

TRIBULATION - A PUNISHMENT FOR THE SINNER, BUT A PRIVILEGE FOR THE SAINT

I am afraid of the doctrine of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church because it is in accord with the desires of the human heart. The natural inclination is to "follow the line of least resistance", to avoid trial, trouble, suffering, etc., while the general teaching of the New Testament is that the spiritual man must not follow this line. Through much tribulation we are to enter the kingdom, Acts 14:22. Through suffering we are to be perfected, 1 Peter 5:10. These are but two of scores of such scriptures. And the inference to be drawn from all of them is that the greater the tribulation endured, the more abundant the entrance into the kingdom; the greater the suffering patiently borne, the greater the degree of perfection attained. Yet when it comes to the Great Tribulation, there is, on the part of Pre-Millennialists, an almost universal shrinking from it, not only because of its unparalleled horrors, but also and principally because, as is commonly taught, for one to be found in it will be prima facie evidence of unfaithfulness, instead of the recognition of it as an opportunity for greater achievements in "the good fight of faith", and therefore for the obtaining of still greater rewards. It is to this unfortunate attitude of mind that I attribute what seems to me to be "wresting" of many Scriptural passages bearing upon this subject, by reading into them meanings which do not belong there. In other words, it looks to me as though the desire is the father of the doctrine, rather than that its foundation is found in the Scriptures. Let us beware lest we believe a thing to be so because we want it to be so, for such a course contains grave possibilities.

Can error be beneficial? The instant I ask the question, methinks I hear a thousand voices reply as one, "No!"

Yet I dare to say that if the belief that the Church will go into the Tribulation is an error, it is a beneficial error.

God's Answer to Jeremiah

Let me explain. Jeremiah the prophet had fallen upon troublous times and in his perplexity, even as the Psalmist under similar circumstances had done (Psalm 73:16,17), he went to the Lord with a question and received from Him an answer.

Said Jeremiah: "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with Thee; yet let me talk ["reason the case", margin] with Thee of Thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" And after he had spoken these and other words, the Lord replied, "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trusted, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Jer. 12:1-5. Then God went on to show that compared with the trials Jeremiah had already experienced and which had caused him such perplexity, the trials he was yet to pass through were as horses to footmen, as the rushing torrent of the Jordan in flood to the gentle stream of the summer fields.

How To Prepare for the Great Tribulation

In view of this warning, what would be the wise thing for Jeremiah to do? If some day he must race with "horses", would it not behoove him to continue to train with "footmen"? If in the future he must breast "the swelling of Jordan", would it

not be the part of wisdom for him first to get all the swimming practice possible in other rivers less deep and rapid? Certainly it would.

Let us apply this to the subject under discussion.

A man complains to God of the comparatively trifling trials he is called upon to endure in the comparatively peaceful present. And God replies: "In proportion to what lies before you ere Jesus comes, they are as running 'footmen' compared with speeding 'horses', as a rippling river compared with a rushing freshet'. Therefore it behooves you to see in these footmen and rippling river trials which you are now enduring only the necessary training for the future, where greater 'horses' and 'swelling Jordan' trials await you, but which, being overcome, are to result in victories as great as themselves and in prizes of like proportions."

Acting upon this suggestion, the man returns to the race-track of trial, first stripping himself of every superfluous garment and weight, Heb. 12:1. The starter, God, knowing the extent of his ability, selects for him an opponent almost but not quite his equal in strength and endurance. This latter fact our friend does not know, but supposing his competitor to be at least as fleet footed as himself, he puts forth every effort to win, and passes the goal a not too easy winner but fully compensated for his effort by the exultation of victory, the pleasure of the applause, and the value of the reward.

In the next race a somewhat fleeter runner is assigned to compete with him, and only by increased effort is he able to win.

And so race after race he runs, always with a swifter runner and always with his opponent crowding him close to the very end of the race.

At last the swiftest footman is matched against him, and again he wins, but by a dangerously close margin.

The many races with their necessarily strenuous efforts have steeled his muscles, the much applause has gratified his soul, the great rewards have delighted his heart, and the many victories have fired his ambition, so that he actually desires more of the very things he once dreaded and complained about. He desires to be "more than conqueror", and he is ever mindful of the statement once made to him that ere he can be that, ere he can receive the greatest of all prizes, he, a footman, must successfully "contend with horses". To continue racing with and defeating "footmen" is to be a conqueror, certainly, but not a "more than conqueror", Romans 8:37. To be the latter he must win in a race that is apparently impossible to win, inasmuch as not "footmen" but "horses" are to be outstripped.

Remembering that only by a few inches had he come in ahead of the swiftest of all his "footmen" competitors, thus proving that he is not yet swift and strong enough to "contend with horses", again and again he challenges the last footman to a race; for he realizes that he needs training for some time to come if ever he is to defeat "horses" and receive the "more than conqueror" prize. Often he runs, and the distance between him and his fellow-runner at the winning-post slowly increases from inches to feet, from feet to yards, and from yards to rods; not because the other man is less fleet of foot, but because he himself is more swift and strong.

At last the day comes when he can say to the starter, not boastfully, but confidently: "I am a candidate for the 'more than conqueror' prize. Bring on the 'horses'. By the grace of God I am what I am. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me; for I am strengthened with all might, according to His glorious

power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." 1 Cor. 15:10; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:11.

The "horses" are brought to the starting line where the well-trained footman quietly awaits them. The feelings of the "witnesses", Heb. 12:1, famous runners all, are too intense for words as they look at this splendid runner who is about to attempt the apparently impossible; to run a race more remarkable even than those they once ran. Some would pity him were it not for the quiet smile on his face, the confident look in his eyes, and the alert attitude of his whole body, all of which make them hope for his success. Verily he is like the sun which, as the Psalmist says, "**rejoices** as a strong man to run a race", Psalm 19:5.

