree was literal, physical death; enforced by driving them out of the garden where was a tree of life, to eat of which would have made them immortal.

(v.) That Adam and Eve began to die physically from that day, and it took Adam nine hundred and thirty years to die; no mention is made of Eve.

(vi.) That because of Adam's sin,

> viewing man as a whole, mentally, morally, and physically, as the Scriptures do, we can see that the curse, the sentence of death, is in operation against every part and element of his being. Looking about us throughout the world, we find corroboration of this on every hand. All are blemished in all respects; all are hopelessly lost under this curse—as it is written, 'I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.'

This, it may be noted, is another fair specimen of the Russellite treatment of Scripture in general. That is to say, assuming that the fifty-first Psalm

was composed by David under the special circumstances alleged, this piteous wail of an adulterer and murderer is wrenched out of its context, and so made to be a universal indictment of human nature—which does not for a moment enter into the thought of the Psalm—that the purest, sweetest, holiest function of humanity, viz. motherhood, is denounced as iniquity. And then we are called upon to wonder, in face of a wholesale slander like this, that thoughtful men and women do not accept and revere and love the Bible. Are they likely to, so long as such falsities prevail?

(vii.) But more.

> This death-curse rests upon us from the moment of birth, and hence demonstrates the fact that it is not the result of our individual sins, but of inherited sins—a curse or blight which has reached us from Father Adam by heredity.

So then, although there really was no Father Adam at all, for the story is allegory, not history[1]; although the Old Testament never once refers to the Fall; although Jesus never once made any reference to it—whilst He had much to say about 'individual sins'; although 'inherited sin' is utterly impossible and unthinkable; although God is said to be a loving Father; in spite of all this we are to proclaim to the world that every human child is born under a death-curse because his primaeval ancestor partook of a tree of knowledge—the very thing which all our children are now urged

[1] The very names Adam and Eve speak for themselves to this effect, Adam being closely related to the Hebrew—Adamah = the ground; and Eve to Chavvah = life

to do every day of their school life. This miserable travesty may be Russellism, but, thank God, it is not Christianity.

(viii.) Nor is Christianity committed to the further libel that human nature, because of Adam, is totally depraved. This dreadful notion used to be supported, after the true Russellite fashion of treating the Bible, by quoting Isa. i. 6—utterly regardless of the plain avowal of the opening words of that chapter that it was a 'vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah to Hezekiah.' It is pitiful to think how in days gone by these two, 'original sin' and 'total depravity,' have been presented to the world of mankind as the very starting-point of the Gospel—in spite of the plain truth which every man at once thoughtful and honest must see, viz. that 'original' sin is unthinkable, that heredity works just as fully for good as for evil. What Russellism seeks to do is to rivet these never-God-intended fetters afresh upon the conscience of humanity. Happily, it will not succeed, for the Church has learned better, and is now teaching the world more truly wherein the sinfulness of sin consists, and how, in the natural results of heredity, to overcome the evil with the good that Jesus brings us.

(ix.) Another falsity of Millennial Dawnism relates to human mortality. There are abundant reasons, though they cannot be here fully exhibited, for pronouncing its doctrine of human nature trebly untrue. We know well that physical death was in the world long before any moral evil had come to pass. We know from the Bible itself—and especially from the doctrine of Jesus, as also of Paul and John—

that physical death is not either the intended or the actual significance of the words, 'Thou shalt surely die,' in the Genesis representation. We know well that the Bible does not countenance the Russellite dogma that human death means utter extinction. Nor does either science or philosophy compel us to think so. For verbal confusion, as well as for flat self-contradiction, the following morsel of Russellism would be hard to beat :—

> Mankind received the spirit of life from God, the fountain of life, through Father Adam. Adam forfeited his right to the power or spirit of life by disobedience, and gradually relinquished his hold upon it—dying slowly for nine hundred and thirty years. Then the body returned to the dust as it was before creation, and the spirit of life, the privilege of living, the power or permission of living, returned to God who gave that privilege of power (Eccles. xii. 7). Nothing in this text implies that the spirit of life wings its way back to God, as some would represent. For the spirit of life is not an intelligence nor a person, but merely a power or privilege which has been forfeited, and hence reverts to the original giver of that privilege.

