

VIEWES FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

CZAR NICHOLAS, Emperor of Russia, has startled the world with a proposition looking toward universal peace – "a durable peace" – by the disarmament of the larger proportion of the armies of Europe. He asks a conference of representative men of all nations to consider the subject; and all the leading nations, including the United States, have responded favorably, promising to send delegates to the Peace Conference. The London *Chronicle* considers the Czar's note the most striking document of the century, and the London *Telegraph* says, "Rarely, if ever, was there a more important document in the history of the world." *The Press* (New York) says, "The document is epochal....The millennium of European disarmament is brought within the range of profitable discussion." *The Public Ledger* (Philadelphia) says, "It may not lead at once to a national disarmament and an agreement to refer all matters in dispute to arbitration, but it will *pave the way* for this desirable result." *The Times* (New York) says, "It may be the beginning of the most momentous and beneficent movement of modern history, indeed of all history."

Among other reasons prompting to the humane course suggested, the Czar calls attention to the fact that present vast armaments were prompted by a desire for peace, but have proved ineffectual and instead are increasing financial burdens. He says: –

"All these efforts have not yet been able to bring about the beneficent result desired – pacification. The financial charges following the upward march strike at the very root of public prosperity. The intellectual and physical strength of the nations' labor and capital are mostly diverted from their natural application and are unproductively consumed. Hundreds of millions are devoted to acquiring terrible engines of destruction, which, tho to-day regarded as the last work of science, are destined to-morrow to lose all their

value in consequence of some fresh discovery in the same field. National culture, economic progress and the production of wealth are either paralyzed or checked in development.

"The economic crisis due in great part to the system of armaments *a l'outrance*, and the continual danger which lies in this massing of war material, are transforming the armed peace of our day into a crushing burden [R2361 : page 283] which the people have more and more difficulty in bearing.

"It appears evident that if this state of things were to be prolonged it would inevitably lead to the very cataclysm it is desired to avert, and the horrors whereof make every thinking being shudder in advance.

"To put an end to these incessant armaments and to seek the means of warding off the calamities which are threatening the whole world – such is the supreme duty imposed upon all states.

"This conference will be, by the help of God, a happy presage for the century which is about to open. It would converge into one powerful focus the efforts of all states sincerely seeking to make the great conception of universal peace triumph."

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Right glad would we be to hope just such a universal peace and maintenance of the present order of things, "the present evil world," if we had no better hope, no better prospect. But as Watchers we have been "taught of God" through his Word to expect no permanent peace from even the best intentioned monarchs and governments during these "times of the Gentiles." (Dan. 2:34,35,44,45; 7:4-13,14,27; Luke 21:24.) Not until Immanuel shall, in Jehovah's appointed times and seasons, take his great power and reign and bind Satan, "the prince of this world," who now "worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience," can we look for the Golden Age of prophecy. Then

humbled under the mighty hand of God, the world will "seek peace and ensue it." [R2361 : page 284]

But, notwithstanding the welcome given the Czar's suggestion, few on sober second thought see reasons to hope for practical results: it is accepted rather as a benevolent *wish* rather than even the Czar's *hope*. Our own expectation is that such a disarmament as is proposed will come within about six years: whether or not it will be preceded by a great general European war, only the Lord knows, but we incline to think it will not. We expect such a disarmament surely within the next ten years for several reasons: –

(1) Because within that time commercial competition will make merchandise of all kinds very cheap, and debts, interest charges and government expenses proportionately the more burdensome. To reduce the burden upon the masses it will by that time be necessary to force it disproportionately upon the wealthy, or else reduce the burden; and disarmament will probably result.

(2) Humanity will delude itself with the thought that such disarmament is the prelude to the Millennium: and so it will be, but in an opposite sense from what they expect. "The *wisdom* of their wise men shall perish and the understanding of their prudent men shall not be manifested (Isa. 29:14); and when thus they shall be disarming, saying, Peace and Safety! they will be very close to the great cataclysm of trouble, and doing the very thing to hasten the overthrow of the present social structure. Because

(3) The present glut of the labor markets of "Christendom" will be *intensified* by further application of machinery within the next ten years; and the tremendous effect of augmenting the supply of labor to the extent of from one to five millions of men in the prime of life would surely mean a financial depression and social upheaval which would shake the thrones of Europe and overthrow many of them.

(4) Such social upheavals, eventuating in world-wide anarchy, are what the Scripture prophecies lead us to expect as the precursor of the Millennium which God has promised, when our Redeemer and his glorified Church shall intervene to deliver mankind from the oppression of its own selfishness, and to bless it with an enforced rule of righteousness along the lines of the heavenly law of Love.

THE SECOND ZIONIST CONGRESS.

