

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

DANGER OF THE "UTTER COLLAPSE" OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

THE Missionary Review of the World has been edited by Rev. A. T. Pierson, D.D., for ten years. Its editor is well posted in everything pertaining to missions, has written a number of books and pamphlets and delivered hundreds of addresses on this subject. Its opinions therefore are entitled to the greatest respect. In its January issue it declares: –

"Without claiming any undue capacity for observation, sagacity in discernment, or accuracy in judgment and induction, the calm conclusion reached after thirty years of study of this theme and of active participation in the actual machinery of missionary enterprise, is, that at no time during the half-century now closing have *missions to the heathen been at greater peril of utter collapse!* Wide doors are open, immense fields invite, some soil calls for the sower, while harvests demand the reaper; we never knew so well how much territory there is to be possessed, and how deep is the need of mankind; never had the church such opportunities and facilities, never such large numbers and wealth at her disposal; and yet, with doors open wider than ever, and candidates offering in unprecedented numbers, the giving of the people of God is so utterly inadequate and disgracefully disproportionate, that where every divine sign of the times is a call for rapid advance and expansion, our drums beat a retreat, and our boards loudly call for retrenchment!

"And – what is to our view most fraught with risk – there is a growing apathy about the whole question of the world's evangelization, which seems to argue a decay at the very root of missionary enterprise. The causes for this we can not for ourselves either doubt or deny. On one hand there is *laxity of doctrine*, which,

at least, leads disciples to indulge a vague 'eternal hope,' like Dean Farrar, that the heathen are not really lost without Christ: and on the other hand, there is a *laxity in practice*, which leads to a practical recognition of all religions as belonging to a universal brotherhood of faiths, and to the fellowship of their representatives as entitled to our 'Christian charity,' forgetful of the famous proverb quoted by Dr. John Ryland to Robert Hall, that 'charity is an angel while she rejoiceth in the truth, but a harlot when she rejoiceth in iniquity,' embracing those whom she should rather pity and weep over."

The following is given by the same journal as a survey of the condition of the nominal church which has led, and is leading, to this threatened "utter collapse." It declares the cause to be the decline of "vital godliness." It says: –

"Look at the church pervaded by sectarianism, sacramentalism, ritualism and Romanism, and an even more fatal secularism. Behold the awful lack of gospel preaching, the reckless extravagance that reigns and practical denial of stewardship, the low level of piety, the prevalence of prayerlessness and the encroachment of virtual infidelity. See the church confronting the world with its more than thousand million unconverted souls, scattered over a wide unevangelized territory, with its unoccupied and neglected fields continental in breath; yet unable to grapple with the awful problems of society, conscious of a widening gap or gulf between itself and the world, yet unable to bridge the gulf, while the intemperance, licentiousness, and anarchy of society takes on a more and more revolutionary aspect."

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It was necessary that the gospel should be preached in all the world, to every nation, *for a witness*, before the end of this age should come. This work, we believe, has been accomplished. We should be glad indeed if as good a civilization as our own could be carried to the uttermost regions of earth, but the civilizing and social uplifting of the

world we clearly see from the Scriptures does not belong to this age, but to the next, [R2112 : page 64] the Millennial age. Those who are hoping for the conversion of the world along the lines of present missionary effort, or any effort possible under present conditions, are hoping against hope. Not only can they see such discouragements as are above pointed out by the *Missionary Herald*, a "danger of utter collapse" because of lessening of interest in civilized lands, but, on the other hand, they must look squarely in the face the fact that while their most sanguine and exaggerated estimates of this century's success with the heathen claims one million converts, the same period of time has witnessed a natural increase of those heathen peoples of over two hundred millions. Why cannot all true Christian hearts, which long for the blessing of their fellow creatures, see that there is something wrong with their expectations, which now after fifteen centuries are as far as ever from realization, so far as the complete conversion of the world is concerned? Why will they not turn to the Word of the Lord and there see with us that the divine purpose in this age is the election or selection of a Church, a "little flock," of which our Lord Jesus is the Head and of which all his fully consecrated and faithful ones are members? Why can they not see that this Church, through trials of faith and oppositions from the world, the flesh and the devil, and through much tribulation, is being prepared of the Lord to be "his Kingdom and priesthood," through which, clothed with divine power – glory, honor and immortality – God will be pleased shortly to bless all the families of the earth according to his original promise as made to father Abraham. – Gal. 3:16,29.

