

VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

It is a common proverb, and one very generally acted upon to-day, that, "In union there is strength." Both the Church and the world accept the maxim as correct; hence we find men binding themselves together in various unions, both social and religious.

From some standpoints the idea certainly is correct. How could labor resist the encroachments of capital, or capital protect its interests, without their respective unions? How else could Free Masonry and similar institutions have gained present power and influence? How could kingdoms maintain their authority and dominion? How could the churches, both Papal and Protestant, have gained or retained their mighty power, influence and authority, had they not each fortified themselves by a union of hands?

Looking out upon these great civil, social, and religious organizations, all must acknowledge that through their respective unions great strength has been secured. And the strength of each great party has helped to keep the other at bay. In other words, one uplifted arm of flesh has served to protect itself against another arm of flesh, as well as to exchange blows in the struggle for existence. And so the world to-day which has been banding its forces for centuries, and with increased energy during the last century, stands organized in companies of millions on opposite sides of almost every question of general interest.

And what does it mean? Where shall it end? When each great band having united its forces, feeling sure that in its union there would be strength, now turns to look upon the equivalent strength of its opponent, the outlook is truly appalling from every standpoint, and men begin to fear if after all, these unions have

given them sufficient strength to withstand the approaching conflict, now so manifest to every reasoning mind.

While we have remarked the expressions and indications of fearful apprehension on the part of the great civil organizations, we also note the same indications on the part of prominent exponents of the great religious systems. While each secretly trembles for its own safety, yet outwardly boasts of its security, they note and delight to point out the elements of disintegration at work in each other.

As evidence of this we quote the following from The Catholic of Nov. 15th:

"PAN-PRESBYTERIAN AND OTHER PROTESTANT COUNCILS.

"With Dr. McCosh, of Princeton, we believe, originated the idea of a Pan-Presbyterian Council. The Church of England people went through the form of holding a Pan-Angelical Convocation some few years ago in London. The Methodists at once followed the example set them by their Episcopalian friends, and attempted to gather together the representatives of Methodism from every land where 'the gospel,' as expounded by Wesley and his followers, had been preached, into a Pan-Methodist Conference. This Pan-Methodist Council was to be a wonderful affair; Methodism was a young, growing and intensely active religious organization; it reckoned its followers by the tens of thousands; it had made serious inroads, both in England and the United States, upon the older and established forms of Protestantism; hence, much was expected from the Pan-Methodist Conference that assembled in London a few years since. But it was the old story of Protestantism re-told. Instead of union and harmony prevailing in the councils of the Methodist body, there was a singular revelation of the lack of both

those qualities so essential to the welfare and stability of the organization. There was no authoritative declaration on those important subjects of doctrine and polity which had split Methodism into different and contending sects. In a word, the Pan-Methodist Conference, like the Pan-Anglican Convocations, was a signal failure. It did not impress anyone, it may be questioned if it did Methodists themselves, with the notion that the Wesleyan system was an improvement upon those forms of Protestant belief which it had supplanted in many quarters.

"The idea of a Pan-Presbyterian Council was next taken up at the instigation of the President of Princeton, the able and learned Dr. McCosh. No sooner was the proposition put forward of holding a Pan-Presbyterian meeting, than it was hailed with a "remarkable unanimity and with almost universal interest and joy" by the Calvinistic Churches. What a pleasing spectacle it would be to see the divided followers of Calvin and Knox coming together and holding mutual intercourse and counsel upon their common standards of faith! Outsiders might be somewhat skeptical as to the possibility of a Pan-Presbyterian Council, but a supreme effort should be made, through the leaders of that body, to convince the world of the 'real and effective oneness' of Presbyterians throughout the world.

"Accordingly a call was issued. And the first Pan-Presbyterian meeting was held in Edinburgh in July, 1877; a second in Philadelphia, September, 1880; and the third, and quite likely the last, was opened in the city of Belfast, Ireland, on the 2nd of July past. We have been reading lately some very unfavorable criticisms of this Belfast Pan-Presbyterian Council made by Presbyterians themselves. A paper was read before the United Presbyterian Ministerial Association of Philadelphia on the Belfast

meeting by the Rev. Mr. Dales, from which we make some extracts.

"The Rev. Dr. Dales writes:

"In looking, however, at the late meeting as we may now after the pleasurable excitements and varied entertaining, social and other interesting things connected with it are over, some matters may be noted which may be considered as grounds of apprehension in regard to it and the whole system of Councils as this one and its predecessors generally have been conducted – and apprehension as to whether any real and lasting good may be expected to flow from them – and apprehension also as to the desirableness, or possibly even the propriety, of their being continued.

