

The
History
of
Government



A.T. Jones

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Publisher's Note

These articles, originally published in a church magazine over 100 years ago, and gathered for the first time in book form, are still very pertinent to the political climate of our day.

As A.T. Jones reviews the details that led to the fall of the nations of the past, we see the same influences at work in our world today, and especially in America, the land that more than any other was founded upon the principles of self-government.

Truly strong nations are built by people who live simply, possess self-control, work diligently at useful labor, and have a deep love for, and respect of all life. These attributes are the same ones taught by the gospel of Christ, for “righteousness exalts a nation” (Proverbs 14:34). Only as people can govern themselves, are they able to govern others.

Nations decay and fall when they depart from these principles, and devote much of their effort to obtaining ease, over-indulging in self-pleasure, and hoarding riches, even at the expense of the poorer nations. It then becomes a priority in such a nation to police the other nations, so that the hoarded riches (often stolen by unfair business practices) are not put into danger.

We reap what we sow, and once a nation leaves its foundation principles and way of life, its fall is inevitable. The lessons from history presented here make this truth clear.

The way out of this coming disaster is to return to the living principles of the gospel of Christ. When He returns, only those who have ingrained those principles into themselves will be part of His unfailing kingdom. Self-government is true freedom, and “if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed” (John 8:36). The time to learn self-government is now.

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I. ETERNAL AND FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES

Individuality

GOVERNMENT exists in the very nature of the existence of intelligent creatures. For, the very term “creature” implies the Creator, and as certain as any intelligent creature is, he owes to the Creator all that he is. And, in recognition of this fact, he owes to the Creator honor and devotion supreme. This, in turn, and in the nature of things, implies subjection and obedience on the part of the creature; and is the principle of government.

Each intelligent creature owes to the Creator all that he is. Accordingly, the first principle of government is,

Mark 12

³⁰ ...You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength...

This is pronounced by the Lord to be the first of all the commandments. It is not the first of all the commandments because it was the first one that was ever given; but simply because it exists in the very nature and existence of every intelligent creature, and so inheres in the nature of things as soon as a single intelligent creature exists. It is, therefore, the first of all the commandments, simply because it is but the expression of the inherent obligation in the first relationship which can possibly exist between creature and Creator.

It is the first in the nature, the circumstances, and the existence of created intelligences. It is the first of all commandments in the supreme and most absolute sense. It inheres in the nature and relationship of the first intelligent creature,

and stands as complete in the case of that one alone as though there were millions; and stands as complete in the case of each one in the succession of future millions as in the case of the first intelligent creature, as he stood absolutely alone in the universe.

No expansion, no multiplication, of the number of the creatures beyond the original one, can ever in any sense limit the scope or meaning of that first of all commandments. It stands absolutely alone and eternally complete, as the first obligation of every intelligent creature that can ever be. And this eternal truth distinguishes individuality as an eternal principle.

Equality

However, just as soon as a second intelligent creature is given existence, an additional relationship exists. There is now not only the primary and original relationship of each to the Creator, for both owe equally their existence to the Creator, but also an additional and secondary relationship of each to the other. This secondary relationship is one of absolute equality. And in the subjection and devotion of each to the Creator, in the first of all possible relationships, each of these honors the other. Therefore, in the nature of things, in the existence of two intelligent creatures, there inheres the second governmental principle, mutuality of all the subjects as equals.

And this principle is expressed in the second of all the commandments,

Mark 12

³¹ ...You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

This is the second of all the commandments, for the like reason that the first is the first of all the commandments: it exists and inheres in the nature of things and of intelligences just as soon as a second intelligent creature exists. And also, like the first, this is complete and absolute the moment that two intelligent creatures exist, and it never can be expanded nor can it be modified by the existence of the universe full of other intelligent creatures.

Each, himself alone, in his own individuality, is completely subject and devoted first of all to the Creator; because to Him he owes all. And in this subjection and devotion to the Creator first of all, each honors every other intelligent creature as his equal: as equally with himself occupying his place in the design of the Creator, and responsible individually and only to the Creator for the fulfillment of that design. Therefore, out of respect to the Creator, to his neighbor, and to himself, he loves his neighbor as himself. And this second eternal truth, equally with the first distinguishes individuality as an eternal principle.

True Self-Government

This is original government. It is also ultimate government; because these are first principles complete and absolute; and because they eternally inhere in the nature and relationships of intelligent creatures. And this government, which is at once original and ultimate, is simply self-government—self-government in reason and in God. For it is only the plainest, simplest dictate of reason that the intelligent creature should recognize that to the Creator he owes all; and that, therefore, subjection and honor are the reasonable dues from him to the Creator. It is likewise a simple dictate of reason that, since his

neighbor equally with himself owes all to the Creator, his neighbor must be respected and honored in all this as he himself would desire to be respected and honored in it.

It is also the simple dictate of reason that, since these have all been created, and in their existence owe all to the Creator, this existence with all its accompaniments in the exercise of abilities and powers should be ever held strictly in accordance with the will and design of the Creator; because it is still further the simple dictate of reason that the Creator could never have designed that the existence, the faculties, or the powers of any creature should be exercised contrary to His will or outside of His design. Therefore it is the simplest, plainest dictate of reason that this original and ultimate government, which is self-government, is self-government under God, with God, and in God. And this is truly the truest self-government.

God has created all intelligences absolutely free. He made man, equally with other intelligences, to be moral. Freedom of choice is essential to morals. To have made an intelligence unable to chose would have been to make it incapable of freedom. Therefore, He made man, equally with other intelligences, free to choose; and He ever respects that of which He is the Author, the freedom of choice. And when, in the exercise of this freedom of choice, an intelligence chooses that his existence, with its consequent faculties and powers, shall be spent strictly subject to the will and within the design of the Creator, and so, indeed, with the Creator and in the Creator, this is in the truest sense strictly and truly self-government.

This truth is illustrated for us on both sides. First, in heaven Lucifer, the most exalted creature, standing in such a

height of perfection that he could unerringly pronounce upon perfection—this perfect and most exalted creature chose to exercise his existence, with its faculties and powers, contrary to the will, and outside the design of God. The consequence was that he instantly became the prince of evil itself, the author of all the long train of evil and woe that is in this world and that the universe will ever know.

Then to counteract this whole train of evil and to redeem this world from woe, the Son of God, by whom were all things created, became man, was made flesh, and, as man, walked this earth to reveal to man the true way. And when this most exalted One thus humbled Himself and came to show the way. He came saying to God, His Father,

Psalms 119

¹²⁵ I am your servant; give me understanding, that I may know your testimonies.

Psalms 40

⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God: yes, your law is within my heart.

John 5

³⁰ I can of my own self do nothing.

John 14

¹⁰ ...the Father that dwells in me, he does the works.

John 7

¹⁶ My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

John 12

⁴⁹ ...He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

John 6

³⁸ For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but

the will of him that sent me.

John 4

³⁴ My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Luke 12

⁴² ...not my will, but thine, be done.

This He did all of His own free, eternal choice. And He not only showed the way, but He is eternally “the Way”:

John 14

⁶ ...I am the way...

Thus, original and ultimate government is self-government, under God, with God, and in God. And upon this earth, only in Christianity, as Christianity is in Christ, is found this true self-government, this original and ultimate government.

II. TWO KINDS OF GOVERNMENT

Man's Choice is Evil

THIS earth was formed to be inhabited. When it had been created, God created man upon it and appointed him to have dominion (under God):

Genesis 1

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

The government of man himself was self-government under God, with God, and in God; and he was created thus to remain forever. But he chose to abandon this and to take a course contrary to the will, and outside the design, of God. by this choice he fell under the power of the chief opponent of all government, and the author of anarchy. But to this usurper of the dominion of the earth and man, God said,

Genesis 3

¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed...

Thus God broke up the absolutism of the dominion of Satan over man; and opened the way for man to return to allegiance to God, and so to true government.

Of the first two sons of the first man, Abel chose the way of true government—self-government according to the will, and within the design, of God; Cain chose the way of Satan—the way of lawlessness, the way of anarchy. And in strict accordance with the principle of that way, and in manifestation

of the true spirit of the originator of that way, and the hater of the principle of government, he killed his brother.

Two Classes

Another son was born who chose the way of true government—self-government according to the will and within the design of God. This man, Seth, was allowed to live, and he was succeeded by others of his way. Cain was also succeeded by others of his way. The two classes continued, and so did the controversy between the true and false government upon the earth; between self-government according to the will and within the design of God on the one side; and on the other the dominion of the evil ones in lawlessness resulting in anarchy. The lawless elements multiplied until:

Genesis 6

¹¹ The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

This anarchy became so universal that it brought upon itself the waters of the universal Flood, and so was quenched. And true government—self-government according to the will and within the design of God in the eight persons who, of all the earth's inhabitants, recognized it, in the ark which they had prepared—was preserved by the waters of the same Flood that quenched the opposing anarchy. Thus was man preserved alive upon the earth and the race was perpetuated.

And so the second time the Creator started man upon the earth, and with him the principle of true government—self-government according to the will and within the design of God. But in spite of the demonstration of the fearful results of taking the other way, it was but a short time before that false

way was again chosen; again the two classes were developed; and again the controversy arose and continued between those who on the earth were espoused to true government, and those who were not.

Man in Place of God

This refusal to recognize true government, this refusal of the individual to hold himself subject to the will and within the design of God, not only continued, but continued to increase. Idolatry was substituted for the recognition of God:

Romans 1

²¹ ...when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³ And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

And in just the degree in which the knowledge of God was disregarded, the absence of true government was manifested, and confusion and lawlessness prevailed.

And in the nature of things, amongst the idolatrous ones, the strongest prevailed.

And when the strong had prevailed they held the power which in the contest they had gained; and, in the true spirit of the false government, having abandoned self-government according to the will and within the purpose of God, they asserted dominion over others according to their own will, and in furtherance of their own design.

And such is the origin of monarchy—the assertion of man

in the place of God—upon earth.

What Idols Are

And it is curious as well as important to notice how idolatry aided in this bad development.

First, they did know God, but they rejected Him. They chose not to glorify him as God, nor to be thankful, nor even to recognize Him. Then idols were put in His place. But these idols were but the creation of their own perverse imagination. The idols were only the imagining of their own false conceptions, and so were but the representations of themselves. And when they had put these idols in the place of God, the idols being but the representations of themselves, it was perfectly easy and also perfectly natural and logical that they should presently put themselves in the places of the idols, as the agents of the idol and the executors of its will which from the beginning was but their own will cast for the occasion upon the idol.

For, strictly and truly speaking, literally the idol was nothing. All that it could possibly be was what its creators and worshipers conceived it to be. This conception was altogether their own. Then, whatever will, character, or purpose, the idol could possibly have was but the will, character, or purpose of the one who made it or worshiped it.

And the idol being helpless to execute this will or to manifest either character or purpose, it fell inevitably to the maker or worshiper of the idol, himself to make this manifest.

And since the idol had been put in the place of God, and since all that the idol could ever possibly be was simply what

its maker and worshiper himself was, this was simply to put the man, the worshiper of the idol, in the place of God.

And when apostasy had reached this point, confusion and turbulence had reached the point at which it was only the power of force that could prevail; and the force which prevailed most, maintained its place and power by the assertion of dominion over others according to the will and purpose of the one man who exerted it.

Thus arose monarchy in the world. In the nature of the case, the monarch was in the place of God.

Facts of History

Nor is this mere theory; nor yet is it merely philosophy. It is fact—fact according to the records of the times in which this bad development occurred. For in the earliest records of the race, in totally and widely-separated places, such is the record. In earliest records in the plain of Shinar, the cradle of the race after the Flood, in every instance the ruler bears not the title of king, but of “viceroy” of the idol god, which is held to be truly king. These records reveal clearly that there had been a time when these same people recognized God as the only King and the true Ruler.

