

VIEW FROM THE TOWER. ECHOES FROM THE WORLD'S GREAT PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS.

THE World's Parliament of Religions, recently convened in the city of Chicago, is justly regarded as one of the wonders of this remarkable time in which we live; and while all Christendom, and indeed the whole world, regard it, from their standpoint of observation, as a wonderful achievement for truth and righteousness, the questions in the minds of the Lord's consecrated "little flock" should be, How does it appear in the light of divine prophecy? has it a place in the divine plan of the ages? do the watchmen on the Towers of Zion view it in the same light as do those in the rank and file of the World's religions?

It would indeed be strange if for this once the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world should be in harmony, that those filled with the opposite spirits should see eye to eye. But such is not the case. It is still true that the spirit of the world is enmity to God (James 4:4); that its theories and philosophies are vain and foolish; and that the one divine revelation contained in the inspired Scriptures of the apostles and prophets is the only divinely inspired truth.

Said the *Chicago Herald*, commenting favorably upon the proceedings of the Parliament,

"Never *since the confusion at Babel* have so many religions, so many creeds, stood side by side, hand in hand, and almost heart to heart, as in that great amphitheater last night. Never since written history began has varied mankind been so bound about with Love's golden chain. The nations of the earth, the creeds of Christendom, Buddhist and Baptist, Mohammedan and Methodist, Catholic and Confucian, Brahmin and Unitarian, Shinto and

Episcopalian, Presbyterian and Pantheist, Monotheist and Polytheist, representing all shades of thought and conditions of men, have at last met together in the common bonds of sympathy, humanity and respect."

How significant to us is the fact that the mind of even this enthusiastic approver of the great Parliament should be carried away back to the memorable confusion of tongues at Babel! Was it not, indeed, that instinctively he recognized in the Parliament a remarkable antitype?

One of the stated objects of the Parliament, according to its president, Mr. Bonney, was to bring together the world's religions in an assembly "in which their *common aims* and *common grounds of union* may be set forth, and *the marvelous religious progress of the nineteenth century be reviewed.*" And the stated object of that review was, fraternization and religious union. The spirit of doubt and perplexity, and of compromise and general faithlessness, on the part of Protestant Christians, and a spirit of counsel and authority on the part of all other religions, were the most prominent features of the great Parliament. Its first session was opened with the prayer of a Roman Catholic – Cardinal Gibbons – and its last session was closed with the benediction of a Roman Catholic – Bishop Keane. And during the last session a Shinto priest of Japan [R1592 : page 324] invoked upon the motley assembly the blessing of eight million deities.

The leading spirit of the great assembly was the Rev. John Henry Barrows, D.D., of the Presbyterian church. For two years previous he had been in correspondence with the representative heathen of other lands, inviting them to come over and have a share in the work of the proposed Parliament. That the call should thus issue representatively from the Presbyterian church, which for three years past has been undergoing a fiery ordeal of judgment, is also a fact significant of the confusion and unrest which prevails in

the denomination, but which has also spread to all Christendom. And therefore all Christendom was ready for the great convocation.

For seventeen days representative Christians of every denomination sat together in counsel with the representatives of all the various heathen religions, who were repeatedly referred to in a complimentary way by the Christian orators as "*wise men from the east*" – borrowing the expression from the Scriptures, where it was applied to a very different class – to a few devout believers in the God of Israel and in the prophets of Israel who foretold the advent of the Lord's Anointed, and who were patiently waiting and watching for his coming, and giving no heed to the seducing spirits of worldly wisdom which knew not God. To such truly wise ones, humble-minded though they were, God revealed his blessed message of peace and hope.

In viewing the proceedings of the great Parliament our attention was forcibly drawn to several remarkable features: – (1) To the doubting and compromising spirit and attitude of nominal Christianity, with the exceptions of the Roman and Greek Catholic churches. (2) To the confident and assertive attitude of all other religions. (3) To the clean cut distinctions observed by the heathen sages, between the Christianity taught in the Bible and that taught by the Christian missionaries of the various sects of Christendom, who, along with the Bible, carried their absurd and conflicting creeds to foreign lands. (4) To the heathen estimate of missionary effort and of its effects and its future prospects in foreign lands. (5) To the influence of the Bible upon many in foreign lands, notwithstanding its mis-interpretations by those who carried it abroad. (6) To the present influence and probable results of the great Parliament whose sessions have so recently terminated. And (7) to its general aspect as viewed from the prophetic standpoint.

COMPROMISING THE TRUTH.

The great religious Parliament was called together by Christians – Protestant Christians; was held in a professedly Protestant Christian land; and was under the leading and direction of Protestant Christians, so that Protestants may be considered as largely responsible for its proceedings. Be it observed, then, that the spirit of Protestantism is plainly that of compromise. This Parliament was willing to compromise Christ and his gospel for the sake of the friendship of antichrist and heathendom. It gave the honors of both opening and closing its deliberations to representatives of the great Papal system. Cardinal Gibbons opened the Congress on September 11, while the benediction with which its sessions closed on September 27th was pronounced by Bishop Keane. And it is a notable fact that, while the faiths of the various heathen nations were elaborately set forth by their representatives, there was no similar systematic presentation of Christianity in any of its phases, although various themes were discoursed upon by Christians. In these discourses Roman Catholics had by far the largest showing, being represented no less than sixteen times in the sessions of the Parliament. But how strange it seems that, in all the gathering of those whom we may well presume represented the most talented, learned and popular of the clergy of Christendom, not one attempted to set before the representative heathen there assembled an orderly, systematic presentation of the gospel of Christ.

And not only so, but there were those there professing Christianity, who earnestly busied themselves in tearing down its fundamental doctrines – who told the representative heathen of their doubts as to the inerrancy of the Christian **[R1592 : page 325]** Scriptures; that the Bible accounts must be received with a large degree of allowance for fallibility; and that their teachings must be supplemented with human reason and philosophy, and only accepted to the extent that they accord with these. There were

those there, professing to be orthodox Christians, who repudiated the doctrine of the ransom, which is the only foundation of true Christian faith, and, denying the fall of man, proclaimed the opposite theory of evolution; – that man never was created perfect, that he never fell, and that consequently he needed no Redeemer; that since his creation in some very low condition, far removed from the "image of God," he has been gradually coming up, and is still in the process of an evolution whose law is the survival of the fittest. And this, the very opposite of the Bible doctrine of ransom and restitution, was the most popular view.

Below we give a few brief extracts indicating the compromising spirit of Protestant Christianity both in its attitude toward that great antichristian system, the Church of Rome, and also in its attitude toward the non-Christian faiths.

Said Dr. Briggs, who was introduced by the President, Dr. Barrows, as "one whose learning, courage and faithfulness to his convictions have given him a high place in the church universal," and who was received with loud applause: –

"All that we can claim for the Bible is inspiration and accuracy for that which suggests the religious lessons to be imparted. God is true, he cannot lie; he cannot mislead or deceive his creatures. But when the infinite God speaks to finite man, must he speak words which are not error? [How absurd the question. Of course he speaks the truth, or else he is not true. – EDITOR.] This depends not only upon God's speaking, but on man's hearing, and also on the means of communication between God and man. It is necessary to show the capacity of man to receive the word, before we can be sure that he transmitted it correctly. [This "learned and reverend" theological professor should bear in mind that God was able to choose proper instruments for conveying his truth, as well as to express it to them; and that he did so is very manifest to every sincere student of his Word. Such an argument to undermine the

validity of the sacred Scriptures is a mere subterfuge; and is an insult to the intelligence of an enlightened audience.] The inspiration of the holy Scriptures does not carry with it inerrancy in every particular.

"The errors of the holy Scriptures are not errors of falsehood or deceit, but of ignorance, inadvertence, partial and inadequate knowledge, and of incapacity to express the whole truth of God which belonged to man.... We are obliged to admit that there are scientific errors in the Bible....Science ["falsely so-called"] goes on, confident that every form of religion which resists this criticism will ere long crumble into dust....There are historical mistakes in the Bible which cannot be removed by any proper method of interpretation. ...The divine command to Abraham to offer up his son as a burnt-offering and other incidents seem unsuited to divine revelation. ...What pleasure could God take in smoking altars? how could the true God prescribe such puerilities?"

Said the Rev. Theodore Munger of New Haven: –

"Christ is more than a Judean slain on Calvary. *Christ is humanity as it is evolving under the power and grace of God*, and any book touched by the inspiration of *this fact* [not that Jesus was the anointed Son of God, but that the evolved humanity as a whole constitutes the Christ, the Anointed] belongs to *Christian* literature."

He instances Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Shelley, Matthew Arnold, Emerson and others, and then adds: –

"Literature with few exceptions – *all inspired literature* – stands squarely upon humanity, and insists upon it on ethical grounds and for ethical ends, and *this is essential Christianity* [– with Christ left out. – EDITOR.]... A theology that insists on a transcendent God, who sits above the world and spins the thread of its affairs, does not command the assent of those minds which

express themselves in literature: the poet, the man of genius, the broad and universal thinker pass it by; they stand too near God to be deceived by such renderings of his truth."

Said the Rev. Dr. Rexford of Boston (Universalist): –

"I would that we might all confess that a sincere worship, anywhere and everywhere in the world, is a true worship....The unwritten, but dominant creed of this hour I assume to be that, whatever worshiper in all the world bends before The Best he knows, and walks true [R1592 : page 326] to the purest light that shines for him, has access to the highest blessings of heaven." [And he surely did strike the key-note of the present dominant religious sentiment, especially as expressed in the great Parliament. But the Apostle Paul did not so address the worshipers of The Unknown God on Mars Hill; nor did Elijah thus defend the priests of Baal. Paul declares that the only access to God is through faith in Christ's sacrifice for our sins. – Acts 17:23-31; 1 Kings 18:21,22. – EDITOR.]

Said the Rev. Lyman Abbott (Congregationalist): –

"We do not think that God has spoken only in Palestine, and to the few in that narrow province. We do not think he has been vocal in Christendom and dumb everywhere else. No! we believe that he is a speaking God in all times and in all ages." [But how did he speak to the prophets of Baal? He has not revealed himself except to his chosen people – to fleshly Israel in the Jewish age, and to spiritual Israel in the Gospel age – "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." See also Amos 3:2; 1 Cor. 2:6-10. – EDITOR.]

A letter from Mrs. Isabel Somerset (Church of England), read with complimentary introduction by President Dr. Barrows, contained the following: –

"I am in sympathy with every effort by which men may be induced to think together along the lines of their agreement, rather than of their antagonism....*The only way to unite is never to mention subjects on which we are irrevocably opposed.* Perhaps the chief of these is the historic episcopate, but the fact that he believes in this while I do not, would not hinder *that great and good prelate*, Archbishop Ireland, from giving his hearty help to me, not as a Protestant woman, but as a temperance worker. The same was true in England of that lamented leader, Cardinal Manning, and is true to-day of Mgr. Nugent of Liverpool, a priest of the people, universally revered and loved. A consensus of opinion on the practical outline of the golden rule, declared negatively by Confucius and positively by Christ, *will bring us all into one camp.... This, I am persuaded, will be attained by the great conclave soon to assemble in the white city of the west."*

The doctrine of a vicarious atonement was seldom referred to, and by many was freely set aside as a relic of the past and unworthy of this enlightened nineteenth century. Only a few voices were raised in its defense, and these were not only a very small minority in the Parliament, but their views were evidently at a discount. Rev. Joseph Cook was one of this small minority, and his remarks were afterward criticised and roundly denounced from a Chicago pulpit. The Rev. Jenkin L. Jones, in a sermon preached before his congregation in All Soul's Church, replied to Joseph Cook's defense of the doctrine of a vicarious atonement before the Parliament of Religions, in which the Boston preacher had said that the Christian was the only true religion, and the acceptance of it the only means of securing happiness after death. In his address Mr. Cook said: –

"Here is Lady Macbeth. See how she rubs her hands. What religion can wash Lady Macbeth's red right hand? That is the question I propose to the four continents and the isles of the sea. Unless you can answer that, you have not come with a serious

purpose to the parliament of religions. I speak now to the branch of those skeptics who are not represented here; and their silence or their responses are as inefficient as a fishing-rod would be to span this vast lake or the Atlantic. I turn to Mohammedanism. Can you wash our red right hand? I turn to Confucianism and Buddhism. Can you wash our red right hand?"

