

## VIEWES FROM THE TOWER.

RECENTLY, during the session of the one hundred and ninth conference of the M.E. church of Philadelphia, the delegates to the Laymen's Electoral Conference gathered and discussed denominational interests. It is described as a "breezy" session in which *equal* representation with the preachers in the general conferences was warmly advocated. Of this session the *Philadelphia Press* says:

"To-day's meeting of the laymen of Philadelphia was no exception to the rule. It not only adopted strong resolutions memorializing the general conference to grant equal representations, but also gave positive instructions to the lay delegates that were elected to attend the coming session of the conference to endeavor to secure constitutional changes to largely restrict the governing powers of the preachers and leave them shorn of much of the official authority they now possess. In fact, the preachers were 'handled without gloves,' and the declarations for enlargement of the authority of laymen in the government of the church were voiced with unusual vigor and unanimity. As was expected, the conference declared in favor of equal lay representation for women."

We clip the following from the *Pittsburg Post*: –

"Baltimore, April 6. – Rev. Dr. John Lanahan sprung a sensation in the Methodist preacher's meeting this morning when he announced that in a few days he will publish in a permanent form the 'Era of Frauds' in the Methodist Book concern at New York, of which he was at one time an agent. He stated that the publication is made necessary by the repeated denials of the frauds by persons in official positions.

"After the astonishment created by Dr. Lanahan's reiterated charges against the New York concern had somewhat subsided, there was almost a unanimous sentiment expressed among the members of

the preacher's meeting that the general conference, to meet in Cleveland, O., next month, be compelled to give serious attention to the case. Dr. Lanahan will be a member of that body, and his standing in the church is such that his statements can no longer be ignored.

"Dr. Lanahan will, he says, furnish proof that for more than 12 years every financial report made to the church by the New York management was false, from \$20,000 to \$100,000; that said reports were false as to the amount of cash in the Shoe and Leather bank, where the official account was kept, because the senior agent kept large sums of the concern's moneys in his personal account and used it to speculate in stocks in Wall street; that large sums of money sent to the concern for church benevolence were used in the same way."

We understand that the above charges are acknowledged but that for over twenty years the business has been in competent and reliable hands.

"At a recent meeting of Methodist Episcopal preachers of Pittsburg it was argued that \$1,000 a year should be the minimum salary for them, and that it should be a lien on the church property. It was not the first time that such a suggestion had been made." – *Pittsburg News*.

The editor of the *News*, probably a worldling, comments upon this item, and gives an account of the labors and salary of a Methodist minister in these parts from August, 1833 to August, 1834, taken from his diary. Total receipts, \$79.44; total sermons, 90, the first being from the text, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work."

The difficulty seems to be that preaching is sought by too many for its honor, its leisure and its emoluments. Few to-day are preaching under the impulse which moved the Apostle Paul: that caused him to rejoice in the preaching of the gospel even when its only wages were slander and persecution, and he earned his living by tent-making. But the Apostle had a gospel to preach of which he was "not ashamed;" he

had "good tidings of great joy which shall [yet] be unto all people," to proclaim. Thank God [R1959 : page 76] for the opening of our eyes and ears and mouths to this blessed message – the light of the goodness of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. – 2 Cor. 4:4.

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"The unanimity of the pulpit in New York in the desirability of peace has brought the clergy of all denominations together, and greatly accelerated the movement in favor of church union. To employ the picturesque phrases of Bishop Potter, the very church steeples appear to embrace each other. Although the movement for church union has all along appeared very chimerical to the conservative clergy, recent events seem to indicate a very near approach to it. Bishop Potter is the most sanguine in his expectations, and is working very hard to bring it about." – *Exchange*.

The announcement is also made that there will be a meeting of prominent ministers in Pittsburg shortly, to consider what obstacles are in the way of a reunion of Protestants and Roman Catholics.