These records also reveal the fact that these people had not yet gone so far in apostasy that the one in authority, the one who exercised rulership, could dare to assume positively the title of king. But the idol which had been put in the place of God could be made to bear God's title of King and true Ruler; and then the man who would usurp the place and prerogative of God over men, could deftly insinuate himself as viceroy, vicegerent, or substitute, of the idol god who, in the figment

of men, still bore the dignity and title of king.

Such also is the record in earliest Assyria, in earliest Egypt, and even among our own ancient Anglo-Saxon progenitors. The persistence of the principle is illustrated in the conception of king in our own English language; for among the English, at least, the kingly houses all claimed descent from the blood of the gods. Every king was a son of Woden.

Thus, by these widely separated and independent records, it is demonstrated that the concept of kingship in the human race was originally recognized as belonging only to God. And this so exclusively that when idols were put in the place of God (which idols were themselves nothing, but were in fact the reflection of the maker of the idols), this title must abide exclusively with the figment, which stood in the place of God.

But as apostasy continued and the asserters of dominion and power over others became more bold, there came Nimrod, the one, and the first one, who was so bold as to take to himself from the idols the title and the prerogative of king, which by the makers of the idols had been taken from God and placed upon the idol. Because of this his impious boldness, the name of Nimrod signifies "rebellion, supercilious contempt," and is equivalent to "the extremely impious rebel."

This is not to say that there should be no governments, nor is it to say that there should be no monarchy on earth. It is only to say that without such apostasy there never could have been monarchy. But when such apostasy had come, and consequent turbulence and violence prevailed, it was better that there should be even monarchy such as that of Nimrod, than that there should be no government at all, but only anarchy. It

were better that there should be such government as that of Nimrod or of Nero, than that there should be none on earth. But apostasy must of necessity go a long way from true and original government—self-government with God—before there could be required such government as that of Nimrod or of Nero.

III. THE HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT

The First Arbitrary Ruler among Men

NIMROD was the first “mighty one in the earth.” He was the first one of men to assert power and force, unrestrained, upon men; the first man to assert the absolutism of authority over men.

This is evident from the fact, as we have seen, that those before him had not the boldness to assume openly and decidedly the title and prerogative of king, which they knew belonged, by right, only to God. This unwillingness to assume the title of king, and the willingness to assert authority only as viceroy of the king, even though their own idols were held to be the king, shows the recognition of the restraint of a superior authority, and the recognition of that authority above them to which they were responsible and under which they acted only as agent; or viceroy.

But with Nimrod, all this was thrown off. He himself would be supreme. He would recognize no superior. He alone would be king. The title and prerogatives of king should merge in him. And this position was taken by him in view of the fact that before this, the title and prerogatives of king merged only in God. This was at once and openly the putting of himself in the place of God. He was assuming the title, the prerogatives, and the absolute authority that belonged only to God; which only God can exercise in righteousness; and which can be exercised by man only in a cruel, wicked despotism.

And all this, which in principle lay in Nimrod's assumption of the title of king, is demonstrated in his career. For, though

Babel was the city in which, and over the people of which, he began the assertion of this absolute authority and power, yet he was not content with the assertion of this over Babel alone and leaving it for others to follow his example in their own particular cities; but with Babel he at once grasped by this his kingly authority

Genesis 10

¹⁰ And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

Thus he asserted his absolute dominion over the whole of the land of Shinar. Nor was he content even with this. It was not enough for him to be king—supreme, unrestrained monarch; but he must extend his authority to the farthest limits.

Genesis 10

¹¹ Out of that land he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah,

¹² and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (the same is the great city).

He was not content with a kingdom only; but he must expand kingdom into empire, and so assert his authority to the widest possible limit, to be indeed supreme and absolute everywhere.

With the setting up of Nimrod's kingdom, the entire ancient world entered a new historical plane. The original tradition which makes that warrior the first man who wore a kingly crown, points to a fact more significant than the assumption of a new ornament of dress, of even the conquest of a province. His reign introduced to the world a new system of relations between the governor and the governed.

The authority of former rulers had rested upon the telling of kindred, and the ascendancy of the chief was an image of parental control. Nimrod, on the contrary, was a sovereign of territory, and of men just as far as they were its inhabitants, and irrespective of personal ties. Hitherto there had been tribes—enlarged families—society; now there was a nation, a political community—the State. The political and social history of the world henceforth are distinct, if not divergent.

Distinction between Kingship and Imperialism

It is notable, as above remarked, that a peculiar characteristic of this impartial sovereignty was the assertion of it primarily over territory, and, accordingly, over people as they might be inhabitants of the territory. Herein lies the essential distinction between kingship and imperialism.

Nimrod's bold example in assuming the title and prerogative of king in the place of God was promptly imitated everywhere, but only as king of a tribe, or associated tribes, or of a city. In such an association there was necessarily involved the idea or the consent or voice of the people of the tribe or city concerned. But when the authority and power of king thus asserted over a community or a city was extended over territory, without respect to the tribes or peoples who might be inhabitants of the territory, and was asserted over these simply as a consequence of their being within the territorial limits claimed, this at a stroke swept away all idea or possibility of the people's having any choice or voice in the matter. And that was but the assertion of the completest possible absolutism.

In the first there might be room for some lingering thought

of limitation upon the monarchy, but in the latter, all this was completely eliminated. This was absolutism complete.

And even in this its ultimate phase, Nimrod's bold example has been diligently followed ever since. The history of the world, even the history of government and of governments, is a history only of kingdoms expanding into empires; kingships by the voice of the people, expanding into imperialism to the exclusion of all possibility or thought of the voice of the people; limited monarchy expanding into absolute monarchic-al despotism.

Kudar-Nanhandi, king of Elam, was the first one of record to imitate Nimrod's imperialism, though his success was small. Urkh, king of Ur, was the next to imitate Nimrod's imperialism, and he succeeded in establishing his imperial supremacy over the whole Babylonian plain. The next one was another king of Elam, Kudur-lagamer—the Chedorlaomer mentioned in *Genesis* 14—who surpassed even his exemplar; for he succeeded in establishing his imperial authority not only over the whole of the Mesopotamian plain, but over all the territory westward to the Mediterranean Sea, and almost to the border of Egypt, and kept it all in subjection for twelve years.

And so has proceeded the course of imperialism from Nimrod until now. But having discovered the principle and essential character of imperialism, the history and the practice of it will be discussed in other studies.

IV. THE ESTABLISHING OF IMPERIALISM

IT took 1,700 years for imperialism to establish itself in a position of recognized authority. While the heads of the tribes, or collections of tribes, were all ready to follow the example of Nimrod in assuming the title and asserting the power of king; and while the tribes, or collection of tribes, were willing to recognize this claim of the king; yet no tribe, no collection of tribes, nor any king, was willing for a moment to consent to the claim of any one to the title, prerogatives, and power of king of kings—imperial absolutism. And this persistent refusal on the part of both the kings and the people to submit to any such power or authority as that of king of kings, kept the imitators of Nimrod busy for 1,700 years.

The single Bible sentence touching Chedorlaomer's empire and experience—

Genesis 14

⁴ Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

—is the story of the peoples and kings, and is the experience of every would-be king of kings, from Nimrod forward for 1,700 years. Each would-be king of kings was compelled to conquer his way to imperial dominion; and, after having acquired it, was compelled to exercise constant watchfulness and activity to maintain himself in the power which he had gained, against the ever-ready and persistent disposition of other kings and people to break the yoke and enjoy their native freedom. He was also in constant danger of being swept aside, and his empire possessed, by some other aspirant to empire.

Egyptian Imitators

The most notable of the far-ancient imitators of Nimrod and Chedorlaomer, was King Thothmes III, of Egypt. He succeeded in establishing his power over all the people and tribes and nations of the East as far eastward as to the borders of India. Indeed, the empire of Egypt was as truly universal in that day as was that of Alexander or Rome in their later days. This power was maintained, and people were held in subjection, through the reigns of his three immediate successors; but in the reign of the fourth the whole structure went absolutely to pieces.

Every king and every tribe, however petty, broke loose from Egyptian power and asserted the independence of their native freedom; and it was not until the time of the third of this king's successors that imperial power was again gained by Egypt. Then Seti I succeeded in establishing the power of Egypt over the same extended territory as had Thothmes III; but at his death, revolt occurred in Ethiopia, and Egypt's claim of empire was disputed by the Hittites, the outcome of which dispute was, that the king of Egypt was compelled to enter into a treaty with the king of the Hittites, recognizing that nation on an equality with Egypt.

And no sooner had this king passed away than the Egyptian empire went finally to pieces before invading powers, who founded dynasties in all parts of the country, sacked and burned the cities, and compelled the Egyptian people "to bow the neck to kings of foreign rulers."

An Empire of Peace and By Peace

The next universal empire after that of Egypt was the em-

pire of Israel under Solomon. The conquests and empire of Solomon were no less extended than were those of Egypt; and the empire of Israel under Solomon was as truly universal in that day as were those of Egypt and Alexander in their respective days. Yet the conquests accomplished, and the empire established, by Solomon were altogether by peace. And the power exerted in these conquests and the government of this empire was only the power of the peace, the wisdom, and the righteousness of God.

1 Kings 4

²⁹ And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

³⁰ And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

³¹ For he was wiser than all men...and his fame was in all nations round about.

2 Chronicles 9

²³ And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.

All these kings came to him, not as mere curiosity seekers; but to recognize his supremacy and to do him honor in it.

2 Chronicles 9

²⁴ And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

The “presents” themselves were a recognition of sovereignty; and their bringing them as “a rate” and “year by year” shows that they were an annual tribute rendered to recognition of the sovereignty of Solomon and of the empire of Israel,

by “all the kings of the earth.”

It is true, as already stated, that this conquest of all the kings was not by force of arms, and the carnage of battle; yet it was none the less a fact. For there is more power in the wisdom and righteousness of God manifested through sincere hearts of men than in all the governments, armies, and weapons of war that this world can ever know.

But this empire Solomon himself lost, by turning from the wisdom and righteousness of God, and adopting the ways of the heathen. For immediately, upon Solomon's turning to the ways of the heathen, adversaries arose on every hand; and the empire of Israel went the way of all the empires that had been before it.

But in this universal conquest and empire established by the peace, the wisdom, and the righteousness of God, God demonstrated to His own people what He would have done for the world by them, if they had been loyal to Him in peace, wisdom, and righteousness, and had not gone into idolatry and the evil ways of the heathen, and then rejected God and demanded a king “like all the nations.” And in this God also gave witness to all the nations of the earth of what He was ready, willing, and anxious to do in all the earth, even in the great apostasy that brought kingships, if only those kings would recognize Him and serve Him in holiness of heart.

The Subject of the Peoples

This peaceful empire of Israel under Solomon brought a respite to all the nations from the long succession of oppression of the despotic imitators of Nimrod. And this inspired them anew with a love of freedom and government of their

own choice. This made it harder for the despotic, world-conquering kings of Assyria to again establish an empire of the Nimrod stripe.

Yet, in spite of all difficulties, the kings of Assyria in straightforward succession for 400 years persistently asserted imperial power, and nothing short of universal conquest and empire. And their work was as tedious as it was persistent; for there was not a king who succeeded to the Assyrian throne who was not compelled on his own part to conquer all that his predecessors had conquered; and, in many instances, they were compelled to repeat their conquests year by year throughout their whole reign.