Here, apart from the absurdity of regarding the entity of personal life as a 'privilege' to return to a contingent giver, we are solemnly assured that this 'privilege' does not 'wing its way back,' but it 'returns' or 'reverts.' The distinction is worthy of Russellism.

(x.) But that is not all. The Millennial doctrine here is that there is to be at the Millennium—that is, there *was* in 1914—a 'first resurrection' of all the faithful Russellites to participate in veritable immortality, and be as Christ is. But another 'resurrection' is to begin now—or rather *began* in

1914—and go steadily on until 2914, of all the 50,000,000,000 human beings who have, according to Pastor Russell's calculations, already lived here and died. But ordinary minds must certainly pause at this point. If death be, as we are again and again assured, utter extinction, so that after death there is nothing left, how on any lines of common sense, let alone science or theology, can nothing rise again? The resurrection of nothing surely must be—nothing. But the resurrection of nothing into something is a trifling miracle to Russellism. Just as, to suit its convenience, the Apostolic 'restoration of all things' in Acts iii. 21 is transformed into the 'restitution of all things to the exact condition in which Adam was before he fell,' so here, the New Testament term 'resurrection,' whether applied to Christ or to humanity, is claimed to be a *re-creation* of all the personalities of the dead. Though even that is manifestly untrue. For if these personalities have veritably been nothing, it is not a case of re-creation at all. It is simply that, to suit the exigencies of Russellism, we are called upon to think of God as creating 50,000,000,000 new personalities, in order that they may enter upon the rewards or punishments due to personalities of that number, with whom they had really nothing whatever to do. This notion may be safely left without comment, though we will presently consider what Russellism proposes to do with the new personalities which have been thus created. We may simply say here, by anticipation, that if the Bible is to be our guide, it knows nothing either of the extinction of mortals at death, or of the annihilation of the impenitent after death. Conditionalism,

equally with Universalism, has been fairly tried in the balances of honest and scholarly exegesis, and found wanting.

V. Christ's Atonement

In so sacred and delicate a matter as the true significance of the death of Jesus upon Calvary, on which whole libraries rather than many volumes have been written, it might easily have been forgiven if Russellism had reverently and modestly suggested some special conceptions of its own. But there are limits even to the liberty which Christian free-thought allows. At least the facts alleged should be true, and the inferences should not contradict either reason or Scripture. Unfortunately, Russellism is equally false in its representations of fact and irrational as well as unscriptural in its inferences.

It must, however, be said in passing, that in order to appreciate these, its manifest errors, we are by no means driven to endorse all that is said by some of its opponents. When, for instance, an American Pastor, after seeking to harrow human feeling to the utmost by attempting to describe the physical agonies of crucifixion, adds the following, one has to realize painfully for the thousandth time how much need Christianity has to cry, 'Save me from my friends!' In defence of the 'orthodox' theory of the Atonement we are told :—

> It was not the smiting of man but the smiting of God that agonized Him. God looked upon Him, and saw Him as the concrete representative of the sin of the world, and smote Him as such. He smote not with the hammer and nails. He smote with that blow of blows—the hiding of

> His face. He turned His back upon Him. He forsook Him utterly. Out of the whelming depths of that separation came the cry of the forsaken. The value of the agony was infinite. It was the equivalent for infinite punishment of sin, and by so much demonstrates that the punishment for sin must be infinite, that the sinner who gets underneath the punishment of sin will be underneath it for ever.[1]

Such words may be sincerely meant, but they may well make many converts for Russellism, and many more for Agnosticism. Concerning such deliverances in the name of Christianity we shall wisely echo the deliberate words of the late Archbishop Magee concerning the doctrine of the creeds of the Church Catholic—'They teach an Atonement, but theory of Atonement, God be praised, they give us none.'

But Millennial Dawnism has no hesitation in giving us one. In this, as in all its dogmas, it speaks as an oracle divine.

