

The Twentieth Century Up to the World War

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein reflects on the false optimism and delusions of progress and peace that marked the dawn of the twentieth century, contrasting it with the harsh realities of increasing immorality, crime, religious declension, and social unrest. He highlights the warnings of impending judgment and the need for repentance, drawing parallels to the prophet Jeremiah's faithful warnings amidst impending doom. Gaebelein exposes the religious declension, rise of false teachings like the 'New Theology,' and the embrace of socialism and worldly pleasures within the church. He also addresses the rise of cults, the universal peace delusion, and the rapid increase in war preparations and revolutionary activities, leading up to the outbreak of World War I in 1914.

Description

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Transcript

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heading: "III" points: - "Religious declension and apostasy" - "Emergence of the 'New Theology'" - "Influence of liberalism on traditional beliefs" - heading: "IV" points: - "Rise of cults and alternative movements" - "The Universal Peace Delusion" - "Misinterpretation of prophetic teachings" - heading: "V" points: - "Critique of societal and religious leaders" - "Call for a return to true Christian faith" - "Conclusion on the state of the world" faq: - q: "What was the general sentiment at the dawn of the twentieth century?" a: "There was widespread optimism about progress and prosperity, with many believing a 'Utopia' was imminent." - q: "How did crime rates change during the early twentieth century?" a: "Crime rates surged dramatically, with the United States experiencing a significant increase in violent crimes." - q: "What is the 'New Theology' mentioned in the sermon?" a: "The 'New Theology' refers to a liberal interpretation of Christianity that denies traditional doctrines, gaining popularity among some religious leaders." - q: "What does the speaker say about the concept of universal peace?" a: "The speaker argues that the belief in universal peace is a delusion, as true peace cannot exist without addressing the underlying sinfulness of humanity." - q: "What warning does the sermon give about the future?" a: "The sermon warns that without a return to true faith, society will continue to decline morally and spiritually." quotes: - "The morning cometh--I know the pessimist denies this." - "The Church is today courting the world." - "War is the most awful evidence of the bestiality of the human race." applicationPoints: - "Recognize the dangers of societal optimism that ignores moral decay." - "Encourage a return to foundational Christian beliefs in the face of modern challenges." - "Stay vigilant against the rise of false teachings and cults that undermine true faith." keywords: - "twentieth century" - "optimism" - "moral decline" - "New Theology" - "religious apostasy" - "crime wave" - "Universal Peace Delusion" - "cults" ---

The dawn of the twentieth century was marked by an almost universal optimism. The secular, and even more so, the religious press, predicted a century of great world progress and material prosperity. Wild guesses were made as to the coming achievements through inventions and scientific discoveries. The preceding century was often reviewed in its marvelous physical progress, but all was now to be outdone. Many preachers used the word "millennium," meaning some kind of a "Utopia" of universal improvement, and declared that it was now in sight, just as in the second decade of this century a certain Southern newspaper announced in startling headlines--"The Millennium is here-- Kentucky is Dry."

Progress and prosperity, a better world and better times, as demanded by the law of evolution became the great expectation. Evolution, teaching a gradually improving world, and producing finally the conversion of all nations, or what has been termed "a christianized world" does not permit retrogression; it must be progress ad infinitum.

One of the older Methodist Bishops who was in office in 1900 said: "The morning cometh--I know the pessimist denies this. Well, the raven, the first bird mentioned in the Bible, and the least admirable, has human prototypes which croak out forevermore--Morning? There is no morning! Night sits on the throne! Darkness is at hand and it is getting darker! The world is getting worse! Politics are corrupt! Morals are going from bad to worse! Religion is losing its hold! Oh thou miserable croaking raven! Keep on croaking, the world is getting better without thee!" But were all these optimistic hopes warranted in 1900? Was there sufficient evidence that the world is making rapidly for greater righteousness and more improved morals? Did the dawn of the century reveal nations shaking off their former character of "being hateful and hating each other" (Titus iii:3)?; Did the divinely revealed symbols of their beastly character as shown in vision to the prime minister of Babylon, Daniel, six hundred years before Christ, undergo a change? Instead of the lion, the bear, the leopard and the fierce non-descript, did the beginning of the century show the nations meek and lowly, assuming the character of a dove or an innocent lamb? Did the so-called Christian

nations manifest a marked tendency towards righteousness, ready to embrace each other?

