

Mormonism's Blacksmith Orator: B. H. Roberts at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions

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The gathering at the Art Institute is a parliament of religions—not a parliament of Christians or a parliament of monogamists. The people in attendance knew what they might expect when they accepted invitations to the congress. If they desired to hear only what was entirely agreeable to them they might better have stayed away. The slight put upon Elder [Brigham] Roberts was unjustified and will detract from the value and the reputation of the whole gathering.¹

—*Chicago Herald*, 1893

I hold the smiling, benevolent mask of toleration and courage, behind which the Parliament has been hiding, in my hands, and the old harridan of sectarian bigotry stands uncovered, and her loathsome visage, distorted by the wrinkles of narrow-mindedness, intolerance and cowardice, is to be seen once more by all the world.²

—Brigham H. Roberts, 1893

On the morning of September 11, 1893, just as the silver-medaled singers of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir disembarked from their Pullman train cars in Salt Lake City, another auxiliary congress of the Chicago World's Fair commenced in Chicago. Years earlier, at the same moment that the Welsh American committee began planning their singing spectacular, a number of spiritual-minded managers of the Columbian Exposition created the General Committee on Religious Congress Auxiliary to coordinate the inaugural

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World's Parliament of Religions. This organizing committee posted over three thousand copies of its preliminary invitation to representatives of all religions around the globe in June 1891. But in contrast to the Welsh *eisteddfod* committee, which lobbied Mormon leaders to send their famed choir to compete in Chicago, officials of the Parliament of Religions board made certain that no invitation was mailed to the headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City. The committee instead privileged the representatives of the many denominations and branches of what were then considered the world's ten great religions—Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism—at the end of the nineteenth century, despite the Church's claim to be a restoration of primitive Christianity. Protestant delegates were loath to admit the “heretical” Mormons to their gathering. Viewed by most American Protestants as neither a wholly Christian (insider) nor totally heathen (outsider) spiritual tradition, Mormons were relegated to an invisible (bystander) role at the historic religious congress. But one Latter-day Saint leader—Brigham H. (“B. H.”) Roberts—was unwilling to play this pressured part in the unfolding religious drama in the White City. The Church's “blacksmith orator” made sure the world knew of his religion's slight in Chicago.³

Scholars can learn a great deal about the prevailing Protestant establishment in Gilded Age America by analyzing which religious groups were barely represented—or not exhibited at all—at the Parliament of Religions and by studying the reasons for their exclusion, according to historian Richard Hughes Seager. In addition to the Latter-day Saints, who received no invitation, Native Americans and African Americans were represented only in a handful of presentations during the entire congress. International exclusions included the so-called primitive religions, except for several paternalistic papers on these tribal faiths offered by Euro-American attendees. Moreover, the religions of Africa and Latin America were barely exhibited at the Parliament. Islam had only two spokesmen. But securing representation was only half the battle for these non-Christian delegates once they arrived in the White City.⁴ “The Parliament was an aggressively Christian event, born of American Protestant Christian confidence in its superiority and organized around unquestioned Christian assumptions of the nature and function of religion,” historian Judith Snodgrass explains. “It was governed by a set of rules for controlling discourse so permeated with Christian presuppositions that they effectively reduced all other religions to inadequate attempts to express the Christian revelation.”⁵ Latter-day Saint representation was not wanted nor solicited by the anti-Mormon organizers of the 1893 Parliament.

In hindsight, this study of Mormonism at the Parliament, taken together with the experience of other Latter-day Saints at the Chicago World's Faith,

helps illuminate several larger issues. First, it provides religious studies scholars and historians with a rich (and largely unknown) case study demonstrating, in the words of Seager, “the ongoing process of revisioning religion in American history.”⁶ Roberts and his fellow Latter-day Saints were denied the right to exhibit their faith in the main Columbus Hall because Protestant organizers determined that the Church did not qualify as a “religion,” largely on the grounds of its former practice of plural marriage. This helps set the stage to explain how and why Latter-day Saint leaders subsequently attempted to exhibit Mormonism as an advanced cultural institution, rather than focusing on its religious differences to the outside world. Second, we learn how the fates of two men, one a Mormon and the other a Muslim, became intertwined in Chicago. Neither man could get an unprejudiced hearing in the Protestant-organized gathering because of the presence of the other. Third, scholars can learn how and why the Parliament of Religions radically altered the Mormon mental map of non-Christian religions, in contrast with that of other American Christians. When individuals, peoples, and nations encounter one another—especially under unprecedented circumstances like the 1893 Parliament—few walk away unaffected by the meeting. This especially held true for the Latter-day Saints in Chicago. While they sought to reshape outsider perspectives on their religion by exhibiting their own faith, the Mormons were also influenced by the representation of other religionists in the White City.⁷

Genesis of the 1893 Parliament of Religions

Charles Carrol Bonney, a Swedenborgian attorney, is considered the father of the Parliament of Religions. A searching soul who explored the varieties of the religious experience during his life, Bonney first dreamed of an international gathering of religionists in Chicago after learning about the proposed Columbian Exposition. “While thinking about the nature and proper characteristics of this great undertaking, there came into my mind the idea of a comprehensive and well-organized Intellectual and Moral Exposition of the Progress of mankind, to be held in conjunction with the proposed display of material forms,” he reminisced. Unable to shake his impression, Bonney shared his concern with Walter Thomas Mills, editor of the *Statesman*, who encouraged him to draft a proposal that embraced this spiritual as well as the temporal concerns and achievements of humankind. Bonney argued in 1889 that the penultimate congress of the Chicago World’s Fair “should not be the exhibit then to be made of the material triumphs, industrial achievements, and mechanical victories of man, however magnificent that display may be. Something higher and nobler is demanded by the enlightened and progressive spirit of the present age.” Rather the “crowning glory” of the international spectacle

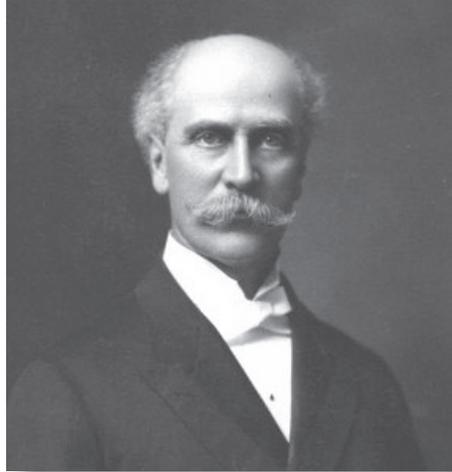


Charles Carrol Bonney, 1898.
Bonney served as president of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Illinois. He also played an active role in organizing the Parliament of the World's Religions held in conjunction with the Exposition. Photograph courtesy Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

should focus on the “world of government, jurisprudence, finance, science, literature, education, and religion should be represented in a Congress,” he wrote. The life of the mind and the heart needed to stand on equal—if not higher—footing than the industrial attainments of Western civilization.⁸

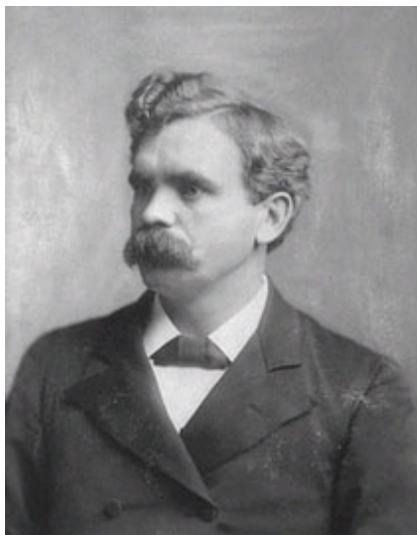
Bonney's avant-garde proposal struck a responsive cord with the informed public and organizers of the Columbian Exposition. They agreed that the mental and religious life of men and women deserved to be showcased alongside of emerging technologies and human constructions. Within weeks Bonney was enthroned as the chairman of an ever-expanding committee charged with the implementation of his grand vision. Over the next year, Bonney and his colleagues created a number of special subcommittees to oversee the various congresses. In October 1890, these men formally created the World's Congress Auxiliary of the World's Columbian Exposition, with Bonney serving as its president. Their organization oversaw over two hundred committees, managed by sixteen hundred group representatives. Bonney handpicked John Henry Barrows, minister of Chicago's First Presbyterian Church, as chairman of the General Committee on Religious Congress Auxiliary. In response, Barrows selected fifteen local clergymen, one Roman Catholic and fourteen Protestants of different stripe, to help plan and execute the unprecedented religious congress. In the minds of many, the resulting Parliament of Religions proved to be the crowing jewel of the entire Columbian Exposition. Over the next several years, Barrows and Bonney worked hand in hand to showcase the contributions of America's Protestant Establishment, which they and, for the most part, their committees represented.⁹

John Henry Barrows, ca. 1899–1902.
Barrows served as president of the
World's Parliament of Religions
at the 1893 World's Columbian
Exposition in Chicago, Illinois.
Photograph courtesy Oberlin College,
Oberlin, Ohio.



Desirous of assembling the most inclusive body of religionists in the history of the world, Barrows's committee mailed over three thousand invitations to Christian and non-Christian religious leaders around the globe. "Believing that God is, and that he has not left himself without witness; believing that the influence of religion tends to advance the general welfare, and is the most vital force in the social order of every people, and convinced that of a truth God is no respecter of persons," the summons began, "we affectionately invite the representatives of *all faiths* to aid us in presenting to the world, at the exposition of 1893, the religious harmonies and unities of humanity, and also in showing forth the moral and spiritual agencies which are at the root of human progress."¹⁰ Copies of the ecumenical text made their way around the world, by land and by sea, to the heads of Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox ecclesiastical organizations, as well as to leaders of Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and other religious traditions. But the global response was mixed. Some religious leaders favored such a pluralistic gathering, while others eschewed its theological designs and implications. A debate soon arose in religious circles about the propriety of holding such a religious congress in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition. Yet in the end, the committee's proposed Parliament of Religions gained extraordinary support in a number of spiritual communities, including the non-polygamy-practicing Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (the Community of Christ since 2001).¹¹ The Church, however, was the single American religious group that was completely denied the promised hospitality from the beginning. Barrows's advisory board never mailed a single invitation to Latter-day Saint leaders in Utah.