> Our Redeemer *purchased* the spirit of life-rights which Father Adam had forfeited for himself and all his family.
>
> The sacrifice which Christ gave on behalf of all was for original sin, Adamic sin and its hereditary weakness in us, Adam's children. Our Lord gave no ransom price for any wilful sin on our part, and hence if we sin wilfully there is no remaining portion of the original merit to apply on account of our wilful transgressions. We should be obliged to pay the penalty of our wilful sins.

There is no need to quote more. Whether this kind of doctrine is likely to draw the men of this age to believe in and turn to the love of God in the Gospel of Jesus, may be sorrowfully left to answer itself.

[1] *Millennial Dawnism the Blasphemous Religion*, by Dr. I. M. Haldeman (C. Cook, New York), pp. 15, 16.

But this remains, that whatever other theory of the Atonement may be more or less true, this is altogether false. There is, alike in the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles, no 'purchase' of life-rights; no sacrifice for original sin. There is no sin anywhere which is not 'wilful'; so that if Christ's self-sacrifice has nothing to do with that, then there is no relation at all between human sinfulness and the tragedy of Calvary. The more extended doctrine of Russellism that Jesus died in order to buy back the human race from physical death, so that all men might be by restitution enabled to have another chance of immortality, is but part of the weird nightmare of Millennial Dawnism, and nothing more.

VI. What Does Salvation Mean?

The general statement of the New Testament, so far as it can be put into one word, is that 'God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.' What is this salvation of the world? In spite of all the doctrinal differences which exist between the churches, there can be no doubt that the real consensus of their answer to this question to-day would be that 'Salvation' means, in Christian language, the being saved from sin, with all its consequences both now and hereafter, into loving and obedient fellowship with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as also into all those human relationships which He approves. That remains as the ideal, whatever means of bringing it to pass may be deemed truest and best. How, then, does Millennial

Dawnism stand when tested by such a standard? In spite of all the multitude of words throughout these three thousand pages, it is difficult indeed to say. There are many references to being 'faithful to the Lord' and to the 'giving up of the will in self-sacrifice' as being the 'elect'; also many indictments of social and national evils, all of which are good in their place. But concerning that personal experience which the New Testament speaks of as 'having passed from death unto life,' and which it everywhere represents as the 'eternal life'—the very pith and marrow of the Gospel promise, the soul and substance of that character transformation which it calls 'holiness'—Russellism has next to nothing to say. 'Death,' to it, is simply and always nothing but the utter cessation of physical existence. 'Eternal life' is to it nothing more than a synonym for everlasting existence. Salvation is represented as either the becoming now one of the elect, the 'little flock' who, when the Millennium comes, are to rule the world in righteousness with Christ, and then to live for ever; or else it consists in giving the chance of a prolonged existence on this planet to millions of newly created personalities who during the Millennium are to have new bodies and a fresh trial. What salvation, therefore, means now is that there has been going on a process of selection—of course, around Pastor Russell and his co-workers as the chief priests, for according to his avowals all others have been in error—which has resulted in a 'little flock' who are now with Christ, regenerating human society—until 2914.

It is impossible without vast space to note one by one all the false and foolish fantasies which

flow like an unceasing river of words from the pens of the writers of these volumes, especially—for the subject of this moment—the last volume, entitled *The New Creation*. But so far as it can be fairly and briefly expressed in his own words, we have it thus. For four thousand years men were left to death and their own devices, but 'the Gospel age' began when Jesus came at first, or in A.D. 30.

> It would not even then have been due time, except for the divine purpose to call and gather and polish and make ready the elect Church to share with the Redeemer in the great Millennial work of blessing the world. . . . God, foreseeing that it would require this entire Gospel age for this election, sent His Son for the redemptive work just long enough in advance to accomplish it. None can be called while still under condemnation on account of Adam's sin. True, our Lord said to the Pharisees—'I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.' But we are to recognize a great difference between calling men to repentance, and calling them to the high calling of the divine nature and joint heirship with Christ. No sinners are called to this; hence it is that we, being by nature 'children of wrath,' all require first to be justified freely by the precious blood of Christ. The close of this call or 'day of salvation' or acceptable time will come no less certainly than it began. A definite positive number were ordained of God to constitute the New Creation, and so soon as that number shall be completed, the work of this Gospel age will be finished. The Scriptures hold out the thought that for this limited elect number of the Royal Priesthood a crown apiece has been provided; and that as each accepts the Lord's call and makes his consecration under it, one of the crowns is set apart for him. To our understanding the general call to this joint heirship with our Redeemer as members of the New Creation of God, ceased in 1881.

