

# Bishop Burch Differs With Harrison as to World's Morals

## Prelate Sees Many Evils, Classing Immodest Dress of Women as the Worst, But Scouts Idea of Civilization's Ruin

"I am not a pessimist," said Bishop Charles Sumner Burch in his office in the Synod Building in the Cathedral Close of St. John the Divine, while he held in his hand the published interview given by a famous Englishman, Frederic Harrison, on his 89th birthday (October 18) to the London Times.

"I cannot believe the world is going to ruin because one man, although he is a great thinker and writer and has done good work in his day, says so. There are evils in the world, as there have always been, but when the statement is made—and Harrison makes it—that the church is doing nothing to counteract and destroy these evils I respectfully refer him and other pessimists who take the blackest view of life to the encyclical promulgated by the Lambeth conference. That is a great, sane and most statesmanlike document and it looks at things as they are."

Frederic Harrison, fellow of Oxford and for twelve years professor of international law to the Inns of Court, president of the English Postivist Committee, 1880-1905; vice-president of the Royal Historical Society at London Library, renowned as author, editor and lecturer, is a name to be taken very seriously in Great Britain and wherever in the world English is read. Accordingly, his most recent utterance has spread widely and aroused profound interest in the most serious minds.

"I am a pessimist," frankly stated the statesman and litterateur. "This world is made of infinite complexity, and humanity has incalculable powers of recuperation; but the immediate future of this kingdom—may, of Western civilization—is in real peril of collapse. The seizure of power by untold millions as yet neither morally nor intellectually trained to rule threatens revolution, anarchy and famine.

"The world war has changed everything and in the end has ruined much of good and of promise."

This is the crux of the Harrison inter-

view. The venerable thinker amplified it by the following articles:

- I.—The boom in education has not brought any nobler literature, any greater art, any purer drama, any finer manners.
- II.—A leisured class able to study in peace and to produce from its learning is being abolished by the mad whirl of modern existence.
- III.—Serious literature is being choked out by the increased cost of printing.
- IV.—The churches have not shown any power to restore religion to its true place as the guide of human life.

Then the pessimistic philosopher draws conclusions in the words that follow:

"The result of this chaos in spiritual and moral training is a manifest loosening of the canons of moral life, defiance of discipline by the young and ambitious, mockery of age and all the lessons of age. Worst of all, the sacrifice of the family as a moral institution and the degradation of marriage to be a temporary partnership entered into as a frivolous mode of getting a good time and to be cast off as easily as a lodging which is not convenient."

### Bishop Declares Evil Cannot Triumph.

It was to be expected that Bishop Burch should single out from the interview the points that viewed the churches with the eye of criticism. And he said:

"Two hundred and fifty-two bishops, representing the most diverse dioceses from all over the world, studied the moral problems confronting the world, some of them perennial, some of them outgrowths of the war—studied them faithfully and prayerfully, having no personal ambition to foster, no propaganda except true Christianity to spread, and then issued an encyclical which for a human document is well-nigh perfect in that it proposes remedies for the unrest, the uncertainty that it discovered everywhere. A body of finer statesmen than was present at Lambeth Palace has never assembled, and its utterances show how pure and unselfish are the aims of the churches.

"These aims are not comprehended in the Episcopal clergy only; non-conformists of every creed, of every shade of belief (all being professing Christians), share these aims.

"And the churches after the return of their leaders to their homes are doing all that they can to carry out the programme to better conditions, spiritual and moral, in the world.

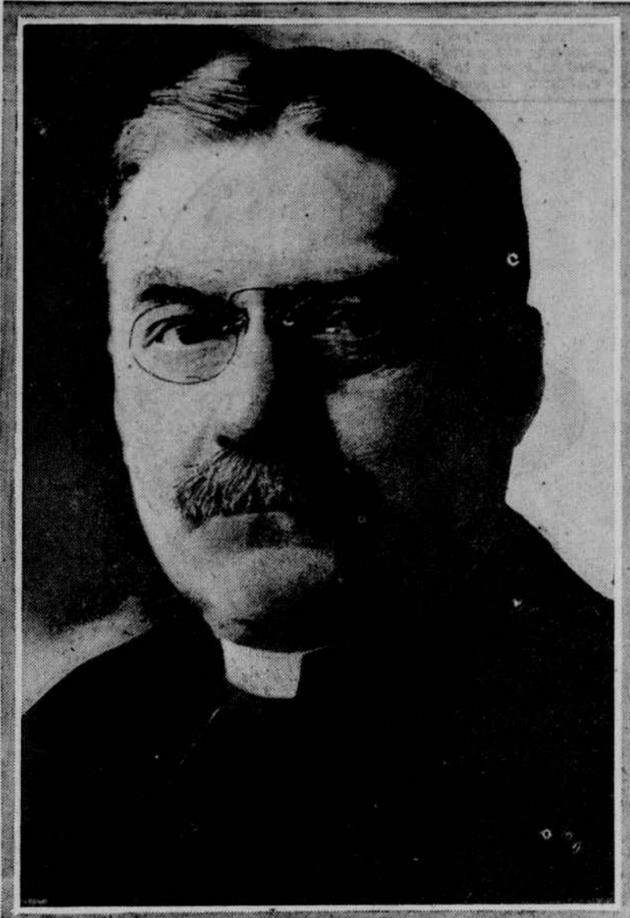
"I consider the present to be a time of anxiety, a period of unrest, perhaps unprecedented in degree, but we have passed through such periods before and we shall pass through this one. I regret the pessimistic view; it is both false and unsafe. The world, however slowly it progresses, does progress upward!

