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THE GREAT PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS.

BY ALLEN PRINGLE.

I.

ALL the great (and some not so great) religions on the earth have met in the Art Palace in Chicago, day after day for many days, comparing notes and rubbing off the acute angles with which some of them have been so profusely, though unfortunately, ornamented. The writer attended the Parliament, and though he has been six months in Chicago he has seen but little at the great Columbian Exposition which has impressed him more, or inspired a deeper interest, than the meetings of the religions.

When the moral and social effects on the future of humanity of the World's Fair of 1893 are summed up in the future, those flowing from the unique gathering of the world's religions must stand out prominent and preëminent. At any rate this is the impression made upon the thousands of thoughtful and intelligent people who either attended the Parliament or carefully read its proceedings from day to day. That it will mark an epoch in the world's religious history no observant witness can doubt. The representatives of some one great religion may in the past have met in conference, with objects more or less worthy, yet narrow; but never before, the representatives of all great religions, with objects cosmopolitan and effects so far-reaching. The Christian, the Jew, the Mahomedan, the Brahman, the Buddhist, the Parsee, the Theosophist, the Rationalist, the Evolutionist, all sat together on the same platform without one of them feeling any danger of personal harm from the others, with the possible exception of some of the gentle Orientals who might well have quaked and quailed under the ponderous Joseph Cook, who, in the language of the *Chicago Tribune*, made the "platform tremble with the weight of three hundred pounds of orthodoxy," and the speaker's desk to "totter as the sturdy New England fist smote it," and as he "thundered and tramped to and fro upon the stage pouring out a torrent of denunciations with face red with the vehemence of his utterances,"—with this solitary exception all sat together in apparent peace and good-will, while each expounded his faith to all the others, and to the thou-

sands that filled the great Hall of Columbus at every session.

But has the Evolutionist or the Rationalist a "faith?" the reader may ask. Undoubtedly, he has—faith in human nature, in human progress, and in the future of humanity. Has the Agnostic a religion? Yes, he too claims to have a religion—even the Religion of Humanity, which, after all, was found by the sense of that great Congress to be the best religion for man on this earth, and the only one of which he knows anything certain.

From the beginning to the end of the Congress it was more than evident that the hard, dogmatic, and aggressive religion of the Occident was placed on the defensive by the liberal, gentle, and charitable religion of the Orient. The Christian was forced into his very best behavior by the mild-mannered and amiable Pagan, who came earnestly breathing the brotherhood of man as well as the fatherhood of God.

This Congress has opened the eyes of many people to the fact that there are great religions in the world besides their own—some of them much older and with more followers than Christianity, and underlying them ethical principles the highest and noblest. They have learned that all, like themselves, may be searching after truth, though in different ways, and, peradventure, finding it with equal success; that these religions are charitable in spirit, strongly inculcating the brotherhood of man, and the solidarity of the race; that they preach peace, not war; good-will, not strife among men; toleration, not persecution; in a word, *the brotherhood of man*, which was the euphonious phrase most used by the speakers, embodying the sentiment most acceptable to the audiences, and was in fact the key-note of the convention.

The very few whose cruel creeds excluded the fraternal feeling from their breasts were soon forced into line, with, perhaps, the one exception of Joseph Cook. Goodness seemed to be catching. The best part of human nature seemed, for the time, to be in the ascendant, and to have received a most wholesome stimulus. Whenever the Religion of Humanity—the brotherhood of man—the sentiment of good-will to all—was sounded from the platform, the invariable chorus of applause from the thousands present showed unmistakably that

the time has come for a religion of peace, charity, and fraternity—that the people of the latter part of the nineteenth century are sick of strife, and of writing the history of the world any longer in blood. They are tired of persecution, and intolerance, and uncharitableness, and dogma, and damnation! When the distinguished Church of England clergyman, Dr. Momerie, uttered the following sentiments to the Parliament he was loudly applauded:

“The essence of religion is not the recognition of God. If a man love not his fellow-men he cannot love his God. Right conduct is all that God can ask of us, it is all that we can do for Him. In the great hereafter we shall find many a strange surprise. We shall find that many a so called Atheist has been more truly religious than we who are professing members of Christian churches.”

And when the Oriental priest uttered the following, it, too, found a hearty response:

“All the words spoken at this Parliament come to the common conclusion that the brotherhood of man is the much-to-be-desired end. Much has been said of this brotherhood as being a natural condition, since we are all children of one God. Now, there are sects that do not admit the existence of a God—that is, a personal God. Unless we wish to leave these sects out in the cold—and in that case our brotherhood will not be universal—we must have our platform broad enough to embrace all mankind.”

