

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

COUNCIL BLUFFS CONVENTION is a thing of the past; but it will never be forgotten by those who participated. The attendance was much larger than we had expected – 175 from abroad, and at the principal sessions about the same number from Omaha and Council Bluffs, friends of the truth and their friends. The visitors were chiefly from Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas; but other States were fairly represented – Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Dakota, Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Georgia, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kentucky, California and Washington.

The four days were a season of blessed refreshing to all, and were faithfully spent from 9 A.M. to 9 and sometimes 10 P.M., with intermissions for meals; and another day was spent in private conferences with colporteur brethren and sisters, some of them beginners. It was remarked by many that they had never seen a convention so free from jar and friction, nor one exhibiting the spirit of meekness, patience, forbearance and brotherly love in so marked a degree. Neither the Chicago Convention of 1893, nor the previous ones at Allegheny (precious as they all were) were better than this one, if they equalled it.

The public speakers were Brothers M. L. McPhail, F. Draper and the Editor of this journal; but nearly all took part in the prayers, praises and testimonies. Testimony meetings preceded the regular meetings and were extremely profitable – not a moment was lost, sometimes two or three being on their feet to speak at one time. And such testimonies – such beaming faces – such gratitude to God for the light of present truth – such love for the brethren – were the general comments. Visitors wondered that no collections were taken, no appeals made for money, but on the contrary, offers were made to assist any attending the meeting short of funds, – tho evidently none were wealthy. During the session a discourse was preached on the real

baptism and its water symbol, after which twenty-one brethren and twenty sisters were symbolically baptized. The youngest of these was about thirty years of age and the eldest two, Bro. Gephart and wife, looked to be over seventy years old. Altogether, we all rejoiced in the divine favor enjoyed, and quite a number expressed the hope that another Convention might be held ere long.

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The convention spirit was contagious, and many who could not attend at Council Bluffs, because of the distance and expense, urged sub-conventions which we might attend enroute to Council Bluffs. We were obliged to decline most of these, for lack of time – the general work being retarded by every day's absence from Allegheny. We did, however, engage to meet with the Chicago Church on Sunday, the 10th, and found that notice of the meetings had brought friends from nearby points in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan. These, with the friends of the four Chicago meetings, the friends of these and others, aggregated three to four hundred. The meetings were held in the Masonic Temple and lasted from 3 P.M. until 9:30 P.M., with an intermission for luncheon, which the Chicago friends provided free, and which was shared by about one hundred and fifty, with zest and appreciation, and every way all the friends of the truth had a most enjoyable time, judging from their words and faces and [R2368 : page 300] hearty greetings and farewells, and assurances that the work centered at Allegheny has their heart-felt sympathy and prayers.

Meantime the friends at Sippo, Ohio, concluded that they, too, must have a sub-convention, and Brother Henniges of the WATCH TOWER force went to assist. He reports a most enjoyable time – the attendance running as high as one hundred and fifty. This meeting lasted three days. About the same time, also, Brother Koetitz of the WATCH TOWER force answered a similar call from Eastern Pennsylvania. It is a good sign of the spiritual condition, when there is so burning a desire to commune together respecting the exceeding

great and precious promises of our Father's Word. And "love of the brethren" is one of the strong impelling promptings to these meetings, as it should be in all our assemblings, and so much the more, as we see the Day drawing on, with its increase of light and blessing to the "wise" in heavenly wisdom, and its increase of opposition to the light by the Prince of Darkness and his deluded servants.

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We arrived home on the 11th, to find Allegheny and Pittsburgh in gala dress, festooned with bunting, interspersed with cross and crown emblems. The streets are crowded with thousands of citizens and visitors decorated with the same sacred emblems of our faith, and each bears a sword whose hilt is a cross. What does it mean? Has "the offense of the cross" ceased? – are these all true knights and soldiers of the cross? – and are they on some heavenly errand bent?

Alas no! they are merely one of the sects of our time which have "a form of godliness" and use the emblems of the true Church and her Lord, because nominally they have become popular. The Sir Knights are parading as we write, and, as we look at so fine a body of men, we wish indeed that they were *all* soldiers of the cross in the true sense: and we know not but what some of these, as well as some in all the various divisions of the nominal church, belong indeed to the Lord our King and will yet be amongst those gathered as the "elect," the "jewels," for the Kingdom.