Suddenly the silence is shattered by the sharp cry of the starter, "Go!" and the competitors are off. As the "horses" thunder down the track they completely surround the footman, before, behind, on each side, threatening at every moment to trample his puny form under their heavy hoofs, but ever and anon the breathless crowd catches a glimpse of his lithe figure as he bounds lightly and noiselessly in their midst.

The unspoken question in every mind is, "Will he win? Will he win?"

On the "horses" sweep, eyes flashing, muscles straining, manes streaming, and the impact of their pounding hoofs shaking the ground. But as they near the goal the spectators nearest it notice that their breathing is becoming labored and their speed less. Suddenly the footman leaps to the front and, in spite of the quickly renewed effort of the "horses" to overtake him, in a few seconds he has passed the post--a winner. And with a common impulse the "witnesses" leap to their feet and unite in the frenzied shout, "More than conqueror! **More than conqueror!** MORE THAN CONQUEROR!"

Yes, he has won, but why and how? Because he stopped complaining about his "footmen" trials, quit seeking to avoid them, and began instead to make use of them as "pace-makers" for an "even as" race, the prize for which was to be an "even as" throne and kingdom, Rev. 3:21.

We need not follow out at length the other figure, for the principle is the same. If a man is ever to overcome "the swelling of Jordan" trial of the Great Tribulation, he must get his training for the supreme effort in the various smaller rivers of trial that flow across his path as he journeys on toward that crowning test. Being rowed across these obstacles will leave him utterly unfit, lacking strength and skill, to breast the muddy torrent of Jordan in flood. By utilizing these waters as places in which to practice swimming, when he reaches "the swelling of Jordan" he will plunge into it; not whimperingly and unwillingly, but with rejoicing, even as James admonishes. "Count it **all joy** when ye fall into various trials. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing....Blessed is the man that endures temptation [trial]: for when he is [sufficiently] tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." James 1:2-4,12.

If we "count it joy" to "fall into [the] various [small rivers of] trial" of this present "land of peace"--because they afford excellent opportunities for swimming practice--and avail ourselves of these opportunities to become expert swimmers, we shall be able to count it the greatest joy of all to plunge into "the swelling of Jordan" of the Great Tribulation because of the unparalleled opportunity it will afford us of proving the grace and keeping power of God, and of

demonstrating the literal truth of the ninety-first Psalm, "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust. Thou shalt not be afraid for the [Zeppelin] terror by night; nor for the arrow [of war] that flies by day; nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness; nor for the destruction [of famine] that wastes at noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side [by war, pestilence, famine, anarchy, flood, storm, earthquake, and many other agencies], and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. **Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.** For He shall give His angels charge over **thee**, to keep **thee** in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample underfoot." There are twenty-four such promises in the Psalm. But their fulfilment depends upon faith.

If the greater the stumbling-stone the greater the stepping-stone, if the greater the curse the greater the blessing, if the greater the trial of faith the greater the increase of faith, if our victories are equal to our battles and our rewards are to be in proportion to our victories, why should we be so anxious to be taken away before the coming of that fiercest battle, that greatest stumbling-stone, that worst curse and that most severe trial of faith--the Great Tribulation--unless it be that God has clearly revealed His will and purpose to remove us before it shall come? If, beyond the shadow of a doubt, God has revealed that it is His purpose to do this, then with all my heart I say, "The will of the Lord be done!" But has He done so?

Post-Tribulation-Rapturism Beneficial Even If It Should Prove To Be Erroneous

Suppose a man believes that he is to enter the Great Tribulation, that that great trial of faith is to be to his present trials as "horses" are to "footmen", as "the swelling of Jordan" is to the quiet rivers of "the land of peace". With the end in view that he may fully overcome at that time, he goes into training as suggested; and will not the training benefit him? Certainly it will.

Suppose, then, that when--strong in faith and full of courage because of his training--he is prepared to undergo that ordeal, he suddenly learns that he is not to face it, that the prize is to be his without competing for it. Will the information harm him? Assuredly not. It may be a pleasant surprise to him, it certainly cannot injure him. If, on the other hand, should the popular belief be an error that the Church will not go into the Great Tribulation except as a result of unfaithfulness, and thousands of God's children should find themselves slipping down the bank into "the swelling of Jordan" with little or no knowledge of the art of swimming, and should find themselves surrounded with the "horses" trials of the Great Tribulation without having faithfully and successfully trained with the "footmen" trials of this present time for that great test, what a frightful error it will prove to be! Confused by their surroundings--awful only to the unprepared--and discouraged by the belief that they are in them because of their own unfaithfulness, what chance will they have of winning?

Pre-Tribulation-Rapturism Injurious Even If True

The teaching that the Church will be taken away **before** the Great Tribulation **is now** injurious to faith in that it implants and fosters the idea that there is no need to develop faith to the supreme point, because that faith will not be called upon to endure the supreme test. In other words, its tendency is to lull people to

sleep. Fortunately, this tendency is counteracted in some quarters to a considerable extent by the teaching of some of its advocates that unless faithful--to how great a degree is not stated by them--professed believers then living will be left behind to go into the Tribulation when the faithful members are taken away. But at its best, it does not tend to the greatest exercise and development of faith, and many Pre-Tribulation-Rapturists deny that any believers will be left behind no matter how low their spiritual state.