Nevertheless, after reading about the proposed religious congress in a newspaper, Elder Brigham H. Roberts, a member of the First Council of the Seventy and one of the Church's most capable and vocal apologists, saw a unique public relations opportunity in Chicago. Born in England in March 1857, Roberts immigrated to the United States with a Mormon pioneer company. He overcame innumerable childhood challenges, including extreme poverty and abuse. Once in Utah, he earned his daily bread as both a miner and a blacksmith. He also excelled as a student at the University of Deseret and served a domestic mission for the Church. Roberts became



B. H. Roberts, ca. 1890s.

a member of the press, a renowned speaker, and a celebrated mission president in the American South. Most important to this story, he was an outspoken polygamist with three wives in 1893. For years, Roberts had defended the practice of plural marriage through the spoken word and printed page. He had even taken flight to England in December 1886 to evade U.S. marshals trying to convict him for unlawful cohabitation in Utah. Roberts spent the next two years in exile editing the England-based *Millennial Star* and helping oversee the Mormon evangelism of Great Britain. Finally, in fall 1888, he returned to Salt Lake City and was called as a Latter-day Saint General Authority. The following year, Roberts served a four-month prison term for his practice of polygamy. This humiliating experience further strengthened Roberts's belief that he and his religion had been unjustly treated at the hands of American officials who sought to restrict his religious liberties.¹² As with many Latter-day Saints who had sacrificed dearly to practice polygamy, Roberts was surprised when he learned of Church President Wilford Woodruff's September 1890 Manifesto prohibiting additional Mormon plural marriages.¹³

While working as the associate editor of the *Salt Lake Herald*, Roberts published an editorial in July 1891 suggesting that the Church should lobby to become involved in both the Parliament of Religions and the overarching World's Columbian Exposition. He argued that the Chicago gathering might provide an unprecedented opportunity for Latter-day Saints to showcase their history, theology, and cultural contributions to the national and international

religious community. After describing the upcoming religious congress to his mostly Mormon readers, Roberts then advocated official Latter-day Saint participation: "Mention of this great religious congress reminds us that Mormonism is an American product, one of which all the inhabitants of the earth have heard, and about which they all have a curiosity if not an interest."¹⁴ As the Latter-day Saints had long bemoaned the negative portrayals of their faith and the misrepresentation of their religious practices in the press and in public opinion, it was up to them to take advantage of the present opportunity to begin to reshape the negative image of the Church, Roberts believed. He argued that it was time for the Latter-day Saints to tell their own story, especially since his fellow church members had complained for years that they never had a public platform to counter the misrepresentations of their enemies.¹⁵

In hindsight, Roberts was naively optimistic that a religious tradition like Mormonism, with its unique American origins and history, "could not well be denied a hearing in its own behalf in the religious congress, unless, indeed, a narrow and most ungenerous prejudice should prevail in the councils of those having the arrangement and management of the congress." Still, he warned that "if a sectarian bigoted prejudice should bar the Mormon Church from a hearing in the congress, there is still the bar of public opinion in the world." (Events in September 1893 proved Roberts prophetic on both accounts: the Church was denied a hearing at the Parliament, and America's press proved to be an ally in shaping public opinion in the aftermath.) Roberts suggested that the Church arrange for an exhibit-hall display at the larger exposition, where it could build a podium for leading Latter-day Saint apologists who might offer a lecture series on the Church. Moreover, Roberts wanted Church leaders to establish an information bureau on the Mormon faith within the gates of the exposition, where official representatives could sell literature and engage interested observers in religious conversation. Church leaders might even publish a special exposition periodical detailing Latter-day Saint beliefs, which could be distributed to fairgoers. "Much bitterness exists in religious circles against Mormonism and its devotees; yet when people of the world become conversant with the former and familiar with the latter, their prejudices are softened and their bitterness vanishes," Roberts asserted that July.¹⁶ Yet his follow-up proposal generated little excitement among Latter-day Saints in Utah, who were seemingly focused on preparing exhibits for the Utah Territory, rallying women's participation for the feminist congress, and gearing up for the Welsh musical competition.

Three months after Roberts issued his initial proposal, in an October 1891 general conference meeting of male priesthood holders, he again tried to convince Mormon leaders and laity about the public relations opportunities within the upcoming Parliament. Perhaps because they had yet to receive

a formal invitation soliciting their contribution, his colleagues did not share his enthusiasm. Roberts let another six months pass before he again lobbied for his losing cause. During the priesthood gathering of the April 1892 general conference, he again made it clear why Latter-day Saints should not pass up the opportunity to exhibit Mormonism in Chicago, in whatever capacity permitted by exposition leaders. This time Church leaders reluctantly organized a group to consider Roberts's proposal, but as is often the fate of causes consigned to committee study, nothing ever happened. He recalled that "the general feeling prevailed that the matter was unimportant, and therefore no preliminary steps were taken looking to the representation of the Church, either in the exposition in the World's Columbian Exhibition proper or in the Parliament of Religions."¹⁷ Latter-day Saint leaders remained unconvinced of the utility of such a religious congress through the first half of 1893. Self-conscious that their Church was the only religious group in America that had not been included, the First Presidency determined not to plead for an invitation, for the time being. It would not be until *during* the Columbian Exposition that Church leaders began to appreciate it was somewhat within their control to determine how the Church was exhibited to the world at such a sophisticated event.¹⁸

Despite exhibiting general apathy towards the pending Parliament of Religions in Chicago, Latter-day Saints in Utah were increasingly aware of the particulars of the approaching religious congress, thanks to Roberts and a series of *Deseret News* articles that praised the declared goals of inclusiveness. "In this assembly the representatives of each religion will be given full liberty to set forth the doctrines, principles and cardinal truths of their beliefs. They can even go further and show how far humanity has been or will be benefited by their theology, but controversy and criticism are sternly to be prohibited. The idea is in truth grand, poetic, sublime," declared an April 1892 editorial.¹⁹ One week later another announcement celebrated the religious congress in the same paper.²⁰ That November an additional editorial echoed the claims of the first, with a decidedly Latter-day Saint slant on the utility of the Parliament: "Can it be that the world at last has become conscious of its helpless condition and is willing to investigate the possibility of saving the various fragments of religion from total destruction? Has the time come for the 'warriors of the cross' to transform their swords into implements of peace, preparatory to the dawning of the day of universal brotherhood?" Perhaps the Church might shine when placed alongside the religious organizations of the world, the writer suggested.²¹

Once the Chicago World's Fair opened in May 1893, hundreds of Latter-day Saint fairgoers began questioning their Church's decision not to participate in its congresses, like the Welsh *eisteddfod* and the upcoming Parliament.

On July 10, 1893, one month after they agreed to send the Mormon Tabernacle Choir to the Welsh *eisteddfod* at the Chicago World's Fair, Presidents Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith finally attempted to secure Latter-day Saint participation at the Parliament of Religions through a direct appeal to Bonney. "We are given to understand that an invitation is extended to all denominations of Christians and to all religions of the earth" to air their beliefs in Chicago, their letter began. The Church's "success in the face of the stupendous opposition it has encountered gives it the right to be heard in such an assembly by its own accredited representatives. All this we believe will be patent to you, and we therefore respectfully ask that the privilege be accorded us of sending a delegation to represent the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the World's Religious Congress," they emphasized. The First Presidency concluded their letter by requesting further details: "You will pardon our lack of information on the subject since none of the literature treating of the movement has been forwarded to us."²² Of course they knew full well they had been slighted, as they posted their letter to Chicago, just two months before the Parliament was to begin in the White City. What remained to be seen was how the First Presidency's eleventh-hour appeal would be handled by Bonney and Barrows's organizations.

After waiting ten days for Bonney's response, the First Presidency dispatched Roberts by train to Chicago to meet face-to-face with exposition and Parliament officials. Adhering to nineteenth-century protocol, the Mormon envoy packed letters of introduction from prominent Utahns to exposition leaders he hoped to meet and lobby in Chicago. One of the references was from Moses Thatcher of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, to his relative Solomon Thatcher Jr., a non-Mormon who was a commissioner of the Chicago World's Fair and whose wife was on the exposition's Lady Board of Managers. Roberts departed solo from Salt Lake City on July 20, and arrived five days later in Chicago. Once in the White City he sought out Thatcher, who kindly arranged for an interview between him and Colonel George R. Davis, director general of the exposition, to see if space was still available for a Mormon information bureau, the Church's first objective. Roberts recalled that Davis was cordial but explained that all the spaces in the Liberal Arts Building already had been reserved. Because Mormon leaders had not acted until weeks before the Parliament was to begin, contrary to Roberts's urgings, the Church missed out on the opportunity to represent itself in the greater exhibition, just as Roberts had feared. In the meantime, many other religions hosted informational booths at the world's fair and denominational congresses at the Parliament.²³

