

**VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.
PULPIT VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM.**

THE PHILADELPHIA PRESS recently interviewed the ministers of Pennsylvania and New Jersey on the subject of the Millennium, asking: – *Do you believe that the Biblical Millennium is at hand?* The majority of the responses denied faith in a Millennium, some expressed an expectation that the churches would bring it about by missionary effort and a few declared faith in a reign of Christ near at hand, as follows: –

Rev. William McNally, Harrisburg, Pa., has made a careful study of the "Millennium" question. He says: –

"I believe that the millennium period is near – that we are living in the 'last days,' foretold in the Bible. The prophecies are all being fulfilled and the signs of the time all indicate it. There are 'wars and rumors of wars' now; there is moral laxity everywhere; the average church attendance is startlingly small, only 36 people out of every 100 attend any church in this country. There is moral and political corruption.

"All of these things indicate the approach of the millennium, as anyone may see by looking up the references in the Bible on this subject.

"The millennium will not be brought about by any human agency. We are not growing better."

Rev. Clarence E. Eberman, Lancaster, Pa., pastor of the Moravian Church and president of the Pennsylvania Christian Endeavor Union said: –

"Sentiment or speculation can decide very little on this great question. The Bible alone offers the authoritative teaching. I believe confidently that Christ is coming again and that his second advent will usher in his kingly reign of a thousand years upon this earth."

Rev. George Fulton, Lebanon, Pa., pastor of the Fourth Street Presbyterian Church, said: –

"I believe that the evidence of the nearness of the millennium is stronger than ever before. Signs have been found in every generation since Christ's ascent that pointed to his coming. The principal proofs are wars and earthquakes, distress of nations, sea and waves roaring, lawlessness and iniquity prevailing to an alarming degree. The Bible says 'When the Gospel of the Kingdom shall have been preached to all the world as a witness unto all nations, then cometh the end.' This is a sign. It belongs only to our own age and the evidence here is strong. Another sign is the prophetic movement, – the restoration of Israel which has begun."

Rev. Sydney N. Ussher, West Chester, Pa., rector of the Church of the Sure Foundation, said: –

"The Millennium is a divine conception, with Scripture the only source of light and authority. No definite time is stated therein. I believe, however, the world is fast preparing for it."

Rev. William J. Houck, Carlisle, Pa., pastor of Grace United Brethren Church, says: –

"I believe that the Biblical millennium is at hand."

Rev. M. E. McLinn, Bloomsburg, Pa., pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, says: –

"I am certain that a great change is imminent. Everything points clearly to a mighty social and religious upheaval and reconstruction."

The very fact that this subject occupies men's thoughts so largely and that the 'secular press' asks the question is proof of it to me."

Pastor F. Jonte Stanley, of the First Presbyterian Church, Atlantic City, N.J., believes "that the signs of the times, as I read them, point to the millennium as not being far off. One of the indications is the gathering of the Jews at Palestine; another that the Gentiles hear the Gospel the world over, and still another is that the nations are coming together commercially, intellectually and religiously."

Rev. W.W. Moffett, D.D., Lambertville, N.J., pastor of the Centenary M.E. Church, says: –

"The trend of revelation on the subject of the millennium seems to teach that a time will come in [R2577 : page 52] the history of the world when the Gospel shall dominate all nations and Jesus shall reign in the majority of human hearts. To the close student of the world to-day there seem to be many indications that this happy period may be enjoyed in the near future."

Rev. Dr. James Lisk, Bordentown, N.J., pastor of the Baptist Church, said: –

"As to your first question, I certainly do so believe. However students of the Word may interpret your phrase 'Biblical millennium,' there can be little doubt that some great change is soon to take place. The divine programme is being rapidly completed, so far as the present order of things is concerned. Prophecy is rapidly being fulfilled."

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The majority of those who saw no evidence of a Millennium meant that they saw no evidence of the speedy conversion of the world to such a condition that God's will would be done on earth even as in heaven. And in this we must commend their judgment as sound. But alas! that so many should be so deluded by human theory as to so

misunderstand the plain statements of God's Word – that Christ's Millennial reign is for the very purpose of *subduing* all things. (1 Cor. 15:25,26,28.) False ideas of the "Kingdom" and of the "Judgment Day," and imperfect views of the character and scope of the Atonement, are at the bottom of this blindness to the signs of our times.

METHODIST FIGURES FOR 1899.

