

THE WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

AN ILLUSTRATED AND POPULAR STORY OF THE WORLD'S
FIRST PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS, HELD IN
CHICAGO IN CONNECTION WITH

THE COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893

EDITED BY THE

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averse to intermarriage with non-Jews has been quoted in evidence of Jewish exclusiveness. Two errors seem to underlie this false reasoning: the one, that Judaism interdicts marriage with non-Jews, and the other that the Jewish Church disciplines those who are guilty of such an act. The Mosaic law, at best, only forbade intermarriage with the seven Canaanitish nations, and though the only justifiable inference would be that this interdiction applies only to heathen, still by rabbinical forms of interpretation it has been made to apply also to all non-Jews. The historical fact is that the Roman Catholic council held at Orleans in 533 A. C. E., first prohibited its followers from intermarrying with Jews. This decree was later enforced by meting out the penalty of death to both parties to such a union. Jewish rabbis then, as a matter of self-protection, interdicted the practice of intermarriage, and though to-day men are free to act according to their tastes, there exists on the part of the Jew no more repugnance to intermarriage than on the part of the Christian. Such ties are, as a rule, not encouraged by the families of either side, and for very good cause.

THE RELIGIOUS MISSION OF THE ENGLISH SPEAKING NATIONS.

BY REV. HENRY H. JESSUP, D.D., OF BEIRÛT, SYRIA.

The four elements which make up the power for good in the English-speaking race and fit it to be the Divine instrument for blessing the world are: 1. Its historic planting and training. 2. Its geographic position. 3. Its physical and political traits. 4. Its moral and religious character; which combined constitute its Divine call and opportunity, and result in its religious mission, its duty and responsibility.

I. The Historic Planting and Training.—In the beginning of the seventh century the Saxon race in Britain embraced the religion of Christ. From that time through nine centuries the hand of God was training, leading, disciplining and developing that sturdy northern race, until the hidden torch of truth was wrested from its hiding-place by Luther, and held aloft for the enlightenment of mankind, just at the time when Columbus discovered the continent of America, and opened the new and final arena for the activity and highest development of man.

Was it an accident that North America fell to the lot of the Anglo-Saxon race, that vigorous Northern people of brain and brawn, of faith and courage, of order and liberty? Was it not the Divine preparation of a field for the planting and training of the freest, highest Christian civilization, the union of personal freedom and reverence for law? This composite race of

Norman Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic blood, planted on the hills and valleys, by the rivers and plains, and among the inexhaustible treasures of coal and iron, of silver and gold, of this marvelous continent, were sent here as a part of a far-reaching plan whose consummation will extend down through the ages.

II. *The Geographical Position.*—A map of the world with North America in the center shows at a glance the strategic position of Great Britain and the United States. Their vast littoral, the innumerable harbors facing the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the maritime instincts of the two nations, their invigorating climate, matchless resources, world-wide commerce, facilities for exploration and travel, and peculiar adaptation to permanent colonization in remote countries, give these peoples the control of the world's future and the key to its moral and ethnical problems.

III. *The Physical, Social and Political Traits of the English-Speaking Peoples* are a potent factor in their influence among the nations. Restless and migrating, they are still home-loving and stable. They are diffusive, yet constructive; free and liberty-loving, yet reverent to law; intolerant of tyranny, yet considerate of the lowly and the poor. Their strong individuality, their spirit of enterprise, their quiet self-control, their courage, tenacity and perseverance, their gravity and calmness, are elements of prodigious strength. In dealing with Orientals, their generosity, their innate sense of liberty and fair play have given them a firm and enduring hold upon the confidence of the people. They bear those traits and principles with them to the ends of the earth. If we add to this the phenomenal growth of scientific discovery and invention, we are prepared to expect from such a race the final and complete subjugation of the powers and forces of Nature for the benefit and uplifting of mankind.

IV. *The Moral and Religious Character and Training of these Nations.*—A Divine voice summoned the Anglo-Saxon race out of paganism into a positive faith and the cheering hopes of the Gospel; but centuries of discipline and gradual growth were needed to fit them as a nation to be the messengers of light and life to the world.

The native love of truth of these peoples has been confirmed and intensified by the English Bible. Integrity, veracity and impartial justice are to great extent national traits. These great nations are permeated with the principles of the Bible; their poetry, history, science and philosophy are moral, pure and religious; they are founded on a belief in the Divine existence and Providence, and in final retribution; in the sanctions of law and the supremacy of conscience; in man's responsibility to God, and the ruler's responsibility to the people; in the purity of the family, the honor of woman, and the sanctity of home; in the obligation to treat all men, white, black and tawny, as brothers made in the image of God. Such principles as these are destined to mold and control all mankind. The Havelocks and Farraguts and Gordons, the men of sturdy faith and sterling sense, of

pure morals and serene trust in God, are the men who are respected, trusted and loved, even to the remotest parts of the globe.