We see by the press reports that Rev. C. I. Twing, of New York City, Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment, preached a discourse in Trinity church (Episcopal), opening the conclave, on Sunday, the 9th inst. In that discourse, as an officer of the order, he made an announcement, and presumably not without authority, which, if lived up to, would imply that this ancient order will in the near future cease its opposition to Romanism and become her ally. The Grand Prelate in his discourse said of the order: –

"We have enlisted in a glorious warfare, and we have vowed to wield our swords, not to rescue the sepulcher, or any part of the holy land from the hand of the Saracen, but in defense of the Christian religion. It is assailed not by the followers of Islam, but by those who would supplant its teachings by a system of materialism, and a denial of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul."

"MAN PROPOSES, GOD DISPOSES."

"The world by wisdom knows not God." "Going about to establish a righteousness of their own they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." – 1 Cor. 1:21; Rom. 10:3.

Men of energy and ambition are, more frequently than others, used of the Lord; because they are instruments *ready* for service. If the energy and ambition be thoroughly subjected to the Lord, – controlled by a high spirituality, humility and veneration toward the Creator, and with large individuality and independence of character and firmness toward men, – it will lead to reverent and careful study of the divine will and to persistence and assiduity in its prosecution. Such characters God is pleased to use for the great things of his service. Next to our Lord Jesus, the Apostle Paul is an ideal illustration of such a character: God was pleased to use him largely as a mouthpiece and as a servant of the truth – in proportion to his humility, loyalty and energy.

And likewise, but in an opposite direction, God has been pleased to use the energetic and ambitious among the worldly – whose motive power was not love, loyalty and humility, but to the contrary – selfish pride, vain-glory. God often uses such characters in another kind of service – causing their ambitious energies ("wrath") to praise him, and the remainder (beyond what suits his purposes) he restrains. Illustrations of this stamp of character are seen in Satan, in Judas, and in persons in less prominent positions in the Church, – even to-day. These are active in planting "roots of bitterness, by which many are defiled" and sifted out, stumbled – leaving the remainder stronger and purer. See the inspired Word on this subject, – "I hear that there be

divisions among you; and as to a certain part I believe it: and there must needs be also partyism among you [permitted of the Lord], *that they that are approved may be made manifest* among you." "Brethren, mark them which *cause divisions* and offenses, in violation of the doctrine which ye have learned [– the royal law of Love]; and avoid them." "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out *that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*" (1 Cor. 11:18; [R2368 : page 301] Rom. 16:17; 1 John 2:19.) It is doubtless as necessary that the Church be sifted, purged, tested, as that it be "built up;" and for either work God uses the ready and willing.

But our thoughts run specially in the channel of God's supervision of earthly affairs and his use of [R2369 : page 301] worldly ambitions in world-affairs. In this direction Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander and Napoleon I. are notable examples of the past, – men of destiny, over whose affairs Providence had a supervision. God utilized the energies and ambitions of these men in the forwarding of his plans and the fulfilment of his predictions – and their further ambitious efforts he restrained by his superior power, as it pleased him. Our thoughts pursue this course, because we perceive such a worldly ambition to do something notable, to achieve a world-wide fame, possessing a man of opportunity to-day – the German Emperor: and we regard him as likely to be to some extent another "man of destiny."

EMPEROR WILLIAM'S AMBITION.

As Lord Hershel was guided by his science to search for a new planet and thus discovered one, so the students of the greatest of all sciences – the divine revelation, the Bible – are guided thereby to search for its promised "things to come" (John 16:13), and, as was promised, they find them and thus are permitted to anticipate history. For instance, the "Watchers" know, from the unfolding of the Scriptures which God has provided them, that astounding changes, social, religious and political, are just before us – to be accomplished

within the next sixteen years: we note the Scripture testimony that just prior to the great collapse in anarchy there is to be a revival of Papal influence in the world, and that Protestantism, considerably unified or federated, will be in practical sympathy and cooperation with Papacy: and that in fact (tho not in theory) Catholicism and Protestantism will for a short time jointly rule the civilized world (through the civil powers) and appear to have begun a *human* Millennium; but while the cries of Peace! Peace!! are still heard, will come the great cataclysm of social revolution which shall demolish all present institutions and demonstrate the futility of all selfish human schemes, and by heart-broken discouragements prepare mankind for the great blessing which God has in store – the Kingdom of God.