One cannot but get nauseated with page after page of this kind of talk; but it is necessary to speak

plainly concerning it for the sake of truth and humanity, no less than of the Christian faith. The assumption is that all who accept Russellism, and, according to its ideals, consecrate themselves, do now constitute this Royal Priesthood, and show all the signs of superior character which may reasonably be expected therefrom. Then, is this true as a matter of fact? Professor Seeley speaks in his *Ecce Homo* of the true type of Christian character as issuing in a 'higher-toned goodness' or holiness—

> a character of such elevation that his mere presence has shamed the bad and made the good better, and has been felt at times like the presence of God Himself.

Is this, then, the manifest hall-mark of Millennial Dawnism? It is difficult to justify a general condemnation, but at least this must be said, that no such special traits of character have earned the notice of either Church or world, in regard to the followers of Pastor Russell. Nor certainly, with the facts already mentioned before us, unanswered and unanswerable, can we recognize such superiority in the leader himself. Dr. Torrey, indeed, who is fairly well known as an earnest evangelist, has publicly declared :—

> We have never known one single person who was thoroughly surrendered to God and an earnest student of the Word who has been led astray by Russellism. We have known many Russellites; we have never known one who was a well-balanced Christian. Every leader among them that we have known (and we have known not a few) has been crooked in his personal morals, in his business, or in his home life. This is not to be wondered at when the leader's business and domestic record is known.

All through these volumes there runs an acid stream of invective against all ordinary Christian churches, both ancient and modern. As above mentioned, special condemnation is poured out upon Christendom in general, which is said to be definitely the intended Babylon of the Apocalypse. But there is no more warrant in fact than in Scripture for such identification; nor for the unmeasured indictment brought against all forms of Christianity as being blind leaders of the blind. No, nor for the attempt to pour scorn upon Christian Foreign Missions in general by reason of an alleged tour of investigation, extending over one hundred and sixteen days, in 1911. It is beyond our scope to investigate here the report connected with this tour, but it has been done by Mr. C. Cook with sufficient thoroughness to show the nature of such a pretentious performance.[1] This careful and thorough critic seems to be quite warranted in his summary that—

> If the report were to be read only by thoughtful persons, it would serve no other end than to bring disdain upon the men whose names are signed to it. Unfortunately, Russell has made sure that it shall be read by millions of people, most of whom know little about geography, history, or missions.

VII. As to the Millennium

It is impossible, however, to separate the Russellite conception of salvation from its Millennial scheme. With a brief but plain and careful summary of this we will, therefore, close our present scrutiny.

We have already seen that there is not only no

[1] See *All About One Russell*, C. Cook, Nassau Street, New York.

warrant in science or in history for taking the early chapters of the Bible as literal history and their figures as mathematically exact, but that all we know now to be true in science and history is opposed to our doing so. Seeing, therefore, that the whole complex scheme of Russellism as regards its Millennial doctrines ultimately depends upon such mathematical exactness in the Hebrew records, the whole structure of Russellism falls to pieces. It is seen to be nothing more than fantastic religious imagination—whether more or less sincere—resting on an entire delusion. Its assumptions being quite untrustworthy, there is *no single instance* in which its interpretations of the past, or its predictions for the future, have found verification in fact. The whole conglomeration of these six volumes does but exhibit as flimsy and unjustifiable a web of religious phantasy—equally untrue and misleading—as Mrs. Eddy's pretentious work above mentioned does in regard to science and philosophy. The alleged 'key,' in both cases alike, no more unlocks the sacred mysteries of Holy Writ than the sword of Alexander untied the Gordian knot. The following is a fair specimen of the method adopted, and its results. This is supposed to be an exposition of Christ's words in Matt. xxiv. 32, 35—'Now learn a parable of the fig-tree. . . . This generation shall not pass away until all this happens.'