We are inclined to think that Jesuits are behind these movements, all of which are of direct advantage to Romanism. Every one of good judgment, who is informed on the subject, knows that Rome will make no concessions; that all the surrender must be by Protestants. That Romanists are profiting by the situation is evident: missions for Protestants are being held in all large cities, at which questions relating to the differences between Romanism and Protestantism are entertained, and answered by priests of keen sagacity, who of course endeavor to represent Papacy as the mother of every good and desirable thing, and not the mother of harlots [systems] and all the abominations of Christendom.

But after all it makes little difference to the predominating "tares" whether they are Protestant tares or Romanist tares. Perhaps indeed the radical blindness of their leaders may help some of the "wheat" class

yet in Babylon [R1960 : page 76] to realize the situation, and thus hasten their separation, as those loyal to God. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues!" – Rev. 18:4.

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The "Church of England Almanack" reports eight associations amongst Church of England clergymen, favoring Ritualism and "restoration of *visible* communion" between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. One of these societies, the "English Church Union," has a membership of seven bishops and 4,255 ministers.

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*L'Independence Belge* says that in time of peace Russia has a standing army of 858,000 men; next comes Germany with 580,000 and then France with 512,000 men. In case of war Russia and France could put in the field 9,700,000 men, against the 7,700,000 soldiers of the three countries forming the triple alliance – Germany, Austria and Italy. In time of peace the maintenance of the standing armies of the above powers costs \$1,000,000,000 annually.

What a record! What a satire on the terms "Christian nations" and "Christendom!" How evidently Satan is still the "prince" of "this present evil world!" No wonder that the whole creation groans and travails in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. No wonder that the sons also groan and pray, "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

It will not be long until these millions are enlightened to the extent that they will refuse to serve the ambitions of lords, priestcraft and superstition, who rule them by the grace of Satan. But they will not get free until they realize that the great taskmaster is Sin who rules them through their depraved dispositions, their selfish and degrading

appetites. Next they must learn of and accept the great Savior who has already redeemed them, and who waits to make them free indeed.

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It appears that in modern rapid-firing guns the size of the bullets has been reduced to facilitate transportation, etc.; but a difficulty has been encountered: the smaller bullet does not sufficiently mangle the poor soldiers who are struck by them. Fewer lives are lost, and the wounded recover more rapidly, and are soon ready to be shot at again. This it seems is to be rectified, according to the following, from the *New York Sun*: –

"A perforated bullet for which great destructive power is claimed has just been finished by an inventor at Anderson, Ind. The bullet has a hole, one-eighth of an inch in diameter bored from the front end almost through its entire length. This air chamber, the inventor says, gathers air under strong pressure, caused by the rapid flight of the bullet, and the air expanding, when the bullet finds its mark, causes an explosion of great destructive force. Inch boards, which would be pierced by an ordinary solid bullet of the same calibre, are splintered and torn with great violence by the perforated bullet. Cans filled with water and sealed were simply pierced by an ordinary bullet, but were blown into fragments when struck by the new projectile. The usual effect, witnesses say, is for the bullet to tear in the object hit a hole from seven to ten times the size of the bullet."

Alas! "man's inhumanity to man" seems to know no limit. When the great Prince of Peace shall have inaugurated his Kingdom and shall have opened the now blinded eyes of the world, with what feelings of revulsion and horror will men look back upon the present "reign" of Sin and Death! What feelings of sympathy and shame for the terrible degradation of the race should be awakened in every heart in which the love of Christ is shed abroad. True views, God's view, the view of the angels and the view of the saints on such matters should be impressed upon those with whom we come in contact, and especially upon our

children. Let them know the truth – that cruelty is a shame, a disgrace, as well as a sin, even when practised on the lower creatures, but especially toward fellow beings made in God's image.

