

ed, and she enters upon this task with the same energy that nations display in going to war, we may look for better results. Here again the future is bright with hope. Less and less as time goes on will be felt the need for a visible appearing to accomplish the enterprise which the Church has been set to carry out by the Lord Himself. The cure is not to be found in that direction.

Avoiding all such factitious sources of interest, the one thing needed to create a genuine enthusiasm over the advent and a hearty desire for it on the part of all morally earnest souls is to enlarge our view of what it really is, so as to make it embrace all that the New Testament conception of it contains. The tendency hitherto has been to rest in partial pragmatic views which are soon exhausted. The complete view is inspiring. To find it we have only to go back to the teaching of Christ Himself.

In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew we have a portion of one of His discourses on the subject. It is represented as arising out of three questions instead of one as in the case of this discourse reported by Luke. The three were: as to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, the sign of His coming, and the sign of the end of the world. But instead of answering these three questions separately, in order, as if they were distinct, He is represented as answering them all together as if in some sense they were one and the same thing, as though He were to come at the destruction of Jerusalem, and also at the end of the world. Hence it may be said that the great judgment which was poured out upon the Jews when their city was laid waste by the Romans, was a coming of Christ to them. If so, then in like manner every judgment that falls upon men is essentially a coming of Christ. They are but types and precursors of the final judgment in which they reach a climax. This is borne out by the analogy of Old Testament speech. In the deluge, at the confusion of

tongues, at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and on many other occasions, God is said to have come down and visited the earth. Every crisis in which sin meets with its due recompense and right is made to triumph, is a coming of Christ, and more or less forms a part of the advent. Just as a war is a succession of battles that tend to become more and more decisive until the final victory is reached, so His advent is a succession of judgments that become more and more conclusive, until evil is wholly subdued, and the cause of right vindicated for ever.

The same comprehensive aspect of the matter is presented when we turn to the other side of the picture. Look at the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel where we have Christ's consolatory discourse to His disciples on the eve of the crucifixion. What is the consolation He offers them? "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth;" and then almost immediately adds: "I will not leave you desolate; I come unto you," as if in some sense the gift of the Spirit were His own coming again to the Church. Following this suggestion, not only Pentecost but every spiritual movement in history, every religious revival and every moral enterprise whereby spiritual life has been quickened and the cause of righteousness promoted has been a coming of Christ. Just as the tide rises by a succession of waves, or the storm by a succession of blasts, until the climax is reached and there comes a lull, so Christ comes in a succession of movements until His Kingdom fills the world. It is a process embracing a multitude of details rather than an isolated fact, a climax rather than a step, an evolution rather than an event.

To some, this may seem like evacuating the advent of all real meaning, explaining it away into nothing. But it does not follow by any means that this exhausts all that is in it, and certainly