"Sometimes we cannot see this upward tendency; our eyes are gifted but with finite vision, but we have history to read, and its lesson is one that teaches this certain, safe and sure improvement of the world.

"The church is doing everything it can to help the world to rise and throw off its restlessness. Its aim is inspiration, and that feeling it does not lack now any more than at any previous period.

"There is no question but that evil powers are abroad in the world, but they are not getting the upper hand, and these powers never will triumph. Beside the forces of good which it is the object of the church to call into battle with them the forces of evil are ephemera."

It was suggested to Bishop Burch that he should go into detail and describe some of the ways that the churches are adopting to counteract the evils set loose by the war. A more concrete statement, it was hinted,



BISHOP CHARLES SUMNER BURCH. Who sees many evils, but scouts idea of world's moral ruin.

would be welcomed by the many who saw destruction in the present art and in literary and philosophical tendencies.

But again calling on the words of the encyclical the prelate pleaded lack of time for anything more than general statements.

When he was asked if he had found in

his visit to England conditions that warranted Harrison to condemn modern art, literature, drama, manners, the Bishop said that he had not. He had seen what convinced him that "great progress had been made ever since 1914."

It is this very progress that the English

### Dr. Kelman Deplores Gloomy Utterance

THE REV. DR. JOHN KELMAN, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, pronounced the general condemnation of society, art and literature, including strictures on the laxity of the church (using the term in its broadest sense) by Frederic Harrison in his birthday interview to be most unfortunate. There were moral forces at work, under the surface he said, which tend to counteract the conditions of decay and degeneration, if they exist in the degree measured by the octogenarian litterateur.

It is always easy to condemn, Dr. Kelman said, but it must be remembered that after every great upheaval by war there had followed a terrible aftermath. It was so after the war of the reformation and the wars that ensued upon the French Revolution. The peoples then may be likened to a man who has taken medicines for humors in his

blood and these medicines drive the evils to the face where they can be seen.

"I worked in the world war," said Dr. Kelman, "and came out of it with a great enthusiasm for lofty ideals. If it has been necessary to reduce them somewhat to workable dimensions that necessity should not be surprising. In my reading of history this summer I revived my knowledge or acquaintance with conditions of the nations of Europe after the war of the reformation. For fifty years following it the church was in its most discouraging period. The Peasant War, the troubles brewed by the Anabaptists are part of the aftermath of that time.

"I do not care to rush into the press with an unprepared statement of what I feel to be the true conditions following the world war and at present I am too occupied to do more than make these rough statements. I read Mr. Harrison's interview carefully, however, and shall keep it by me in order, if I consider it well and timely, to answer it fully at a subsequent time."

## Noted Englishman's Statement That Church Is Doing Nothing to Counteract Laxity Born of War Brings Denial Here

pessimist arraigns in clearest tones. Harrison says:

"I am far from denying this vast material progress, but this social improvement has not been gained without grave evils and cruel loss to good things and worthy persons.

"The tremendous upheaval, spiritually, morally and intellectually, has wrought incalculable mischief.

"The social betterment of labor has been won too often by violence, selfishness and greed, and usually by no cry but that of more money and bitter suspicion."

To these denials of good out of evil (the war) Bishop Burch offered no remark, explaining that these, too, were generalizations that would require specific instances and that the latter would have to be studied in England as they were of that country.

### Following False Gods.

"The situation of England," said Bishop Burch, "is supremely difficult at this moment. The internal pressure is harder, sterner than has ever been put on that country before in all her checked history. More than any other nation she is suffering from economical unrest, and from leaders who, however honest they may be, seem to be following false national gods. The problem that confronts her in India is a vexed and grievous one, enough for one nation to struggle through without the added troubles of strikes and holdups of production of all kinds at home.