"The freedom and boldness with which, as at the meeting in Philadelphia and possibly in Belfast, speculative views at least were advanced to inspiration, the claims or pretensions of science, ritualism and other topics, and which could not be antagonized or properly controverted at the time or in the place, lest there might be developed some unseemly scene of difference, and, what the outside world might say, of strife among brethren of the same name. Thus more or less of serious error might go uncorrected and unrebuked.'

"Just so. There are most serious grounds of apprehension in the Presbyterian case, as well as in the Anglican and Methodist instances, of any "real and lasting good" likely to flow from such meetings. The elements are too discordant to be harmonized. And this critic goes on to say that 'there has been an unsatisfactory, and perhaps ominous, indefiniteness and uncertainty in those councils from the beginning.'"

From all this we gather that Presbyterians themselves do not believe in the utility or advantages to be derived from the holding of Pan-Presbyterian Councils; that the experiment is a dismal failure; and this for the simple reason: that "unless the Lord build the house, the labor of the builders is in vain." The Protestant fabric the Heavenly Builder certainly did not contemplate when he laid the foundations of the Christian Church."

Thus the "Mother Church" points out to her wayward daughters the error of their course in following the principle for which they parted company with her, viz.: the right of private judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures.

And in their confusion they are beginning to heed her counsel, and by degrees are looking for the old paths – not the old paths marked by the steppings of Jesus and the Apostles, but for the paths of the great apostate church of Rome.

As evidence of this, mark the spirit of intolerance which increasingly prevails throughout Protestantism: the authority with which they attempt now to silence private judgment, for which right they once contended; the emphasis with which they command their people to "stop thinking and go to work;" the effort to bind the people by fear, and to lead them to render undue reverence to men of like passions and frailties, who have assumed the right to lord it over God's heritage; and the indulgence they offer to men of the world who will advance their financial interests. Like Catholicism, they point to their age, their established clergy, trained and educated for their service, and their dignified presumption, as evidence of their divine authority.

In keeping with this growing disposition to admire and imitate the "Mother Church," was the proposition entertained in the "Protestant Episcopal Congress" recently held in Detroit, Mich., to establish Auricular Confession.

We append the following from the Detroit Evening News, showing the favor with which the motion was received and entertained:

"It must have been a little startling to the majority of Protestants hereabouts, to discover the almost unanimity with which the clergy of the Episcopal Church Congress favored Auricular Confession. Indeed, almost the only arguments urged against it were those of expediency and practicability. Its philosophical [R696 : page 1] basis was heartily approved, and its scriptural authority conceded. The Latin clergy themselves could hardly have spoken more eloquently of the benefits of the practice than did the reverend gentlemen who appeared as its advocates in the Episcopal Congress."

These and similar indications, manifest to every thoughtful mind, show the tendency of human schemes. Men were beginning to think they had built the tower of Babylon high enough to reach unto heaven, but, lo! the confusion of tongues! the discord among the builders! they cannot understand each other, and the various sections of the vast condemned structure are disintegrating, settling, falling. As an evidence that this is beginning to be realized, we quote the following from the Chicago Express which is part of an article written by Bishop Foster, of the Methodist Church. While traveling in Europe, he took occasion to speak of those forms of worship there which are supported by law, and the acts that led to such a state of things. He says: –

"That there is but little real, vital, personal religion in these lands, is among the most patent facts....I know of nothing more sad than the religious condition of Europe, and the saddest part of it is, that it is chargeable to the Church itself, and therefore the more hopeless. If something is not speedily done, the so-called Christian

Church will drive Christianity from these ancient lands, if not from the whole world."

In speaking of the primary causes which led to this state of things, he says: –

"Did Constantine make the Roman mind Christian by abolishing paganism, and proclaiming the religion of the cross in its stead? and did creating the constituted Roman nation into a church, make the nation a Christian church? or did he not rather paganize Christianity?"

Speaking still further of the present state of things, he says: –

"By a false theory, the Church has been taken from the people, and converted into a priestly and political machine, and has ceased to be a Church of Christ, as much as the papal machine at Rome. ...This condition of things is the sad inheritance of the union of Church and State."