Rev. A. B. Sanford, D.D., editor of the "Methodist Year Book," says in "*The Philadelphia Methodist*," –

"Your readers may be interested to hear concerning the total membership of the church for 1899, as the statistics have been prepared for the new "Methodist Year Book," now passing through the press. In some measure, the result is preliminary, since the receipt of the figures from a few recent fall conferences will slightly change the additions that later appear in the General Minutes. The "Year Book" totals will not, however, be greatly affected, and show a decrease in members and probationers during the past year amounting to 21,934. In the analysis of this result, several interesting facts appear.

"1. The increase in full members through the whole church has been but 6,661. It is a serious fact that such strong bodies as the New England, the New York, the Philadelphia, the Central Pennsylvania, the New Jersey and the Wilmington Conferences suffered considerable losses, the decrease in these instances varying from the minimum of 1,368, to the maximum of 2,436.

"2. The decrease of probationers in the year 1899 has been 28,595.

"3. This decrease in members and probationers is accompanied by a decline in Sunday School scholars during 1899 of 16,716. It is a noticeable fact that the decline in Sunday School scholars thus occurs in the spring conferences, which as a body contribute a total loss in probationers of 22,572.

"It may be said in conclusion, that the net decline in members and probationers of 21,934 is the first positive decline that has occurred since 1881, and, with that exception, since the year 1863. The above facts are serious, but are such as it may be wholesome for the church to know.

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We do not rejoice in such evidences of a decline in denominationalism: nor do we expect it to continue. If the losses of denominationalism meant that God's children were getting out into *the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed*, then we would rejoice. But only a small proportion of the present decline can be credited to the spread of present truth. It means, therefore, indifference, worldliness.

It will not surprise us if in the near future a *Trust* Churchianity will have a season of great prosperity, lasting until the grand collapse which the Scriptures declare will be sudden.

PROPOSED FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN GERMANY.

Prof. Beyschlag has issued an appeal to German Protestants which is being regarded favorably by many of them. It tends in the direction of the general religious federation we have long been expecting – which will revive religious tyranny and suppress religious liberty and stifle present truth; but not until it [R2578 : page 52] has borne its witness and gathered the "wheat" of the Gospel "harvest." The *Literary Digest* gives a summary of the proposed plan as follows:

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"There is to be no formal union of the various state churches, nor are these to lose their historical identity in the proposed new arrangement. Not a union is proposed, but a federation of the state

churches, with the Prussian Church, which represents the Emperor, the *summus episcopus* of the Protestant Church of that kingdom, as the head. The confessional status of each church shall remain undisturbed.

"The object of the federation is to unite the churches of the empire for practical purposes. Chief among these purposes is cooperation in providing for the religious needs of the Germans in the Diaspora, *i.e.*, those who are scattered in the various foreign lands and need religious care. Then, too, the Protestant Church of the empire must have some means by which it can, as a body, be represented, just as the Catholic Church has a representative in the Pope. A further but later purpose is to secure unity in church government and polity. In other words, it is to be, with the necessary changes, a federation for the good of the church such as the organization of the empire has been for the state.

"This federation is to find its expression in an imperial Protestant synod, which shall consist of representatives of the various state church governments, as also of the congregations, in such proportions as shall be agreed upon. The officials of this synod shall be the representatives and the executive board."

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A CONGRESS OF RELIGIOUS HISTORY.

This, at the coming Paris Exposition, is proposed as instead of a Parliament of Religions such as was held at the Chicago World's Fair. It is proposed to avoid *doctrines* and merely to show *works* – missions, charities, etc., and in all these matters Catholicism hopes to make the chief showing, and reap the greatest advantage.

Disapproving of the proposed Congress *The Midland*, a United Presbyterian journal, refers to the Chicago Parliament of Religions as follows: –

"Missionaries tell us that their work has been made more difficult, in India at least, by the boasts of devotees of the false systems of religion there that in Chicago they had met and triumphed over Christianity. Tho not intolerant, the Christian religion is absolutely exclusive. It can have no fellowship with systems which insult the true God and know nothing of that blessed Name by which alone salvation comes to any human soul. Its mission is to expose and uproot all other systems and rescue men from their delusion and destructive influence. We are convinced that these parliaments tend to obscure the distinction between the only true religion and the systems of error it must seek to destroy. One such experiment was one too many. If a second is to be attempted we hope the good sense of Christian people will keep them from participation."

We are pleased to note an expression of so much loyalty to the Gospel, and the only Name in which is salvation. It is as rare as it is refreshing in these days of evolutionary *unbelief* and Higher Criticism *infidelity*. Would that this editor and his readers might see that the blessed day of Christ's Millennial Kingdom is near, in the which all the deaf ears shall be opened to hear the joyful sound of salvation and to know of that only name and of the eternal life offered to all who will obey him.