Disappointed yet undaunted by the news from Colonel Davis, Roberts turned his attention to his Church's second objective: gaining Mormon

representation at the Parliament. After exerting much effort and enduring many delays, Thatcher arranged for Roberts to meet with Charles Carrol Bonney. Unlike Davis, who had treated Roberts warmly, Bonney dispensed with pleasantries and admitted to Roberts that he had not yet replied to the First Presidency's letter, as the Parliament's committee was conflicted about the proper response to the undesirable Mormons. "There was a very general opinion that the [LDS] Church ought not to be admitted to representation for the reason that it would doubtless prove to be a disturbing element in the Parliament, and it was doubtful in [the committee members'] minds if any good would come from [the Church's] admission," Roberts later fumed. Chagrined, he asked the president of the Columbian Exposition why Barrows's committee believed Latter-day Saints would disturb the Parliament. Bonney replied because of the continued Protestant outrage over the past Mormon practice of plural marriage. Roberts countered that the Latter-day Saints should be allowed to present their faith to dispel such religious intolerance, regardless of past or current religious practices. A defensive Bonney conceded that "common fairness" necessitated Mormon participation in the religious congress.²⁴

Bonney then went on the offensive, cross-examining Roberts through a series of pointed questions: "How would you answer the objection urged against the representation of your Church in the Parliament, because of its belief and practice of polygamy?" Roberts replied that such objections should be ignored, pointing out that most of the Asian religions (Hinduism, Islam, Confucianism, and Judaism) and foreign nations represented at the Parliament also practiced polygamy in the past or at least countenanced concubinage currently, yet they were not kept from addressing the Parliament. If the organizing committee was willing to admit "unchristian and polygamous religions from the East they ought not to bar those that were considered unchristian and polygamous from the West." Roberts then pointed out that the Church and its leaders had officially discontinued the practice of taking additional plural marriage three years previously, in October 1890, rendering it a moot concern in 1893. Moreover, he made it clear he did not plan to discuss polygamy in his paper to be given in the Hall of Columbus. Roberts further pointed out to Bonney that anti-Mormons accused the Utah-based Church of evangelizing only the "ignorant and that it would not dare to come in contact with the enlightenment of our age and civilization." Given the stated objectives of the Parliament and its claims to tolerance, it "would be inconsistent with the character of the great gathering and come with bad grace" to exclude the Mormons from participating. Non-Mormon Thatcher agreed that the Latter-day Saints deserved a hearing on this point.²⁵

Bonney finally promised the duo that he would bring the matter again before the Parliament's organizing committee. Roberts impetuously asked if he could be in attendance when the committee discussed his proposal. Bonney replied in the negative but instructed Roberts to put on paper why the Latter-day Saints should be allowed to address the attendees and to outline his proposed comments on the Church, a request that Bonney and Barrows made of no other religion before or during the Parliament. As required by Bonney, Roberts drafted a letter justifying why the Latter-day Saints should get a hearing at the Parliament and outlined his proposed remarks. He divided the latter into seven main sections: Church history, summary of its articles of faith, the organization of the Church, the domestic work of the Church, the foreign evangelism of the Church, and a conclusion describing the Church's contribution to humanity. Roberts then delivered both documents to Bonney's office for official review. But after a week and a half of fruitless waiting for a response in Chicago, Roberts determined to return to Utah by train, having failed to achieve either of the First Presidency's objectives. As things stood, the Church would not be represented at either the exposition or the Parliament. Before departing, however, Roberts wrote one more letter to Bonney, informing him of his pending return to Utah and how he could be contacted in Salt Lake City, if and when Barrows's committee ever made a decision.²⁶

The historical record is largely silent about why Bonney, a liberal-minded Swedenborgian, was opposed to the inclusion of the Latter-day Saints in the religious congress. Perhaps he harbored animosity toward Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church, who some have suggested borrowed from the cosmology and theology of Emanuel Swedenborg. Or maybe Bonney believed members of his own extended family had been deluded by the Latter-day Saints and persuaded by its leadership to relocate to the mountain deserts of the American West. A number of Bonney's relatives converted to the Church and gathered with the Latter-day Saints, breaking up his immediate kinship networks. His maternal uncle and aunt, Joseph and Sally Murdock, embraced the Latter-day Saint message when a Mormon elder evangelized the citizens of Hamilton, New York, in 1836, and performed several miraculous healings. A number of townsfolk, including several of Bonney's cousins, likewise joined with the Latter-day Saints. Four years later, they moved to Nauvoo, Illinois, to be near the religion's founder, Joseph Smith; following his 1844 assassination, most Mormons resettled in the Salt Lake Valley. Several of Bonney's cousins became well-respected, local Mormon leaders. Bonney, in contrast, moved from Hamilton to Peoria, Illinois, at age nineteen, and subsequently converted to Swedenborgianism. Whether this religious rupture of family relationships soured Bonney on the Church is unknown, but he was not the first American to blame the Latter-day Saints for geographically splintering his relations.²⁷

While Bonney's rationale for prejudice against the Latter-day Saints remains murky, John Henry Barrows was an outspoken opponent of the Church. Bonney's handpicked committee chair was born in 1847, the same year that the Latter-day Saints were driven from the United States into Mexican territory. After studying theology at Olivet College, Yale Divinity School, Union Theological Seminary, and Andover Theological Seminary, Barrows was ordained a Congregational minister in 1875. For the next six years, Barrows held pastorates at the Maverick Church, East Boston, and the Eliot Church, Lawrence, Massachusetts. He then served as pastor of Chicago's First Presbyterian Church between 1881 and 1896.²⁸ Barrows began his crusade against the Church when he visited his brother Walter, who was serving as a Congregational Church pastor and as president of the board of trustees for the Salt Lake Academy, an evangelical Protestant institution bent on the destruction of the Church and the practice of polygamy.²⁹ During his stay in Utah and the West, John Barrows gave a number of speeches condemning the Mormon faith. He also authored an anti-Mormon circular for Colorado College titled "Christian Education for the Mormons." The published pamphlet is full of contempt and anger toward Latter-day Saints, whom he, like his colleagues, viewed as the vilest of sinners. "Their doctrines are abominable. . . . This system ought to be wiped out. We send the gospel to Turkey and India; and we are lacking in our duty to our country if we do nothing to promote Christianity in Utah, and heal this plague spot by touching it with pure gospel instruction."³⁰ Barrows's contempt for the Church continued long after the 1893 Parliament of Religions. In 1900, while serving as president of Oberlin College, he became a founding member of the Utah Gospel Mission Executive Committee, "an interdenominational organization incorporated in January 1900 with the stated purpose of mounting a national crusade against Mormonism." Barrows labored on the committee until his early death from pleuropneumonia in 1902.³¹ Barrows wore his anti-Mormonism on his sleeve as a badge of evangelical courage and Christian orthodoxy. He was likely the chief agitator within the organizing committee who lobbied against Latter-day Saint participation in the congress.³²

Opposition to Church's participation in the Parliament of Religions was not merely a grassroots campaign by low-level Parliament committee members. The anti-Mormon cause was championed by the organization's leadership: both Bonney and Barrows fought Mormon involvement from their gathering's genesis. Having the president of the World's Congress Auxiliary and the chairman of the Parliament's organizing committee fundamentally set against the Church was a major hurdle—one Church leaders eventually found insurmountable. While both Barrows and Bonney swam in the mainstream of late nineteenth-century American Protestant thought with regard to

the Mormon tradition, the two men were uniquely positioned to act on their anti-Mormon prejudice in the White City.

Weeks after B. H. Roberts returned to Utah, and many days since he had abandoned hope that the Church would be allowed representation at the Parliament of Religions, he received a conciliatory letter from Bonney dated August 28. After apologizing for his tardy response to the First Presidency's missive of July 10, Bonney revealed that Barrows was now willing to accept Roberts's proposed paper on the Church for presentation in the main assembly room of the religious congress. The president of the Columbian Exposition concluded his note by asking Roberts to pass along his regards to the Church's governing body. As fate would have it, however, Presidents Woodruff, Cannon, and Smith had already departed from Salt Lake City as part of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir entourage to Chicago's *eisteddfod*, just days before Bonney's letter arrived in Utah. Seeking official direction in the absence of the First Presidency, Roberts consulted with President Lorenzo Snow of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the highest ranking Church official not attending the Columbian Exposition with the Tabernacle Choir. Snow encouraged Roberts to prepare the accepted paper and hand deliver it to Bonney or Barrows in Chicago, rather than trusting the mail. "If you merely send your paper they will pigeon-hole that, but if you go down for the purpose of reading it they will not pigeon-hole you so easily," Snow reasoned.³³ Roberts was skeptical of his forthcoming reception in Chicago by the Parliament's organizers, yet excited by the renewed opportunity to try to secure representation for his religion in the White City.

Roberts arrived in Chicago by train on September 8, a mere three days before the Parliament commenced, but just in time to witness the Tabernacle Choir's triumphs with hundreds of other Latter-day Saints. That weekend Roberts made his way to Barrows's office to personally hand over a draft of his paper on the Church, as directed by Lorenzo Snow. Barrows "seemed both somewhat surprised and annoyed at seeing me, and reminded me of the very guarded promise made by Bonney of the acceptance of my paper," Roberts recalled. The two men soon engaged in a heated debate about whether the Church should be represented at the Parliament, contesting the same ground Roberts had covered with Bonney during his July trip to Chicago. "Feeling somewhat impatient at the treatment accorded the Church I represented," Roberts continued, "I took occasion to remind the reverend gentleman that there was a public opinion that beyond all question would pass upon the unfairness of a rejection of the application of the Mormon Church for hearing in that Parliament, and that if we were not granted the right of a hearing, the world at least should know of the narrow, sectarian bigotry which had denied to us that right." The fiery interview ended following this threat. But Barrows

conceded to review Roberts's paper on Mormonism and pledged to let him know the following day its status for presentation.³⁴

The Mormon delegate returned to Barrows's office the next morning to hear the decision of Barrows's committee. When Roberts arrived, Merwin-Marie Snell, Barrows's personal secretary, informed Roberts that the chairman was out but that Roberts could wait until Barrows returned. Roberts (a Mormon) and Snell (a Roman Catholic) hit it off in Barrows's office, both having felt the weight of the Protestant establishment against their respective faiths. Roberts was delighted to learn that Snell was a professor of comparative religions and an editor of the *Oriental Magazine*. In addition to studying Asian religious traditions, Snell shared that he also had investigated the Church. In Barrows's absence, Snell divulged to Roberts how unfairly the Latter-day Saints had been treated in the private congress committee meetings. "He gave me some very interesting accounts of the stormy discussions that had taken place with reference to this subject. Among other things he said that it had developed that from the earliest agitation of the propriety of holding the Parliament it had been at least tacitly understood that the Mormon Church would not be admitted," Roberts noted. Snell further revealed that he had personally argued for the Latter-day Saints' right to be heard alongside all other religions, an opinion he would soon advocate in public. Roberts accepted Snell's exposé as to why the Church had not received any information on the Parliament or an invitation from the organizing committee. As Roberts and Snell concluded their conversation, Barrows came through the door of his office with several Asian Parliament delegates in tow. Unaware of Snell's damning disclosures, Barrows nevertheless declared that although he had not yet read Roberts's paper on Mormonism, he had distributed copies to several of his colleagues who judged it "altogether unobjectionable in its character."³⁵ Roberts would be allowed to deliver his address after all.

