**“The Labour Struggle” The Bible Echo 14, 24.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following is taken from a leading daily paper:- {BEST June 15, 1899, par. 1}

The Trust system in America has attained gigantic dimensions since the close of the Spanish-American war. So rapid has been its growth and so widespread its operation during the last year that a complete change has been brought about in the industrial system of the United States. Today in America all the chief industries of modern life, except farming and banking, are concentrated into the hands of fifty-four great combinations, controlling between them some three hundred and sixty-six million pounds of capital. Such enormous aggregations of wealth and the power that wealth brings in the hands of a few may seem to be a direct menace to labour all the world over. But the amalgamation of millionaire interests promote as nothing else can the real solidarity of labour. {BEST June 15, 1899, par. 2}

And when millionaire interests are consolidated, and the solidarity of labour secured, what will be the position? Each will form a powerful army, and there will be war to the death. “Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.” Isaiah 8:9. {BEST June 15, 1899, par. 3}

The Scriptures recognise that there will be oppression of the poor by the rich in the last days. But the Lord judges the cause of the poor. In this is their only hope. “Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.” James 5:4. The Lord hates oppression, but when the labourers organise, that they may oppress their oppressors, they take their case out of the Lord’s hand. He cannot approve or support their course. {BEST June 15, 1899, par. 4}

“Shall men sit down tamely then under oppression?” If they commit their cause to God they may be quite sure that all that God can do for them will be done. “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” “For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts [the Lord of sabaoth] Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread.” Isaiah 8:11 13. Labour organisations may have good objects, but they often work hardships on those whose interests they seek. There is only one Union which will never fail to secure its objects, and which will never work an injury to its members, its resources are sufficient for every struggle, and no applicant for membership is refused. “And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, *even as we are One*: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one.” John 17:22, 23. {BEST June 15, 1899, par. 5}

E. J. WAGGONER.

**“The Baptism of Fire” The Bible Echo 14, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

The words of John the Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees among the crowds of Jews assembled on the bank of Jordan were these: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Matthew 3:11, 12. The record in the third of Luke is the same. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 1}

We have here two classes of people brought to view,—the wheat and the chaff; and likewise we have two treatments mentioned,—the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the baptism of fire. The two baptisms are as distinct as are the two classes of people. As the question concerns only the baptism of fire, we shall consider that alone. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 2}

It would seem as though the text itself should be sufficient to give a good idea, if not to settle the question, as to what is meant by the baptism of fire. Having stated of Christ that He will baptize with fire, it says that He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. This sets us on the right track; let us see how perfectly the figure fits the final destruction of the wicked. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 3}

In the first place, it must be borne in mind that “baptism” always and everywhere means immersion, and that only. “Baptism” of a whole congregation with a quart of water was a thing unheard of for the first two or three centuries after Christ. John baptized in Ænon near to Salim, “because there was *much water* there.” John 3:23. It would not require as much water to “baptize” a thousand people according to the papal perversion of the ordinance, as would suffice to quench the thirst of half a dozen men. Without going further into detailed proof, let it be remembered that whenever a person or thing is said to be baptized in any fluid substance, the person or thing baptized is wholly enveloped in the substance. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 4}

Let the well-known fact also be borne in mind that it is the nature of fire to consume and destroy that which is cast into it. This is its nature, and it will also do so unless the thing is immediately removed after being cast in, or else the fire is quenched before it can begin its devouring work. But if the fire is so great and so fierce as to be unquenchable, then there is no hope of saving anything that it has enveloped. Especially is this so when the substance cast into it is as combustible and as light as chaff, to which the wicked are compared. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 5}

Now read Revelation 21:8: “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.” Revelation 20:14, 15 also speaks of the “*lake* of fire.” {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 6}

This lake of fire will be at the time when “the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (2 Peter 3:10), and the earth shall be “clean dissolved” by the fire of destruction. See Isaiah 24:19. When the earth is melted with the intensity of the heat, there will be indeed a “lake of fire,” into this the wicked, as chaff, thorns, and worthless branches, will be cast, and burned up. They will literally be immersed in a lake of liquid fire. And this is the “baptism of fire,” for which some earnest but misinformed souls sing and pray. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 7}

Baptism in water is for the remission of sins, and so it is sometimes referred to as washing away sin. See Acts 22:16. Consistently with this idea, the baptisms of fire for the purpose of washing away sin; but there is this difference; the baptism by water is for the remission of sin and the salvation of the individual; but the baptism by fire is for the destruction of the sin and of the individual upon whom it is found. It is this that is brought to view in Isaiah 4:3, 4:- {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 8}

“And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.” {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 9}

This is the time when “whomsoever was not found written in the book of life [“written among the living in Jerusalem”] was cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:15); the time of the melting of the elements with fervent heat, in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Peter 3:7, 10), when “the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.” Isaiah 24:6. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 10}

At that time the filth of the daughters of Zion shall be washed away, and the blood of Jerusalem purged with fire. The earth will be cleansed from the curse of sin. Before that time all will be given a chance to wash themselves from sin in the blood of the Lamb; on such the second death-the lake of fire-will have no power. But those who refuse the gracious offer will have to be baptized when the time comes for this to be done, those who have fully identified themselves with sin, and who are permeated with it, will necessarily be destroyed by the same fire which removes it from the earth. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 11}

E. J. WAGGONER.

**“The Dust of Pharaoh” The Bible Echo 14, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Moses chose to suffer affliction with the Israelitish people rather than to accept the throne of Egypt, the popular verdict, we can well understand, was that the young man had thrown, himself away. His name must have been a by-word in the court for all that was foolish and fanatical. But the Scripture says that “he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” His choice was not a blind one.He weighed both sides, and decided that the honour of being a Pharaoh was not to be compared with the glory of sharing the reproach of Christ. {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 12}

After his death, Moses was raised to life, and he appeared with Christ in glory on the mount of transfiguration. We know, therefore, that he now lives in the City of God, amidst glories that human eyes have never seen. What about the Pharaohs, amongst whom he might have ranked for a few years? They are but dust. Some have been discovered in recent years, and may be seen in museums for a small entrance fee. An incident that occurred several years ago is thus related:- {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 13}

“Brugsch Bey, the famous explorer of the tombs of ancient Egypt, who discovered the mummy believed to be that of the Pharaoh who oppressed the Israelites, recently found another mummy, on the coffin of which was the royal cartouche, indicating that the body was that of one of the Pharaohs. He was delighted with his discovery, and with great care packed it up for conveyance to Cairo. On arriving at the railway station, he was directed to have his ‘luggage’ put in the luggage-van. The Bey was concerned about its safety and insisted on its going in the carriage with him. The officials consented on the condition that the fare was paid as for a living passenger. Brugsch Bey accordingly paid Pharaoh’s fare, and the mummy went in the passenger coach. At the custom-house of Cairo a new difficulty arose. The custom officers demanded duty. The Bey explained that the package was the mummy of a Pharaoh, and that no duty could he levied upon it. But the officers were convinced that it might be made dutiable under some category, and they searched their list for a suitable class. Finally, they decided to charge for it as dried fish, on which a duty is imposed. The Bey scorned to contend about the small charge involved, and the mummy having been weighed and the duty paid, the dead body of Pharaoh entered the capital of Egypt as a package of dried fish. With such contempt did they treat the body of a potentate, who, in his lifetime, doubtless received the homage of all who came into his presence. In his case with startling force were the words of the prophet fulfilled that the terrible ones shall be despised and shall become as chaff. Isaiah 29:9.” {BEST June 24, 1899, par. 14}

E. J. WAGGONER.