

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

My Dear Sir,—

On Wednesday the 8th inst., there were three meetings.

In Association Hall the first speaker was Dr. Dörner of the University of Berlin, who explained and exposed the new dogma of the infallibility of the Pope. The following is a characteristic passage:

Since the Pope henceforth takes this position, a great change awaits the Catholic Church, demanding our deepest sympathy. For, ought it not to grieve us that so large a portion of Christendom which Christ has redeemed should again fall so low as that under the name and appearance of unity, the Romish Church should become a despotism, the most absolute monarchy ever known? Herein, likewise, is involved a rupture of unity, a dualism, by which the uniformity and unity of the members in participation in the Holy Spirit is done away with, since the wisdom and will of the Holy Spirit are said to concentrate themselves in one member while the others called by the apostle Peter "a royal priesthood," are said not to have their immediate part in the Holy Spirit, but only through the high priest. Does not this renew the distinction of the religion of priests before Christ, with a boldness hitherto unknown? What a disunion such a unity brings within the body of the Roman Catholic Church itself! Christ says that "the water he will give is to be a well of waters springing up in the believer himself unto everlasting life. The new dogma will no longer have the Holy Spirit to dwell independently in the members; they are not to have wells of life, screaming forth from the mysterious depths of the water of the Divine Spirit and word; but merely passive channels for the water which is to flow forth from the Tiber to Rome, to enrich the globe.

Dr. D. discussed also the question of "Nominal Protestantism," showing that while the Reformation restored freedom to the European mind, many have abused that blessing by abandoning the authority of revelation and propagating the antieuphratic opinions which have exerted a withering influence on true religion, especially in Germany and France.

Dr. Hitchcock, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, followed on the same side.

Dr. Fisch of Paris delivered an excellent discourse on "The revival of Popery in France," which he attributed to the indefatigable efforts of the Jesuits, who educate the noblemen, "so that those noblemen still live in the middle ages," and take care to keep the mass of the people in "holy ignorance."

The Jesuitical endeavours are sustained by pilgrimages. But "there will be a terrible reaction by and by."

While they are covering France with churches and pilgrimages, we have covered France with Bibles. We have circulated four millions of Bibles. We have preached in the dancing halls—we have no other—among the Roman Catholics who are thirsty for Gospel truths, and the Holy Ghost is doing a great work. Religious liberty is still secure. Six months ago a proposal was made to give to France a perfect religious liberty which we never had. This proposal went into the hands of a committee, composed of 13 clericals and two liberals, and they were unanimously agreed that it should be laid before the house. And since we have religious liberty with France so well prepared, when Popery has shown to the nation what it is, with that longing for reformation, what may we not be? Then, my Christian friends of America, you will stand with us under anything. France lies before us like a wounded man in the road, and you will be the good Samaritan—you will have compassion upon us. Let no one say that the work in France is very slow and repays little of the work in its behalf. Such a one is certainly no Anglo-Saxon, and certainly a poor Christian. You Anglo-Saxons go ahead and never mind obstacles. You overcome them. But we have a good work, and shall succeed at last.

The Rev. Leopold Witte, Coethen, Prussia exposed recent legislation in Germany respecting the Church. Four laws have been enacted. After enumerating them and pointing out the apparent necessity for this legislation, and the reasons on which it was founded, Mr. Witte said, in conclusion:

True, I cannot agree with everything contained in these laws. To define, for instance, the limits of clerical learning—the measure of knowledge in literature and philosophy, which the priests have to acquire—all this ought to be left to the decision of the religious denominations themselves. But on the whole, there was an urgent necessity for those or similar laws. One thing, however, the State should never forget: Spiritual powers cannot be finally vanquished by external means and regulations. It wants religious truth to break down religious falsehood. May Prussia support and strengthen the bearers of such truth, and she will come out of the struggle victorious. Let the

German Government, as it has begun to do in the case of Bishop Reinke's support and strengthening the Old Catholic movement. Let it support the efforts of the Evangelical Church to establish human society on the eternal principles of the Word of God. Let the State proclaim the freedom and independence of the Evangelical Church, and surrender to the same its property. Let the whole nation breathe the air of religious freedom, and the dangers by which the State is threatened at present will disappear as the mist before the sun. The State alone can hardly hope finally and successfully to resist the overwhelming power and influence of the Romish priests. But there is one power mightier than Rome and all the States of the world, and whosever is in close alliance with it may be sure to be crowned with victory. Faithful to Jesus Christ, and free from the pressure of the State, the Church of the Gospel will be victorious against the Church of spiritual bondage, and the State enjoying the blessings of such a church will flourish and prosper to do God's will.