It was a humiliating fact to the liberal and tolerant Christian to find that the first discordant note sounded at the Parliament of Religions—the first manifestation of bigotry and ill-will—was made, not by a Pagan, Mahomedan, or Jew, but by a Christian. All were courteous, tolerant, and charitable in utterance and demeanor till the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, took the platform. He was narrow, dogmatic, uncharitable, and discourteous. The *Chicago Tribune*, in one of its reports says:

“Almost every one of the recognised religions of the world has had its claims presented by an able champion. Almost every speaker has treated his subject in a broad and liberal spirit, and avoided carefully any infringement on the feelings of others who hold different faiths. If there be an exception to this rule it must be set down to the discredit of Christendom. The Eastern scholars who have spoken for the great creeds of the Orient have at all times shown a scrupulous desire to avoid everything which might touch in any way upon the prejudices or the beliefs of their fellow-members.”

As one immediate result of the Parliament:

“The four thousand people who have religiously attended at least two sessions daily have, most of them for the first time in their lives, been able to get a clear idea of Buddhism, Brahmanism, Confucianism, and the other great religions of the East, whose followers vastly outnumber those of Christianity. . . . The greatest enthusiasm perhaps of the week was awakened by a Japanese orator who, after explaining the gentle precepts of Buddha, went on to tell how Christian missionaries had brought blood and riot into his land. It was a broad and liberal spirit which led four thousand people, most of them professing Christians, to rise and cheer Kinza Ringe Hirai when he declared he was the first man in Japan to urge that Christian missionaries be banished from the land, and

the first to organise a society to accomplish it. In a like spirit he explained that it was not against the truth of Christianity that he preached, but against the persecutions to which his people had been subjected by the emissaries of Christendom.”

That the Congress of Religions made a disclosure regarding the folly and inefficiency of much of the work of Christian foreign missions, which opened the eyes of many and fairly startled others, was plainly apparent. This was brought about, not altogether by the Orientals, but to a considerable extent by Christians themselves. It was maintained that Christianity could never hope, as hitherto presented, to convert the Oriental world to its tenets. It was shown that it was in reality making very little headway in proportion to the advantages it possessed and the efforts it put forth; and that the general result of the introduction of Christianity and Christian civilisation among the Eastern nations was the demoralisation of the latter.

H. Dharmapala, the learned Buddhist priest, said:

“I came to this great country, bringing with me the good wishes and peace of four hundred and seventy-five millions of Buddhists. My mission is to explain what Buddhism is, and to explain away the errors of opinion regarding Buddhism. The religion of the Buddhist takes within its fold of universal sympathy not only all mankind but all animal-kind. Your great slaughter-house here is a shame and a curse to civilisation, and we do not want any such Christianity in Ceylon, in Burmah, in Japan, or in China. We want the lowly and meek and gentle teachings of Christ, not because we do not have them now, but we want more of them. I tell you if you want to make Christianity an influence in the East you must send there men of gentleness, lowliness, meekness, and tolerance. The missionaries sent to Ceylon, China, or Burmah, as a rule, have not the toleration that we need. The missionary is intolerant, he is selfish. Why do not the natives take to him? Because he has not the toleration and unselfishness he should have. Who are his converts? They are all men of low type. Seeing the selfishness and intolerance of the missionary not an intelligent man will accept Christianity. Buddhism had its missionaries before Christianity was preached. It conquered all Asia, and made the Mongolians mild. Its preachers do not go in this grand, fashionable costume of yours, but in the simple garb you see upon this platform. They did not go with a Bible in one hand and a rum bottle in the other; but they went full of love and compassion and sympathy. With these attributes they conquered; and they made Asia mild. Slaughter-houses were abolished; public-houses were abolished, but they are now on the increase because of the influence of Western civilisation. . . . Let the missionaries study all the religions; let them be a type of meekness and lowliness and they will find a welcome in all lands.”

The Rev. F. M. Bristol of Chicago, in his address, said:

“Right here in Chicago we are paying thousands upon thousands of dollars to evangelise the brownstone fronts on Michigan Avenue, while almost nothing is being done to evangelise Plymouth Place and South Clark Street. I could lead you in four minutes, from where we stand to as dark a spot as ever defiled the face of the earth. It is useless for us to talk about saving the heathen abroad unless we can save the heathen at home. If you cannot save Chicago you cannot save Calcutta. Unless you can save San Francisco you cannot save Shanghai. Unless you can save Boston you cannot save Bombay.”

The Chicago press, in commenting on the reverend gentleman's address, says :

"He will astonish several of the churches, not only of his own, but of other denominations, by acknowledging his inability to understand why millions of money should be spent every year to convert foreign heathen, when within a few minutes' walk of every church in the city, and in every other city in this country, there are as dark spots as exist anywhere on the earth. True is his remark, that we plant our altars 'amongst the silks and satins, and not amongst the rags of Chicago; among homes whose tables groan with every luxury, and not among homes that are empty, where little children are pinched with want and hunger,' and that if Christ were here to day, he would send his disciples to preach the Gospel, not to the Buddhists, or to the Confucionists, or Mohammedans, but to the 'heathen' of Halsted Street, 'Little Hell,' and the 'Levee,' and perhaps on some of the avenues, also. Millions of dollars are squandered on the alleged conversion of some Oriental pagans. Tens of thousands of dollars before this have been wasted in reclaiming some Jews to Christianity, while in all this waste of time and money thousands upon thousands of worse and more dangerous pagans are right here in our midst, with little or no effort made to save them.

