

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE CRISIS NEARING

THE Federation of Religions, now fairly launched, we have been waiting for ever since we published our interpretation of Revelations, chapter 13, in 1881. We there showed that Protestantism would federate, that the Evangelical Alliance of 1842 was the start of it, and that it would be in full bloom when the Episcopal body should associate and lend the dignity of its claimed "Apostolic ordination."

This combination is made ostensibly as the outcome of greater love amongst the Lord's followers, but really is the rolling together of the one end of the symbolic "heavens" for self-defense and to make an impression on the worldly.

Really, this is a step toward political power. The masses are becoming too logical to be dealt with as formerly, and religion to be popular must assume a new role. The old-time preaching, "Ye must be born again" to "enter the Kingdom," backed up by the horrible dogma of the dark ages, that all not "born again" must go to a hell of eternal torment, can no longer be preached – the world will not accept it. The new gospel must be something which will appeal to the worldly wise as "practical religion," namely, good morals – in politics, in finance, in society, in the family. Everybody can understand and appreciate that much of religion, and everybody will support it, and the churches will thus pose not as representatives of Christ and the Bible's teachings as a whole, but merely representatives of Christian morals. The effect will be a growth of Christian-Phariseism which will make clean the outside of the cup or platter, leaving the inside still unclean – unregenerate.

So popular will Federated Churchianity become that to even criticize it will be a "crime" worthy of crucifixion in some form – socially and financially, if not physically.

Politicians will quickly realize that their bread is buttered on that side, and be ready to enact legislation of any kind desired by the Federation. Mammon-worship will take on new forms temporarily, but power will soon debauch the unregenerate mass and drive out the regenerate faithful who may temporarily be misled by the great "Union" movement in the name of Christ, but without his Spirit or authority.

The Scriptures clearly show that anarchy will speedily swallow up everything – social, financial, political and religious – in the great "time of trouble" with which, as the Scriptures everywhere show, this age is to close and the Millennium of our Lord's reign of righteousness to be ushered in. Socialism, already growing, undoubtedly is the seed out of which anarchy will develop, though many Socialists are no doubt hoping to the contrary – misled by their failure to appreciate the power of selfishness, which will exhaust every means and battle to the death on both sides of the question – to get wealth and to hold it.

CHURCH UNION IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Ardor for Church union in Great Britain has cooled considerably of late over the law which practically turns over the public schools to the care of the Church of England – the Episcopal Church. All other Protestant denominations there are known by the general term, "Nonconformists," because they refuse to conform to the services of the Church established by the law of the land. These now are bent on an attempt to secure the disestablishment of present Church and State union. The hope has been expressed that with all churches on an equal footing a general Church Federation of Protestants will follow.

Now, a new suggestion is offered by Canon Henson of Westminster Abbey, namely, that an easier and a more popular course would be for the Government to recognize all [R3697 : page 7] Christian denominations (with certain limitations, possibly) putting all on a parity with the Episcopal Church. His suggestion is that this would be a *practical union*, and he favors it as a possibility. He says in a lengthy article: –

"Clear the fiction of Apostolic Succession out of the way and Establishment will be no barrier to reunion. Leave that fiction paramount in the minds of the English clergy, and Disestablishment will only give freer play to the intolerance it inevitably generates. The deeper forces of our time are not moving in the direction of that severe individualism which would reduce the action and responsibility of the State to the lowest measures; rather we move toward a larger view of State action and State responsibility.

"The logical goal of modern tendencies is not toward Disestablishment, but toward a fuller and worthier Establishment. Why should not the nation draw into its service all the organized Christianity instead of limiting itself to a single denomination? I rejoice to observe a beginning made in this direction by recent legislation, which has recognized for certain civic purposes the status of Nonconformist clergymen, and I would venture to hope that the final solution of the problem of religious education in the State schools may be reached by an extension of the principle of establishment.

"If, even at the eleventh hour, more temperate counsels could prevail, and a resettlement of the educational difficulty [R3698 : page 7] could be arrived at by the combined efforts of the just and peace-loving men on both sides, it does not seem to me impossible that the cause of home reunion should receive a great impetus from this very educational conflict, which, for the moment, seems

to put back by at least twenty-five years the hands of the clock which were slowly, very slowly, climbing toward union."

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Can it be that *thus* the two-horned beast [Great Britain] may give "life," energy, the *effect* of Apostolic succession, to the Protestant "image of the [Roman] beast"? (Rev. 13:15.) A very few years will demonstrate; but this appears to us a very likely course of fulfilment.

RESULTS OF RUSSIA'S STRUGGLE.

Matters are in a sad condition in Russia, but probably not one-fifth as bad as the majority of people surmise. In times past rioting has occurred in many cities of the United States, the details of which were learned by fellow-citizens only through the same channels as by the remainder of the world – through the newspaper dispatches. Doubtless the same is true in Russia, except in the immediate vicinity of the troubles.

What is now occurring in Russia is awakening that stolid people marvellously. Even when order shall have again been fully restored the people will have gained such a knowledge of this power as will prepare them for the great climax which, according to prophecy, we believe will be reached by 1915.

"The Internationals," extremists of the Socialist class, are credited with the chief direction of the Russian revolution. They have shown great skill thus far and may be esteemed as getting a schooling with the most stupid of "Christendom," which will prepare them for the great struggle to occur at the close of "the times of the Gentiles."

RUSSIA'S THREE-SIDED MELEE

The telegraphic reports from Russia are confusing to many. One time we read of the Socialists and students rioting and in conflict with the troops; again we read of massacres of Jews, to which the Government employees seem to give assent and secret aid. These seemingly conflicting reports can only be understood when we remember that there are three parties more or less in conflict:

(1) The Socialists, mechanics, students, etc., who are moving for liberty – some for a constitution and a congress composed of the people's representatives, and some for out-and-out Socialism.

(2) The old government party, sometimes styled the Bureaucracy. Amongst these are many of wealth and culture, who believe that any concessions to the growing discontent will surely lead up to further discontent and eventually disrupt Russia. This party is charged with being responsible for having brought on the Japanese war. They are influential and close to the Czar.

(3) A third party is everyway conservative. It desires reform and peace under a midway government – neither autocratic nor liberal. Count Witte is at the head of this division.

The Czar is credited with sympathy for this third class of his subjects, but has been closely pressed by the influentials of the second party until recently, when, under fear of the first party, he formally put Witte in office and issued a decree, or ukase, granting a constitution and congress. Had he followed this course sooner matters would have gone more smoothly, for at one time party number three was of considerable size. Many have deserted it for party number one – some because they have imbibed the theories and spirit of Socialism and some because they doubt the Czar's honesty or ability in respect to his ukase.

Witte and his associates of the third party are obliged to operate largely through present office-holding governors and generals, whose sympathies lie with the second party – across Witte's path of governmental reform. It is these who have secretly sanctioned or aided the riots which have killed so many Jews – because the Jews are of the first party, namely, Socialist sympathizers and abettors.

LATEST REPORTS

As we write, the dispatches seem to imply that the Czar is in great perplexity, because the masses refuse to accept his ukase of freedom and are, by strikes and increasingly revolutionary methods, more than ever menacing the Social structure. He doubtless feels that he must do something and that quickly; and that his "olive-branch" ukase having been rejected he can do nothing now but fall back upon the second party and use force to crush the rebellious into submission or into death. Matters may not yet have reached this extreme, but if it has we doubt not there will be strenuous times in Russia before Socialists are reduced to submission.