The moral, the political and the religious conditions in the opening year of the twentieth century were such that no sane person could call them bright and promising. The entire civilized world faced a most astounding increase of immoralities and crimes of every description. Disorder and lawlessness were in evidence everywhere. In the United States we heard then for the first time the expression "crime wave." By it was meant a periodical outbreak of viciousness. For several weeks there were burglaries, holdups and similar crimes, but after a while the "crime wave" subsided and there was a falling off in these lawless acts. After the first decade had passed, according to statistics, nearly two hundred persons were murdered every week in the United States. Crime cost the United States \$8,500,000 a day. The total yearly cost of crime had risen to the enormous sum of \$1,373,000,000.

But what is all this, as we shall show later, in comparison with the conditions in the third decade of the twentieth century? We have stopped speaking of "crime waves." The country is engulfed by a deluge of vicious criminality. And the same is true of other civilized nations, as history calls them. Yet, the Evolution-Delusionist keeps on mumbling his unreasonable creed of betterment. All these crime conditions, besides the increasing suicides as well as immoralities and divorces, and other signs of a rapid deterioration, were almost totally ignored by these self-appointed prophets of world progress and world prosperity.

One of the outstanding features of the first ten years of our century, a feature most sinister and alarming, was the constantly increasing religious declension. As this is closely linked with the moral and general conditions of the nation we must give it attention in our pages. We want to show, so far as Protestantism is concerned, how hopeless everything was becoming. And this hopeless drift started in the first years of the new century. True it is apostasy from the faith, once and for all delivered unto the Saints, was in evidence all through the preceding centuries. When sometimes it seemed to threaten everything, it was arrested by the intervention of God, by great and true revivals of religion, not man-made, but Spirit-produced. But with the twentieth century it became more wide-spread, more brazenly outspoken. To what a hopeless condition it has led in this year of our Lord 1935 we shall find later.

First of all we mention a religious leader who appeared in England with his creed of a "New Theology." After he had sown his pernicious seed in Great Britain he came to the United States. Reginald J. Campbell was heartily welcomed by all the leading liberalists of the different denominations, by the middle-of-the-road men and by the "fence straddlers" who can never make up their mind on what side of the fence they are going to land, till they find out which is the most popular. He was wildly applauded by the religious press in sympathy with him, and by the worldly and even infidel press for bringing the "New Theology." "My Gospel," he said, "suits everybody, Protestant, Catholic, Jew and Agnostic." Another one of his sayings was, "The Labor Party is the truest Church of Jesus and is destined to save the world." The Editor of the "Clarion" Robert Blatchford(1), an infidel, spoke well when he said, "Mr. Campbell is a Christian minister and I am an infidel editor. The difference between his religion and mine is too small to argue about. The 'New Religion' or 'New Theology' is Thomas Paine in a white tie, the Ingersoll fist in a boxing glove." He denied everything relating to the supernaturalness of our Lord--His Deity, His Virgin birth, His sacrificial death, His physical resurrection and the Bible revelations as to a judgment to come. He brought from England a big lump of the leaven of the Sadducees which he set at work in the United States. It is still working.

Before the writer is a mass of material relating to this downward drift in religious matters. To quote it verbatim, to reproduce different documents and their sources would mean the publication of at least two large volumes. And so we give only a few of the evidences of the religious declension and drift towards infidelity.

The voices of a number of religious leaders were heard in 1902 and 1903 declaring boldly that belief in the old cosmogony, on account of the latest scientific discoveries is shattered; the belief in the God of the Old Testament is taken away; the story of Adam and Eve and the garden of Eden can no longer be believed; belief in the Bible as a revelation of God must be given up. Salvation by Blood, as taught in the Word of God and accepted by the true Church, came in for special mention. It was ridiculed and branded a survival of a primitive form of religion which is untenable in the twentieth century.

In 1906 certain college professors declared themselves. Among them we find the President of Lawrence University; C. J. Little of the Garret Biblical Institute; Dr. Raymond of the Wesleyan University, a Professor Mitchell and scores of others, who expressed themselves as no longer believing in the Bible as God's revelation and in Christ as the Son of God. One of them was reported as saying, "If Jesus ever had divinity, he lost it all when he was born of Mary."