The editor of the Express in calling attention to the statements of the Bishop, says: –

"The Church in America has also very largely become a political machine, and has been used as a means of raising a campaign fund to retain and maintain the party in power, and return men to office, who have betrayed the people, and **[R696 : page 2]** sold them to the giant corporations of the land....How long, we would ask of Bishop Foster, does he imagine it will be before the Church in America, like the Church of Europe, will be forced to seek an alliance with the State in order to sustain itself, because of the indifference of the people, who perceive its iniquitous practices, and scoff at its pretended Christianity? Already a union of the two is a thing openly spoken of as desirable.

"We have before us at this moment a religious journal, the Sabbath Sentinel, which in its leading editorial warns the Church against the tendency. The rich men within the Church, who have taken shelter there against public condemnation of their crimes of extortion, are ready at any time for the union – more than ready. They would do with their taxes to the Church as they have done with their taxes to the State: frame the laws in such a way that the poor shall be forced to pay for them. Every one of the causes which produced the union of Church and State in Europe, exists either in full bloom or in embryo in this country; and here, as there, 'if something is not speedily done, the so-called Christian Church will drive Christianity from the land.' Again we say, with the Bishop, 'Let the Church of God come out from the world; let it be made of followers and disciples of Christ; let it represent righteousness and truth; let it cut loose from false and entangling alliances; let its priests be clothed with salvation, and its citizens be a holy communion; let it demonstrate its divine lineage, – let this be the watch-cry of Zion, and then it will be a power in the earth, and will silence the taunt of its enemies.'"

What then shall we conclude? Is there to be no union among Christians – shall brother forever stand divided against brother? Shall truth forever be so vaguely comprehended that God's children may not have full confidence in it? Is there no common bond of union?

Yes, assuredly there is a common bond of union – the spirit of truth promised – which is able, through the exercise of our free unbiased judgment in the study of God's word, to lead us into all truth, in its due season. And all thus led are united to each other and to Christ, the great invisible head of the church. And in that union there is strength, which no opposing forces can withstand, and before which all must fall.

Therefore, you who thus stand united to Christ, though you may stand alone among men, be of good cheer, contend nobly for the faith once delivered to the saints, though alone you contend against a host. Greater is he that is for us than all they that be against us. Babylon's massive walls shall crumble into dust, but the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord's house shall be established. Isa. 2:2.

As an example of a strong church system or union, Papacy is head and shoulders above all others. Her principle of teaching the infallibility of decrees of Popes and Bishops, and the utter ignorance of truth and subservience in all others, is the tried and most approved method of having union in error. Because of this, Papacy will probably survive the shock of the coming storm longer than any other section of Babylon. For the same reason limited monarchies will probably fall sooner than absolute monarchies in the same conflict between truth and error. Yet truth is mighty and shall prevail.

That union only will be lasting, which is based upon the liberties and restraints provided in the Word of God, and which recognizes it as the only infallible teaching.

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EXTRACTS FROM INTERESTING LETTERS.

Wayne Co., Pa., Oct. 23d, 1884

MY DEAR BROTHER: – A copy of the WATCH TOWER of October, 1883, has just fallen into my hands. There are several articles in that issue of such a character that, should the tone of the paper for 1884 be similar, I want to take it and circulate it as far and wide as possible. I am Pastor of the Christian Church of this place. Our people are liberal in sentiment and love the Holy Scriptures. Hence any paper containing so much candid research

and Biblical exegesis as the above mentioned number, will find willing readers.

Please send me a sample copy.

Fraternally yours, _____.

Ayrshire, N.B.

SIR: – In the goodness of God I have got a look at your pamphlet, "Why Evil was Permitted." I have been deeply interested in the subjects therein presented for some time. Please to favor me with a copy of ZION'S WATCH TOWER with the supplement already mentioned, and any others of a like description. Christians cannot but note to what an extent the power of God is being put forth in the calling of one here and another there. In striking contrast is the way in which the devil, knowing that his time is short, is using every effort in his power, and so the conflict is going on, while the so-called Church of God is sound asleep. Let us realize our position. By faith having received the blessed Christ and realizing the guiding and teaching of the Holy Ghost, may we grow in grace and in the love of God.

Yours, most respectfully,

_____.

Bellaire, O., Nov. 23, 1884.

C. T. RUSSELL, Dear Sir: – In sending a little order to you, allow me to make an explanation of causes that led me to this course.

A few weeks ago, on a pleasant Sabbath afternoon, I went for the first time in my life across the Ohio river here, to Wheeling. While visiting churches and other places of interest, I passed, it

seemed by chance, the State House, where Elder J. B. Adamson was preaching to a group on the pavement. I staid so long to hear him that I saw little more of the city that day. I heard the Bible explained – I heard him "vindicate the ways of God to man," as Pollock says. I got the little book, "Food," etc. I felt then, and more ever since, that that day was a great crisis in my life.