On the other hand, the teaching that the Church will **not** to taken away before the Great Tribulation is **now** beneficial to faith, in that it tends to encourage believers to make use of their present trials in order to increase faith by exercising it, with the view to its complete development in readiness for the future great crisis of the age. If this unpopular teaching is an error, it is a beneficial error, for at the worst it can bring to its believers only the possibly pleasant surprise that they are **not** to go into the great contest for which they have been preparing. My **natural** tendencies and desires incline me toward the popular doctrine because it is along the line of least resistance, but my spiritual tendencies and desires incline me toward the unpopular doctrine because it is "the way of the cross", which is the way to a crown. Verily, "the spirit indeed is willing (to go the way of suffering and trial), but the flesh is weak". And, as already remarked, it may be that many are **expecting** certain things to happen because they **want** them to happen; and their natural desires may be influencing their interpretation of Scripture. Such people seem to forget that the flood which destroyed sinners merely lifted saints nearer to heaven.

An Honor To Be In The Great Tribulation

Concerning this view, a scholarly man of God has said:

Others again, while owning the approach of a coming struggle with the powers of darkness, tell us with all confidence (though Scripture positively teaches the reverse) that the saints of God are to be taken from the earth before the hour of truth's last conflict comes, and would have us believe that it is a blessing to be deprived of the honor of fighting in that last great battlefield where soldiership for Christ is most needed, and triumph is most glorious. They seem to count it no honor to be counted among that faithful few who will at that time "overcome because of the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and will not love their lives unto death." Rev. 12:11.

A Desire to Shirk Suffering a Sign of Degeneracy

Robert Cameron puts it thus in his book, "Scriptural Truth About the Lord's Return":

This extra-scriptural theory [that the less spiritual believers will be left to go through the Great Tribulation] leaves room to account for the presence of **some saints** who are most surely mentioned as having been on earth during the day of the Antichrist in tribulation under his persecution. Rev. 7:14, and chapters 13,14. If some saints pass through the Tribulation, why may not **all** saints have the honor of witnessing for Christ at that hour of the triumph of Satan and the Trying Tribulation? It must always be remembered, "the path of sorrow, and that path alone, leads to the land where sorrow in unknown". Through "much tribulation" all must enter into the kingdom of God. John 16:33; Acts 14:22. Everywhere in the New Testament it is taught that to suffer for Christ is one of the highest honors Christians can have bestowed upon them. A desire to shirk suffering for Christ is a sign of degeneracy. At the close of this dispensation, it will still be counted an

honor to suffer shame for our adorable Lord. Page 18.

The Church To Suffer Satanic Persecutions, Not Divine Judgments

The same writer says:

Tribulation the Church has always had, and it will yet pass through the season of tribulation that will never again be equalled: but the Church never has known, and it never can know, what the **judgment** of God's **wrath** may mean. There is nothing in the Great Tribulation yet to come, that is essentially different from the tribulation of the past, except the intensity and extent of its sufferings...The Church experienced, at the beginning of her existence, great persecution and suffering, and...this suffering will be intensified at the end.

The Church and Israel Contemporary at Beginning and End of Age

Then he makes the following important point:

The Jews, in a **corporate capacity**, existed **contemporaneously**, for a short time, **with the Church** at the **beginning** of this dispensation; and the **same will be true**, for another brief period, **at the close of its career**. The Church was on earth when Israel had her "days of vengeance", and the Church will be on earth again when Israel shall have her "time of trouble". This is a most important point to see. The Parousia, or Coming of Christ, is always placed at the end of the time of trouble in the Scriptures. Matt. 24:29. By what right may we transfer it to the beginning?

God Will Not Favor the Last Generation

And closes with this:

It is sometimes objected that God loves His Church too well to permit it to pass through the Great Tribulation. But is it so? We may judge the future from the past. Did He interfere when bitter persecution came from the Jews who put our Lord to death and sought to crush His followers at the beginning? Did His love interfere when untold suffering came from the heathen rulers of Pagan Rome? Did He interfere during the long years of persecution and torture that were endured at the hands of Papal Rome? Has He interfered to stay the hands of cruel fiends who have outraged and murdered Armenian saints during the past four or five centuries? Were not missionaries and their converts dear to the heart of God and did He take them out of the massacres that attended the Boxer outrage in China? God is love, and He loved the Church of these past days, but in spite of His love, He left the saints to suffer from the awful persecutions of professed Christians, of unbelieving Jews, of brutal pagan rulers, of fiendish barbarians, and of heartless bigots. Now, what reason have we to expect Him to change His methods in the future?

Which Interpretation Savors of Cowardice and Which of Courage?

And this from S. P. Tregelles (who says much more like it):

There are, indeed, some who say, "An expectation of times of extreme peril before the Lord's coming, times of great tribulation, during which Christ's people would have to wait on this earth, would be no *hope* to me--it would only lead to discouragement and dismay: I want that which would *animate* my soul; no *hope* that is not of such a character would produce in me an emotion of present joy, or give me sustained comfort."

Such reasoners go on sometimes to say, that even though proof of revealed events to occur before the coming of Christ is logically correct, although no flaw or fallacy can be detected in the arguments, yet because the *result* is such as cannot be accepted, therefore there *must* be a defect somewhere.¹ Therefore in meeting such thoughts, it is well that it is on *testimony* that we rest as to this truth; not on a process of reasoning, but on the inspired declarations which bear on this point on every side.

Not on the Intervening Darkness But on the Brightness Beyond"

But will the expectations produce no animating hope? Will there be no emotions according to God from the thought of seeing Christ in His glory, and being like Him at His coming? It is not on the intervening darkness that we have to rest, but on the brightness beyond; that is our hope, and it is made known to us that we may understand our place of service and patience while *waiting* for the coming of our Lord, by which all trial shall be for ever ended. However hopeless it may be to meet the arguments of idealistic visionaries, who assume a conclusion, and refuse to submit to opposing Scripture testimony, yet for others it is well distinctly to show that the hope of Christ's coming was given to be the sustainment and consolation in intervening trial. So far from its being a thing to cast down or depress, it is gracious in the Lord to have told us what to expect in the path of the Church up to the time of the appearing of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Peter, in his first epistle, contemplates Christians as "begotten again unto a **lively hope** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1.3), while waiting for the "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, **ready to be revealed in the last time.**" (1.4,5.) Meanwhile, such may be "in heaviness, through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory **at the appearing [revelation] of Jesus Christ.**" (7.) The trial may be borne, the temptations may be endured, as knowing what the blessing shall be at the revelation of the Lord himself. And what is the practical exhortation to those thus set in the place of present trial: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and **hope to the end** for the grace that is to be brought unto you **at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**" (13.) This, then, is the point at which we are to look beyond all suffering, and this is the truth, as applied to our souls by the Spirit of God, which is to give us present sustainment. But, lest any should imagine that the Church should be exempt from special and peculiar times of suffering, as well as that which falls on men in general, he says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that **when His glory shall be revealed,**² ye may be glad also with