In the Harvard Theological Review in 1908, Dr. George A. Gordon, an outstanding Bostonian liberal, wrote an article on "The Collapse of the New England Theology." He showed first that that belief consists in faith in the Sovereignty of God; the Deity of Christ; the blood atonement for sins and the working power of the Holy Spirit. All this Dr. Gordon said is now given up and denied in New England. Then he asked the question: "Now where do we find men of modern training and respectable intellect holding this New England Theology?"

The once called "Higher Criticism" developed more and more into "Destructive Criticism" undermining the very foundations of supernatural Christianity. Theological institutions, founded by godly men and women several generations ago, supported by the funds of Bible loving and Bible believing Christians, became by adopting modernism, hot-beds of the most subtle infidelity with which Protestantism has been cursed in all its history. Theological reviews, denominational papers, and the current religious productions, pamphlets and books, were all more or less charged with this corrupting leaven. The more popular monthly magazines were also used in the dissemination of the rationalistic attacks on the Bible and the true Christian faith.

Along with this departure from the faith religious leaders began to turn to Socialism. The social Gospel was adopted in place of the true Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that Gospel which emanates from the Cross of Christ. In the beginning of 1908 the Literary Digest gave the information that "three hundred clergymen of the United States had allied themselves openly with the socialistic movement, while many more were secretly in sympathy with the cause, but hesitated for prudential reasons to make an open avowal." Towards the end of the same year a largely attended "Ministers Socialist Conference" issued a Manifesto. The Conference was called for the purpose of injecting into the religious life of the country the social message of the Bible, to end the class struggle by establishing "Industrial Democracy" and to hasten the reign of justice and brotherhood on the earth. The conviction was expressed that the economic teachings in the Bible should lead to the establishment of the Co-operative Commonwealth of Modern Socialism. These socialistic preachers stopped calling each other "brother"; they addressed fellow preachers as "comrade." Socialism was then termed by some "a new religion of life and power." One of its leading advocates said: "It is the religion which in its purity dwelt in Jesus Christ, the religion which was

crucified on the cross of the world's selfishness, which has laid buried in the grave of conventional ecclesiasticism, with the nations standing guard. It now at last comes forth in a glorious resurrection. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

At the same time the professing church became more worldly and one feature became prominent, as it is still, only in a more marked degree "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. iii:3). At the beginning of the century a godly Bishop of the Methodist denomination, a man of a different stamp from the present Modernist-Socialist Bishop McConnell of New York, made the following remarks: "The Church is today courting the world. Its members are trying to bring it down to the level of the ungodly. The ball, the theatre, nude and lewd art, social luxuries, with all their loose moralities are making inroads into the sacred enclosures of the Church, and as a satisfaction for all this worldliness, church members make now much of Lent, Good Friday, Easter and church ornamentations * * *. Worldly socials, fairs, festivals, concerts, and such like, are taking the place of religious gatherings and the prayer meetings of bygone days." He also lashed the hireling ministers, who, instead of preaching the Word deal largely in generalities and in popular lectures. Have these conditions, so marked in the beginning of our century, become better or worse?

While this declension was going on in the religious sphere, foreboding nothing but ill, thoughtful men called attention to these deplorable conditions. Numerous newspaper clippings of thirty and more years ago in possession of the writer, bear a witness against this encroaching departure from the faith. Here is one taken from the New York Sun in 1901.

"It is not exaggerating the fact to say that in the last quarter of the last century the very foundations of the religious faith, and much more so in our day, were and are destroyed in the great mass of thoughtful minds of the Protestant world. The documentary authority on which Christian Theology rests is discredited even by Theological authority. The Bible has been made a 'literature' of human composition and therefore open to human criticism. The temporal rather than the spiritual welfare of society is the end to which fashionable current religious activity is directed; philanthropy supersedes religion. The Church has become largely a social institution, appealing to tastes that are rather aesthetic than religious. Under such circumstances, what is the hope that a great religious revival can be stirred up? Where is the religious faith to be revived? The last century shook the foundation of Christian Theology by contending and proving to the satisfaction of scientific standards, that supernatural religion is no more than a figment of the superstitious human imagination; and in place of faith there has come doubt throughout the civilized world, and in it the pulpit and seminary share, nay, they often stimulate and lead it."

