

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

UNION OF CHURCHES

A MOVE toward the formation of a federation of the Protestant Churches of Cleveland, O., was taken yesterday morning at the Ministers' union meeting.

A paper was read by Dr. Paul F. Sutphen of the Second Presbyterian Church, in which he presented an argument in behalf of unity among the churches on the basis of a federation similar to the relationship between the United States government and the States, the denominations to retain their names, but be members of a federation. Dr. Sutphen said that he thought the time was now ripe for the organization of such a federation.

The paper was followed by a discussion. The views expressed by Dr. Sutphen met with approval and the ministers selected a committee of five, of which Dr. Sutphen is chairman, to look over the situation in Cleveland and ascertain whether or not an organization can be formed.

The movement in Cleveland is similar to the movement which has been started to form an organization including all the Protestant denominations in the United States. At a meeting in New York next November delegates will meet to discuss the situation. It is expected that there will be 600 to 700 delegates at the meeting, over which President Roosevelt has been invited to preside.

– *Cleveland Plaindealer.*

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This is precisely what we suggested as the probable outcome of the "Union" movement, – a federation on the plan of the union of the several States in the United States of America. Denominations of

kindred creeds and spirit may indeed unite absolutely, but federation alone will bring opposing creeds into accord. This is really a revival of "The Evangelical Alliance," but it will include the Episcopal Church and thus get the "life" mentioned by the Revelator. (Rev. 13:15). The proposal to have the chief executive of the nation preside at the meeting for proposed federation is significant of the close political alliance which will result.

SEVENTEEN MILLION CHURCH MEMBERS TO FEDERATE

We clip the following from the *North American*: –

Long strides have been taken towards the practical federation of the Protestant churches of the United States. Fourteen denominations have already agreed to participate in the great conference to be held in New York city during November of this year. It is understood that the synods of the Lutheran Church will vote to participate, and the Protestant Episcopal Church, through its Committee on Unity, will do likewise.

If these two denominations' assent, seventeen millions of communicants will be represented. It will be the first time in the history of Christianity since the Reformation that such a unity has been realized.

There will be no union along the lines of rules of faith or church organization, but there will be consolidation of effort in all the matters pertaining to the broad moral and national questions upon which all sects can meet on a common basis.

It will be a great church "trust," in fact, if not in name. The leaders of the movement prefer to say they are adopting the national spirit; *forming a union of denominations similar to the union of the States*. But the spirit of consolidation of energy is predominant.

One of them said yesterday:

"In many of the general charities, and in scores of other ways, we are dividing our energies; we are accomplishing a minimum of good with a maximum of energy. It is clear that by such a federation as is proposed we can reverse the proposition."

An eminent clergyman, who has done more, perhaps, than any other person to bring this church unity, for which all sects and denominations have so earnestly prayed, yesterday gave the following statement to *The North American*:

About a year ago a number of gentlemen representing different churches, officially connected with movements for Christian union and co-operation, met in the City of New York and decided to undertake a movement whose purpose should be the bringing together of regularly appointed representatives of the American Christian and Protestant churches, with a view to considering their common interests in connection [R3602 : page 228] with the moral and religious welfare of the American nation.

A committee was constituted, with the Rev. Dr. W. H. Roberts, of Philadelphia, as chairman and the Rev. Dr. E. P. Sanford as secretary.

Dr. Sanford has been for years the secretary of a voluntary organization, with headquarters in New York city, known as the National Federation of Christian Workers, and Dr. Roberts is the stated clerk of the Presbyterian General Assembly and American secretary of the Pan-Presbyterian Alliance.

THE NEWER UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

"Our forced-draft pace relieves us of the super-abundance of energy that demands an explosive outlet. Spasms of violent feeling go with a sluggish habit of life, and are as out of place today as are

the hard-drinking habits of our Saxon ancestors. We are too busy to give rein to spite. The stresses and lures of civilized life leave slender margin for the gratification of animosities. In quiet, side-tracked communities there is still much old-fashioned hatred, leading to personal clash; but elsewhere the cherishing of malice is felt to be an expensive luxury. Moreover, brutality, lust, and cruelty are on the wane. In this country, it is true, statistics show a widening torrent of bloody crime, but the cause is the weakening of law rather than an excess of bile. Other civilized peoples seem to be turning away from the sins of passion.

"The man who picks pockets with a railway rebate, murders with an adulterant instead of a bludgeon, burglarizes with a 'rake-off' instead of a jimmy, cheats with a company prospectus instead of a deck of cards, or scuttles his town instead of his ship, does not feel on his brow the brand of a malefactor. The shedder of blood, the oppressor of the widow and the fatherless, long ago became odious; but latter-day treacheries fly no skull-and-crossbones flag at the masthead....