In reply Mr. Jones said in part: –

"For the last fifteen years or more Joseph Cook, in his rhetorical climaxes, has escorted the red-handed queen of Shakespeare's great drama before American audiences, and has challenged, now Unitarianism, now philosophy, and again the nonchristian religions of the world, to clean that lady's murderous hand and to bring to her soul a peace as though the foul deed had not been done. With swift and vehement rhetoric he rushes into two immense assumptions, viz.: That all the above-named forces are powerless in this emergency; second, that Christianity, meaning, of course, his special kind of Christianity, *can* wash clean the stain. By some supernatural power he assumes that it can remove the blot and give to the soul again its sweetness and its purity.

"His favorite word is to 'wash,' and by word and gesture he enforces the thought of a miraculous change, a supernatural and vicarious atonement, brought about by the shedding of another's innocent blood on Calvary. How this is done even the philosopher Joseph Cook [R1592 : page 327] does not pretend to explain, but that it is done he asserts with all the dogmatic power of his ponderous eloquence. The other day, on the platform of the Parliament of Religions, he made his challenge again, a challenge that has been made so frequently that it might be called an orthodox classic. And it is a challenge that carries much weight to many minds. The frequent repetition of it seems to carry with it convincing power to so many that I deem it my duty, as a teacher

of morals and religion, to give it some attention in this presence this morning – not for controversial purposes, but for truth's sake, for morality's sake. In the name of common sense and common decency I protest against this juggling with the eternal laws of right and wrong.

"If Christianity has any short cut by which murderers, perjurers, defaulters and workers of mischief of every kind can slip unscathed into heaven as though they had wrought no mischief, then it is a rebel religion, and Jesus is an insurrectionist come into the world to defy the benign order of the universe, teaching men how to escape their just debts by virtue of a bankrupt act which does not hold in any court save his own. It is hard to tell just what Joseph Cook means, but it is perfectly clear that he expects that Lady Macbeth can take advantage of some transaction that happened in far-off Palestine that can transfer her guilt to the suffering one who was lifted on the cross of Calvary. And because he suffered she may escape the consequences of her deeds.

"In order that we may discover the immorality of the vicarious atonement – this "look-to-Jesus-and-be-saved" kind of a scheme with which the great Boston orator undertook to browbeat out of countenance the representatives of other faiths and forms of thought at the parliament – let us study closely the character of the deed, the temper of the woman to whom he promised such swift immunity if she would only "look on the cross." This champion of orthodoxy indignantly flung into the faces of the representatives of all the religions of the world the assertion that it is "impossible in the very nature of things for one to enter into the kingdom of heaven except he be born again" through this Christ atonement, this supernatural vicariousness that washes her red hand white and makes the murderess a saint. All I have to say to such Christianity is this: that I am glad I do not believe in it; and I call upon all lovers of morality, all friends of justice, all believers in an infinite God whose will is rectitude, whose providence makes for

righteousness, to deny it. Such a "scheme of salvation" is not only unreasonable but it is immoral. It is demoralizing, it is a delusion and a snare in this world, however it may be in the next.

"I know not whom Mr. Cook meant by the 'skeptics not represented here,' of whom he made his first demand that they should wash Lady Macbeth's hand clean, but if he meant those represented by Darwin, Spencer or Emerson, those who trust science and reason, who believe in progress and search for the foundations of religion in the soul itself, they would say, as I understand them: 'Who dares clean the hand of blood that has not yet completed its mission?' The stain remains; the smell abides for the saving of the soul. They are a part of the redemption processes of the God of nature, and if Christianity pretends to interfere with that holy law, to sneer at that blessed schoolmaster of the spirit, so much the worse for Christianity.

"All representatives of all religions will join with Joseph Cook in turning glad faces toward Jesus and will recognize in him a representative of those great types of humanity who, in the gladness of goodness, have encouraged souls to fight the good fight with weakness and temptation, to learn the hard though holy lesson that "whatsoever ye sow that shall ye also reap," that "by their fruits ye shall know them." I turn from Calvary if my vision there leaves me selfish enough to ask for a salvation that leaves Prince Sidartha outside of a heaven in which Lady Macbeth or any other red-handed soul is eternally included. I ask you to join with me in this slow, long but sure struggle of humanity toward truth, righteousness and love. Let us struggle for it, reach for it, pray and labor for it, so that we may merit the sweet benediction of the old man in the play: "God's benison go with you, and with those that would make good of bad and friends of foes."

Subsequently an "oriental platform meeting" was held in this same church, when this same reverend (?) gentleman read select

sayings from Zoroaster, Moses, Confucius, Buddha, Socrates and Christ, all tending to show the universality of religion, which was followed by the address of an Armenian Catholic. After this address, says the Press reporter: –

"Mr. Jones said that he had had the temerity to ask Bishop Keane, of the Catholic University of Washington, if he would attend this meeting and stand on such a radical platform. The bishop had replied with a smile that he would be in Dubuque or he might be tempted to come. 'I then asked him,' said Mr. Jones, [R1592 : page 328] 'if he could suggest any one.' The bishop replied: 'You must not be in too much of a hurry. We are getting along very fast. It may not be a long time before I shall be able to do so.'"

"'The Roman Catholic Church,' continued Mr. Jones, 'under the leadership of such men as Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Ireland and Bishop Spalding, is getting along, and these men are forcing the laggards to work. People tell us that we have given up the parliament of religions to the Catholics on one hand and the Pagans on the other. We will hear from our Pagan friends now. *That word pagan does not have the same meaning as it did, and I thank God for it.*'"

Prof. Henry Drummond, author of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," was on the program for an address on "Christianity and Evolution." He failed to arrive, however, and his paper, which was sent in advance, was read by Dr. Bristol. The following extract from it shows how far Prof. Drummond's faith has departed from the one true foundation laid in the Scriptures. He said: –

"The theory of evolution fills a gap at the very beginning of our religion, and if science is satisfied in a general way with its theory of evolution as the method of creation, assent is a cold word with which those whose business it is to know and love the ways

of God should welcome it. [This was greeted with loud applause.] As to its harmony with the theory about the book of Genesis [as to its authority], it may be that theology and science have been brought into perfect harmony, but the era of the reconcilers is past. Genesis is not a scientific, but a religious book. Its object was purely religious, the point being, not how certain things were made, *which is a question for science*, but that God made them. [If that be the only object of the book of Genesis, then why does it attempt more than the simple statement that God made all things? Boasted science comes very far short of common sense, as well as of the divine revelation. – EDITOR.] There is only one theory of creation in the field, and that is evolution.

"Under the new view the question of revelation is undergoing expansion. The whole order and scheme of nature are seen to be only part of the manifold revelation of God. As to the specific revelations, the Old and New Testaments, *evolution* has already given to the world *what amounts to a new Bible*. [Yea, verily; for it could never harmonize with the old Bible, the divinely inspired Word of truth. – EDITOR.] The suggestion has been made that sin is probably a relic of the animal caste, the undestroyed residuum of the animal....If science can help us in any way to know how sin came into the world, it may help us better to know how to get it out. [Applause.] A better understanding of its genesis and nature may modify, at least, some of the attempts made to get rid of it. ['Professing themselves wise, they became fools' – foolish indeed in discarding the Bible account of the fall of man and the Bible plan of salvation through faith in the precious blood of Christ our Redeemer, who alone has power to eliminate sin and to restore the sinner to the divine image in which he was first created. – EDITOR.]"

A FEW DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH.

In the midst of this compromising spirit, so bold and outspoken, it was indeed refreshing to find a very few representatives of Protestant Christianity who had the moral courage, in the face of so much opposition, both latent and expressed, to defend the faith once delivered to the saints; though even these show signs of perplexity, because they do not see the plan of the ages and the important relationship of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity to the whole marvelous system of divine truth. We append below some extracts from these commendable discourses, praying that the faithfulness of these witnesses thus far may continue, and that it may lead them to the clearer knowledge of the truth now due to the faithful.

Prof. W. C. Wilkinson, of the Chicago University, spoke on The Attitude of Christianity toward other Religions. He directed his hearers to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments for an exposition of Christianity, to the hostile attitude of Christianity toward all other religions, which must of necessity be false if it be true, and to our Lord's exclusive claim of power to save, as manifested in such expressions as: —

"No man cometh unto the Father [that is, no man can be saved] but by me."

"I am the bread of life."

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

"I am the light of the world."

"I am the door of the sheep."

"All that came before me are thieves and robbers." **[R1592 : page 329]**

"I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

"Such," said he, "are a few specimens of the expressions from Jesus' own lips of sole, exclusive claim to be himself alone the savior of man.

"It may be answered, 'But Jesus also said, I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me; and we are thence warranted in believing, of many souls involved in alien religions, that, drawn consciously or unconsciously to Jesus, they are saved, notwithstanding the misfortune of their religious environment.

"To this, of course, I agree. I am grateful that such seems indeed to be the teaching of Christianity. [But this hope flows from a generous heart rather than from a knowledge of the divine plan of the ages. He does not yet see that the *drawing* of the *world* to Christ belongs to the Millennial age, and that only the drawing of the Church is now in progress; and that knowledge of the Lord, the drawing power now, will be the power then. "The knowledge of the Lord shall [then] fill the earth, as the waters cover the deep." – EDITOR.] I simply ask to have it borne steadily in mind that it is not at all the extension of the benefits flowing from the exclusive power of Jesus to save that we are at present discussing, but strictly this question: Does Christianity recognize any share of saving efficacy as inherent in the non-Christian religions? In other words, is it anywhere in Scripture represented that Jesus exerts his saving power, in some degree, greater or less, through religions not his own? If there is any hint, any shadow of hint, in the Bible, Old Testament or New, looking in the direction of the answer yes to that question, why, I confess I never have found it. Hints far from shadowy I have found, and in abundance, to the contrary.

"I feel the need of begging you to observe that what I say in this paper is not to be misunderstood as undertaking on behalf of Christianity to derogate anything whatever from the merit of individual men among the nations, who have risen to great ethical

heights without aid from historic Christianity in either its New Testament or its Old Testament form. But it is not of persons, either the mass or the exceptions, that I task myself here to speak. I am leading you to consider only the attitude assumed by Christianity toward the non-Christian religions.

"Let us advance from weighing the immediate utterances of Jesus to take some account of those upon whom, as his representatives, Jesus, according to the New Testament, conferred the right to speak with an authority equal to his own. Speaking of the adherents generally of the Gentile religions, he uses this language: 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.'

"Man, bird, beast, reptile – these four specifications in their ladder of descent seem to indicate every different form of Gentile religion with which Christianity, ancient or modern, came into historic contact. The consequences penally visited by the offended jealous God of Hebrew and of Christian, for such degradation of the innate worshiping instinct, such profanation of the idea, once pure in human hearts, of God the incorruptible, are described by Paul in words whose mordant, flagrant, caustic, branding power has made them famous and familiar: 'Wherefore God gave them up to the lusts of their hearts, unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves; for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.'