Shalmaneser II, whose reign was one of the longest in the Assyrian annals, made thirty-three campaigns in the thirty-one years of his reign; and many of these were made into the same countries and against the same peoples that his father had conquered in his reign. And the work of these two was only the repetition of what their predecessors had done, and was what their successors were compelled to do during all the following 300 years, through the reigns of Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, Sennacherib, Esar-Haddon, unto the pinnacle of Assyrian supremacy in the reign of Assur-banipal. Then Assyria was broken down, and the kingdom of Babylon under Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar was expanded into empire by the same means by which the persistent power of former conquests had established the universal empire of Assyria.

And this perpetual hammering during the 400 years of Assyrian supremacy, which was immediately taken up and con-

tinued by Babylon, so broke the spirit of the peoples of the earth, that practically there was no further attempt of the conquered peoples to throw off the incubus of imperialism. They submitted to the inevitable, accepted imperial power as final, and left imperialism free to manifest itself fully in the world, and to show what it could do when it had its own way untrammelled and undisputed.

V. THE PERPETUATION OF IMPERIALISM

WE have seen that by the time of the conquests and the establishment of empire by Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar, of Babylon, the spirit of independence of the peoples had been so completely broken down that the despotism of empire had secured undisputed sway. This was so effectually accomplished by Babylon, that the Scripture plainly defines it as

Jeremiah 50

²³ ...the hammer of the whole earth.

And, yet, Babylon had only perpetuated the hammering of the peoples which Assyria, with but a brief interval, had kept up for more than a thousand years. And this perpetual hammering, continued by Babylon, had effected at last what the ambitious of every imperialist, since Nimrod had ever hoped; the silent suffering and submission of all peoples to one predominant and absolute will.

This work of Babylon in perpetuating the destructive work of Assyria in this respect, is forcibly told in the expressive words of the Scripture concerning their dealings with the peoples:

Jeremiah 50

¹⁷ ...first the king of Assyria has devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones.

While Assyria, in its lust of empire, had fed itself on the substance of the peoples, Babylon completed the work by breaking their bones and sucking the very marrow. And though a single king of Assyria, as Sennacherib, might compel the nations and peoples to such submission as that, like terror-stricken chickens,

Isaiah 10

¹⁴ ...there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

Yet, when the direct assertion of personal power by that particular king was passed, all people were prompt to stand up again for freedom and independence; but when Babylon, “the hammer of the whole earth,” had laid upon the nations and peoples her crushing strokes, the subjection of all was complete, and their submission final.

And now that the supremacy and absolutism of empire was attained in permanency, and the imperial spirit was absolutely free to demonstrate what it could and would do when entirely untrammelled and undisputed, this was demonstrated to the full, and that in such measure as to be a perpetual lesson to all peoples that should follow, even to the world's end.

And in order that empire might be saved from what it would certainly do if left to itself, God foretold to all by giving to Nebuchadnezzar the first head of permanent empire, a vision in a notable dream. In this vision God showed to Nebuchadnezzar that his empire, though universal and so great, would be succeeded by another, inferior; which would be succeeded by another, further inferior; and that, in turn, by another, yet further inferior, which would go all to pieces; and then even the pieces would be dashed so utterly to pieces that they would be

Daniel 2

³⁵ ...like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.

But this could not be believed even from God, by one who

stood as the proud possessor of permanent, worldly, imperial power; and he undertook to disprove it by setting up against it the imperial idea.

God's Truth versus Human Ambition

To show the gradation and inferiority in the succession of empires, the Lord, in the vision, had presented the image of man composed of metals of inferior gradations from head to foot, the head only being of gold: this head of gold representing the empire of Babylon.

But Nebuchadnezzar could not accept, as correct, any such representation as that. accordingly, he, too, presented a great image, but all of gold from head to feet; thus excluding all suggestion that there should be even any succession of empires, much less a gradation of inferiority in succession. This great image, all of gold, was but the king's assertion that the golden glory of his empire of Babylon should continue forever.

And this embodiment of his idea, King Nebuchadnezzar set up; and required, under the terrible penalty of a burning, fiery furnace, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should accept it.

But amongst his subjects there were some servants of the Most High God, who had studied, and who understood, the truth as to empire. These being loyal to God, and, therefore, holding His idea to be the correct one, refused to accept the imperial idea. Therefore, they were cast into the burning, fiery furnace, heated to the highest possible degree. But God preserved them, and they came forth unscathed, and with not even the smell of fire upon them. And thus God not only vin-

icated their course as righteous, but continued the truth of His idea of empire and changed the king's word and also his idea of empire.

After this lesson, King Nebuchadnezzar was led of God; but when he had died the empire shortly demonstrated what it could and would do; that is, sink itself in everlasting ruin by intemperance. For when the abundant tribute of all nations flowed in an uninterrupted stream into the one treasury of Babylon; and the permanent submission of all nations and peoples had left the government in complete idleness so far as military expeditions were concerned; the imperial classes thus having an endowment of boundless wealth and abundance of idleness, intemperance of every sort grew to such a height that the empire sank in a night in the drunken, lascivious feast of Belshazzar, which he made

Daniel 5

¹ ...to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

And this perfection of ruin was accomplished in only twenty-three years from the death of Nebuchadnezzar.

The Medo-Persian Regions

In that night of drunken lasciviousness

Daniel 5

³⁰ ...was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

The mighty empire of Babylon sank, and the succession of empire passed to the Medes and Persians.

The Medes and Persians were peoples who had grown up through self-discipline and hardships of natural surroundings;

and so, both by circumstances and by choice, they were a strictly temperate people. This temperance of the Persians, and the value of it, was so well known amongst the neighboring kingdoms, that when King Cœsus was contemplating war upon the Persians, one of his counselors dissuaded him with the observation:

“Thou art about, O king, to make war against men who wear leathern trousers, and have all their other garments of leather, and who feed not on what they like, but on what they can get from a soil that is sterile and unkindly; who do not indulge in wine, but drink water; who possess no figs nor anything else that is good to eat.”

And the Medes and Persians knew of the intemperate course of Babylon that was surely working her undoing. And they understood the situation so well that they calculated upon the intemperance of Babylon as a capital element in their plans for empire. For when Cyprus, the leader of the Medo-Persian armies, addressed his troops at the beginning of his expedition against Babylon, he said:

“Do you know the nature of the enemy you have to deal with?—They are soft, effeminate, and enervated men; men not able to bear either hunger or thirst; equally incapable of standing either the peril of war or the sight of danger; whereas, you that are inured from your infancy to a sober and hard way of living—to you, I say, hunger and thirst are but the sauce and the only sauce to your meals; fatigues are your pleasure; danger your delight.”

It is further said of the Persians that

“the only food allowed either the children or the young men, was bread, cresses, and water; for their design was to accustom them early to temperance and sobriety. Besides,

they considered that a plain, frugal diet, without any mixture of sauces or ragouts would strengthen the body and lay such a foundation of health as would enable them to endure the hardships and fatigues of war, to a good old age.”

And Herodotus declares that before their conquests

“the Persians possessed none of the luxuries or delights of life.”

This is the people who succeeded to the world empire in the place of the idolatrous, luxurious, drunken, lascivious, imperial power of Babylon.

But when Medo-Persia had succeeded to the imperial world-position and power of Babylon, again empire demonstrated precisely all that absolute empire in permanency could do. The invaluable experience and lessons of both the principle and practice of temperance were forgotten. The principles and the experience of temperance were all swept away; and that which was a new order of things to them, the untold wealth in the uninterrupted stream of tribute from all peoples and nations, governmental idleness by the submission of all nations, and the consequent intemperance, carried this empire over the same course that Babylon had gone to ruin. Indeed, of them history records that

“to such a height was their luxury grown, that they would have the same magnificence and enjoy the same pleasures and idleness in the army as in the king's courts, so that in their wars the kings marched accompanied by their wives, their concubines, and all their eunuchs. Their silver and gold plate, and all their rich furniture was carried after them in prodigious quantities; and, in short, all the equipage and utensils so voluptuous a life requires...This luxury and extravagance rose in time to such an excess as to be little better

than downright madness.”

The Succession of Greece

And to this excess of intemperance the Persian empire sank, so had Babylon before her. The Persian empire sank before another new people, accustomed to hardships, and though not so strictly temperate as were the Medes and Persians in the day of their succession to empire, yet, so far more so than were the Persians at their last, that they could be called a temperate people. For when the Greeks first met the Persians at Marathon, and before as well as afterward, it is recorded of them that they were

“well disciplined troops under skilful and experienced commanders; soldiers accustomed to temperance, whose bodies were inured to toil and labor, and rendered both robust and active by wrestling and other exercises practiced in that country.”

But the glory of wealth and luxury of empire that came to the Greeks, immediately robbed them equally of their power. Their mighty king, who won the world-empire before he was thirty-three, perished as the result of a drunken bout; the empire was broken to pieces, was held in four parts, then in two, but going the same course of empire—vast wealth, abundance of idleness, and consequent intemperance—till

Daniel 8

²³ ...the transgressors are come to the full,

and again empire, having demonstrated precisely what alone empire was and will do when it can have its own way in undisputed sway, perished; and in its place there came empire by another new people, built up by hardships, self-discipline, and temperance.

Roman Dominion

For at the time when the Romans were rapidly stepping to the very height of world-empire, three ambassadors were sent by the senate to the king of Egypt in his capitol. In their honor the king spread a banquet of

“...all the variety of the most sumptuous fare. Yet, they would touch nothing more of it than was useful, and that in the most temperate manner for the necessary support of nature, despising all the rest as that which corrupted the mind as well as the body, and bred vicious humors in both.”

Such was the moderation and temperance of the Romans at this time. And hereby it was that they at length advanced their State to so great a height. In this height would they have still continued could they have retained the same virtues. But when their prosperity and the great wealth attained thereby, became the occasion that they degenerated into luxury and corruption of manners, they drew decay and ruin as fast upon them as they had before victory and prosperity, till at length they were undone by it. Being so undone, the empire of the Romans sank in annihilating ruin as had the empires before it.

Such is the repeatedly demonstrated course of empire. And thus it is also repeatedly demonstrated that such is precisely and only what absolute empire in permanence can and will do.

VI. CHARACTER OF EARTHLY MONARCHY

WE have studied the principles, the origin, and the essential nature of monarchy. Monarchy being the recognized system of government, it was in essence the same everywhere; yet there were varieties of form which, in practice, made the successive monarchies different, and in some things peculiar.

Since, in its very inception, the assertion of monarchy was the assumption of the title and prerogatives of God, it became necessary for the monarch, in supporting this pretension, to separate himself as far as possible from the people, and to surround himself with an atmosphere of exclusiveness and pseudo-divinity; and indeed, personally, to assert divinity. This was the case with Nimrod; and in this also he was imitated by the world-kings, as they also imitated him in the manifestation of the imperial spirit.

This is illustrated more fully in the kings of Egypt than in any other ancient nation. The sun was held to be the great god, and in Egypt the kings professed to be the very impersonation of the sun-god. They claimed identity with the sun-god, and must be addressed as "sun-god." For instance, Thothmes III, the founder of the Egyptian empire, inscribes himself as

"Son of the Sun, Thothes III, Giver of Life, like the Sun forever."

And, again,

"Giver of Life like the Sun eternal."

The governors must address the king of Egypt as

"The king, my Lord, my Sun-God,"

and say,

“At the feet of my Lord, my Sun-God, seven times seven I prostrate myself.”

In the records of Egypt, letter after letter from governors to the king open with the words, for instance,

“To the king, my Lord, my Sun-God, I speak, even I, Rib-Adda, thy servant; at the feet of my Lord, my Sun-God, seven times seven do I prostrate myself.”

And again,

“To the great king, the king of the world, I, the servant of the mighty Lord, to the king, my Lord; at the feet of my Lord, the Sun-God, seven times seven I prostrate myself.”

