

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER
A DENUNCIATION OF CHICAGO UNIVERSITY BY
REV. J. B. CRANFILL OF TEXAS

"NOBODY in Chicago now claims that the University of Chicago is a Baptist institution, either in a general or a special sense, and it may be gravely doubted whether or not it is even a Christian institution," writes Rev. J. B. Cranfill to the Texas Baptist *Standard*, giving his estimate of the Baptist life of Chicago. In many Baptist quarters the university on the Midway stands in great disfavor, but probably never before has such bold expression been given that disfavor.

Dr. Cranfill says that "the University of Chicago is the greatest organized enemy of evangelical Christianity on the earth today." He doubts if Standard oil has ever worked or can ever work such harm as has the university which Mr. Rockefeller founded and fosters.

"During my short stay here," he writes in his letter, "I have spent most of my time in South Chicago, near the university. In 1895, when it was my pleasure to interview President W. R. Harper for the columns of the Baptist *Standard*, it was believed that the University of Chicago was a Baptist institution. Indeed, that was one of the points elicited in the interview. That pleasing delusion has long since vanished, and nobody in Chicago now claims that the University of Chicago is a Baptist institution, either in a general or in a special sense. It may be gravely doubted whether or not it is even a Christian institution, but there is a semblance of Christianity of a kind in some phases of the university work.

WORSHIP PECULIAR

"The worship of the university is carried on at Mandel hall. This hall was built largely by a Jew, Leon Mandel, one of the most enterprising citizens of Chicago. The hall is a long building, nicely seated, with an elaborate gallery, and will accommodate perhaps three thousand people. I have attended several of the Sunday services in this building. During the time of my stay here I have heard sermons by Dr. O. C. S. Wallace, chancellor of McMaster University; Dr. W. J. McGlothlin, of the Louisville Theological Seminary, and Dr. H. L. Stetson, who is one of the teachers in the Chicago university divinity school. Some of the other sermons I did not hear. One was delivered by an Episcopal rector, and another by a Roman Catholic priest. I understand that this 'pulpit' has also been filled by Unitarians and Jews. The 'worship' is rather peculiar to a Southern Baptist. It is a hybrid service, but it is chiefly Episcopalian. It begins by the incoming of a male choir, who enter the building singing some kind of hymn or chant. They are all capped and gowned after the university style, and are followed as they come in by the preacher of the day, who also has the regulation university uniform. The preliminary service is responsive, after the style of Episcopalians. A Psalm is read in responsive reading, and after the conclusion of the morning prayer the choir chants the Lord's prayer. At the conclusion of the morning service the choir marches out again, singing, followed by the preacher. After they go away somewhere on the outside they finish their song in the distance, and the audience feels relieved and rises for departure. The sermon usually is twenty to twenty-five minutes long; the entire service takes up about an hour and a half. There is no evening service.

ENEMY OF CHRISTIANITY

"Without in anywise meaning to be unkind or unjust, I believe that the University of Chicago is the greatest organized

enemy of evangelical Christianity on the earth today. The whole Chicago religious atmosphere is surcharged with infidelity and skepticism, which is masquerading in Christian garb. At a place where I boarded for awhile, one of the instructors in the University of Chicago, a very bright and intelligent woman, informed me that she never attended Church, and that she had no use for either religion or preachers. I think this feeling among the teachers is [R4065 : page 292] the rule. In many ways I highly esteem Mr. John D. Rockefeller, and have never joined in the crusade that has in certain quarters been made against him, but I believe profoundly that the money he has devoted to the establishment of this misnamed Baptist and Christian institution is doing, and will do, the world far greater harm than all he ever put into the Standard Oil Company or any other trust. The situation here is such that every preacher within the radius of the university has to kow-tow to it, or he will find himself out of a job. The powers that be, humanly speaking, are ordained of the University of Chicago, and the man who has the hardihood to stand out for orthodox Christianity takes his life, denominationally speaking, into his hands, and is marked for early elimination.