How true this was! About the same time Prof. G. B. Foster, of Chicago University, made the following boast: "Gone are the old ideas of religion; gone the old notion of the sacraments; gone the efficacy of prayer, the authority of the Scriptures, the divinity of Christ and gone forever the former view of the immortality of the soul."

A writer in another newspaper uncovered about two years later these tendencies. This is from the Chicago Daily News, "The indications are that we are becoming a nation of scoffers, an aggregation of people to whom little is sacred. Our society respects nothing so much as flatulent scandals, our pulpits are too often filled with men who hide God behind tapestries of sensationalism, and our press runs riot in excess of sneers at what good men and women have been taught as the highest virtues of humanity. Religion, the Bible, the purest affections, the best of ambitions, domestic life in all its phases, the best things of the past, the noblest possibilities of the future, sin and sorrow, death, the grave, the hereafter, serve the witless

purposes of men to whom notoriety, however won, is the climax of their ambition." It was all true. And has it become better?

Still another "Daily" thirty years ago, in pointing out a number of silly sermon topics, asks the questions: "Has the Christian pulpit ceased to preach the Gospel? Are the clergymen of the various denominations laboring under the delusion that they must get away from the teachings of Christ in their discourses in order to hold their congregations?"

We must not overlook another fact As this religious departure from the truth of God gained momentum, all kinds of cults increased and prospered. Leading among these is the delusive metaphysical movement, which came into existence during the second half of the nineteenth century. We have reference to so-called "Christian Science." This cult denies the essential doctrines of the true Christian faith, the eternal Godhood and Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross through which He made man's redemption possible. While true faith was denied, this anti-Christian movement gained tremendously, as it still does. Thousands of nominal church members have turned to it confirming the prophetic message of Peter concerning the end of our age: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 Peter ii:1-2).

The cults of occultism also increased at an astonishing rate. Such men as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir Oliver Lodge, Lombroso, the prominent Italian Scientist, the late journalist Stead, and scores of others, sponsored spiritism and made it popular. In plain language, it is necromancy, the supposed asking the dead. Circles for psychical research, the polite name for this satanic invention, were formed in universities and in colleges.

Another delusion of the beginning of the twentieth century is the Bahaistic Cult. Bahaism, originated by a Persian, has become a widespread and powerful movement, it is entirely anti-Christian. We pass by other cults of a more subtle nature which came, some of them suddenly, into existence, and are now flourishing everywhere.

An outstanding fact, just as prominent as the religious decline and apostasy, was what we term, the Universal Peace Delusion. All well balanced human beings, not to speak of Christians, will agree with the definition of war, given by a great American General, War is Hell! Nor does the writer decry the motives of statesmen, philanthropists and religious leaders in their well meaning attempts to bring about a war-less world. War is the most awful evidence of the bestiality of the human race. According to sacred history the first evidence that man had fallen, alienated by sin from his Creator, was the murder of Abel, slain by his own brother Cain. War is the most frightful, horrible skin disease covering the body of humanity. It cannot be eradicated unless the underlying cause is removed. "Prom whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (James iv:1). Corruption is in the world by lust; that corruption is, in one word, "sin." There is a remedy for it as every Christian knows, but if that remedy is rejected, the ravages of war cannot be stopped. The greatest Prophet Who spoke unveiling the future is our Lord Jesus Christ He knew that man would not accept that remedy, which He Himself would furnish, and therefore He announced the program for this age, a program of war and not of peace. "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Matt, xxiv :7). Nor did He predict for the ending of our age a state of universal peace, for He said that the end of our present civilization would be "distress of nations with perplexity" (Luke xxi:25). The world does not listen to this voice of

supreme and infallible authority; the professing church either pays no attention to His words of prophecy, or perverts them. The ignorance of the character of our age and the religious declension produced this universal peace delusion, so prominent during the opening years of our century, right up to the fatal hour when "nation rose up against nation and kingdom against kingdom."