Opening of the Parliament of Religions

The inaugural World's Parliament of Religions commenced on Monday, September 11, 1893, with great fanfare. "An event of world wide historic interest, and one without previous counterpart in the history of the world, took place here today. It was the assembling of the parliament of religions, a gathering of representatives of all the great beliefs on the earth," a reporter for the *Deseret News* exclaimed. The Utah journalist was moved by the unprecedented gathering of global religious leaders and representatives. The pageantry, especially the native Asian, Middle Eastern, and Islander costumes, added to the spectacle: "The occident in severely plain garments touch elbows not only on the platform but in the great audience with the brilliantly costumed

orient.” The journalist further exclaimed that followers of “Jehovah, Christ, Confucius, Buddha, Muhammad” were present as well as delegates from “China, Japan, India, Turkey, the islands of the sea, Catholic and Protestant Europe, and of the Hebrews of the world.” Most impressive was the gathering’s beginning, an ecumenical invocation led by the Most Reverend James Gibbons.³⁶

While seated in Columbus Hall that magnificent morning, Roberts played back in his mind his earlier conversation with Barrows. The chairman had promised only that his “paper would be read,” Roberts recalled, which caused him to fear that a non-Latter-day Saint might be assigned to read his paper on the Church. Roberts wrote Bonney a short note seeking clarification. “I am left in a little uncertainty as to whether I am to be permitted to read my own paper or you would have it read by someone else,” the Latter-day Saint representative asked. “Now, in order that there may be a perfect understanding between us on that, to me, very important matter, I write you this note to say, that under no circumstances could I consent to have my paper read by any person but myself. . . . The disadvantage at which the Church I represent would be placed by having an unsympathetic person read its paper is too obvious to need comment.”³⁷ Three days later, Bonney sent Roberts a message making clear that that he would be able to read his own paper. The Church would get a hearing in the main congress Hall of Columbus, or so it seemed.

The next two and a half weeks of congress meetings were unprecedented in the Western world in terms of the comparative study of religion and ecumenical outreach. “Delegates presented some 216 papers in which they advocated a wide variety of theologies, philosophies, creeds, and religions and explored the relationship between religion and music, literature, ethics, morality, ritual, history, and art,” Richard Seager describes.³⁸ The Buddhists were represented by sixteen papers, the Hindus by thirteen, and the Jews by eleven. Presentations on Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Jainism, Islam, and Zoroastrianism were also heard by the crowds in Chicago. Delegates from seventeen nations offered remarks, flavoring the religious congress with international seasoning. Asian Indians presented eighteen papers, Japanese seventeen, British sixteen, French five. Moreover, representatives from Armenia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Greece, Russia, Switzerland, Syria, Thailand, and Turkey each took their turn behind the congress’s podiums. There were about fifty “Unitarians, freethinking liberals and naturalists, Swedenborgians, Quakers, Shakers, and other sectarians”; twenty-seven “Catholics, Armenians, and Orthodox”; and eleven Jewish delegates. The Asian delegation numbering thirty was split between twelve Buddhist delegates, eight Hindu delegates, and a smattering of other Asian representatives. According to Seager’s calculation, these 118 “non-evangelicals”

accounted for 61 percent of the total number of Parliament presenters. Awash in a sea of non-Christian faith, it is noteworthy that the Parliament organizers hoped to sideline the Latter-day Saints, whom they viewed as non-Christian, during Chicago's international Pentecost.³⁹

While waiting to occupy center stage at the Parliament on behalf of his beleaguered flavor of Christianity, Roberts and several of his Mormon associates, including the entire First Presidency, attended a daily stream of congress sessions to learn about other religions. A handful of Latter-day Saints were present during two of the non-placid moments of the gathering. The first was caused by a Japanese Buddhist delegate, Hirai Kinzo. As Buddhologist James E. Ketelaar describes, Barrows initially disallowed Hirai's address as too provocative for the Chicago assembly and urged him to present a more conventional essay on religious unity. So when Hirai made his way to the dais clutching his earlier inflammatory paper, Barrows confronted him center stage and tried to stop him from proceeding. A furious Hirai verbally exploded within earshot of the audience: "Why do you try to prevent me from speaking? By what rights do you violate my freedom of speech? What authority do you claim to interfere with the speeches of members of this Parliament?" Barrows recoiled, and the Japanese representative proceeded with his remarks titled "The Real Position of Japan towards Christianity," a tirade against the "abusive, high-handed, self-righteous, bigoted, and racist attitudes of the Christian missionaries in Japan as well as the political inequities perpetrated upon the nation of Japan by the so-called Christian nations." The largely Western audience erupted with applause, although private reactions varied among the Christian denominations. Not surprisingly, Barrows did not record his confrontation with Hirai in his "official" proceedings. Barrows and his committee were hoping to avoid such embarrassing moments when American Protestantism, which they believed was the ultimate culmination of all world religions, was exhibited in anything but the best light. The Protestant-minded committee dreaded public antagonists like Hirai.⁴⁰

As with other Christian attendees, Roberts and members of the First Presidency were awed by the international spectacle at the World's Fair and astonished by the richness of the Asian religions they encountered within the walls of the Hall of Columbus, including Hirai's Buddhism. George Q. Cannon, for instance, observed that "some things . . . are going to puzzle this parliament," at least the Christian contingent, who believed that Jesus Christ had taught novel doctrines during his mortal ministry. "But here come the Buddhists and the followers of Confucius," he noted, "and they prove that long before the Savior was born many of the truths which He proclaimed were taught by their leading men." Cannon correctly surmised that this anachronistic Christian worldview was "likely to furnish good ground for infidelity and for men

thinking that after all there is not so much in this Christian religion as those who advocate it assume; because if Buddha and Confucius knew these truths, where are the claims of the Christians that the Savior was the first to introduce them in His sermon on the Mount?" Many Christians at the Parliament were, in fact, puzzled over these seeming anachronisms of truth.⁴¹

From the Church's 1830 founding until the 1893 Parliament, Latter-day Saint leaders generally employed the "light and spirit of Christ" theory to account for Christian parallels in non-Christian religions. According to this early explanation, "the spiritual influence which emanates from God is not confined to selected nations, races, or groups. All men share an inheritance of divine light. Christ himself is the light of the world. Even those who have never heard of Christ are granted the spirit and light of Christ."⁴² As such, God inspired the founders of Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Jainism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, and other Asian faiths, to bless all his earthly children. While Joseph Smith was almost certainly ignorant of Asians and their religions, the Latter-day Saint prophet brought forth a number of new scriptures that provided a theological framework for mapping non-Christian, non-Western religions, such as Buddhism and Shinto. According to the Book of Mormon, "the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have" (Alma 29:8) and "the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil" (Moroni 7:16; see also Doctrine and Covenants 93:2; John 1:9). In 1832, Smith further revealed that "the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit. And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father" (Doctrine and Covenants 84:45–47). Thus, the light and spirit of Christ theory became the leading Mormon explanation for the existence and value of Asian religions during the nineteenth century—until the Chicago gathering.⁴³

As in the case of other Christians formally introduced to non-Christian traditions at the Parliament, some Latter-day Saint leaders reformulated their theological response to Eastern religions. Previously they had to explain only how truth existed in other religions. Now they had to account for striking Christian parallels in those same faiths. In other words, the Parliament prompted a Latter-day Saint rhetorical shift from the "light and spirit of Christ" theory to a diffusionary hypothesis, a theology better suited to account for Christian parallels in non-Christian religions. The diffusion theory proposes that all religions can trace their beginnings to the Christian gospel as originally taught to Adam and Eve by God. Rather than advocating an evolutionary "fulfillment" model, which was quite in vogue in the late nineteenth century, Latter-day Saints viewed the gospel of Jesus Christ in

an anti-evolutionary framework. They rejected the developmental claims characteristic of fulfillment inclusivists that suggested nineteenth-century Christianity was the pinnacle of human religious progress. Instead, Mormons advanced a declension model, asserting God had revealed the saving mission of Jesus Christ to Adam and Eve, who then taught it to their children and their children's children. But their descendants had apostatized, resulting in spiritual darkness until God had seen fit to restore that spiritual light. Thus, humanity experienced a number of dispensations of gospel truth followed by apostasy and hopes for future renewal. In short, Mormons dated Christianity at least four thousand years earlier than other Christians did. By moving back the origins of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the time of Adam and Eve, Mormons avoided the timing issue of Christian parallels found in non-Christian religions, parallels that disturbed other Christian Parliament attendees. In brief, post-Parliament Latter-day Saint rhetoric evidences a shift from the "light and spirit of Christ" rationalization to a diffusionary explanation.⁴⁴

Attendance at the Parliament of Religions would radically alter the Mormon mental map of non-Christian religions and their adherents, more than any other nineteenth-century encounter between Latter-day Saints and Asians. At the same time as Latter-day Saints were trying to get other religionists to take a fresh look at post-polygamy Mormonism, they were confronted, along with many of their fellow Christians, with the upstanding morality and shared truths of the religions of Asia. After listening to several of the speakers at the Parliament, Mormon historian Andrew Jenson noted in his diary "I cannot deny that some lofty and excellent thoughts were made by these able speakers on religious points."⁴⁵ Another Church leader who attended the Parliament later wrote of the Asian delegates: "The Buddhists and the Shintovists [*sic*] and the believers in Confucius have a great many truths among them, and they are not so imperfect and heathenish as we have been in the habit in this country of believing them to be."⁴⁶ Not only were the Mormons in Chicago to teach, they were there to learn.