As he was the “giver of life,” the people were supposed to receive from him “the breath of their nostrils.” As, for instance, on a certain occasion it is recorded of the chiefs of a conquered country, making their submission,

“Then the chiefs of that land came bringing the usual tribute, adoring the spirits of His Majesty, asking breath for their nostrils of the greatness of His power and the importance of His spirits.”

Being so great, he must be beheld by the mass of the people afar off, and was approachable only by the inner ones of the gradation of royal circles. For instance, when one of the kings had decided to establish and build a temple, and wanted to convey to even the royal masons and the sacred sculptors his purpose, he must do it thus:

“Then His Majesty ordered that orders should be given to the superintendent of the royal masons, who were with him, and the sacred sculptors.”

Here are plainly no less than two, or possibly three, grada-

tions between the king and even the royal masons and sacred sculptors. What, then, must have been the distance between “His Majesty” and the daily toiling masses.

Not in every monarchical nation or world-empire did the king stand at this extreme of idolatrous “Majesty.” But with Nimrod and the kings of Egypt it was so; and with the kings of Assyria it was hardly less than so. For, eleven hundred years before Christ, Tiglath-Pileser I, of Assyria, published himself as

“the powerful king, the king of hosts who has no rivals, the king of the four zones, the king of all kinglets, the king of lords, the shepherd of princes, the king of kings, the exalted prophet....The faithful shepherd, proclaimed lord over kinglets, the supreme governor whose weapons Assur has predestinated, and for the government of the four zones has proclaimed his name forever.”

Two hundred years after this, another king of Assyria proclaimed himself

“Assur-natsir-pal, the powerful king, the king of hosts, the king unrivaled, the king of all the four regions of the world, the Sun-God of multitudes of men...who has overcome all the multitudes of men...who has established empire over lands,...the supreme judge...who has established empire over all the world,...mightiest among the gods am I.”

His son and immediate successor, Shalmaneser II, proclaimed himself,

“Shalmaneser, the king of the multitudes of men, high priest of Assur, the powerful king, the king of all the four regions, the Sun-God of the multitudes of mankind, who governs in all countries; the son of Assur-natsir-pal, the supreme priest, etc., etc.”

In Babylon and Later Empires

It does not appear that in the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar this self-exalted “Majesty” was so boastingly proclaimed; but that the spirit of it was manifested there is shown by the scripture, in which king Nebuchadnezzar openly and positively set up his idea against the known idea of the God of heaven. It is further manifested in the instance in which, after king Nebuchadnezzar had completed the building of his great temples and his mighty works in Babylon, he again set himself against the God of heaven in the boast,

Daniel 4

³⁰ ...Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

But Nebuchadnezzar had an experience which humbled his pride and annihilated his self-exaltation, and led him to recognize the true God in truth, and that

Daniel 4

³² ...the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever he will.

But this was all forgotten by the successors of Nebuchadnezzar; and blasphemous defiance of God reached its culminating point that last night of Babylon when there appeared the mystic fingers of a man's hand over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall:

Daniel 5

²⁶ God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it...You are weighed in the balances, and are found wanting.

And in that night of blasphemous defiance of God, Babylon sank forever.

There was in the kingdom of Babylon a feature that, of all the empires of ancient or modern times, is peculiar alone to Babylon; excepting only at the seat of the Babylon of modern times. The king of Babylon required of the subject kings of his world-empire that their thrones should be in Babylon, ranged with the throne of the king of Babylon, and in gradation according to the degree of their importance on their own part, and their favor in his sight.

In the kings of the empire of the Medes and Persians the pride and idolatrous self-exaltation of "His Majesty" was subdued in Darius the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian, by their recognition of the true God and their submission to Him. And this self-exaltation never did rise in Persia to anything like the height it had attained in Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, and Shinar.

But when in the imperial succession we come to Greece, we find it again in full measure. It was Philip of Macedon who unified Greece and paved the way for Alexander's imperial succession. And both he and his wife aspired to divinity. She was a bacchanalian devotee, and indulged in the ceremonies of magic and incantation. And Philip was in the very act of celebrating his own divinity when he was slain by the hand of an assassin; for he was at that moment making a grand and majestic entrance into the great and crowded theater, having been preceded only shortly before by a procession of the twelve great gods, and immediately after them the statue of Philip himself as the thirteenth god.

Coming from such a parentage as this on both sides, it is not strange that there should be manifested in their son, Alexander the Great, that insatiable aspiration to be a god which

characterized his whole public career.

The same thing was repeated in the monarch of the next world-empire, that of Rome. For when the Roman empire, which was originally a government of the people, had fallen to a one-man power, the very first one was declared by the representatives of that people to be no more Caius Julius a man, but Divus Julius a god. And they voted that a temple should be built for the worship of him, and they named one of their party to be the priest who should conduct this worship. And then when they murdered him they continued the same thing to the man who succeeded him in the government and made permanent that world-monarchy.

Then when Rome fell and the barbarians of Germany established their ten kingdoms upon her ruin, these all traced the genealogy of their kings to their one great ancestor, the god Woden. The kingly houses all claimed descent from the blood of the gods.

Beyond all this, upon the ruin of Rome and over the monarchies of the barbarian invasions and their final settlement, the bishop of Rome asserted kingship in the church and rose to imperialism in ecclesiastical power. In this also there was continued the old usurpation of the place and power, the title and prerogatives of God; the same persistent idolatrous claim and assertion of the attributes of divinity; and the same old self-exaltation. Only here beyond all heights that ever were before, the pride and self-exaltation of monarchy and imperialism was asserted above all that is called God or that is worshiped, declaring in the face of the avowed exclusive knowledge of the supreme God, that "he is God":

2 Thessalonians 2

⁴ Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Such is the character and course of monarchy on earth. And that the exercise of governmental prerogative by such power as this, from Nimrod to Pius X., must be a persistent succession of despotisms, was in the nature of things a certainty. And that despotism was so persistent and steady that to attempt a story of it would be but a constant repetition as steady as has been this brief story of the nature of monarchy, and far more wearisome.

VII. SELF-GOVERNMENT IN ROME

BY Nimrod and his imitators in Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and earliest Rome, monarchy and imperialism had made themselves so obnoxious that mankind was completely tired of them, and, as a consequence, the people of Rome stood up and took the lead in behalf of all the people of the world in repudiating every principle of imperialism, monarchy, and kingship; and asserted, in behalf of the world, the principle of government of the people. They declared that the people were capable of governing themselves; they needed no man set over them to whom they must be in subjection, do obeisance, and pay tribute.

The people of Rome did this in behalf of mankind. They espoused this principle for the good of themselves and the whole world. They stood as the conservators of liberty for mankind, and as the leaders of the nations to the blessings of liberty and true government.

The principle of government of the people asserted by Rome was intended as the true and ultimate principle of government. But in truth it fell far short of this, for, as we have seen, the true principle of government is self-government under God, with God, and in God. But the principle of self-government announced by Rome was that of self-government without God; self-government altogether of self; self-government wholly on the human basis.

Yet, though it was only this, and though it was far short of the true principle, the government of Rome was far better than any human government that had been since the first apostasy to idolatry and monarchy.

In the first ages of their government of the people, the Romans understood the true principle of temperance, which literally is only self-control. And they practiced accordingly, as we have seen illustrated in the instance of the ambassadors to the king of Egypt, who, at the royal banquet of all Egyptian luxury and dainties spread in their honor, chose only the plainest of what was before them, and partook of this in the most frugal manner, refusing all the rest as that which tended only to corrupt both mind and body, and to breed vicious humors in both. And because of adherence to these principles, it is deservedly recorded of the Romans that

“they possessed the faculty of self-government beyond any people of whom we have historical knowledge,”

with the sole exception of the Anglo-Saxons.

Degeneracy and the Cause

As a natural consequence, the government of Rome, being a government of the people, was the freest and the best human government of all ancient times, so long as they maintained the principle of self-government, even only on the human basis, but just as soon as they failed in the government of themselves, so soon the Roman government failed; because, of all forms of government, that form known as the government of the people or the republican form, depends most vitally upon the integrity of the individual in governing himself.

Because of faithfulness to principle, the government of Rome prospered and grew into the mightiest nation of all ancient times. And so she could have continued had the Roman people, who were truly the government, individually continued to govern themselves.

But the Roman people were not content to govern only themselves. They took it upon themselves to govern other people, and in this they abandoned the principles of self-government. And when the other people, to whom the senate and people of Rome had professed to extend the blessings of liberty and self-government, chose to act upon the principle, and assumed the prerogatives of governing themselves, the Roman people, having announced to the world and having espoused, in behalf of the world, the principle of self-government, government of the people, absolutely refused to allow any of those people to govern themselves. The Roman people, committed to the principle of self-government, denied it to other people, and insisted upon governing them in spite of themselves, upon the principle that

“they were not capable of self-government.”

The Roman people, who themselves were first governed by kings, and who had cast off kings and repudiated kingship, and had immediately established government of the people upon the principle that they were entirely capable of governing themselves, asserted dominion over other peoples, and refused even to allow them to attempt to govern themselves, when those other peoples, as the Roman people, and with the assistance of the Roman people, had cast off kings and repudiated kingships, upon Rome's own principle of their capability to govern themselves.

When the Roman people had thus completely repudiated the last essence of the principle of self-government, or government of the people, she was lost; there was absolutely nothing to hold her, nothing to keep her from following the identical course of all the imperial powers before her. For

when Rome had spread her power over other peoples, and repudiated her own essential principle of government in refusing that principle to them, this was but to espouse and assert the same old imperialistic principle that had afflicted the world from Nimrod to her own day, and which she had repudiated in espousing the principle of self-government—government of the people.

A Harvest of Greed and Corruption

When the Roman people collectively repudiated their own essential principle of government, they lost from themselves, individually, the benefits of the restraining power of that principle. And when from her many conquests, through their native habits of thrift and economy in self-support, the first consequence of self-government,

“money poured in upon them in rolling streams of gold,”

the getting of money by any means, lawful or unlawful, became the universal passion.

“Money was the one thought, from the highest senator to the poorest wretch who sold his vote in the Comitia.”

And, with the restraint of self-control annihilated in the repudiation of the principle of self-government, all this abundance of wealth was spent only in the indulgence of luxury of every kind.

“Wealth poured in more and more, and luxury grew more unbounded. Palaces sprang up in the city, castles in the country, villas at pleasant places by the sea, and parks, and fishponds, and game-preserves, and gardens, and vast retinues of servants.”

All this indulgence of luxury inevitably resulted in a vast

sea of idleness, depravity, and debauchery. And that people, committed originally to the principle of self-government in the world, and who originally possessed the faculty of self-government beyond all other people of ancient times, became the most abandoned to every kind of depravity and vice, and was sunken in intemperance the farthest from any thought of self-government.

“No language can describe the state of that capital after the civil wars. The accumulation of power and wealth gave rise to universal depravity. Law ceased to be of any value...The social fabric was a festering mass of rotteness, the people had become a populace, the aristocracy was demoniac, the city was a hell. No crime that the annals of human wickedness can show was left unperpetrated. The higher classes on all sides exhibited a total extinction of moral principle; the lower were practical atheists.”

Past Reformation

So complete and so universal was the depravity that the few who retained any sober thought on the subject

“despairingly acknowledged that the system itself was utterly past cure.”

It was truly past cure, or even amelioration, from any earthly or human source. And when the corruption had reached such a depth of depravity that from it men could conclude only that if there were a God, He must surely let loose His judgments and end it all, just then—instead of letting loose His judgments in annihilating ruin, He opened full and free the fountain of His love, and

John 3

¹⁶ ...gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Jesus, the Son of God, came into the Roman world that was sunken in iniquity and corruption. He came into that Roman world which was dominated by that people who were so utterly apostate from their own original espousal of the principle of self-government. And He came to reveal to that people and to all mankind the true principle of self-government in very truth—self-government under God, with God, and in God.

