

## **VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER**

### **WAR LEADING TOWARD A CLIMAX**

THE GREAT WAR continues to rage. More and more all the nations are being dragged into it, as intimated by the Lord through the Prophet. (Jeremiah 25:15-28.) One is reminded of St. James' words, "Ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain." "Ye ask [pray] and receive not [answers to your prayers], because ye ask amiss" – selfishly. Again we read, "Go to, ye rich men. Weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you." – James 4:2,3; 5:1.

Regardless of their branch of the human family, all sincere men must sympathize greatly with the terrible conditions prevailing in Europe. The French are finally awakening to the fact that they are almost exhausted. They have no further reserves to call to the colors. They are patriotically using their money and exhausting their credit. They are convinced that they cannot win, that it will be either devastation or a bargain-peace. They know of no reason whatsoever as to why they are at war with their neighbor. The Italians are in much the same predicament, and are fearing insurrection, anarchy. The Russians are in terrible plight, also. The novelty of the war has worn off. The glory of marching into Berlin has faded. Revolution is threatening. The Balkan nations and Greece are perplexed and fearful under the demands, the entreaties and the threats of the great warring nations, compelling them to participate in the strife or threatening their future existence.

Only Germany and Great Britain realize what the war is about – that it is commercial; that it is for the liberty of the seas and the profits of world commerce. Both of these great and intelligent nations now realize that they have gotten into a struggle ten-fold more severe than they had ever anticipated. Both would like to be out of the war, but both fear the future, realizing that no such

combination could ever again be effected. Both are on the verge of financial bankruptcy, and wisely are borrowing as much as they can and seeking to avoid the thought that they could never pay the interest on their debts without risking revolution of their peoples against the heavy taxes that would be necessary.

The warring nations are jealous of America and bitter against her for her neutrality. Americans are snubbed and insulted everywhere in Europe and even in Australia. The best intentions of our President and his own personality are ridiculed – so blind are the poor people in respect to the real issues of the war. Surely things are leading on toward the climax when every man's hand will be against his neighbor and against his brother and when there will be no peace to those who go out or to those who come in. – Ezekiel 38:21; Zechariah 8:10.

### **WAR NECESSITIES COST LIBERTIES**

Few are aware of the extent to which war's necessities are interfering with the liberties of the peoples of Europe. Military necessity is rapidly pushing aside all the rights of the people in the great Magna Charta of British liberty. We are not saying that this is unwise, or that we could do better under the circumstances. We are merely noting the fact that the people are giving up their liberties as one of the costs of the war. In Great Britain large factories are taken over by the Government and turned from peaceful industry to the manufacture of **[R5791 : page 323]** munitions of war. The employees are required to continue to work the same as before. Other manufacturers and employers are forbidden by the Government to employ any one who has been connected with these factories taken over by the Government unless the applicant has a full release by the Government. This is difficult to get.

Canada and Australia are being drawn into the whirlpool and are losing their liberties, too. At the beginning of the war it was a question as to what the Canadians and Australians would do to help

the mother country – voluntarily. All that condition is changed. Instead, the Government is discussing whether or not it will conscript Canadian and Australian young men and force them into the war. And so great is the change that has come over the people that the right of the mother country in this respect seems not even to be questioned by the majority.

Over and beyond all this, the Government is taking a record of every individual in Canada and Australia, as well as in Great Britain, with full particulars practically including all of the individual's affairs. This is called the War Census Act and recites: "Two things are certain – one, that we must continue to fight with every ounce of energy we possess; the other, that we can do this only by a complete organization of all our resources. By no other means can we continue this life and death struggle.

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"Every pair of hands must be occupied. Every resource must be developed. Every citizen must give to the country in labor and money the utmost of his capacity."

As a further war measure personal liberty is being taken away under what is known as "The Defense of the Realm Act." Under this Act the Government holds absolute control of the press and of the lives and liberties of all the people. A Briton may be arrested and imprisoned **[R5791 : page 324]** for a year or more without even knowing the charge against him or having any opportunity whatever to defend himself – the act of habeas corpus being set aside. This law, now operative in Great Britain, is being extended to the Canadians and Australians, who, apparently, will meekly submit to it. If any one had prophesied such a condition of things three years ago, he would have been counted a fool.

Our Brethren are not anarchistic, surely. Undoubtedly they will seek to be subject to the "powers that be" as long as they be – except wherever their consciences might be impinged.