"The great Religions Parliament is past. Upon its platform were representations from all the sects we have been accustomed to denominate as heathen, and for whose conversion these millions have been spent. They have risen and told the story of their religion, the dogmas they believe, the rites they practice, the hopes they have for the future. Their morality is of as high a type as ours; in some cases higher. They have as firm a belief in the brotherhood of man. And underlying all these religions is the fundamental idea of the fatherhood of God. Are these men pagans and heathen? As compared with their religion, how stands the religion of Halsted Street and the Levee? What sort of a story would the representatives of the paganism of these sections have told, had they been called to the platform of the Religions Parliament? The truths which Brother Bristol uttered may not have been palatable, but they were none the less truths. It is useless to talk about converting heathen abroad, until the Church has converted heathen at home. It is useless to try to convert China, while Chicago remains unconverted. It is useless to send missionaries to Siam and India, when darker haunts of vice than Siam and India ever saw, flourish in the very shadow of the churches which send them."

Prof. G. N. Chakravarti, M. A., LL. B., of Allahabad College, India, said :

"I think the Parliament has achieved already a result of great moment. It has opened the eyes of the Christian world to a fact of which it was ignorant; that there is a deep fountain of truth to be found outside the Christian world, in the religions which were heretofore regarded as heathen. I have heard some of the most representative men here declare that it is useless to spend money sending Christian missionaries to convert people whose ideas of God and future life are such as may profit even those who are now members of Christian churches.

"The attempt to convert the heathen, as this missionary work has been called, is beginning to appear to the American public as an illusion; and it is much better to teach lessons of spiritual life to the people of this land, who need it as much, or more than the heathen."

The Rev. Jenkins Lloyd Jones, in a recent sermon on "The Parliament of Religions," says :

"These representatives of the Orient triumphed over that audience by telling them unexpected truths. . . . Christianity, as

one of the various religions forces in the world, combating error, struggling with crime, quickening hearts with love, and nerving souls to do the right, had nothing to fear, but much, very much, to gain from this Parliament. It will grow strong by increasing its stock of modesty. . . . Jesus, the simple priest of character, Jesus, the man, illuminated and illuminating in the sermon on the mount, the golden rule, and the matchless parables of the good Samaritan and the prodigal son, was magnificently honored at the Parliament. . . . But the Christ of dogma, the Christ of the orthodox scheme of salvation, was threatened. There was no place on that platform for any atoning scheme that will snatch a murderous and thieving Christian into heaven, and plunge an honest, life-venerating, and love-guided pagan into hell. Jesus, as one of the Saviours of the world—as, I think, the noblest of that noble brotherhood that have been the spiritual leaders of the race—remains, made more dear and more near by this fraternity of religion. But Jesus, as the Saviour of the world, who, by miraculous endowment or supernatural appointment, is to supplant all the other teachers and to overthrow their work, finds but little indorsement in the thought or the feeling that will grow out of that Parliament of Religions."

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

THE REDEMPTION OF THE BRAHMAN.

BY RICHARD GARBE.

[CONTINUED.]

VII. THE FUNERAL.

While the Englishman slowly accompanied the blind Pariah, Ramchandra stood as if paralysed, a mighty conflict agitating his soul. His eyes stared at the departing men, but he did not see them; a veil was spread before him. At last his confused ideas began to arrange themselves. "What was that? What is going on here? Am I dreaming, or awake? But no, it is the truth. The Sahib is gone. What were those words he spoke to me, with a look and tone that pierced my very soul like a flame of fire? 'It is a man, Ramchandra, a man like you?' And how the Aghori thanked the gods with such fervor, that a man not of his class had touched him and called him friend. That such feelings should dwell in the Pariah, whom we are wont to regard as lower than the crawling worm,—feelings of which no Brahman need be ashamed. Oh, ye gods, give me understanding! But no; however often I cry to you, you remain silent and answer my prayers by no sign. You are hard; as hard as your laws. Your laws? Your commandments? And what if it be true, as the Sahib says, that the sacred laws are not given by the gods, but are the work of men? No, no, it is not possible that by human laws millions of creatures are condemned to filthy misery, despair, and starvation! I shall go mad if I think of it!"

"*Râm, râm, sat hai*,—God, God alone, is truth," sounded from a distance in monotonous repetition, then nearer and nearer. Six bearers, ever speaking these words in unison, carried upon a woven mat a body covered with a gray cloth. They brought it to the burning Ghat, and laid it upon the funeral pile already prepared. A man belonging to a lower order

of the church, whose inherited and commissioned business it was to kindle the funeral piles of Benares, stood with a torch, awaiting the signal to perform his office. Ramchandra arose and betook himself to the place. He knew that it was Livilati's body because in the circle of friends he saw Krishnadas standing with bowed head. As he approached, he heard the merchant saying, "Only a short time now, and the ashes of my poor sister will mingle with the waters of the holy Ganga."

