

American Churchman Is Envoy to Warring Nations

Groups For International Friendship Organized in Germany, France, England and Russia

(By The Religious Rambler.)

HERE sailed for Europe last Saturday, after a few weeks' visit in America, for conference with leading churchmen in this country, the most potent of all the peace commissioners that the war has brought forth, Dr. Benjamin F. Battin, a member of the Society of Friends and a professor in Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania.

Since last Fall, Dr. Battin has been secretly at work among the religious leaders of the nations at war, on a mission of conciliation in behalf of the World Alliance of Churches for Promoting International Friendship. He has acted as special representative of the Church Peace Union of New York City, which Mr. Carnegie has financed.

The results of his work have been extraordinary. In every one of the warring European nations, except Austria and Serbia and Turkey, and in the neighboring neutral nations as well, he has established an organization which stands ready to resume and cultivate fraternal relations with all the other nations as soon as the war is over.

This is a practical feat of first magnitude, and it has all been done without the blare of trumpets or without seeking to glorify any organization. The work has necessitated repeated visits to the various European countries, and the mission has been one of extreme delicacy. A few weeks ago Dr. Battin returned to America for report and conference, and now he has returned to Europe, to remain for several months more, or until the end of the war.

When Religious Ties Snapped

Scarcely any other phase of the war has been more dramatic or tragic than the collapse of the Christian fellowship between the churches of the warring nations, and between Germany and Britain especially. Through several years there had been painstakingly built up a special organization of religious leaders for the express purpose of promoting closer relations. Each group had an organization and an organ. Christian leaders were proclaiming that the time had come when the church, by its vital international ties and common understanding, could prevent a rupture between the rival nations.

The apex of this movement for promoting international peace by Christian influence was designed to be the two great religious conferences called

for last August, one for Protestant churches to meet in Constance, Switzerland, on August 1, and the other for Roman Catholic churches, to meet in Liege, Belgium, on August 10.

Delegates from twelve nations and thirty-three religious bodies were to meet at Constance on August 1, spending Sunday August 2, in prayer, and the following two days in conference. Dramatically, war broke the peace conference, and the delegates were forced to flee for their homes minus baggage and money, owing to the instant collapse of the transportation and banking systems.

Delegates to the Constance meeting experienced grave difficulties in getting back home, while the assembly at Liege on August 10 was far from being a peace conference.

So extraordinary a collapse of pre-tentious plans evoked cynical remarks on all sides. Articles and speeches upon the break-down of Christianity became common in all countries. Undoubtedly, in the first passion of war even some of the Christian leaders of the countries involved expressed sentiments more pagan than Christian; and brotherhood was the least of the words in their vocabulary.

An American Into the Breach

Nothing quite like this had ever before occurred in the world; indeed, it was a by-product of the new international conditions, which have made all the earth a neighborhood. Quickly the American spirit, which, as Kipling says:

"Turns a keen, untroubled face,
Home to the instant need of things," asserted itself. From among the Constance delegates was chosen a man fitted to be Christianity's ambassador to all the nations and churches. Only an American could hope to be received with favor by the various countries. A member of the Society of Friends was historically fitted for this unique service of binding up broken ties. An experienced traveler, perfectly at home in all the nations of Europe, and able to speak the languages involved, was also necessary.

Prof. Benjamin F. Battin, Ph. D., of the chair of German in Swarthmore College, alone seemed to fill all the requirements. The Church Peace Union financed the project, and Dr. Battin was given a year's leave of absence from his classes.

So, while societies and conventions have been adopting peace resolutions, Dr. Battin has gone from nation to nation; and the genuineness of his neutrality is attested by the fact that he has been welcomed alike by religious leaders in Great Britain (where the strongest branch of the International Friendship Alliance exists), in Germany, in Russia, in France, in Holland, Denmark and Switzerland. He has not yet effected a branch organization in Austria, because of the absence at the front of the leaders to whom he would naturally look.

What Europe's Religious Leaders Say

Observers who have not known of the existence of Dr. Battin's mission, and of the agencies for good which he has set to working even amid war's turmoil, have remarked during recent months the diminishing acrimony and bitterness in the utterances of the leaders of the various nations now in conflict. The early bitterness has been succeeded by a milder and more charitable tone. No longer are ministers saying that they will never resume Christian fellowship with their country's foes. Instead, there is a general recognition that, after the war is over, there must be radical and Christianly, if a new world order of thought is to be secured; and if the spiritual lessons of the present time are to bear their expected results.