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- 1 Such persons often escape from the bearing of Scriptures on their consciences by calling them "Jewish." But let such be asked, Do you mean *unbelieving-Jewish*, or "Christian-Jewish?" If they say the latter, then must the persons to whom such Scriptures apply be part of the Church, as essentially so as the Ephesians were; if they say the former, then it may be asked them, How can unconverted Jews use any part of the New Testament at all? If an *expression* be adopted, and used without explanation or definition it may then afford a shelter for any ambiguity or fallacy.
 - 2 It will be observed that Mr. Tregelles stresses the fact that these promised blessings are to be given at the "appearing" of the Lord Jesus Christ. His reason for doing so is at once apparent to the Bible scholar, but not the average reader. The Greek word here used by Peter is "Apocalypse". The Pre-Tribulation-Rapturists teach that Christ's coming will occur in "two stages". The "first stage", they say, will be the "Parousia" before the Tribulation. This, they say, will be a "secret coming". At the end of the Tribulation Christ will, they allege, have an "open coming", which is known as His "Epiphaneia" and "Apocalypse". By stressing this word "Apocalypse" or "appearing" or

exceeding joy." (4.12,13.) "Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls unto Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." (19.) So also as to service. To those who feed the flock of God, taking oversight, the promise is, "**When the Chief Shepherd shall appear**, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away." (5.4.) Pages 104-107 "The Hope of Christ's Coming".

Pre-Tribulation-Rapturism Illogical

Many years after the foregoing was written, I came across the following on this subject by Rev. Henry W. Frost on page 64 of his book, "Matthew Twenty-four and The Revelation:"

The principle of Christians facing the Antichrist and enduring his persecutions is written large in the Scriptures, for it is made very clear therein that the Church has ever stood before and in opposition to antichrists (1 John 2:18-22; 4:3; 2 John 7), and has ever suffered persecution from systems ruled by such (Matt. 2:16-18; 5:11,44; 23:34; John 15:20; 19:13-18; Acts 8:1; 11:19; 13:50; 2 Tim. 3:12). For the Church therefore to go into the days of the Antichrist and to be called upon to endure his hatred and harassments, is but for her to pass from one phase of an experience into another, the difference being, not in kind, but in degree. Moreover, the fact that Christians have faced past antichrists and suffered because of them, presents strong, presumptive evidence that they will face the future Antichrist and suffer because of him. Whatever may be true in regard to this last, it is unmistakably plain that suffering on the part of the Church because of antichrists is not inconsistent, but rather, wholly harmonious with the thought and fact of God's most tender love. The question of divine love permitting such suffering, therefore, is not one which needs to be considered. The only question which we are called upon to decide is this, whether or not the saints going through the Tribulation is a divine revelation.

And on page 271 of the same book, Mr. Frost says:

The thought is often expressed and still more often felt that God loves His saints too well to allow them to stand face to face with the Antichrist and to pass through the Great Tribulation. If Scripture and experience teach this, all controversy, of course, is immediately ended. But do they? Did God love Christ too well to forbid His standing before His antichrist and passing through His great tribulation? Or, if it is said--as it may most justly be said--that Christ was unique in His experiences, did God love Peter, James, John and Paul too well for this; or the apostolic Church; or the Church of the Reformation; or the more modern Christians of Armenia, Madagascar, and China? It is a historical fact that the Church, from apostolic days to the present, has always faced antichrists (1 John 2:18,22; 4:3; 2 John 7) and has frequently passed through periods of tribulation (Rev. 2:10,13; 3:10); and the Scripture makes it plain that this will be her appointed portion to the end of her earthly pilgrimage (Acts 14:22; Rom. 8:35-39; 1 Thes. 3:4). There is no occasion then, for surprise on the part of the Church when an antichrist arises and persecution comes. As a matter of fact, there is more need for surprise when there are no antichrists and persecutions. Indeed, this latter is so true, that Christians may well question, in times of universal quiet and peace, if things are with them spiritually just what they ought to be. For suffering, not comfort, is the appointed lot of God's heritage, even as Paul said: "For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (Rom. 8:36); and again, "We must through much tribulation [or, many tribulations, R.V.] enter into the kingdom of God"

"revelation", Mr. Tregelles is asking, in effect, how the Church is to receive these promised blessings **at the Apocalypse of Christ after the Tribulation** when, as the Pre-Tribulation-Rapturists teach, she received them **at the Parousia of Christ before the Tribulation**. See the three chapters on "Parousia", "Epiphaneia", and "Apocalypse", in Volume 2, in which I have gone into this subject in detail.

(Acts 14:22).

