

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

CHURCH UNION – NEXT, FEDERATION

THE Presbyterian and Cumberland Presbyterian bodies have reunited, as per the following telegram in the public press columns:

Des Moines, Ia., May 24. – Dr. Hunter Corbett, the Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, declared the union of the Presbyterian Church of the United States and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church completed at 10.21 o'clock this morning as follows:

"I do solemnly declare and hereby publicly announce that the basis of union and reunion is now in full force and effect, and that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church is now reunited with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as one Church."

The big ecclesiastical assemblage burst into a storm of rejoicing. Handclapping, cheering and waving of handkerchiefs gave expression of unalloyed pleasure.

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The spirit of union and federation prevails everywhere. Our readers well know that from prophecy we have for twenty-five years been expecting not only that the Federation would come soon, but that the *vitality* of it would come from the Episcopal Church. The insurmountable barrier thus far seems to be in the claim of this denomination to "Apostolic Succession," which asserts that none are qualified ministers except as "ordained" in the line of such succession.

Now we find a movement amongst Episcopalians to concede something: to claim merely the Historic Episcopate and to drop the claim of Apostolic Succession, so as to promote the union of all Protestants. This view is set forth in a recently published book by Rev. E. McCrady (Episcopalian), entitled,

"APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION AND THE PROBLEM OF UNITY"

We quote one paragraph: –

"When we ourselves are broad enough, catholic enough, to admit that the theory of the divine right of Episcopacy is a theory only – when we are willing to own, as we must, that while fitting in very well with historical facts, it can never be absolutely *demonstrated* – when we further are willing to recognize the fact that the Reformers did not believe in such a theory themselves, and that the Church, in spite of all the influences brought to bear upon her, has carefully refrained from officially promulgating such a doctrine – when, in other words, we cease to unchurch our Protestant brethren by insisting upon a principle logically indefensible and never officially set forth – we will then be in a position to expect some concessions on their part, and – we venture the further prediction – we shall then begin to hear some solid discussion, and see some valid signs of the approaching union of Christendom."

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The Bible clearly sets forth that such a *federation* of Protestants will be effected before the great final catastrophe which will usher in the Kingdom of God's dear Son and the glorification of the Church of the Firstborn; hence our interest in every item pointing to its realization.

"THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA"

"The negotiations for the union of three churches in Canada have attracted world-wide attention. Nearly all of the religious journals and many of the secular ones devote much space to special comment upon this theme. These comments are almost entirely congratulatory. The Toronto *Globe* has rendered important service by printing the expressions of opinion by men of light and leading in the three churches in various parts of the country. It is a surprise to find how generally these are favorable expressions. Of course there are a few doubting Thomases, a few who magnify the differences and overlook the great harmonies, who advise us to be careful and go slow; but the overwhelming consensus is in favor, not of federation, but of organic union. We have received correspondence from various parts of the United States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with reference to an account we wrote in *The [R3791 : page 180] Christian Herald* of this great movement, and all of these are of devout thanksgiving for the leading of divine providence. We quote from the *Literary Digest* some of the press comments on this subject:

"'An extraordinary movement, in some respects, not paralleled in several centuries,' is the phrase by which the New York *Christian Advocate* (Methodist) characterizes the movement toward union between the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist churches in Canada. The report of the joint committee of these three denominations, just published, is described by the Toronto *Globe* as 'the most remarkable ecclesiastical document issued in Protestant Christendom since the Reformation.' All the indications seem to point to the ultimate consummation of this union, and the name tentatively chosen for the new Church is, 'The United Church of Canada.' The *Interior* (Presbyterian, Chicago) writes of the union planned as 'the most radical and remarkable coalition of churches that has been proposed since the Reformation brought in the era of

denominational divisions,' *Zion's Herald* (Methodist, Boston), reminds us that Canada in the past has led the way in effecting denominational unions.

"The *Christian Advocate* remarks editorially: 'This experiment in each of its stages should receive the concentrated attention of the Protestantism of the world. If it succeed it will make feasible the only reasonable plan for the diminution of the number of distinct communions.'

"The *Presbyterian* (Toronto, Canada) thinks that the prospects are bright for a consummation of the proposed union. It says: 'There will be no unseemly haste; in the nature of things there cannot be. It will take some little time to prepare the basis and have it pronounced upon ultimately by the body of the people. Agreement as to the things that may be given up and the things that shall remain, will not come in a moment, but it will come. There is an organizing power of its own in a great, structural, co-ordinating movement like this.'

"The *Presbyterian Banner* (Pittsburgh, Pa.) comments as follows: 'We would hardly think a union of these three churches possible in this country, but it appears to be possible only a few miles north of us, and it is the Lord's doing and marvellous in our eyes. The Spirit of the Lord, however, is not restricted by geographical boundaries and red and blue lines on the map, and what the Spirit can do there he may do here.'

"The Methodists in Canada number 916,659, the Presbyterians 842,016, and the Congregationalists 28,000. Thus, as the *Church Standard* (Protestant Episcopal, Philadelphia) points out, the new Church will enter upon its work with a membership of 1,786,676, 'nearly one-third of the population of the whole of Canada.'"