And He did reveal it. He sent His apostles into all the world to preach it

Mark 16

¹⁵ ...to every creature.

And when one day one of His apostles stood face to face with a representative Roman who had sent for that apostle, to hear him concerning the faith in Christ, that apostle, in preaching to that representative Roman the truth of the true faith in Christ,

Acts 24

²⁵ ...reasoned of righteousness, self-government, and judgment to come.

That apostle of Christ, talking to that representative Roman, to that man who was a chief representative of that government originally founded upon the principle of self-government, set forth in the spirit of truth the true principle of self-government. The representative Roman “trembled,” as he saw not only how far short the people had come in their original conception of the principle of self-government, but how infinitely farther short the people were now.

As that representative Roman saw the heavenly beauty and

infinite value of the true principle of self-government as it is in truth, and that in all consistency he should espouse it, and that to do so meant the utter abandonment of all that Rome had become, this was also an element in his trembling.

And though God so graciously sent, and Christ so kindly brought, and the apostles and early Christians so faithfully preached to the people of Rome the full reality and vital substance and the essential truth of the principle of government which the people of Rome had originally espoused, yet, instead of readily recognizing it and gladly accepting it, they absolutely repudiated it, and persecuted to the death the principle and all who espoused it.

But most deplorable of all was that there came an apostasy,

2 Thessalonians 2

³ ...a falling away,

even amongst those who espoused in the name of Christ this true principle of self-government. These unfaithful ones also held the principle only in the mere profession, and upon only the human basis. These also, instead of governing themselves, naturally enough manifested the ambition to govern others, asserting in this “a kind of sovereignty for themselves,” and even beyond this, they extended their ambition to dominate the civil power. They said,

“Let the government, let the imperial power, espouse the Christian religion; let it ally itself with the church; let it receive through the church the true principle of government. Thus will it attain to true government indeed; and thus shall the kingdom of God come.”

Their words were accepted. Their scheme was adopted. By

political means the empire was made “Christian.” The name, the forms, and the profession of Christianity were adopted as the way to salvation, and so became only a cloak to cover the original iniquity; so became only the form of godliness, under which to increase unto more ungodliness. Then and thus Roman apostasy and iniquity attained its ultimate; and the divine judgments of destruction did now fall in annihilating ruin “upon this nominally Christian, but essentially heathen world.”

Wave after wave of a mighty flood of the barbarians of the north swept out of existence the empire and people of Rome. “Self-government” on the human basis, “self-government” without God, had demonstrated itself a complete failure.

VIII. THE DECLINE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT IN ROME

LAST week we studied the principle of government of the people, self-government, as illustrated in the government of Rome. In that study we found that government of the people was good, practical, and effectual, the best of all governments of ancient times, in all respects—so long as the people really governed themselves. Of all forms of government, that of government of the people depends most upon the integrity of the individual, upon the individual's loyalty to the principle of governing himself. And just as soon as the individuals fail in governing themselves, government of the people is lost, and must be succeeded by some other form.

This subject, as illustrated in the history of Rome, is worthy of further study, especially in the United States, because the United States was founded upon the principles of self-government, “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

And the study of government of the people, amongst the very people who possessed the faculty of self-government beyond all people of whom we have historical knowledge, except only the Anglo-Saxons, must, in the nature of things, supply most valuable lessons for the people of this nation, whose government was founded as a government of the people.

Government of the people must, in the nature of things, be the best of all governments, when the people really govern themselves. Also, in the nature of things, government of the people must be the worst of all governments, when the people

fail to govern themselves. For, when the government is of the people, and the people fail to govern, then there is practically no government; and the only alternative that then remains is either:

- anarchy – which is no government; or else
- despotism - a government of such a character that will effectually govern a populace that will not govern themselves.

It may be a despotism of the majority, it may be a despotism of the minority, it may be a despotism of a few, or even two or three, or it may be a despotism of only one; but whether of the majority, or the minority, of only two or three, or of only one, it must be, and it will inevitably be, a despotism. And through all these gradations the Roman Government of the people went in its degeneracy.

The first of all elements in self-government is self-denial. The exclusion of self-indulgence is temperance in all things. This we find as a characteristic in the earliest government of the people of Rome. The next vital element in self-government is self-support. Self-support, equally with self-denial, is inseparable from self-government. This also was a characteristic of the earliest Roman Government of the people.

Individual industry and frugality, therefore, are the essential elements in any system of practical self-government. And, as we have seen, the Roman people held in faithfulness both these essential elements of self-government. Their self-government was the greatest success, in every respect, of all human governments before the rise of that only other government of the people, the republic of the United States.

In such a government of the people, a government where each governs himself, the formal government easily becomes of that sort which is acknowledged to be the best, and which has been most aptly described in the sentence,

“The best government is the one which does the least governing.”

In such a case, the formal government exists, and is exercised solely for protection of the individual in his rights of life and property, while the individual governs and supports himself and the government. For, upon the principle that government is of the people, the formal government is a creation of the people. It is but a device, a piece of political machinery, framed and set up by the people, by which they would make themselves secure in the enjoyment of the inalienable rights which they all possessed as men capable of governing themselves, and exercising that capability in the actual government of themselves.

So, with the system complete, it stands: individual government, and collective protection. And since individual government, self-government, involves self-support, the complete system stands: self-help and governmental protection.

Assuming to Govern Other People

Such was the system of the Roman Government of the people at the first, and by virtue of which it was the freest government, therefore the best government, and by which it grew to be the greatest government, then in the world.

But when that nation assumed the prerogative of governing other people than themselves, and, to do this, repudiated for itself its own original and vital principle; and when into

the national treasury there came from conquered provinces and plundered peoples immense wealth in great, rolling streams of gold; and when the more fortunate individuals multiplied their wealth in boundless measure, and the positions, powers, and favors of the government were absorbed by these, as well as boundless luxury indulged by them,—when all this passed steadily before the eyes of all, the inevitable result was that the great mass of the less fortunate, the ones solely dependent upon their daily labor, and the poor—these followed the example of the rich and luxurious ones, and abandoned self-government, and with self-government abandoned self-help, and demanded governmental help. But when the government was a government of the people, the demand by the people for governmental support was merely the advocacy of Socialism.

There was however at the first a condition, under cover of which governmental support could be pleaded without itself appearing to be socialistic. That condition was that the vast wealth of the public treasury was not gathered from the people by taxation; but came as tribute and by plunder from conquered nations.

The plea and the campaign for governmental support was successful; not at first in having money or even provisions given direct to the people, but in the expenditure of the public money for the distribution of land to the people. Vast sums were thus spent. Then great numbers of people were, free of expense to themselves, placed upon well-improved lands.

But this failed; because, when they were upon the land, they must support themselves by their own efforts, and they

had all by far followed the example of the rich and luxurious, that their own work on the lands that were given them would not supply the means which they required to keep up the rate of living which they must maintain. And, living beyond their means, they incurred debt, then had to borrow from the rich to pay their debt; and, in borrowing what they must have, they mortgaged their claim upon the land.

Accordingly, it was but a comparatively short time before their lands were all gone, and they were again clamoring for governmental support. Then, in answer to these clamors, the same thing was done by the government again, and with the same result again. Then, again, the clamors arose; against the government did the same thing, with again the same result.

The Failure of Socialism

When this had been followed in the same round several times, it became apparent to the public authority that such a course was practically useless. Also the beneficiaries were heartily tired of it, because it did not relieve them from the necessity of work with their hands in self-support. Therefore, the scheme was discontinued.

But those who insisted upon governmental support did not cease the demands for governmental support. They next required that the government should establish public granaries from which the people should be supplied with grain at a merely nominal sum. It was argued that this would be in no wise different in principle from that which had already been done in the supplying of land. It could hardly be more expensive, and being much more direct, would be much less complicated. There were always plenty of demagogues to urge these

claims of the populace, and so to lift themselves to popular favor and governmental place.

With the enthusiastic clapping of every pair of poor hand in Rome, a law was secured which decreed that public granaries should be established in Rome, to be filled and maintained at the cost of the State, and that from these the wheat should be sold to the poor citizens at a merely nominal price. This was practically governmental support of the populace, because the immediate effect was to gather into the city a mob of needy, unemployed voters, living on the charity of the State, to crowd the circus, and to clamor at the elections, available, no doubt, immediately to strengthen the hands of the popular tribune, but certain, in the long run, to sell themselves to those who could bid highest for their voices.

And each voter could sell his vote for a sum sufficient to keep him constantly well supplied with provisions from the public granaries. Then, as the populace existed in practical idleness, the next thing was that the State must supply games and spectacles to fill the time of the idle crowd sufficiently to prevent mischievous designs that would threaten the government.

As before remarked, the open practice of Socialism could be avoided, so long as the public treasury was supplied with money from conquered nations; but when all the nations had been conquered, and the supply was not sufficient, then it was found that the scheme was absolutely socialistic in practice, as in the beginning it was in principle. For when the supply of money in the public treasury from conquered provinces proved insufficient, by public devices and decrees the needed

sums were simply taken by confiscation from those who had money.

Conflicts between Capital and Labor

But, while events were reaching this final point, other accompanying and strictly logical in which had gained a permanent hold upon the government, and, with this had carried it utterly away from government of the people. In the progress of this socialistic principle, there was a constant struggle between the rich and the poor, between capital and labor, between governmental order and anarchy. When the rich, or capital, held the power, the poor and laboring classes were oppressed. When the populace held the power, the rich were oppressed.

In this see-saw for the possession of power capital had the advantage, because the senate was always on the side of capital, and the senate was always in existence, and, therefore, in possession of power. Besides, owing to the fact that the elections were annual, the ascendancy of the people was but spasmodic at the best. When some leader, who could carry the multitude with him, arose, the people would arise, and carry everything before them. But when the particular occasion was passed, or the leader fallen, the people would drop back into the old, easy way. The elections were never without riot, but the senate would gradually regain all its former power, which it would use still more oppressively in revenge for the checks which had been put upon it, and the insults which it had received when the populace was in power.

Despotism

Thus, when the populace was in power, it was a despotism

of the majority; and when the senatorial party was in power, it was a despotism of the minority. Yet, it must in justice be observed that the despotism of the senatorial party, the party of property, was not so great as was the despotism of the majority. And in justice it must also be admitted that the violence and excesses in defiance of law and order, of the populace, whether in power or out, compelled despotism on the part of the government.

For instance: The senate absolutely abolished the trades-union; but to this the senate was driven by the fact that, though these unions had been originally formed only for mutual benefit, yet in the times which we are now considering they had become nothing but political clubs, and had become so dangerous to property and even to life, that, for the security of both property and life, it was essential that they should be absolutely abolished.

And this but illustrates the truth that, though the government was a despotism, whether the majority (the populace) or the minority (the senatorial party) was in power; yet, the despotism of the minority was, in a degree, less heavy than was that of the majority; for the majority, possessing nothing, had no kind of respect, or any consideration, whatever, for the rights of property. All that they cared for was to get what they could. With the populace the chief consideration was how to get more, and whatever means they could employ for this purpose was to them perfectly proper.

On the other hand, the senatorial party was preeminently the party of property. Therefore, even their own instincts of self-preservation required of them that they should have re-

spect to the rights of property. And this principle also acted as a check on the temper and despotism of that party. Yet, with this exception, the minority could no more be trusted than could the majority.