Mr. Adamson was in this town afterward, and I "heard him gladly." He came, at my earnest request, to my room, and talked to me of this mystery – now made clear. Besides, the little volume is satisfying my mind wonderfully.

Please read the enclosed card, and then address it so that it will reach Mr. Adamson, if you know where he is.

Truly yours,

_____.

We give below the "card" referred to in the above.

Bellaire, O., Nov. 23, 1884.

J. B. ADAMSON: – Dear Sir: – I now send a few lines to tell you how fully I believe I have found the truth. I have not quite finished the little book "Food," and I have not read much of the paper yet, but everything is like the breaking of sunlight on a dark day. The darkest problems of my mind, that have confronted me for many years, are being clearly solved – so many of them. I tell my associates quietly but gladly, that I have found that for which I have longed. And I tell my near friends – the dear ones at a distance – that I have found peace with God. It was such a revelation to me: The Bible, the Saviour, the Church, and the world, all appear to me in such a different light from that in which I looked at them before. Yet truly my life's experiences have been preparing me for the

immediate acceptance of these things. I feel that I have long known what self-denial is – indeed I have tried hard. Now though I feel how unworthy my powers of body and mind, are, I consecrate them to God. I am so anxious to attain to the highest and feel sorry to think of failing in that. How glad I am that my feet were led that day, past the Wheeling State House. May God bless you and your companion in your work – Mrs. A.

Yours in faith, _____.

The brother need not conclude that he is too late to attain to the "High Calling." Thousands of God's children have given themselves to the Lord long ago, who are now being led to more fully realize the full import of their covenant. They have learned and practiced self-denial, self-sacrifice, and are now being quickened by the truth to renewed energy in sacrifice and devotedness to God. And it is the privilege of all such to so run to obtain. How many sincere hearts have in solemn song or words or prayer declared to God –

"My all is on the altar."

"And the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And (unless they should forsake or despise their covenant John 8:31) they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." Mal. 3:16,17. None of us understood fully the extent of our sacrifice when first we made it. Each added day brings its opportunities for sacrifice, and God's word is now making clear to inquiring minds that it must be even unto death; and as we daily realize the death struggles of the old nature, glorious visions of the new burst upon our spiritual visions through the precious word. And thus we are impelled and helped in the way of sacrifice – even unto death.

Let all who see these incentives therefore be earnest in their efforts to make them known to other consecrated saints, that they too may be likewise inspired to make their calling and election sure.

Cheshire Co., N.H.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL: – My wife has been receiving THE WATCH TOWER for several years past, and I have occasionally read an article in them without awakening any particular interest in my mind until about two months ago. Then my attention was especially called to them, and since that time I have read them eagerly and with very great delight.

I have read, also, "Food for Thinking Christians," "Tabernacle," etc., and find as a result quite a revolution wrought in my life and religious emotions.

I was in the Methodist ministry seven years previous to the last four years, and should probably be there now but for the different and changing views of my wife, as she has been a nominal (though not a real) Baptist till within a few years past, and now neither of us find a resting place in either of these or any of the other churches. We find ourselves in sympathy with the most of your writings, though I am unable, as yet, to measure fully up to some views you put forth. Nevertheless, the doctrines you hold wherein I cannot go with you do not concern particularly your main teachings, as I understand them.

My mind is in lively exercise just now as to what my work in the Master's vineyard shall be, and how it shall be done. That this "Plan of God" for the restoration of the race should be placed before those that are prepared to receive it, as also before the probably much larger company that would accept it if properly

explained, I am fully convinced. But it is not so clear in my mind in what way this can be done with the best promise of success. "He that winneth souls is wise;" and this same wisdom is required in sowing the seed. Scarcely elsewhere than in the churches are there any prepared for such meat as this, and even there but few; and how even may they be best approached is a question.

I am inclined to start out to teach or in some way to proclaim this doctrine. My wife has been pondering this matter for several years, and is fully persuaded that it is the genuine teaching of Scripture. So she is ready to go out; but I am not so taught as to be confident of a qualification for the task.

In my ministry I professed and preached sanctification, but a little over two months ago I experienced an outpouring of the Spirit far surpassing anything I had previously known.