Needless to say that in Germany and all the other nations at war conditions are much the same, or worse. How long it will be ere our own favored land shall become involved we know not. However,

"Through all the tumult and the strife  
We hear the music ringing;  
It finds an echo in our souls –  
How can we keep from singing" –

that the King of Glory is at the door, and that His glorious Empire of Righteousness and Truth is about to be ushered in! Well may we be content with whatever the Lord's providence may mark out for us, knowing that all things will work together for good to those who love Him – called ones according to His purpose!

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## **NATIONAL AMITY AFTER THE WAR**

Prof. Bertrand Russell, of Cambridge, England, quotes the German historian Eduard Meyer, that "So far as one can foresee, peace will be only a short truce; England will use the first opportunity of beginning the fight again, better prepared, at the head of a new coalition if not of the old one, and a long series of difficult and bloody wars will follow, until at last the definite decision is obtained."

Professor Russell proceeds: "Is it certain that these two nations will continue to fight and hate each other until one of them is utterly broken? Fortunately no country consists wholly of professors, not even Germany; and it may be hoped that more sanity is to be found

among those who have not been made mad by much learning. For the moment, both countries are wholly blind to their own faults, and utterly fantastic in the crimes which they attribute to the enemy. A vast but shadowy economic conflict has been invented to rationalize their hostility which, in fact, is as irrational and instinctive as that of dogs who snarl and fly at each other in the street. The cynic who said, 'Speech has been given us to conceal our thoughts,' might well have added, 'Thought has been given us to conceal our passions from ourselves.' At least I am sure that this is true of thought in war-time.

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"France and Russia each has its myth, for without myth no great national upheaval is possible. But their myths are different from ours, whereas the myths of England and Germany are all but identical. Each believes itself a great peace-loving nation, powerful, but always using its power to further worthy ends. Each believes that the other, with an incredible perfidy inspired by the basest jealousy, suddenly stirred up the war, after many years of careful preparation, military in the one case, diplomatic [and naval] in the other. Each believes that only the utter humiliation of the other can secure the peace of the world and the ordered progress of civilization. In each, a pacifist minority urges moderation in the use of victory, while yielding to none in the conviction that victory is the indispensable preliminary to any future reconstruction. Each is absolutely confident of victory, and prepared for any sacrifice, however great, in order to secure victory. Each is unable to believe that the other is sincere in the opinion which it professes; its own innocence and the other's guilt are as clear as noonday, and can be denied only by the most abject hypocrisy.

"Both cannot be right in these opinions, and *a priori* it is not likely that either is right. No nation was ever so virtuous as each believes itself, and none was ever so wicked as each believes the

other. If these beliefs survive the war, no peace will be possible. Both nations have concentrated their energies so wholly on making war that they have rendered it almost impossible to make peace. In normal times civilized and humane people find a difficulty in believing that they do well to butcher each other. In order to overcome this feeling, journalists have filled the minds of their readers with such appalling accounts of the enemies' crimes that hatred has come to seem a noble indignation, and it has grown difficult to believe that any of our opponents deserve to live. Yet peace, if it is to be real, must be accompanied by respect, and must bring with it some sense of justice toward rival claims. What these claims are, and what justice demands if they are to be reconciled, must be realized in some degree before the peace, if the peace is to heal the wounds which the war is inflicting.

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"When the Germans, with their usual incautious explicitness, made the announcement, 'Our future is on the sea,' most Englishmen felt, almost without conscious thought, that the Germans might as well have announced that their future lay through the death of England's greatness and the starvation of our population.

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"Because the apprehension was real and deep-seated, the hostility was rather blind and instinctive; although, in the region of conscious thought, the hopes of an understanding were not abandoned, yet in that deeper region out of which effective action springs, the belief in a future conflict had taken root and could no longer be dislodged.

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"The Germans, in spite of their progress, their energy, and their population, are very inferior in colonial possessions, not only to England and Russia, but also to France. This seems to them unjust; but wherever they turn to try to acquire new colonies, England and England's navy block the way, because of our friendship with France, or our sensitiveness about India, or some other interest in the complicated web of our foreign policy.

"German aggressiveness, real and obnoxious as it has become, is the result of experience. Germany cannot, as we do, acquire colonies absent-mindedly, without intention, and almost without effort. When colonies were easier to acquire than they are now, Germany had not yet entered into the competition; and since Germany became a great Power, it has been handicapped by naval inferiority and by the necessity of defending two frontiers. It is these accidents of history and geography, rather than innate wickedness, which have produced German aggressiveness. The aims of German policy are closely similar to those which *we* have always pursued, but its methods cannot be the unobtrusive methods which we have usually adopted, because such methods, in the circumstances, would achieve nothing.