"I arrest the quotation unfinished. The remainder of the passage descends into particulars of blame, well known, and well known to be truly charged against the ancient pagan world. No hint of exceptions here in favor of points defectively good, or at least not so bad, in the religions condemned; no qualification, no

mitigation of sentence suggested. Everywhere heavy shotted, point blank denunciation. No idea submitted of there being in some cases true and acceptable worship hidden away, disguised and unconscious, under false forms. No possibility glanced at of there being a silent distinction made by some idolaters, if made only by a very few discerning among them, between the idol server and the one incorruptible jealous God as meant by such exceptional idolaters to be merely symbolized in the idol ostensibly worshiped by them. Reserve none on behalf of certain initiated, illuminated souls seeking and finding purer religion in esoteric "mysteries" that were shut out from the profane vulgar. Christianity leaves no loophole of escape for the judged and reprobate anti-Christian religions with which it comes in contact. It shows instead only indiscriminate damnation [condemnation] leaping out like forked lightning from the glory of his power upon those incorrigibly guilty of the sin referred to, the sin of worship paid to gods other than God. **[R1592 : page 330]**

"There is no pleasing alleviation anywhere introduced in the way of assurance, or even of possible hope, that a benign God will graciously receive into his ear the ascriptions formally given to another as virtually, though misconceivingly, intended for himself. That idea, whether just or not, is not scriptural. It is, indeed, anti-scriptural, therefore anti-Christian. Christianity does not deserve the praise of any such liberality. As concerns the sole, the exclusive, the incommunicable prerogatives of God, Christianity is, let it be frankly admitted, a narrow, a strict, a severe, a jealous religion. Socrates, dying, may have been forgiven his proposal of a cock to be offered in sacrifice to Aesculapius; but Christianity, the Christianity of the Bible, gives us no shadow of reason for supposing that such idolatrous act on his part was translated by God into worship acceptable to himself.

"Peter said, 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him.'

"To fear God first, and then also to work righteousness, these are the traits characterizing ever and everywhere the man acceptable to God. But evidently to fear is not, in the idea of Christianity, to worship another than he. It will accordingly be in degree as a man escapes the ethnic religion dominant about him, and rises – not by means of it, but in spite of it – into the transcending element of the true divine worship, that he will be acceptable to God.

"Of any ethnic religion, therefore, can it be said that it is a true religion, only not perfect? Christianity says no. Christianity speaks words of undefined, unlimited hope concerning those, some of those, who shall never have heard of Christ. These words Christians, of course, will hold and cherish according to their inestimable value. But let us not mistake them as intended to bear any relation whatever to the erring religions of mankind. Those religions the Bible nowhere represents as pathetic and partly successful gropings after God. They are one and all represented as groping downward, not groping upward. According to Christianity they hinder, they do not help. Their adherents' hold on them is like the blind grasping of drowning men on roots and rocks that only tend to keep them to the bottom of the river. The truth that is in the false religion may help, but it will be the truth, not the false religion.

"According to Christianity the false religion exerts all its force to choke and to kill the truth that is in it. Hence the historic degeneration represented in the first chapter of Romans as effecting false religions in general. If they were upward reachings they would grow better and better. If, as Paul teaches, they in fact grow worse and worse, it must be because they are downward

reachings. The indestructible instinct to worship, that is in itself a saving power. Carefully guarded, carefully cultivated, it may even save. But the worshiping instinct, misused or disused, that is depraved to idolatry or extinguished in atheism – 'held down,' as Paul graphically expresses it – is in swift process of becoming an irresistible destroying power. The light that is in the soul turns swiftly into darkness. The instinct to worship lifts Godward. The issue of that instinct, its abuse in idolatry, its disuse in atheism, is evil, only evil, and that continually.

"The attitude, therefore, of Christianity toward religions other than itself is an attitude of universal, absolute, eternal, unappeasable hostility, while toward all men everywhere, the adherents of false religions by no means excepted, its attitude is an attitude of grace, mercy, peace for whosoever will. How many may be found that will, is a problem which Christianity leaves unsolved."

The Rev. Jas. Devine of New York City also spoke on the message of Christianity to other religions, clearly presenting the doctrine of redemption through the precious blood of Christ. He said: –

"We are brought now to another fundamental truth in Christian teaching – the mysterious doctrine of atonement. Sin is a fact which is indisputable. It is universally recognized and acknowledged. It is its own evidence. It is, moreover, a barrier between man and his God. The divine holiness and sin, with its loathsomeness, its rebellion, its horrid degradation and its hopeless ruin, cannot coalesce in any system of moral government. God cannot tolerate sin or temporize with it or make a place for it in his presence. He cannot parley with it; he must punish it. He cannot treat with it; he must try it at the bar. He cannot overlook it; he must overcome it. He cannot give it a moral status; he must visit it with the condemnation it deserves.

"Atonement is God's marvelous method of vindicating, once for all, before the universe, his eternal attitude toward sin, by the voluntary self-assumption, in the spirit of sacrifice of its penalty. This he does in the person of Jesus Christ. The facts of Christ's birth, life, [R1592 : page 331] death and resurrection take their place in the realm of veritable history, and the moral value and propitiatory efficacy of his perfect obedience and sacrificial death in a representative capacity become a mysterious element of limitless worth in the process of re-adjusting the relation of the sinner to his God.

"Christ is recognized by God as a substitute. The merit of his obedience and the exalted dignity of his sacrifice are both available to faith. The sinner, humble, penitent and conscious of unworthiness, accepts Christ as his redeemer, his intercessor, his savior, and simply believes in him, trusting in his assurances and promises, based as they are upon his atoning intervention, and receives from God, as the gift of sovereign love, all the benefits of Christ's mediatorial work. This is God's way of reaching the goal of pardon and reconciliation. It is his way of being himself just and yet accomplishing the justification of the sinner. Here again we have the mystery of wisdom in its most august exemplification.

"This is the heart of the gospel. It throbs with mysterious love; it pulsates with ineffable throes of divine feeling; it bears a vital relation to the whole scheme of government; it is in its hidden activities beyond the scrutiny of human reason; but it sends the life-blood coursing through history and it gives to Christianity its superb vitality and its undying vigor. It is because Christianity eliminates sin from the problem that its solution is complete and final.

"Christianity must speak in the name of God. To him it owes its existence, and the deep secret of its dignity and power is that it reveals him. It would be effrontery for it to speak simply upon its

own responsibility or even in the name of reason. It has no philosophy of evolution to propound. It has a message from God to deliver. It is not itself a philosophy; it is a religion. It is not earth-born; it is God-wrought. It comes not from man, but from God, and is intensely alive with his power, alert with his love, benign with his goodness, radiant with his light, charged with his truth, sent with his message, inspired with his energy, pregnant with his wisdom, instinct with the gift of spiritual healing and mighty with supreme authority.

"It has a mission among men, whenever or wherever it finds them, which is as sublime as creation, as marvelous as spiritual existence and as full of mysterious meaning as eternity. It finds its focus, and as well its radiating center, in the personality of its great revealer and teacher, to whom, before his advent, all the fingers of light pointed, and from whom, since his incarnation, all the brightness of the day has shown.

"Its spirit is full of simple sincerity, exalted dignity and sweet unselfishness. It aims to impart a blessing, rather than to challenge a comparison. It is not so anxious to vindicate itself as to confer its benefits. It is not so solicitous to secure supreme honor for itself as to win its way to the heart. It does not seek to taunt, to disparage or humiliate its rival, but rather to subdue by love, attract by its own excellence and supplant by virtue of its own incomparable superiority. It is itself incapable of a spirit of rivalry, because of its own indisputable right to reign. It has no use for a sneer, it can dispense with contempt, it carries no weapons of violence, it is not given to argument, it is incapable of trickery or deceit, and it repudiates cant. It relies ever upon its own intrinsic merit, and bases all its claims on its right to be heard and honored.

"Its miraculous evidence is rather an exception than a rule. It was a sign to help weak faith. It was a concession made in the spirit of condescension. Miracles suggest mercy quite as much as they

announce majesty. When we consider the unlimited sources of divine power, and the ease with which signs and wonders might have been multiplied in bewildering variety and impressiveness, we are conscious of a rigid conservation of power and a distinct repudiation of the spectacular. The mystery of Christian history is the sparing way in which Christianity has used its resources. It is a tax upon faith, which is often painfully severe, to note the apparent lack of energy and dash and resistless force in the seemingly slow advances of our holy religion. [But it is no longer so to those who understand God's plan of the ages. – EDITOR.]

"Doubtless God had his reasons, but in the meantime we cannot but recognize in Christianity a spirit of mysterious reserve, of marvelous patience, of subdued undertone, of purposeful restraint. It does not 'cry, nor lift up, nor cause its voice to be heard in the street.' Centuries come and go and Christianity touches only portions of the earth, but wherever it touches it transfigures. It seems to despise material adjuncts, and counts only those victories worth having which are won through spiritual contact with the individual soul. Its relation to other religions has been characterized by singular reserve, and its progress has been marked by an unostentatious dignity which is in harmony with the majestic attitude of God, its author, to all false gods who have claimed **[R1592 : page 332]** divine honors and sought to usurp the place which was his alone.

"We are right, then, in speaking of the spirit of this message as wholly free from the commonplace sentiment of rivalry, entirely above the use of spectacular or meretricious methods, infinitely removed from all mere devices or dramatic effect, wholly free from cant or double facedness, with no anxiety for alliance with worldly power or social eclat, caring more for a place of influence in a humble heart than for a seat of power on a royal throne, wholly intent on claiming the loving allegiance of the soul and securing

the moral transformation of character, in order that its own spirit and principles may sway the spiritual life of men.

"It speaks, then, to other religions with unqualified frankness and plainness, based upon its own incontrovertible claim to a hearing. It has nothing to conceal, but rather invites to inquiry and investigation. It recognizes promptly and cordially whatever is worthy of respect in other religious systems; it acknowledges the undoubted sincerity of personal conviction and the intense earnestness of moral struggle in the case of many serious souls who, like the Athenians of old, 'worship in ignorance'; it warns, and persuades, and commands, as is its right; it speaks as Paul did in the presence of cultured heathenism on Mars hill, of that appointed day in which the world must be judged, and of 'that man' by whom it is to be judged; it echoes and re-echoes its invariable and inflexible call to repentance; it requires acceptance of its moral standards; it exacts submission, loyalty, reverence and humility.

"All this it does with a superb and unwavering tone of quiet insistence. It often presses its claim with argument, appeal and tender urgency; yet in it all and through it all would be recognized a clear, resonant, predominant tone of uncompromising insistence, revealing that supreme personal will which originated Christianity, and in whose name it ever speaks. It delivers its message with an air of untroubled confidence and quiet mastery. There is no anxiety about precedence, no undue care for externals, no possibility of being patronized, no undignified spirit of competition. It speaks, rather, with the consciousness of that simple, natural, incomparable, measureless supremacy which quickly disarms rivalry, and in the end challenges the admiration and compels the submission of hearts free from malice and guile."

It gives us great pleasure to thus find a few earnest voices raised in defence of the cross and of the Bible.

Among these noble utterances in defence of the truth was also that of Count Bernstorff, of Germany. He said: –

"I trust that nobody is here who thinks light of his own religion [though he certainly learned to the contrary before the Parliament closed. This was said at its beginning.] I for myself declare that I am here as an individual evangelical Christian, and that I should never have set my foot in this parliament if I thought that it signified anything like a consent that all religions are equal, and that it is only necessary to be sincere and upright. I can consent to nothing of this kind. I believe only the Bible to be true, and Protestant Christianity the only true religion. I wish no compromise of any kind.

"We cannot deny that we who meet in this Parliament are separated by great and important principles. We admit that these differences cannot be bridged over; but we meet, believing everybody has the right to his faith. You invite everybody to come here as a sincere defender of his own faith. I, for my part, stand before you with the same wish that prompted Paul when he stood before the representatives of the Roman Congress and Agrippa, the Jewish king. 'I would to God that all that hear me to-day were both almost, and altogether, such as I am.' I cannot say, 'except these bonds.' I thank God I am free; except for all these faults and deficiencies which are in me and which prevent me embracing my creed as I should like to do.

"But what do we then meet for, if we cannot show tolerance. Well, the word tolerance is used in different ways. If the words of King Frederick, of Prussia – 'In my country everybody can go to heaven after his own fashion' – are used as a maxim of statesmanship, we cannot approve of it too highly. What bloodshed, what cruelty would have been spared in the world if it had been adopted. But if it is the expression of the religious indifference prevalent during this last century and at the court of

the monarch who was the friend of Voltaire, *then we must not accept it.*

"St. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, rejects every other doctrine, even if it were taught by an angel from heaven. We Christians are servants of our Master, the living Savior. We have no right to compromise the truth he intrusted to us; either to think lightly of it, or to withhold the message he has given us for humanity. But we meet together, each one wishing to gain the others to his own creed. Will this not be a parliament of war instead of **[R1592 : page 333]** peace? Will it take us further from, instead of bringing us nearer to, each other? I think not, if we hold fast our truths that these great vital doctrines can only be defended and propagated by spiritual means. An honest fight with spiritual weapons need not estrange the combatants; on the contrary, it often brings them nearer.