"How decent are the pale slayings of the quack, the adulterator, and the purveyor of polluted water, compared with the red slayings of the vulgar bandit or assassin! Even if there is blood-letting, the long-range, tentacular nature of modern homicide eliminates all personal collision. What an abyss between the knife-play of brawlers and the law-defying neglect to fence dangerous machinery in a mill, or to furnish cars with safety couplers!...

"The stealings and slayings that lurk in the complexities of our social relations are not deeds of the dive, the dark alley, the lonely road, and the midnight hour. They require no nocturnal prowling with muffled step and bated breath, no weapon or offer of violence. Unlike the old-time villain, the latter-day malefactor does not wear a slouch hat and a comforter, breathe forth curses and an odor of gin, go about his nefarious work with clenched teeth and an evil scowl.

In the supreme moment his lineaments are not distorted with rage, or lust, or malevolence. One misses the traditional setting, the time-honored insignia of turpitude. Fagin and Bill Sykes and Simon Legree are vanishing types.... The modern high-power dealer of woe wears immaculate linen, carries a silk hat and a lighted cigar, sins with a calm countenance and a serene soul, leagues or months from the evil he causes. Upon his gentlemanly presence the eventual blood and tears do not obtrude themselves."

"The same qualities that lull the conscience of the sinner blind the eyes of the onlookers. People are sentimental, and bastinado wrongdoing not according to its harmfulness, but according to the infamy that has come to attach to it. Undiscerning, they chastise with scorpions the old authentic sins, but spare the new. They do not see that boodling is treason, that blackmail is piracy, that embezzlement is theft, that speculation is gambling, that tax-dodging is larceny, that railroad discrimination is treachery, that the factory labor of children is slavery, that deleterious adulteration is murder. It has not come home to them that the fraudulent promoter 'devours widows' houses,' that the monopolist 'grinds the faces of the poor,' that mercenary editors and spellbinders 'put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.' The cloven hoof hides in patent leather; and to-day, as in Hosea's time, the people 'are destroyed for lack of knowledge.' The mob lynches the redhanded slayer, when it ought to keep a gallows Haman-high for the venal mine inspector, the seller of infected milk, the maintainer of a fire-trap theater. The child-beater is forever blasted in reputation, but the exploiter of infant toil, or the concocter of a soothing syrup for the drugging of babies, stands a pillar of society. The petty shoplifter is more abhorred than the stealer of a franchise, and the wife-whipper is outcasted long before the man who sends his over-insured ship to foundering with its crew."

– *Atlantic Monthly*.

LUTHER'S SUPPRESSED UTTERANCE.

A Council of the Lateran, held A.D. 1513, under Pope Leo X., pronounced the immortality of the soul to be an orthodox article of Christian faith. The following is a translation of the rule which was adopted by this council, as given by Caranza, p.412, 1681.

"Whereas, some have *dared* to assert concerning the nature of the reasonable soul, that it is mortal; *we*, with the approbation of the *Sacred Council, do condemn and reprobate* all those who assert that the *intellectual soul is mortal*, seeing that the *soul* is not only truly and of itself and essentially the form of the human body, as is expressed in the canon of Pope Clement the Fifth, but likewise *immortal*; and *we strictly inhibit* all from dogmatizing otherwise, and *we decree* that all who adhere to the like erroneous assertions shall be shunned and punished as heretics."

Martin Luther visited Rome during the reign of Leo X., and the profligacy, corruption and licentiousness that he witnessed at the Papal court destroyed forever his former reverence for the sacred authority of Popes and Councils. For the decree of the Lateran Council he seems to have entertained a special contempt. In his *Defense*, prop. 27, "*Adversus Execrabilem Antichrist Bullam*," (Luther's Works, Vol. 2, folio 107, Wittenberg 1562) published in 1520, he said:

"I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful – such as 'the soul is the substantial form of the human body,' '*that the soul is immortal*,' with all those *monstrous opinions* to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals."

SPIRITISM'S ONWARD MARCH

The day is near when the world will accept the belief that spirits importantly participate in terrestrial life and exercise influences on our minds and acts. I am giving the **[R3602 : page 239]** study of

spirit possession or obsession of insane persons most profound attention. – *Bishop Samuel Fallows*.

I often see the spirits who cause insanity in my patients and at times I even hear their voices. Persons who are spoken of as helplessly insane are frequently simply lost under the overwhelming control of a spirit or, at times, a crowd of spirits. We frequently find by post-mortem examinations that no physical disorder exists in the brain or nervous systems of such insane. A large percentage of the insane are persons who have attempted to become spiritualistic mediums and who, by laying themselves open to spirit influence, have found the wrong or an evil spirit taking advantage of their susceptibility for the purpose of giving vent to spiritual desires and ideas through an earthly medium.

– *Dr. Edgar M. Webster*,
member of the Mental Section of the
American Medical Association.