Extra-constitutional Power

Finally the contention between these two parties became so continuous and so violent that, for the very existence of society, there had to be created a power which would be a check on both; and, under the circumstances, upon the principle of government of the people, even extra-governmental.

Under the circumstances of the alternate despotism of the majority and of the minority, it was essential that there should be organized a power which should be constantly active, and so balance the power of the senate, and hold in check its despotic tendencies, and also be able to hold in check the despotic sway of the majority.

Already it had appeared more than once that this power lay in the veterans of the triumphant, but disbanded, armies; but it was impossible, at the first, to rule openly by the power of the army. And since this feature must be shaded, the logic of the situation was that a coalition should in some way be formed, representing the contending parties, with the understanding that it could depend upon the army for support. And the logic of the situation was met by the formation, B.C. 60, of

A Triumvirate,

representing both capital and labor, and including the army. Caesar was the idol of the populace, and had the confidence of the trades-union, which, after having been abol-

ished by the senate, were fully restored when, in the turn of the political wheel, the populace held governmental power.

Crassus was the richest individual in the Roman world, and he represented the combinations of capital, the farmers of the taxes, and the moneyed class, generally, who were not of the nobility.

Pompey, one of the mightiest leaders of her armies that Rome had yet known, was the idol of the soldiers, who, though not at the moment organized in legions with arms in their hands, were, nevertheless, a mighty political power; and, if necessity should demand, could be made, in a day, a mighty military power.

These three men, representing labor, capital, and the soldiery, covenanted together that no proceedings should be allowed to take place in the commonwealth without the consent of each of the three contracting parties. United, they constituted a power beyond all the resources of the commonwealth to cope with.

Thus the first triumvirate became an accomplished fact. And, though there were a few expiring struggles, the power of the Roman senate, and also of the Roman people, was at that moment virtually gone forever. Government of the people had been utterly wasted, and government was now merged in three individuals, with one controlling mind among the three, and that mind the mind of Julius Caesar.

But the government did not long remain in this form. Crassus, in an expedition against the Parthians, was slain, and, instead of the triumvirate being preserved by the selection of another in the place of Crassus, the two that remained,

separated, and the only question and the contest was as to which of these two should alone be the government. The senate stood with Pompey, the populace supported Caesar, the army was divided, the more powerful part supporting Caesar. Civil war followed, in which Caesar was everywhere successful. Pompey was defeated and slain, and Caesar stood alone as head of the Roman world, himself alone the government. Not only was

Government of the People Gone,

not only was government of the classes gone, not only was government of a few gone—all government was gone but government by one.

The senate, seeing what had come, formed a conspiracy to save the republic in the destruction of the government by the assassination of him who, by the direct logic of affairs, was alone the government. For affairs had reached that point in the Roman State where a one-man power was inevitable. And, though to avoid this the senate had killed the one man who was that power, and the one man who, of all the Roman nation, was most capable of exercising that power, the reality and permanency of a one-man power, and that by one worse than he, was only the more hastened by the very means which they had employed for the purpose of preventing it.

This they themselves realized, as soon as they awoke from the dream in which they had done the desperate deed. Cicero exactly defined the situation, and gave a perfect outline of the whole history of the times, when, shortly after the time of the murder of Caesar, he bitterly exclaimed:

“We have killed the king; but the kingdom is with us still.

We have taken away the tyrant; the tyranny survives.”

That tyranny survived in the breast of every man in Rome; and the only question was, which one should be the tyrant to such a degree that he could dominate the tyranny of all the others.

This was very soon decided; for, immediately upon the murder of Caesar, a second triumvirate was formed—Mark Antony; Caesar's general of cavalry, who was at the head of his troops. This was, however, a mere shuffle on the part of the two principals, Antony and Octavius, to gain time and get their bearings. And as soon as this was done, Lepidus was eliminated, and the sole question and contest was repeated as to which of these two men should be the one man, who should be the Roman Government.

Again there was war; Octavius was successful; Antony, with Cleopatra, committed suicide; and now, just thirteen and one-half years after the murder of Caesar, again, and this time in permanency, one man was the Roman Government, and that one man a man who could not govern himself; and that government a furious and crushing despotism, only a single degree removed from sheer anarchy. And such it remained, with only slight amelioration, until it sunk in annihilating ruin.

IX. ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT OF ROME

WHEN Rome perished every form of government and every device as to government had been tried, and had failed, all but one; that one form, that remaining device was government wholly by the church—ecclesiastical government. The last stage of the Roman Government had been a government in which the church was united with the State, in which the church worked hand in hand with the State, and traded church support for State favors. But the State, not the church; the emperor, not the bishop; was the ruling power.

The bishops had promised to the imperial power, and even to themselves, that that system should be the very kingdom of God come on earth. But that bow of promise was most rudely dispelled when it was found that ruin rode swiftly in very element, and from every direction. Yet, in the face of all this, the bishops would not acknowledge themselves mistaken, except in the matter of time and order. They still insisted that they were right as to the coming and the reign of the kingdom and city of God; but that there must be a cleansing and an overturning that would clearly give to the church alone full and undisputed sway.

For this the church of Rome aspired and conspired to take to herself the power and the dominion over the earth, and demonstrate that the perfection of government on earth was the church of Rome. The ruling power in this church was the bishopric of Rome, and the only thing contemplated by Rome's prelates was that this new order of things, this new form of government in the world, would be, in substance and vital principle, only the government of Rome continued.

Through Rome, cleansed by the divine judgments, ruined, re-vivified, and glorified by the divine presence, benediction would come to bless the earth with perfect peace. Thus would original Rome reach its true goal, and its original purpose in the world be truly fulfilled.

Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome (440-461), lived and exercised his bishopric in the very midst of the whirl of events that brought ruin to the Roman Empire. And it was he who conceived and prophesied this grand future for the church of Rome. He declared that the former Rome was but the promise of the latter Rome; that the glories of the former were to be reproduced in Catholic Rome; that Romulus and Remus were but the precursors of Peter and Paul, and the successors of Romulus, therefore the precursors of the successors of Peter, and that as the former Rome had ruled the world, so the latter, by the see of the holy blessed Peter, as head of the world, would dominate the earth.

This conception was never lost by the Papacy. And when, only fifteen years afterward, the Roman Empire had in itself perished, and only the Papacy survived the ruin and firmly held place and power in Rome, this conception was only the more strongly and with the more certitude held and asserted.

This conception was also intentionally and systematically developed. The Scriptures were industriously studied and ingeniously perverted to maintain it. By a perverse application of the Levitical system of the Old Testament, the authority and eternity of the Roman priesthood was established; and by perverse deductions from the New Testament, the authority and eternity of Rome herself was established.

First, taking the ground that she was the only true continuation of original Rome, upon that the Papacy took the ground that wherever the New Testament cited or referred to the authority of original Rome, she was meant, because she was the only true continuation of original Rome. Accordingly, where the New Testament enjoins submission to the powers that be, or obedience to governors, it means the Papacy, because the only power and the only governors that then were, were Roman.

Every passage was seized on where submission to the powers that be is enjoined; every instance cited where obedience had actually been rendered to the imperial officials; special emphasis being laid on the sanction which Christ Himself had given to Roman dominion by pacifying the world through Augustus, by being born at the time of the taxing, by paying tribute to Caesar, by saying to Pilate: "You could have no power at all against Me except it were given you from above." - *Bryce*

And since Christ had recognized the authority of Pilate, who was but the representative of Rome, who should dare to disregard the authority of the Papacy, the true continuation of that authority to which even the Lord from heaven had submitted.

Sustained by Forgery

The power that was usurped by the church and her popes upon these perversions of Scripture, was finally confirmed by a specific and downright forgery. This "most stupendous of all the medieval forgeries" consisted of "The Imperial Edict of Donation," or "The Donation of Constantine."

"Itself a portentous falsehood, it is the most unimpeach-

able evidence of the thoughts and beliefs of the priesthood which framed it.”

It proceeds to tell how that Constantine the Great, having been cured of leprosy by the prayers of Sylvester, bishop of Rome, resolved, as a reward of gratitude, that he would forsake Rome, and found a new capital,

“lest the continuance of the secular government should cramp the freedom of the spiritual.”

It declares that

“Constantine found Bishop Sylvester in one of the monasteries on Mount Soracte, and, having mounted him on a mule, he took hold of his bridle rein, and, walking all the way, the emperor conducted Sylvester to Rome, and placed him on the papal throne.”

Then the forgery makes Constantine decree as follows:

“We attribute to the see of Peter, all the dignity, all the glory, all the authority, of the imperial power. Furthermore, we give to Sylvester and to his successors our palace of the Lateran, which is incontestably the finest palace on earth; we give him our crown, our miter, our diadem, and all our imperial vestments; we transfer to him the imperial dignity. We bestow on the holy pontiff in free gift the city of Rome, and all the western cities in Italy. To cede precedence to him, we divest ourselves to our authority over all these provinces; and we withdraw from Rome, transferring the seat of our empire to Byzantium, inasmuch as it is not proper that an earthly emperor should preserve the least authority where God hath established the head of His religion.”

It was strictly in the exercise of this power, exercised by Leo the Great, and systematized by his successors, that the Papacy exercised the prerogative of restoring and re-estab-

lishing the Roman Empire, in the proclaiming and crowning of Charlemagne as emperor, and Augustus; and then of asserting supreme power over emperor, empire, and all, and using this as the means by which she herself would attain to this supreme height of worldly ambition and priestly arrogance; where she herself would assure entirely to herself all the power and prerogative of that enormous assumption, and, “arrayed with sword and crown and scepter,” in the sight of the assembled multitude, would shout,

“There is no other Caesar, nor king, nor emperor, than I, the sovereign pontiff, and the successor of the apostles.”

One of the bases of her claim of right to rule the world was that she was the sole embodiment on earth of the principles of the Prince of Peace, and that the bishop of Rome was the very vicegerent of the person of the Prince of Peace, and, therefore, she would assure the reign of peace to the full extent of her recognized dominion. But the fact proved that at every step of the way in her climbing to that pinnacle of world power, and in maintaining herself there, she kept kingdoms and nations, and even all Europe, and beyond, in a constant turmoil of war and anarchy.

And in order to save their own kingdoms from sheer anarchy, and to preserve even society itself from annihilation by the anarchism of the Papacy, the heads of the nations of Europe, the secular powers, were compelled to assemble in a general council, specifically

“for the reformation of the church in its head and members;”

at which council they took her down from her high throne of universal supremacy, and seated her upon a stool of sub-

mission and subjection. In complete and horrible measure there had been demonstrated to all the world that the essence of the Papacy and the ultimate of her rule is only anarchy.

Such was the result to the nations of Europe, and to Europe as a whole, with respect to government itself. But the real dominion claimed by the Papacy is of the heart and life—the soul—of man. As essential to the proper demonstration of this dominion, she claims that the temporal power of the world must be absolutely subject to her will; that power she had surely gained, and the universality of her rule had been recognized, so that she had a fair, free, and open field to demonstrate exactly what she would do. And as respected the temporal power, and even her own power in government, the result was only anarchy.

Speculation in Crime

And the result of her rule in her own peculiar claim of dominion over the soul of man, demonstrated universally in her dominion over those who were become her own, and who acknowledge themselves her own—in this dominion, the result was in nowise different from that in the other. Her whole power to the full extent of her recognized dominion was devoted to the seducing, and even the compelling, of mankind to sin. She actually speculated in human corruption.

