

it will give him a Christlike enthusiasm for humanity, a sympathy with *all* his brother men. He may have pity for some, but for none will he feel contempt. He will understand that even a dark-skinned man who does not wear a hat or leather boots may be intellectual, spiritual, and an earnest seeker after God. He will be kept from that shamefully narrow outlook in religion characteristic of too many who profess to teach Christianity with authority. He will be saved from the equally shameful habit of utterly ignoring the ethnic faiths because he is afraid of them. The study will enable both the preacher and the Church at home to progress unto more essential conformity with the Word of God, and to advance into truth not explicitly declared in it. "The enlarged study of religion will be useful in offsetting the undoubtedly strong trend of the currents of religious thought toward mere ethics." It will bring to his mind, as nothing else can, that man cannot do without worship and communion with the Highest. And last of all, it will bring into greater clearness and fulness the absolute truth of the rightfully apprehended Word of God. Already does the comparative study of religion bear testimony to the unique relation of Christianity to a sense of sin, to repentance, to prayer, to the fatherhood of God, to the person and work of Christ, to forgiveness, to the Christian service of mankind, to the future life, to the weekly day of rest, and to woman.

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### III.—THE METROPOLITAN FRONTIER.

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THE metropolitan frontier is the strategic fact of our American civilization. A menace to our institutions, first of all, because its increasing importance as a factor in the social problem is not fully appreciated by public sentiment, it becomes strategic, nevertheless, as holding in itself the key to the whole problem of Christian sociology. And in the social atmosphere, as in the physical, the same cloud which hurls the lightning also brings the rain.

The geographical frontier of America takes form in the popular mind with instant impression, being referred, with varying boundary lines, to the great West; and, whether it maps itself to our thought in the deep forests of the lake region, or on the broad prairies of the Mississippi Valley, or distributes itself in shifting shadows among the mountains and plains of the Pacific States, the frontier always lies in mental association with Indians, buffaloes, dugouts, and emigrant wagons. But the social frontier is not by any means conterminous with the physical frontier. We have already learned about the phenomenal growth of the modern city. We know that some eighteen millions of people, about one-third of the total population of the country, now live in cities of more than eight thousand inhabitants,