Those who have been blessed by the Lord with the light of present truth have no such cause of despondency as others; nor have they any lack for fields of work. The Chief Reaper sends us, as he did the disciples in the Jewish age, with the message of present truth – "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," – not to the wild savages of foreign lands, but to the fields "white already to harvest" – to those who have already heard the gospel, – to gather the "wheat" into his garner before

the "fire" of the great trouble shall come upon the "field" – the whole civilized world.

And wherever there are ripe grains of "wheat," there we believe the Lord is sending the sickle of truth. In our last issue we gave letters from some interested in present truth from the various quarters of the world, and we might have added to them others from South America, Africa and India. Wherever there are ripe grains of "wheat," thither we believe the Lord will send the separating present truth. It will be first of all a test as to loyalty to him, and worthiness to be gathered into his "garner," as one of his faithful ones; secondly, if the test of faithfulness be passed successfully, it will serve to bless and uplift and strengthen, and to prepare the true believer with an understanding of many things that were, many things that are, and much respecting the things that are yet to be, – that he may not walk on in darkness and stumble into the ditch of unbelief with the masses.

RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR AFFAIRS COMMINGLING.

The general tendency for religion and politics to draw together is illustrated by the recent decision of a New York supreme judge, denying a Jewish organization a certificate of incorporation because its annual meeting was fixed for Sunday. The journals of the larger religious denominations very generally approve the judge's decision, while the organs of the smaller denominations, and Hebrew papers, very generally, condemn the decision as unjust and an attempt to control by the power of the state questions that are purely religious. The smaller denominations very properly see that if the views of the majority are permitted to control in *any* religious matter, it will be an entering-wedge for almost absolute majority control in *all* religious matters and liberties. The *Jewish Messenger*, commenting on this decision, says: –

"It has served the purpose of again making the Jew appear as under proscription, and at the hands of a jurist who, both by birth and training, was supposed to be above such bigotry. One cannot but feel

ashamed that our age and city should witness such a revival of the blue laws. Perhaps Judge Pryor has been influenced by the recent opinion of the New York Presbytery as to the doubtful character of Jewish moral environment. Judge Pryor's ruling should not go unchallenged, and his violation of American civil and religious liberty merits a more effective rebuke than it has yet received."

THE ARBITRATION TREATY.

The U.S. Senate has not yet confirmed the Arbitration Treaty between the United States and Great Britain; but there is every probability that it will be approved with perhaps slight amendments. The measure is extremely popular both in Great Britain and here, and that with all classes. The disposition with many is to consider this the beginning of universal peace, with Reason as the arbiter instead of the Sword. The suggestion is freely made that it will not be long before all the nations of Europe will practically disarm. In this, and in connection with the hope for "union" amongst Protestant denominations, the worldly Church is looking for the realization of its ideal of the Millennium, when the whole world will be converted; not by the preaching of Christ, and him crucified, as the only name given under heaven or amongst men, but by *harmonizing* the Christian religion with the various religions of the world, saying, "There is some [R2113 : page 65] good in every religion, and the important things are civilization and prosperity, with some outward form of religion."

Alas! how far short all this would come of the grand hopes set before us in the gospel – even if it could be attained. If the whole world were as peaceful and as unarmed as are these United States, and if the whole world had a great civilization and prosperity as have these United States, and if the whole world had as much formalistic and true religion as have these United States; alas, how far we would still be from the blessed condition for which our Master taught us to hope and to pray, when he said, after this manner pray ye – "Our Father which

art in heaven....Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

The following from the *Jewish Exponent* shows that the Hebrews are looking at the matter in a very proper light: – "THE BEGINNING OF INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION."