"Her Irish question is a burning problem. We are largely ignorant about it and fall in the mass to understand it, and we should wait until we have knowledge and get understanding before we meddle with it.

"But even with these woes in mind, and with some power to weigh them through studies made on the spot and talks with great British leaders, I am no more pessimistic as regards England than I am of America. England will win through, as she has always done."

With the reflection that Americans could more wisely discuss existing conditions with America in view than with reference to any foreign land, Bishop Burch repeated his optimistic feeling in regard to our social and political progress, convinced that it tended upwards, even if tardily. At a recent meeting held by the women of the Episcopal denomination for a discussion of social work and needs he had learned, he said, many gratifying things.

These had convinced him, he said, that the cry of decadence of American morals and manners was one raised by a small band of pessimists and was not justified by facts.

"But this country is made up of optimists. I am happy to think, and while we admit freely that there are difficulties, we are surely going to surmount all of them."

### As to Degrading Books and Plays.

Admitting that he did not possess the personal knowledge of certain popular books and plays that he would need in order to speak of them—a personal acquaintance that had been denied him by the press of duties in his vast ecclesiastical domain—the Bishop heard with surprise not unmixed with displeasure of the decadent flavor of many of them. He said, however, that these isolated instances of evil art did not persuade him to be a pessimist.

"I believe that the public is too careless about such things, and that greater care should be exercised with regard to literary, artistic and other matters to shut out such of them as are intended to be and are morally destructive. The church would be the first to ban them if they were brought to its attention, for the church aims first of all to protect the family and the institution of marriage. The books you mention, if

as you describe them, would degrade the latter and destroy the first.

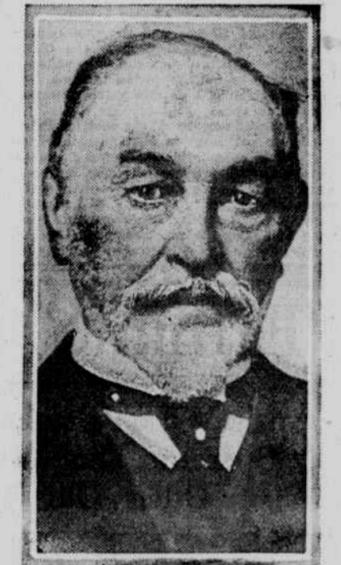
"I do not know, I cannot pretend to know the modern leaders in what you term the modern literary decadence. I do know that evils are in the world, that they abound here and take their toll of the young and growing generation.

"In my opinion there is no greater evil power at work to-day than the indecent and immodest dress of women. Nothing worse can be imagined and no book, however degraded, could work the harm this custom of dress does. Go into any street, every street of our city and you will see what I mean. Nothing worse is possible. Men are human and the women who dress in this fashion cannot comprehend the reactions on our entire social system. They are doing a real, definite, social harm.

"A return to modest apparel, a more widespread acceptance of the indissolubility of the marriage tie, a closer, wiser and kinder chaperonage of the young by their elders, a simple acceptance of the ideal of family life as one to be striven for and attained by unselfishness and altruism, these things will clear up the social situation for all of us. A more intimate religion, too, must be fostered along with them. In fine, this is the work of the church.

"The church acknowledges that there are evils. It does not shut its eyes to them and seek to survive in a pallid spirituality. No, it claims to be and is a force mobilized to fight evil. And this church is struggling with the powers of wickedness as best it can."

This is Bishop Burch's way of looking at some of the things which Frederic Harrison looked upon with far different eyes, but it is not intended for a categorical reply to the Englishman's assertions. On his return from the West, whither he went on official business shortly after expressing his confidence in the future of ourselves and our country, the Bishop intimated that it would be his interest to make a further study of particulars.



FREDERIC HARRISON. Noted Englishman, who declares war has brought civilization to verge of moral collapse.



THE REV. DR. JOHN KELMAN, who believes history will repeat itself in eradicating moral laxity resulting from war.

# World Peace as Seen by W. M. Evarts and Joseph H. Choate

PROPHETIC and striking utterances on the possibilities of a league of nations made by two great Americans years ago just have come to light. What William M. Evarts thought of such a plan as far back as 1889 was set down by William V. Rowe, long associated with the firm of Evarts, Choate & Beaman. How Joseph H. Choate looked upon the idea and his comments on Mr. Evarts's suggestions as recently as August, 1907, was also set down by Mr. Rowe. These notes of two memorable conversations have been transcribed by Mr. Rowe and are presented to the public for the first time through The New York Herald.

To realize fully the significance of these two striking opinions one must recall the public service of the two great men who gave them. William M. Evarts served as Attorney-General of the United States; as Secretary of State; was Senator from New York; counsel before the Geneva Tribunal in the Alabama case; of counsel in the impeachment trial of President Andrew Johnson and counsel before the Electoral Commission in the Hayes-Tilden case.

Joseph H. Choate served as Ambassador to the Court of St. James's; headed the American delegation at the second Peace Conference at The Hague and, with Mr. Evarts, for more than a generation was looked upon as an authority on international law.

**How the Subject Was Brought Up.**

Telling how he came to have the conversations with Mr. Evarts and Mr. Choate about an international league, Mr. Rowe says:

"In the late spring of 1889 I had several discussions with Mr. Evarts, followed by other confirmatory talks at different times, on the subject of an international arrangement for the prevention of war, the settlement of all international disputes and the scientific development of international law. I had prepared a rough draft of a treaty and told him I would read it to him, for at this time Mr. Evarts's eyes had almost completely failed.

"Senator Evarts manifested extraordinary interest, and when I had finished he at once began to comment, and what he said was later deliberately restated and repeatedly confirmed. His conclusion was: 'That is all very good; I don't take serious exception to any part of your treaty.'

"At The Hague, in August, 1907, when discussing the general situation there and while

Prophetic Words of Two Great Statesmen and Authorities on International Law, Uttered in 1889, and in 1907, Recorded at the Time by Office Associate and Just Given Publicity-- The Hague Conference Offers a Workable International League

he was complaining very emphatically of the German opposition to arbitration, I was led to repeat these talks with Mr. Evarts and to tell him in detail about the sketch for a treaty which I made nearly twenty years before. Mr. Choate had been a good deal annoyed by many of his experiences at this conference, and spoke his mind with considerable freedom and emphasis."

**What Mr. Evarts Said.**

"World peace? Why not? The only way to stop war is to stop it. World control by the nations means simply self-control. We shall never have another war with England. She and we are alike—in laws, in morals and in spiritual aspirations. Our disputes will be family quarrels. We can, for that reason, by arbitration or adjustment, settle all questions with her, because we understand one another and know how to arrange matters on a common basis.

"Not only so, but we can also go further—England and we alone, with France, with whom there will always be a good understanding, can keep the peace of the world until the other nations gradually get ready to join us in due course of natural development. It will be to our advantage to do this.

"Alliance and cooperation of separate sovereign units, each independent, but working with the others under a general working arrangement—that is the right idea, and that will be the real foundation for world peace for many generations. You have hit that nail squarely on the head. Law must supplant war. You are right on that head also. I am sure that we are approaching the time for international action—perhaps by this very alliance I have mentioned—to force permanent peace on the nations.

"Law, not war, really rules the world—even to-day. As law enters the door war flies out of the window. Some way must be found to nourish and fertilize international law, to the end that the world may have law, adjudication and order, in place of war, reprisal and anarchy. We must have periodical world conferences of the nations, at short intervals, to thrash out the public

opinion of the world and to promote the growth of international law.

"But you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, and you cannot make world peace all at once out of a lot of unrefined, undeveloped brute nations. After all, what is there in any treaty whatever except its moral weight? If you are dealing with nations without any sense of moral obligation (as we and the English and French understand it) what is the use of a treaty? You have got to have some force, as a sanction, at any rate, to cover such cases—some police power and blockade provisions—undoubtedly. Of course, it is useless even to attempt to bring Germany, for instance, into such a treaty. What does she care or know about morals or moral obligations, as we understand them?

**Prophetic Work About Germany.**

"All military and autocratic nations are savages, brutes and hypocrites and, under Bismarck's misleading tutelage, Germany is the worst of the lot, with a population at this time that is absolutely unmoral, docile and servile, stealing from others, as the Hun always has done, both ideas and material resources, and recognizing no neighborly or world obligations.

"The German people are now back in the dark ages, in a class by themselves. I speak of this strongly, because it is very necessary to do so. They are a shocking menace to the good order of the world—like any other beast in cultivated surroundings—and they cannot be trusted. Trade with them, if you will, as Washington said of Europe generally, but keep out of all political and diplomatic entanglements with them. That is a perfectly practicable arrangement.

"Long after I am gone the world will have to wake up and watch the Germans and set up barriers, as you would against a wild bull until he is tamed. That will probably be the special work of England and America, but it will be a white man's burden, to be borne courageously.

