

# The Religious World

Dr. Huntington  
on the Unification of  
American Christianity

The speaker before the Congregational Clerical Union in New York on Monday morning, January 29, was the Rev. W. R. Huntington, D.D., the accomplished rector of Grace Church, New York. He had been invited by the Congregationalists to speak to them on the "Reunion of Christendom." He began by saying that the subject was too large, and he would simply speak concerning the "Unification of American Christianity." He first called attention to the sadly divided condition of the churches in the United States, emphasizing the fact that there is little co-operation between the sects, that there is great waste of men and money, and that the problem of the city, the problem of home missions, the problem of foreign missions, and, most of all, the civic problem, can never be solved until Christians combine their forces and move together against their common enemies. He then considered the different schemes which had been suggested for doing away with the evil of a divided kingdom, and quickly came to a consideration of the Chicago-Lambeth articles, which are briefly these:

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary to salvation, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

The Apostles' Creed as the baptismal symbol, and the Nicene Creed as a sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

The two Sacraments ordained by Christ himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with the unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by him.

The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nation and the people called of God into the unity of his Church.

These propositions, Dr. Huntington claimed, are the only ones which have been offered by any religious denomination looking toward Christian union. They are the contribution of American and Anglican Episcopalians. Dr. Huntington then considered each one in order, showed that there is substantial agreement among Christians on all but the last, and then explained that last one as it is generally understood by the members of the communion presenting it. The address was listened to with the deepest interest. Dr. Huntington's manner is gracious and attractive, and the spirit in which he presented his theme won the sympathetic attention of all his hearers.

A new religious movement seems to have been recently started in Chicago. It has probably more or less relation to the recent Parliament of Religions in that city. It is said to have for its platform two propositions: "All religions are true," and "All religions are false." During the last summer a circular letter was issued, signed by the Rev. Dr. H. W. Thomas, of the People's Church, Chicago; the Rev. Dr. W. S. Crowe, a Universalist minister of Newark, N. J.; Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, a Jewish rabbi; and the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, a prominent Unitarian of Chicago. The object of this letter was the calling of a Conference to organize what is to be known as a "Universal Church." The aim of this organization was stated by Mr. Jones in a recent issue of "Unity" as follows: "Let us both step out and on to a platform upon which neither Christianity, Buddhism, Brahminism, nor Agnosticism has any pre-emption. On that broad plane of humanity let us build a temple of universal religion dedicated to the inquiring spirit of progress, to the helpful services of love. Some such Church as this already exists. It exists all over the world where commerce and science, letters and philanthropy, have gone to break down the conceits of creed and the pretensions of sects. We believe that in the so-called liberal forces of America—the Unitarian, Universalist, Reformed Jewish, Ethical Culture, and independent movements—there is found the material for the great prophetic free Church of America, democratic, progressive, helpful; a Church where heresy-hunters will be absolutely impossible, because the spirit which makes heretics will be the central inspiration of its life—the spirit of inquiry, the spirit of individual responsibility in matters of thought. In that same spirit let Unitarians say: 'If the word "Unitarian" giveth offense, if it misinterprets us

or we misinterpret it, we discard the word that we may cherish the thing.' There is nothing specially new in this plan for a comprehensive Church. It is simply an effort to organize the independent religious bodies of the country, and to do so, it seems to us, without any distinct organizing principle. Religion, according to it, is nothing but the evolution of the world's life. It may be called by many names, but the thing itself is entirely different from all that the world understands as religion. It may be that there is a place for such a movement, that it has within itself elements of strength and vitality which do not appear on the surface. We shall watch with much interest for any future developments along this line, but we do not forget that many times in the past there have been efforts to realize something of the same kind, known now as the "Church of Humanity," now as the "Free Church," and now as the "Religion of Reason," but always essentially the same as that proposed in this latest call for a Universal Church.