The Second Congress of Israelites from all parts of the world, to consider the interests and welfare of the natural seed of Abraham, and especially looking to a reestablishment of Israel as a nation in the old homestead, Palestine, has closed. Like the first it was held in the city of Basel, Switzerland. All reports indicate that the Zionist movement has gathered much momentum since the Congress of a year ago: about four hundred delegates were present – nearly seven times as many as at the first one.

Addresses were delivered by a number of prominent Israelites, setting forth the necessity and urgency of the movement, and pointing out that prophecy and the traditions of the nation as well as the growing hostility toward their race, everywhere, all urged forcefully in the direction toward which they were heading. In view of the fact that Palestine is under the control of Turkey, and that foreign Jews have been prohibited from emigrating thither for now seven years, suggested the idea that the duty of the hour would be to labor for the betterment of the conditions of Jews already there, and to wait and trust for the Providential opening of the "door" in the near future. To this end a Palestine Banking Company, "The Colonial Bank," of \$10,000,000 capital was provided for – to promote and foster various enterprises in Palestine – all of which shall in every sense of the word be in Jewish hands and employ Jews only. An advance intimation of this matter had gotten abroad, and as a result it was announced that \$1,000,000, one tenth of the capital, had already been subscribed, and over ninety-six per cent. of it in single shares of \$5 each, by Jews in

all parts of the world. This indicates that the movement is taking hold of the hopes of the race. A new flag was raised; – a white six-pointed star on a blue ground – and it served to add to the patriotic fervor. Even the populace of Basel caught the inspiration seemingly and cheered – "Hoch die Juden!" *i.e.*, Hurrah for the Jews! Has this occurred before for over eighteen hundred years? Not that we know of. God's time has come for regathering Israel, and those who lend a hand will receive encouragement.

For twenty-three years past we have been calling attention to Isaiah 40:1,2, – showing that it became applicable in April, 1878, and that within forty years (before 1915) the prophesied divine favor beginning by regathering Israel from all lands "into their own land," would be an accomplished fact. "Adventists" ridiculed, declaring that much sooner than that this earth would be in cinders; "orthodoxy" sneered that Israel's regathering and the Millennium were thousands of years off and that first the gentiles must all be converted; Jews themselves were of two opinions – one class declaring that they and the leaders of Jewish thought and the rising generation had abandoned all hope of a Palestine home and ignored the prophecies relating to the regathering, or else applied them to the United States – the "*new* Promised Land;" the other class expressing hope and faith in the prophecies, declared that according to Jewish chronology (not the Bible chronology which we follow) over three hundred and fifty years yet remained before the completion of six [R2361 : page 285] thousand years from Adam; and that nothing could be hoped for sooner.

Only one-half of the forty years have passed, and what do we see! Palestine is rejuvenating: not only has it been connected with civilization by railroads, telegraphs and telephones, but the seasons are becoming more regular as respects rain, and the thousands of Jews driven thither by Russian persecution some ten years ago are taking root and are now to be helped with money, in a practical way, and the eyes of Israel and the world are opening to the fact that "The

testimonies of the Lord are sure, making wise the *simple*," and that prophecies over two thousand years old are being fulfilled before us.

But the "Watchers" should not for a moment lose sight of the chief lesson which Israel's revival teaches us, namely that every evidence of the return of divine favor to fleshly Israel is an evidence that divine favor to spiritual Israel is gradually drawing to a close, because the divine purpose respecting this Gospel age has about reached fulfilment – in the selection of the Gospel Church, spiritual Israel, the Bride, the Lamb's wife. – See Rom. 11:25-33.

We add a few extracts from a Jewish journal, interesting and corroborative: –

ZIONISTS AND THE PEACE PROPOSAL.

"On Monday, Aug. 29th, the ordinary business proceedings were stopped in order to discuss the Czar's message, the most remarkable document of the century. Dr. Herzl said, amid tremendous applause:

"'Since Israel's mission in the world is peace, anyone who labors to attain this end is ideally a brother in Israel! The universal peace manifestation of Czar Nicholas is now in order!'

"After a lengthy discussion of its various political and national aspects a congratulatory resolution was adopted and a telegram was sent to His Majesty the Czar, who, with the stroke of his pen, has conquered the world and is destined to become the Cyrus of the nineteenth century.

"There was a large attendance of delegates, the most numerous and most widely representative of Israelites that the world has seen for centuries, if ever before. The enthusiasm was unbounded, the confidence manifested, while too exuberant, running over into acts of aggression against anti-Zionists, yet sufficiently proved the ardor of

the leaders; the harmony was unshattered, the deliberations were dignified and at times inspiring. [R2362 : page 285]

"It was officially reported that there are nine hundred and thirteen associations now identified with this movement. From the half shekel subscriptions received it would seem to be certain that the number of Zionist adherents already largely exceeds two hundred thousand, compared to which all other organizations in Israel, local, national or international, dwindle into insignificance....The wide-spread character of the movement was not due to any propaganda carried on from any particular centre, but to the natural force and intrinsic attractiveness of the movement itself all over the world.