The fact of the matter is, the dealing of God with His saints and especially their dealing with Him, during about a hundred years past, have brought His people to some seriously false conclusions concerning suffering. On God's side, there has been granted to the modern Church a breathing space in order that there might be ample and unhindered opportunity to pass through divinely opened doors. But on the side of the saints, the vast majority of these have gladly accepted the breathing space thus given, and then have refused to pass through the opened door. In time, therefore, these saints have come to conclude that the prosperity of quiet and easement from suffering is not only their lot, but also their right. What a shock it was in 1900, therefore, when the Boxer movement broke over their cherished kith and kin like a devastating storm!³ In those days of sorrow, many a soul secretly demanded to know of God what He was doing. His only answer was, the allowance of further torture and death--till the storm had passed. And yet since then He has given another and even more dreadful answer to questioning souls, as France, Germany, Turkey and Armenia bear witness. It is significant, in the letter to the Philadelphian church, that He who says, He opens and no man shuts, also says, He shuts and no man opens, and that this same One immediately adds that there is an hour of trial which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth (3:7-10). It is evident that the Hand that bears the key of David and which turned for a time the usual of suffering into the unusual of peace, will in coming days turn the unusual of peace into the usual of suffering; for accumulating evidence indicates that the Church which had torment in the old days but has sat at ease in the new, will be called upon to re-enter blood-stained paths and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes. It may not be regarded as exegesis, but it may be reckoned as analogy, that Christ thrice asked Peter, who was appointed unto suffering and death, if he loved Him, and that, so far, He has asked Christians at large this same question but twice, once in apostolic days and once in Reformation, which suggests that the third time is yet to be. And as Peter confessed his Lord three times over and confirmed, finally, his words by willing death, so the Church has said twice and will say thrice, "Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee!" and they too will willingly seal their covenant-troth by poured-forth blood.

As will be observed, Brother Frost wrote those words (his book was issued in 1924) before the God-hating, Christ-rejecting, Bible-despising government of recently so-called "Holy Russia" (so-called because of the alleged Christian piety of its people) began its church- and Bible-destroying and saint-persecuting work as a part of its avowed purpose to make that great country one hundred percent atheistic and antichristian (something which no other government in all the history of the world had ever attempted to do). If one may believe one-half the stories which have come out of Soviet Russia, then many of the saints there have already had to face as "great tribulation" as any saint will be called upon to face during the Great Tribulation itself. Yet as recently as ten years ago it was not thought possible, except by prophetic students, that such a condition could have obtained in any so-called civilized country in these days. Now we know that active propaganda is threatening to make that condition universal, and that quickly. Also dictatorship, a necessary preliminary to the appearance of the Antichrist, is "in the air" everywhere, and is actually in existence in some of the great nations-- Russia, Italy, Germany, etc., and, in a modified way, even in these United States. If Brother Frost had been writing his book at the time I am adding this note, July, 1933, he would have had very much more reason than he had in 1924 for saying "accumulating evidence indicates that the Church, which had torment in the old days but has sat at ease in the new, will be called upon to re-enter blood-stained paths and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes".

What a "Fool's Paradise" Pre-Tribulation-Rapturism is!

³ Brother Frost was at that time connected with the China Inland Mission, as Home Director, so he knows whereof he writes.

IS NOT THE TRIBULATION, INsofar AS IT WILL AFFECT THE SAINTS, GREATLY EXAGGERATED?

When Colonel Goethals had been commissioned by the United States government to build the Panama Canal, he went to look over the ground. He knew that deLesseps, with all the resources of the French government behind him, had failed to perform the task. And, viewed as a whole, the obstacles seemed innumerable, the difficulties insurmountable, the task impossible. While so thinking, it suddenly occurred to the almost discouraged colonel that he was making a mistake in viewing the job as a whole. So he began to consider one detail of it at a time, and soon realized that while as a whole the work seemed impossible, each detail in itself was quite possible; and he knew that the sum total of the finished details would mean the completed Panama Canal. So detail by detail the colonel planned the work, and detail by detail it was completed.

In this same way we should view the coming Great Tribulation. As a whole it will be a colossal, unparalleled thing. Yet it will continue only one hundred and eighty weeks, or "forty and two months". And as each of its sunsets shall come, the saints may well say, "We are one day nearer the end", and then make a mental calculation of the ever-decreasing number of days that are to follow of the "thousand two hundred and threescore days" allotted to it. There will be no "hope deferred" to "make the heart sick" in those days, for the saints will then know the very day and perhaps the very hour when the Lord will appear. Thus hope will be kept burning brightly, even the "blessed hope" of the coming of our Lord to bring to His "troubled" Church that "rest" which will be all the more blessed by reason of its contrast with the "persecutions and tribulations" which will have preceded it.⁴

Most people think of the Great Tribulation as a period of unparalleled suffering, and in a sense it will be. That is to say, it will be a period of unparalleled suffering in that it will be suffering on an **international** or worldwide scale. But it does not necessarily follow from this that it will be a period of unparalleled suffering for the **individual** believer.

Even if martyrdom should be by torture during the Tribulation, it is doubtful if all the devil-controlled human beings then in existence, including the Antichrist himself, could devise more diabolical forms of death than have been already inflicted upon millions of God's saints during this age, some of them in our own generation. And if saints of the past have so died, why should not saints of the future also so die?

But it is significant that the only form of martyrdom mentioned in connection with the Tribulation is beheading,⁵ which is one of the quickest and least painful

4 "We glory in you...for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, WHEN THE LORD JESUS SHALL BE REVEALED FROM HEAVEN WITH HIS MIGHTY ANGELS, IN FLAMING FIRE TAKING VENGEANCE ON THEM THAT KNOW NOT GOD, AND THAT OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." 2 Thessalonians 1:4-8. Here Paul shows that the "rest" for the saints is not to come until "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed [apocalypsed] from heaven", etc., which is the revealing or apocalypsing pictured in Revelation 19:11-21, and foretold by Jesus in Matthew 24:27-31. This passage will be carefully examined in the chapter on "What Did Paul Teach the Thessalonians?" (Part Two), in Volume 2.