After attending the Parliament, Cannon and Roberts advocated diffusion theory. In 1896, Roberts argued that Mormonism, like mining quicksilver, is the force that can unite and blend all truth. He recalled his own experience in Chicago, where he had the "opportunity of listening to an explanation of the religion of Brahma, of the Buddhist religion, of the Philosophy of Confucius and Zoroaster, and of the Mohammedan religion, and in short, of nearly all the religions." Roberts admitted to being "very much astonished at the amount of truth to be found in all these systems of religion." He related how writers including Robert Ingersoll, David Hume, and Voltaire "have undertaken to prove that Christianity was not an original religion with Jesus Christ, that is, they insist that Jesus Christ copied his precepts, his ordinances, and the

religious and fundamental truths of his religion from the religions of the orient.”⁴⁷ At the Parliament the similarities between Christianity and Asian religions puzzled many Protestant theologians. Echoing Cannon, Roberts employed the diffusion theory to account for these Christian parallels. He contended that Latter-day Saint scriptures, including the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Pearl of Great Price “teach the antiquity of the Gospel” and explain the “fragments of Gospel truth held by the religions of the Orient, of India, Persia, Egypt and some portions of Japan and of China.” Neither Cannon nor Roberts again used the light of Christ theory to map Asian religions after their close encounter in Chicago, instead espousing a diffusionary explanation. The Latter-day Saints left Chicago with new ideas and fewer stereotypes about other religions.⁴⁸

Roberts also was in attendance when Muslim representative Alexander Russell Webb, a Caucasian convert to Islam, made his highly debated presentation, “The Spirit of Islam,” in the Hall of Columbus. His presentation overshadowed even Hirai’s diatribe against Christian missionaries. Webb remained on safe ground in the beginning as he described the history and basic tenets of Islam. He lost his footing with the mostly Western audience when he offhandedly broached the Muslim practice of polygamy. He had the audacity to suggest in Victorian America that although Islam did not inculcate plural marriage, “polygamy is no curse. A man can be a good, honest Christian and yet be a polygamist.”⁴⁹ While Webb was not an advocate of polygamy, “he argued that Westerners were ignorant of how it was actually practiced in the Muslim world and that their categorical condemnation of it was self-righteous and hypocritical in view of the problems that surrounded the marital and sexual practices of their own societies,” his biographer explains.⁵⁰ A reporter for the *San Francisco Argonaut* wryly pointed out that Webb’s discussion of Muslim polygamy should not upset “the moral sensibilities of the wealth of Christian populations of New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, where, we understand, practical polygamy and even polyandry, are not altogether unknown.”⁵¹ One Parliament historian writes tongue-in-cheek that the largely Christian audience reacted to Webb’s statements on plural marriage as if they were ignorant of Old Testament luminaries David and Solomon, who were both polygamists and leaders of the Israelite nation.⁵²

The 1893 Parliament was neither the first nor the last public occasion that antagonistic Protestants tarred Islam and Mormonism with the same black brush. “Mormonism arose within a North American culture emanating from European Christian civilization, which had nourished anti-Islamic attitudes that were redirected against Mormonism,” Near Eastern historian Arnold H. Green describes. “The Joseph Smith–Muhammad analogy developed through three phases correlating with, respectively, anti-Mormon polemics,

Orientalism, and pseudosociology.”⁵³ To begin with, Roman Catholics charged Protestant Reformers with being religious heretics and imposters like Muhammad, a medieval indictment labeled “cryptomohammedanism.” The theological descendents of these early Protestants, now the religious establishment in America, ironically redirected this same accusation in opposition to the small, but growing Mormon religious minority as early as 1830. Early critics of the Church, including Abner Cole, Alexander Campbell, Pomeroy Tucker, James Gordon Bennett, E. D. Howe, and even Thomas B. Marsh, employed this anti-Mormon polemic—that Joseph Smith was a latter-day Muhammad in Christian America—viciously and consistently. This latest iteration of cryptomohammedanism eventually made its way into many anti-Mormon articles, pamphlets, and books; moreover, these attacks expanded the simile to embrace the whole of Islam and Mormonism. But as Green makes clear, “This larger superstructure rested on the original foundation: like Muhammad, Joseph Smith was an ignorant, devious, violent impostor.”⁵⁴ Eventually, the Joseph Smith–Muhammad comparison moved into the European observation of the Near East, known today as “orientalism.” For example, renowned explorer Richard F. Burton toured the Utah capital of the Church in 1860, sixteen years after Joseph Smith’s assassination, yet still imagined the theological fingerprints of Muhammad all over Salt Lake City and its majority religion, especially when it came to the practice of plural marriage. Burton’s sensational travel account *City of the Saints*⁵⁵ likely influenced British historian D. S. Margoliouth, who later penned *Muhammad and the Rise of Islam*,⁵⁶ which exploited the same comparative trajectory of the founders of Islam and Mormonism. Celebrated German historian Eduard Meyer continued in this vein in his book *Ursprung und Geschichte der Mormonen* (“Origin and History of the Mormons”), the most extensive comparative treatment yet between Muhammad and Joseph Smith.⁵⁷ Over time, anti-Mormon polemics and orientalism moved to, in Green’s view, “the pseudosociology stage represented a dialectical synthesis of the first two,” by which Christian sociologists sought to discredit both religious founders.⁵⁸

All three of these described phases of anti-Islamic and anti-Mormon thinking contributed to the now-intertwined fates of Webb and Roberts at the religious congress. Yelling “fire” in the crowded Chicago hall might have created less of a stir than the mere mention of the explosive word *polygamy*, which conjured up reminders of the still-distressing “Mormon Question” in America. “The reading of [Webb’s] paper was an exceptional event in the proceedings of the Parliament, for the fact that it was attended with strong and even violent and impatient expressions of disapproval on the part of the hearers,” Barrows later editorialized in his anthology of speeches. “At the outset of the paper . . . these demonstrations, in the form of hisses and cries of ‘Shame!’ were so

emphatic that the speaker seemed deterred from pursuing the line of discourse on which he had entered.” Barrows appeared outraged that the taboo subject of polygamy was broached in front of the main assembly.⁵⁹ But Richard Seager questions Barrows’s recollection of Webb’s comments and the audience’s response. “Newspapers reproduced the talk with parentheses showing cries of approval and disapproval, with applause outnumbering hisses and boos three to one (indeed, twice hisses and cries of ‘shame’ were heard together with applause.)” Seager further notes that Barrows expunged Webb’s discussion of polygamy in his “official” proceedings.⁶⁰ Moreover, as biographer Umar F. Abd-Allah points out, Webb never intended to discuss plural marriage in this, the first of his two scheduled speeches. “Since Barrows chaired the first session, it is quite possible that Barrows himself prompted Webb to begin his speech by addressing the issue of polygamy.”⁶¹

Why might the Protestant chairman of the Parliament do such a provocative thing? One possibility is that Barrows, anticipating a firestorm of controversy over the mere mention of Muslim plural marriage, hoped to use the incident to disqualify Roberts and his pending presentation on the Church, a religion infamous for its own allowance of polygamy. In any event, that is exactly what happened. That afternoon, as the commotion over Webb’s address subsided, Barrows met with his committee, which determined to uninvite Roberts to address the large gathering on the Church in the Hall of Columbus. “Webb’s paper on polygamy had aroused such a decided opposition to a free discussion of polygamy, the members of the congress decided that an apostle of Mormonism would be out of place at the congress,” the *Chicago Herald* documented the next day.⁶² Neither man could get an unprejudiced hearing in the largely Protestant gathering because of the presence of the other. Roberts’s religion, with its polygamist baggage, hampered Webb’s reception in Victorian America; and Webb’s remarks on Muslim polygamy disqualified Roberts’s participation in the same Progressive Era milieu. Regardless of how Barrows subsequently framed and recounted the incident in his Columbian Exposition history, Webb’s controversial comments doomed Mormonism’s chance to get an impartial investigation during the remainder of the Parliament. Ironically, American Protestants at the Parliament gave a much warmer reception to the Asian representatives of non-Abrahamic (and non-Christian) religions like Hinduism and Buddhism than to Euro-American delegates of Islam and Mormonism.⁶³

Barrows sent Roberts a message inviting him to read his already vetted paper (that made no mention of polygamy) in Hall Three, a side room, the following Monday. Already defensive over his previous treatment at the hands of the Parliament’s organizers, Roberts was furious to learn of Barrows’s administrative about-face regarding his religion’s representation. He was well

aware that Hall Three was merely a side committee room with space for only two hundred seats. “In a fundamental way,” Seager explains, “if one was not among the speakers or the 3,000 observers in the Hall of Columbus in the Chicago Art Institute (or in the Hall of Washington in the case of overflowing crowds), one was not at the World’s Parliament of Religions.”⁶⁴ Barrows himself referred to Hall Three as a place “where papers of a more scientific and less popular character were read.”⁶⁵ In Roberts’s view the Church was once again being kicked to the curb of public opinion. It was the Hall of Columbus or bust for his religion. Having come so far, yet seemingly being denied his desired prize just at the moment that it seemed within his grasp, Roberts came out swinging. That Thursday he dashed off a note to Barrows in which he agreed to present his approved paper on the Church in Hall Three as long as doing so would not bar him from also delivering the same address before the entire congress audience in the Hall of Columbus. Angered by this defiant response, Barrows stopped Roberts as the two passed each other in the hall. Barrows made it clear that Hall Three was the only place that Roberts and his religion would be granted a public platform. “The conversation was very hurried, but there was no mistaking the intention of the managers of the Parliament to thus get rid of what they evidently regarded a very troublesome church and representative,” Roberts recalled.⁶⁶ The First Presidency’s representative was right.