"The one great instrument that has been constructed by the Congress for the execution of its purposes is the Colonial Bank. An institution like this may become a powerful means for the accomplishment of great and definite results. These, it will be observed, are to be secured in Palestine, and nowhere else. That the construction of such an institution is practical with so numerous a constituency, there would seem to be no inherent reasons to doubt, and sufficient material evidences are at hand to fully substantiate. There is every prospect that those placed in charge will be both responsible and able to honestly and efficiently carry out the important trust that will be reposed in them.

"As to colonization itself, the present activities of the movement seem necessarily limited to the advancement of those interests which are already located in Palestine. The Sultan's prohibition of further Jewish immigration may not work inharmoniously with the best interests of Zionism if it shall result in first securing the welfare of the Jews now inhabiting that country before being burdened with new and large accessions from without. When this has been done the Sultan's fears may be dissipated, or the new arrangements in the European kaleidoscope may have placed this territory under more favorable conditions than at present.

"Perhaps the most remarkable achievement of the Congress was to dispel the doubts that existed as to the true relation of Zionism to Judaism. Dr. Gaster, the haham of London, in his masterly address, declared: 'It is this religious element which knits us together much more strongly, tho often unconsciously, than mere principles of a political or racial unity.... Whatever the difference between individuals may be, the unity of religious sentiment remains with us; it is the abiding factor in our whole movement; it may lie deep down, hidden away in the breast of our people; it is there incontestably. It blends itself, here in our Zionist movement, into one harmonious whole....I, therefore, propose, for your adoption, the following resolutions: Zionism aims not only at the economical and political, but also at the spiritual regeneration of the Jewish people; it thus rests upon the foundation of modern culture and adheres to its achievements. Zionism will not undertake anything which would be contrary to Jewish religious law.'"

"WE DO NOT WORSHIP THE PAST."

Said another speaker at the Congress: –

"We do not worship the past, we alone hold that the future is better than the past, we are known as optimists, and whenever any wrong is done to us or we are exposed to hardships, we are comforted by the thoughts that it must be better, and it will be better. We do not commence with an age of gold that deteriorates in time to a silver and then an iron age. We, on the contrary, look to the continued improvement and progress of mankind, and that is what we understand under the Messianic Age, and that hope has been the solace of our race in its wanderings through the [R2362 : page 286] world. The light of culture and education has never been extinguished in our midst."

THE ZIONIST CONGRESS-MEDAL.

"On a large, peaceful landscape bordering on the seashore, at a well, shaded by a very old tree of Southern type, there rests a Jewish

family composed of father, mother and three children, with eyes turned upon the ocean, where the sun is mirrored in myriads of waves. The father, in the prime of life, leans on his travel-staff, the tragic symbol of the lot of his race on earth. The mother nurses the infant at her breast. A little child is seated on the floor; an older boy, stronger and determined, stands erect and already holds the travel-staff in his hand, which is to become the symbol of his destiny, as it is that of his father.

"A supernatural vision appears to these exhausted and aimless wanderers; it is the personification of the Jewish ideal – the ideal of Zionism. Her left hand she lays on the shoulder of the father and points with her right hand in the distance to that land across the sea where he shall secure at last a home. Her expression is full of sympathy and love. Her arm and the movement of the hand illustrate destiny. The father gazes with a heart overwhelmed with emotion at the golden hope of the future which this genius has awakened in his soul. He resolves at once to follow his guide. The mother, half doubtful and half relying, grasps the strong hand of her husband, – she is the typical Jewish wife, that loyally speaks to her husband: 'I follow thee to the end of the world; where thou art there is my home; thy destiny is mine.' The little child is only curious, it does not comprehend yet the great event that is happening before his eyes. Not so the boy. The 'Arba Kanfoth' – the religious 'garb of fringes' – on his naked breast, teaches him symbolically that his race will eventually be 'gathered from the four corners of the earth.' He turns, therefore, with keen earnestness and profound determination to the destiny foretold by the heraldess, drinking in her words and impressed by her sympathetic features; he is ready to go with her, no matter what sacrifices this may require, what battles he will have to wage, nor in what struggles to endure.

"This is the explanation of the symbolic figures on the Congress medal, translated from the official Zionist organ, *Die Welt*, of Vienna, while the reverse side of the medal contains the Hebrew letters, of which the following is the translation: –

"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they have gone, and will gather them on every side and bring them into their own land.' – Ezek. 37:21.

"Who of those that read the signs of the times can shut their eyes to the important part that the restoration of Israel to Palestine is destined to play in the progress of humanity?

"In reviewing the events of the year, none appears to me so great, none so significant, none so fraught with incalculable blessings for the future of our people as the awakening of Israel, manifested by over 400 delegates hailing from every country and clime to the Second Congress at Basel."