5 "I saw thrones, and they that sat upon them, and judgment [rulership] was given unto

modes of execution, seeing that it results in instantaneous death (especially when inflicted by the guillotine, as most likely will be the case, following the example set during that miniature Tribulation, the "Reign of Terror" during the time of the French Commune).⁶

So, apparently the Lord will temper the Tribulation **persecutions** for His saints in this way, even while He will be increasing the Tribulation **punishments** for their enemies.⁷

But in view of the fact that the greater the trial endured the greater the blessing obtained, this tempering of suffering for the Tribulation saints could

them: and I saw the souls of them THAT WERE BEHEADED for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Revelation 20:4. Notice the similarity between the reason given for this beheading and the statements made in the following passages. "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was [a prisoner] in the isle that is called Patmos, FOR THE WORD OF GOD, AND FOR THE TESTIMONY [teaching] OF JESUS CHRIST." Revelation 1:9. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain FOR THE WORD OF GOD, AND FOR THE TESTIMONY [teaching] WHICH THEY HELD." Revelation 6:9. "And the dragon [Satan] was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, WHICH KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS [word] OF GOD, AND HAVE THE TESTIMONY [teaching] OF JESUS CHRIST." Revelation 12:17. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice...Here is the patience of the saints: here are they THAT KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS [word] OF GOD, AND THE FAITH [teaching] OF JESUS. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord [by martyrdom, for refusing to accept the mark of the beast, see context] from HENCEFORTH [from the time the mark of the beast edict is issued]. Revelation 14:12,13. Taken together, these passages indicate quite strongly that during the Tribulation the principal if not the only mode of martyrdom will be by beheading.

- 6 As a lad, I went to see the original guillotine in Madame Tussaud's Exhibition in London, the one used during "the Reign of Terror" in France, my home then being near that city. When first I saw a printers' paper cutter, which was when I entered the printing business in this country, immediately I noticed its resemblance to the guillotine, so was not surprised to hear, when later visiting a printing establishment in England, the proprietor refer to his "cutter" as "the guillotine"--from which I inferred that that was the name given to a paper cutter by all British printers. As an illustration of the physical painlessness of death by beheading with a guillotine: A printer in this city, at work at his "power cutter"--the smaller ones are operated by hand--turned to speak to an office girl, who, not realizing the danger of so doing, moved the starting lever of the machine, and the razor-edged blade came down. Turning again to see if any damage had been caused to the paper he had been cutting, the man was astounded to see the severed fingers of his right hand lying across the cutter stick"--a narrow strip of hard wood which receives the edge of the descending blade after it passes through the pile of paper, thus preventing damage to the blade. When turning to speak to the girl, he had inadvertantly left his hand resting across the cutting stick, and the descending blade had sliced them off so quickly and easily that evidently he had not felt the equivalent of a pin prick when the accident happened.
- 7 I have said that the Tribulation sufferings will be unparalleled in the sense that they will be **international** or worldwide; that so far as they will affect the **individual** saints, they will not be unparalleled. But there will be an individual sense also in which the Tribulation sufferings will be without parallel, for God will then inflict such torments upon His enemies at times as would be sufficient, normally, to cause death, yet will miraculously prevent their obtaining relief from their sufferings in death. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit...And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt...but only those men which have not the seal of God in

hardly be looked upon as an unmixed blessing. Yet if the Lord wills so to plan it, none of us would feel inclined to question His wisdom, for "He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind".

Still, one can hardly help picturing two saints together after those days--one who had died by beheading, another who had been tortured to death--and thinking how much the former must feel like envying the latter (even as a soldier, after a war, envies his comrade who bears the marks of many severe wounds while he himself bears the mark of but one slight wound).

Yet it may be that just as a soldier seriously wounded in some nameless skirmish envies the soldier who passed unscathed through or was only slightly wounded in some great historic battle (especially if that one had greatly distinguished himself by some conspicuous act of bravery), so may one saint, done to death by torture in some inconspicuous persecution, have cause to envy his fellow saint who came unharmed out of or was painlessly beheaded in the Great Tribulation.

"I lost my arm at Waterloo", some old "Chelsea" veteran might have proudly remarked during my childhood to a fellow inmate of that West London home for aged and disabled British war veterans; and then have asked, "Where did you lose your arm and leg?" And the almost "sheepish" answer might have been: "I lost them in a little fight near_____."

So the battle wounds themselves, severe or slight, may not be so much the criteria in the future as the fact that the wounds were received in a certain place, at a certain time, and under certain circumstances.

their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he strikes a man. And in those days shall men seek death [by suicide], and shall not find it; and shall desire to die [a natural death in order to be delivered from their suffering] and death shall flee from them." Revelation 9:1-6. Later similar and perhaps equally severe suffering will befall them. "I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul (creature) died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord...because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy (deserve it)... And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give Him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat [the throne or capital] of the beast [the Antichrist]; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." Revelation 16:1-11. This effectually disposes of the argument that the Church cannot go into the Tribulation because the Tribulation is a judgment period, and the Church is not to enter into judgment; for the saints then on the earth are to be protected against such judgments, even as the Israelites, in the type were protected against the judgments which fell upon Pharaoh and his Egyptian subjects. **This fact, so clearly shown, cannot be too strongly stressed.** How light, comparatively speaking, even at their worst, will be the "persecutions and tribulations" of the saints of those days, 2 Thessalonians 1:4, compared with the "tribulation" of the wicked! 2 Thessalonians 1:6.

It is significant that of those who will be beheaded during the Tribulation because they "keep the commandments of God and the faith (doctrine) of Jesus", it is written, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord (by martyrdom) **from henceforth.**" Revelation 14:12,13. And it is equally significant that we read further concerning them: "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Revelation 20:4.

So these comparatively painless martyrdoms in this "place" (the absolutely devil-controlled earth, Revelation 12:7-17), at this "time" (the "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be [again]", Matthew 24:21), and under these "circumstances" (when unparalleled judgments are in the earth), would seem to be accounted as just as deserving of reward as the more painful martyrdoms of other times, and perhaps more so.