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There are two great levers, Love and Selfishness. The former is the right, the divine power. It, with justice, moves the sceptre of heaven, and is shortly to be the power that will rule the world. It should therefore be recognized [R1960 : page 77] and cultivated in the hearts and lives, the thoughts and words and deeds of all who have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

Selfishness, greed, is the Sin-power now in control of the world through depravity. It has led and is still leading to every evil thing. The Apostle James' comment (James 4:2) is endorsed by a *New York Tribune* editorial as follows: –

"Nations and individuals, the world over, as almost never before, are hastening to become rich. They are doing this in many ways, but most notably by the simple process of digging precious metals from the earth. Manufactures, trade, commerce, all are too slow.

"Almost every war or threat of war to-day may be directly traced to this greed for gold and silver, just as could the savage freebooting of three hundred years ago. The troubles in the Transvaal are due to the gold fever on the Rand. That it is that makes Great Britain so resolute to maintain her suzerainty over the Republic, and that makes Germany so desirous of extending her own influence over it. The same cause led to the occupation of Mashonaland and to the Matabele war. It was not because Lobengula was a monster of savagery that he was deposed: no, but because his kingdom was a part of ancient Ophir. Prempeh of Coomassie made human sacrifices, it is true; but his kingdom was known to contain much gold, and hence the Ashantee war.

"It was in expectation of finding gold in Madagascar that the French decreed the conquest of that island. For the same cause Japan wrested Formosa from China, and Brazil and France are now involved in a boundary dispute. Reports of mines of gold and gems led England to the partitioning of Siam, and are now making Russia and Japan confront each other over Corea. It is the mineral wealth of the Essequibo and Orinoco basins that makes the Venezuela boundary question most acute and most difficult to settle. It is the gold mines of the Yukon and of the Coast Range that have brought the Alaska boundary question to its present state, and prompted the vast extension of Canadian claims. And the gold finds, or expected finds, of British Columbia, of Australia and of Colorado and Washington are stirring three great English-speaking nations to the heart."

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In India there are no fewer than 65 Protestant missionary societies; *viz.*, 16 Presbyterian, with 149 laborers; 13 Baptist, with 129; 9 Church of England, with 203; 7 Lutherans, with 125; 4 Methodist, with 110; 2 Congregationalist, with 76; 1 Unitas Fratrum and 1 Quaker, with 16; 7 Independent, 5 Women's associations. In addition to 857 ordained missionaries there are 711 ordained European lay helpers, 114 European and semi-European lady assistants, teachers, etc., and 3,491 native lay preachers. The number of communicants is 182,722, an increase of 70,000 in the last decade.

Is it strange that when viewing all the inconsistencies of these varying sects, a Hindoo Brahmin should say: "You Christians are not as good as your Book! If you were as good as your Book, you would convert India to Christ in five years?" – *The Armory*.

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"Probably one of the strangest facts in the history of language," says a recent writer, "is the resurrection of the Hebrew to life and activity as the language of a people and country, after its death,

which occurred 2,250 years ago. The Jews who returned from the exile were a small people, and they were compelled to learn and employ the Aramaic, the language of the country, so that the Hebrew was disused, excepting by the priests, as the Latin now is by the Catholics. But the language was preserved in the Old Testament Scriptures, and it was taught that the Scriptures might be understood, and this has been continued to the present day. Now the Jews are returning to Palestine from Russia, Poland, Germany, Italy, Spain and other countries, and cannot understand each other in these divers languages, but they *all understand the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and employ it*, so that Hebrew is again *the language of the common people*, and is heard in the marts of trade and in common use. The Hebrews of Palestine employ it exclusively in their families, so that it has become again the mother-tongue. In Jerusalem it died, and in the same city after so many centuries it has come to life again. As was to be expected, the pronunciation varies, but this is corrected in accordance with the Arabic and other Semitic dialects. There is something marvelous in this restoration of, not only the people, but the language, which they had practically lost five hundred years *before* their dispersion." – *The Armory*.

