

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

THREE CHURCHES UNITE IN CANADA PRESBYTERIANS, CONGREGATIONALISTS AND METHODISTS AGREE

Toronto, Ont. – The central committee, composed of representatives from the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches throughout the Dominion, have agreed upon a code of doctrines that will unify the three denominations into one great Church, which, it is proposed, should be known as the "United Church of Canada." The revised confession of faith of the American Presbyterian Church will be used. The new Church is to be governed by the "General Conference," after the Methodist form, with a president as the chief officer. Below is to be a council, after the Congregational idea, with a chairman at the head. The next body is to be a "Presbytery," governed by a moderator. The plan will be submitted to the several denominations throughout Canada for approval, which it is expected to receive.

FOR GREAT CHURCH UNION

Concord, N.H. – A number of the Episcopal clergymen of the diocese of New Hampshire have made preliminary arrangements for the formation of an association which will have for its ultimate object the union of the Anglican Church with the Orthodox Church of Russia and other ancient churches of the East. The organization is the outgrowth of the thanksgiving service at Christ Church, Portsmouth, which followed the signing of the treaty of peace between Russia and Japan, and at which priests of the Episcopal and Russian churches officiated. The new organization will follow the lines of the "Eastern Church Association" of the Church of England and will have branches in all dioceses of the Episcopal Church in this country, if the plans of the promoters are

successful. It is said that within a half dozen years the relations between the Russian and Episcopal churches have been growing closer, but until the thanksgiving evensong held at Portsmouth, there had been no general participation in one service by both Russian and Episcopal priests.

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Items such as the above quoted in these columns are not thereby endorsed. We print them as news – as showing the fulfilment of prophecy. We could more nearly endorse the following article from the "New York Tribune":

THE INTER-CHURCH CONFERENCE

Cooperation on a far-reaching scale seems to have been the main object of the recent Inter-Church Conference on the Federation of American Churches, held in New York city, and the eminent men and delegates of the conference, with hardly a single exception, predicted, as the result of Christian unity and denominational fellowship the ushering in upon the world of a reign of universal peace and righteousness, in fact, the setting up of the Kingdom of God.

The writer notes that this most excellent state of affairs is to be brought about by potent forces and activities introduced in the realm of civil law, and using "the gateway of politics." No doubt those who are so enthusiastic for a vital unity agreeable to all sects, for a confederated power that shall reach to and be felt "in all Christendom," are well meaning; still, it must seem to some like only an iridescent dream; an attempt to reorganize society and introduce a "new order of things" by and through the aid of the civic power, instead of the apostolic process of the "new birth" and the operation of those powers which belong exclusively to the spiritual.

One is led to inquire whether the proposed federation of all the churches into a substantial organization that shall make itself felt in the religious, the social and the business worlds is not, after all, a Church "trust." And if a Church "trust" will not its methods be something after the order of the methods of the great trusts and combines of the financial world? Will it not find a way to do away with competitors or those who do not believe in its principles and refuse to cooperate in its purposes?

Surely it would be but a step to find the heretics, and likewise find a way to punish them. And whoever ponders the history of the fourth century and studies the acts and words of the great religious councils of those early days must see in the recent congress of religionists in New York an exact parallel; and the significance of a movement that will lead, as was clearly indicated by several of the speakers, to a world religion, must not be underestimated.

Back there, there was a cooperation and a federation on a magnificent scale. And the sure result was the ushering in of the scenes of the Dark Ages. It was a minority that lighted up the splendid gardens of Nero for the chariot races, their bodies soaked in petroleum, providing fuel for the lurid flames: it was a minority that underwent the tortures of the thumb-screw, the rack and the fagot, that endured the Spanish Inquisition and the exquisite punishments of a praying Torquemada rather than yield "the faith." It was the majority, the cooperative majority, that defined the civil and religious duties of man and provided punishments to fit the crime. **[R3704 : page 20]**

Shall history repeat itself? We hope not. But let this federation or combination of all churches pursue its course to the last analysis, and we tremble for the results. Let ministers of the gospel strive for forgiveness of sin and regeneration, and legislators attend strictly to the business of providing punishment

for crime. And let a wide distinction ever be made between sin and crime. There will then be little likelihood of religious persecutions.

In the name of liberty to worship God "according to the dictates of one's own conscience," I want to enter a public protest against a federation or organization of churches that seeks to use the civil power to attain an end that allows only of spiritual methods, and to recommend to all the study of the life and trials of Roger Williams, the hanging of the Quakers, the whipping of the Anabaptists, the story of Daniel in the lions' den and the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace.

All this was accomplished by a religious federation, which is only another name for a Church trust. Instead of a demand for a world religion that compels, let there be a plea for a genuine religion that implores. – JOHN S. WIGHTMAN.

THE WORLD'S PERPLEXITY.

On the opposite page we copy from "Doctor" Dowie's publication a cartoon which fairly well represents the present situation of "Christendom." But should not Doctor Dowie also be represented in the crowd, shouting, "I am for myself, as 'First Apostle,' 'Elijah,' and the 'Messenger of the Covenant'"? It would seem so!

Possibly some unfriendly critic may say, "Yes; and you are another who is adding to the Babel of confusion, forming a new division, 'the sect everywhere spoken against,' the no-name sect."

Not so, we reply. It is not we but the Truth which causes the division, even as our Master foretold and exemplified: "I am not come to send peace, but a sword." As *present truth* did a separating work between the wheat and the chaff in the Jewish "harvest," so now *present truth* will be used of the Lord to

separate the "wheat" from the "tares" in the present "harvest" of this age.

It is true that our quiet, effective presentation of God's Word and plan does cause commotion and a great din, as all sects and parties at once shout against the faithful presentations of God's Word of "good tidings of great joy unto all people," as presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN. But that is Babylon's noise, not ours. It is their effort to obscure the [R3706 : page 20] light of the dawning new dispensation. It is their unavailing effort to drown the voice of the great Shepherd, who is now calling his true sheep out of every earthly pen to himself and the liberties and rest and food of the true fold.

We preach not ourselves but Christ. We substantiate nothing except by his Word. We make no laws, formulate no creed, deprive no sheep of his full liberty in Christ; but merely on every question quote the Word of the Lord, through the apostles and prophets. We boast nothing, claim nothing of ourselves. We are content to serve the Lord and his flock to the best of our ability – exacting no tithes, no "honor of men," no confession of authority, no compensation; hoping merely for the love of the Lord and of those who are his children and have his Spirit.

So far from forming or desiring to form a new sect, we ignore all sectarian systems and their claimed authority; we recognize only the "one Lord, one Faith and one Baptism" of the Scriptures and fellowship as a "brother" every person of decent morals who confesses faith in the "redemption through the blood of Christ," and especially all of this class who profess a full consecration to the Lord's will and service, – whatever sect they may be in, or outside of all.

The word "Catholic" signifies general or universal. We know of Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Anglican Catholics, etc., but we know of no other company of Christians which

recognizes *every* Christian in the whole world in the same complete sense that we do, as stated foregoing. Hence to us the term Catholic, or Universal, most fitly belongs.

Our Lord's petition for his "members" – "that they all may be one even as thou, Father, and I are one," was never meant to apply to sects and parties as is being attempted by the Federation movement now in progress. The Father and the Son are one in a very different sense from that. On the contrary, we occupy a position to which every true child of God can come if he chooses. And the *best*, the *truest* of all the sects and of those outside all sects are now being gathered to the Lord and to us, and all truly the Lord's in faith and in practice.