And in view of the fact that these various forms of martyrdom were not selected by the victims themselves but were thrust upon them by others, who shall say that such a decision would not be a just one? Martyrdom itself is always the result of deliberate choice on the part of the victim. The method of martyrdom may be wholly accidental. That is to say, there have been "fashions" in methods of martyrdom. Because Huss and Cranmer lived when and where they did, they were burned at the stake. Because certain others lived when and where they did, they were delivered to the lions. But while there have been and may yet be "fashions" in methods of martyrdom, there has always been and will be "choice" in the matter of martyrdom; and it is the "choice" which counts.⁸ And so when one "fights the good fight of faith" to the extent that it is given him to fight it, and "makes the supreme sacrifice" in whatever way it chances him to make it, **if at all**, the end will be glory.⁹

8 Perhaps an explanation is needed here. In *The Latter Rain Evangel*, under the heading, "Tibet Yields Her First Martyr", there appeared a reference to the murder of William E. Simpson, a young missionary, who, with a companion, was killed by bandits while driving a motor truck, the object of the killing being robbery. In no way can this estimable young man's violent death be accounted martyrdom, for his religious convictions did not enter into the matter at all, since those bandits were out to kill and rob, regardless of the race, creed, or occupation of their victims. So William Simpson had no choice in the matter, for he was shot and killed instantly from ambush, precisely as thousands of ungodly men have been shot and killed. I never met this young man, the devoted son of a devoted missionary father, whom I have known and admired for many years, but I have heard enough about him to believe that he will have "an abundant entrance" into the kingdom, 2 Peter 1:11, as an unusually "good and faithful servant", and I quite believe that he would willingly have suffered martyrdom had occasion required. But the fact is, he did not die a martyr's death any more than did another highly esteemed missionary acquaintance of mine, a fellow-missionary of this young man's father, who was accidentally shot and killed while on the field. Of course, religious convictions sent these men to the foreign field where they met death by violence, and thus were remotely responsible for what happened; but true martyrdom involves death by violence for the sake of religious convictions: a violent death which might have been avoided by recantation. Thus the element of choice is vital to it. The question may be asked: What about such a slaughter of professed Christians as that which occurred in France on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572, when, at a given signal, death was meted out to the Huguenots without opportunity being given them to recant? In that case, politics and religion were so inextricably mixed that only He who knows the hearts of men knows how many of the victims of that massacre were true martyrs; for, presumably, some of those victims might have recanted if given the opportunity to do so, because almost certainly there were those among them who were Christians only in a nominal sense.

9 I say, "and makes the supreme sacrifice in whatever way it chances him to make it, **if at**

What an honor it will be when, in the kingdom, one shall be pointed out as "A Great Tribulation Saint"! Yet if the "the-unready-will-be-left-behind" doctrine which is taught by the greater part of the Pre-Tribulation-Rapturists were Scriptural, the reverse of this would be true.

Should martyrdom be one's portion in those days, even martyrdom by torture, there can never be more than one second of suffering at a time. And suffering can proceed only to a certain point, for we are so constituted physically that at a certain point suffering ceases, no matter what is being done to one. At that point either numbness of nerves, insensibility, or death ensues.

A certain brilliant Frenchman was being "broken on the wheel". As each blow fell, a bone of an arm or a leg was broken. Naturally the victim winced under the blows--at first. However, only a few blows had fallen when he smiled up into the face of the executioner and remarked that he no longer felt the blows. Why? Because Nature had applied her anæsthetic, and his nerves were too numbed to feel further pain.

It is declared on good authority that while being tortured by the Indians, by fire and other means, men would sometimes fall asleep, and could with difficulty be aroused. This would not occur in the case of one burned in the usual way at the stake, since in such a case death would ensue too quickly to permit it. But often, soon after people have been fatally burned by accident, all pain ceases, and death is then painless. In fact, the natural cessation of all pain in such cases always indicates a fatal termination.

After having been attacked by a lion, whose great jaws crushed his shoulder, David Livingstone was shaken by the huge "cat" precisely as a mouse is shaken by a domestic cat. He tells us that immediately there crept over him a delicious languor which obliterated both pain and fear.

When but a lad, with an arm crushed under the wheels of a flat car (which splintered the bones into fragments from the size of a pinhead up and tore off much of the muscle, besides inflicting other injuries), refusing proffered assistance I

all", because in later chapters of these volumes I shall show "a more excellent way" even than martyrdom. One may have faith enough to suffer death for Christ's sake by "the mouths of lions", but Daniel had faith enough to "stop the mouths of lions". Others may have faith enough to suffer death for Christ's sake by "fire", but the three Hebrew children had faith enough to "quench the violence of fire". Hebrews 11:33,34. In this chapter I am dealing more especially with Tribulation martyrdom because it is of martyrdom that people usually think when in their minds they associate believers with the Tribulation. But there is a far "better thing" than martyrdom, and a far greater reward than a martyr's crown. And, as I understand, and later shall seek to show, the Great Tribulation will afford the opportunity to obtain that far "better thing" and a part of that far greater reward. Martyrdom will necessitate resurrection, and Paul says, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." 1 Corinthians 15:41,42. The differing glories of the "stars" accurately describe the varying positions which the resurrected saints will occupy as "lords" in the kingdom; the martyrs all being stars of the first magnitude, no doubt. But there will also be a "moon" glory, that of the "Queen" or "Bride", which will be greater than the glory even of the brightest star; and a "sun" or "kings" glory, greater even than that of the moon at the full. These various rulership glories, especially those of the "sun" and the "moon", will be dealt with in other chapters in later volumes under various headings, "Degrees of Faith, Attainment, and Reward", "The Sunclotted Woman", "The Manchild", "The Two Flowers" and "The Bride, the Lamb's Wife", etc.

was able to walk a mile, and that without any sense of pain, until, reaching home, weakness from loss of blood made it necessary for my mother to assist me into the house.¹⁰

So Nature often renders assistance in order to prevent undue suffering.

