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THE OLD CONSTITUTION By Fred T. Fuge

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DEDICATED

to the memory of Mrs. E. B. M. who, without any solicitation whatever, gave almost sufficient money to pay for the first edition.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR'S STYLE

The author of this booklet did not get all of his facts straight, nor were his figures of speech all well-chosen, and yet his style is vivid and captivating. I have inserted a few notes into the text regarding several flaws that I found. However, it is my hope that these do not unduly detract from the writer's messages. -- DVM

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Chapter 1 THE OLD CONSTITUTION

Some years ago in a Ministerial Meeting here in the State of Michigan, I spoke on "The Preacher and His Books." I have been asked to give the same address again, or something similar. To give the same thing is not possible. Much of it has gone from me. Then again, it was born for that occasion, and not for this. However, I will do my best to get near to it, but under another heading. "The Old Constitution" is what I shall speak on at this time.

There is at present a general out-cry all over these United States for every true and loyal citizen to stand by the grand, old Constitution of this wonderful republic. This great document has been, and is now, seriously threatened. So much so, that many fear for its life, and, because of this seeming danger, men and women of nearly all walks of life are boldly standing for it.

The Bulwark Of The Nation

For 150 years it has been the bulwark, the plank, the ribs and the keel of this old Ship-of-state. But it is being assailed, assaulted and insulted on every hand. Those who swore by the God of heaven to be its defenders and its friends have held it up to ridicule and contempt, and regarded it but little more than any other scrap of paper.

Constitutions and safeguards of decency and order are nothing more than withered leaves to the bandits, thugs, murderers and bloodthirsty felons that constitute the Red regime. And, because of such reckless disregard for the doctrines and teaching that have lifted this great Republic so far above the starvation, degeneration, ignorance and priest-craft of both Continental and Oriental lands, there is a wave of indignation sweeping over every state. Heroes and heroines, private and public, military, civil and religious have risen up and taken their stand in bold defence of the grand Old Constitution.

The Constitution Is Important

The Constitution, they say, is just as important to these United States of America as a lighthouse is to a ship on a dark night in a stormy sea. Old-fashioned Americans are in favor of keeping it without a change, and millions of them would bleed and die for it just as gladly as their forefathers bled and died at Bull Run, or crimson Bunker Hill.

The Constitution, written in the name and the fear of God, and signed by Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson and many other great ones, cannot be improved on by the racketeers and buccaneers of this unsteady day. It is true that the ancient pirate scouring the sea for loot would seize upon any ship, plunder her cargo, butcher her men, and send the shattered hulk to the bottom of the sea.

Intruders On Our Liberty

And that is exactly what the pirates and buccaneers that have swept down from Russia and other vermin producing lands would do to the great American Ship-of-state. They would disarrange her rudder, shoot away her spars, throw overboard her compass, murder her wheelsman, destroy her royal charter, and send the dismantled and broken hulk to the scrapheap of wrecked and ruined nations.

And just what these intruders on American liberties, American institutions, and the American Constitution are doing, the pirates and buccaneers of religion are ever seeking to do to the glorious Cause of Jesus Christ. Indeed, they are doing it every day, so that the danger that confronts the march of the blood-red religion of Calvary is vastly greater than the danger that confronts the Constitution of this Republic.

The Bible Stands

Not that there is any danger of the Bible being destroyed, there is none whatever! The earth will dissolve in judgment fires, the oceans boil like a seething pot, the sun become black as a blanket of pitch, the moon change to blood; every island and mountain take wings and fly out of its place, and the stars burn down in their sockets, and die of old age. But, the Bible will live on, and rise in mighty triumph above the tragedy of the elements, and the wreck of ruined and blasted ages.

It has stood the bombardments and the thundering shocks of more than forty centuries without the loss of a single word. It has come down through a world swept by flames, ravaged by floods, and soaked by the blood of nations, but, still it stands! -- the royal Constitution, the safeguard of all our liberties, and the blood-sealed Magna Charta of the only Ship that can save the race from hell.