"You should consider her happy, Krishnadas," spoke Ramchandra; "one who has passed from such a life now leads a more delightful existence than any of us."

"I thank you," answered Krishnadas, "but for a brother who saw her years of suffering, and nothing but suffering, it is hard to forget the past."

Behind him stood Lakshman, looking on, in a seeming state of indecision. "The poor man! But I must not be silent; he must know it," he murmured, and stepped a pace forward, "Krishnadas," he said, half aloud.

The man addressed turned round and said: "You, too, Lakshman! I thank you. I knew you would not fail me to-day. But you have something different on your mind, it seems!"

"I am sorry to say I have. I received a letter to-day from Cashmere, with much important news. There was also something in it about—Champak, your son-in-law."

"Nothing good, I suppose," said Krishnadas with a gloomy countenance. "I can imagine that—"

"No, nothing good." Lakshman paused. It was harder for him to deliver the message than he supposed. "But you will want to know it,—you *must* know it."

Krishnadas was greatly terrified. "Is he ill, is he very ill?" questioned he with breathless interest, and as Lakshman bowed his head affirmatively, he cried out: "No, no, Lakshman, do not say that! Anything but that! Tell me that Champak has stolen,—that he sits behind lock and bolt as a robber, even for life,—only do not say that he is ill."

He stretched his hands imploringly toward his friend, as the latter spoke again in a low voice: "As was his custom, Champak accompanied the Maharaja on a recent hunt. The young prince is hasty, impetuous, and heedless. . . His shot, aimed at a stag, pierced Champak's breast, and he died immediately."

Krishnadas sank down unconscious, and those standing near caught him up. The reflex from the funeral pile which was now ablaze, lighted his pain-stricken features. But Ramchandra hastened to him with the cry: "Almighty gods, what do I hear? Champak is dead, and Gopa a widow!"

VIII. THE JUDGE AT HOME.

At the time of our story the English officials in India were not so overburdened with duties as are those of to-day, to whom leisure has become almost unknown. At that time even the highest officials found time to attend to their favorite studies with success. At about noon Mr. White had usually completed his official work, and could pursue his studies leisurely during the remainder of the day.

A few days after the conversation he had with Ramchandra at the ghats, we find him in his comfortable study in his bungalow, which, like most of the European homes in that region, was not elegant, but provided with all the conveniences requisite in a tropical climate. The opposite window and doors were opened to afford as free an entrance as possible to the air, shaded only with mats of fine straw weaving. Over the head of the Englishman rustled in regular vibrations the punkah, the great native fanning-machine, which, by means of a rope passing to the veranda, was kept in motion by the coolies squatting there. Upon the floor of the room several tiger-skins were spread, and on the walls were hung antelope-horns and a few other trophies of the chase.

Mr. White sat reading at his table; presently he looked at his watch. "Ramchandra keeps me waiting to-day. A wonderful change has taken place in him, since I first knew him. At first he always looked at me askance, as if he were afraid of I know not what. And whenever I asked a question which did not relate directly to our studies, he would scarcely answer a word. But now . . . the matters on which he has asked my opinion during the last few days indicate that his mind is in a peculiar state of agitation; I hope I shall be pleased with Ramchandra. . . . But I shall employ the time to call my servants to account."

He called loudly from his seat to the man who acted as his housekeeper, addressing him, as is usual in India, by the name of his position: "Khansamah!"

The man who was called, appeared, bowing profoundly, while he touched his forehead with both hands. "Salaam, Sahib, what is your desire?"

"Who broke that glass upon the table?"

"Sahib, it fell of itself," answered the servant.

"Of itself,—as usual," repeated the Judge with a sneer. "Did the lamp also break of itself?"

"No, Sahib, a muskrat ran against it and broke it."

Mr. White had long ago learned to accept such explanations from his servants with the coolness which all Europeans must acquire in India, if they wish to avoid constant vexation.

"Well, then," said he, "go to the bazaar and buy a new lamp; but I tell you if ever again things break of themselves in my house, or a fat runs against anything,—"

"Sahib, it shall never occur again."

"Now, render your account. What did you pay out to-day?" continued Mr. White.

"Seven rupees to the tailor, and six besides, namely, four for meat, vegetables, bread, and milk, and two for shoeing your riding-horse. Altogether, fifteen rupees."

"How many are seven and six?"

This query of his master, put in a stern tone, made the servant quake, and he humbly said: "Oh, thirteen, Sahib! Pardon me, we poor people count badly."

"Silence!" shouted Mr. White. "I know you can count better than I." The Judge looked significantly at his whip.

The culprit stretched out his hands anxiously, in an attitude of petition. "Ah, Sahib, do not be angry with me. You are my father and mother. May the gods make you the Maharaja of Europe!"

"Very probable!" mocked the Judge, and turning to another servant, who appeared at the door, he said: "Well, what do you bring, Sudin?"