We remind ourselves of some of the statements which were made by men of international and national prominence, among them educators, religious leaders and certain statesmen "War will soon become a thing of the past." "The world is becoming more civilized and weapons too destructive; both will make a great war impossible." "The cost of war is too great and the commercial interests are too powerful to permit another war." "The great nations of Christendom will never again fight each other for the Christian heaven producing an anti-war sentiment is doing its powerful work." We could add many more of these "choice" sayings which gradually produced a false security and the universal peace delusion. To record all the peace efforts, societies for peace, peace leagues and peace pacts is out of our reach. We confine ourselves to a very few.

The Russian Czar Nicholas II had sponsored a Peace Palace in the Hague. This act was lauded to the sky. It heralded the dawn of a better day--so it was said and believed by many. That great and artistic building was really never used and soon years came, during the world war, when it was "for rent." A well meaning Scot came with ten million dollars (what a paltry sum today!). Mr. Andrew Carnegie gave these millions for a peace foundation. All and much else strengthened the conviction in millions of minds that universal peace was now in sight.

While Europe indulged in this false hope, in the United States meetings for "Peace on Earth," and a number of peace congresses were held. We mention an outstanding one, the third "National Peace Congress," held in the Spring of 1911 in the City of Baltimore, Maryland. The two most prominent leaders were the late President Taft and Cardinal Gibbons. The main proposition made was that England and America should form a great alliance. Here are Mr. Taft's words: "Let Britannia and Columbia join hands across the Atlantic and their outstretched arms will form a sacred arch of peace, a rainbow which will excite the admiration of all nations, and will proclaim to the world, that with God's help earth shall nevermore be deluged with bloodshed in Fratricidal War." This sounds most beautifully!

The religious press literally went crazy over it. Here is a sample: "He is indeed a skeptic who today declares that international peace is an idle dream. The feeble voice of the peace worker is swelled by the official tones of President Taft and Sir Edward Grey." Then on August the third 1911 the unlimited arbitration agreement between England, France and the United States was consummated. It was heralded as the greatest event of the century, which marked the beginning of a new and auspicious era in the affairs of nations and the whole world. Similar treaties between Germany and other nations, including Japan, had passed the initial stage and the phantom of universal peace seemed to be caught at last.

Another "Peace Congress" was held in New York City. Archbishop Farley called attention to the fact "that no peace conference at the Hague will be complete unless the Pope is represented and acknowledged." Rabbi Hirsch of Chicago declared that navies provoke war, while Captain Hobson (of Spanish-American War fame) stated "that America alone is the nation which can prevent war." He said: "We must have a navy so big so that we can say to the rest of the world, 'Give up your navies and we will give up ours'." All kinds of schemes were advanced to secure peace among all nations. An interesting one was the plan advocating the union of all nations and giving them one head with dictatorial power. A constitution was formulated and agitated throughout Europe with little success. The first article read as follows: "A

government shall be established, to be known as 'The United States of the World,' which shall have the powers set forth in this constitution." Another article stated, "The executive powers shall be vested in one person, to be known as the Imperial President, who shall be chosen by the members of the Congress of Nations, and who shall hold office for life."

The first decade of the century had passed and the peace agitations were reaching their climax. One of the prime agitators for universal peace was the late William Jennings Bryan, for some time Secretary of State under President Wilson. Mr. Bryan was an excellent Christian, a staunch defender of the Bible as the Word of God. For several years he read "Our Hope" edited by the writer. But he did not seem to accept the divine forecast of the future of the nations. He also read a number of our books; we corresponded with him. But it is hard for a politician to accept prophecy, the unveiling of the future; and we suppose if a politician accepts God's revealed purposes he ceases to be a politician.

Mr. Bryan worked hard for "Peace on Earth." His famous lectures, "The Prince of Peace" and "The Signs of the Times," were heard by thousands everywhere. He had lined up twenty-nine ambassadors in Washington and persuaded them to sign peace treaties. He obtained from the War Department a number of obsolete swords, the blades of which, by some artist, had been fashioned into miniature plow-shares, and on these were engraved the words from Isaiah, "They shall beat their swords into plow-shares." They were to serve as paper weights. And Secretary Bryan wrote to these ambassadors: "It is the Secretary's hope that these plow-shares will always be on the desks of diplomats to be perpetual reminders of the better way." The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations also received these nice little paper weights. And this was done with rejoicing and in great hope that peace was about to be an established fact. A few months later, the greatest tragedy of our age passed into history.