"And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord's house shall be firmly established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and unto it shall flow all the nations. And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths....And he will judge among the nations and decide for many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruningknives; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall not learn war any more'

"This prophecy of Isaiah and Micah dates at least as far back as the eighth century before the Christian era. At the end of the nineteenth century of the Christian era it begins to find actual realization in the affairs of two great nations.

"In presenting the treaty of arbitration between the United States and England to the Senate of the United States, President Cleveland intimates that the result reached may not meet the views of the advocates of immediate, unlimited and irrevocable arbitration of all international controversies."

How far from such an ideal the present measure is may be judged from those of its provisions which limit its duration to five years, and make it include but a limited class of subjects within its scope. Compare this with Isaiah's prophecy of universal and perpetual arbitration, disarmament and peace, under the guidance of divine justice and law, and then judge how far off yet are those "last days" of which the prophets speak. Over two thousand six hundred years have

elapsed, and this is all that the most enlightened and most closely affiliated of nations are as yet prepared for.

"Nevertheless, the President declares that this treaty cannot fail to be everywhere recognized as making a long step in the right direction, and will mark the beginning of a new epoch in civilization. If this be true, Israel's prophetic writings can hardly be considered obsolete. On the contrary, they promise to attain a new and increased importance from the fact that the policies they prescribe are now beginning to be practically carried out among the nations. As in many other fundamental principles, a remarkable unanimity is here seen between the teachings of Israel's faith and the highest ideals of the American people."

"As it was in the days of Noah," men do not realize that we are now in the last days of this "present evil world [order]." The new dispensation is coming so differently from what they expect. Alas! how the bright hopes of this nineteenth century must shortly be dashed to pieces. What chagrin there will be as, one after another, present institutions shall be drawn into the vortex of the great time of trouble which is near at hand and hasteth greatly. The Lord has not only declared through the prophets that the sword shall be beaten into plowshares and the nations learn war no more, but he has also declared through the same channels that this blessed time shall be introduced by a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation. And of that time of trouble it is declared that then many shall beat their ploughshares and pruninghooks into spears, and the whole world be involved in the great battle. The battle will eventuate in the utter prostration of the world in the zenith of its power and glory. But, praise God, those days of trouble will not be permitted to continue, else as our Lord declared, "there would no flesh be saved." For the sake of the elect – because of Christ, the elect Head, and the Church, his elect body, and the acceptableness of the sin-offering, – the Kingdom of God shall be established under the whole heavens, to lift up and bless

the groaning creation, and to grant eternal life and joy to all who will accept them under the conditions of the New Covenant.

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Meantime even the blind can see that the common hopes of peace are not built upon a change of the controlling principles of human hearts from selfishness to love. For instance, note the fact that the French government appointed M. de Kerjegn to examine into and report upon the French Naval equipment as compared with that of Great Britain. He has filed his report, which, after pointing out the great superiority of the British Navy, urges a large increase of the French navy, and concludes thus: "The aim of every patriotic Minister of Marine ought to be to push on to the possession of a fleet capable of *ruining* the commercial supremacy of England at a given moment." Germany also is increasing her naval armament, so are the United States, Japan and Russia, while Great Britain feels [R2113 : page 66] bound to keep her fleet ahead of all, to prevent the ruination of her commercial supremacy. Evidently the lion and the lamb are not yet ready to lie down together in peace; – the lion must first get a new disposition.