The wild beasts of the Roman Colosseum could not destroy it, the wicked ingenuity of the Spanish Inquisition could not strangle it, nor could the hellish infidelity of France impede its onward march. It stands! It stands! -- the Gibraltar Rock in the midst of a raging and turbulent sea. It will live in Russia with a hundred million bloodthirsty Communists seeking its destruction. It will live in Germany with sixty million Brown Shirts armed with drawn swords against it, and it will live in Italy when Mussolini, the boss and bully of the land of the ancient Gauls is rotting in the ground. [This last remark dates this booklet back to some time before Mussolini's death -- perhaps before or during World War II. -- DVM]

Yes, the Bible will stand till Gabriel blows his judgment trump and angels veil their faces at the grave-side of a dead and buried world. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." The Scriptures cannot be broken.

The Bible Like Its Author

Indeed, this Old Constitution [The Bible] stands, and like its mighty Author, reaches out to all mankind in every nook and corner of this old, troubled world -- north, where polar seas roll thunder through the Arctic, and the pure, white shroud of everlasting snow evelopes the cragged cliffs of old Spitzbergen -- south, to inhospitable South Georgia, where the gloom of the wild Antarctic robes heaven and earth in black, and the brave whalers of the old north-way bow to

worship God in the shadows of the mighty ice cap -- east, to the grey dawn of the ages, where partiarchs and prophets trod with blistering feet the hot sands of time; where pirate priest and bogus law nailed Jesus to a tree -- then west, to where the gold crowned king of day, in chariot of flame and fire rides down the evening sky -- where balmy zephyrs fling the sweet magnolia to the breeze, and nature scatters on a newborn world rich blessings of every kind.

We Should Know The Bible

We cannot appreciate this book as we should, unless we make ourselves accquainted as far as possible with its heroes, conquerors and leaders. The soldiers that have fought for it, the generals and commanders that have ever pointed its way. The strange and hostile lands that it has invaded, and the wild and savage tribes that have been conquered and brought into subjection through its inspiring influence.

And the only way that I can know these things is through the pages of my books, and the only place that I shall ever meet these mighty conquerors here on earth, is around my study table.

Men That I Meet In My Study

There too, I meet the great discoverers and explorers, who opened up the vast, outlying lands of our world. And there I find out what earth's strange and savage tribes were really like when first the white men found them. As far as ability and means will permit, I study the great Religious Movements of all ages, especially this wonderful Gospel Age.

I live with the Waldenses of hundreds of years ago, until their mountain homes in the Swiss Alps look like mansions of light around the throne of God. I go with them into persecution at the bloody hands of Rome, until my soul cries out with Milton. "Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones lie scattered on Alpine mountains cold."

I study the Scotch Covenanters, until the moors and glens of the land of Bobby Burns seem linked to Calvary, where Jesus died for sinners. I turn to the great Crusade of Peter the Hermit, and Walter the Penniless, until their fire and passions to capture the tomb of Jesus from the Turk, stirs all my ransomed powers. [The preceding statement strikes me as lending undue virtue to Crusades and Crusaders whose religion was one centered too much on materialism and superstitious worship of earthly relics and shrines. -- DVM]

Yes, in my study, I am at home with the great and good of the ages. When I enter in the morning, a thousand voices bid me welcome, and a thousand souls are waiting there to inspire me. Yes indeed, the realm wherein I live is a realm rich with the experiences of the greatest and grandest souls that have ever blessed this world. Many of them have been in heaven for thousands of years, others are but new arrivals to that golden land. Still others that I meet in my study are on the way, but all with one voice beckon me on.

Help In Trial

In the moments of great trial and testings, Jeremiah the prophet has often come to my help by telling me that the worse is yet to come. [The writer here apparently conveys the thought that Jeremiah thus encourages by saying, "It could be worse." -- DVM] With the same index finger that pointed Israel to her God, and Israel to her doom, he bids me look ahead for darker skies, and bloodier seas; and storms that are more tempestous are yet to break upon us. Yes, oft' this mighty prophet challenges my faltering spirit thus: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then bow canst thou contend with horses, and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan."