But were all these peace hopes warranted by current history? Did the great nations of the world show signs of peace, becoming more tolerant and amiable towards each other? Or were they becoming more suspicious, more jealous waiting for an opportunity to spring at each other's throats? Any student of the history of the thirteen years preceding the world war knows the answer. An almost unbelievable preparation for war was going on. Ammunition factories were kept going day and night. Standing armies were increased year after year. Europe became a vast armed camp. Never before had Europe seen such armies. In 1867 Europe could mobilize 6,958,000 men. In 1892 the fighting force of the different nations was 12,563,000. Before 1910 was reached nearly 30,000,000 men were available for a gigantic conflict. Deadly instruments for the wholesale destruction of human life were invented; human ingenuity and modern science produced new methods to be put into deadly action with the next war. During 1907 the London Spectator stated, "All the gunsmiths in the world are besieged with orders for breech-loaders of various devices, each warranted by the inventors to slay more human beings than rival weapons. To this we have come after centuries of Christianity and morality, international intercourse and commerce."

It cost Europe a round billion dollars every year to maintain peace and be prepared. Year after year a program of naval construction was carried on by the leading nations with a feverish haste. New and greater battleships had to be built; torpedo boats of new types and the improved submarines required an outlay of nearly six billion dollars.

And during these opening years of the much lauded twentieth century, let us remind ourselves, the world witnessed terrible struggles. First came the Russo-Japanese war with all its horrors, ending with Russia's defeat. Many tens of thousands were killed. Hundreds of thousands were wounded and became cripples. Bodies laid sometimes six deep. Thousands often were left on the battlefields for many hours and days

without help. They crawled around in pitiful agony with jaws shot away, parched tongues, without hands, with blinded eyes, seeking help and shelter. We shall never forget a great master painting by the Russian artist Verestachin, an eyewitness of these horrors. He pictured such a battlefield after the struggle.

And there was the "sick man of Europe"--well named the "unspeakable Turk." He caused no end of trouble in the Balkans. His ignominious death came in the twentieth century. But before it came Balkan wars raged with indescribable horrors of bloodshed and cruelties. As the "Concert of Europe" stood by in silence when thousands of Armenians were murdered in cold blood, so the "Christian" nations let the Balkan horrors go on unchecked without interfering. There were two wars. The first was fought by Balkan allies against Turkey and ended with its downfall. The second war the Allies fought amongst themselves.

We give the statistics of both wars:

Bulgaria--350,000 mobilized; 80,000 dead. Cost--\$300,000,000.

Servia--250,000 in the field; 30,000 dead. Cost--\$160,000,000.

Greece--150,000 mobilised; 10,000 dead. Cost--\$70,000,000.

Montenegro--30,000 mobilized; 8,000 dead. Cost--\$4,000,000.

Turkey--450,000 mobilized; 100,000 dead. Cost--\$400,000,000.

The second war, Bulgaria, Servia and Greece fighting claimed over 100,000 victims more and cost over \$350,000,000 more.

Italy also had a brief war with Turkey.

Space forbids to enter into all the details, for we are not writing a detailed history.

And what else is to be recorded in this general way? There came revolution after revolution. What upheavals in Mexico, in Central and South America! The United States had to intervene in Mexico. But all these revolutions were overshadowed by what was going on in Russia. A series of revolutions took place during the first ten years of our century, especially in 1905 and 1906. Thousands perished. Anarchism began to rise stronger and stronger. The unrest of the world increased. It began to affect all European countries. In writing on these conditions in 1911, we said: "All Europe is a volcano of social turmoil, which must come sooner or later to a disastrous eruption. Unless all signs are false, Europe is on the verge of another great upheaval as it has not faced since the revolutionary movement in 1848, when Louis Philippe fell in France, when Austria sought the aid of Russia to crush Hungary, and the king of Prussia and others saw their thrones tottering. From Madrid, Vienna, Berlin, Paris and London come accounts, varying little in particulars, of the masses aroused to the point of desperation in the struggle for mere existence." The United States were similarly affected. The Russian revolutionary activities were much felt in our country. The Anarchists of Chicago on January 22 in 1906 celebrated openly the bloody events which had taken place in St. Petersburg. Over 1,500 men and women marched with the red flags of revolution and many more listened to revolutionary speeches. Certain workers' organizations were founded, forerunners of communism, such as the I. W. W. In connection with all these events and the increasing unrest, we wrote in "Our Hope" (March, 1906): "It is an idle dream to think that conditions in the United States are such as to make a revolution impossible. Let the present era of prosperity end and there will be an outbreak, which will shake the very foundations of this Republic."