Pope John XXII, regularly listed, and set a tax upon, the sins of men. The list of taxes drawn up by John XXII, as levied upon the licentious practices of ecclesiastics, priests, nuns, and the laity; on murder and other enormities, as well as lesser crimes and breaches of monastic rules and church requirements; is sufficient to cover almost every sin that mankind

could commit. Yet, all these sins were regularly taxed at a certain rate, down to the single “sou” (cent), and even to the “denier.” So that it is literally true that no inconsiderable portion of the revenues of the Papacy were derived from a regularly assessed tax upon the sins of men. Well did the abbot of Usperg exclaim:

“O Vatican, rejoice now, all treasuries are open to thee; thou canst draw in with full hands! Rejoice in the crimes of the children of men, since thy wealth depends on their abandonment and iniquity! Urge on to debauchery, excite to rape, incest, even parricide; for, the greater the crime, the more gold will it bring thee. Rejoice thou! Shout forth songs of gladness! Now the human race is subjected to thy laws! Now you reign through depravity of morals and the inundation of ignoble thoughts. The children of men can now commit with impunity every crime, since they know that thou wilt absolve them for a little gold. Provided he brings thee gold, let him be soiled with blood and lust; thou wilt open the kingdom of heaven to debauchees, Sodomites, assassins, parricides. What do I say? Thou wilt sell God Himself for gold.”

X. DEPARTURE FROM TRUE PRINCIPLE

WHEN Rome had perished, every form of government had been tried but one—the Papacy; for the Roman Government was diverse from all that were before it.

Daniel 7

¹⁹ Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

²³ Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

When the middle ages were past, every form, even that one, had been tried; for the papal government was diverse from all.

Daniel 7

²⁴ And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first...

And that one not only failed, as had all before it, but proved itself a greater curse than had all before it.

Except in Britain alone, the new nations that planted themselves upon the ruin of the Roman Empire, being burdened with the incubus of the Papacy, never had fair chance to develop government upon the basis of their own native, free principles; but were borne down, perverted, and corrupted by the influence and power of the Papacy. The feudal system, the worst form of things ever established in civil affairs, was nothing else than the system of the Papal Church, adapted

and applied apart from the actual machinery of the church.

In Britain every Roman influence was swept away before the Anglo-Saxon, who made Britain England. A hundred and fifty years after the Anglo-Saxons entered Britain, the Catholic Church was also planted there by the invasion of Augustine and his accompanying monks; but the papal system never gained a foothold in England, and was never recognized there except for the little moment when King John surrendered himself and the kingdom to the pope as supreme.

And even this act of recognition of the papal system complete in England, only the more swiftly and the more certainly excluded it forever. For that surrender by John of England to the Papacy immediately drew forth the *Magna Charta* and its long train of resultant free institutions, of which the Constitution of the United States was not by any means the least important development.

“A New Order of Things”

Through all these changes of all of these nations after the fall of Rome, kingdoms were invariably the form of government, and kingdoms expanded into empire, though every kingdom or empire was in subjection to the Papacy. But when the American nation arose, kings and all principles of kingship were utterly repudiated; the freedom, the right, and the capability of the people to govern themselves was again asserted. And when government of the people was formally established in the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, it was in repudiation not only of kings and all principles of kingship, but also of popes and all principles of Papacy.

The State was established as a government of self-govern-

ment people; a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. It was such a government separated and held by the Constitution entirely apart from the church, or from any connection with the church, or any recognition of the church, or even of religion in the abstract.

The churches were left perfectly free to go their own way; to organize and govern themselves, and conduct their own affairs as they might choose.

The State held to itself the principle of utter separation from any Church or religion, and upon that principle would conduct all the affairs of the State.

These two bodies, the Church and the State, abiding by natural and essential principle in totally distinct realms, occupied each its distinctive realm. And so in this new and final nation, the system of the church was a church without a pope, and the system of State was the State without a king; the Church and the State each absolutely independent of the other, and each entirely separated from the other.

This was indeed “a new order of things,” [inscription on the Great Seal of the United States] and it was equally the correct and the divine order of things. And those who established it thus did so entirely out of respect to the divine order of things, as to the government of the church on earth. They did it out of respect entirely to the principles of “the Holy Author of our religion,” and “upon the principles upon which the Gospel was first propagated, and the reformation from popery carried on.”

And so they established this new nation upon right principles for the State, that it should be a light and a guide to all

the nations in the way of individual liberty and of free and happy government; and also upon the right principles for the Church leaving her free in her own realm to be joined only to her own true Lord, to Him alone as her true head and guide, that she should be indeed the light of the world.

Thus, at last, was attained the form of perfect earthly government. And all that was needed in order that this nation should forever lead the world was that the people composing the nation should hold themselves in practice, in strict allegiance to the principles upon which the nation was founded. And while this was done, this nation was distinctly the leading nation of the world; that is, the nation was truly leading the world toward right principles, away from the corrupt and the corrupting influence of the Papacy.

But in the latest years these principles have not been adhered to either by the Church or by the State in this nation. The churches, combining their strength and influence, have sought to unite themselves to the State; and in direct violation of the fundamental principles of the Reformation and of Christianity, it has sought “by force to enter into the office of another,” to transfer worldly government, and “to prescribe laws to the magistrate touching the form of the State.”

On the other hand, the people of the State have not been loyal to the principles of the State in the United States. The fundamental principle of State in this government is government of the people—self-government: the government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed. The people have not continued to govern themselves; and the government has repudiated government by the consent of the

governed, and has espoused government by the consent of “some of the governed,” which, in principle, is merely government of the few, and in logic and in practice, presently, government by one, or a one-man power.

And with fundamental principles and original practice of this nation abandoned on the part of both the Church and the State, it is literally impossible that there can be any other result than that there shall be here repeated the history of that other degenerate government of the people which developed the one-man power in the Roman State; and that other apostate church which developed the one-man power in the church, dominating the world.

And today this nation has gone so far in this direction, and the inevitable course further is so clearly defined, that all that any one needs to do to understand the subject even in detail, is merely to be acquainted with the history as it actually occurred in that degenerate Roman Government of the people, and of that apostate church, which drew life and supremacy from the destruction and ruin of that degenerate government of the people.

Not Self-Governing

Today, in the United States, the people are not a self-governing people. They do not govern themselves either in private or public life. Intemperance, absence of self-government in individual life, possesses and absolutely controls the individual life of the vast majority of the people of the United States, and is constantly increasing at a fearful rate.

In the business or commercial life of the people of the United States the people do not govern themselves. They are

absolutely governed either by the trusts or by the unions, or by both.

In the field of labor and employment, the people of the United States of all people, do not govern themselves. Almost wholly, they are governed as to their employment, their wages, and almost in their very buying and selling, by the trades-union.

In political life the people of the United States do not govern themselves, and the government is not of the people. The people are governed by “the party” and “the machine,” and these, in turn, are controlled by the political “bosses.”

History Repeats Itself

Here is the same old desperate struggle between capital and labor; here also is the same old longing and grasping for governmental support, which, under whatever pretense it may be urged, is merely socialism. And, indeed, here it is advocated as socialism direct and by name.

And just as the advocacy of governmental support means only socialism, so also the advocacy of socialism means only anarchy. In some instances here it is advocated under the would-be-saving title of “Christian socialism.” And in the advocacy of it in all its phases, the words of Christ are readily grasped and enthusiastically rung in as an expression of the principles of socialism.

There are, however, a number of serious considerations which absolutely preclude this socialism from ever being in any sense Christianity. One is that the words and principles of Christ are absolutely meaningless in the mouths, the plans, or

the devices, of those who do not believe at all in Jesus; and even though there be some believers in Jesus who are mistakenly advocating socialism, yet, the overwhelming mass of those who advocate socialism are those who have no regard for the truth, or the faith, or the principles of Christ.

And this fact alone absolutely vitiates all possibility of any virtue ever accruing to socialism from the words or principles of Jesus, though they be quoted and advocated in every speech and on every page. The defect is not in the words or the principles of Jesus; the defect is in the people who quote these words and principles and urge them for a wrong purpose.

It is the same old story of Sinai: there God gave His own divine truths in words spoken direct from heaven. The people adopted them and declared that,

Exodus 19

⁸ ...All that the Lord has spoken we will do...

But the people adopted them in the wrong way, and for wrong purposes:

Hebrews 8

⁸ For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

⁹ Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt...

Jeremiah 31

³² ...which my covenant they break...

The fault was not on the part of the Lord, nor was it in the

words or the principles announced in the covenant on His part; the fault was in the people. They went about it to do some great thing themselves and make a great change and reform in the world.

They failed, as all others must fail, who attempt to use the divine principles without supreme guidance and control of the divine Spirit through the divine and abiding faith of Christ Jesus, the Saviour and Sanctifier of the soul.

They failed, as all others must fail, who attempt to use the divine principles for worldly or selfish purposes, for any other than divine purposes, according to the divine will, under the supreme guidance and control of the divine Spirit.

XI. DEPARTURE FROM TRUE PRINCIPLE, PART 2

IT is true that the people of the earliest church brought their belongings and put them into a common fund, and

Acts 2

⁴⁴ And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

And this is cited by the advocates of socialism as the true example, and assurance that socialism is the true order in government and society on earth. But in this deduction in behalf of socialism, the most important elements, indeed the strictly vital elements, are all left out.

It is true that at that time the church had all things in common, and no one said that aught that he had was his own. But that was the church, not the State, nor society, as such; and it was the church immediately after Pentecost, when

Acts 4

³¹ ...were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

And not all who cite this in advocacy of socialism are thus filled with the Holy Ghost.

Another item in that action of the early church is that the matter of having all things common was altogether and absolutely voluntary on the part of every one of those who were in it. While in the socialism proposed, it is intended to conduct a political campaign, and get a majority vote, and then have this majority compel by force all to have all things common. But the thing can never be accomplished by force, nor by any political or any other worldly scheme.

Another vital element, which in this socialism is ignored, is

that the Holy Spirit reigned so completely there that those who were the leaders had, by that divine Spirit, the faculty of detecting those who would use the system for merely selfish purposes, as the means of sponging, while in the system of socialism, as now advocated for the United States, this power is entirely lacking. And without that element, every scheme of having all things common will surely fail; for it is perfectly certain that there never can be given perfect assurances that amongst these advocates of socialism there are, and ever will be, absolutely none actuated by the motives that characterized Ananias and Sapphira.

These items demonstrate that no scheme of having all things common, whether it be distinct socialism or what not, whether in the church or in the world, ever can be true, or ever can be successful; into which all composing it do not enter individually, of their own free choice; in which all who compose it are not entirely free from selfishness; in which every one in it is not filled with the Holy Ghost, as the consequence of having personal faith in Jesus Christ as the Saviour from sin; in which all are not absolutely subject to the control and guidance of the Holy Spirit; and in which the Holy Spirit does not preside to such a degree as absolutely to guard the community from all selfishness and all hypocrisy.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that this mistaken system of socialism will continue to be advocated; and will even be advocated as "Christian" socialism. It is also scarcely to be doubted that, at least to some extent, the scheme will be made effective in governmental affairs. But to whatever degree the thing shall be made effective, it will prove itself only that much of an element in the hastening of the anarchy, which is

the only logic of the socialistic proposition from the beginning.

Government of the people, both in the individual life and in the public life, is so far gone that, in every phase of the public life, government is of a few.

The contest between capital and labor has reach the point where it is truly a contest as to which shall control the formal governmental machinery to the disadvantage of the other. This contest is as certain to grow as that day and night continue. And as it grows, confusion and uncertainty will only the more grow, and expedients of government will certainly have to be resorted to as means of balancing issues and preserving order. And, at the rate that things have been going lately, it will be but a little while before

A Triumvirate

will be the surest expedient of the balancing of issues. For at the point at which things almost stand today, the chief representative of capital, and the chief representative of labor, and the chief political manager of whatever national party should be in power, by agreeing together, could decree that nothing should be done in the commonwealth without the consent of each of the three; and such a triumvirate would form a power as complete and beyond any other combinations to resist, as was that of the triumvirate of Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar.