Naturally, the "Watchers" are on the lookout for every sign of the times seeming to harmonize with the known coming events. Indeed, our interest in the "news of the day" is chiefly with the fragments which seem to have a connection with or a bearing upon the fulfilments of prophecy. And knowing that God generally uses "a man of opportunity" for his work, we are struck with the fact that the German Emperor, who evidently is seeking a notable destiny, has lately been giving expression to ambitions that seem closely related to Scriptural predictions. And his determination and pride will impel him so far as possible to make good his boasts: added to which he freely and repeatedly declares that he feels himself led and impelled in this direction by an unseen power, or "voice," which spurs him on to success. And a success on one point or issue would surely lead such a man to larger schemes in the same direction. God "raised him up" to the throne of the German Empire (in probably the same way that he raised Pharaoh up to the throne of Egypt at the time of Israel's deliverance) by taking out of the way, by death, his father – a man of very different temperament and ambitions. What would be more reasonable than to suppose of William III. that (as it is written of one brought miraculously to the throne of old) God brought him "to the throne, *for such a time as this,*" and for the work he is ambitious to accomplish.

The Emperor's ambition is to restore to "religion" some of its former power by which it cooperated with the civil rulers in the control of the world. Not that he would desire to reproduce "the dark ages" of priestcraft and superstition, and of inquisition, the stake and the rack; but that he considers those evils not in the light of the Scriptures, but in the light of to-day's world-wisdom, attributing those evils to the ignorance of the times and not to the false teachings of Anti-Christ.

He reasons that Romanism is rejuvenating and adapting itself to twentieth century conditions and can be trusted as much as Protestantism, so far as the maintenance of present governments is concerned; – and that, after all, is to him the all-important matter. Indeed, he seems to feel that the revival of Papal influence is a necessity anyway on the ground that of two evils the least should be chosen to avert the greater. Therefore he proposes to be the *mediator* between King Humbert of Italy and the Pope, and to endeavor to bring about a reconciliation of interests. His thought apparently is that after some parley both will consent to modifications of their claims in the interest of harmony. The pope will probably be asked to waive all claim of civil power over the provinces once known as the States of the Church, and the King be asked to grant the pope civil control of Rome. It is barely possible that this will succeed on the basis of Rome or some portion of the claimed papal territory being placed under papal control or principedom by popular vote – which would make of the pope a sort of President rather than a prince. Such a reconciliation would [R2369 : page 302] reconcile the Catholic party throughout Italy and establish Humbert's shaky throne: and it would reinstate the pope amongst the "sovereigns" of earth. Additionally it would bring the blessing of the pope and of all the Catholics upon the German Emperor and establish his throne more securely. Finally – the governments of earth being then all at harmony with Papacy, its representative could *pose* as arbiter of disputes of national and international importance, – his old role.

The German Emperor's scheme is even broader than this; for, while yet his name is popular amongst Romanists, he will attempt to exalt it amongst Protestants by assuming the part of defender, father, pope to the Lutherans of all nations. It is in this role that he has planned a visit to Jerusalem ere long – to preside with great display at the formal opening and consecration of a Protestant Cathedral (under construction twenty years), which he has about finished. This is to be specially German, but also international – for Lutheran churches of all lands have been invited to send representatives to take part in the ceremonies (and incidentally to admire and bless and honor the Emperor – who will be the centre of interest and the recognized head and front of Lutheranism).

From the Emperor's own statement of his ambitious designs (published in the public prints) as related to General Hoffmann Scholz, and doubtless designed for publication, we furnish an extract. After telling of his various past efforts to bring about a reconciliation between the Papacy and the monarchy of Italy, he said: –

"But the good that was to be done is still to do, and I am resolved to go on with my undertaking. The entire world will gain if I can bring about the rapprochement of Leo XIII. and Humbert I. No one will doubt the sincerity of my Protestant leanings. But it is precisely because I am a Protestant that I have a clear and accurate conception of the power and influence of the Papacy.

"At the present day two great evils threaten humanity. They are Socialism and Atheism. Against each of these the pope is a bulwark. In fighting infidelity no aid should be neglected. Socialism is infidelity to the monarch or the State, and Atheism is infidelity to God.

"The Pope is the spiritual ruler of the largest communion on earth, and he is by far the most powerful and authoritative of spiritual rulers. His word is promptly and willingly obeyed by hundreds of millions of people spread throughout the globe. He can order and direct the consciences of these multitudes. He can say: These are your religious

tenets: those must be your social sentiments; and suddenly he is obeyed. His power therefore for good is immeasurable.