A far seeing English resident in Russia, a witness of what was going on, penned in the fall of 1906 the following warning: "But now for the real danger of the situation, a danger which is very imperfectly understood in England. The danger is that the unrest in Russia is being exploited by the pent-up Socialism and Anarchism of all Europe. Russia is, as if it were, the crater of the volcanic elements, sullenly waiting for an outlet. Left to itself the Russian nation is prepared to move slowly towards what I may call 'Westernization.' But that does not suit the Reds in Europe; they want a conflagration. Their objective is not the Russian government merely, but all government, all order, all property. Wherever there have been mutinies of troops or seamen, it has been found that Socialists had been at work." Another English journalist wrote the same time: "We are but at the beginning of things. The blood red dawn of the twentieth century is the sign of a storm that will sweep the world."

We must not pass by the sufferings of the Jews in Russia and in the Balkans. These persecutions started anew in the beginning of the century; that was under the old regime, the Czarist government. In June, 1903, we received a communication from Pastor R. Faltin, of the Lutheran Church, in Kishineff, Bessarabia. In our visit to that city eight years before, we had met him. He wrote: "Terrible have been the days through which we had to live during Easter time this year. I have seen many Jewish persecutions, but in comparison with the last they are all insignificant. I have seen the destruction of 600 huts and 700 houses and with it the indescribable horrors and miseries of the murdered, the wounded and the dying." In 1904 the enemies of the Jews issued the following proclamation: "All Jews must be killed pitilessly. The blood of the Jews must pay for the blood of Christian children which they drink (a most satanic superstition). Death to the Jews! The glorious anniversary of Kishineff approaches! God is with us!" In Bialistock in May, 1906, another horrible pogrom was enacted. Many were the slain, mostly shockingly mutilated. Their homes were plundered and then destroyed. In Gomel, Mohilev and other places the same outrages were committed and hundreds of innocent men, women and children were cruelly slaughtered. No wonder when the revolutions came which ended the Czarist government so many Jews sided with it and some became leaders in it. The same Jewish persecutions took place in Poland, Galicia, Boumania and Turkey. Neither the appeals of Dr. Herzl, the founder of Zionism, or Max Nordau and Israel Zangwill seemed to put a stop to them.

Year after year brought more unrest, strikes upon strikes in all European countries and in the United States. Voices were heard here and there predicting that a world crisis is impending and a world catastrophe could not be averted. War preparations continued. The possibility of using aeroplanes and dirigibles in the coming struggle was agitated. In view of the fact, as we show in this volume, that all nations are, in 1935, equipped with thousands of powerful aeroplanes and bombing planes, it is of interest to remember that in 1910 this phase of warfare was quite undeveloped. Germany possessed fourteen dirigibles of various models and five aeroplanes; France had three dirigibles and five planes; Austria came next with two dirigibles and four planes; England had two dirigibles and two planes and Spain one dirigible and three planes. The possibility of "war by the air," however, was realized. A Dr. Martin in the London Times wrote in 1908: "In the aerial warfare in the near future men will be staggered not by the spectacle but by the slaughter. The havoc wrought by a small fleet of Zeppelins would be frightful. They could pursue the fastest battleship and send it to the bottom."

In 1910 a volume was published in Germany with the sickening title, "The Human Slaughter House." In a short time over one hundred thousand copies had been sold. It created a sensation throughout Europe. The volume contained a horrible description of the battlefields of the near future. Mechanical inventions would change "the field of honor" into a "human slaughter house." According to the realistic description of

the next war, machine guns would mow down whole regiments and dynamite dropped from planes during the night would wipe out human lives by the thousands. Here is a paragraph from the book: "Another thing we know is, that forty years ago, in spite of inferior guns and rifles, over one hundred and twenty thousand dead stayed behind on the field of honor in the Franco-Prussian war. What percentage of the living will modern warfare claim? Armies are being marshalled vaster than the world has ever seen. Germany alone can put six millions in the field; France as many. Then the war of 1870-71 was nothing more than a long-drawn affair of outposts! My brain reels when I try to visualize these masses starting to march against each other; I seem to choke for breath." Some branded the book as the work of a madman, an unbalanced pessimistic visionary. But he did not tell half of the coming horrors. He did not know anything about the liquid fire used, the poisonous gasses and other devices, thanks to the help of scientific discoveries.