"Salaam Sahib,!" answered the latter. "A boy stands without who does not dare to come in. He has brought you a basket of fruit as a gift, and says that you led his blind father home out of the throng of the streets."

The Englishman looked up in surprise and said: "At last I find gratitude, so long sought for in vain in India, among the lowest classes of this people. Bring the fruit in."

The man addressed did not stir, and the Judge added: "Will you do it at once?"

"It is an Aghori boy, Sahib," the servant apologised, and the other servant heard the announcement with evident horror.

"Just so," said Mr. White, "and his touch would defile you. You, too, Khansamah?"

"Yes, Sahib."

"Now see! You lie to me and deceive me; that does not defile you! But to take a basket of fruit from an innocent child, that defiles you!"

"Yes, Sahib," one of them said with assurance, "if it is an Aghori."

Mr. White arose. "Then I will go myself. Oh, the dark power of superstition which rules in Benares!"

When he had left the room, the two servants passed out through another door with restrained laughter. "There is something wrong with all Sahibs," said one of them. "They think that cheating defiles!"

"And," argued the other, "if we do not cheat them, whom shall we cheat?"

Just then Mr. White returned with the fruit in his hand, followed by Ramchandra, who had just come up and had met him upon the veranda. The young

Brahman looked very miserable. "Be seated, Ramchandra. How are you?"

"I believe not as well as usual," he replied, in a strangely weak voice. "Let us begin." He opened the book he had brought with him, and looked at it with an unsteady gaze, while the Judge, holding a pen in his hand, looked searchingly at him. After a time Ramchandra declared that he did not understand the passage.

"That is the first time I ever heard you say that," answered Mr. White, and continued sympathetically, "we will not work to-day; you are sick, Ramchandra."

"No, I am not sick; but I have had sad experiences."

"Yes," interrupted Mr. White, "you told me of the sorrow in the home of our friend Krishnadas. Your grief honors you, Ramchandra."

"Ah, you do not yet know all," explained the other, "Gopa's husband is dead; Gopa is a widow. Krishnadas is in despair. I believe I cannot endure it either."

Both were silent for a time; then the Englishman asked: "Have you seen Gopa often?"

"Oh, yes, very often. Her father has not confined her to the women's room as much as most of the women of our people are. Gopa is very sensible. Krishnadas is wont to converse with her upon all subjects and desires her presence when he has a visit from a friend."

"Is Gopa very beautiful?" inquired Mr. White further, in a subdued tone; and Ramchandra exclaimed with enthusiasm: "Beautiful as the goddess Lakshmir, when she rose from the foam of the ocean!"

"Shall I tell you, Ramchandra, the cause of your trouble? . . . You love Gopa."

The words were spoken gently and in a manner indicative of hearty sympathy. But the Brahman arose with a wild start, as if wounded to death.

"What do you say, Sahib? Do you not know that I am a Brahman; that Gopa is a merchant's daughter and a widow besides?"

"But first of all I know this," answered the Judge, with quiet earnestness, "that you are a man, and a young man with a warm heart in your breast. When such a young man, wherever it may be, meets socially with a lovable young woman, he is irresistibly drawn to her. It is the will of the Creator."

"You call that the will of the Creator?" queried Ramchandra, with a vacant look, as if he had not heard aright.

"Yes! And what does Gopa's widowhood signify? Tell me, Ramchandra, did she live with her husband?"

"No, never. She was a child when she was married and when Champak left her."

"But tell me, what makes the maid a wife? Do you not know? Is it the priestly ceremonies?"

The Brahman, who gave the last answer with bowed head, was almost ready to fly into a passion, and cried: "Do not ridicule my religion, Sahib."

"I do not," replied the latter, "for religious customs are not religion. Believe me, Ramchandra, you are in the true path to enlightenment. It will not be long before you, too, can distinguish between the will of God and the laws of Brahmanism. Friend, do not look so distressed; what you feel is no disgrace to you; but doubt no longer, you love Gopa."

Ramchandra sprang up in fearful excitement. "If what you say is true, then I am a lost man." And with that he staggered out of the door. On the following day Mr. White waited in vain for the Brahman at the appointed hour.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PROFESSOR VON JHERING'S VIEW OF SHYLOCK'S CASE.

GENERAL TRUMBULL'S recent remarks on Shylock (*The Open Court*, No. 320) recall to our mind Prof. Rudolf Von Jhering's criticism of the case. The opinion of this prominent German jurist is sufficiently instructive and interesting to justify its quotation. Professor Jhering, in his book "*Der Kampf um's Recht*," upholds the idea that it is the duty of every man to insist upon his rights and manfully to resent the wrongs which he suffers. He must perform this duty in the interest of the law and of his consciousness of right. He takes his stand on the universal sense of justice of the people. Professor Jhering says with reference to the case of Shylock:

"Hatred and vengeance brings Shylock to the halls of justice to cut his pound of flesh from Antonio's body. But the words the poet makes him say, are as true in his mouth as in that of any other. It is the language which injured sense of justice will ever speak, in all places and at all times; the power, the firmness of conviction, that right must be forever right; the might and pathos of a man profoundly conscious that the cause he represents is a cause, not only of his own, but of the law. 'The pound of flesh,' as Shakespeare makes him say,

"The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
..... I crave the law.
..... I stay here on my bond."