But, it will take me too long to call the roll of all the saints and sages that come to my study table. I simply say I love them all, and immensely enjoy their company. In my realm I am a prince, and kings and queens, prophets, priests and apostles, and Jesus Christ Himself, are among my entertainers. And when the storms of life beat down upon me, they tell me how they endured in times of strain and trial, and how they triumphed in the face of resolute foes.

In my study I watch the holy martyrs ride up from Smithfield Commons in chariots of flame and fire, and as they climb toward their mansions in the sky, the resounding heavens echo back their all-inspiring war cry:

"Through floods and flames surrounding, We still our way pursue; Nor shall we be confounded, With glory in our view. Still Christ is our salvation, What can we covet more? We fear no condemnation, Our Father's wrath is o'er."

Again, in Caesar's great theater I see the wild beasts charge. The Christian martyrs die, and from the blood-soaked floor where millions have given their lives for Christ, the thrilling song arises:

"They met the tyrants brandished steel, The lion's gory mane; They bowed their necks the death to feel, They followed in His train."

From the crimsoned land of the ancient Gauls, where thousands of God's children lay in garments rolled in blood, there arises on the invisible air, and floats away to the throne of heaven another inspiring stanza of the Christian's battle-song of the ages:--

"He tells me what I ought to do, And how I ought to die, And so we walk together, My Lord, and I." Be assured of this one thing, our Charter is certain to stand, come what may. Our Constitution is safe, and the links of love that connect us with it need never be severed.

American Constitution

For many decades the Constitution lay in an old leather trunk in the War Building in Washington. But at last it has gone to its glorious home, and that at a time when the greatest storm of persecution in all its history was raging about it. A magnificent building, the like of which cannot be found in all this world is just being finished to receive and hold in security America's greatest and grandest Documents: The Constitution of these United States, and The Declaration of Independence. This building is known as the National Archives Building, and in it, these safeguards of all American liberties are being enshrined. The building itself can never rust or decay, for it is built of rustless steel, and the very best of marble. There is not an inch of combustible material used in the entire structure. All drawers and shelves are made of steel, and every document and every page of the many tons that are stored in its three million cubic feet of space, have been treated with a fireproof substance, that can never burn.

The entrance to the Archives building is beautiful, and in the far end there is a circular vault like the chancel of a great cathedral. There is also a beautiful altar built entirely of bullet-proof glass, and in this sacred ark, America's Constitution and The Declaration of Independence is securely locked away. All historic films, both talking and silent, with all phonographic records of great men's speeches, will be treasured up here also.

All these wonderful documents are coated with a transparent, fire-proof shellac, so that they can never be destroyed by fire, rust or moth. The safety devices in the building are so mechanically perfect that the great door will never close as long as any person, whether on evil or good intent, remains near the sacred ark. Even the presence of a rat or mouse on the marble floor will agitate electric currents that will instantly flood the building with red lights, sound great warning bells, and call the guards to arms.

All this, and a great deal more, is being done to preserve The Constitution and The Declaration of Independence, that lay for decades in an old leather trunk, and that is now being assaulted and abused. Yet, this wonderful Archives building in Washington will crumble in the tragedies of judgment, and its fire-proof, rust-proof and moth-proof documents will go up in the curling, red glare of the last great conflagration, if not before. But our [spiritual, Biblical] Constitution and our Declaration of Independence will stand forever! Therefore, I encourage you to lay up treasures for yourself in heaven, where moth nor rust will not destroy, and where thieves will not break through and steal.

Gather all the sands of the great Sahara desert, with all that buried Egypt and ancient Mongolia, with all the grains of sand that ever touched our world -- gather every grain together, then draw a line and start your grains a-rolling, each grain a billion ages after the other, and when the last small grain has crossed your line, the Bible will have just begun to live, and Jesus Christ will be but a black-haired youth, and I shall be a youth in glory with Him.

[The figure of speech about Jesus being " but a black-haired youth" is not well-chosen and not Biblical: "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow ..." -- Rev. 1:14 -- DVMI

Time in its hurried flight may plow deep furrows in my brow, and paint my hair with silver, but time will soon forget me. Jesus Christ will see me again, then my heart will rejoice; and that joy no man shall take from me. For, I shall be at home with saints, sages and prophets, priests and apostles, and Jesus Christ Himself, with whom I became acquainted, and whose glorious fellowship I so enjoyed around my study table.