And while events have reached this pass, and are fast hastening to a crisis, of which some such expedient can be the only salvation,—while all this is occurrent on the part of the State, the religious power (and that the power of the Papacy,

flattered and favored by apostate Protestantism) is striding at even greater pace to position of supremacy at Washington, and, from this, the supremacy of the world.

For, of all the elements that are working today to exalt the Papacy once more to world supremacy, there are none so potent, none so sure, and none so rapid, as the influence of the United States. And with that supremacy there comes also the persecution and the anarchy that are the inevitable accompaniments of undisputed papal power. But this time, thank the Lord,

Her Reign Will Be Short,

for the Scriptures point out that the period allowed her in this thing is the shortest of all the prophetic periods named by inspiration—“one hour” (Revelation 17:12). Her power over the kingdoms of the earth is received for but “one hour,” and in “one hour” her judgment comes (Revelation 18:10). In “one hour” all her wealth and glory vanish.

And then that mighty angel takes up a stone like a great millstone, and throws it into the sea, saying:

Revelation 18 [20th Century Version]

²¹ So shall Babylon, the great city, be violently overthrown, never more to be seen.

²² No more shall the music of harpers, minstrels, flute players, or trumpeters be heard in you; no more shall any worker, skilled in any art, be found in you; no more shall the sound of the mill be heard in you; no more shall the light of a lamp shine in you; no more shall the voices of bridegroom and bride be heard in you.

²³ Your merchants were the great men of the earth, for all the nations were deceived by your magical charms.

²⁴ Yes, and in her was to be found the blood of the prophets and of Christ's people, and of all who have been put to death upon earth.

And then there will be heard that loud voice of a great throng in heaven, saying:

Revelation 19

¹ ...Praise the Lord! To our God belongs salvation, glory, and power,

² For true and just are His judgments. For He passed judgment on the great prostitute, who was corrupting the earth by her licentiousness, and He took vengeance upon her for the blood of His servants.

³ And again the voices cried, Praise the Lord!

Then when the earth shall have been cleansed with fire from on high, He who sits on the throne, says,

Revelation 21

⁵ ...Behold, I make all things new...

and,

⁶ ...It is done...

Then comes the kingdom of God indeed, in all its beauty, glory, and power,

Daniel 7

²⁷ And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.

¹⁸ But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

NOTE: After the foregoing article was written, the American Bar Association held its annual session for 1903; and the report of its committee on trusts contains the remarkable forecast of a one-man power, of how near it may be, and what it can be when it comes:

“The modern combination's primary object is to control trade and commerce in plain articles of production and substitute a more or less perfect monopoly in place of a more or less free competition. It changes entirely the basic principle of commercial relation between man and man, and if they are to continue to grow and develop in the future, as in the past, will render necessary most important changes on the principles of our commercial laws.

“Combination as an economic force, is fast coming to take the place of competition. The producers are combining, the transportation companies are containing, trades-union are combining; workmen, as well as employers, are combining; everything seems to be coming into some form of combination, and everybody seems to be a combiner. The competition that still remains is fast disappearing. Workmen are refusing to compete for jobs. Labor unions are enlarging the spheres of their activity and extending their operations.

“The union of the employers is still stronger and more far-reaching than the union of workmen. We are now having combinations of combinations. The United States Steel Corporation is a combination of a dozen theretofore competing producers, who themselves were combinations of still other producers, and these, in turn, often combinations of still others. To have them back to their beginning is like discovering all the multitude of sources that go to make up the volume of the swollen Mississippi.

“The ambition of the shipping trust, perhaps the pet project of the great American combiner, has been to control all the ships that sail the ocean. A hundred years ago there were

hardly two ships owned by the same individual or corporation, and even fifty years ago there was scarcely a ship owner, individual or corporation, that owned a half dozen ships.

“No one knows but that within the next ten years a greater man than J. P. Morgan will arise, who will combine into one organization all the industries of the land, so that the workman who works for wages can find but one possible employer, and the purchaser of wares can find but one possible seller. The steps toward the formation of one universal industrial corporation, which shall crowd out all other corporations and assume to itself all the industries of the land have already been more than half taken. It is not so far to go from now to that end, as we had to go to reach the present condition.”

And when that point shall have been reached, the event will bring the sure fulfilment of these verses:

Revelation 13

¹⁶ And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

¹⁷ And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

So true is it that the best view of the signs of the times is presented in the daily march of events.

XII. THE END OF EARTHLY HUMAN GOVERNMENT

WE have now reviewed the history of government on earth. We have seen that every kind of government has been tried, and in every instance has developed unbearable despotism toward men, and blasphemous assumption toward God.

In every instance also the government has failed and fallen to ruin—except the ones now existing on earth; and these, founded and considered upon the identical principles of these which have perished, must inevitably and shortly perish.

And this the more shortly and more certainly by the fact that, whereas in every instance in former ages, when governments had reached the breaking point, there were new peoples to arise and perpetuate government in their places; *now* there are absolutely no new peoples anywhere on earth to take the places of these, and perpetuate government when the ones now existing shall have reached the inevitable breaking point, as have all before them.

And this consideration alone makes it certain that when the governments now existing do reach that inevitable breaking point, the only result that there can be, will be the actual ending of all earthly human government.

And that this inevitable breaking point is today very near, and is hastening greatly in the experience of the present governments of earth, is plain.

This very consideration is perplexing the world's rulers today. And there can be no other end to these things than the end of all earthly human government.

But that will not be the end of government, thank the Lord! It will not be the end of even earthly government. It will be only, as expressed, the end of earthly human government. For God lives, and He is Governor amongst the nations. And when that crisis comes, which is now imminent, He will take to Himself His own great power, and will reign.

Sin has almost finished its course upon earth; the solution of the problem of iniquity is in its last stage; and, presently,

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

The universal failure of all earthly human government is no proof at all of the failure of all government; for in this history of government on the earth, we have seen that the universal cause of the failure of government has been

The Failure of Individual Self-government.

We have also found that the universal cause of the failure of individual self-government has been the attempt at self-government without God, and the universal and inevitable failure of every attempt at self-government without God lies simply in the fact of sin. It was sin in the first place that originated any such attempt; and it is sin which, ever since, has frustrated and will ever frustrate every such attempt.

Sin has enslaved every soul on earth. There is power in sin to enslave and to reign over man, and even against his wish, impelling him to wrong. And man, being thus enslaved to sin

and reigned over in power by sin, simply can not possibly truly govern himself. The power of sin must be broken and the enslaved captive freed, before it is possible for him truly to govern himself.

And the power of sin can be broken. The enslaved captive can be freed. For Jesus Christ, the Lord, has met both sin and its author on their own territory, and in the very citadel of their own kingdom, has conquered and has completely broken their power; has openly triumphed over them; and leads in His triumphant train every soul who chooses this only true way of freedom.

And this whole story of the impossibility of human self-government, except by the breaking of the power and the reign of sin by and through Christ Jesus, the Lord, is told in a single passage and few words in the Scriptures. And here is the story:.

Romans 7

¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

¹⁶ If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

¹⁷ Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord...

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

And this free man, the Christian free in Christ, free in God, which is the place and the way of the only true freedom, exercising self-government with God, and in God, is

The Manifestation on Earth of True Government.

And that true government is not human; it is divine-human; for divinity is the only source of true self-government. The only person in the universe who, of Himself, can in all things truly and perfectly govern Himself, is God. Self-government, therefore, is in truth but an attribute of God.

Therefore, divinity is the only source of self-government; and it is impossible for any creature in the universe to govern himself except as he is allied to divinity; except as he is made partaker of the divine nature. And he who is made partaker of

the divine nature has escaped the corruption that is in the world, and is delivered unto the glorious liberty of the children of God.

And this is Christianity. This is the way, the true and living way, revealed by Christ in human flesh. And in this divine-human way, every human soul can walk in the manifestation of the principles and the glory of true government, which is true self-government.

And this manifestation of true government—the true government of self—is greater than is the government of all kingdoms and empire, and he who truly exercises it is greater than all kings and emperors that ever were on earth.

Proverbs 16

³² ...He that rules his spirit [is better] than he that takes a city.

Accordingly, this power of true government—self-government—is truly kingly power. Being from the divinity, it could be nothing else. And He who came into the world to make manifest in human flesh this true government, which is true self-government,—He, when challenged on the point with the words,

John 18

³⁷ Are you a king then?

royally answered:

³⁷ You say that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hears my voice.

And He who was born to the end, and who came into the world for this cause, that He should be King, He

Revelation 1

⁵ ...loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

Every Christian is, therefore, by creation, and so by divine right, a king. The ambition that has so manifested itself in all ages to be king, has never been in itself a false or a wrong ambition. The ambition itself has been true and right; it is the course, the manifestation, and the aims of that ambition that have been false and wrong.

As we have seen in this whole study of government, the manifestation and aims of the ambition of man on earth to be a king have been invariably to gain power and dominion over others, and to govern and exercise authority upon others; and to govern and exercise authority upon others; while the true ambition and aim to be king is to gain dominion, over self, and to govern and exercise authority upon self.

Jesus, the True King

has made this distinction plain in the following words to His disciples:

Matthew 20

²⁵ You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

²⁶ But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

²⁷ And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

²⁸ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Worldly, false kingship is always government of others

and the service of others. With worldly, false kingship is always the ambition to conquer all nations, that they may serve Him; while with the Christian, true kingship, the ambition is always and only to surrender himself to all nations that he may serve them.

And it is the simple philosophy of Christian kingship that Christ is the greatest of all kings, yea, the very King of kings. Because He surrendered far more, to serve far more, than any other in the universe possibly could. And since true kingship is to surrender self to all, that he may serve all; in the manner of things he who surrenders most to serve most, is the greatest king.

And since Christ made the greatest possible surrender in surrendering Himself, and He did it for the greatest possible number, that He might serve absolutely all; it is but the plain philosophy of Christian kingship that He is in very truth the greatest of all kings, the very King of kings. And all who in Him, in God, and with God, surrender themselves to all, that they may serve all, are true kings; and are of His kingdom.

The Coming Kingdom

And this is the kingdom, this is the government which, upon earth, shall presently succeed all earthly human governments, and which shall stand forever; simply because it is the divinely true government. For in reference to the succession of all earthly human governments, it was declared long ago by the divine Spirit that

Daniel 7

¹⁸ But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

and

Daniel 7

²⁷ And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Revelation 22

³ And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

⁴ And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

⁵ And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

They serve and they reign. They serve Him, they serve Him in serving others, and they reign over themselves. And such alone is true government, whether in heaven or on earth. And because it is true, such government abides eternally.

And such is Christianity in the truth of it. And unto Him, Christ, the Author and Finisher of Christianity—

Revelation 1

⁵ Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

⁶ And has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

And let all the people forever say, “Amen and amen.”

This is a book about Political Science from a Christian perspective.

Normally, when people think of politics and religion, the pictures that come to mind are those of oppression, persecution, bigotry, narrow-mindedness, and compulsion to follow a certain belief-system. These experiences have given rise to the saying, "Religion and Politics don't mix!"

But the Bible holds forth a different idea, when it states, "righteousness exalts a nation." Is this so? Does righteousness exalt a nation, or does it oppress a nation? Further, what exactly is righteousness?

The History of Government answers those questions. It shows that a strong government is only possible when the individual people of the nation have learned how to govern themselves. And since true religion was intended to give man back his self-control, it can therefore lay a strong foundation for a good government.

Lessons are drawn from the history of the nations of the past which verify these principles. Also, the causes of the decay of the Roman republic are explored and paralleled with the political and moral condition of the nations today.