"I think this conference will have done enough to engrave its memory forever on the leaves of history if this great principle [religious liberty] finds general adoption. One light is dawning in every heart, and the nineteenth century has brought us much progress in this respect; yet we risk to enter the twentieth century before the great principle of religious liberty has found universal acceptance."

In marked contrast also with the general spirit of the Parliament, was the discourse of Mr. Grant of Canada. He said: –

"It seems to me that we should begin this Parliament of Religions, not with a consciousness that we are doing a great thing, but with an humble and lowly confession of sin and failure. Why have not the inhabitants of the world fallen before the truth? The fault is ours. The Apostle Paul, looking back on centuries of marvelous God-guided history, saw as the key to all its maxims this: that Jehovah had stretched out his hands all day long to a disobedient and gainsaying people; that, although there was always

a remnant of the righteous, Israel as a nation did not understand Jehovah, and therefore failed to understand her own marvelous mission.

"If St. Paul were here to-day would he not utter the same sad confession with regard to the nineteenth century of Christendom? Would he not have to say that we have been proud of our Christianity, instead of allowing our Christianity to humble and crucify us; that we have boasted of Christianity as something we possessed, instead of allowing it to possess us; that we have divorced it from the moral and spiritual order of the world instead of seeing that it is that which interpenetrates, interprets, completes and verifies that order; and that so we have hidden its glories and obscured its power. All day long our Savior has been saying, 'I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people.' But the only one indispensable condition of success is that we recognize the cause of our failure, that we confess it with humble, lowly, penitent and obedient minds, and that with quenchless western courage and faith we now go forth and do otherwise."

Would to God that these sentiments had found an echo in the great Parliament; but they did not. On the other hand it was characterized by great boastfulness as to the "marvelous religious progress of this nineteenth century; and Count Bernstorff's first impression, that it meant a bold compromise of Christian principles and doctrine, was the correct one, as the subsequent sessions of the Parliament proved.

While Christendom stood representatively before the representative heathen world, boastful of its religious progress, and knowing not that it is "poor and blind and miserable and naked" (Rev. 3:17), the contrast of an evident feeling after God on the part of some in heathen lands was very marked.

HEATHEN REFORMERS FEELING AFTER GOD.

In two able addresses by representative Hindoos, we have set before us a remarkable movement in India which gives evidence that the Bible, which the missionaries carried there, has been doing a work which the conflicting creeds that accompanied it, and claimed to interpret it, have only hindered. From Japan also we hear of similar conditions. Below we append some extracts from three addresses remarkable for their evident sincerity, thought, and clear expression, and showing the very serious attitude of heathen reformers who are feeling after God if haply they may find him.

A VOICE FROM NEW INDIA.

Mr. Mozoomdar was greeted with loud applause. His address was as follows: –

"MR. PRESIDENT, REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONS AND RELIGIONS: – I told you the other day that India is the mother of religion; the land of evolution. I am going this morning to demonstrate the truth of what I said. The Brahmo-Somaj of India, which I have the honor to represent, is a new society; our religion is a new religion, but it comes from far, far antiquity, from the very roots of our national life, hundreds of centuries ago.

"Sixty-three years ago the whole land of India was full of a mighty clamor. The great jarring noise of a heterogeneous polytheism rent the stillness of the sky. The cry of widow; nay, far more lamentable, the cry of those miserable women who had to be burned on **[R1592 : page 334]** the funeral pyres of their dead husbands, desecrated the holiness of God's earth. We had the Buddhist, goddess of the country, the mother of the people, ten handed, holding in each hand the weapons for the defense of her children. We had the white goddess of learning, playing on her Vena, a stringed instrument of music, the strings of wisdom. The goddess of good fortune, holding in her arms, not the horn, but the

basket of plenty, blessing the nations of India, was there, and the god with the head of an elephant, and the god who rides on a peacock – martial men are always fashionable, you know – and the thirty-three millions of gods and goddesses besides. I have my theory about the mythology of Hindooism, but this is not the time to take it up.

"Amid the din and clash of this polytheism and so-called evil, amid all the darkness of the times, there arose a man, a Brahman, pure bred and pure born, whose name was Raja Ram Dohan Roy. Before he became a man he wrote a book proving the falsehood of all polytheism and the truth of the existence of the living God. This brought upon his head persecution. In 1830 this man founded a society known as the Brahma-Somaj – the society of the worshipers of the one living God. While on the one hand he established the Brahma-Somaj, on the other hand he co-operated with the British government to abolish the barbarous custom of suttee, or the burning of widows with their dead husbands.

"The Brahma-Somaj founded this monotheism upon the inspiration of the old Hindoo Scriptures, the Vedas and the Upanishads.

"In the course of time, as the movement grew, the members began to doubt whether the Hindoo scriptures were really infallible. In their souls they thought they heard a voice which here and there, at first in feeble accents, contradicted the deliverances of the Vedas and the Upanishads. What shall be our theological principles? Upon what principles shall our religion stand? The small accents in which the question first was asked became louder and louder and were more and more echoed in the rising religious society until it became the most practical of all problems – upon what book shall true religion stand?

"Briefly they found that it was impossible that the Hindoo scriptures should be the only records of true religion. They found

that although there were truths in the Hindoo scriptures, they could not recognize them as the only infallible standard of spiritual reality. So twenty-one years after the foundation of the Brahma-Somaj the doctrine of the infallibility of the Hindoo scriptures was given up. Then a further question came. Are there not other scriptures also? Did I not tell you the other day that on the imperial throne of India Christianity now sat with the Gospel of Peace in one hand and the scepter of civilization in the other? The Bible had penetrated into India. The Bible is the book which mankind shall not ignore. Recognizing, therefore, on the one hand, the great inspiration of the Hindoo scriptures, we could not but on the other hand recognize the inspiration and the authority of the Bible. And in 1861 we published a book in which extracts from all scriptures were given as the book which was to be read in the course of our devotions. It was not the Christian missionary that drew our attention to the Bible; it was not the Mohammedan priests who showed us the excellent passages in the Koran; it was no Zoroastrian who preached to us the greatness of his Zend-Avesta; but there was in our hearts the God of infinite reality, the source of inspiration of all the books, of the Bible, of the Koran, of the Zend-Avesta, who drew our attention to his excellencies as revealed in the record of holy experience everywhere. By his leading and by his light it was that we recognized these facts, and upon the rock of everlasting and eternal reality our theological basis was laid.

"Was it theology without morality? What is the inspiration of this book or the authority of that prophet without personal holiness – the cleanliness of this God-made temple. Soon after we had got through our theology, the question stared us in the face that we were not good men, pure minded, holy men, and that there were innumerable evils about us, in our houses, in our national usages, in the organization of our society. The Brahma-Somaj, therefore, next laid its hand upon the reformation of society. In 1851 the first intermarriage was celebrated. Intermarriage in India means the marriage of persons belonging to different castes. Caste is a sort of

Chinese wall that surrounds every household and every little community, and beyond the limits of which no audacious man or woman shall stray. In the Brahma-Somaj we asked 'Shall this Chinese wall disgrace the freedom of God's children forever?' Break it down; down with it, and away.

"Next, my honored leader and friend, Keshub Chunder Sen, so arranged that marriage between different castes should take place. The Brahmans were offended. Wiseacres shook their heads; even leaders of the Brahma-Somaj shrugged up their shoulders and put [R1592 : page 335] their hands into their pockets. 'These young firebrands,' they said, 'are going to set fire to the whole of society.' But intermarriage took place, and widow-marriage took place.

"Do you know what the widows of India are? A little girl of ten or twelve years happens to lose her husband before she knows his features very well, and from that tender age to her dying day she shall go through penances and austerities and miseries and loneliness and disgrace which you tremble to hear of. I do not approve of or understand the conduct of a woman who marries a first time and then a second time and then a third time and a fourth time – who marries as many times as there are seasons in the year. I do not understand the conduct of such men and women. But I think that, when a little child of eleven loses what men call her husband, to put her to the wretchedness of a lifelong widowhood and inflict upon her miseries which would disgrace a criminal, is a piece of inhumanity which cannot too soon be done away with. Hence intermarriages and widow marriages. Our hands were thus laid upon the problem of social and domestic improvement, and the result of that was that very soon a rupture took place in the Brahma-Somaj. We young men had to go – we, with all our social reform – and shift for ourselves as we best might. When these social reforms were partially completed there came another question.

"We had married the widow; we had prevented the burning of widows; what about her personal purity, the sanctification of our own consciences, the regeneration of our own souls? What about our acceptance before the awful tribunal of the God of infinite justice? Social reform and the doing of public good is itself only legitimate when it develops into the all-embracing principle of personal purity and the holiness of the soul.

"My friends, I am often afraid, I confess, when I contemplate the condition of European and American society, when your activities are so manifold, your work is so extensive that you are drowned in it, and you have little time to consider the great questions of regeneration, of personal sanctification, of trial and judgment and of acceptance before God. That is the question of all questions. A right theological basis may lead to social reform, but a right line of public activity and the doing of good is bound to lead to the salvation of the doer's soul and the regeneration of public men.

"After the end of the work of our social reform we were therefore led into the great subject, How shall this unregenerate nature be regenerated; this defiled temple, what waters shall wash it into a new and pure condition? All these motives and desires and evil impulses, the animal inspirations, what will put an end to them all, and make man what he was, the immaculate child of God, as Christ was, as all regenerated men were? Theological principle first, moral principle next; and in the third place the spiritual of the Brahma-Somaj – devotions, repentance, prayer, praise, faith; throwing ourselves entirely and absolutely upon the spirit of God and upon his saving love. [This heathen philosopher sees to only a partial extent what sin is, as is indicated by his expression, "an immaculate child of God...as *all regenerated men* were." He does not see that even the holiest of the fallen race are far from being actually spotless, immaculate, perfect; hence that they all need the merit of Christ's perfection and sin sacrifice to justify them. He

speaks of prayers, etc., and the mercy of God; but he has not yet learned that justice is the foundation underlying all of God's dealings; and that only through the merit of Christ's sacrifice can God be just, and yet the justifier of sinners believing into Christ, and thus covered by his great atonement for sin, made eighteen centuries ago, – once for all – to be testified to all in due time. – EDITOR.]

"Moral aspirations do not mean holiness; a desire of being good does not mean to be good. The bullock that carries on his back hundredweights of sugar does not taste a grain of sweetness because of its unbearable load. And all our aspirations, and all our fine wishes, and all our fine dreams, and fine sermons, either hearing or speaking them – going to sleep over them or listening to them intently – these will never make a life perfect. Devotion only, prayer, direct perception of God's spirit, communion with him, absolute self-abasement before his majesty; devotional fervor, devotional excitement, spiritual absorption, living and moving in God – that is the secret of personal holiness. And in the third stage of our career, therefore, spiritual excitement, long devotions, intense fervor, contemplation, endless self abasement, not merely before God but before man, became the rule of our lives. God is unseen; it does not harm anybody or make him appear less respectable if he says to God: 'I am a sinner; forgive me.' But to make your confessions before man, to abase yourselves before your brothers and sisters, to take the dust off the feet of holy men, to feel that you are a miserable, wretched object in God's holy congregation – that requires **[R1592 : page 336]** a little self humiliation, a little moral courage. Our devotional life, therefore, is two-fold, bearing reverence and trust for God and reverence and trust for man, and in our infant and apostolical church we have, therefore, often immersed ourselves into spiritual practices which would seem absurd to you if I were to relate them in your hearing.