THE NEW CHRISTIANITY

The Rev. Dr. Francis L. Patton, President Emeritus of Princeton University, addressing the students of Washington University Medical Department, said: –

"Some of the symptoms of the new Christianity are found in the studied avoidance of doctrinal statement, in the disposition to deal very prominently with sociological topics and to treat even doctrinal subjects exclusively from their ethical side.

"Underlying the movement is a new conception as to what Christianity is.

"The old view of Christianity, of course, is that it is a piece of supernatural information respecting the way of salvation through a crucified Redeemer.

"The new Christianity is the direct denial of this. According to one form of that denial, Christianity is simply a stage in the great progress of development. This form of denial has been, in a measure, superseded by another, which looks upon Christianity as the revelation of God in Christ and claims attention as being a return to the historic facts of the gospels. It is a return, however, which is distinctively associated with the repudiation of metaphysics in theology and an uncertain attitude with reference to the real deity of Jesus Christ.

"The logical result of either form of the new Christianity is the elimination of doctrinal statement, and the placing of the emphasis altogether upon the ethical teachings of Jesus. It must, however, be constantly remembered that Christianity must be more than ethical in order to be even ethical. If we are to uphold the ethics of Jesus we must uphold the authority of Jesus, and to uphold the authority of Jesus, we must maintain the supernaturalism that enters into his life.

"The tendency to reject the teachings of Paul is one that **[R3603 : page 229]** has its logical expression in the thoroughgoing subjectivism of Sabellius, and the way to escape from the blighting influences in morals and religion which result from this subjectivism is to rehabilitate the Pauline theology." – St. Louis Republican.

POPE TOUCHES TRUST QUESTION

The "trust" question is dealt with in an encyclical letter from the Pope. Among other things it says: –

"There are to-day vast numbers, continually being recruited by fresh accessions, who are utterly ignorant of the truths of religion, or who at most possess only such knowledge of God and of the Christian faith as to lead the lives of idolators. In consequence of this ignorance they regard it as no crime to cherish hatred against their neighbor, to enter into the most unjust contracts, the most unjust

speculation, endeavor to possess themselves of the property of others by enormous usury and to commit iniquities not less reprehensible."

HUMANITY IS SAVAGE

Count Tolstoy, in an interview, reiterates at length his views on the inefficiency of the proposed government reforms in Russia. He says: –

"This striving for a renewal of the state is impossible until the people have within themselves the image of the living God. Civilization has become savage. When the war with Japan is finished there will be war with India for Thibet. Human happiness is only attainable when such individual will do his utmost, one in the workshop, another in the field and another to compose sonatas; it only matters that each fulfils his duty, creates something. Positive rest will come of itself. Reform is of little value when humanity is savage.

HEBREW CHILDREN EXPELLED FROM MOSCOW

The Russian authorities have ordered the expulsion from Moscow of all Jewish children living with their parents. The order is issued on the ground that while permission has been granted to a limited number of Jews to live in the city the privilege does not extend to their children. The order therefore has been issued that the children must leave the place.

– *Cleveland Plain Dealer.*

"BE READY TO RECEIVE THE TRUTH."

Rev. John Robinson was the pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers. Below we note his memorable "parting charge" to the Pilgrims who came long ago to settle in America:

"I charge you before God and His blessed angels, that ye follow me no further than ye have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed Churches who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instruments of their reformation. Luther and Calvin were great shining lights in their time, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God. I beseech you remember it – 'tis an article of your Church covenant – that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God."

LIVING AT OUR BEST

Do not try to do a great thing; you may waste all your life waiting for the opportunity which may never come. But since little things are always claiming your attention, do them as they come, from a great motive, for the glory of God, to win His smile of approval, and to do good to men. It is harder to plod on in obscurity, acting thus, than to stand on the high places of the field, within the view of all, and to do deeds of valor at which rival armies stand still to gaze. But no such act goes without the swift recognition and the ultimate recompense of Christ.

To fulfil faithfully the duties of your station; to use to the uttermost the gifts of your ministry; to bear chafing annoyances and trivial irritations as martyrs bore the pillory and stake; to find the one noble trait in people who try to molest you; to put the kindest construction on unkind acts and words; to love with the love of God even the unthankful and evil; to be content to be a fountain in the midst of a wild valley of stones, nourishing a few lichens and wild flowers, or now and again a thirsty sheep; and to do this always, and not for the praise of man, but for the sake of God – this makes a great life.

– *F. B. Meyer.*

"It is blasphemy to assert that the infinitely good God should plan a redemptive system for His children, and that the Son of God should give His life for its advancement, and the Holy Ghost His continuous, unwordable efforts for its carrying forward, and then have it fail, and the only other alternative should be to have the Judge come and destroy the whole race and world."

– *Bishop H. W. Warren.*

True. Much better is the Bible teaching of coming "times of restitution." – Acts 3:19-21.

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