"I crave the law." With these four words the poet characterised the true relation of law in its subjective sense to law in its objective sense, and displayed the significance of the struggle for right in a manner that no juristic philosopher could have ex-

celled. With these words the question was transformed from a legal claim of Shylock's to a question of the law of Venice. How tremendous, how colossal, the form of the man appears, as he speaks these words! It is no longer the Jew that demands the pound of flesh, but the law of Venice itself that knocks at the gates of justice—for his law and the law of Venice are one; with his rights, the latter also falls. And when afterwards he himself breaks down beneath the weight of the judicial sentence, which by a poor, mean quibble defeats his rights,* when he, followed by bitter jeers, bent and broken, with quaking knees, totters from the hall of justice, who can help but feel that with him the law of Venice also has been humbled; it is not the Jew Shylock who staggers thence, but the typical figure of the Jew of the Middle Ages, that pariah of society, who cries in vain for justice. The colossal tragedy of his fate is not that justice has been denied him, but that he, a Jew of the Middle Ages, has faith in the law,—one is tempted to say, exactly as if he were a Christian,—a firmly founded faith, which nothing can shatter, and which the judge himself nurtures, till, like a clap of thunder, the catastrophe breaks above him that reveals his error and shows him that he is nothing but the outcast mediæval Jew, to whom the people give his rights by cheating him out of them."

CURRENT TOPICS.

It is not easy to tell what the state of affairs may be next week, or the week after, but on this 25th day of October the prospect is that the "silver purchase" clause of the Sherman Law is to be unconditionally repealed. We know not what promises have been made by the victorious party to the silver interest as the price of a surrender at this time; nor need we speculate on that, for at present it is enough that the law is to be repealed. For my own part I rejoice, because the repeal of laws is generally of public value; and because the repeal of this particular law will remove an excuse for many political and social evils that are due to other and different causes altogether. The Sherman Law has done good service as a scapegoat, and when the scapegoat is dead his work

* Here precisely is the point, in my opinion, that rouses in us so high a tragical interest for Shylock. Shylock is, in fact, cheated of his rights. At least, this is the view the jurist must take of the matter. Of course, the poet is free to make his own jurisprudence, and there is no need for us to regret that Shakespeare has done this in the present play, or, more correctly, has preserved unaltered the old story. But when the jurist is asked to give his opinion of the matter, he can say nothing else than that the bond in itself was void, because contrary to all moral principles; the judge, accordingly, was in duty bound to throw out the bond, from the very start, as illegal. But not having done this, and after "the wise young Daniel" had, despite these reasons, admitted the validity of the bond, it was a sheer piece of sophistry, a miserable pettifogger's trick, to deny the man to whom he had already granted the right of cutting a pound of flesh from a living body, the spilling of blood, which was necessarily connected with such an operation. With exactly the same justice might a judge acknowledge the rights of ingress and egress of a lessee, yet sustain the lessor's demand that the lessee should leave behind him no footprints on the land leading to his property, because in the lease this was not especially stipulated. One is almost induced to believe the history of Shylock was enacted in the very earliest days of Rome; for the authors of the Twelve Tables regarded it as necessary, *a propos* of a creditor's privilege of dissecting a debtor (*in partes secare*), expressly to remark that in the matter of the size of the pieces the creditor should be allowed his discretion. (*Si plus minusve secuerint, sine fraude esto!*)

will be at an end. We may welcome the repeal of the Sherman Law as the beginning of a return to the true ethics of government which is, to govern as little as possible. Government usurps illegal power when it makes itself a preferred customer for the merchandise of any class whatever, especially for merchandise that it cannot and will not use. It is wasteful to pay men for digging silver out of the ground in Colorado that it may be buried in the ground at Washington, or wherever the graveyard of silver is. How interesting it is to see a civilised nation paying big wages to statesmen for contriving and adopting such measures as the Sherman Law.

* * *

While gratified by the prospective repeal of the Sherman Law, I am not quite so enthusiastic about it as my "unconditional" morning paper which gushes forth rhapsodies like this: "If the good news shall turn out to be true, we shall have thanks to give for bank vaults unlocked, for the wheels of machinery let loose, for a new impetus in merchandising, for a rise in prices to the normal point, for public confidence restored—for good times come again once more." Several other miracles for which we may give thanks are mentioned in the catalogue, but the impossible few above quoted will tide us over the winter; that is, of course, if our collaterals are good. I am not so grateful for a "rise in prices" as for some of the other blessings; and I believe that any legislation which makes a "rise in prices," is mischievous, except when it makes a rise in the prices of merchandise of which I have a stock on hand, and which I wish to sell. Some economists believe that all the people are engaged in selling, and that none of them ever buy, but whenever I see a seller laughing at a "rise in prices," I also behold on the other side of the counter a buyer who is proportionately sad. The study of political economy should be avoided, because it has a tendency to tangle up the convolutions of the brain. Here, for instance, is my "unconditional" paper praising the Repeal Bill for making a "rise in prices," and condemning the McKinley Bill for doing that very thing. If a "rise in prices" is beneficial, why denounce the McKinley Bill?

* * *

As to the effect of the Repeal Bill on prices, another authority, Mr. Allen, the senator from Nebraska, mentally tangled by the dismal science, comes to a conclusion the very opposite of that reached by my morning paper. Mr. Allen is a statesman and a political economist, or he would not be in the United States Senate, and he declares that *lower* prices will result from the repeal of the Sherman Law. In the gloom of defeat, he said: "We are now entering upon an era of forty-cent wheat, ten-cent corn, and ten dollar cows. Unconditional repeal will inflate the prices of stocks and bonds, but it will surely depress the price of agricultural products and add to the distress of the farmer and the workingman." This curious medley of contradictions proves that political economy and statesmanship may seriously affect a senatorial mind. Here is a statesman telling the workingmen that they are to be injured by a rise in the prices of stocks and bonds which they never buy, and by a fall in the prices of bread and meat which they must either buy or starve. The artificial market for silver created by the government does not increase the price of agricultural products, and the closing of that market will not lower it. In another form, it is the old sum in the rule of three that puzzled us at school, If cheese is ten cents a pound, and butter twenty cents a pound, what will a pair of boots cost? Mr. Allen puts the problem thus: If the government buys four million and five hundred thousand ounces of silver per month in 1893, and buys none in 1894, what will a cow cost? And he answers, "ten dollars."

* * *

Often, when starting on a trip to the Houses of Parliament, or the Halls of Congress, or to some great political meeting, and sometimes when attending divine service in some church, pan-

theon, mosque, or synagogue, I have wished that I could borrow, as easily as I could borrow an umbrella, the magic spear that Gabriel the archangel gave to Ithuriel when he sent him in search of Satan; that spear of celestial temper, the touch of which no falsehood can endure, but "returns of force, to its own likeness." I have longed for the spear that I might touch lightly the preacher, the senator, or the candidate, make him return to his own likeness, and reveal himself in the true color of his opinions as they lay concealed behind his brow. Many a time in the Parliament of All Religions, when I heard some Reverend, or some Right Reverend orator, out of harmony with his creed, pleading for spiritual and mental freedom, for fewer sects, and a larger brotherhood, for more love and less hate, for more peace and less war, for justice, liberty, and toleration, I have thought that if I could only touch him with Ithuriel's spear, his clerical regalia would vanish, and the man would stand revealed before the congregation in his true mentality an unbeliever and an infidel. We may dissemble here, and hide our consciences away from the gaze of men, but in the course of eternal being there is not one soul of us all that shall escape the touch of Ithuriel's spear.

* * *

The President having informed the office-seekers months ago that nothing would be done for them until after the silver settlement, the approaching end of the Silver Question gives a new impetus to patriotism and starts a revival of that important industry. My Washington correspondent, under date of yesterday, informs me by special telegraph that "the patronage question is again a burning one"; and that the office-hunting patriots "are beginning to crowd the hotel corridors." I am further informed that "a train-load of Indianians came to-day," and reinforcements were expected on another section of the train, which was only a few miles behind. "The Ohioans," remarks my correspondent, "are also here in force." It surprises the crowd that the President is not waiting for them at the station and offering to carry their gripsacks up to the hotel. On the contrary, instead of affectionately falling upon their necks, he rather avoids them; and, in fact, says my correspondent, "frequently remains at his suburban home all day and disappoints the long line of visitors who besiege the White House." The President keeps in stock a variety of smiles for a variety of occasions, and being informed that a few offices judiciously distributed would have a "stimulating effect" on the November elections, he "smiled one of his broad, expansive smiles," expressive of ironical pity for the politicians who did not know that while the gift of an office has a stimulating effect upon the one man who gets it, it has a contrary effect upon his ninety-nine disappointed competitors. The "suburban home" device will not protect Mr. Cleveland from the patriots who desire to sacrifice themselves in "the public service." Nothing but a contagious disease can save him, and it must be a virulent case, even then. I remember when old Martin Van Buren Doty was an applicant for the postoffice at Marbletown, and went all the way to Washington in order to present his "claims" in person to Mr. Lincoln. As he was marching from the hotel to the White House, he met the Congressman from his district and invited him to go along, but the honorable member said, "Don't you know that the President has the smallpox?" "Well," replied Martin Van Buren, "I have heern about that; but I'm goin' to resk it anyhow; it's only varioloid."