One of "the noble army of martyrs", while being consumed by flames, stretched out his hand to a bystander and said, "Feel my pulse. If its beat is one more than normal, then say there is nothing in the grace of God to sustain a man in such a time as this."

So Nature's God can render still more assistance in order to prevent undue suffering.

Perhaps after all, therefore, no matter whether one should suffer martyrdom by fire (as in the case of this man), or by the fangs of wild beasts (as was the case with a myriad of others), or by mangling or mutilating (as with still others), or by beheading (as was the case with Paul), the difference in suffering may not be so very great. And ever it will be true: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in [thy] weakness", 2 Cor. 12:7-9; "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Deut. 33:25.

And further to encourage the martyr saints of those days will be the thought that very soon they will be resurrected and rewarded; for at the most, for the earlier martyrs, it will be not more than three-and-a-half years, and for some of the later martyrs as with the two witnesses, Rev. 11:9-11, perhaps not more than three-and-a-half days; and with others it may be even less.

No indeed! There will be no "hope deferred" in those days, for, as I shall show later, hope will then have been replaced by the positive knowledge of the very day and perhaps hour of the Lord's coming.

Paul, who already had experienced much suffering, and who knew that he might be called upon to make "the supreme sacrifice" by martyrdom,¹¹ could say: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4:17. And again: "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy." Acts 20:24. And Peter, who actually knew that he was to die by martyrdom¹² could exhort his converts thus:

10 There followed many months of suffering, of course, some of it excruciating, and many more months of slow convalescence. Still other months passed before the apparently useless member (which the surgeon had decided to experiment upon with the view to saving it if possible) could be used, even a little; and never has it regained normalcy. But the point is, that under such circumstances, death, if not too long postponed, is practically painless.

11 "The Lord said unto him [Ananias], Go thy way: for he [Paul] is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." Acts 9:15,16.

12 "Jesus said to Simon Peter...When thou wast young, thou girded thyself, and walked whither thou would: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou would not. This spake He, signifying by what death he [Peter] should glorify God." John 21:18,19. It is legendary that Peter was crucified head downward, and this at his own request, because he felt that he was unworthy to suffer in precisely the same way that his Lord had suffered. Assuming this to be true, it is possible that Peter's very position on the cross hastened his death, or at least hastened unconsciousness, by sending the blood surging to his brain. So while Peter's death was apparently more painful than was the death of his Lord, it may in reality have been much less painful.

"If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." 1 Peter 3:14. And again: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:12,13. So why should we fear possible martyrdom during the Tribulation when these men feared it not before the Tribulation?

Strange that professed believers should consider it other than a privilege to be permitted to witness for Christ, even with their blood, during the Great Tribulation! I am convinced that many who do hold the contrary idea do so only because of the false notion, constantly proclaimed by their teachers (and that without an iota of Biblical authority for it), that to be in the Tribulation will in itself be proof of a lack in the spiritual life, and so an evidence of the Divine disfavor. As I have shown, the fact that the Lord will send the "two witnesses" into the Tribulation there to witness for Him even unto death, Revelation 11:1-12, utterly disproves such an absurd idea.

Some one has well said: "The brave die once; cowards die a thousand deaths." Bearing such things in mind, one will not, because of a cowardly shrinking from possible suffering, be enamored of such a Scripture-wresting, God-insulting, Christ-dishonoring, saint-deceiving doctrine as Pre-Tribulation-Raptureism.

Whenever one feels that he does not want to believe the doctrine of Post-Tribulation-Raptureism, because, if true, it means that suffering and possible martyrdom await him, let him read the latter portion of the great "Faith Chapter", also called "The Westminster Abbey of the New Testament", and be ashamed of himself.¹³

But some will still say, "You are trying to destroy our Blessed Hope, and to give us in its place a nightmare of horror."

Poor blind creatures not to see that their co-called "Blessed Hope" is only the hope that the "weak" flesh may be spared temporary suffering for Christ, which temporary sparing of the flesh can only result in the "willing" spirit being deprived of an eternal blessing. Such people need to read not only the latter portion of the great "Faith Chapter", but also to read and meditate upon the first four verses of the next chapter.¹⁴ Doing this, reverently and sincerely, they may be able to obey the injunction of the twelfth verse of that same chapter: "Strengthen the drooping hands and paralyzed knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put entirely out of joint but may rather be restored." (Weymouth's translation.)

Let them do this, and so rid their minds of the incubus of fear, and they

13 Of all the names which I have seen in Westminster Abbey, never have I recognized one as having belonged to a shirker or a coward. And the Lord was just as careful as to whose name should be inscribed in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews as Great Britain has been as to whose name should appear in her great abbey.

14 "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin [unbelief] which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; who FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. YE HAVE NOT YET RESISTED UNTO BLOOD, STRIVING AGAINST SIN." Hebrews 12:1-4.

will be in a condition to give this subject the careful and unbiased consideration which it should receive.

Shortly after the foregoing was written, I came across the same thought expressed in his characteristically brief way by Rev. Henry W. Frost on page 273 of his book, "Matthew Twenty-four and The Revelation".

Mr. Frost says:

The frightfulness of the persecution of the Antichrist, according to the Revelation, will be manifested not so much in its supreme intensity as in its supreme extensity. Happily, there is a limitation in human nature as related to suffering, the point being speedily reached where the mortal frame can bear no more; and modern Armenia--not to speak of other martyr nations--probably saw in the individual life as much physical pain and spiritual anguish as will ever be seen in the days of the Man of Sin.

And Mr. Frost is right.