– *Onward* (Methodist, Toronto).

FEDERATION IN GREAT BRITAIN

The London *Daily Chronicle* recently published a lengthy appeal for special prayers for the reunion of Christendom. It was signed by the President of the United Methodist Free Churches; the President of the Methodist New Connection Church; the President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference; the Moderator-elect of the English Presbyterian Church; the President of the Baptist Union; the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; the Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland; the Primus of the Scottish Church, and the Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Evidently a few more years of stress will accomplish what they *pray for*, – a union of sects, a federation on the basis of ignoring one another's errors. But this will not be the heart union for which our Lord prayed – *one* in the Father and the Son and in heart [R3792 : page 180] fellowship with each other, because "sanctified by the Truth."

EDUCATION MAKES "FOOLS"

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." – Psalm 14:1.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CLASS 65 PER CENT. FOOLS

The faculty of Columbia University put the following questions to a class of 45 students in elementary psychology:

- (1) "Do you conceive of God as a personal or an impersonal being?"
- (2) "What difference do you make between a personal and an impersonal being?"
- (3) "Under what image or images do you think of God?"
- (4) "What difference would the non-existence of God make in your daily life?"

Papers bearing these questions were distributed to the class, with the request that they be returned with their answers within a few days. Only three replies were received.

The Professor then made the questions a part of the regular class lesson, and an entire lecture period was granted for the preparation of the answers. It was further granted that none need sign his name to his replies, in hope that this would bring out full responses.

Three refused to express themselves, returning the question papers blank. Twenty-two said their conception of God was impersonal. Four expressed doubt as to God's personality. Sixteen only (35 per cent.) expressed belief in a personal God. Thirteen of the young men said that it would not make the least bit of difference in their daily lives if they had not heard of the existence of God. The rest said that there would be some difference, but no two agreed exactly as to the same condition of life.

These things are hard to believe, but the facts are vouched for by the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*. They remind us of the Apostle's words, "The world by wisdom knows not God"; and again, that "The god of this world hath *blinded* the minds of them that believe not."

How glad we are that these *blinded* young men will yet be brought under the influence of him who died for [R3792 : page 181] them at Calvary, to the extent that their blindness shall be turned away and the "knowledge of the glory of the Lord" shall shine into their hearts. How strange it seems that their Christian friends and relatives (1) so combat the thought of God's mercy enduring beyond the tomb, that these and "all the families of the earth may be blessed" by the Messiah (Head and body), the elect of this age. (2) How strange that they think of such young men, who say in their hearts, "There is no God," as being of the "elect,"

believers, footstep followers of Christ – to whom alone in this age the "great salvation" is promised.

"WE ARE COUNTED AS FOOLS"

The above words by St. Paul are still true of those faithful to the Word of God. Below we reprint an item from the *Digest*, *re* the changing meaning of the word heresy. The Rev. Crapsey, D.D., of the Episcopal Church, has recently been telling his doubts and disbeliefs, yet contends that he is still an orthodox Episcopalian and should be permitted to teach his unbeliefs under the prestige of "the Church," wearing its livery, holding its honors and receiving its pay. Some one not well posted on such matters thought this was wrong and brought the matter up in a heresy trial, Dr. Crapsey disbelieves the Bible, rejects its being of divine inspiration, thinks Jesus was born as every other child, that he had no prehuman existence, that Joseph or some man was his father. So far as we may be able to judge, Robert Ingersoll and Rev. Crapsey, D.D., would have agreed perfectly except as to *methods* of teaching the unbelief. In our opinion Mr. Ingersoll took the more honorable position in not pretending to be a minister and servant and teacher of the One whose words he denied.

Dr. Crapsey, in his unbelief, has so much company now among ministers that his conviction was a general surprise. Others would doubtless feel that if they condemned him they would be at the same time condemning themselves, because the majority, apparently, are now "higher critics." Dr. Crapsey is surprised and desires a new trial.

"THE WAY WHICH THEY CALL HERESY"

The Apostle says, "After the way which *they call heresy* so worship I the God of my fathers." (Acts 24:14.) Likewise, today, if anyone will arise in any of the churches of Christendom and

fearlessly preach the Bible's presentations as set forth in the MILLENNIAL DAWN volumes, it would not take long to decide him a heretic. In other words, times have so changed that those who *deny* the Bible's testimony are recognized as orthodox, while those who teach and expound the Bible faithfully and consistently are recognized at once as heretics, just as in Paul's day. The article follows: –

CHANGING DEFINITIONS OF HERESY

"In the eighteenth century it required a radical philosopher like Hume to advance such arguments against the credibility of Christian miracles as today may be put forth by an Episcopal rector, with a fair chance of baffling the heresy-hunters at the last,' remarks a writer in the *Evening Post*, apropos of the recent trial of Rev. Algernon Crapsey. The churches, the writer asserts, are looking for a definition of heresy that can be generally accepted, 'for it is annoying, to say the least, to convene investigating bodies every year to define the offense anew.' Dr. Crapsey's trial, he points out, will leave the Episcopal Church practically where it was before in the matter, 'except that in Bishop Walker's jurisdiction it will be decided either that the miracles of the Bible must be accepted or that they may be rejected.' However, he adds, it will serve to show that what was heresy yesterday is not necessarily heresy today. We read further:

"As compared with the published utterances of Heber Newton, Dr. Crapsey's statements do not seem to be extreme, though they mark a distinct advance in frankness from the day that Bishop Gray "deposed" Bishop Colenso for attempting to question the Pentateuch. The words are much more specific, too, than those uttered by Dr. Charles A. Briggs in 1891, when he became professor of Biblical theology at the Union Theological Seminary, and which led to his withdrawal from the Presbyterian ministry. But Dr. Briggs found refuge with the Episcopalians,

that Church called by Phillips Brooks "the roomiest Church in America." Whether the denomination that refused to consider charges against Heber Newton and welcomed Dr. Briggs will decide to retain Dr. Crapsey must depend upon the court's reading of history.'

"Some years ago, when Dr. Heber Newton gave up his rectorship of All Souls' Church to go to Leland Stanford University, the New York *Sun* commented in part as follows:

"The religious views expressed so boldly by Dr. Newton which aroused so loud a protest ten or fifteen years ago have no longer the novelty they then had. *The conclusions of the "higher criticism" of the Bible, which in general may be said to have furnished the basis for them, have since affected very profoundly the teachings of Protestant churches very extensively, and they are accepted if not actually propagated by professors in practically all their leading theological schools.* Thus the religious public has become accustomed to views which provoked astonishment and resentment when they began to be proclaimed so frankly by Dr. Newton."

MAN AND WOMAN UNDER THE CURSE

Sin and death have long reigned. Selfishness instead of Love has had control of the world for centuries. Now God is lifting the vail of ignorance, and all who have been getting the worst of the bargain become violent for their rights. The masses of Russia have long been happy in ignorance and superstition. Their ignorance was their bliss. Now there is a general awakening; everybody is dissatisfied; all are clamoring for their rights. The nation is in revolution, and undoubtedly will become more unhappy yearly as the awakening comes, until the great catastrophe of anarchy, which will be the divine opportunity for rectifying all wrongs and establishing the social order on Love instead of Selfishness. It is necessary that all should **[R3792 :**

page 182] be awakened, that all may see the effect of selfishness and learn to deprecate it.

The men of Russia have been degraded and brutal because of their share of the curse; because their mothers knew nothing but selfishness to teach them. Now these mothers and sisters are awakening and crying out against the very conditions they assisted in creating. They have our sympathy; the more so because their discontent will for the time make them and their homes the more unhappy until they learn their lesson. And of course only a few will ever learn in this day "The Christian's secret of a happy life" – the peace of God, built on the exceeding great and precious promises of the Scriptures.

HELL FIRE AND SAINTLINESS DENOUNCED BY TWO M.E. BISHOPS

We clip the following from the *Toledo Times*, May 24, report of the Rocky Mountain Missionary Society:

Denver, Colo. – Hell fire, such as is preached from many pulpits, does not exist, declared Bishop Oldham of the Methodist Episcopal Diocese of Southern Asia yesterday before the convention of the Rocky Mountain Missionary Society. **[R3793 : page 182]**

"Just tell me of anybody who believes we will be burned alive in a place filled with brimstone and fire. I'd hate to die if I thought I'd get a scorch for every sin," said the Bishop.

"I wouldn't be a saint for anything," exhorted Bishop J. C. Hartzell of Africa, in taking up the discussion, "but at the same time I go to Church regularly, even if I don't do the talking. There are two extremes: the man who, in spite of all the help God, man or the Bible gives him, goes to the bad, and the man who is so tremendously greedy good that he is dubbed saint. I'd rather be a

man, for a man has all the possibilities of right and wrong, and a saint hasn't any choice."

CRAZED BY DR. TORREY'S SERMON ON HELL

The Chicago *Tribune*, May 24, tells of a Mr. J. W. Griffin of Atlanta, Ga., crazed by hearing Dr. Torrey's sermon on hell and taken in charge by the police.

ALL THINGS WORK FOR GOOD.

– *ROMANS 8:28.* –

If our Father's gracious promise
Was more clearly understood,
That his daily dealing with us
Works together for our good;

How the burdens that are pressing
Hard upon us would grow light,
And each trial prove a blessing
Were our trust in him complete.

If our hearts were always lightsome,
And we knew no anxious care,
We might overlook the sorrow
That surrounds us everywhere.

If our stores were overflowing,
Then, perhaps, we never would
Learn to sympathize with others
Who are lacking daily food.

Knowing he is always "*for us*"
We, as children of his grace,
Can afford to bear with patience
"Trusting where we cannot trace."

He will surely *guard the issue*
Of *each test*, though it may seem
Hard to bear; its object always
Is to draw us *close to him*.

So whatever may befall us
We who love him always should
Know the Lord is overruling
All that happens us, for good.

– *John LaDow*.