Lord F. von Luttwitz, writing recently in a Berlin journal, commenting on the determination of the German government to greatly increase its navy, says: –

"A second partitioning of the world is at hand. We need only remember the dissolution of Turkey and the opening of China in order to realize what great opportunities for colonial enterprise [commercial warfare] still exist. Nor should the restless condition of some of the South American republics be forgotten, for these to many offer future advantages. But we will miss our chance again unless we have a fleet. We must become so strong at sea that nations which can afford to snap their fingers at our army cannot afford to ignore us in partitioning the world. We must have a navy, and we must not lose time in getting it. Our alliances are of no value in this matter. We cannot afford to go to

war for the sake of some miserable little piece of land far from us, yet we will have to do so if we have no navy. It may be assumed that the next partitioning of colonies will be eminently peaceful. But unless we have a navy powerful enough to take possession of our share and to defend it, the maritime powers will not even consider us as competitor, and we will go out empty."

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On the other side of the question a new factor is discovered. The soldiers of Europe are beginning to think, and are not so anxious as they once were to give up their lives at the behest of kings and princes. A recent dispatch from Brussels, which will be read with interest, is as follows: –

"The disaffection in the Belgian army, founded on the Socialist propaganda against the use of armed force, appears to be making headway. The *Soir* announces the discovery of organized Socialist clubs in barracks, whose members, while submitting to the rules of the service, are pledged to refuse active service should occasion arise.

"Inquiry in one large center has already revealed the existence of a club of this description, and seventeen non-commissioned officers have been suspended."

THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH UNITY.

Under this caption the *Christian Statesman* says: –

"What we maintain is no mere speculative theory, away up in the ecclesiastical clouds, and impossible of realization in this matter-of-fact world. On the contrary, it is the simple, practical, Scriptural rule by which the Church of Christ, according to her divinely ordained nature, is under obligation to order her earthly life...We believe that the church cannot effectively meet concentrating hostility in her present divided condition, with her separate denominations often

failing to cooperate and not infrequently working at cross purposes. We further believe that she will be *compelled in the near future* to search for the true solution of the problem of her imperatively needed organic unity. We are constrained, therefore, to point out what we are fully convinced is the remedy that must soon be applied for the healing of her sectarian divisions....The church, like the state, is a social being made up of individual members. *Each of these collective beings, by divine ordainment, is clothed with authority in its appropriate sphere of action. And in each of these collective or social beings are found subjects of authority. Christ is the Sovereign Lord and King over both church and state. His Word, given in the sacred Scriptures, contains supreme law for each of these social bodies in its distinct sphere.*

"Due regard in the state for the law of Christ *secures for it the balance of political authority* and the liberties of the citizen, and thus the establishment and preservation of national organic unity. And in like manner due respect for the law of Christ will secure to the church and all her individual members the balance of ecclesiastical liberty and law and consequent enduring [R2114 : page 66] organic unity. The admitted differences between the sphere and functions of the church on the one hand and the sphere and functions of the state on the other hand will not affect this analogy. Ecclesiastical authority wields no material sword. *Its penalties are spiritual.*"

It is seldom that we find the advocates of Church Federation so outspoken as this; but we admire honesty and frankness even in a bad cause; – and as our readers well know we esteem the movement for the proposed organic union of the churches and then their cooperative union with the state a very bad cause; – one fraught with danger to the liberties of all classes – but foretold in the Scriptures as associated with the great trouble with which the social and ecclesiastical order of this Gospel age will come to an abrupt end.

We deny every proposition of the quotation. (1) We deny that the church (collectively) is "*clothed with authority.*" On the contrary, we hold that the individual Christian is free from authority except that of the head of the true Church – Christ. His fellows may advise with him or may withdraw from his fellowship, but they have no "authority" over him according to the Scriptures. Since there are none "clothed with authority," there can be no "subjects of authority." The object of Satan, and unwittingly of those whom he deceives, has ever been to deprive the individual Christian of the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, and under one pretext or another to sink the individual in the mass, under human heads and authorities. Papacy is a woeful illustration of Satan's successes in this direction in the early centuries of this age; and the Protestantism of the sixteenth century, which never entirely rid itself of that influence, is now being drawn into the same snare.