Then my wife, calling attention to the great consolation she had received from your writings, I began to see the harmony existing between your teachings and the Bible, and forthwith the wondrous wisdom and love of God became astonishingly grand and glorious beyond any former conception. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." Your brother in Christ,

—————.

[We pray that the Lord may abundantly bless you and use you as a channel of blessing to others. We kindly refer you to some hints on preparation in our August issue. – ED.]

New York, Oct. 27, '84.

C. T. RUSSELL: – Dear Brother: – You have been giving me considerable of your thought and time lately, and I appreciate this.

Your last letter is very strong but perfectly clear to me, and accepted, as I know it is according to the spirit of scripture teaching.

Rejoice! I have entered into a new consecration. I have been drawing nearer to this for nearly four years, and had given up time that according to human foresight belonged to my business, and on which my future prosperity very much depends. I have long realized that nothing in the world is of much value to me and have truly realized all worldly employment or position or name as unworthy to be compared with the joy to be revealed to us through our Lord.

I am deeply impressed. I am a thinking man and from past experience (in my advancement toward full consecration) know the trials and sorrows that will encompass me, and no one with whom I am connected or personally acquainted to give sympathy – My family opposed. But these things do not hinder me. I have been led to look only unto the Lord God Almighty for guidance and sympathy and from thence it is unfailing.

I have given up my business – that is, I am where I am, it seems to me, by the will of the Lord, and I see no possibility of change that I could advantageously make at present, and I am convinced that when a change is to be made the Lord will give me a conviction of mind and opportunity to that effect. I have given up my family – that is they, as well as everything, stand second to the will of God and to his love.

As far as I know and can judge of my own heart or purpose or choice I believe that I truly desire to give my whole time and daily life to the Master – wholly for his service.

The impression on my mind is that he will give me a greater knowledge of his truth and then open a way for me to use it yet

more fully. I really count my life as nothing if I may win Christ. My question or thought is not how to avoid trouble or pain, but "what is thy will O! God?"

I am yet lacking in many things, but the Lord will make me better and better acquainted with his truth and his will. It takes all my faith to keep me, but there is no wavering. I press forward.

Yours in fellowship and service,

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DESCRIPTION OF JESUS.

The following epistle it is claimed was taken by Napoleon from the records of Rome, when he deprived that city of so many valuable manuscripts. It purports to have been written at the time and on the spot where Jesus commenced his ministry, by Publius Lentelus, governor of Judea, to the senate at Rome – Caesar, Emperor. It was the custom in those days for the governor to write home any event of importance transpiring during his term of office.

"Conscript Fathers: – There appeared, in these our days, a man named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and, of the Gentiles, is accepted as a prophet of great truth; but his own disciples call him the son of God. He hath raised the dead, and cured all manner of diseases. He is a man of stature somewhat tall and comely; with a very ruddy countenance, such as the beholder may both love and fear. His hair is of the color of the filbert when fully ripe, plain to his ear, whence downward, it is of more oriental color, curling and waving on his shoulders. In the middle of his head there is a seam of long hair, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead is plain and delicate; his face, without spot or wrinkle, beautiful, with a comely red; his nose and mouth are exactly

formed; his beard is the color of his hair, and thick; not of any length, but forked. In reproof he is terrible; in admonishing courteous; in speaking, very modest and wise; in proportion of body, well shaped. None have seen him laugh, many have seen him weep. A man for his surpassing beauty excelling the children of men."

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The following poem is from a Bible standpoint, beautifully expressive of the prospects of the [\[R696 : page 3\]](#)

GROANING CREATION.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

"Across the sea I heard the groan
Of nations in the intervals
Of wind and wave. Their blood and bones
Cried out in torture, crushed by thrones,
And sucked by priestly cannibals.

I dreamed of freedom slowly gained
By martyr meekness, patience, faith,
And lo! an athlete grimly stained,
With corded muscles battle-strained
Shouting it from the fields of death.

I turn me, awe-struck, from the sight
Among the clamoring thousands mute.
I only know that God is right,
And that the children of the light
Shall tread the darkness under foot.

I know the pent fire heaves its crust,

That sultry skies the bolt will form
To smite them clear; that Nature must
The balance of her powers adjust,
Though with the earthquake and the storm.

God reigns, and let the earth rejoice!
I bow before His sterner plan.
Dumb are the organs of my choice;
He speaks in battle's stormy voice,
His praise is in the wrath of man.

Yet, surely as He lives, the day
Of peace He promised shall be ours,
To fold the flags of war, and lay
Its sword and spear to rust away,
And sow its ghastly fields with flowers."