The next day Roberts vented his outrage over the way he and his Church had been treated by supposedly open-minded Parliament organizers in a letter to Barrows and his committee. He rehearsed everything that had transpired during both of his trips to Chicago on behalf of the First Presidency and described how he had jumped through every hoop that Bonney and Barrows had placed before him. Yet his religious tradition had been denied equal representation. “I may be pardoned for saying that to ask me to read my paper there and let that be the only hearing that ‘Mormonism’ has, looks very like an attempt to *side track the Church* I represent,” Roberts exclaimed, “while the Parliament preserves a reputation for broad-minded toleration that could not even exclude a ‘Mormon,’ while, as a matter of fact, it hears of him either not at all or else only as in a corner.” The Church’s apologist continued his perceived litany of abuses by pointing out that Hall Three, “whatever be said in praise of the meetings held there, is not the Hall of the Parliament of Religions, nor the platform from which the great religious sects and faiths have spoken—Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism. Nor has there appeared in the [news]papers any account of its proceedings.” Roberts then informed Barrows that he planned to withdraw his paper in formal protest. For Roberts, if Mormonism could not be heard in the Hall of Columbus, “she will be content with the distinction of being the one voice in all the world that could not

be heard in such an assembly, and will seek other means for expressing her views."⁶⁷ His was not an idle threat.

From Barrows's perspective, Roberts's status continued to degenerate from nagging nuisance to irrepressible interloper. And it further deteriorated once the religious gathering concluded. Feelings of relief, more than thoughts of retaliation, likely soothed Barrows's mind. The Mormon problem seemed to have passed and the overall congress already was being celebrated as a positive turning point in the religious history of the world. Needless to say, Barrows did not respond to Roberts's scathing missive. Roberts, on the other hand, sought justice in the court of public opinion, which was well beyond the control of Bonney, Barrows, and their Protestant-dominated committees. Roberts continued to attend the Parliament sessions, to ensure that he was always available if the opportunity arose to represent his faith. Barrows would not have the opportunity to say Roberts was not available for comment. In addition, Roberts sought out his new ally Merwin-Marie Snell, complained about the Church's treatment by the Parliament's leaders, and explained why he had withdrawn his paper on the Church, which deserved better than a hearing in Hall Three, Roberts contended. Snell, a Roman Catholic, agreed.⁶⁸

During the previous week of the Parliament, Snell had encouraged his Chicago audience to thoroughly investigate other religious traditions before passing judgment. "The prejudices and animosities which perpetuate religious disunion are in a large proportion of cases the result of gross misconceptions of the true character of the rival creeds or cults," he argued. "The anti-Catholic, anti-Mormon, and anti-Semitic agitations in Christendom, and the highly colored pictures of heathen degradations in which a certain class of foreign missionaries indulge, are significant illustrations of the malignant results of religious ignorance." To make his point he further contended: "No one would exclude the Church of the Latter-Day Saints from the family of the world's religions who had caught the first glimpse of its profound cosmogony, its spiritual theology and its exalted morality." According to Snell, studying religion scientifically would enable all religions—including the Mormon faith—to be welcomed at ecumenical gatherings such as the present congress. No religions "need to feel out of place; none of them need sacrifice their favorite tenets, and none of them should dare to deny to any of the others a perfect right to stand upon the same platform of intelligent and impartial inquiry and to obtain a free and appreciative audience for all that they can say on their own behalf," he concluded.⁶⁹ Bonney, Barrows, and like-minded Protestants, of course, disagreed. Not surprisingly, Snell's defense of the Church and other nonmainline strands of Christianity never made it into Barrows's "official" collection of the proceedings. The chairman

only abstracted Snell's comments and made no mention of his biting critique of anti-Catholicism, anti-Mormonism, or anti-Semitism comments.⁷⁰

On Sunday, September 24, while chairing a Parliament session, Snell publicly expressed his outrage over how Bonney and Barrows had behaved toward Roberts and the Church, noting the First Presidency's delegate had pulled his paper in official protest. Snell also shared with his audience what he had previously divulged only to Roberts—that when Barrows's committee was planning the congress it had come to a tacit consensus that the Church would not be allowed to participate in the Parliament. Snell also related that Bonney and Barrows had personally assured Roberts that he could read his prepared statement in the Hall of Columbus. But now Roberts was being denied that opportunity. He further pointed out that—with the exception of the Church—not one other American religion, or its representatives, was barred from participation at the Parliament, a committee decision he considered, with obvious hyperbole, to be “the darkest blot in the history of civilization.” Moreover, “this ineradicable blot seems to have been due to contemptible ignorance of the religion,” he exclaimed.⁷¹ One Chicago reporter reconstructed the heated dialogue that ensued between Snell and members of his audience:

“Are you a Mormon?” asked a ministerial-looking man who occupied a front seat.

“I'm a Mormon this afternoon,” was the answer [of Snell].

“Were you yesterday?”

“That makes no difference, I am now.”

Continuing Mr. Snell said, the Mormon Church had suffered through the preposterous ignorance and prejudice of other religious bodies. The same was true of the Catholic Church, “I never saw a Protestant,” said he, “whose mind was not full of lies about the Catholic Church.”

“What's that? What's that?” Interrupted the ministerial-looking gentleman again, “You say you never saw a Protestant whose—”

“Yes, I say I never saw a Protestant whose mind was not full of lies about the Catholic Church.”

At this point another gentleman in the audience arose and took exceptions to the interruptions. The little wave of excitement passed over and Mr. Snell was allowed to proceed quietly with his talk.⁷²

Roberts and the Church had found an outspoken advocate in Snell. The next morning the *Chicago News* reported the Roman Catholic's remarks under the blaring headline: “SPOKE FOR MORMONISM: SECRETARY SNELL STIRS UP THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS. DECLARES THAT FAIR PLAY WAS NOT ACCORDED THE CHURCH OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.” Barrows's own secretary, the journalist noted, “jumped into the breach” in defense of the Church and its ill-treatment at the hands of the Parliament committee. “Mr. Snell was full of religious fair play, besides

possessing a quantity of knowledge about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," he described. "What the meeting lacked in numbers it made up in spice."⁷³ The Mormon controversy, it appears, was not again addressed in any of the sessions during the final days of the religious congress. Roberts never presented his speech on the Church in Hall Three or the Hall of Columbus.⁷⁴

Closing of the Parliament of Religions

The Parliament of Religions concluded on September 27, 1893, after seventeen days of religious discussions, presentations, and networking events. During the final plenary session, Bonney addressed the large audience in the Hall of Columbus and reflected on the apparent triumphs of the historic gathering. "These Congresses have been successful far beyond anticipation; that they have transformed into enduring realities the hopes of those who organized and conducted them, and that they will exercise a benign and potent influence on the welfare of mankind through the coming centuries," he declared were simply "established facts." He then congratulated his fellow organizers and everyone who participated in the groundbreaking ecumenical spectacle that had relatively few administrative hiccups.⁷⁵ Bonney added: "If some Western warrior, forgetting for the moment that this was a friendly conference, and not a battle field, uttered his war-cry, let us rejoice that our Oriental friends, that a kinder spirit, answered, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they say,'" in response to the behavior of one Protestant agitator.⁷⁶ Bonney also used his closing remarks to justify why he, Barrows, and their committees had excluded one philosophical group and a single religious sect from participation. "If the so-called Secularists or Freethinkers were denied admission to the Religious Congress, it was not from any personal ill-will, but because they had no religious faith to affirm, and no religious achievements to set forth," he explained. Rather than making a similar argument about Mormonism—that it was not a "real" religion—a claim that Roberts and Snell had protested both in private and public, Bonney use a more emotional argument: "If the Mormon Church was not admitted to the Parliament of Religions, it was not because of any discrimination against its religious faith, but for the reason that its disclaimer of a practice forbidden by the laws of the country had not become sufficiently established to warrant such admission." Nevertheless, Bonney claimed that in both situations "the action of the World's Congress Auxiliary was in conformity with the highest rules of charity and justice."⁷⁷

Seated in the Hall of Columbus, a seething Roberts determined not to let Bonney have the final whitewashed word on how the Parliament's leadership had dealt with the Church behind closed doors. As he had warned Barrows,

Roberts would plead his religion's case before the court of public opinion. That afternoon, Roberts contacted Chicago's leading newspapers, seeking a forum to air his grievances. He convinced the editors of the Republican *Inter-Ocean* to publish what he regarded "a faithful history" of his experiences at the Parliament in the form of an open letter to Bonney and Barrows. Roberts's bombshell appeared in newsprint the following day. After detailing Bonney and Barrows's unfair handling of the Church and its representatives, Roberts concluded his scathing rebuke in crescendo. "Gentlemen, you should have extended a hearty invitation to the 'Mormon' Church to participate in your Parliament, and give her representative a full and fair hearing, not in some out-of-the-way corner, but in general Parliament. You should have done that if for nothing else than to have had the joyful news proclaimed that polygamy had been discontinued by the 'Mormons,'" he wrote. "If you thought us in error, as Christian ministers, you should have been anxious to learn and have the world find out wherein we were in error, that you, as lovers of human souls could find out where we were wrong, and then in kindness and for our good show us our error—and what could have been better for you Christians than to have exposed our error from our own statement of our faith, and then reclaimed us? But you have missed your opportunity."⁷⁸