What does it matter if through jealousy or prejudice we are crowded into a corner, and chained to the whipping-post of some starvation station? God is bigger than circumstances, no cage can imprison the soul, no chain can fetter the spirit. Someone, somewhere may catch the flame of our passion, and burn when we are no more. Let us stand by the Old Constitution!

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Chapter 2

WILL THE OLD BOOK STAND?

Midway between Beirut and Mount Lebanon, in Syria, there stands, remains of what is said to have been the greatest and the most imposing temple ever raised in honor of any god or man.

On a platform, nine hundred feet long, five hundred feet wide, thirty-feet above the desert sands, and four thousand feet above the sea, stands this mighty Temple of Baalbek, built by whom -- no one can tell, and dedicated to the joint memories of Baal and Jupiter. The principle stones in this great structure are sixty-nine feet long, fifteen feet thick, and seventeen feet wide -- its massive columns seventy-five feet high and twenty-one feet around, all of a single stone. And the great key-stone in the central arch weighs not less than sixty tons.

On this stone, sculptured by hands long since gone back to dust, may be seen the symbol of Jupiter; a great eagle with extended wings, ready for flight among the stars -- his neck arched, his head poised, and in his talons the thunderbolts of wrath. There is nothing in Egypt, Greece or Rome to compare with this massive temple, erected in honor, and dedicated to the memories of senseless, heathen gods.

The Bible Greater Than Baalbek

The Bible is greater than the Temple of Baalbek. It will stand when Baalbek is gone, and the last particle of its dust has been devoured by the red flames of judgment.

The two wonderful pillars of the Bible, the Old Testament and the New, will stand when heaven and earth shall make their final bow and pass forever away. Standing as they do at the two extremities of Time, they swing out their mighty arch over all intervening ages, and beneath this arch all ages and acts of time pass in review.

Here, empires have appeared and vanished, kings have come to coronation and passed away to dust and ashes, nations have rolled their war-drums, flung out their gilded banners, and marched their tramping millions; and have vanished from the earth like the dust of a summer threshingfloor. Stars have turned black in the heavens, mountains have burned down on earth, islands have gone from their places in the oceans, and rivers have died in their ancient beds. The double-tusk elephant, the mighty mastadon, the dinosaur, and the saber-tooth tiger have perished from off the earth. Behemoth has gone from the rivers, and leviathan from his place in the sea. But the Bible lives! Like a burning seraphim of fire it has blazed its way through the darkest age, and, with increased momentum, it will ever sweep ahead, until the angel of destiny shall stand on sea and land, and swear that time shall be no longer.

Yes, and in the last great judgment storm, when the sun shall turn black as sackcloth and the moon changes to blood, when red-fingered lightning shall dart devouring tongues of flame, and wailing thunders sound the "last post" over the dead and buried ages -- even then, Jesus Christ, the Keystone of this mighty Bible arch, will hold it steady, and I, a poor lost man, redeemed, in the midst of falling stars and burning worlds, shall never regret the hours, days and years I have spent with this Eternal Word.

The Wonders Of The Ancient World

The seven wonders of the ancient world, with the exception of a few solitary relics, are all forgotten and gone. The Great Man of Rhodes is gone. The walls of Babylon are gone. The Temple of Diana in Ephesus is gone. The Temple of Jupiter at Athens is gone. The great Colosseum of Rome is gone.* [*This is erroneous. The Colosseum still stands, albeit, not in its early splendor. -- DVM] Only the Sphinx and the Pyramids of Egypt remain, and these are in a ruined state. The Pyramid has lost many tons of its original weight, and the Sphinx has lost its nose. But, the Bible lives, and is as deathless in its mission as the brightest angel around the throne of God. And on it is ever sweeping! -- from the ice-capped glaciers of the wild Antarctic, to the storm-whipped lands far up in polar seas -- from the grey dawn of the ancient east to the sun-kissed hills of the golden west -- from the igloo of the Eskimo under the North Star, to the hovel of the cannibal beneath the Southern Cross, the glory and influence of this great Book has gone.

