

since the world began to inaugurate the reign of universal peace."

Our accomplished townsman, the Rev. Dr. Rand, thus expresses, in the *Globe*, what we believe is the predominant sentiment in Canada.

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION.

Boom, boom, ye mellow joybells, like the sea!

Peace, peace on earth, good-will (and all hell gapes!)

Yet immemorial sadness ever drapes
The upward way of far humanity,—
All prone through dark and strait Gethsemane

Thou can'st in blood, a cluster of trod grapes!

O bruised race, whose wail so surges in shapes

Melodious sorrow's awful threnody!

Late, late, love's Arcopagus unfurled

Right-reason's sun-glad banner from the height,

While rage the Furies in their cave beneath.

Hush, hush, it is the daybreak of the world!

Man's warring sky is passing out of night!
And stark black demons flit with sword in sheath.

The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. A great battle, with the slaughter of thousands of our fellow-creatures, would be heralded to all the winds, and would be hailed with *Tu Deum* of the victors. But this victory of peace and brotherhood is as unheeded as the snowflake, but it has in it the promise of the potency of the highest Christian civilization for the future.

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS IN 1896.

The New York *Independent* makes a very notable report, in its first number for the year, of the progress of the Churches of the United States during 1896—an increase of 743,333. It is one to inspire devout gratitude to God. The number of churches is upwards of 180,000, the gain during 1896 was nearly 3,700, or over ten for every day in the year. This is a sufficient reply to Colonel Ingersoll and his school on the decline of Christianity.

Bishop Hurst reports the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church as 2,776,656, a gain in four years of 474,942. It has over two and a half millions of scholars in its 30,264 Sunday-schools, with 352,627 officers and teachers. Notwithstanding its missionary debt, the income of the Society for the quad-

rennium was \$244,295 beyond the previous quadrennium; nearly \$5,000,000 in all.

The Roman Catholics claim a membership of 8,271,309. The next most numerous is the Methodists, with 5,653,289. But the adherents of the latter are probably twice as many more. Next follow the Baptists, with a total membership of 4,153,857. Then the Presbyterians, with 1,463,346.

Dr. Hodges, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, says: "The world has moved since the day when Bishop Seabury ordered a mitre that he might the better confound the pretensions of the audacious Congregational ministers of his diocese, who said that they were as good bishops as he."

The representative of the Roman Catholic Church frankly says: "Catholics believe that Protestantism is a damnable heresy, worse than any that has yet arisen in the Church. They think it is charity to tell Protestants so; to labour to convince them that it is so."

Even some of the minor sects are making earnest missionary efforts. The Dunkards, for instance, have seventeen missionaries abroad. The Mormons claim to have sent out over 1,400 missionaries during the year—home and foreign—many of these are rather emigrant agents, than what we understand as missionaries. The Mennonites have sixteen agents in the foreign field, chiefly in China.

The *Independent* notes that in the Gilbert Islands Father Bontemps is distributing by the thousand copies of the Gospels and Christian books. One of these is practically a reprint of an issue of the American Bible Society.

The Christian Scientists have erected, in Boston, a church which cost over \$220,000, and claim a membership of 200,000 in the United States and Canada.

A FORWARD MOVEMENT IN MISSIONS.

The subject of Christian missions is receiving, in this year of grace, profounder consideration than ever before. The New Year's International Sunday-school Lessons, studied by over fourteen millions of teachers and scholars in many lands, was on our Lord's commission to His followers to "preach the Gospel to every creature." The lessons for the year are devoted to the growth of the early Church and the missionary labours of the Apostle of the Gentiles. The great missionary societies appointed the first week of the year to a forward movement