

CHRISTIANITY AND WAR.

BY BISHOP WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BROWN, D.D.

AS a religious movement Christianity started out with the view of promoting peace and good will among men, but ever since its triumph over rival interpretations of religion it has been staggering under an accumulating burden of responsibility on account of war.

The pretensions of Christians to a religion which promotes forbearance and peace must be so many by-words to Jews, Mohammedans and Buddhists, for they cannot help seeing that no other religionists have destroyed themselves and ruined their progeny by a murderous and calamitous warfare on any such scale as the one which Christian Europe inaugurated nearly three years ago on the slightest and most sordid of pretenses and which Christian America is in imminent danger of greatly enlarging and prolonging, for reasons which are certainly no more if indeed as justifiable.

From the beginning the attitude of the Christian churches in Europe has been a source of great discouragement to the lovers of our Zion, who have vainly hoped that its influence might yet be used as a power that makes for pacific measures, but the hearts of such must now sink within them because of the action of the great Federation of Christian Churches in the metropolitan city of New York of which last week's press gives an account. It voted overwhelmingly, 158 against 52, in favor of the extensive military preparations which are recommended by the belligerent enthusiasts who are trying to force our country into this war.

It is popularly supposed that Christianity has been the means of rendering war much less frequent and of greatly reducing its evils, but the sad truth is that the world has never seen as many wars or suffered as much by them as ever since the triumph of the Christian church with the accession in the year 325 of Constantine to the throne of the Roman Empire.

Nor was this more true of the age preceding the Protestant reformation than it has been of the period which followed it. Indeed quite the contrary is the case. The wars growing out of it in Germany alone resulted in the reduction of the population of that nation from thirty to twelve million in the course of the seventeenth century.

And Protestantism rather than Catholicism may justly be charged with the responsibility for the existence of large standing armies which, next to ignorance and superstition, constitute the most insuperable barrier to the progress of civilization. The empire of Rome, extensive and heathen as it was, never had one of more than half a million, but those of the Christian nations within the comparatively small territory of Europe have gradually been growing until even in times of peace they are sustained at the astonishing magnitude of fifteen millions, and the Protestant nations have by far the larger ones.

The chief combatants in the war that is now in progress, the most destructive in the history of the world, are Germany and England in which Protestantism predominates. Hungary is a stronghold of Catholicism, but the church of Russia is of the Greek catholic type, and allied with the church of England rather than that of Rome.

As for France, its religion, morally the best in Europe, is predominantly of the rationalistic or scientific character, not Christian in the theoretical sense, but preeminently so in the practical, the only sense which is of any real value or general interest to the world.

In a passage which is sure to become a classical reproach to belligerent Christianity, Mark Twain causes his angel of history and prophecy to give this ironic yet conservative and just expression to a melancholy truth:

"You perceive that you have made continual progress. Cain did his murder with a club; the Hebrews did their murders with javelins and swords; the Greeks and Romans added protective armor and the fine arts of military organization and generalship; the Christian added guns and gunpowder; a few centuries from now he will have so greatly improved the deadly effectiveness of his weapons of slaughter that all men will confess that without Christian civilization war must have remained a poor and trifling thing to the end of time.

"It is a remarkable progress. In five or six thousand years five or six high civilizations have risen, flourished, commanded the wonder of the world, then faded out and disappeared; and not one of them except the latest ever invented any sweeping and adequate way to kill people. They all did their best, to kill being the chief ambition of the human race and the earliest incident of its history, but only the Christian civilization has scored a triumph to be proud of. Two or three centuries from now it will be recognized that all the competent killers are Christians; then the pagan will go to

school to the Christian—not to acquire his religion but his guns. The Turk and the Chinaman will buy those to kill missionaries and converts with.”

Humane readers who are Protestant church-members will blush (none more than Episcopalians, both Methodist and Anglican) when they see the names of their respective churches in the following shameful exhibit. Catholics will be spared, but only because their churches are not represented in the confederation.

	FOR WAR	AGAINST WAR
Baptist	16	1
Congregational	10	0
Disciples of Christ	3	0
Seventh Day Adventists	1	1
Protestant Episcopal	27	3
Reformed Episcopal	0	1
Evangelical Association	1	2
Society of Friends	0	2
German Evangelical Synod	0	1
Lutheran	14	7
Methodist Episcopal	23	4
Primitive Methodist	1	0
Moravian	4	1
Presbyterian	27	20
Reformed	19	3
Unitarian	1	0
Universalist	1	2
Union Protestant	10	4

Among the churches with a large membership the Presbyterian has the least to regret in connection with this showing, but it is a misfortune that it has twenty-seven votes or that any church has one vote on the wrong side.

The Presbyterian church also has the good fortune of having the most influential of all pacifists, Mr. William Jennings Bryan, as a member. But again it is unfortunate that Mr. Bryan did not get his pacifism from inside his or any church. The movement against war, like that against slavery, was started, as all reformatory movements have been, outside of the churches, or if inside, by heretics who were forthwith put out.

It is Holy Week. The week in which during many and long ages benighted people sacrificed their Christs to Shylock gods. If Jesus lived and was one of them, unhappily He was neither the first

nor the last, for there were many both before and after Him. Were they who superstitiously led these victims to their Golgothas greater sinners against humanity than those who are avariciously driving large armies of young men to the trenches, a wholesale sacrifice to the lords of power and wealth? No. Both are in need of the prayer, forgive them for they know not what they do.

A FRENCH NOVELIST ON ANGLO-AMERICAN UNION.

BY JOHN H. JORDAN.

THE Cecil Rhodes dream of incorporating the United States of America into the British Empire is cleverly outlined in *Le Maître de la Mer*, by Vicomte Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé, of the French Academy.

The novel was written to contrast French with American ideals, from the viewpoint of a Frenchman. In the leading character Archibald Robinson, the "Master of the Main," one cannot fail to discern the figure of the elder Morgan as seen through Gallic eyes.

It is this American magnate whom a self-anointed prophet of Rhodes imperialism endeavors, with fulsome religious cant, to interest actively in establishing a Pan-Anglo-Saxon world state. The little misunderstanding which led to the altogether regrettable American Revolution was to be corrected, and America, generously atoning for the sins of her Revolutionary fathers, was to take her pre-Revolutionary status in that blessed British Empire, bespoken of the Prophets, the real City of God.

The sixteenth edition of De Vogüé's novel, from which I have translated the following extracts, appeared in 1903. It is apparent therein, that the Frenchman possessed complete comprehension of the common aim of British and American imperialists. The ninth chapter is exceptionally interesting because of the fact that some of the men whose views are set forth therein, Carnegie, Balfour and Lord Rosebery, are still zealous and devoutly active in the cause. Lord Rosebery is to be our next British ambassador.

The story opens with a dialogue between the great American maker of trusts, and his loyal little Irish secretary, Joe Butler, in the office of the Universal Sea Trust on the Rue Scribe, Paris. The far-flung lines of this world trust are indicated by the conversation: