

**PROCEEDINGS OF
THE CLEVELAND
MEETING, 1886**

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Proceedings of the Cleveland Meeting, 1886 by The American Congress of Churches

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THE AMERICAN CONGRESS OF CHURCHES

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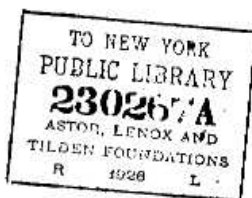
1886.

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1886.



"Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worst in a free and open encounter? Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing. . . Who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty? She needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings, to make her victorious; these are the shifts and defenses that error uses against her power; give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps."

MILTON, "AREOPAGITICA."

WICK
OLSON
VSA

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THE AMERICAN CONGRESS OF CHURCHES.

OBJECTS AND METHODS.

The AMERICAN CONGRESS OF CHURCHES has for its object "to promote Christian union, and to advance the kingdom of God, by a free discussion of the great religious, moral, and social questions of the time."

The general management of the Congress is in the hands of a COUNCIL OF TWENTY-FIVE, in which the various churches of America are unofficially represented by clergymen, or laymen, or both. This Council has no intention of establishing a society, or organizing a plan of union, or putting forth a creed; it simply aims, by holding public meetings from time to time, to make provision for a full and frank discussion of the great subjects in which the Christians of America are interested, including those ecclesiastical and theological questions upon which Christians differ. The Council is a self-perpetuating body, not composed of delegates elected by ecclesiastical organizations, and therefore not officially responsible to any church or association. Its executive organ is a COMMITTEE OF SEVEN, chosen from its own members, whose business is to make arrangements for an annual public meeting, and to conduct its various sessions in such a manner as to further the interests of our common Christianity.

The composition of the Council, ecclesiastically considered, may be far from perfect; but it at least indicates the scope and the spirit of the movement, a movement which is meant to be at once comprehensive and conservative. There has been no intention of excluding any church, or of expressing an opinion in regard to the relative value and excellence of any. But it was impossible that every kind of American Christians should be represented, however informally, in a Council of Twenty-five, and equally impossible that any strict ratio should be preserved in the representation actually attempted. As the movement to establish a Congress took shape in Western Massachusetts, the original nucleus of the Council consisted, naturally, of gentlemen residing in that section. It is hoped, however, that the Congress will be accepted as belonging to our whole country, as well as to all our churches, and that its annual assemblies will be welcomed everywhere.

W. C. W. W. W.
G. L. G. L. G.
M. A. M. A. M.

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REGULATIONS.

In pursuance of the chief object contemplated in the establishment of a Congress of Churches—namely, to make provision for the free and full discussion of the great subjects in which all Christians are interested—the Council of Twenty-five has adopted the following Regulations for the government of the Congress in its meetings.

1. The Congress shall, if practicable, meet annually. The President shall be chosen by the Executive Committee from the State in which the meeting of the year is held, and shall exercise the customary functions of a chairman. The Committee shall also appoint, from year to year, Vice Presidents representing different churches, and residing in different parts of the country. But no one shall be announced as a Vice-President who has not signified his acceptance of the appointment.

2. Discussions in the Congress shall be conducted in the following order: First, by appointed writers; secondly, by appointed speakers; thirdly, by voluntary speakers.

3. No appointed writer shall occupy more than TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES in the discussion; and no paper shall be read except by its writer; nor shall any paper appear in the authorized "Proceedings" of the Congress unless its writer has personally participated in the discussion.

4. Appointed speakers must limit their addresses to TWENTY MINUTES, and must speak without manuscript.

5. Voluntary speakers must limit their speeches to TEN MINUTES, and must speak without manuscript.

6. Any gentleman not under appointment, desiring to participate in a discussion, must present his card, together with the

name of the church with which he is connected, to the Secretaries, and no person shall speak until the President has given him opportunity by announcing his name.

7. A bell will be sounded three minutes before the expiration of the time allotted to any speaker or reader. The second stroke, three minutes after the first, is final, and must terminate the reading or address AT ONCE. No one shall be permitted to speak twice on the same subject.

8. It is understood that all papers, as soon as they have been read, will be placed at the disposal of the Executive Committee, with reference to their prompt publication in a volume containing the Proceedings of the Congress. The Committee will make provision also for the accurate reproduction in the "Proceedings" of the various addresses, whether made by appointment or otherwise. But the issue of such a volume—unless some publisher of books shall assume the responsibility—must depend upon the number of subscriptions received by the Committee.

9. NO TOPIC DISCUSSED IN THE CONGRESS, NOR ANY QUESTION OF DOCTRINE OR OPINION ARISING OUT OF ANY DISCUSSION, SHALL EVER BE SUBMITTED TO VOTE, AT ANY MEETING OF THE CONGRESS OR OF ITS COUNCIL.