"The last principle I have to take up is the progressiveness of the Brahmo-Somaj. Theology is good; moral resolutions are good; devotional fervor is good. The problem is, how shall we go on ever and ever in an onward way, in the upper path of progress and approach toward divine perfection?

"Christianity declares the glory of God; Hindooism speaks about his infinite and eternal excellence: Mohammedanism, with fire and sword, proves the almightiness of his will; Buddhism says how joyful and peaceful he is. He is the God of all religions, of all denominations, of all lands, of all scriptures, and our progress lay in harmonizing these various systems, these various prophecies and developments into one great system. Hence the new system of religion in the Brahmo-Somaj is called the New Dispensation. The Christian speaks in terms of admiration of Christianity; so does the Hebrew of Judaism; so does the Mohammedan of the Koran; so does the Zoroastrian of the Zend-Avesta. The Christian admires his principles of spiritual culture; the Hindoo does the same; the Mohammedan does the same.

"But the Brahmo-Somaj accepts and harmonizes all these precepts, systems, principles, teachings and disciplines and makes them into one system, and that is his religion. For a whole decade, my friend, Keshub Chunder Sen, myself and other apostles of the Brahmo-Somaj have traveled from village to village, from province to province, from continent to continent, declaring this new dispensation and the harmony of all religious prophecies and systems unto the glory of the one true, living God. But we are a subject race; we are uneducated; we are incapable; we have not the resources of money to get men to listen to our message. In the fulness of time you have called this august parliament of religions, and the message that we could not propagate you have taken into your hands to propagate. We have made that the gospel of our lives, the ideal of our being.

"I do not come to the sessions of this parliament as a mere student, not as one who has to justify his own system. I come as a disciple, as a follower, as a brother. May your labors be blessed with prosperity, and not only shall your Christianity and your America be exalted, but the Brahma-Somaj will feel most exalted; and this poor man who has come such a long distance to crave your sympathy and your kindness shall feel himself amply rewarded.

"May the spread of the New Dispensation rest with you and make you our brothers and sisters. Representatives of all religions, may all your religions merge into the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, that Christ's prophecy may be fulfilled, the world's hope may be fulfilled, and mankind may become one kingdom with God, our Father."

A VOICE FROM JAPAN.

When Kinza Ringe M. Harai, the learned Japanese Buddhist, read his paper on "The Real Position of Japan Toward Christianity" the brows of some of the Christian missionaries on the platform contracted and their heads shook in disapproval. But the Buddhist directed his stinging rebukes at the false Christians who have done so much to impede the work of spreading the gospel in Japan. The paper follows:

"There are very few countries in the world so misunderstood as Japan. Among the innumerable unfair judgments, the religious thought of my countrymen is especially misrepresented, and the whole nation is condemned as heathen. Be they heathen, pagan, or something else, it is a fact that from the beginning of our history Japan has received all teachings with open mind; and also that the instructions which came from outside have commingled with the native religion in entire harmony, as is seen by so many temples built in the name of truth with a mixed appellation of Buddhism and Shintoism: as is seen by the affinity among the teachers of Confucianism and Taoism, or other isms, and the Buddhists and

Shinto priests; as is seen by the individual Japanese, who pays his other respects to all teachings mentioned above; as is seen by the peculiar construction of the Japanese houses, which have generally two rooms, one for a miniature Buddhist temple and the other for a small Shinto shrine, before which the family study the respective scriptures of the two religions. In reality Synthetic religion, or Entitsim, is the Japanese speciality, and I will not hesitate to call it Japanism.

"But you will protest and say: 'Why, then, is Christianity not so warmly accepted by your nation as other religions?' This is the point which I wish especially to present before you. [R1592 : page 337] There are two causes why Christianity is not so cordially received. This great religion was widely spread in our country, but in 1637 the Christian missionaries, combined with the converts, caused a tragic and bloody rebellion against the country, and it was understood that those missionaries intended to subjugate Japan to their own mother country. This shocked Japan, and it took the government of the Shogun a year to suppress this terrible and intrusive commotion. To those who accuse us that our mother country prohibited Christianity, not now, but in a past age, I will reply that it was not from religious or racial antipathy, but to prevent such another insurrection; and to protect our independence we were obliged to prohibit the promulgation of the gospels.

"If our history had had no such record of foreign devastation under the disguise of religion, and if our people had had no hereditary horror and prejudice against the name of Christianity, it might have been eagerly embraced by the whole nation. But this incident has passed and we may forget it. Yet it is not entirely unreasonable that the terrified suspicion, or you may say superstition, that Christianity is the instrument of depredation, should have been avoidably or unavoidably aroused in the oriental mind, when it is an admitted fact that some of the powerful nations of Christendom are gradually encroaching upon the Orient, and

when the following circumstance is daily impressed upon our mind, reviving a vivid memory of the past historical occurrence. The circumstance of which I am about to speak is the present experience of ourselves, to which I especially call the attention of this Parliament, and not only this Parliament, but also the whole of Christendom.

"Since 1853, when Commodore Perry came to Japan as the ambassador of the President of the United States of America, our country began to be better known by all western nations and the new ports were widely opened and the prohibition of the gospels was abolished, as it was before the Christian rebellion. By the convention at Yeddo, now Tokio, in 1858, the treaty was stipulated between America and Japan and also with the European powers. It was the time when our country was yet under the feudal government; and on account of our having been secluded for over two centuries since the Christian rebellion of 1637, diplomacy was quite a new experience to the feudal officers, who put their full confidence upon western nations, and, without any alteration, accepted every article of the treaty presented from the foreign governments. According to the treaty we are in a very disadvantageous situation; and amongst the others there are two prominent articles, which deprive us of our rights and advantages. One is the extritoriality of western nations in Japan, by which all cases in regard to right, whether of property or person, arising between the subjects of the western nations in my country as well as between them and the Japanese are subjected to the jurisdiction of the authorities of the western nations. Another regards the tariff, which, with the exception of 5 per cent ad valorem, we have no right to impose where it might properly be done.

"It is also stipulated that either of the contracting parties to this treaty, on giving one year's previous notice to the other, may demand a revision thereof on or after the 1st of July, 1872. Therefore in 1871 our government demanded a revision, and since

then we have been constantly requesting it, but foreign governments have simply ignored our requests, making many excuses. One part of the treaty between the United States of America and Japan concerning the tariff was annulled, for which we thank with sincere gratitude the kind-hearted American nation; but I am sorry to say that, as no European power has followed in the wake of America in this respect, our tariff right remains in the same condition as it was before.

"We have no judicial power over the foreigners in Japan, and as a natural consequence we are receiving injuries, legal and moral, the accounts of which are seen constantly in our native newspapers. As the western people live far from us, they do not know the exact circumstances. Probably they hear now and then the reports from the missionaries and their friends in Japan. I do not deny that their reports are true; but if any person wants to obtain any unmistakable information in regard to his friend he ought to hear the opinions about him from many sides. If you closely examine with your unbiased mind what injuries we receive, you will be astonished. Among many kinds of wrongs there are some which were utterly unknown before and entirely new to us 'heathen,' none of whom would dare to speak of them even in private conversation.

"One of the excuses offered by foreign nations is that our country is not yet civilized. Is it the principle of civilized law that the rights and profits of the so-called uncivilized or the weaker should be sacrificed? As I understand it, the spirit and the necessity of law is to protect the rights and welfare of the **[R1592 : page 338]** weaker against the aggression of the stronger; but I have never learned in my shallow studies of law that the weaker should be sacrificed for the stronger. Another kind of apology comes from the religious source, and the claim is made that the Japanese are idolaters and heathen. Whether our people are idolaters or not you

will know at once if you will investigate our religious views without prejudice from authentic Japanese sources.

"But admitting, for the sake of argument, that we are idolaters and heathen, is it Christian morality to trample upon the rights and advantages of a non-christian nation, coloring all their natural happiness with the dark stain of injustice? I read in the Bible, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also;' but I cannot discover there any passage which says, 'Whosoever shall demand justice of thee smite his right cheek, and when he turns smite the other also.' Again, I read in the Bible, 'If any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;' but I cannot discover there any passage which says, 'If thou shalt sue any man at the law, and take away his coat, let him give thee his cloak also.'

"You send your missionaries to Japan, and they advise us to be moral and believe Christianity. We like to be moral, we know that Christianity is good, and we are very thankful for this kindness. But at the same time our people are rather perplexed and very much in doubt about this advice when we think that the treaty stipulated in the time of feudalism, when we were yet in our youth, is still clung to by the powerful nations of Christendom; when we find that every year a good many western vessels engaged in the seal fishery are smuggled into our seas; when legal cases are always decided by the foreign authorities in Japan unfavorably to us; when some years ago a Japanese was not allowed to enter a university on the Pacific coast of America because of his being of a different race; when a few months ago the school board in San Francisco enacted a regulation that no Japanese should be allowed to enter the public school there; when last year the Japanese were driven out in wholesale from one of the territories of the United States of America; when our business men in San Francisco were compelled by some union not to employ the Japanese assistants or laborers, but the Americans; when there are some in the same city

who speak on the platforms against those of us who are already here; when there are many men who go in processions hoisting lanterns marked 'Jap must go;' when the Japanese in the Hawaiian islands are deprived of their suffrage; when we see some western people in Japan who erect before the entrance of their houses a special post upon which is the notice, 'No Japanese is allowed to enter here,' just like a board upon which is written, 'No dogs allowed;' when we are in such a situation is it unreasonable – notwithstanding the kindness of the western nations, from one point of view, who send their missionaries to us – for us intelligent 'heathen' to be embarrassed and hesitate to swallow the sweet and warm liquid of the heaven of Christianity? If such be the Christian ethics, well, we are perfectly satisfied to be heathen.

"If any person should claim that there are many people in Japan who speak and write against Christianity, I am not a hypocrite and I will frankly state that I was the first in my country who ever publicly attacked Christianity – *no, not real Christianity, but false Christianity*, the wrongs done toward us by the people of Christendom. If any reprove the Japanese because they have had strong anti-Christian societies, I will honestly declare that I was the first in Japan who ever organized a society against Christianity – *no, not against real Christianity, but to protect ourselves from false Christianity*, and the injustice which we receive from the people of Christendom. Do not think that I took such a stand on account of my being a Buddhist, for this was my position many years before I entered the Buddhist Temple. But at the same time I will proudly state that if any one discussed the affinity of all religions before the public, under the title of Synthetic Religion, it was I. I say this to you because I do not wish to be understood as a bigoted Buddhist sectarian.

"Really there is no sectarian in my country. Our people well know what abstract truth is in Christianity, and we, or at least I, do not care about the names if I speak from the point of teaching.

Whether Buddhism is called Christianity or Christianity is named Buddhism, whether we are called Confucianists or Shintoists, we are not particular; but we are very particular about the truth taught and its consistent application. Whether Christ saves us or drives us into hell, whether Gautama Buddha was a real person or there never was such a man, it is not a matter of consideration to us, but the consistency of doctrine and conduct is the point on which we put the greater importance. Therefore unless the inconsistency which we observe is renounced, and especially the unjust treaty by which we are entailed is revised upon an equitable basis, our people will never [R1592 : page 339] cast away their prejudice about Christianity, in spite of the eloquent orator who speaks its truth from the pulpit. We are very often called barbarians, and I have heard and read that Japanese are stubborn and cannot understand the truth of the Bible. I will admit that this is true in some sense, for, though they admire the eloquence of the orator and wonder at his courage, though they approve his logical argument, yet they are very stubborn and will not join Christianity as long as they think it is a western morality to preach one thing and practice another.

"But I know this is not the morality of the civilized west, and I have the firm belief in the highest humanity and noblest generosity of the Occidental nations toward us. Especially as to the American nation, I know their sympathy and integrity. I know their sympathy by their emancipation of the colored people from slavery. I know their integrity by the patriotic spirit which established the independence of the United States of America. And I feel sure that the circumstances which made the American people declare independence are in some sense comparable to the present state of my country. I cannot refrain my thrilling emotion and sympathetic tears whenever I read the Declaration of Independence. You, citizens of this glorious, free United States, who struck when the right time came, struck for 'Liberty or Death;' you, who waded through blood that you might fasten to the mast

your banner of the stripes and stars upon the land and sea; you, who enjoy the fruition of your Liberty through your struggle for it; you, I say, may understand somewhat our position, and, as you asked for justice from your mother country, we ask justice from these foreign powers.