"Colonial ambitions are no doubt one reason why Germany has developed a navy; but another and more imperative reason is the necessity of safeguarding foreign trade.

**[R5791 : page 325]**

"In the time of Bismarck, Germany had not yet become a great, industrial nation; it was independent of foreign food, and its exports of manufactures were insignificant. Its industrial expansion dates from the introduction of the Bessemer process in 1879, by which its supplies of iron became possible to work at a profit. From that time onward, German industrial progress has been extraordinarily rapid; more and more, Germany has tended to become dependent, like England, upon the possibility of importing food and exporting

manufactures. In this war, as we see, Germany is just able, by very painful economy, [R5792 : page 325] to subsist upon the stock of food in the country; but another ten years of such development as was taking place before the war would have made this impossible. High agrarian protection, which alone could have retarded the process, was naturally disliked by the manufacturers and the working classes, and could not be carried beyond a certain point for fear of leading to a triumph of Socialism.

"It thus became obvious that in a few years' time Germany would be liable to defeat by starvation in any war with a superior naval power. In 1900, when the Germans decided to build a great navy, the Triple Alliance was weaker than France and Russia on the sea. The wish not to be inferior to France and Russia is enough to account for the beginnings of the German Navy; the rivalry with us may perhaps have been no part of the original intention, but merely a result of the suspicions produced in England by the German program. However that may be, it ought to have been obvious to the Germans that a strong navy was sure to make us hostile, and would therefore not serve the purposes for which it was intended unless it was stronger than our navy. But it could not be supposed that we should submit to the existence of a navy stronger than our own, unless we had first been utterly and hopelessly defeated; and there was no way of defeating us except by first having a navy stronger than our own.

"For these reasons, the German policy was inherently incapable of success. And yet, without success, all industrial progress and all colonial expansion remain perpetually at England's mercy. If we ask ourselves how we should feel if we were similarly at the mercy of Germany, we shall perhaps begin to understand why the Germans hate us. And yet we can hardly feel any sense of guilt, because a supreme navy is for us a matter of life and death.



"This dilemma must be faced, if we are to understand the conflict of England and Germany; and not regard it as merely due to wickedness on one side or on the other. After the war, sooner or later, exactly the same problem will have to be faced again. The native energy of the Germans cannot be permanently checked by defeat; after a longer or shorter period of recuperation, they will again feel that commercial safety and colonial expansion demand a strong navy, if they are not to be content to live in sufferance and to be compelled to bow to England's will on all occasions of serious dispute. The problem is a new one, since hitherto England has been the only nation dependent for subsistence on food imported by sea, and England has had unquestioned naval supremacy. But if we are to avoid the century of internecine warfare contemplated by Eduard Meyer, we must find some solution of the problem, and not be content merely to hope that, whenever war comes, we shall be victorious. Germany's industrial ambitions, at least, are entirely legitimate; and they alone make some security for German trade an imperative necessity. It is not only justice that makes it necessary to find a solution, but also self-preservation."

### **WHY CHURCH UNION LAGS**

"Anything that even suggests an endeavor to close up divisions of followers of Christ claims favorable countenance from a generous Christian, regardless of whether it appears practicable or not.

"It was doubtless on this presumption that all other Protestant denominations of any consequence in this country responded amiably to the Episcopalian request for committees to be named which should join in summoning and organizing this 'world-conference.'

"And these commissions, when named, could not courteously do less than confer with the Episcopalian commission whenever the latter desired. So there have been many meetings and much

resolving that it would truly be a beautiful thing if all churches would unite.

"But at the end of every meeting the outcome might be summed up in this – that if the Episcopalians think they can do anything with such a world-conference, they are welcome to go ahead and do it...

"What's the reason? Why aren't the other churches aroused?"

"Is it because other churches don't want union? Not if they understand themselves. But it is for another reason, which is hard to say under bonds of common courtesy.

"Nevertheless, no relation between parties standing at different view-points can be substantial without frankness. The time has come when frankness is needed on this subject. So here is the plain truth:

"The reason why other churches have not taken up enthusiastically the Episcopalian proposals for a world-wide congress on the union of Christendom is simply because they have not yet seen reason to believe that Episcopalians in general want unity enough to make concessions to procure it."

*The Continent.*

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**"WINNING OF IMMORTALITY"**

Prof. Frederick Palmer, A.B., D.D., Harvard Divinity Faculty, in his book entitled "*The Winning of Immortality*" says: "I have endeavored to sketch the growth of the doctrine of a future life from its appearance in Hebrew history through the line of Christian development to the present time. In doing this we come upon the fact that the belief which was counted orthodox in the *first Christian centuries* was different in one notable respect *from that*

*generally counted orthodox today*. For while we regard it proper and Christian to hold that immortality is necessarily inherent in humanity, this was then regarded as *improper* and *unchristian*, the only true Christian view being that immortality was a victorious prize to be won through fellowship with Christ.

*"I cannot but think that their orthodoxy was wiser than ours.* For I am sure that one great deterrent to believing in a future life is, with many persons, the dread thought of the vast multitudes, the majority of mankind, according to some theologies, who, it is asserted, are condemned to conscious existence in wretchedness and torture forever. Such *must* be the result if perpetual existence is a necessity inherent in humanity. But if it is contingent; if the soul is not necessarily immortal, but may become so; if the failure to attain immortality proceeds along ordinary non-arbitrary lines, and reaches a result which we see here imaged in the gradual elimination of decadent life, then the processes of the next world are redeemed from horror and made intelligible, almost verifiable.

"Immortality as a *necessity* seems to me to have little to say for itself. As a goal to be *attained*, it is the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus."

(Preface pp. 9-11.) [R5792 : page 326]

### "PLATO MISTAKEN FOR CHRIST"

S. D. McConnell, D.D., D.C.L., Rector of All Souls Church, New York, in his book, "*The Evolution of Immortality*," states:

"A careful study of the ante-Nicene 'Fathers' can but convince one that in and among them a number of ethnic notions were struggling to express, each in its own terms, the truth which Christ had dropped among them. The early Christians had all been reared either in the religions of Judea or Greece or Rome. Those among them who had been reared Jews unconsciously transferred their

idea of a corporate or tribal immortality from their old faith to their new, and their imaginations were filled with the hope of a 'Second Coming' and a 'New Jerusalem.'

"Those who were Greeks brought to the new religion the Platonic idea that the individual soul is indestructible, being in fact an articulate portion of the substance of the mind of God. Those of Roman antecedents, having no inherited belief of a future life of any kind, were better prepared to comprehend the truth of Christ. The interaction of all these fragments of previous philosophy produced a confusion and uncertainty of mind which was not clarified for five centuries. Then the masterful Augustine, the man who fixed the lines in which the thought of the civilized world ran from the sixth century to the nineteenth, took Plato's doctrine of the inherent immortality of the soul, disengaged it from metempsychosis and transmigration, and gained for it a general credence *which it has held to this day.*" (Pages 45,46.)

"Tertullian in his treatises *On the Soul* and *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* gives by far the fullest presentation of what was commonly believed in *his* circles; but it is quite impossible to make him consistent with himself or with other Christian writers of the same period. Upon the whole, however, he leaves the impression, afterwards confirmed and *fixed* by Augustine, that he believes the soul to have an independent existence of its own, and to be of its own nature indestructible. The truth of the case seems to be that as the Greek influence gained the domination in the early Church the Platonic doctrine of a natural immortality which it brought with it came to be accepted. The notion was withstood from the beginning as being *subversive of the very essence of Christianity*. Theophilus (*Ad. Autolyicum* II. 27), Irenaeus (*Adv. Haeres.* II. 34), Clement of Alexandria (*The Pedagogues*, I. 3), Arnobius (*Cont. Gent.* II. 24), and most weighty of all, Athanasius in his treatise on the *Incarnation of the Word of*

*God, all strenuously fought against it as a Pagan error which brought to naught the work of Christ.*

"They were defeated, however, and the conception prevailed *which is vulgarly current today*, of an immortal soul and a mortal body, temporarily joined, then severed, then reunited in an imperishable personality. Its currency has probably *confused and obstructed the work of Christ* among men *more than all other obstacles combined.* [R5793 : page 326] A *Pagan speculation* has masqueraded so long as an elemental *Christian truth* that now, when the intelligent world is well disposed to receive and comprehend Jesus' revelation of a life to come, *Plato stands across the path* and is commonly *mistaken for Christ.*" (Pages 47,48.)

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