> A generation might be reckoned as equivalent to a century (practically the present limit) or one hundred and twenty years, Moses' life-time and the Scripture limit (Gen. vi. 3). Reckoning a hundred years from 1780, the date of the first sign, the limit would reach to 1880; and to our understanding every item predicted had begun to be

> fulfilled at that date—the harvest or gathering time beginning October, 1874; the organization of the Kingdom; the taking by our Lord of His great power as the King in April, 1878; and the time of trouble or day of wrath which began October, 1874, and will end October, 1914; and the sprouting of the fig-tree.
>
> Those who choose might without inconsistency say that the century or generation might as properly reckon from the last sign, the falling of the stars, as from the first, the darkening of the sun and moon, and a century beginning 1833 would be still far from run out. Many are living who witnessed the star-falling sign.

Unfortunately for this brilliant exegesis there was another 'star-falling sign' in 1866, which myriads in this country witnessed with intensest interest. So that if 1833 is ruled out, Russellism can still run for another port of refuge to 1866 and the century following. But all such double-shuffles will not avail to save the credit of Millennial Dawnism, for throughout these volumes, again and again, the whole scheme is definitely committed to a series of events which were predictions at the time they were first printed, but now are—proved delusions.

To state the case with final succinctness, we will begin with what is declared to be the exact six-thousandth year from the creation of Adam and Eve, viz. 1872. Concerning this it is only required to say, however gently, with blunt plainness, that it is a pure figment of Pastor Russell's imagination without any sober warrant whatever. Simply to affirm that—

> The Bible, our God-provided history of the first three thousand years, is the only work in the world which, beginning with Adam, the first man mentioned in history, furnishes us a clear and connected history down to a period where secular history is well authenticated,

is but to set up a pious tradition against that modern

knowledge which can no more be dismissed as false than to-day's astronomy can be put away for that of the early Christians. It is also to degrade the Bible from a true and valid record of God's progressive revelation of Himself to men, into a mere bewildering collection of arithmetical puzzles. No schoolmaster living has the right or duty to tell his young pupils to-day that it is just six thousand and forty-four years since Adam and Eve were suddenly created, absolutely perfect beings, in the Garden of Eden. And what the children may not learn, grown people ought not to be continually saying. We come next to 1874, the great year of all years for Millennial Dawnism. There is no need for repeated quotation. All through these volumes it is reiterated that Christ did definitely come for the second time in that year. Then also began the times of 'restitution,' so that since October, 1874, we have entered upon the great antitypical Jubilee period; which is to last until 2875. Jesus Himself has been invisibly present in the world ever since. So then, before 1874 there was no presence of Christ with His Church in any way or degree. Has, then, anything happened in Christendom to signify so great difference as the presence or absence of the living Christ with His Church on earth? Nothing whatever. The dilemma, therefore, faces us, either Christ's presence on earth with His people makes no difference at all; or Russellism is false. The plain truth being, of course, that there is no valid ground whatever for such a Russellite assertion.

Let us pass on to 1878. In this year, according to Millennial Dawnism, four definite events took place. (i.) It marked the date at which 'the dead

in Christ' did 'rise first.' So then, in that year all the Apostles and faithful saints of the entire age—who had, according to Russellism, long been extinct utterly—were created afresh, glorified, and put in possession of spiritual bodies, i.e. changed into spirit beings like their Lord. (ii.) The time of Israel's rejection, which 'we know even to the very day,' ended, and they entered once more into divine favour. (iii.) All nominal church systems —i.e. all except Russellism—were 'spewed out,' and ceased to be in any degree recognized by God. (iv.) The end of the Gospel age began by the preparation of woes for all Christendom. Now what is the truth in regard to all these items? This, that they are all pure fictions, and deserve no notice from any man of Christian faith and sense.

In 1881 the time of special favour to the Gentiles closed; Babylon, i.e. Christendom, began to fall; days of vengeance began, and 'a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation' commenced. Have there been any facts to confirm these 'predictions'? None whatever; save to the Russellite mind.