"If any religion teaches injustice to humanity, I will oppose it, as I ever have opposed it, with my blood and soul. I will be the bitterest dissenter from Christianity, or I will be the warmest admirer of its gospel. To the Promoters of the Parliament and the ladies and gentlemen of the world who are assembled here, I pronounce that your aim is the realization of the Religious Union, not nominally, but practically. We, the forty million souls of Japan, standing firmly and persistently upon the basis of international justice, await still further manifestations as to the morality of Christianity."

A YOUNG MAN'S VOICE FROM THE ORIENT.

A voice from the young men of the Orient was sounded by Herant M. Kiretchjian, of Constantinople, as follows: –

"Brethren from the Sun-rising of all lands: – I stand here to represent the young men of the Orient, in particular from the land of the pyramids to the icefields of Siberia, and in general, from the shores of the Aegean to the waters of Japan. But on this wonderful platform of the Parliament of Religions, where I find myself with the sons of the Orient facing the American public, my first thought is to tell you that you have unwittingly called together a council of your creditors. We have not come to wind up your affairs, but to unwind your hearts. Turn to your books and see if our claim is not right. We have given you science, philosophy, theology, music and poetry, and have made history for you at tremendous expense. And moreover, out of the light that shone upon our lands from heaven, there have gone forth those who shall forever be your cloud of witnesses and your inspiration – saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs.

And with that rich capital you have amassed a stupendous fortune, so that your assets hide away from your eyes your liabilities. We do not want to share your wealth, but it is right that we should have our dividend, and, as usual, it is a young man presents the vouchers.

"You cannot pay this dividend with money. Your gold you want yourselves. Your silver has fallen from grace. We want you to give us a rich dividend in the full sympathy of your hearts. And, like the artisan who, judging by their weight, throws into his crucible nuggets of different shape and color, and, after fire and flux have done their work, pours it out and behold, it flows pure gold, so, having called together the children of men from the ends of the earth, and having them here before you in the crucible of earnest thought and honest search after truth, you find, when this parliament is over, that out of prejudice of race and dogma, and out of the variety of custom and worship, there flows out before your eyes nothing but the pure gold of humanity; and henceforth you think of us, not as strangers in foreign lands, but as your brothers, in China, and Japan and India, your sisters in the Isles of Greece and the hills and valleys of Armenia, you shall have paid us such a dividend out of your hearts and received yourselves withal such a blessing that this will be a Beulah land of prophecy for future times, and send forth the echo of that sweet song that once was heard in our land of "Peace on earth and good will to man."

"There has been so much spoken to you here, by men of wisdom and experience of the religious life of the great east, that you would **[R1592 : page 340]** not expect me to add anything thereto. Nor would I have stood here presuming to give you any more information about the religions of the world. But there is a new race of men that have risen up out of all the great past whose influence will undoubtedly be a most important factor in the work of humanity in the coming century. They are the result of all the past, coming in contact with the new life of the present – I mean

the young men of the Orient: they who are preparing to take possession of the earth with their brothers of the great west.

"I bring you a philosophy from the shores of the Bosphorus and a religion from the city of Constantine. All my firm convictions and deductions that have grown up within me for years past have, under the influence of this parliament, been shaken to their roots. But I find to-day those roots yet deeper in my heart and the branches reaching higher into the skies. I cannot presume to bring you anything new, but if all the deductions appear to you to be logical from premises which human intelligence can accept, then I feel confident that you will give us credit of honest purpose and allow us the right as intelligent beings to hold fast to that which I present before you.

"When the young men of to-day were children, they heard and saw every day of their lives nothing but enmity and separation between men of different religions and nationalities. I need not stop to tell you of the influence of such a life upon the lives of young men who found themselves separated and in camps pitched for battle against their brother men with whom they had to come in contact in the daily avocations of life. And as the light of education and ideas of liberty began to spread over the whole Orient with the latter part of this century, this yoke became more galling upon the necks of the young men of the Orient and the burden too heavy to bear.

"Young men of all the nationalities I have mentioned, who for the past thirty years have received their education in the universities of Paris, Heidelberg, Berlin, and other cities of Europe, as well as the Imperial Lyceum of Constantinople, have been consciously or unconsciously, passively or aggressively, weaving the fabric of their religion, so that to the thousand young men, for whom their voice is an oracle, it has come like a boon, and enlisted their heart and mind.

"They find their brothers in large numbers in all the cities of the Orient where European civilization has found the least entrance, and there is scarcely any city that will not have felt their influence before the end of the century. Their religion is the newest of all religions, and I should not have brought it upon this platform were it not for the fact it is one of the most potent influences acting in the Orient and with which we religious young men of the east have to cope efficiently, if we are to have the least influence with the peoples of our respective lands.

"For, remember, these are men of intelligence, men of excellent parts, men who, with all the young men of the Orient, have proved that in all arts and science, in the marts of the civilized world, in the armies of the nations and at the right hand of kings they are the equal of any race of men, from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof. They are men, moreover, for the most part, of the best intentions and the most sincere convictions, and, when you hear their opinion of religion and think of the position they hold, you cannot, I am sure, as members of the religious parliament, feel anything but the greatest concern for them and the lands in which they dwell.

"I represent, personally, the religious young men of the Orient; but let me, by proxy, for the young men of the newest religion, speak before you to the apostles of all religions: 'You come to us in the name of religion to bring to us what we already have. We believe that man is sufficient unto himself, if, as you say, a perfect God has created him. If you will let him alone he will be all that he should be. Educate him, train him, don't bind him hand and foot, and he will be a perfect man, worthy to be the brother of any other man. Nature has sufficiently endowed man, and you should use all that is given you in your intelligence before you trouble God to give you more. Moreover, no one has found God. We have all the inspiration we want in sweet poetry and enchanting music, and in the companionship of refined and cultured men and

women. If we are to listen to it, we would like Handel to tell us of the Messiah, and if the heavens resound, it is enough to have Beethoven's interpretation.

"We have nothing against you, but really, as to all religions, we must say that you have done the greatest possible harm to humanity by raising men against men and nation against nation. And now to make a bad thing worse in this day of superlative common sense you come to fill the minds of men with impossible things and burden their brains with endless discussions of a thousand sects. For there are many I have heard before you and I know how many could follow. We consider you the one **[R1592 : page 341]** of all men to be avoided, for your philosophy and your doctrines are breeding pessimism over the land.'

"Then with a religious instinct and innate respect that all orientals have, I have to say suddenly: 'But, see here, we are not infidels or atheists or skeptics. We simply have no time for such things. We are full of the inspiration for the highest life, and desire freedom for all young men of the world. We have a religion that unites all men of all lands, and fills the earth with gladness. It supplies every human need, and, therefore, we know that it is the true religion, especially because it produces peace and the greatest harmony. So, we do not want any of your 'isms' nor any other system or doctrine. We are not materialists, socialists, rationalists or pessimists, and we are not idealists. Our religion is the first that was, and it is also the newest of the new – we are gentlemen. In the name of peace and humanity, can you not let us alone? If you invite us again in the name of religion, we shall have a previous engagement, and if you call again to preach, we are not at home.'

"This is the oriental young man, like the green bay tree. And where one passes away, so that you do not find him in his place, there are twenty to fill the gap. Believe me, I have not exaggerated; for word for word, and ten times more than this, I have heard from

intelligent men of the army and navy, men in commerce and men of the bars of justice in earnest conversation and deep argument, in the streets of Constantinople, in the boats of the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, in Roumania and Bulgaria, as well as in Paris and New York and the Auditorium of Chicago, from Turk and Armenian, from Greek and Hebrew, as well as Bulgarian and Servian, and I can tell you that this newest substitute of religion, keeping the gates of commerce and literature, science and law, through Europe and the Orient, is a most potent force in shaping the destinies of the nations of the east, and has to be accounted for intelligently in thinking of the future of religion, and has to be met with an armament as powerful in the eyes of the young men of the Orient as that which science and literature have put in the hands of these men of the great army of the new gentlemen class.

"There is another class of young men in the Orient who call themselves the religious young men and who hold to the ancient faith of their fathers. Allow me to claim for these young men, also, honesty of purpose, intelligence of mind, as well as a firm persuasion. For them also I come to speak to you, and in speaking for them I speak also for myself. You will naturally see that we have to be from earliest days in contact with the new religion; so let me call it for convenience. We have to be in colleges and universities with those same young men. We have to go hand in hand with them in all science and history, literature, music and poetry, and naturally with them we share in the firm belief in all scientific deduction and hold fast to every principle of human liberty.

THE DIGNITY OF MAN.

"First, all the young men of the Orient, who have the deepest religious convictions, stand for the dignity of man. I regret that I should have to commence here; but, out of the combined voices and arguments of philosophies and theologies, there comes before

us such an unavoidable inference of an imperfect humanity that we have to come out before we can speak on any religion for ourselves and say: 'We believe that we are men.' For us it is a libel on humanity, and an impeachment of the God who created man, to say that man is not sufficient within himself, and that he needs religion to come and make him perfect.

[Note how the natural man accuses and excuses himself in the same breath. Imperfection cannot be denied; but power to make ourselves perfect in time is claimed, and thus the necessity for "the precious blood" of the "sin-offering," which God has provided, is *ignored* by the heathen as it is now being *denied* by the worldly-wise of Christendom. – EDITOR.]

"It is libeling humanity to look upon this or that family of man and to say that they show conceptions of goodness and truth and high ideals and a life above simple animal desires, because they have had religious teaching by this or that man, or a revelation from heaven. We believe that if man is man he has it all in himself, just as he has all his bodily capacities. Will you tell me that a cauliflower that I plant in the fields grows up in beauty and perfection of its convolutions, and that my brain, which the same God has created a hundred thousand times more delicate and perfect, cannot develop its convolutions and do the work that God intended I should do and have the highest conceptions that he intended I should have; that a helpless pollywog will develop, and become a frog with perfect, elastic limbs and a heaving chest, and that frogs will keep together in contentment and croak in unity, and that men need religion and help from outside in order that they may develop into the perfection **[R1592 : page 342]** of men in body and soul and recognize the brotherhood of man and live upon God's earth in peace? I say it is an impeachment of God, who created man, to promulgate and acquiesce in any such doctrine.

"Nor do we accept the unwarranted conclusions of science. We have nothing to do with the monkeys. If they want to speak to us they will have to come up to us. *There is a western spirit of creating difficulties which we cannot understand.* One of my first experiences in the United States was taking part in a meeting of young ladies and gentlemen in the City of Philadelphia for a quiet evening, of which there are quite a number there. The subject of the evening was whether animals had souls, and the cat came out prominently. Very serious and erudite papers were read. But the conclusion was that, not knowing just what a cat is and what a soul is, they could not decide the matter, but still was it a serious matter bearing upon religion. Now suppose an Armenian girl should ask her mother if cats had souls. She would settle the question in parenthesis and say, for example: 'My sweet one, you must go down and see if the water is boiling (What put the question into your head? Of course cats have souls. Cats have cats' souls and men have men's souls.) Now go down.' And the child would go down rejoicing in her humanity. And if my Armenian lady should one day be confronted with the missing link of which we hear so much, still her equanimity would remain unperturbed and she would still glory in her humanity by informing you that the missing link had the soul of a missing link and man had the soul of a man.