(2) It is not true, as stated, that God's Word given in "the sacred Scriptures contains supreme law for each of these bodies." On the contrary, the Lord's commands and counsels and promises were first to the [R2114 : page 67] little nation of Israel only, and secondly to the peculiar people, royal priesthood and holy nation – the Church called out of the world and begotten of a new spirit through that Word. And the Lord's words to the Church are not as an organization but as individuals only. "If *any man* [individually] will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. He that hath an ear let him [individually] hear."

So far from recognizing the state, the nations, and giving them laws, the Lord's Word declares that they are all "kingdoms of this world" and under "the Prince of this world" – Satan. And through the prophet he has pictured these Gentile governments or states as ferocious beasts, and told of their utter destruction at the time of the establishment of his Kingdom for which he taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom *come!*"

(3) It is not true that "Due regard in the state for the law of Christ *secures for it* the balance of political authority." Quite to the contrary, the balance in politics often goes to the side of the corrupt and the saloon element. The history of the various so-called Christian States of Europe, written in blood, shows that none of them have ever been controlled by the laws of Christ, but all of them per force on contrary lines. Christ gave no national laws because his kingdom is not of this world. He rules individually each citizen of *his* heavenly kingdom.

(4) The claim that such an *organized and dominating* Ecclesiastical Authority would need no sword but would merely execute spiritual penalties is delusive. This was Papacy's claim in the zenith of her power. For instance, she damned the Huguenots as "heretics," told how God would torment them in the future, and declared that "heretics" had no rights which governments or people were bound to respect, and promised eternal rewards to all who would oppose them. And when the French king, thus incited, entrapped and massacred them Papacy struck medals to his honor and made him a saint. Thus *spiritual penalties and rewards* was interpreted not very long ago. We do not presume that Protestant authority would at once become so arrogant, but in some form all dissenters would be considered "heretics" or "anarchists," and persecuted to the extent that public sentiment would sanction.

THE REAL IMPORT OF MODERN CRITICISM.

The editor of the New York *Sun* has devoted considerable space to the discussion of modern criticism of the Scriptures, as recently publicly voiced by Rev. Lyman Abbott. The editor shows himself as ever to be a logician. Of course, his editorials have aroused opposition from many who seek to defend this modern infidelity. Referring to these defenders, the *Sun* of Feb. 9, says: —

"They all miss the point, which is that if there is not supernatural authority for Christianity it becomes simply a system of moral

philosophy, regarding whose soundness disagreement is justifiable and inevitable. If it is not believed in as coming from God by supernatural revelation, but is treated as simply human in its origin, it will be criticized on its merits alone, as the Jews, for instance, criticize it, and as it was criticized by the Romans. The Romans opposed the Christian system and tried to destroy it as essentially inimical to the state and the established social order. They viewed the Christians and dealt with them as we now regard and treat Anarchists. If, then, the supernatural origin and character of Jesus are denied, his teachings will be examined in a light radically different from that in which their discussion has proceeded hitherto. They will cease to be the foundation of a religion imposing an obligation of belief as essential to obedience to God, and become debatable propositions made by a human teacher of philosophy, and therefore properly and necessarily examinable to determine their intrinsic value....

"It is this destruction in which Dr. Abbott and his defenders are now engaged. If the Biblical story of Jonah and the whale is to be regarded as purely a parable, an allegory, whose actual occurrence was impossible and therefore unbelievable, Christianity must descend from its exaltation as a religion of divine authority, and drop to the level of a system of religious philosophy or speculation, of human authorship. If the story of Jonah is merely allegorical, a fable, every other Biblical tale, from the creation of Adam and Eve up to the supernatural birth and resurrection of Jesus, is likewise allegorical, for they conflict equally with the possibilities under merely natural law. In other words, the arguments of Dr. Abbott and his defenders shatter the whole fabric of religion built by faith, and put the Scriptural reports of supernatural occurrences in the same category with the tales of mythology. This is a conclusion which the theologians of the school of Dr. Abbott try to avoid, with a timidity which may be natural in view of their ecclesiastical relations, for it takes away the reason for their existence....

