

## **VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER. THE PEACE CONFERENCE FAILURE.**

CZAR NICHOLAS II. was no doubt greatly disappointed with the barren result of his recent Peace Conference. Called specially to induce a general disarmament on the part of civilized nations and for the institution of national courts of arbitration, the convention may be said to have failed utterly, in that the question of disarmament was totally rejected by Germany and therefore of necessity by her neighbors. The German emperor evidently realized that the disbandment of his great army would not only leave him with less power, but would throw another million able-bodied men upon Germany's labor market seeking employment, further depressing wages and precipitating a panic and anarchy. He did the wisest thing for the present: but no human wisdom can long avert the impending time of trouble when there shall be no hire for man nor hire for beast, and no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in, because every man's hand shall be against (in competition with) his neighbor. (Zech. 8:10.) The growth of intelligence is being fostered by the schooling connected with these standing armies, and labor-saving machinery is fast bringing these to the place where their increased intelligence will make them the more discontented and the less willing to step backward into serfdom at the command of giant Trusts.

Of the twenty-seven nations represented at the Conference, sixteen agreed to favor and to seek to promote arbitration in settlement of national disputes, and about as many agreed to certain modifications of cruelties of war, which they evidently do not hope are ended. How evident it is that not humanity and not councils, but God who shall "speak peace to the Gentiles [the nations]." – Zech. 9:10.

And his voice commanding "Peace" will be in a very different tone from what is generally expected. – In tones that will shake not only the

earth [social structure] but also the heavens [the ecclesiastical structure], he shall, by that awful time of anarchy when all the selfish passions of mankind shall be let loose, say – "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the Gentiles, I will be exalted in the earth." – Psa. 46:8-10.

**"KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED" – AND "THERE SHALL BE A TIME OF TROUBLE SUCH AS WAS NOT SINCE THERE WAS A NATION."**

Another illustration of the fact that the impending trouble is being hastened and not hindered by education, comes to our knowledge. The security of the past was due, less to the fact that men were better in olden times than now, than to the fact that general intelligence being less men did not so well know how to do evil. A general increase of knowledge not accompanied by a conversion to righteousness and subjugation to the law of Love is dangerous at the present time. The time for such general enlightenment will come safely when the Kingdom of the Lord has been established and when its iron rule will hold in check the evilly-disposed, and teach them lessons of swift retribution.

The illustration of this subject is again in Russia, where, as noted a short time ago, the privileges of high-school and college education were greatly restricted by government authority. Now we clip the following respecting the unrest of the educated classes in Russia from the London *Spectator*: –

"The signs of unrest in Russia multiply. Apart from the local insurrections caused by the prevailing **[R2515 : page 212]** scarcity, which in some places, notably Kazan, are serious, there are the artisan troubles which we noticed last week; and now the University students are in mutiny. Their real grievance is the brutality with which every expression of their feelings is suppressed by the Cossack police, who strike them with their whips, arrest, and otherwise maltreat them. The students have combined to protest against this treatment, and between

their strikes and expulsions thirty thousand young men have left the universities, whose doors are closed in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, Kharkoff, Odessa, Kazan, Tomsk and Warsaw. The female students will, it is stated, follow the example of the men, and are much more dangerous, as they at once become revolutionaries. Indeed, there would seem from some documents published to be small revolutionary parties embedded in the movement. As each student has many families interested in his success, the matter is a serious one for the government, which once again finds itself in collision with the whole educated class. Nothing will, or can, happen in Russia until the military class is discontented, or the Empire finds a reforming Czar, but no government likes to feel itself hated by the class, from which, after all, it must draw all its own agents. There is, however, no remedy to be perceived, except through the Emperor, and Nicholas II., tho he wishes thoroughly well to his people, has no strength of initiative."

### **PRESBYTERIANISM IN SCOTLAND.**

The claim is often set forth that Presbyterianism is drifting from its ancient moorings: and we regard this as having both a favorable and unfavorable aspect. It is favorable to the intelligence and heart of these people to find increasingly large numbers of them unwilling to admit the unreasonable side of the doctrine of election – that God predestinated the torture of hundreds of millions of his creatures before their creation and made provision for it by the creation of a vast torture-chamber called "hell" and the preparation of vast quantities of fuel for their torture. It is unfavorable when we find them drifting toward infidelity – the rejection of Christ's redemptive work and the gospel set forth in the Bible – under the influence of a Higher Criticism and Evolution doctrine. And it appears that this movement is not confined to this country. An evidently well informed writer in the *N.Y. Tribune* says of this *progress* in Scotland, –

"Professor Briggs would not have been molested in the church founded by John Knox. On the contrary, he would have found in it

scholars and thinkers like-minded with himself. Open-mindedness is the characteristic of the Scottish church. Implicitly, if not explicitly, truth is the first article of its creed, and all the other dogmatic articles of its creed are interpreted in the light of the truth. It is true the biblical scholars and theologians of Scotland are more conservative than those of Germany. But, for all that, some of them would have as hard a time in the American Presbyterian church as Professor Briggs had. Nor is that all. A ritualistic tendency has grown up in the Scottish church that has for its object the restoration of some liturgical and ceremonial features that were discarded at the Reformation. This movement meets with a sympathetic response from the people in the larger towns, and bids fair to revolutionize the church. Only in the remote country districts will one find the typical Presbyterians of the old days, and as they die there are none to take their places. Thus, in spite of its strong government and its uncompromising creed, Scottish Presbyterianism finds itself moving along in the stream of tendency. **[R2516 : page 212]**

"But most remarkable of all is the drift away from the severe conception of life and religion that characterized the Scottish reformers. During the last few years there has been a noteworthy change of sentiment in regard to the observance of the Sabbath. Not long ago Principal Story, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Scottish church, preached a sermon on Sabbath observance in Edinburgh. In this sermon he made a strong plea for a less rigid observance of the day, and especially for the opening of clubs, public gardens, museums, art galleries and libraries."

If all the "old fashioned" Christians are dying out of the Presbyterian Church and few or none of this class now being developed, and if this church is a fair sample of all churches, what can we expect? Just what the Master implied when speaking of the present time he said, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?" – Luke 18:8.

It is the *errors* in the creeds of all churches that are causing the overthrow of the truths which they all hold, and which the errors discredit. Let all who have the true light now shining be zealous to lend a helping hand to these dear brethren – especially to the "old fashioned" ones.

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