"So far we come with the young men of the gentlemen class, hand in hand, upon the common plane of humanity. But here is a corner where we part, and take widely diverging paths. We cry, 'Let us alone, and we will expand and rise up to the height of our destiny;' and, behold, we find an invisible power that will not let us alone. We find that we can do almost everything in the ways of science and art. But when it comes to following our conception of that which is high and noble, that which is right and necessary for our development, we are wanting in strength and power to advance toward it. I put this in the simplest form, for I cannot enlarge upon it here. But the fact for us is as real as that of the dignity of man, that there is a power which diverts men and women from the path

of rectitude and honor, in which they know they must walk. You cannot say it is inherent in man, for we feel it does not belong to us. And if it did not belong to us, and it was the right conception of man to go down into degradation and misery, rapacity, and the desire of crushing down his fellow man, we would say, 'Let him alone, and let him do that which God meant that he should do.'

"So, briefly, I say to anyone here who is preparing to boil down his creed, put this in it before you reach the boiling point: 'And I believe in the devil, the arch-enemy of God, the accuser of God to man.' One devil for the whole universe? We care not. A legion of demons besieging each soul? It matters not to us. We know this; that there is a power outside of man which draws him aside mightily. And no power on earth can resist it.

"And so, here comes our religion. If you have a religion to bring to the young men of the Orient, it must come with a power that will balance, yea, counterbalance the power of evil in the world. Then will man be free to grow up and be that which God intended he should be. We want God. We want the spirit of God. And the religion that comes to us in any name or form, must bring that, or else, for us, it is no religion. And we believe in God, not the God of protoplasms, that hides between molecules of matter, but God whose children we are.

"So we place as the third item of our philosophy and protest the dignity of God. Is chivalry dead? Has all conception of a high and noble life, of sterling integrity, departed from the hearts of men that we cannot aspire to knighthood and princeship in the courts of our God? We know we are his children, for we are doing his works and thinking his thoughts. What we want to do is to be like him. Oh, is it true that I can cross land and sea and reach the heart of my mother, and feel her arms clasping me, but that I, a child of God, standing helpless in the universe, against a power that I cannot overcome, cannot lift up my hands to him, and cry to him, that I

may have his spirit in my soul and feel his everlasting arms supporting me in my weakness?

"And here comes the preacher from ancient days, and the modern church, and tells us of one who did overcome the world, and that he came down from above. We need not to be told that he came from above, for no man born of woman did any such thing. But we are persuaded that by the means of grace and the path which he shows us to walk in, the spirit of God does come into the hearts of men, and that I can feel it in my heart fighting with me against sin and strengthening my heart to hold resolutely to that which I know to be right by **[R1592 : page 343]** the divine in me. We do not know whether the spirit of God proceedeth from the Father or from the Son, but we know that it proceedeth into the heart of man and that sufficeth unto us.

"And so with a trembling hand but firm conviction, with much sadness with humanity, but joy of eternal triumph, I come with you all to the golden gates of the twentieth century, where the elders of the coming commonwealth of humanity are sitting to pass judgment upon the religion that shall enter those gates to the support of the human heart. I place there by the side of ancient Oriental Confucianism and modern theosophy, ancient Oriental Buddhism and modern spiritualism, and every faith of ancient days and modern materialism, rationalism and idealism – there I place ancient Oriental Christianity with its Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, and its cross, still radiant in the love of God,

""Towering o'er the wrecks of time.""

The thoughtful observer cannot read the noble sentiments of some of these who are feeling after God and aspiring toward righteousness, without marking the contrast between their serious sincerity and their noble purpose and effort to lift up before their fellow-men the highest standards of righteousness they can discern, and the compromising attitude of so many Christians who

have been more highly favored by birth and environment with a knowledge of the truth, who are now anxious to sell it at the immense sacrifice of its noble principles, merely to gain the present popular favor. To whom much has been given much will be required by the Lord, who is now weighing them all in the balances.

But while a few of the foreign representatives call out our admiration and respect, the great majority of them were rejoicing in their privilege of parading and recommending their superstitions to such a representative assembly of the civilized and enlightened nations. Buddhism, Shintoism, Brahminism, Confucianism and Mohammedanism were repeatedly set forth with great boldness, and the Mohammedan apostle even had the audacity to recommend polygamy. This was almost too much for the audience, but their manifestations of disapproval were quickly silenced by the chairman, Dr. Barrows, who reminded them of the object of the Parliament – to give all a fair hearing without dispute. So all had an abundant hearing and freely argued their points before the already unsettled minds of thousands of professed Christians, and they have had much reason to expect converts to their religions here in America. The same privileges were also enjoyed by many of the anti-christian movements, such as Christian Science, Theosophy, Swedenborgianism, etc.

CLOSING SENTIMENTS OF THE GREAT PARLIAMENT.

As to the probable outcome of this great convocation, which has already made Babylon's confusion worse confounded, we may judge somewhat by the farewell remarks of the different representatives on the last evening of the Parliament, from which we quote a few brief extracts.

Suamie Vive Kananda (priest of Bombay, India) said: –

"Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory; but if any one here hopes that this unity would come by the triumph of any one of these religions and the destruction of the others, to him I say, Brother, yours is an impossible hope. Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindoo? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindoo or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid. The Christian is not to become a Hindoo or a Buddhist, nor a Hindoo or a Buddhist to become a Christian. Learn to think without prejudice. ...If theology and dogma stand in your way in the search of truth, put them aside. Be earnest, and work out your own salvation with diligence, and the fruits of holiness will be yours."

Vichand Ghandi (Jainist of India) said: –

"If you will permit a 'heathen' to deliver his message of peace and love, I shall only ask you to look at the multifarious ideas presented to you, in a liberal spirit, and not with superstition and bigotry....I entreat you to examine the various religious systems from all standpoints."

The Right Rev. Shabita, high priest of the Shinto religion in Japan, said: –

"What I wish to do is to assist you in carrying out the plan of forming the universal brotherhood under the one roof of truth. You know unity is power. [But not when God is **[R1592 : page 344]** on the opposite side of such union. See Isa. 8:9.] Now I pray that the eight million deities protecting the beautiful cherry tree country of Japan may protect you and your government forever, and with this I bid you good-by."

H. Dharmapala of Ceylon said: –

"I, on behalf of four hundred and seventy-five millions of my co-religionists, followers of the gentle Lord Buddha Gautauma,

tender my affectionate regards to you....You have learned from your brothers of the far east their presentation of the respective religious systems they follow;...you have listened with commendable patience to the teachings of the all-merciful Buddha through his humble followers."

Bishop Keane (Roman Catholic) said: –

"When the invitation to this parliament was sent to the old Catholic church, people said, 'Will she come?' And the old Catholic church said, 'Who has as good a right to come to a parliament of all the religions of the world as the old Catholic universal church?'...Even if she has to stand alone on that platform she will stand on it. And the old church has come and is rejoiced to meet her fellow-men, her fellow-believers, her fellow-lovers of every shade of humanity and every shade of creed. been planted here a seed that will grow to union wide and perfect. If it were not better for us to be one than to be divided, our Lord would not have prayed that we might all be one as he and the Father are one." [But they are not praying for such a union as exists between the Father and the Son: the proposed union is a vastly different one.]

The sentiments thus expressed found fullest acceptance in the Parliament from Protestant representatives. Thus, for instance, Rev. Dr. Candlin, missionary to China, said: –

"The conventional idea of religion which obtains among Christians the world over is that Christianity is true, all other religions false; that Christianity is of God, while other religions are of the devil; or else, with a little spice of moderation, that Christianity is a revelation from heaven, while other religions are manufactures of men. *You know better* [mark that], and with clear light and strong assurance can testify that there may be friendship instead of antagonism between religion and religion, that so surely as God is our common father, our hearts alike have yearned for him and our souls in devoutest moods have caught whispers of grace

dropped from his throne. Then this is Pentecost, and behind is the conversion of the world."

The Rev. Dr. Bristol, of the Methodist church, said: –

"Infinite good and only good will come from this parliament. To all who have come from afar we are profoundly and eternally indebted. Some of them represent civilization that was old when Romulus was founding Rome; whose philosophies and songs were ripe in wisdom and rich in rhythm before Homer sang his Iliads to the Greeks; and they have enlarged our ideas of our common humanity. They have brought to us fragrant flowers from the gardens of eastern faiths, rich gems from the old mines of great philosophies, and we are richer to-night from their contributions of thought and particularly from our contact with them in spirit.

"Never was there such a bright and hopeful day for our common humanity along the lines of tolerance and universal brotherhood. And we shall find that by the words that these visitors have brought to us and by the influence they have exerted they will be richly rewarded in the consciousness of having contributed to the mighty movement which holds in itself the promise of one faith, one Lord, one Father, one brotherhood.

"The blessings of our God and our Father be with you, brethren from the east; the blessings of our Savior, our elder brother, the teacher of the brotherhood of man, be with you and your peoples forever."

Rev. Augusta Chapin said: –

"We who welcomed now speed the parting guests. We are glad you came, O wise men of the east. With your wise words, your large toleration and your gentle ways we have been glad to sit at your feet and learn of you in these things. We are glad to have seen

you face to face, and we shall count you henceforth more than ever our friends and coworkers in the great things of religion.

And we are glad, now that you are going to your far away homes, to tell the story of all that has been said and done here in this great parliament, and that you will thus bring the Orient into nearer relations with the Occident, and make plain the sympathy which exists among all religions. We are glad for the words that have been spoken by the wise men and women of the west, who have come and have given us their grains of gold after the washing. What I said in the beginning I will repeat now at the ending of this parliament. It has been the greatest gathering in the name of religion ever held on the face of this earth."

Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones said:

"I bid you, the parting guests, the godspeed **[R1592 : page 345]** that comes out of a soul that is glad to recognize its kinship with all lands and with all religions; and when you go, you go leaving behind you in our hearts not only more hospitable thoughts for the faiths you represent but also warm and loving ties that bind you into the union that will be our joy and our life forevermore."

Dr. Barrows (chairman) said: –

"Our hopes have been more than realized. The sentiment which has inspired this parliament has held us together. The principles in accord with which this historic convention has proceeded have been put to the test, and even strained at times, but they have not been inadequate. Toleration, brotherly kindness, trust in each other's sincerity, a candid and earnest seeking after the unities of religion, the honest purpose of each to set forth his own faith without compromise and without unfriendly criticism – these principles, thanks to your loyalty and courage, have not been found wanting.

"Men of Asia and Europe, we have been made glad by your coming, and have been made wiser. I am happy that you have enjoyed our hospitalities," etc.

The remarks of President Bonney were very similar; and then, with a prayer by a Jewish rabbi and a benediction by a Roman Catholic bishop, the great Parliament came to a close; and five thousand voices joined in repeating the angel's message of "Peace on earth and good will towards men."

THE OUTLOOK.

But Oh! at what sacrifice of principles and truth, and of loyalty to God, is such an announcement made to the world; and that, too, on the very threshold of a divinely predicted time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, a trouble which all thinking people begin to realize, and the crisis and outcome of which they greatly fear. And it is this fear that is driving this heterogeneous mass together for mutual protection and co-operation. It is merely a stroke of human policy to try to quiet the fears of the world by crying, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace. (Jer. 6:14.) The time is coming when the Lord himself will speak peace unto the heathen (Zech. 9:10); but it will not be until he has first made known his presence in the whirlwind of revolution and in the storm of trouble. – Nah. 1:3.

Those who are posted in history know something of the character of that great antichristian power with which affiliation is so earnestly sought – the church of Rome; and those who are keeping open eyes on her present operations know that her heart and character are still unchanged. And only recently tidings came from southern Russia of fierce persecution, not only of Jews, but also of Christians who are awakening from the blindness and superstition of the Greek church and who are seeking and finding God and the truth through the study of his Word. The persecution incited by the priests and the police are of the most cruel and

revolting nature. But, nevertheless, union and co-operation with both these systems is most earnestly sought, as also with all the forms of heathen superstition and ignorance.