Protestants and Romanists  
in Columbus

We have read with interest a statement issued to the public by the pastors of the various churches in Columbus, O., concerning misrepresentations of Roman Catholics and consequent excitement in that city and section. Various false statements were made concerning the Roman Catholics, so that many people began to feel as if there would soon be an uprising of the Romanists to ravage the land. It was the result, of course, of ignorance and misrepresentation. Under such circumstances the Protestant pastors did what was right. They prepared a generous circular in which they stated their own convictions with perfect plainness, and then (1) denounced as a barefaced forgery an alleged letter of the Pope calling upon Catholics to rise and exterminate the Protestants; (2) declared another document of the same kind to be a stupid forgery; (3) called attention to the fact that of the 349 public-school teachers in the city of Columbus thirteen were Roman Catholics; (4) that instead of ninety-five per cent. of the policemen of the city being Roman Catholics, a majority were Protestants; (5) that the statement that the schools and offices of one of the counties were overrun with Catholics was not based upon fact; (6) that the stories current about warlike preparations on the part of the Romanists were baseless fabrications. The whole document is charitable and generous, and shows the absurdity of much of the current talk concerning the purposes of the Roman Catholic Church. In a country of seventy millions of people it is not likely that ten millions of Roman Catholics, whose resources are small, could very soon acquire sufficient power (even if they had the disposition) to oppose and annihilate the Protestants. This paper finely says: "We make these statements not only in the interests of truth and decency and common humanity, but also in the interests of Protestantism." Among those whose names are signed to this document are W. E. Moore, Presbyterian, late Moderator of the General Assembly; A. E. E. Taylor, Presbyterian; James Poindexter, Baptist; Washington Gladden, Congregationalist, and George H. Shodde, Professor in Capital University. These are only a few of the best-known names.

The American Missionary  
Association

All the friends of the American Missionary Association ought carefully to observe the urgent request of a special committee who have designated Sunday, February 11, which is just before the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, as the day for special collections for the relief of the treasury of the Association. This Association is doing a most important work. For the first time in many years it finds itself seriously in debt. All the Congregational churches of the country ought to rally at once and make sure that this calamity does not threaten this Society. It is important, in connection with the above suggestion, that another should be made. Reports are in circulation that the American Missionary Association is about to receive a large legacy as an addition to the Daniel Hand Educational Fund. It should be remembered, however, that, in case this legacy is received, it will be for special work, and not one dollar will be available for the relief of the debt, nor to provide for the current work. It will be for other work valuable in itself. No

one should be deceived by these reports into thinking that the Association will be relieved of its embarrassment by this gift.

**A Congregational Retreat** The Congregational ministers of northern New Jersey have just spent two days in a "retreat" for prayer and meditation on spiritual themes, as preparatory to the work which is before them during the Lenten season. Nominally Congregationalists do not observe Lent, but actually they are coming to regard it as their spiritual harvest-time. This "retreat" was held in the beautiful suburban town of Westfield, where is located a church under the strong leadership of the Rev. C. H. Patton. The following subjects occupied the attention of those present: "The Realization of God," "The Central Teaching of Christ," "The Way of the Cross," "Helps to the Devout Life," "Our Special Work." Perhaps most interest was manifested in the first subject, which brought home to all with vivid distinctness the question, "Do *you* know God?" The question was carefully distinguished from knowing about God. One meeting—the one whose theme was "The Way of the Cross"—was open to the public. The greatest value of the meeting was in the spiritual uplift which was given to those who attended. Ministers are often so busy thinking of the spiritual life of other people that they have little time to cultivate their own. Such meetings as these are of the greatest value. And, if they are of benefit to ministers, why should they not be to others? Would it not be well for the officers of our churches, if they cannot have all-day retreats, at least to have spiritual meetings at which prayer for their own illumination and inspiration as Christian leaders should be the principal object?

**The Baptist Social Union** One of the largest and most brilliant meetings in the history of the Baptist Social Union was held at the Savoy Hotel, in New York, on Thursday evening, February 1. If we mistake not, this Union was the first organization of the kind in the country. It has been followed by the Congregational Clubs and the Presbyterian Unions, and in some respects even eclipsed by them, since the growth of the Baptist Union has not been as rapid as that of some others. Whatever may be the causes, however, of this lack of growth in the past, the New York Union is now in a most prosperous condition. The great banquet-hall of the Savoy Hotel was full at the last meeting. The general subject was "The Future of the Church," and the speakers were the Rev. T. Edwin Brown, D.D., of Philadelphia, who gave a most optimistic outlook concerning the progress of Christianity; the Rev. Amory H. Bradford, D.D., of Montclair, N. J., who had as his topic "The Future of the Church in its Relation to the Unification of American Christianity," and aimed to show how much is lost by the division of our churches into sects, and how essential their unification is to the advancement of the common work; the Rev. J. M. Wells, D.D., of Fort Worth, Texas, made a very amusing speech on "Texas and her Baptists;" and the Rev. Dr. Tupper, of Denver, spoke very helpfully concerning "Some Phases of Church Work" in the city where he is a pastor. Dr. Tupper is evidently a favorite with Baptist audiences, and it was no small compliment to him that his audience waited so long for his address. Much of the success of the Baptist Union during the last year, we are informed, is due to the very efficient leadership of Dr. Wendell Phillips, the retiring President.