Time will never wear it out; age will never kill it, nor will eternity exhaust this boundless, priceless treasure. The hatred of Hitler's Brown Shirts, the insults of Mussolini's Black Shirts, nor the hell of Stalin's Red Shirts will ever succeed in blocking the wheels of this great chariot of the Lord. It rolled into action 4000 years ago, and on it goes! It has outridden the storms of forty centuries, sailed through bloody seas, and quenched the flames of devouring fire. It has defied the fury of popes, priests and potentates and maintained its watch-post on the ramparts of the ages, while a hundred generations went down to rise no more. It has outlived the greatest Empires that this world has ever known, and watched the most illustrious crowns go back to pathetic dust. It has spanned the continents, bridged the seas, and united into one vast brotherhood the scattered masses of mankind. It has honored heaven, blessed the world, and lifted millions doomed to die from the brimstone gates of hell.

The Bible is the oldest, and at the same time the newest Book. It is the humblest Book, and yet the most exalted. It weeps with the brokenhearted penitent, and rejoices with the newborn child

of heaven. It goes down into the valley of death with the aged and trembling saint. It removes the last obstacle out of the believer's way and opens a shining path into a deathless land. It shares the poverty of the poorest hovel on earth, and at the same time, points to the wealth of the brightest mansions around the throne of God. It throbs with the groans and suffering of the oppressed, and rejoices with the redeemed, and all who are forever free. It lives in a world that is torn by graves, and crimsoned with blood, but at the same time takes hold upon a graveless world, where death can never come. It will sail with the storm-tossed mariner across life's troubled ocean, and pilot his struggling barque into heaven's tranquil harbor. It has gone with the soldier where cannons roar and bullets fly, and fields are slippery with the blood of murdered men. But even there it speaks of a better day, when swords shall be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks, and the nations shall learn war no more. And Heaven knows how eagerly we are longing for that Day to come!

The Ravages Of War

Just think of what war has done. The war under Julius Caesar killed 400,000 men. War under the Persian Xerxes, killed 5 million. Under Genghis Khan 1 million were killed -- at the battle of Nashar 700,000 -- at the seige of Osten, 120,000 -- the seige of Troy, 1,800,000 -- wars against the Turks and Arabs, 180 million -- the African wars, 108 million -- the last World war, 10 million.

Add to this great list the millions of crushed, mangled and bleeding who died as the result of war, with those who fell in smaller engagements, and you have a bloody catalog that will perhaps run into sixty billion, or thirty times the present population of the world.

But the time will come, so this Old Book declares, when the nations shall learn war no more. The Lord of Hosts, the Lord of Armies, will break the battle-bow, burn the war chariot in the fire, and proclaim a universal armistice that will never be disturbed. The sword will go back to its scabbard, and the spear will be sheathed in roses.

And here is the best illustration of that time to come that I have ever found. When the Treaty of Versailles, at the close of the Great War* was signed, thousands of American Soldiers in France marched under the Arch of Triumph, with thousands of beautiful roses tied to the points of their bayonets. They were all picked men, six feet or more [in height]. Their faces were grim, and they wore helmets of war, but the war was over, blood had ceased to flow, and now their spears were tipped with roses.

[*I think that the term "Great War" was used to denote World War I before the beginning of World War II. Therefore, here again may be evidence that this booklet was published some time between World War I and World War II. -- DVM]

This great Book points to a grander day, when a grander army will march beneath a grander Arch of Triumph, and with swords sheathed, no more to be stained with blood.

The Jewelled Book

A few months ago there was brought to the city of Detroit, what was said to be the most beautiful Book in all the world. It was a copy of Lord Tennyson's Holy Grail. It had been bound, and especially prepared for some member of the British Royal Family. The covers were of brightly decorated leather, inlaid with rubies, sapphires and other precious stones. The material in the body of the book was of the finest parchment obtainable, and many of the letters were embossed with gold and blue. It was made up in seven glorious colors, and all coloring matter was mixed with the white of an egg, so that it might retain its brilliant shades forever. But, what of all that, if its contents were not truthful and dependable?