Of the gross darkness of heathenism with which co-operation and sympathy is even now craved by Christians, we may gain some idea from the following indignant retort of Dr. Pentecost against the critical tone which some of the foreigners assumed toward Christianity and Christian missions. He said: –

"I think it is a pity that anything should tend to degenerate the discussions of this parliament into a series of criminations and recriminations; nevertheless, we Christians have been sitting patiently and listening to a series of criticisms upon the results of Christianity from certain representatives of the eastern religions. For instance, the slums of Chicago and New York, the nameless wickednesses palpable to the eye even of the strangers who are our guests; the licentiousness, the drunkenness, the brawls, the murders, and the crimes of the criminal classes have been scored up against us. The shortcomings of Congress and government both in England and America have been charged to Christianity. The opium trade, the rum traffic, the breach of treaties, the inhuman and barbarous laws against the Chinaman, etc., have all been charged upon the Christian church. [Aye, but if Christians claim that these are Christian nations, can they reasonably blame these heathen representatives for thinking and judging them accordingly? – EDITOR.]

"Now it seems almost needless to say that all these things, the immoralities, drunkenness, crimes, unbrotherliness, and selfish greed of these various destructive traffics which have been carried from our countries to the Orient, lie outside the pale of Christianity. The Church of Christ is laboring night and day to correct and abolish these crimes. The unanimous voice of the Christian Church condemns the opium traffic, the liquor traffic, the Chinese **[R1592**

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"We are willing to be criticised; but when I recall the fact that these criticisms are in part from gentlemen who represent a system of religion whose temples, manned by the highest castes of Brahmanical priesthood, are the authorized and appointed cloisters of a system of immorality and debauchery the parallel of which is not known in any Western country, I feel that silence gives consent. I could take you to ten thousand temples, more or less – more rather than less – in every part of India, to which are attached from two to four hundred priestesses, whose lives are not all they should be.

"I have seen this with my own eyes, and nobody denies it in India. If you talk to the Brahmans about it, they will say it is a part of their system for the common people. Bear in mind this system is the authorized institution of the Hindoo religion. One needs only to look at the abominable carvings upon the temples, both of the Hindoos and Buddhists, the hideous symbols of the ancient Phallic systems, which are the most popular objects worshiped in India, to be impressed with the corruption of the religion. Bear in mind, these are not only tolerated but instituted, directed, and controlled by the priests of religion. Only the shameless paintings and portraiture of ancient Pompeii equal in obscenity the things that are openly seen in and about the entrance to the temples of India.

"It seems a little hard that we should bear the criticism which these representatives of Hindooism make upon the Godless portion of Western countries, when they are living in such enormous glass houses as these, every one of them erected, protected and defended by the leaders of their own religion.

"We have heard a good deal about the 'fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man,' as being one of the essential doctrines of the religions of the East. As a matter of fact, I have never been able

to find – and I have challenged the production of them all over India – a single text in any of the Hindoo sacred literature that justifies or even suggests the doctrine of the 'fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.' This is a pure plagiarism from Christianity. We rejoice that they have adopted and incorporated it. How can a Brahman, who looks upon all low-caste men, and especially upon the poor pariahs, with a spirit of loathing, and regards them as a different order of beings, sprung from monkeys and devils, presume to tell us that he believes in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man? If a Brahman believes in the brotherhood of man, why will he refuse the social amenities and common hospitalities to men of other castes, as well as to his Western brethren, whom he so beautifully enfolds in the condescending arms of his newly found doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man?

"If there is any brotherhood of man in India the most careless observer need not hesitate to say that there is no sisterhood recognized by them. Let the nameless horrors of which the Hindoo women of India are the subjects answer to this statement.

"Until the English government put down with a strong hand the ancient religious Hindoo institution of Sutte, hundreds of Hindoo widows every year gladly flew to the funeral pyres of their dead husbands, thus embracing the flames that burned their bodies rather than deliver themselves to the nameless horrors and living hell of Hindoo widowhood. Let our Hindoo friends tell us what their religion has done for the Hindoo widow, and especially the child widow, with her head shaved like a criminal, stripped of her ornaments, clothed in rags, reduced to a position of slavery worse than we can conceive, made the common drudge and scavenger of the family, and not infrequently put to even worse and nameless uses. To this state and condition the poor widow is reduced under the sanction of Hindooism. Only two years ago the British government was appealed to pass a new and stringent law 'raising

the age of consent' to twelve years, at which it was lawful for the Hindoo to consummate the marriage relation with his child wife. The Christian hospitals, filled with abused little girls barely out of their babyhood, became so outrageous a fact that the government had to step in and stop these crimes, which were perpetrated in the name of religion. So great was the excitement in India over this that it was feared that a religious revolution which would almost lead to a new mutiny was imminent.

"We have been criticised by our Oriental friends for judging with an ignorant and prejudiced judgment, because at a recent challenge in the early part of this parliament only five persons were able to say that they had read the Bible of Buddha; so it was taken for granted that our judgment was ignorant and unjust. The same challenge might have been made in Burmah or Ceylon, and outside of the priesthood it is almost fair to say that not so many would have been able to say they had [R1592 : page 347] read their own scriptures. The Badas of the Hindoos are objects of worship. None but a Brahman may teach, much less read them. Before the Christian missionary went to India, the Sanskrit was practically a dead language. If the Indian Scriptures have at last been translated into the vernacular or given to the Western nations, it is because the Christian missionary and Western scholars have rediscovered them, unearthed them, translated them, and brought them forth to the light of day. The amount of the Sanskrit Scriptures known by the ordinary Indian who has secured a Western education is only those portions which have been translated into English or the vernacular by European or Western scholars. The common people, ninety-nine one-hundredths of all, know only tradition. Let us contrast this dead exclusiveness on the part of these Indian religions with the fact that the Christian has translated his Bible into more than three hundred languages and dialects, and has sent it broadcast by hundreds of millions among all the nations and tongues and peoples of the earth. We court the light, but it would

seem that the Bibles of the East love the darkness rather than light, because they will not bear the light of universal publication.

"The new and better Hindooism of to-day is a development under the influence of a Christian environment, but it has not yet attained to that ethical standard which gives it right to read the Christian Church a lesson in morals. Until India purges her temples of worse than Augean filth, and her pundits and priests disown and denounce the awful acts and deeds done in the name of religion, let her be modest in proclaiming morals to other nations and people."

RESULTS OF THE GREAT PARLIAMENT.

Viewed from its own standpoint, the Parliament was pronounced a grand success, and the unthinking world responds, Amen! and America, and especially Chicago, and President Bonney and Chairman Dr. Barrows come in for a large share of the honors of the occasion so great in the eyes of men. It is looked upon by them as the harbinger of universal peace. The whole world is to be bound up in one universal bond of religious unity and brotherhood, and yet all are to think and act and grope along in the darkness of ignorance and superstition just as they have always done, refusing "the light that shines in the face of Jesus Christ," which is the only true light. And Christians are rejoicing in this prospect, and hailing such an event as the most glorious event in history; and they are promising the world a universal and everlasting peace on this hypothesis; and they think they can bring about arbitration instead of war for the settlement of national disputes.

To accomplish this it was even proposed and argued at the Congress that the Pope of Rome is the most suitable person in the world to be the arbitrator of nations.

But while the general impression created by the great Parliament is that it is the first step, and a long one, towards a realization of the angel's message at the birth of Christ, of peace on earth and good will toward men, we view it far otherwise – as another manifestation of the faithlessness of Christendom. Surely, as saith the prophet, "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." (Isa. 29:14.) And again we hear him say, "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together and it shall come to naught; speak the word and it shall not stand." – Isa. 8:9,10.

With the Psalmist we would again propound the question, "Why do the people imagine *a vain thing?* – Why do they cry, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace? The kings of the earth [civil and ecclesiastical] set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure," and the great time of trouble will come. – Psa. 2:1-5.

When God's chosen people – spiritual Israel now, like fleshly Israel anciently – abandon his Word and his leading, and seek to ally themselves with the nations that know not God, and to blend divine truth with the world's philosophies, they take such steps at a peril which they do not realize; and they would do well indeed to mark God's recompenses to his ancient people, and take warning.

Several very unfavorable results are, we think, clearly discernible: –

(1) It has introduced to the already unsettled minds of Christians the various heathen philosophies, and that in their most

favorable aspects, and doubtless the impression already made upon many minds is that there are no religious certainties. Such a condition was even hinted at by one of the delegates from [R1592 : page 348] Syria – Christophore Jibara. He said: –

"My Brothers and Sisters in the worship of God: – All the religions now in this general and religious congress are parallel to each other in the sight of the whole world. Every one of these religions has supporters who realize and prefer their own to other religions, and they might bring some arguments or reasons to convince others of the value and truth of their own form of religion. From such discussions a change may come: perhaps even doubts about all religions; or a supposition that all of them are identical faiths. And, therefore, the esteem of every religion may fall or decrease; doubt may be produced against all the inspired books, or a general neglect may happen, and no one will remain to hold a certain religion, and many may entirely neglect the duties of religion, for the reason of restlessness in their hearts and the opinion which prevails in one form of religion, *just as is going on among many millions in Europe and America*. Therefore, I think that a committee should be selected from the great religions, to investigate the dogmas and to make a full and perfect comparison, approving the true one, and announcing it to the people."

(2) It has made special friendship between Babylon the great, the mother of harlots (the church of Rome), and her many daughters (the various Protestant sects), who glory in their shame, and are proud to own the relationship, all unmindful of the disreputable character ascribed to her in the divine revelation and abundantly verified in her history even to the present day.

(3) It has taken a long step, which will doubtless be followed by others – already proposed – towards the affiliation, in some sense, of all religions; toward a yet closer union of the church (nominal) and the world. It was publicly announced by the

President at the last session of the Parliament that "a proclamation of fraternity will be issued to promote the continuation in all parts of the world of the great work in which the congresses of 1893 have been engaged."

(4) It has practically said to the heathen that there is really no necessity for Christian missions; that Christians are themselves uncertain of their religion; that their own religions are good enough, if followed sincerely; and that Christianity, to say the least, can only be received with a large measure of incredulity. It is a cause of astonishment to note how the heathen representatives have measured nominal Christianity; how clearly they have made distinctions between the Christianity of "Christendom," and the Christianity of the Bible; and how keenly their rebukes were often administered.

(5) It has said to distracted Christendom, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace, instead of sounding an alarm, as saith the Prophet (Joel 2:1): "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain;... for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand," and calling upon all to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God.

(6) It was evidently a measure of policy, originating in the fears of the leaders in "Christendom," as they discerned the approaching trouble of this day of the Lord. Mark! it had its beginning in the distracted and perplexed Presbyterian church. The cry of Peace! Peace! in the very midst of the rising storm of this day of the Lord, reminds us of the prophecy – "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." – 1 Thes. 5:3.

Let not the children of God be deluded by Babylon's false prognostications. In God only can we find a safe retreat. (Psa. 91.) Let us rally closer round the cross of Christ, which is our only hope. Let the universal brotherhood of false religions and apostate

Christianity prove the value of that relationship; but let us recognize only the brotherhood in Christ – the brotherhood of all who trust in him alone for salvation, through faith in his precious blood. Other men are *not* children of God, and will not be until they come unto him by faith in Christ as their Redeemer, their substitute. They are the "children of wrath," even as were we before we came into Christ (Eph. 2:3); and some are the children of the wicked one, whose works they do. When God condemned Adam and his posterity to death, on account of sin, he no longer owned and treated them as sons. And only as men come into Christ by faith in his precious blood are they reinstated in that blessed relationship to God. Consequently, if we are no longer the children of wrath, but are owned of God as his sons through Christ, other men, not so recognized of God, are not in any sense our brethren.

Several propositions have already been publicly made for another similar world's congress, to convene in the year 1900; and New York, Jerusalem and Benares, India, have been suggested as suitable places. A great "Eucharistic Congress" was held in May under the direction of Roman Catholics, the object of which seemed to be to advance the cause of union between the various branches of the Catholic church, particularly the largest two bodies, **[R1592 : page 349]** the Greek and Roman branches.

Let all the children of light watch and be sober (1 Thes. 5:5,6); let the soldiers of the cross be valiant for the truth, and receive no other gospel, though it be declared by an angel from heaven (Gal. 1:8); and let them consummate no union with any class save the "little flock" of consecrated and faithful followers **[R1593 : page 349]** of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.
