

**VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.**  
**"LIBERTY ENLIGHTENING THE WORLD."**

WE HAVE no sympathy with Count Tolstoy's unscriptural religious views for which he was ex-communicated by the Greek Catholic Church; yet we note with surprise that his published reply to his ex-communication has been forbidden sale by the Public Prosecutor of Leipsic, Germany. A cable dispatch to the New York *Sun* says:

"The reason given for the seizure is that the work is calculated to bring the Church into contempt, and the prosecutor's action is based on a paragraph of the German penal code, which imposes a maximum penalty of three years' imprisonment on anybody publicly insulting one of the Christian churches or other religious communities enjoying in Germany the privileges of a corporation. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the incident is that Count Tolstoy's indignant reply to his ex-communicators is allowed to circulate in Russia, the Holy Synod refraining from prosecution, while the officials of the country which indorsed Luther's protest against the Roman Church seek to extinguish the words of the Russian reformer."

There are any number of people, in all countries, of similarly narrow soul we have every reason to believe. Fallen human nature though not inclined to claim for itself perfection, loves to wield power and to destroy its enemies or those against whom it is prejudiced; although uncertain as to what is truth it is ready to decide what is error upon very slight evidence.

Who can doubt that God's providence held back America until the due time, when its discovery opened a door of freedom for the oppressed and priest-and king-ridden of Europe. "Liberty

enlightening the world" has been a fact for now more than a century. No well-informed person will doubt that much of the liberty enjoyed by the peoples of Europe to-day are the result of the *influence* which has gone back to the "fatherland" from the liberty-loving people who commingling here have learned to think more justly and more broadly than they or their fathers could think under their old environments.

Custom becomes law: the illustration of American liberty with prosperity compels a liberty in Europe which otherwise would not exist to-day. But it looks as though the pendulum has swung its full length liberty-ward, even in America, and as though it had started in a return movement. We believe that the next few years will witness a serious curtailment of liberty on the part of those in power, and that the general spirit of liberty and alertness to its defense is so deficient among the masses, here as well as in Europe, that its wings will be clipped rapidly, in the name of law, order, expediency – until the people finally awakening to the situation, in fear of a return to complete serfdom will revolt in anarchy.

How comforting the thought that the bright lining to this cloud is the Millennial Kingdom which will promptly be established on the ruins of "the present evil world" – on the ashes of present civil, religious, political institutions. We who thus hope for the salvation of the world which God has promised can possess our souls in peace as respects these matters, waiting and hoping for a share in the new order of things – the new heavens and new earth – wherein will dwell righteousness. – 2 Pet. 3:13.

### **FEDERATION OF METHODISTS, AND OTHERS.**

Rev. Dr. George Elliott, pastor of the Central Methodist Episcopal Church, who has just returned from attendance upon the Methodist Ecumenical conference in London, England, says that the recent assembly was especially marked by its constant response to spiritual religion and by the utter absence of dogmatism. Perhaps the most important matter that came before the assembly, which

consisted of some 500 Methodists from all over the world, was that of church unity. As a result of the ecumenical conference, held in Baltimore ten years ago, all the Australian Methodists are now united in a single body. At the late conference in London all the smaller English bodies signified their willingness to unite with the Wesleyan church, which is the strongest [R2920 : page 388] branch of the denomination in the British Isles. Dr. Elliott thinks the outlook good for a consolidation, or at least for a federation, of the different branches.

The advance in this direction, however, was not so noticeable among the delegates from the United States, although some progress was made. The delegates from the Methodist Episcopal church south, which left the main body at the opening of the civil war, had little to say on the subject.

Half a day was spent in considering the matter of a federation similar to the church federations in this country, which should include the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Baptists and the Methodists. There already exists a free church catechism [R2921 : page 388] which all these denominations use in common, and to a great degree they are already joining in plans for mutual work.

– *Detroit Free Press.*

### **THE POPE'S VIEWS.**

*Die Information*, the clerical organ in Vienna, says: "The pope addressed the Catholic Bishops Sunday and declared that the late President McKinley was a victim of the excessive freedom granted to the people of the United States. He urged that it was the duty of society to oppose the spread of socialism, freemasonry, Judaism and anarchism."

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