Between 1910 and 1912 there were to be serious times of trouble, culminating with 1914, which was to be the great year in which—in October—the Lord would set up His kingdom in power. What happened in 1914 we are not likely to forget. And some Russellites may be found hardy enough to claim that the time of trouble which then began confirmed their predictions. But what are the facts? There is no need to repeat what we have already so plainly quoted from these volumes in this regard, beyond the reminder that the statements are unmistakable. It was

an established truth that *the final end of the kingdoms of this world* and the *full establishment of the kingdom of God* will be accomplished at the end of A.D. 1914.

The battle of the great day of God will end in 1914 with the *complete overthrow of earth's present rulership.*

The Gentile kingdoms will be *ground to powder, and utterly removed,* no place being found for them, in 1914. Babylon —Christendom—will *be utterly overthrown* and her influence over the world broken.

In 1914 the Gentiles will all be overturned and *Christ's kingdom fully established.*

Surely we need no more. These declarations are unmistakable, and no shuffle of words can alter their significance. And the plain truth is that *every one of them is utterly falsified by facts.* No one of these things has happened, or shows at present any likelihood of coming to pass. There are, for sober and thoughtful men and women, no indications whatever that the Millennium has begun; that Satan is bound, i.e. all evil restrained from misleading men—until 2914; Christendom is not destroyed; it is less likely to be destroyed than it has ever been before; the kingdoms of this world are not overthrown; assuredly they are not become Christ's, nor is His kingdom fully established; the Jews are not restored to their own land; and there are no indications whatever of the 'restitution' of Abraham, or the prophets, or Apostles, or any other of the blessed dead.

In a word, there is no one single thing in which the predictions of Russellism are fulfilled, any more than there is any one single principle in which its treatment of the Bible is justified.

This being the case in regard to the past, it seems hardly worth while to consider its construction of

the future, whether near or far. But in order to complete our painful survey, we will enumerate the fictions with which that future is pictured by Millennial Dawnism. It is no more than fanatic fiction to say that Christ and the invisible elect, whose numbers were finished in 1881, are now converting the world to righteousness, any more than they were before Russellism was heard of. It is sheer delusion to assert that all the dead, who were extinct, are now beginning to be created afresh with a view to a second probation here on earth. There are no sober grounds whatever for asserting that these recreated dead are going, to the number of 50,000,000,000, to be tried during the next thousand years; or that at the end of that time they will be severely tested; or that those who pass the test will be permitted to go on living here for ever, by eating necessary food; or that the true Church of the elect—the 'little flock' whose limits in numbers were divinely preordained—will become divine, as divine as Christ Himself, and become absolutely as immortal as God Himself; or that those who, after the second trial during the Millennium, fail to pass 'the test of justice' will be annihilated.

It is not our duty here even to outline the true Christian doctrine. That has been done elsewhere, and it rests with each man to estimate it for himself. The matter in hand here is to point out, without either bitterness or hesitation, that all these things which are reiterated through the three thousand pages of Pastor Russell's six volumes are utter falsities, and constitute no true representation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to modern humanity.

VIII

CONCLUDING SUMMARY

It is more than possible that some readers of these pages will be weary of the details of the preceding scrutiny. When certain main fallacies have been made plain beyond denial, it seems as if the rest was as unnecessary as to slay the slain. Assuredly there is for the writer neither pleasure nor comfort in carrying through such an investigation. But when a false and mischievous system is so ingeniously constructed, and so energetically propagated under plausible and attractive conditions, as to lead millions astray, it is not Christian charity but unchristian cowardice, or selfish indolence, which would allow such work to go on unchallenged. Certainly that was not the method of Christ or His Apostles. No doubt Paul received small thanks for his letter to the Galatians. In all probability he was called by many hard names for his pains. But he did not hesitate to use much stronger language than has been here employed, in characterizing the doings of those who brought the Galatians ' a different Gospel, which is not another Gospel ; only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.' And his ' anathema ' was but an echo of some of his Master's stronger words to the ' blind guides ' around Him.