* * *

At a Missionary Convention recently held in Chicago, the President of Robert's College, Constantinople, spoke on "The Aims of Missionary Work," and in the course of his remarks he said: "It is often better missionary work to import a plough, than tracts; to help a fisherman mend his nets, than to read a chapter on the sin of worshipping idols; better to help a heathen dig a well, than to sit idly by and read the ten commandments; far

better to read and study the Koran, than to always read the Bible, if the missionary is in the land of Mohammed." Judged by the canons of all the Christian sects, those opinions are heresy, and they are a satire on the methods of Evangelical missions. The benevolence recommended is purely secular. Missionaries never have been sent across the sea to carry ploughs, instead of tracts, to dig wells, to mend fishermen's nets, or to study the Koran. The sentiments above quoted are evidence that the missionary has grown wiser and more tolerant by exchanging doctrines and opinions with sectarians of another faith. They testify to the futility of ministering to spiritual wants alone; and they prove that missionaries ought to know something of the religions they desire to overturn. If the spear of Ithuriel should happen to touch the President of Roberts College, Constantinople, it would very likely reveal a Freethinker or a Mohammedan.

* * *

Speaking about missionaries brings to mind the aggravating and perplexing Noyes case, with which the American Board of Home and Foreign Missions of the Congregational Church is wrestling again. The Rev. Mr. Noyes, desiring to go as a missionary to Japan, applied for that office, and was at last appointed, after having been several times rejected, because his views concerning heathen salvation were not orthodox and sound. This action has made a schism in the Board, the secretary and several of the directors having resigned, because the appointment of Mr. Noyes "opens a way for disastrous heresies into the Church." It seems that Mr. Noyes entertains a "reasonable hope" that God has made some provision by which the heathen who die without any knowledge of Christ may yet be saved. This is the objection to Mr. Noyes, and I think it is well taken, for it is clearly the duty of a missionary to tell the heathens that there is no "reasonable hope" for them at all, unless they become Christians. The Creator will no doubt appreciate the good opinion of Mr. Noyes, who entertains a "reasonable hope" that God has made some provision for doing that which mercifully ought to be done. As for me, I would rather take the chances of Mr. Noyes at the "great day," than the chances of those members of the Board who entertain the "unreasonable hope" that no such provision has been made. When Mr. Noyes reaches Japan, he will find that he is "carrying coals to Newcastle," for his enlightened theology already prevails in Japan. During the late Parliament of Religions I had the pleasure of meeting, at the house of a friend, some Buddhist bishops from Japan, and I spent some hours in conversation with them on matters of theology. To my delight I found that all of them entertained a "reasonable hope" that God has made some provision by which the Christians who die without any knowledge of Buddha may nevertheless be saved. And I met a Mohammedan who hoped in the same way. M. M. TRUMBULL.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS, A BOOK OF STUDIES AND STROWINGS.
By *Daniel Brinton*, A M., M.D., LL.D. Philadelphia:
David McKay. 1893.

Dr. Brinton is well known to the readers of *The Open Court* as the author of popular ethnological works and treatises. The present book seems to be the outcome of his leisure hours and thoughts—his contribution to the world's opinion about the purpose and methods of life. In spirit, if not in form, the work strongly reminds us of Sir John Lubbock's "The Pleasures of Life." The fundamental thesis of Dr. Brinton's book is, that happiness is the aim of life. But with him happiness is the increasing consciousness of self. And though built upon pleasure it is not absolutely pleasure, and can be derived from other than pleasurable feelings. It is evident, thus, that Dr. Brinton cannot be stamped as a hedonist, although there is much in his book which points to such a conclusion. The work shows wide reading and discusses almost

every interesting phase of life; it is pleasantly written, and replete with pithy, epigrammatical utterances. Every reader will enjoy its perusal. μκκκ.

NOTES.

The ruthless assassination of Carter Harrison, mayor of Chicago, is a striking proof of the faultiness of our partisan system of administration. The experiences of centuries have taught all European nations to select their government employees from candidates who have specially prepared themselves for the service, and to appoint them, with the exception of governors and the chiefs of the various departments, for life; while we, in a ridiculous fear of bureaucracy, cling with tenacity to the principle that offices are the spoils of the victors. This method of ousting the officers of the beaten party not only renders government positions uncertain but throws, after every change in politics, a number of men out of employment. It is true that this class of people are much wanted in politics, for they make the most active stump-speakers, who will, without qualification, support the political machine. But it would be sad if the interest in public affairs could be kept aglow by such means and men of that stamp only! It is natural that there will always be a great number of disappointed office-seekers. They are the most miserable creatures, for hunger makes them desperate and unscrupulous. If we do not reform our civil service because the present system is wrong, unjust, and unwise, we shall have to do it because of the dangers which it involves. The World's Fair concluded without the planned festivities and with flags at half-mast. The Mayor of Chicago, who should have played the most conspicuous part in the closing ceremonies, a public-spirited man of undoubted abilities, of enterprise, and keen judgment, had become the victim of an almost imbecile office-hunter.

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