"We shall have to help France, which is in constant contact with this brutish world menace, and which was terribly hurt and

bruised by the barbarian Bismarck, much as a delicate flower is hurt by the ruthless blow of a savage. The beauty and the artistic and general culture of French life must be preserved, for they are absolutely essential as spiritual assets and as elements of the greatest value to civilization and in world advancement. France will readily join us and England as she may be able.

"I like this rough sketch of a treaty you have read to me. It is sensible and very complete, but the world as a whole will not be sufficiently advanced even for that, I fear, for many years. The Germans are in the way. However, by shutting them out—a perfectly practicable idea, as I have said—I will admit that England, France and America might make at once such a treaty of cooperative alliance as you have outlined, and it would be a good thing to do, each preserving fully its own sovereignty, including our peculiar American doctrines as to Europe and the Western Hemisphere, and each participating in its own way, by agreement, in police measures by force and blockade. The national obligations and moral pressure would take care of all that.

"We must keep all American doctrines and sovereignty intact. There can be no overlord for us. That crippling of sovereignty would set back our development to an unimaginable extent. We must keep out of the affairs of other continents, and must confine our operations and obligations, as far as practicable, to the Western Hemisphere.

"It is just as fundamentally necessary to separate ourselves from European entanglements in our international life as it is to separate right from wrong in our moral life, or heaven from hell in our spiritual life. That separation will be truly fundamental and necessary for a thousand years, perhaps forever, because it is a matter of race, and considerations arising from racial differences and differences in environment and historical development cannot be wiped out in a minute. As you say, America can be depended upon to help them at all times in her own way, but Washington's far seeing

view of these matters, in the Farewell Address, must always control. As he pointed out, as I remember it, such a political separation has nothing to do with our trade and commerce and general commercial relations. We can always cut off diplomatic and political arrangements without interfering with trade.

"At any rate, we must maintain our individual position, standards and practices, unimpaired, if not forever, at least until we have educated and assimilated our mixed population and until they and the world are ready for a broader nationality—perhaps a world commonwealth—a hundred or a thousand years after you and I are gone.

**Russia and China the Mysteries.**

"The harum-scarum anarchists, Socialists and radicals do not trouble the much. They are merely foreign to us and ignorant—and insane to a greater or less degree. But I am afraid of the wild Germans—unconquered by an international high board fence—and I confess that Russia and China are almost unknown quantities to me and are difficult problems.

"I hope you will live to see the principles of your draft-treaty worked out. It is all a matter of public opinion. Organize that opinion in America, England and France, by an agreement against all wars, and you will have no wars in the future. No matter how red-blooded the nations may be, and no matter what the cause or question in difference, if the nations are truly civilized, and their advanced public opinion is properly enlightened, matters will be adjusted and there will be no wars. Not only so, but such nations will stop wars between other nations. That is the point.

"There is no reason why we should not go into such an arrangement. That would not be among the permanent alliances opposed by Washington. He and Jefferson were thinking of offensive and defensive particular alliances, which would actually draw us, perforce, away from the Western Hemisphere into all Europe's quarrels—an impossible situation.

"Two good things I like in your treaty—the confining of our police work to our natural points in the Western Hemisphere and the Orient, what we would naturally attend to anyway and then, the provision for not more than six representatives of a single nation, but with only a single vote. That will give representation at all meetings to colonies and outlying possessions without enlarging the vote.

"All conferences and work leading up to and following such a treaty should be open and public, with free debate. Europe has bedeviled us long enough with autocratic and secret diplomacy and secret procedures. Let's have done with it.

**Would Avoid Details.**

"We should make a treaty of general terms like those of our own Constitution and not a contract of many details. Leave leeway for practical interpretation and regulation and for future growth. Your draft does all that. Do not bother about any international questions except the settlement of disputes. Everything else will take care of itself.

"While human nature is what it is there will always be brawls among nations as well as among boys on street corners. The police take care of most of such matters and the courts see to the rest. Your sketch of a treaty provides for an effective police force to keep down international corner fights and enforce the court's orders. That is necessary and right. The world in our day cannot have peace in any other way, and I hope such a treaty may be signed one of these days. There are many able men, both in and out of the Senate, still young enough to push the matter.

"One matter, I hope, will never be forgotten, and that relates to the fundamental difference between our system of law and government and that of Central Europe. It affects the whole temper of the different races and makes most of our European immigration absolutely unfitted for American citizenship. It threatens our welfare, for these immigrants have no conception of law and order and the function of public opinion as we understand them.

"We must not only keep out of Europe's jealous territorial fights and general entanglements, but we must keep those entanglements away from ourselves, and to that end must stop the growth among us of hostile European ideas of law and government by shutting out certain of these un-