"Our correspondents who discuss the case of Dr. Abbott, have no conception of the tremendous revolution in sentiment of which it is a symptom. All the infidelity of past periods has been of no consequence as compared with the present infidelity, of which, for the moment, he has made himself an example. It is an infidelity which strikes at the supernatural basis upon which Christianity rests, and therefore relegates the religion of Christendom to the position of mere mythology and fallible human philosophy."

We freely endorse the editor's arguments and his definition of modern criticism as the rankest infidelity.

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The disposition of many to fail to discriminate on such subjects is witnessed by the fact that Dr. Buckley, of the New York *Christian Advocate* is rated as an utter repudiator of the Bible, worse than Dr. Abbott, – simply because he declared his disbelief that every word, punctuation and fly-speck of our English *translation* of the Bible is inspired. Nobody of sense could dispute [R2114 : page 68] his proposition. It is the *original* Scriptures that we hold were inspired; not the translations of it. Vastly different is Doctor Buckley's position from that of Doctor Abbott.

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The start of modern criticism or "higher criticism" may be said to have been in the theory of Evolution – which is diametrically opposed to the Bible theory of the creation of man in God's likeness, his *fall* into sin, imperfection and death, his redemption by a ransom and the restitution to come.

"But according to the following clipping from the New York *Tribune*, the most intelligent Christians are already perverts from the Bible faith to the protoplasm and monkey doctrine of

Evolution, and hence to its associated doctrines known as "higher criticism." It says: –

"To-day, though evolution is not a demonstrated truth, and perhaps never will be, it is practically accepted by most intelligent Christians as the best explanation of life....

"Quite as terrible at first seemed the blow which evolution aimed at the literal interpretation of the Scriptures. Most of those who first read *The Origin of Species* believed literally in the creation stories in Genesis; and, of course, any theory that made such a belief impossible must have seemed a denial of God's Word. That view of the matter has been abandoned long ago by Christians....Thirty-six years ago it was Darwin against the whole Christian world. To-day Darwin lies among Christian England's honored dead in Westminster Abbey, and the man who publicly protests against elevating to the chair of St. Augustine a clergyman who holds the views of Darwin is contemptuously brushed aside as a crank."

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The man referred to, who was treated as a "crank," is the clergyman mentioned in our issue of January 15, [R2115 : page 68] who protested against the enthronement of Dr. Temple as Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of all England, because as an Evolutionist he was necessarily lacking in all the fundamentals of Christianity. Now hear Brother Moody, the Evangelist. Before a large audience in Carnegie Hall, New York City, he said: –

"Nineteen hundred years have rolled away since Christ found no place on earth to lay his head. His gospel is now preached in all parts of the world, but is it not a fact that even now there is not room on earth for the Son of God, and no nation wants him?"

"Does America want him? It is a Christian nation. England claims to be the most Christian nation, but if a man stood up in Parliament to-

morrow to advocate – could it be possible – that Christ should come in person to rule England, he would be hooted down. France, Germany, Italy and Spain are Christian nations. Is there room for him in either?

"Has not Christianity settled down to be a mere lifeless form? Suppose it were possible to petition Christ to return to earth to rule us. How many of the people of New York would sign the petition? Would business men sign it? They would have to change their methods first. Would stock-brokers sign it? It would smash up their business pretty quick. Would saloon-keepers sign it? They would find their occupation gone should they do so.

"I'll bring the question closer home to you. How about the churches? Do they want him? Pride and form and dignity in the church would have to step down.

"But we can bring the question even closer to us. How many ladies here would vote to have him come? I think but few hands would be raised should the vote be taken this afternoon. Thank God, there are a few who have stepped out of the world who would welcome him!"