"Kings and emperors are the divinely ordained guardians of social order and directors of social well-being, just as the leaders of religious bodies are the divinely ordained moderators of conscience. But just as kings and emperors can have their beneficent influence in the religious order, so can spiritual guides help and promote the social weal.

"The pope's range of power is the vastest of all, and consequently the possibilities of the good he may do are the most far-reaching. I think it imperative *therefore* that he be put in a position to freely accomplish all the good of which he is capable. He must be liberated from his self-imposed imprisonment in the Vatican. All the trammels that surround and harass him in his daily life must be removed, so that he will then be at liberty to fight the common enemies, Socialism and irreligion. And he will be in a position to make his voice heard in the interests of peace, when nations go to war without just motive, and in the interest of humanity, when acts of cruelty or injustice are being anywhere committed.

"I have meditated long and deeply on this subject. The fact that it preoccupies me so much convinces me that *I am inspired to take action in the matter*. It is like one of the voices that Socrates had about with him which whispers in my ear that this also is my mission to remedy the pope's position and open up the field for his range of well-doing. It daily urges me to act. Whether I shall succeed or not it is beyond my power to foretell. Judging from the circumstances there is every evidence that success should not be outside the bounds of possibility. I am going to do my utmost, and more than this no man can do.

"I feel for the moment that I have no other concrete and practical mission before me. To succeed in [R2370 : page 302] such an undertaking would be a climax and a crowning worthy of any man's life. As I say, I will energetically attempt it. The small *preternatural*

voice unmistakably spurs me on, and I think than this no better augury of success could be desired.

"For this moment I can say no more, and it does not behoove me to be too explicit about my plans. They are already laid, and my immediate actions will be a development of them. Their result will be their justification, and it will also be the justification of many acts in the past, which may have seemed strange and unaccountable to my good Protestant subjects, but which had their motive and their origin in a desire to accomplish great and enduring events...

"I shall not die until my ends in this regard are attained. Death otherwise would find a void in my existence; and *I feel within me* that I have not been born in vain."

ANOTHER MOTIVE BACK OF THE AMBITION.

Doubtless the Emperor thinks most, and would have others think most, of his disinterested benevolence, in the matter of the proposed peacemaking. Nevertheless, every thoughtful observer can read between the lines another motive. It is not because William loves Catholicism *more* or Protestantism *less*, that he thus exerts himself; but because he loves both Protestantism and Catholicism in proportion as they make his own imperial power secure: and he sees correctly, and so do other potentates, that all monarchs [R2370 : page 303] stand or fall together. The wealthy class sees also, as well as the royal class, that growth of general intelligence amongst the masses leads to broader views and greater demands on their part, based on new views respecting human equality, rights and privileges, incompatible with the principles of monarchy and the exploded theory of "the divine right of kings" to rule and of others to unquestioningly obey their behests.

This disposition of the people to claim and so far as possible grasp all that they consider to be their rights (sometimes unjustly and unwisely making extreme claims) is creating a reaction against liberty, not only on the part of rulers, who are put on the *defensive* as to every

feature of law and order, but they have with them an increasing number of those who love peace and order, and who realize that *too much power* in the hands of the officers of the law is preferable to *too much liberty* in the hands of rash, inexperienced and irresponsible people, whose well-meant panaceas for the ills of human society are at very most experiments, whose success (if successful) would mean momentous changes, unfavorable to royal and financial princes and incidentally also for all either directly or indirectly associated with or dependent upon these. For instance, the ministers and churches of all denominations in Germany are supported by the Government at public expense, and would not be sure of an equivalent support for a while at least if the Government were in any manner changed.

Emperor William views with alarm the condition of things prevailing in Italy, considerable districts of which have lately been placed under martial law to prevent bread-riots. The government claims that these were incited by Roman Catholic priests, who, it claims, are continually intriguing and endeavoring to prejudice the populace against the monarchy, in hope that the latter will yield to the Pope's demands and restore his sovereignty over the "Papal States," or that, failing in this, a revolution will overthrow the present kingdom and establish a republic under which the pope could fare no worse. Already the Socialists and Radicals hold the balance of power in the Parliament of Italy, and hence the government greatly desires the aid of the Papal influence to maintain order, but it cannot do otherwise than meet Papal *intrigue* with *force*, to preserve the trembling monarchy. On this subject a well informed writer says: –

ITALY'S INTERNECINE WAR.