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Rev. A. T. Pierson, one of the speakers at the Prophetic Conference held in Allegheny in December last, was immersed on Feb. 1, by Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, a Baptist minister in England. According to Baptist usage (there is no Baptist law on any subject; for Baptists deny being a denominational organization) his action made Mr. Pierson a member of the Baptist church. But he was already a member of the Presbyterian denomination, and a member of the Philadelphia Presbytery to which he addressed a [R1961 : page 77] letter, in which, after stating the fact of his immersion, he said: –

"This act was *not meant by me as in any sense a change of denomination*, but a simple act of obedience to what seems to me a clear teaching of the New Testament. For some years the basis of infant



baptism has seemed to me too slender, scripturally, and its perversion too common and too dangerous, practically, to justify my longer adherence to the practice. And the obvious example of believers' baptism seems to be too conspicuous in the New Testament to leave in my mind a reasonable question that it was my privilege thus to confess Christ, and typically submit myself to burial with him."

Well done! Obedience to conscience is always a safe course. True, we regret the clinging to denominationalism, shown in the preference manifested for the tighter bondage of Presbyterianism, rather than the looser bondage of Baptist Associations; but Dr. P. is progressing, not retrograding. By and by, let us hope, he will be free indeed, from all human control. Let us hope, too, that he may yet come to see the true import of immersion, which few even of our Baptist friends see, of which the water immersion is only the outward symbol. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord."

The Philadelphia Presbytery was greatly agitated upon receipt of this letter. The fact that Dr. Pierson believed in the second coming of Christ, and took part in the Prophetic [R1961 : page 78] Conference, had already marked him as a semi-heretic, even though he avoided the despised Nazarenes of ZION'S WATCH TOWER and MILLENNIAL DAWN, and avoided teaching that our Lord's coming is for "the restitution of all things" (Acts 3:20,21) – the only "good tidings of great joy, which *shall be* unto ALL PEOPLE."

The Presbytery had hoped that Dr. P. would take himself away into some other denomination, and at his request had granted him a Letter of Recommendation to the Congregationalists; for they did not like to "cast him out" simply because he believed the Lord's words, "*I will come again* and receive you unto myself," a truth so fully corroborated by all the Apostolic writings. To have done so would have advertised the second coming, and some of the common people might have been awakened to the Scriptural prominence of this teaching.

But now, in being immersed, and in claiming that neither he nor others baptized in infancy were "believers," Dr. Pierson was casting discredit upon them all, implying that none of them had been baptized according to the Scriptures. If belief in the Second Coming was bad, this was worse; now he was a heretic, sure enough. The Presbytery promptly withdrew its Letter of Commendation to the Congregationalists, and after some dispute as to whether to "**drop**" him from membership, etc., or what to do, it was decided to **request** his withdrawal.

In the discussion of the subject one of the ministers, Dr. Hoyt, said, – "We [Presbyterians, respecting infant baptism] rest on the Abrahamic covenant confirmed in Christ. To deny that fundamental principle in the Presbyterian Church, and then to hold a position in its ministry is utterly inconsistent. We are in a dilemma, and don't know how to get out of this labyrinth in which Dr. Pierson has entangled us."

As with the doctrine of election, our Presbyterian friends have a mixture of truth with error, so on this subject of the justified state of the children of believers. True, the children of believers are subjects of divine grace until they come to years of personal responsibility (1 Cor. 7:14); but infant sprinkling has nothing whatever to do with this favor. Our Presbyterian friends have assumed, but without the slightest warrant, that **baptism** now takes the place of **circumcision** appointed for the seed of Abraham; and that, as infants were circumcised, so infants **therefore** should be baptized, even though not believers. But baptism and circumcision do not represent the same thing at all: if they do represent the same grace, only males should be baptized; for only males were circumcised.

We would like to see the truth on the subject of baptism very thoroughly and widely proclaimed. It would be a great blessing to all true Christians, not excepting "Baptists" and "Disciples."

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