Statesmen sounded clearer and stronger warnings also. Lord Rosebery was particularly serious in his references to the European situation, pointing out that whereas all the talk is of peace, all the action means preparation for war. He warned, declaring that the outlook is appalling and that he had never seen the condition of things in Europe so remarkable and so menacing. In addressing employers of labor on behalf of the new territorial army, War Secretary Haldane said in 1911, that the condition of international affairs was such that only a spark was needed to make a great war possible. Nations nowadays, he said, resemble armed camps rather than people contemplating peace. Ex-Premier Balfour in 1909 made the prediction in the presence of a large number of newspapermen, that the nations soon would have to fight a big battle. Warning after warning was sounded, but were not heeded.

In 1912 a gifted novelist, Marie Corelli wrote in a popular magazine an article on the condition of the twentieth century. We must quote it:

"It needs no gift of prophecy and no special intuition to see that we are on the brink of some tremendous change in the destinies of the human race. Everything points to it--tottering creeds, our fluctuating standards of manners and morals. Materially speaking, we know that the slightest tilt of the earth on its axis would cause a complete redistribution of its contents and seas, sweeping away every vestige of civilization as we know it now. We never consider this, imagining that such a catastrophe is impossible. Yet God had willed it so before and may will it so again. We spin on our earth in gathering storm clouds between two fathomless gulfs, the past and the future. Our present is the result of the past and our future will equally be the work of the present."

But religious optimism prevailed. While the signs of the times increasingly showed that something would soon happen, and statesmen, journalists and others sounded their warnings, the false hope of Christendom was not abandoned. The fictitious "Gospel leaven" was at work, working slowly they claimed, but surely in permeating all nations "till the whole was leavened."

Those days were much like the days in which Jeremiah the prophet lived. He sounded a faithful warning based upon the Words of Jehovah. He showed Israel her unfaithfulness, called to return to the Lord, and announced the impending judgment. As the judgment clouds were gathering over Jerusalem and the nation, his calls to repentance became louder and louder.

While the mass of professing Christians were misled by the optimism of evolution, promising progress and prosperity, the Lord also had His faithful witnesses who interpreted current events not by some theological creed or philosophy, but by the prophetic teachings of the Word of God. They sounded their warnings of the fast approaching end of the age with its clearly revealed events in the political world. Frequently they

had to endure, like Jeremiah, hardship and the sneers and ridicule of the leaders of the rationalistic faction of the professing church.

In Jeremiah's days, though it was getting darker, and the armies of Nebuchadnezzar were beginning their march on the holy city, and would soon hammer at its gates, Jeremiah's enemies, the false prophets, continued with their delusive message, accepted by the mass of the people, including the king and his advisers, the "brain trust" of his times. Their message was "Peace! Peace!" And how Jeremiah warned against this false peace--Peace when there was no peace!

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the Prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise Me, The Lord has said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard His Word Who hath heard His Word and marked it? Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind, it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked" (Jer xxiii:16-19). "A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth, for the Lord has a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh. He will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord" (Jer. xxv:31-32). "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth."

And so it was 2,500 years later, in the twentieth century. The same false prophets who spoke their own dreams, the same false religious leadership, with the lullaby of a false hope. It continued right up to the Spring of 1914. A number of peace delegates left the United States for Europe for another "Peace Conference" to arrange new treaties. Some declared jubilantly the glorious universal peace would now be a fact.

Then came the month of August. Suddenly, as out of a clear sky the crashing bolt came. It started on the ninth day of the Jewish month Ab, the memorable day on which the Babylonian hordes destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. On the same day in the year 70 A.D. the Roman armies burned Jerusalem and destroyed the great Herodian Temple.

The greatest world disaster had arrived.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/arno-clemens-gaebelein-/the-twentieth-century-up-to-the-world-war/>

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