Roberts's public denunciation of Bonney, Barrows, and the Parliament made waves in a sea of faith. A condensed version of his letter was distributed nationally by the Associated Press, which garnered a good deal of editorial attention, particularly in Chicago's newspapers.⁷⁹ "This was most discourteous treatment. . . . The gathering at the Art Institute is a parliament of religions—not a parliament of Christians or a parliament of monogamists," the *Chicago Herald* editorialized on October 3. "The people in attendance knew what they might expect when they accepted invitations to the congress. If they desired to hear only what was entirely agreeable to them they might better have stayed away. The slight put upon Elder Roberts was unjustified and will detract from the value and the reputation of the whole gathering."⁸⁰ The *Chicago Daily Tribune* likewise advertised Roberts's charges against Bonney and Barrows. "All the religions of the world—oriental and occidental, known and unknown, white and black, from idolatry to atheism—have been heard," its reporter summarized. "But the doctrine of the Latter Day Saints, as preached under the anti-polygamy laws of the United States, were completely ignored by the officials of the Congresses at the Art Institute."⁸¹ There is no known record of Bonney or Barrows ever responding in print to Roberts's charges.

The disappointment that Latter-day Saint leaders felt after their religious tradition was sidelined at the Parliament reinforced what most of them already suspected: that anti-Mormons in powerful places would continue to thwart their theological attempts to assimilate into Christian America. But in

Chicago they also came to appreciate that American Christians were willing to embrace the Latter-day Saints as cultural contributors. On the one hand, the territorial representatives from Utah, the women of Mormondom, and the Tabernacle Choir enjoyed international acclaim and commendation. But on the other hand, Roberts and the Church were ostracized by the Parliament of Religion's organizing committee. Just after the men and women of Utah, especially the Tabernacle Choir singers, sparkled on the world's *cultural* stage, a Mormon official was denied access to the globe's *religious* platform. Juxtaposing these overlapping experiences helps scholars better understand the limits of religious tolerance in late nineteenth-century America. Not only would the Protestant establishment continue to define the concept of "religion," but it also would seek to control how minority American faiths like Mormonism publicly exhibited themselves to the world. Nevertheless, the Mormon successes—and struggles—at the larger Chicago World's Fair pushed Church leaders to seek to escape these imposed confines and to exhibit thereafter their ecclesiastical institution as a culturally advanced society.

Notes

1. *Chicago Herald*, October 3, 1893; reprinted in *Deseret News Weekly*, October 7, 1893.

2. B. H. Roberts, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the Parliament of Religions: III. Christian Treatment of Mormons," *Improvement Era* 2, no. 10 (August 1899): 766 (hereafter cited as Roberts, "Christian Treatment of Mormons").

3. Roberts, "Christian Treatment of Mormons," 750–66; and Davis Bitton, "B. H. Roberts at the World Parliament of Religion," *Sunstone* 7, no. 1 (January/February 1982): 46–51. See also Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985), chapter 4.

4. Richard Hughes Seager, ed., *The Dawn of Religious Pluralism: Voices from the World's Parliament of Religions, 1893* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1993), 7–8. See also Richard Hughes Seager, "Pluralism and the American Mainstream: The View from the World's Parliament of Religions," *Harvard Theological Review* 82, no. 3 (July 1989): 301–24.

5. Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 1.

6. Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 8.

7. Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 8.

8. Charles Carrol Bonney, "The Genesis of the World's Religious Congresses of 1893," *New-Church Review* 1 (January 1894): 79.

9. Bonney, "Genesis of the World's Religious Congresses of 1893," 80–81; Richard Hughes Seager, *The World's Parliament of Religions: The East/West Encounter, Chicago, 1893* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995), 47.

10. John H. Barrows, ed., *The World's Parliament of Religions: An Illustrated and Popular History of the World's Parliament of Religions, Held in Chicago in Connection with the World's Columbian Exposition*, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: Parliament Publishing Com-

pany, 1893), 1:10–61; emphasis added. Two additional published sources of the Parliament proceedings are Walter R. Houghton, ed., *Neely's History of the Parliament of Religions and Religious Congresses at the World's Columbian Exposition*, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: Neely Publishing, 1894); and J. W. Hanson, ed., *The World's Congress of Religions: The Addresses and Papers Delivered before the Parliament* (Chicago, IL: W. B. Conkey, 1894).

11. Joseph Smith III, president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1893, and a number of his church colleagues also were present at the Parliament. They kept their membership abreast of the proceedings through several letters later published in the *Saints' Herald* periodical (see Roger D. Launius, *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet* [Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988], 296).

12. Truman G. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts," in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, ed. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2000), 1034–35. Roberts married Sarah Louisa Smith on January 24, 1878; Celia Ann Dibble on October 2, 1884; and Margaret Curtis Shipp in April 1890, just months before the 1890 Manifesto that prohibited future polygamist unions within Mormonism. See Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1980), chapter 8, "Exile in England," 160–81, and chapter 9, "Castle Prison" 182–98.

13. Ronald W. Walker, ed., "B. H. Roberts and the Woodruff Manifesto," *BYU Studies* 22, no. 3 (Summer 1982): 363–65.

14. B. H. Roberts, "A Religious Congress," *Salt Lake Herald*, July 15, 1891.

15. Roberts would later complain that the Church was falsely accused of "shunning such opportunity for comparison and contrast" with other religions and made reference to his attempt to gain Mormon representation at the Parliament. See his article, "The Claims, Doctrines, and Organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Improvement Era* 1, no. 9 (July 1898): 664–80.

16. Roberts, "A Religious Congress."

17. B. H. Roberts, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the Parliament of Religions: II. Preliminary Agitation," *Improvement Era* 2, no. 9 (July 1899): 675 (hereafter cited as Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation").

18. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 675.

19. "A World's Parliament of Religions," *Deseret Evening News*, April 8, 1892.

20. "A Congress of Thinkers," *Deseret Evening News*, April 16, 1892.

21. J. M. S., "Religious Congress," *Deseret Evening News*, November 19, 1892.

22. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 676; and "World Congress of Religions," *Messages of the First Presidency*, comp. James R. Clark, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1965), 3:248–50 (July 10, 1893).

23. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 677–78. For a biographical sketch of George R. Davis, see *The Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Representative Men of Chicago, Iowa and the Columbian Exposition* (Chicago, IL: American Biographical Publishing, 1893), 12–15.

24. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 678–79.

25. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 679–80.

26. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 680–82.

27. For an overview of Bonney's life and theology, see *Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery*, 224–28; and George F. Dole, *With Absolute Respect: The Swedenborgian Theology of Charles Carroll Bonney* (West Chester, PA: Swedenborg Foundation, 1993). On Mormonism and Swedenborgianism, see Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York, NY: Knopf, 2005), 198–99; and Catherine L. Albanese, *A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion* (New

Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 139–44. See also George A. Thompson, *Advancing the Mormon Frontier: The Life and Times of Joseph Stacy Murdock, Pioneer, Colonizer, Peacemaker* (n.p.: George A. Thompson, 1980), 2–7; and Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1920), 3:173–74. I thank Glen Cooper for providing me with much of the Bonney family biographical data, but I alone am responsible for my conclusions. Bonney's Columbian Exposition papers were lost (see Seager, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 177).

28. For an official biographical sketch of Barrows, see *Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery*, 137–40. See also John Henry Barrows, Papers Finding Guide, Oberlin College Archives; and Mary Eleanor Barrows, *John Henry Barrows: A Memoir* (Chicago, IL: Fleming H. Revell, 1904), 134–35.

29. For a sample of Walter M. Barrows's anti-Mormon rhetoric, see his *The Mormon Problem* (Boston: Frank Wood, 1878); "Mormonism: A National Shame and Peril," *Home Missionary* 52, no. 5 (September 1879): 113–16; and *How Shall the Mormon Question be Settled?* (Chicago, IL, 1881).

30. See "Barrows Full of Anti-'Mormonism,'" *Deseret Evening News*, August 18, 1881; and "The Object in View," *Deseret Evening News*, August 20, 1881. John H. Barrows, *Christian Education for the Mormons* (n.p., 1878), 2.

31. See Utah Gospel Mission Collection, Center for Archival Collections, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio; and Brendan Terry, "Evangelizing Mormonism: John Danforth Nutting and the Utah Gospel Mission, 1900–1949" (Honors thesis, Brigham Young University, 1992). See also Jana Riess, "Heathen in Our Fair Land: Anti-Polygamy and Protestant Women's Missions to Utah, 1869–1910" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2000).

32. Barrows's personal papers were ruined by a 1923 fire in Berkeley, California, and his files relating to the Parliament were mistakenly destroyed at the University of Chicago. See Seager, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 177; and Oberlin College Archives Finding Guide.

33. Quoted in Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 682–83; and Andrew Jenson, *Church Chronology: A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1899), 203 (August 29 and September 8, 1893).

34. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 684.

35. Roberts, "Preliminary Agitation," 684–85. During the Parliament, Roman Catholic Merwin-Marie Snell stepped up as an unlikely supporter for the Latter-day Saints and other minority faiths traditionally marginalized by the American Protestant establishment. As historian Matthew J. Grow argues, "Late-nineteenth-century Catholics adopted a militant stance towards Mormonism," making Snell a notable exception (Matthew J. Grow, "The Whore of Babylon and the Abomination of Abominations: Nineteenth-Century Catholic and Mormon Mutual Perceptions and Religious Identity," *Church History* 73, no. 1 [March 2004]: 156).

