

**MESSAGES OF THE MEN  
AND  
RELIGION FOREWARD  
MOVEMENT, VOL. I**

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**VARIOUS**

**MESSAGES OF THE MEN  
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# Messages of the Men and Religion Movement

Complete in Seven Volumes; including the Revised Reports  
of the Commissions presented at the Congress of the Men  
and Religion Forward Movement, April, 1922, together  
with the Principal Addresses Delivered at the Congress

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VOLUME I

## Congress Addresses



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## THE CHRISTIAN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

WILLIAM T. ELLIS

If anything was needed to impart a deep note of seriousness to the Christian Conservation Congress of the Men and Religion Forward Movement, which met in Carnegie Hall, New York, April 19-24, the *Titanic* disaster would have supplied it. The solemnity which all the world felt because of this tragedy was intensified for the delegates to the Congress by the consciousness that in their representative capacity they were concerned with the affairs of two worlds; the social order that now is, and the life beyond, which stalks so close to the life that now is. In this spirit it was inevitable that the great issues of humanity and eternity should be faced.

There was an oft-expressed and all-pervading sense that the present is a time of crisis in this western world, and indeed throughout the whole earth. The industrial and commercial, the social and political and religious problems that teem in our day were driven home one after the other to the delegates, but always with the assurance that the last word for their solution remains with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Congress was a gathering of statesmen. The quality was higher even than the enthusiastic friends of the Congress had expected. Most of

the men were laymen, and it would be no misnomer to apply the adjective "leading" to them. An extraordinary proportion of the religious leadership of America could have been found in the Congress sessions in Carnegie Hall.

The attendance was 1338, representing thirty-seven states. Ten Canadian communities were registered, as well as eight foreign countries.

The common concomitants of conventions, such as badges and buttons and noisy effervescing enthusiasm, were totally lacking. This gathering was on a different plane. The men revealed by their very attitude toward the platform an unwonted seriousness and determination. They were ready for the strongest utterances of the strongest men. The most unexpected deliverances did not faze them. That it is the business of the Church to face fearlessly all the new problems of our complex day, and to grapple with them to a solution was a note that sounded throughout. Withal, the delegates were splendidly loyal to the old church. They spoke as churchmen, and they postulated the Church as the agency and the force that is to do the work which the twentieth century demands.

In somewhat spectacular evidence of the faith of leaders in the Church and her sufficiency, the Committee of Ninety-seven of the Men and Religion Forward Movement formally ended its own existence at this Congress. There is to-day no such thing as the Men and Religion Forward Movement, spelled in capital let-

ters. The organization has bequeathed a program of definite work to the demoninational Brotherhoods, which these are taking up. It has done the same for the local congregation. There was a manifest stirring to self-examination of existing organizations, and a questioning as to their real efficiency. To have imposed the sense of emergency upon the general agencies of all the churches was itself a considerable achievement. An agreement has been made for an annual conference of the officials of the Brotherhoods, of the International Sunday School Association, of the Laymen's Movement, of the International Young Men's Christian Association, etc. The word went out from these bodies that, so far as in them lies, they will carry into practice the lessons of the Men and Religion Forward Movement.

The Commission Reports presented to the Congress, surveyed the themes of Social Service, Evangelism, Christian Unity, Publicity, Missions, Boys' Work, and Rural Church, and afford a new body of expert literature for pastors and laymen in their work. The report on Christian Unity was called the most advanced document on this theme that has as yet been issued by any responsible body.

To name the speakers at the Congress would be impracticable in this space. Perhaps the profoundest impression was made by Miss Jane Addams, of Chicago, in her statement of the social evil as a task for the Church.