That modern Russellism is one of the modern religious cults to which, with all charity, no other name can be truthfully applied, is shown by what we

have here examined. Much more than this might be truthfully said concerning the practical and financial side of Russellism, as has been witnessed in the legal courts of America. But we are content to leave that out of account, and on highest grounds of Christian truth alone, protest against the fallacies and falsities which characterize the preaching of Millennial Dawnism to this generation.

Only two things need here be appended.

(i.) Although this criticism is only partial, it is alike true and sufficient. Every statement admits of being supported by exact words from the standard volumes. To do more could only be to take each of these six books, *seriatim*, page by page, and show its untruth. It would be as easy as wearisome a task. Enough has been done to guide all, save the wilfully blind, to sound conclusions.

(ii.) Unquestionably the whole matter turns upon the treatment of the Bible. One final instance will serve to illustrate.

> We are not ignorant of the theory of a pre-Adamite man, and the attempt thus to account for the different races of the human family. But we stick to the Bible as God's revelation, and hence superior to all human conjectures. It declares the solidarity of the human family in no uncertain terms, saying—' God made of one blood all nations of men ' (Acts xvii. 26). And again, that Adam was the first man (1 Cor. xv. 45, 47). Again, the story of the deluge is most explicit to the effect that only eight human beings were saved in the ark, and they all children of Noah, descended from Adam.

It is this pitting of the Bible as a manual of anthropology and science in general against modern

knowledge, which is not merely the radical error of Russellism—and some others—but which holds in the balances the fate of the Bible, and of Christianity, for the present and coming age. The situation is really analogous to that which, on another subject-phase of 'orthodoxy,' troubled the minds of the earliest disciples. Then, the question was whether circumcision and Judaism were essential to Christian faith. Now, it is whether a verbally inspired and completely infallible Bible is the *sine quâ non* of Christ's kingdom. It is well, therefore, to bear in mind what is recorded of the Apostolic decision for that time.

> The Apostles and the presbyters met to investigate this question, and a keen controversy sprang up; but Peter rose and said to them, Brothers, you are well aware that from the earliest days God chose that of you all I should be the one by whom the Gentiles were to hear the word of the Gospel and believe it. The God who reads the hearts of all attested this by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He gave it to us; in cleansing their hearts by faith He made not the slightest distinction between us and them. Well now, why are you trying to impose a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we ourselves are able to bear? No; it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus that we believe and are saved, in the same way as they are.[1]

The true kingdom of Christ will maintain its hold upon humanity, and contribute more than any other agency to the future wellbeing of humanity, not by exalting the Bible into a fetish, nor by extracting from it precise details of a theological plan of salvation either for this century or for eternity, and certainly not by making it into a

[1] Acts xv. 7–11 (Moffatt).

complex mass of cryptic predictions; but by coming with Berean openness of mind to face 'whatsoever things are true,' accepting from Jesus Himself, as from One whom we have rational grounds for trusting, the one great basal, final, sufficient revelation of the actual and universal Fatherhood of God—with all that naturally and necessarily flows from it. To be true to that will ensure the only Millennium worth considering, and the only Heaven worth hoping for. Dean Farrar's concluding sentence in regard to the Book of Daniel has an application as true as Christian to the wider themes of the Bible and the world-outlook of to-day.

> It is easy to record and to multiply elaborate guesses, and to deceive ourselves with the merest pretence and semblance of certainty. For reverent and severely honest inquiries it seems safer and wiser to study and profit by the great lessons and examples set before us in the Book of Daniel, but, as regards many of its unsolved difficulties, to obey the wise exhortation of the Rabbis—'Learn to say, "I do not know."'

One critic has suggested that Russellism has done good service in leading many people to read the Bible afresh. But it must be frankly pointed out that such reading is not necessarily an unmixed good. The time has come, it has once more been made vivid—if not lurid—to say that the mere reading of the Bible is not only often useless, but sometimes wofully misleading and immeasurably harmful. No other illustration is needed, alas, to-day than that of the Kaiser, who has assured Europe, by the mouth of Herr Stotte, that he 'reads the Bible every day, has one always at his bedside, and goes to it for direction whenever he needs guidance.' So we must presume that he did so when he gave

