The Congress of Religions.

A great many of us are doubtless looking forward to our visit to the World's Fair as one of the great events of our lives. There will probably not be another such chance to see and hear what will be crowded into the small amount of space and time, at least for us, in our lifetime.

We read of its magnitude and can form only a very faint conception of it. The sight will be wonderful. The effect upon the individual is one that to the studious mind will be well worth a year's schooling. In the short time we take a look at all peoples, make a brief visit to all lands, and in short may hope to see nearly all things.

The good effects produced by the exchange of ideas and opinions by the different peoples can hardly be estimated. It is for America a mighty
advertisement of her resources and wealth, a testimony of her pluck, energies, and enterprise. To a great degree these benefits are for us only. But there is one that is to be derived by all, one that has its source in the very nature of the gathering. We in America, removed as we are from the hostile countries across the ocean, can hardly form any idea from the meager newspaper reports of the actual animosity which the various nations regard each other. Constantly prepared for war, keeping standing armies that are so expensive that we can only wonder at their prosperity. To such, a bringing together of their peoples and representatives will do a great deal toward bringing about the desired and much needed peace.

One of the leading features of the Fair will be the numerous of various kinds, all tending to make men
feel a common and mutual dependence, that good may be alike given and received.

It has been proposed that there be held a parliament of Republics. It is surely a grand idea. This will include those countries of the Old and New Worlds that have this common form of government.

But a plan that is grander in its intent and farther-reaching in its scope is the proposed Congress of Religions. The Congress of Republics would reach but a few. This would include all mankind. That asks attendance of those only who agree. This holds the door open for any who will come that they may agree.

Here it is proposed shall be gathered the different faiths and creeds of the world, and represented by their most learned men with due respect and consideration for each other, calmly weigh the arguments and
talk over the points of difference. The spirit of rivalry and controversy is to be eliminated as far as possible. With this object in view, could they agree on but one or very few points, the results in the common exchange of ideas and the seeing of the true beliefs of each other and mutual the necessary respect which such contact would necessarily elicit would necessarily be very great. We are told that when the Crusaders went into the East to conquer their enemies, even though but doubtfully successful, they returned with a profound respect for the true, not simply in a military point of view, but in the contact of man with man. They found in those barbarians qualities which they might emulate with profit to themselves. This was one of the benefits of this great movement of the middle ages. If such could come about through such sources
what may we not expect from this
hold in time of peace and with such
objects in view.

We may also look for clearer, better
and more universal views in re-
gard to Divine Truth. We must not
strive for religion in the same sense
as we do of governments or simi-
lar institutions. It is not some-
thing which men by their mutual
mixture and consent create. As they
must in all the different creeds be a vein of the human mixed in
with the Divine, in such a case
of inquiry this part will be exposed
and probably made to fall, and the
part that should stand, because of the
ability to bear this inspection will
shine forth all the brighter.

It seems to me that whether
we believe in evolution or not
we must accept the theory that
there is a ruler who operates accord-
ing to certain fixed laws, and
Religion is the study of these
laws as such. The nearer we app-
preach its standard or author, the stranger and meaurier do we become.
During the time of the Caesar, the Apostles were brought before the Jew
ish Sanhedrin, accused of preaching a false doctrine. Emanuel the greatest
philanthropist the Jews probably ever had defended with the plea that if
their religion was false it did not need their efforts to cause its downfall. If true it would
stand despite their attacks. If in this session any be represented that cannot stand the test it is
true that it fails.
I think that some of the greatest hindrances to the advance-
ment of the Church today are the dissensions and jealousies
which are constantly arising between the different denominations.
So long have they wrangled over small points of difference that all
seem to have forgotten that there are common and very important
interests on which they may agree. It may be expected that when called upon to defend a common cause they will unite leaving out the petty differences thereby accomplishing a great good.

Who can estimate the good that will follow from this calling together of the master-minds of the present age? There will be inculcated a spirit of respect for each other that will lead to a great degree upon the people represented. So leaving out the question of religion and thinking simply of its general effects we may look for great results.

I believe that this is only the first of a series of such meetings each year finding them coming together, drawing more and more closely into bonds that will do so much to make men feel an interest in the advancement of their fellow-men which is necessary for true advancement.