While Dr. Battin made no general public report, it is known that he tells an impressive story of the religious awakening which has followed the progress of the war. Great Britain is displaying something of the dominant religious spirit of Puritan days. Germany's Christianity is striking in to the depths of spiritual experience, and leading ministers to say that a revival of religion has already come to the nation. Russia's zeal for religion in this testing time, has expressed itself, in part, by sending two million New Testaments to the men in the trenches.

Around the whole circle of the horizon there are unprecedented signs of a great spiritual daybreak. Perhaps, if this means a religious rebirth for humanity, even the great war itself will not be too great a price to pay.

THE RELIGIOUS RAMBLER.

MITE SOCIETY MEETING

Shiremanstown, Pa., April 23.—The Mite Society of the Bethel Church of God met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Stansfield. After a short business meeting an interesting program was rendered. A Scripture lesson was read by the president. Other features were: Recitation, Emma Weber; reading, Mrs. Stanley; recitation, Helen Wiegell; duet, Mrs. Stanley Bates and Mrs. William Stansfield; reading, Margaret Weber; reading, Lester Baker; duet, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Frey and instrumental solo, Miss Mary Atticks.

DEATH OF WILLIAM H. GRAY

Millersburg, Pa., April 23.—William H. Gray, aged 52, died on Wednesday night at the State hospital after a long illness. The body was brought to his old Millersburg home from where the funeral will take place tomorrow afternoon. He is survived by his mother, two sisters and three brothers. The Rev. Mr. Hangen will officiate at the funeral.

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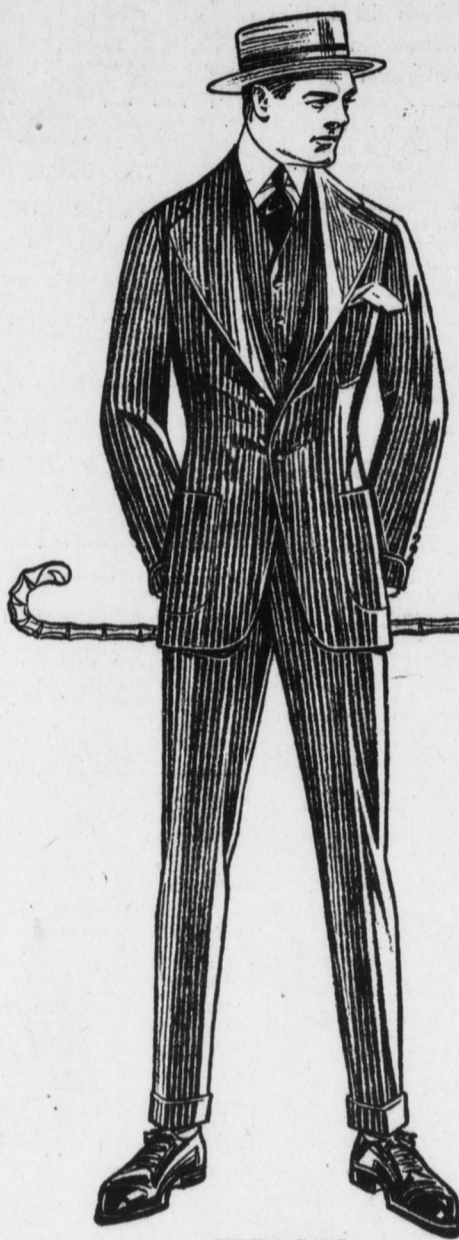
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The Olive Tablet Company, Columbus, O.—Advertisement.

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Big Parade Will Feature Barnum & Bailey Circus

The Barnum and Bailey Greatest Show on Earth will present in Harrisburg on Thursday, May 6, the greatest street parade in the history of the American circus. It will be in every way similar to the parades of the past. It is three miles in length. It cost the management \$1,000,000.

