

IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE

by

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(Author of *Mark of the Beast*)

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CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

CONCLUSION

QUIETLY, giving the impression that the sense of a great shame rested upon him, the Rev. - -, the noted popular Nonconformist minister rose from his seat and faced the congregation.

Many of his own church were there. Many others, who had followed the criticisms of the more spiritual-toned Christian papers, upon his pulpit and other utterances, were there. Every one waited breathless, wondering what contribution he would make to the great matter in hand.

It was evident that it was only by the exercise of tremendous will-power that he could restrain his emotions sufficiently to speak.

"GOD help me, dear friends!" he began, "for I know now that I have been a Judas to the Lord of Life and Glory, whose professed servant I have been. I have gloried in my success; in the crowd that always filled my church; in the adulation of my intellectual powers by the Press. But I have never glorified CHRIST. In a hundred subtle ways I have denied my Lord - He is my Lord now, I have found Him in the silence of the past awful night -. I have been practically denying His deity for years, I have talked learnedly, when I ought to have been walking humbly, and-and - ."

The strain was too much for him, tears streamed down his face, he covered his face with his hands, and dropped, sobbing, into his seat.

Sobs broke from many of the people. Weeping is infectious. In another moment the released pent-up emotions would have become a storm that none could have stayed. But the Bishop's voice called out,

"Let us pray!"

Every head was bent, and a prayer, such as London's Cathedral had never heard before, poured from the Bishop's lips. The conclusion of the prayer was followed by a moment or two of deepest stillness.

The silence was, suddenly, sharply broken by a full, rich voice crying:-

"Sit up, dear friends! Hear ye the word of the Lord!"

As the people lifted their heads a cry of amaze rang out from many throats:-

"The Monk of -!"

The face of the Monk was familiar to all Londoners by his photograph, which beside being on sale in the shops, had appeared again and again in magazines. He had a striking figure, and there was a curious picturesqueness about his appearance, with his smooth, clean-shaven face, eagle eyes, tonsured crown, and curious purple-brown cowle'd habit, girdled with a stout yellow cord about the waist. His bare feet were sandaled. His hands, long, thin, with white tapering fingers, were outstretched a moment, then dropped slowly as he went on:-

"These are times when no one of us may shrink from speaking the truth boldly, if the Truth has been committed to us.

"With all due respect to our friend, Bishop -, I would say, that all the surmises abroad in London, to-day, and those that have been voiced in our hearing here, during this hour, are wrong!

"The true meaning of the mysterious disappearance of so many ultra-protestants, is this: The great end is near! GOD's work was being frustrated by those unholy zealots, who have been therefore graciously snatched away to hell, before they could do further mischief.'

Murmurs of dissent and protest ran through the mass of people, like the low sullen roar, at sea, of a coming storm.

The Bishop thought of his Translated wife. He knew, too, that GOD not only indwelt himself, now, but that He had guided him in speaking to the people. He rose in the pulpit to protest against the words of the Romanist.

But a voice cried out from the congregation: "Let the Monk have his say. These are strange times, and we would hear all sides before we can judge."

And the Monk went on:-

"His supreme Holiness, the Pontiff, had been warned of GOD - as he is GOD's Regent on earth - of the event that has happened in our midst. His priests were warned a few days ago, and in most of our churches, last Sunday, certain dark hints of the coming catastrophe were given.

"GOD therefore, now, calls upon you all, through me, to turn to the true church, the real church, the church of St. Peter's, the church of Rome -."

A storm of protesting murmurs rolled up from the people.

He waited, smiling confidently a moment. Then he went on:

"When all the inhabitants of the earth bear upon them the sign of the true church -"

"**THE MARK OF THE BEAST!**" yelled a voice.

Another instant and there would have been a hideous uproar, but that everything became forgotten in a new excitement.

From outside, in the street, there rose the roar of a multitude, crying "Fire!" Fortunately the packed congregation within the Cathedral, one and all realized that the alarming thing was outside, not inside the building, so that there was no panic.

In a few minutes the great place was cleared. The Bishop, the Great Nonconformist, and a dozen other ministers, and laymen, remained gathered together as by a common instinct, by the pulpit.

"What is coming, brethren?"

"The power of Antichrist, and the manifestation of The man of Sin, himself," cried the Bishop, solemnly. "The Monk of -," he went on "has been the first to voice the awful claims of this Man of Sin."

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A week later ! ! !

Like a sow that returneth to the mire, London, England, the world had returned to its old careless life. The fever for sport, pleasure, money-getting, drinking, gambling, licentiousness, was fiercer than ever. Everyone aimed at forgetting what had happened a week before - and the bulk of the people were succeeding in finding the lethal element.

There had been many conversions during the first forty-eight hours after the Translation of the Church, but, since then, scarcely one. Already there had arisen, all over the land, all over the world in fact, as the American, Australasian, and Foreign Press Telegrams made clear, a multitude of men and women who were preaching the maddest, most dangerous doctrines.

Among the most popular, and successful, of these was Spiritualism. Not the comparatively mild form known before the Great Translation, but an open, hideous blasphemous exhibition that proved itself to be, what it had really always been - *demonology*.

Antichrist's sway had begun. Satan was a positive, active, agent. The restraints of the Holy Spirit were missing, for HE had left the earth when the Church had been taken away. Other restraints were also taken from the midst of the people, since, whether the world recognize it or not, the fact remains, that the people of GOD are the Salt, the preservative of the earth.

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Final word! Whether or no, the writer has failed in the purpose he had when he set pen to paper; whether or no he has bungled his subject; whether the reader is, or is not willing to accept the main statements of the special teaching in this book, does not really affect the real question, namely, The Near Return of our Lord. His word to us, whether we believe and accept it, or whether we slight and reject it, is:-

"BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY!"

"BE YE ALSO READY, FOR IN SUCH AN HOUR AS YE THINK NOT, THE SON OF MAN COMETH."

"FOR THE LORD HIMSELF SHALL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN . . . AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST: THEN, WE WHICH ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN, SHALL BE CAUGHT UP TOGETHER WITH THEM IN THE CLOUDS, TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR: AND SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD!"

TO-DAY? PERHAPS!

The continuation of this Book is published under the title "The Mark of the Beast,"

NOTE: "*The Mark of the Beast*" is also available freely at our web site.

~ end of book ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