The Bible will stand the test. It is the jeweled Book, and its jewels will brighten with ages. It is rich with the most precious things of heaven and earth. Time and eternity hath poured into it their most costly treasures. Its covers are the outstretched wings of the Almighty, inlaid with sapphire, jasper, emeralds, and with all the precious stones of heaven, and the pearl that glitters in its wonderful gates.

God himself was its architect and builder, and holy men and angels labored to make it what it is. It is embossed with the glory of the Ancient of Days, illuminated with the splendors of a deathless world. It shines in the light of the sun that will never set, and it will live when the moon hath hid her face in shame. Bright worlds shine in its glorious pages, and millions of unfallen creatures bow to its Creator and its Lord. Through its rainbow-circled arches rolls the music of the spheres, and against its shining headlands breaks the sea of glass, mingled with fire.

It offers "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." To the hungry it comes with the "Bread of Life." The thirsty may drink of its springing fountains and never thirst again. The aged and hoary may but taste of this elixir of life, and nevermore grow old, and the dead may but touch the brim of its lifegiving ocean, and live for evermore.

It rejoiced with the morning stars, and sang together with the sons of God at the cradle of Creation, and it will groan with wailing thunders, and weep with dissolving worlds when creation drops and dies. It throbs with the "Hallelujah Chorus" of the saved in heaven. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." And it trembles with the dirge of the lost in hell. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Yes, the Old Book will stand forever, and Jesus Christ will be its great, eternal hero. Out of ages only counted in heaven, He came. Across all centuries of time his chariot of salvation rolled. The fires on Jewish altars, and the flowing blood of goats and bulls for four thousand years, proclaimed His coming. Angels descended the midnight sky, a convoy down from the throne of God to announce that He had come. Trembling shepherds forsook their flocks, and wise men left their vast estates to seek the newborn King. To kill Him, hell sent forth its strongest legions, and earth produced the bloodiest of men. Like hungry hounds in pursuit of game they pursued him from the manger to the cross, and there, with spikes in his hands and feet, and thorns in his lovely brow, they hung him up to die. There, under the black arch of a sunless sky at noon, while muttering thunders beat on muffled drums of clouds, and red-fingered lightning traced in letters of living fire the tragedy of the ages, the Savior breathed His last.

They wrapped his blood-stained body in linen cloth and laid him in the tomb. They rolled a stone to block the entrance, and sealed it with great Caesar's ring, then set a guard to keep the dead man in. But after three days, His glorious spirit that from the cross went into the underworld to lead captivity captive, arose and entered the tomb. There, he shot a quivering arrow into the heart of death, and broke its power forever! The bars of the grave were thrown down, Caesar's seal was broken, the defiant stone rolled down the hillside, the Roman guards fell over like dead men, and Christ, my Christ, blessed be His glorious name forever, came out of the tomb with a ringing shout of victory for every child of God: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

For forty days in glorious immortality, he lingered to bless his struggling Church, then, from the hills of Bethany, he struck the trail back home. Angels on the battlements of glory saw Him coming, and shouted from their glittering watch-post "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

Christ Going Home

When he shook the last dust of the earth from off his blessed feet and started to ascend the radiant heavens, angels in shining clothes said to his waiting, watching ones below. This same Jesus that you see going into the heavens will so come in like manner as ye see him go away...

After all that I have said, or could say of this marvelous Book and its Christ, I feel stupid, ignorant and unacquainted. If possible I may exhaust the vocabulary of every language and use up every descriptive sentence under the sun, even then, I would have but barely touched the brim of this mighty ocean of God's eternal truth.

Sir Isaac Newton, with all his knowledge of science and the scientific world, said, "I don't know what other people think, but, as for me, I feel like a child playing on the sea shore, finding here and there a smoother pebble, and a prettier shell, while the vast ocean of knowledge and truth lies stretching out before me."

And this is just how I feel in the presence of the Bible and my Almighty Christ.

Though mountains from their seats be hurled --Down to the deep, and buried there, Convulsions shake the solid world, My faith shall never yield to fear!

* * * * * * *

THE END