permission if not command—for the damnable atrocities in Belgium, and for the methods which issued in the wholesale and infernal murders of innocent women and children on the *Falaba*, the *Lusitania*, and the *Sussex*—not to mention other violations of truth and honour and chivalry which rejoiced the heart of the German nation, but have made its name stink throughout all civilization, as it will do in all history. If these things are the result of Bible-reading, then the world would be well rid of such a habit altogether. Only too well we know that all the religious fanatics who have made Christianity a laughing-stock or an abhorrence to mankind, have sought to justify their follies and cruelties from the Bible. The time has indeed come, therefore, to say plainly that it is not the reading of the Bible 'through' so many times, that avails for good, or is needed in these our days, but the true understanding of the Bible, on the lines of rational treatment.

The writers of the six volumes we have had sorrowfully to plod through, have read the Bible in very deed. But to pass from out the bewildering mixture of their twisted quotations, their childish interpretations, their pitiful misrepresentations, their narrow-minded worship of the letter, into the natural and rational explanations afforded by honest induction, is like coming out of the stifling atmosphere of a conservatory for tropical plants, into the invigorating freshness of the atmosphere of a spring morning.

The crass literalism from which Russellism starts would prove as fatal to the New Testament as to the Old. When Jesus said so emphatically:—

> In most solemn truth I tell you that unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have in yourselves no life at all. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food in very deed, and My blood is drink indeed.[1]

Taken with the literalness which Russellism—and some others—insists upon in regard to the opening chapters of Genesis, these words would put an end to Christianity. Only too well we know what Romanism and Sacerdotalism have done with them. Pastor Russell smiles, and says—truly enough—that they are symbolical. Then he turns and seeks to force down the throat of modern men, as the condition of a real Christianity, the absolutely literal acceptance of the record of a man made in a moment out of dust; a woman made in a second out of a man's rib; a serpent that stood up and talked in human speech; a tree of knowledge to eat of which was a curse; and a God who went for a walk in the cool of the evening because of the heat of the midday; and who did not know where Adam and Eve were until they came out of hiding. This—with all the rest of the repellent fallacies we have had to exhibit—as the foundation of Christian faith and the revelation of the love of the only and awful God, for mankind! Is it any wonder that in these days, when, as he quotes, 'many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased,' the men and women and children who are faced with such pitiful misrepresentation turn away in bewilderment, if not in despair, from religion altogether?

No. Whatever be the potency for good of the

[1] John vi. 53-56.

many and various agencies employed by the churches in Christian efforts to teach and bless modern humanity—against which here nothing whatever is said, so long as they are true to the Christ of the New Testament—the one thing which in all else, and above all else, is needed for the Christian faith which is to abide to-day and prevail to-morrow, is what Jesus, and Paul, and John, and Philip, combined to emphasize—*an understanding.*

> 'Have you understood all these things?' Jesus asked.[1]
>
> And the Spirit said to Philip, Go and join that chariot. So Philip ran up and listened as the eunuch went on reading the Prophet Isaiah. Then he said, Do you understand what you are reading? And the eunuch replied, Well, how can I unless some one shows me the way? [2]
>
> God be thanked, I speak with tongues more than any of you. But for all that in the Church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might also open the minds of others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.[3]
>
> And even as they were relating these events, Jesus Himself stood in their midst, and said to them, Peace be with you. . . . Then He opened their minds, so that they might understand the Scriptures.[4]

The appeal of these pages is, of course, to the whole New Testament fairly interpreted by itself. But if any one word may be emphasized more than another, as containing—when viewed in the light of all the rest—the whole truth in shortest compass, it is that of John as he closes his protest against the false prophets of his day:—

> And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, so that we do know Him who is true;

[1] Matt. xiii. 51. [2] Acts viii. 29–31. [3] 1 Cor. xiv. 18, 19. [4] Luke xxiv. 36, 45.

> and we are in Him who is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God; He is life eternal. My dear children, be on your guard against idols.

Millennial Dawnism is but one of many idols, alas, which are set up for false worship to-day. The only safeguard against them all is found in the Apostolic counsel to the Ephesians of old :—

> Therefore do not be devoid of sense, but get to understand what the Lord's will really is.[1]
>
> [1] Eph. v. 7.

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