With the advantage of many years spent in touring all the civilized countries of the world, where this circus is as well known as in America, Barnum and Bailey's many agents have been constantly gathering the materials to be used in this year's street spectacle. Remote savage lands have been ransacked. Artists and designers from France and Italy have worked out the designs and ideas. Day and night for two years mechanics and property builders have toiled in foreign workshops, executing these ideas. There has been no regard to the cost.

All strange types of the human family are found in the procession, together with their characteristic costumes, weapons of war, vehicles, idols and music. Rich and fantastic wagons of state, gorgeous tableaus floats, palanquins, richly draped howdahs, rolling thrones, chariots of fire and fairy vans have been made of the most expensive woods, carved by hand labor and burnished with pure gold. The harness is silver mounted. The laces are from Ireland. The silks and satins are from China and Japan. The rugs and tapestries are from Persia and Turkey.

The effect of all this wealth is dazzling. The equipment is more gorgeous by far than anything of its nature exhibited in past seasons. The parade is three times longer than any other. It cost ten times as much money. It is a congress of nations, a horse fair, a musical convention, a zoological garden on wheels, a fairy-land carnival and an academy of sciences, all rolled into one panorama.

A trip to the grounds is like a tour of the world, without the annoyance of seasickness. The great sea of canvas spreads out over fourteen acres of ground. In the stables are 700 of the finest horses that money can buy. In the menagerie are 1,200 animals. This single exhibit is worth more than the average circus. On the grounds is a dynamo plant, furnishing power for twenty different shops and supplying current for 6,000 incandescent lamps, flaring arcs, beacons and searchlights.

The best talent of the world has been selected to give the performance under the main tent. There are 480 artists, gathered from every corner of the globe, and they are presenting the greatest all-nation circus this world has ever seen.—Advertisement.

Continued Improvement in Steel Business Predicted by Iron Age

Reviewing the week's developments in the Iron and Steel trades, the Iron Age this morning, shows that business in these trades is now better than it has been in months and months past. A continued increase in business is predicted.

In part the Iron Age says: "The Pennsylvania Railroad's announcement that it is about to buy or build 16,500 cars and 194 locomotives and the tentative placing in this country of further large sections of the Canadian Car and Foundry Company's \$80,000,000 shrapnel contract have been the main contributions of the week to the news of better business. There is also the expectation that the Pennsylvania rail order will soon be distributed, adding 150,000 tons or more to the 20,000 tons already placed.

"There are signs that other railroads are getting more alive to the low prices car and locomotive companies would make just now, and the steel trade looks for further developments in this direction. How far the large war contracts the equipment companies are now figuring on might affect deliveries of new cars that may be wanted by Fall, is a factor not entirely overlooked.

"Of the \$80,000,000 Canadian contract for Russia, it is now known that over \$20,000,000 has been sublet in this country and that \$20,000,000 more is nearly closed. Much less clear is the status of other pending business, involving many millions, presumably for Great Britain."

CURBING SET IN DERRY ST. FROM 23D TO CITY LIMITS

All the necessary curbing incident to the paving of Derry street from Twenty-third street to the eastern city limits has been put in place by the Central Construction and Supply Company, with the exception of the corner pieces. These have been ordered and will be set as soon as they arrive, Commissioner W. H. Lynch declares. The contractors yesterday began setting curb in Emerald street between Front and Fifth, with a view to paving that section as early as possible.

The paving of the Second street subway is proceeding rapidly and today the foundations for the sidewalk on the eastern side were laid.

RENOVATING CHURCH

The Rev. William N. Yates, pastor of Fourth Street Church of God, will speak on "House Cleaning" next Sunday morning and on "Let There Be Light" in the evening. The Fourth Street church is being renovated and an electric lighting system installed.

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HAVE A SMALL KITCHEN

In building a house, it is a great mistake to build a large kitchen, unless it must also be used as a dining-room. A big kitchen means an enormous number of extra steps for the housewife in preparing her meals, and a wholly unnecessary amount of labor in sweeping and cleaning.

Have your kitchen made just large enough to contain comfortably your range, work table, cupboard, and a couple of chairs. If you need extra space for washing or work of that sort have a room partitioned off from the kitchen to be used for these purposes alone, and shut up during the ordinary routine of kitchen work.—Zella Bissell Slater in Farm Life.

He who coincides with God's plan, succeeds; he who does not, is crushed.—A. F. Schaeffer.

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