36. "Parliament of Religions: The Occident and Orient Meet to Discuss Their Creeds," *Deseret Evening News*, September 11, 1893.

37. Roberts, "Christian Treatment of Mormons," 752.

38. Seager, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 50.

39. See F. Max Muller, "The Real Significance of the Parliament of Religions," *Arena* 61 (December 1894): 1–4. See also John P. Burris, *Exhibiting Religion: Colonialism and Spectacle at International Expositions, 1851–1893* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2001); Seager, *World's Parliament of Religions*; Eric J. Ziolkowski, ed., *A Museum of Faiths: Histories and Legacies of the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions*

(Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993); and Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, for a discussion of its significance to the scholarly study of religion.

40. James E. Ketelaar, "Strategic Occidentalism: Meiji Buddhists at the World's Parliament of Religions," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 11 (1991): 48. See also Ketelaar's "The Reconvening of Babel: Eastern Buddhism and the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions," chapter 4 in *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and Its Persecution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 136–73; and Andrew Jenson, *Autobiography of Andrew Jenson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), 208–9 (September 17, 1893). President George Q. Cannon (who was also present at the Parliament) later editorialized of Hirai's paper: "He holds the mirror up to professed Christians. He enables the American people to look at themselves as a Christian nation." Cannon then suggested that the same paper "is not without its profit to us as Latter-day Saints. We make high-sounding professions. Do they correspond with our conduct? Are we consistent? In our treatment of others especially those not of our faith or whom we may think of inferior races to ourselves do we carry into practical effect our professions and teachings? These are questions each of us can ask himself" (George Q. Cannon, "The Parliament of Religions," *Juvenile Instructor* 28, no. 19 [October 1, 1893]: 607–8). See also Vidi, "A Progressive People," which editorializes about the parliamentary comments of Buddhist delegate Ashitsu Jit-suzen in the same *Juvenile Instructor* issue, 595–97. Barrows was not adverse to editing his collection of Parliament texts that did not meet his approval, as also evidenced by his excising of the remarks of African American delegate Fannie Barrier Williams, who took Christianity to task for its past sanction of slavery. See Umar F. Abd-Allah, *A Muslim in Victorian America: The Life of Alexander Russell Webb* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 222.

41. Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses Delivered by Wilford Woodruff, His Two Counselors, the Twelve Apostles, and Others*, 5 vols. (Burbank, CA: B. H. S. Publishing, 1987–1992): 3:355.

42. Spencer J. Palmer, *Religions of the World: A Latter-day Saint View* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1988), 197.

43. See my essay, "Joseph Smith and Nineteenth-Century Mormon Mappings of Asian Religions," in *Joseph Smith: Reappraisals after Two Centuries*, ed. Reid L. Neilson and Terryl L. Givens (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 209–20, for a comparison of nineteenth-century Mormon and Protestant views of Eastern traditions.

44. Some eighteenth-century Deists advanced their own version of "primitive monotheism" or "original monotheism," although it differed from the later Christ-centered Latter-day Saint theological position. See Samuel Shuckford, *The Sacred and the Profane History of the World Connected*, vols. 1 and 2, 3rd ed. (London: Printed for J. and R. Tonson, 1743). Peter Harrison describes primitive monotheism in his book "*Religion and the Religions in the English Enlightenment*" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 139–46. Wilhelm Schmidt, a non-Mormon critic of evolutionism, argued a similar original monotheism theory, but not until the first decades of the twentieth century. According to Eric Sharpe, Schmidt's "overriding concern was to demonstrate that the older stratum of human culture, the more clearly can one discern in it clear evidence of the worship of a Supreme Being" (Eric J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion: A History* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975], 182–84). See also W. Schmidt, *The Origin and Growth of Religion: Facts and Theories* (London: Methuen and Company, 1930); Palmer, *Religions of the World*, 194.

45. Jenson, *Autobiography*, 208–9.

46. Stuy, *Collected Discourses*, 3:355.

47. Quoted in Stuy, *Collected Discourses*, 5:155.

48. Stuy, *Collected Discourses*, 5:155.

49. Latter-day Saints in Utah were aware of Webb and his Moslem World periodical prior to the Parliament (see "Mohammedanism in America," *Juvenile Instructor* 28, no. 13 [July 1, 1893]: 413–14). For early American views on Islam, see Thomas S. Kidd, "'Is It Worse to Follow Mahomet than the Devil?' Early American Uses of Islam," *Church History* 72, no. 4 (December 2003): 766–90. "Discourses on Religion of Islam," *Chicago Tribune*, September 21, 1893, 9; and "Islam is Preached," *Chicago Tribune*, September 21, 1893, 9; "The Religious Congress," *Deseret Evening News*, September 29, 1893.

50. Abd-Allah, *Muslim in Victorian America*, 239–41. This hypocrisy was not lost on Latter-day Saints in Utah. One Utahn argued: "Coming down to the essence of the matter, if Mr. Webb's statement is false, then the only conclusion to be drawn is that no Mohammedan can be a good, honest gentleman. Nor is this all. Many of the heroes who in the books most revered by all Christians are held out as patterns of the highest standard must be denounced, and the descent of our Savior Himself must be traced through an ancestry consisting of 'no good, honest gentlemen.' Surely no Christian is prepared to accept that conclusion. Would it not be better, even for those who profess an ultra-morality, to admit that the peculiar doctrine has had its benevolent mission to perform at some stages of the world's civilization?" ("The Religious Congress," *Deseret Evening News*, September 29, 1893; emphasis added).

51. As quoted in Abd-Allah, *Muslim in Victorian America*, 241.

52. Abd-Allah, *Muslim in Victorian America*, 241. Also see notes 49–50.

53. Arnold H. Green, "Mormonism and Islam: From Polemics to Mutual Respect and Cooperation," *BYU Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001): 199–203. See also his "The Muhammad–Joseph Smith Comparison: Subjective Metaphor or a Sociology of Prophethood?" in *Mormons and Muslims: Spiritual Foundations and Modern Manifestations*, rev. ed., ed. Spencer J. Palmer (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University, 2002), 111–33. See also Timothy Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), chapter 4, "'Turkey Is in Our Midst': Mormonism as an American 'Islam'"; and J. Spencer Fluhman, "Anti-Mormonism and the Making of Religion in Antebellum America" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin at Madison, 2006).

54. Green, "Mormonism and Islam," 201.

55. Richard F. Burton, *City of the Saints: And Across the Rocky Mountains to California* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1862).

56. D. S. Margoliouth, *Muhammad and the Rise of Islam* (London, 1905).

57. Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung und Geschichte der Mormonen* (Halle A. S., Verlag von Max Niemeyer, 1912).

58. Green, "Mormonism and Islam," 202.

59. Barrows, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 1:127. Barrows goes on to say, "Concerning this solitary incident of the kind in the whole seventeen days, three remarks require to be made: 'It was a sudden, unpremeditated outburst of feeling, which the conductors of the Parliament exerted themselves not in vain to repress. It was occasioned, not by any doctrinal statement, but by what was taken for an attack on a fundamental principle of social morality. As soon as the speaker turned from this to a more appropriate line of discourse, he was heard with patient attention and even with applause'" (Barrows, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 1:127–28).

60. Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 279. See also reports in *Daily Inter-Ocean*, September 21 and 22, 1893, reproduced in Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 279–80.

61. Abd-Allah, *Muslim in Victorian America*, 238, 240.

62. *Chicago Herald*, September 26, 1893, as quoted in "The Religious Congress," *Deseret Evening News*, September 29, 1893; "Parliament Notes," *Chicago Daily Tribune*,

September 24, 1893, 11.

63. See also Sarah Miglio “Encountering Islam: Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb and the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Church History, January 2007, copy in my possession.

64. Richard Hughes Seager, “The Two Parliaments, the 1893 Original and the Centennial of 1993: A Historians View,” in *The Community of Religions: Voices and Images of the Parliament of the World’s Religions*, ed. Wayne Teasdale and George F. Cairns (New York: Continuum, 1996), 25.

65. Barrows, *World’s Parliament of Religions*, 1:152.

66. Roberts, “Christian Treatment of Mormons,” 753.

67. Roberts, “Christian Treatment of Mormons,” 755.

68. Roberts, “Christian Treatment of Mormons,” 756.

69. Houghton, *Neely’s History of the Parliament of Religions*, 1:260–61.

70. See Barrows, *World’s Parliament of Religions*, 2:1347.

71. Roberts, “Christian Treatment of Mormons,” 756.

72. Roberts, “Christian Treatment of Mormons,” 756–57.

73. *Chicago News*, September 25, 1893; and “Addresses by German Ministers,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 25, 1893, 2. See also *Chicago Herald*, September 26, 1893, as quoted in “The Religious Congress,” *Deseret Evening News*, September 29, 1893.

74. Roberts later published his submitted—yet never presented—paper in his “The Paper on Mormonism,” 831–40; and his *Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1907), 1:5–22. It makes no mention of polygamy.

75. Charles Carroll Bonney, *World’s Congress Addresses* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1900), 77–81. See also Barrows, *World’s Parliament of Religions*, 1:185.

76. The offensive individual was almost certainly the Reverend Joseph Cook, who was “narrow, dogmatic, uncharitable, and discourteous to non-Christians at the Parliament.” Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 50–51.

77. Bonney, *World’s Congress Addresses*, 77–81; Barrows, *World’s Parliament of Religions*, 1:185.

78. Roberts, “Christian Treatment of Mormons,” 765–66.

79. Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 6:240–41.

80. *Chicago Herald*, October 3, 1893; reprinted in *Deseret News Weekly*, October 7, 1893.

81. “Mormon Church Is Aggrieved,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 28, 1893, 2.