DIFFERENT TYPE

"In this connection I hope I will be pardoned for saying that the sort of Baptists I have come in contact with here are not the same type as our southern Baptist people. I recently attended the services at the Hyde Park Baptist Church, where Rev. J. L. Jackson is pastor. He devoted his entire morning sermon to a discussion of the recent Shanghai missionary conference, which he made the basis of an appeal for the obliteration of all denominational lines and the union of the entire Christian world under some kind of a non-descript, ecclesiastical organization. He referred to the Baptist view as 'narrow and selfish,' and placed the emphasis of his discussion entirely upon the importance of

the obliteration of the lines that have in the past divided the various Protestant denominations. It was rather a crude piece of irony that, following his discourse, he received for baptism a young man who had formerly been a Lutheran, but who said that through his study of the Scriptures he had come to believe in immersion. The logic of Dr. Jackson's sermon would eliminate immersion and establish in place of our Baptist churches a kind of spineless, jellyfish ecclesiasticism that would be like the original universe – without form and void."

Dr. Cranfill summed up his impression by saying that he had "become convinced that the really sound, aggressive and effective Baptists of the country are found in the Southern States."

– *Houston Post*.

R. J. CAMPBELL'S ADMIRERS

If Mr. Campbell by his "New Theology," which seems a fresh way of spelling "Old Infidelity," has lost some of his friends and admirers, he has gained others. The most energetic and uncompromising antagonist of Christianity in England, and probably in the world, is Mr. Blatchford, of *Clarion* fame, who, in commending the recently published book, says: "Mr. Campbell is a Christian minister, and I am an infidel editor; and the difference between his religion and mine is too small to argue about." For once Mr. Blatchford expresses the views of many Christians when he says that the difference between the "New Theology" and infidelity "is too small to argue about." Theosophists also press forward to express their appreciation of Mr. Campbell's teaching. The Indian *Daily Telegraph* claims that the "New Theology" is simply Theosophy. "This Indian newspaper," says the *A. C. World*, "shows how Mr. Campbell, by denying the virgin birth, joins hands with Theosophic inquirers, and with them sees in this 'myth' the materialization of a great

spiritual event – the virgin birth of the universe." Mr. Campbell may well say, "Save me from my friends." He must feel embarrassed, though he has no right to be surprised, at the anti-Christian hosts so enthusiastically rallying around, but he should soon feel at home among them.

– *Australian Christian.*

ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN ITALY

The Italian liberal press teems with detailed descriptions of the alleged immorality and corruption of religious and educational institutions, and a fresh campaign favoring the suppression of all convents and monasteries throughout the country has been initiated.

Recently a so-called clerical scandal was discovered by the Milan police. One old woman, who called herself a nun, had a home for destitute young girls in Milan, which turned out to be a den of filth and iniquity. It was found that the children's earnings were increased by means too horrible to relate. The home was closed and the soi-disant nun and her accomplices, two priests were arrested.

The liberal papers blamed the ecclesiastical authorities, but these proved that they had repeatedly warned the police against the woman and her work, and that they had denied the sacraments to the woman, protested against her and exposed her home to no avail.

Though the calumnies recently printed against the monks and nuns are so loathsome and horrible that they are not fit to be read, not a single proof has been adduced to show that they are based on a particle of truth. It is no exaggeration to say that open acts of violence against religious communities are momentarily expected and these may lead to wholesale suppression by the government. It is difficult to predict what may happen.

The French people were indifferent and rather sympathized with the nuns and monks, but here the situation is different, as popular feeling is hostile to religion and the anti-clerical parties are so well organized that if a movement against the Church once begins they will not stop before they have overthrown religion and *perhaps attained a Church war in Italy, which might mean a revolution.*

– *Chicago Tribune.*

BRITAIN BECOMING MORE SOBER

"Last year the 43,000,000 inhabitants of these islands spent £164,167,941 on drink, or some £3 16s. each. But a steady decrease is going on, Dr. Dawson Burns points out in his annual exposition of drink bill statistics in *The Times*. Great as last year's total was, it [R4066 : page 293] was £21,759,286 less than the amount spent in 1899. Every year since that one has shown a decrease. Had there been an increase proportionate to the increase of population, our drink bill for 1905 would have reached £198,012,495. London spent over £18,000,000 in liquor last year."

– *English Journal.*
