

other point of view, it cannot be concealed that the marching of these hordes, insignificant as the movement as yet may be, is a symptom of a condition favorable to disturbances of a serious nature. What shape those may assume, should at last the various elements of discontent be united for a giant demonstration directed against the government, can at present only be a subject for conjecture. But the disaster that would result could not be confined to a party. It would affect the whole country. Looking at this serious aspect of the phenomenal undertaking, sentimentality must be put aside for the question of an effective remedy. The demands of the laboring classes are to a great extent just, and there must be legitimate means of meeting them. Even the downfall of the Roman republic might have been prevented had those in authority heeded the warning voice of their best citizens. Concessions to the toiling classes of this country are demanded. To accede to them as far as justice and the interests of all permit will be the best policy and the only means conceivable of preventing dire disaster. It men in trusted positions continue to wallow in moral filth, exposed to the gaze of the public, while nepotism, selfishness and arrogance are rampant and the poor are treated as the *canaille* whose interests are unworthy of consideration, then it is high time to prepare for a catastrophe. The marching army should be a warning and a timely lesson to the American people.

A HISTORIC BUILDING.

A few days ago Baranoff Castle, around which there are more historical associations than any other building in Alaska, was destroyed by fire. The place was the property of the United States, and for several years has been the headquarters of the government officials. At the time of the fire R. C. Rogers, U. S. commissioner, was the only person in the castle. He was in the second story, and when he discovered the flames his escape by the stairway was cut off. He was about to jump from the window to the ground, forty feet below, when assistance arrived and a rope was thrown to him by which he was able to descend. He had passed barely out of the window when the floor upon which he had been standing fell into the fire beneath. A large number of valuable books and papers were destroyed.

The castle, which is on the island of Sitka, was built upon an eminence commanding an excellent view of the town and harbor. In appearance it resembled more a country hotel than a castle. It derived its name from the Russian governor, Baranoff, who lived there in the early part of the century and ruled the people with an iron hand. At that time the governorship of Russian America was considered by Muscovite nobles a desirable position, and many notable men in the czar's domains made the castle their stopping place at different times.

A leading historical feature connected with Baranoff castle is the fact that it was from its roof that the Stars and Stripes was flung to the breeze on October 3, 1867, taking the place of the eagles of the czar, and signaling the

transfer of 580,000 square miles of territory from Russian to American dominion. Many noted personages stood upon the balcony of the old edifice and witnessed the ceremonies. At a later date Lady Franklin, then eighty years of age, visited the place in search of some trace of her missing husband, Sir John Franklin, and made the castle her home during her stay. Wm. H. Seward, through whose efforts, aided by Charles Sumner and others, the vast territory was secured for this country by peaceable means, also stopped there some time on his travels after his retirement from office. From these historical associations there clustered around the castle an interest that causes regret among Americans at its destruction.

UNITING CHRISTENDOM.

Among the congresses to be held at the Midwinter Fair at San Francisco is one of representatives of the various religious denominations. This religious congress is to be in session for eight days, commencing on April 16. An elaborate program has been prepared for discussion, and learned professors of religion will discourse on Judaism, Theism, Buddhism, Christianity, Points of Agreement in All Religions, and kindred topics. A leading feature is to be a development, so far as practicable in such gatherings, toward what is designated as a Union of Christendom, the advocates of which are growing very numerous and are finding but little antagonism to their scheme.

That a proposition for the suggested union should rapidly gain favor among sectarians is not to be wondered at. True, there was a time, and that but a few years ago, when leading lights of the various Protestant denominations justified a disruption of Christianity into sects on the ground of necessity in the constitution of a body for the church—that it was as essential as hands, feet and other members were for the body of man. But it is now realized that the disruption theory does not mean a classification into one body of different parts, as members of one organization, but tearing piecemeal the body. As it is clear that such a line of procedure must ultimately bring destruction, the idea of division is not now advocated to any extent, but another plan of action is sought to be worked out.

None will question the claim that a union of Christendom upon principles that would meet the approbation of the Almighty would be a glorious consummation of a great plan. It would be a long stride in the way of bringing men to a unity of the faith and a perfect knowledge of the truth of the Gospel of Christ. Such a magnificent work would be nothing short of a miraculous exhibition of the power of God, therefore to be a complete success it would have to be in strict accord with His law, and under His inspiration and guidance. But the scheme proposed is being operated upon different lines. There is no claim that it is in response to a revelation or command of God. In fact the persons who are engineering it repudiate the idea that the Almighty communicates His will in these days

by His own voice to men or through the medium of heavenly messengers. The suggested plan of union is of human conception.

The final outcome of the movement, which may develop many changing features, it is not difficult to foretell. All of the sectarian churches sprang from one source; they were at one time within the fold of that power which succeeded the primitive Church, and which persecuted and put to death the disciples of Christ—"made war with the Saints and overcame them"—till the Gospel was driven from among the nations. No matter what particular claim of succession, direct or otherwise, any of them may present, the power named was once the universal head. By reformation or apostasy, or other means, schism, arose, and the formation of new religious orders followed. Yet notwithstanding the difference of views held by these, they all were daughters of the same mother church.

At one time, in this century, it might have seemed impossible to get any two of the sects in combination, so vital were the differences between them. Take for instance the chief representatives of the two conceptions of spiritual law, the Romish and the Presbyterian churches. The former is the determined advocate of one conception, and the latter of the other. The Papists hold that the basis of spiritual law is a divine authority vested in the church and a divine power and grace communicated to the church's officers. The Presbyterians hold that the spiritual law is revealed in the books of the Bible, and that this revelation is not only literal, but unique and complete. All other sectarian organizations are founded on a modification of one or the other of these two ideas; as the Episcopal church has modified the Romish idea, so the Baptists and Methodists and Congregationalists have modified the other idea.

With the situation left at this point any effort to unite all factions in one must result in failure. The two ideas referred to are essentially contradictory. They cannot be made to amalgamate; one or the other must be given up, for the presence of both is division. Beyond this, the Presbyterian idea, with its distortion of the doctrines of predestination and election, and Romanism with its ritualism and priestcraft, are so repulsive to those who take a comprehensive view of the justice of God and brotherhood of man that they reveal another element that is as antagonistic to both as they are to each other.

But in the light of recent events it is quite probable that these radical conceptions and their outgrowth may be so varied in form as to admit of a coalition. For instance, the Presbyterian idea has undergone a great change through the elimination of the infant damnation part of the creed and its modification regarding the irrevocable condition of man after death. At the same time, the pope assumes an attitude of leniency in dealing with the United States that was never before known toward other governments. There is a lessening of the rigidity which existed to the extent that there