With such a unique combination of historic, geographical, political, and religious elements, it is easy to see what constitutes the Divine Call and Opportunity, the religious mission and responsibility of these great nations.

The true ideal of the religious mission of a nation embraces its entire intellectual, moral and social relations and duties to its own people and to all other peoples. It is thus a home and a foreign mission.

(a) To its own citizens this mission is one of religious liberty, the promotion of Sabbath rest, temperance, social purity, and reverence for the laws of God. The fear of God cannot be enforced by legal enactment, but nations who owe their liberties and laws, their happiness in the present and their hopes for the future to the Word of God, should see to it that every citizen, native or adopted, shall be able to read, and be taught to reverence, this Divine *Magna Charta* of human rights and human happiness.

It is treason to liberty, disloyalty to religion, and a betrayal of the sacred trust we hold from God for our children and our country, to surrender the control of our educational system, our moral code, and our holy Sabbath rest from toil, to our brethren from other lands, who have come at our disinterested invitation to share in these blessings, but who, as yet hardly free from the shell and the shackles of Old World absolutism, or the despair-begotten dreams of unbridled license, are not yet assimilated to our essential and vital principles of liberty and law, of perfect freedom of conscience, tempered by the absolute subjection of the individual to the public good. Let each rear his own temple for the worship of his God according to his own conscience, but let the school-house be reared by all in common, open and free to all, and patronized by all.

(b) To the civilized nations this mission is one which can only be effective through a consistent, moral example. They are set for an example, to exhibit moral reform in act, to shun all occasion of war and denounce its horrors, to show the blessings of arbitration by adopting it as their own settled international practice, and to treat all social questions from the standpoint of conscience and equity. The Alabama and Behring Sea arbitrations have been an object lesson to the world more potent in exhibiting the true spirit of Christianity than millions of printed pages or the persuasive voices of a hundred messengers of the Cross. It is only ninety-nine years since the eminent Edmund Burke used language respecting the French people which would now be denounced as unworthy of a civilized man. It is the religious mission of the English-speaking nations to form a juster estimate of other nations, to treat all men as entitled to respect, to allow conscience its full sway in all our dealings with them.

(c) To the semi-civilized and heathen nations our religious mission is one of helpfulness, uplifting and enlightenment. The sympathies of our

Christian faith are all with the poor, the suffering, the ignorant, the oppressed.

The highly favored northern races are called by every prompting of the law of love to go to the help of the less favored continents of the South. Christ bids the strong to help the weak, the blessed to succor the unblessed, the free to deliver the enslaved, the saved to evangelize the unsaved.

But we find ourselves confronted and thwarted at the very gateway of the Asiatic and African, as well as the Polynesian races, by that monster of hideous mien, the *sacra auri fames*, the accursed European greed for gold; gold earned at any price, gold in exchange for opium, gold for poisonous, maddening liquors, degrading and crazing with their flood of foulness and death men, women and children, made in the image of God. We who are strong, are bidden by our Master to bear the infirmities of the weak, and instead of this, men bearing the name of Christians, are shamelessly taking advantage of their weakness for the lowest and most groveling motives to betray and destroy them. While we thank God for the great insurrection of the human mind in the sixteenth century against spiritual absolutism; for our legacy of liberty, its principles, its maxims and its glorious results; for our pure and peaceful homes; for our sacred day of rest, instituted by God himself, honored and kept pure by our forefathers, revered and enforced by Washington and Lincoln in the critical emergency of war; for the dignity and honor with which our women are crowned; for the growing abhorrence of war; for the spirit of moral and social reform, and for the Divine call and opportunity to go forth and bless the nations; let us all resolve that our nation and people shall no longer be compromised by complicity in these accursed forms of sordid traffic.

Our mission is one of peace. We are to guarantee to our sons and daughters of toil one full day's rest in seven; an equitable adjustment of all social and labor questions that arise; the protection of our children from the gilded tempting cup which at last "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." We are not to be ashamed of that Divine Book which has made the difference between North and South America, between Great Britain and the Spanish peninsula.

This then is our mission: that we who are made in the image of God, should remember that all men are made in God's image. To this divine knowledge we owe all we are, all we hope for. We are rising gradually towards that image, and we owe to our fellow men to aid them in returning to it in the glory of God and the beauty of holiness. It is a celestial privilege and with it comes a high responsibility, from which there is no escape,

In the palace of Behjeh, or Delight, just outside the fortress of Acre, on the Syrian coast, there died a few months since a famous Persian sage, the Babi saint, named Behâ Allah—the "Glory of God"—the head of that vast reform party of Persian Moslems, who accept the New Testament as the Word of God and Christ as the deliverer of men, who regard all nations