**The Parish Paper** We have received from time to time many papers which are published in the interest of local churches. We recall distinctly a very valuable one published by the First Congregational Church of Detroit, the Rev. W. H. Davis, D.D., pastor; another by the First Church of Oakland, Cal., the Rev. J. K. McLean, D.D., pastor; and we have just received another, published by the Church of the Saviour in Philadelphia, of which the Rev. William B. Bodine, D.D., is the rector. In many respects this last is one of the best of the kind that has ever come to our notice. It is superbly printed and fittingly illustrated, and cannot fail to be a great help in the work of the church. Incidentally we gather from it information which shows that the Church of the Saviour must be a hive of spiritual industry. One or two fea-

tures we especially like. The first is the prominence which is given in that parish to the musical service. It is not made an annex to the church, but a part of it, and music is recognized as one of the most important means for the advancement of the cause. We are impressed with the fact that many churches are now coming to realize that the leader of the worship ought to be regarded as one called to his ministry with a divine call, and consequently ought always to be a godly man, and, if possible, set apart to his work with fitting service. In this Church of the Saviour we notice that, besides the usual societies in such places, there is an Employment Society, a Pastoral Aid Society, a Visiting and Relief Society, a Brotherhood of St. Andrew, and a Choral Society. By the way, in the list of officers of the church, as it is published in the "Parish Messenger," we notice that the organist and choirmaster is given the place immediately after the clergy and before that of the vestry, thus classing him, as he ought to be, among those charged with spiritual privileges and responsibilities.

#### The Opium Question in Ceylon

December 9, 1893, witnessed the gathering of a unique assembly in Colombo, Ceylon. It was composed of various classes and religions. Hindu barristers, Buddhist priests, Mohammedans, and Christians sat side by side, drawn by interest in a common object. The meeting was convened for the purpose of taking action on what is known as the Opium Question. Two American women missionaries, the Misses Leitch, had been instrumental in showing how the habit of opium-smoking and the use of bhang are increasing in Ceylon. The sale of these drugs is secretly injuring the life of the various races of the island. The natives were never accustomed either to use or to grow them, and the result of their introduction has been to work serious evil among the people. This meeting in Colombo was held in a public hall. The chair was taken by the editor of the Ceylon "Observer." Various missionary societies were represented—as the Church Mission, the Wesleyan Mission, the Baptist Mission, and the Salvation Army. On the same platform sat six Buddhist priests, three prominent Mohammedans, and several Hindu barristers. Resolutions were adopted emphasizing the necessity of taking immediate action for the restriction of this evil, and a committee was appointed to carry out the wishes of the people. A petition for this object is being signed by large numbers throughout the island. Should this petition fail to procure proper legislation, a committee will lay the matter before the House of Commons. As we read of the part which was taken by the Misses Leitch in this matter, we are reminded of the splendid work which was done about a year ago by two other American ladies in breaking up certain hideous abuses in the Indian Empire. American women are making their influence felt for good in the distant and difficult fields in which many of them are choosing to pass their lives. The opium question is of as great importance for the people of the East as the liquor question is for the people of the West; and, indeed, if we are not mistaken, the opium question itself will very soon have to receive serious attention in this country, for it is well known that the injury caused by cigarette-smoking comes very largely from the opium which is put into the cigarettes.

**Judaism in London** Any study of the religious forces of a nation must include the Jews. They are among the most aggressive and yet conservative of all peoples, and are constantly making themselves felt in the religious life of our time. Some interesting facts have recently been published concerning Judaism in London. We cull a few of them for the information of our readers. The Jews are divided into synagogues, which comprise many congregations. Among these "The United Synagogue" comprises thirteen different synagogues, with accommodations for 6,562 worshipers, and 1,956 seats unlet. But as a very large number are not able to subscribe to the synagogues as members, they rent temporary seats during the festivals. The average subscription among these Jews in the cheapest synagogue in London is £3.8, and the most expensive £14.2. The essential feature of the United Synagogue scheme is this: Every member is assessed thirty per cent. on account of his seat-rental