"The scarcity of news from Italy at the present time is indicative of the policy of suppression begun by the new Premier, General Pelloux. He has begun his career by stifling the newspaper press of that country in a manner that has no equal in Europe. Not even Russia is under such stringent rule regarding her press as is Italy.

"Italy's new Prime Minister has declared war upon the Vatican. Every step that his Cabinet takes is with a view to curtail the power of the pope... One feature of his program is the suppression of all societies that have or are suspected to have religious affiliations. The laws of Italy prohibit clerical ownership of property. This law was passed years ago, and was thought to be a death-blow to religious corporations. Since that time a large number of lay societies have sprung into existence, and, acting as agents for the clericals, have secured the ownership of vast and important properties. During the past five years no less than 1200 rural banks have been established, the religious character of which is shown by their being under the absolute control of the local ecclesiastics. A circular is now being drafted by the government to be sent to the local authorities, ordering the beginning of the campaign against the societies.

"With the growing dissatisfaction over high taxes on wheat, which has raised bread to famine prices, and the large internal taxation, the Vatican has forced the Quirinal to rule by the force of arms. Two generals and two admirals hold seats in the Ministry, and they hope to retain them by a policy of suppression.

"What is to be the end of all this? Already there is a cry throughout Italy that the monarchy is doomed and that the best thing that could happen would be for it to split up into a number of small republics under the general temporal control of the pope. Certainly, as matters stand now, the State can expect no aid from the clergy. The latter, as a matter of fact, are the most tireless agents in spreading the crusade against the King."

This is the spectre that is haunting Emperor William: he fears that the trouble of a brother sovereign may result in trouble within his own empire. He realizes that one or many republics in Italy would be much more dangerous than a visit from the Cholera and the Bubonic Plague together. Royalty is in dread of the spread of popular government. Besides, he is kept busy at home, watching and circumventing the

rapidly growing numbers and influence of Socialists and Radicals in the German Reichstag. If we digest the following facts we will see the mainspring of the German Emperor's efforts as a peace-maker. He realizes that he *must* have aid of the Romanists, or else destroy the present form of his own government and proclaim himself an Autocrat, a Dictator, a Czar, – too dangerous an experiment to be entertained, unless all else fails. The facts referred to are these: –

Twenty-eight years ago, in the first imperial election the Socialists polled only 102,000 votes, and elected but one Deputy to the Reichstag or Parliament. In [R2370 : page 304] 1890 they elected thirty-five Deputies, in 1893 the number of Deputies was increased to forty-five, and this year polling a vote of over two million ballots they have increased their representatives to fifty-seven. There are four parties in Germany – (1) The "Centrists" or Roman Catholic party (professedly under the guidance of Papal influences) has 102 Deputies, (2) The Conservatives, 80 Deputies, (3) The Socialists, 57 Deputies, (4) The National Liberals, 47 Deputies. From this it is evident that the Socialists are already quite a factor throwing their influence with one or another of the larger parties and bartering for their support in return: but the most striking thing is their rapid growth. They are conducting their efforts wisely and making no end of trouble for the Kaiser. To add to this trouble, the largest party, the "Centrists" (the Papal party) has recently started on an aggressive campaign of cooperation with the Socialists and thus will put it within the power of both of these parties to enact laws which each has coveted for years, but been unable to attain for lack of numbers in cooperation. All this seems to imply considerable and speedy trouble to Emperor William, unless he can gain the good will and cooperation of this "Clerical" or Centrist party by good offices toward the pope in his dispute with the Italian government.

The pope is a very shrewd man: he sees the trend of events too, and is working every lever that will help his cause: undoubtedly the proposed move of the Centrists of Germany was ordered from Rome

and will continue to be manipulated in the interest of Papacy. The whole civilized world is to be made to feel, as far as possible, that its only bulwark against Socialism is Romanism. It is because Protestants everywhere are catching this thought that so many advances are being made Romeward by all denominations.

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"GOOD FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD."

"They tell us that in Pisa's old cathedral
All noises, harsh and loud –
Grating of ponderous doors, shrill tones, the tramping
And murmur of the crowd –
Are caught up, softened, harmonized and blended
Within the lofty dome;
Then echoed back in one great wave of music,
Sweet as a dream of home.

"So all the harsh notes in life's mingled music:
The burden and the woe;
The stroke that almost snaps the quivering heartstrings,
The loss that grieves us so;
In heaven's o'er-arching dome of perfect wisdom,
Power and love, shall be
Gathered and blended in divinest marvel
Of matchless melody.

– M. L. UPTON.