The second section met in St. Paul's Church. Dr. Kraft of Bonn read a long paper on "The Old Catholic movement," explaining and vindicating it. A communication from the Old Catholics, signed by Bishop Reinke and others was read, and another from Pere Hyacinthe.

Dr. Promer of Geneva presented a paper on "Catholicism in Switzerland."

Dr. Storrs of Brooklyn addressed the meeting on "Rome's Appeal to educated Protestants." Her advocates labour to convince us that Romanism only is powerful enough to carry on the conflict with the infidelity of the age.

Of course, we hold that much of this is unhistorical, purely fanciful; that it is the Gospel, as a living force, working apart from, and often directly against, the hierarchy, which has done the best part of this and that the history of the Church, as an organization, is marked by bigotry, pride, persecution, license; by inquisition like the Inquisition; by prelates and pontiffs like the Borgias and the Medicis. But to those minds whose attitude toward it I am seeking to present, the different aspect is the one which it offers, and often they are profoundly impressed by it. Then it appeals to them by its cordial relations to all the fine arts—music, painting, sculpture, architecture—to whatever impresses most and delights the senses and the tastes. Its cathedrals are the wonders of the world, mountains of rock work, set to music. Its elaborate, opulent, mighty masses make the common hymn tunes of Protestantism sound like the twitter of sparrows amid the mighty rush and wail of concentrating winds. Its ritual is splendid, scenic, and impressive to the highest degree, and all is exquisitely pervaded and modulated by the doctrine which underlies it. Every service, every vestment even, is full of significance. Nothing is too ornate or magnificent to be incorporated at once into its majestic and superb ceremonial. It moves, as it fights, like an army with banners. Now to one who wants his whole esthetic nature gratified and educated in his worship, who accepts this nature as from God, and feels its subtle impulses demanding a lawful and large domain, this attraction is very powerful, while the occasional attempts of ambitious high-churchmen to emulate that which the blundering genius of many centuries and lands has produced, are to him simply ludicrous—like representing the walls of Warwick Castle in cake and sugar, or building an edifice like St. Peter's of scantling and boards. [Loud applause.]

The third session met in the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church, where Dr. Fisher of Yale College discussed "Protestantism, Romanism, and Modern Civilization;" Rev. T. Lorriaux of Paris, "The evangelization of France;" Dr. Coulin of Geneva, "The training required to enable Protestant Ministers effectually to meet the intellectual demands of the Age;" and Dr. Hovey on "Christian Liberty," which he treated in true Baptist fashion.

An extract from Dr. Coulin's paper is appended:

Who would deny our century is especially in need of self-sacrificing, consecrated men? Then if Jesus should reappear among us we cannot doubt but that his character would be just what our Gospels have faithfully handed over to us. Perfection is unalterable. So he would be just as we know him in his meekness, in his strength, in his perfect submission to God's will, especially in his self-sacrificing devotedness. And now as then mainly by the manifestation of that character in words would he enlighten the world and found the kingdom of heaven. Let us, then, put on the same character and impress our friends with it. This generation has gone with miracles; well then compel it to accept the miracle of Christian excellence. As of yore, the light will be welcomed by some and shunned by others. Christ in us will again goad the world to opposition. But if the world hate us, let us take care it should hate us as it hated Christ, and that it should thereby be made inexcusable; and besides, as ministers, we should personify the Gospel. People look to us, not to heaven. Our Christian soundness is the light of our flock; our inconsistencies are the excuses of those who refuse to come to Christ to get life. Were Jesus Christ to reappear among us, no doubt He would bring with Him the same social spirit which is manifest in His life. He would

take no part in politics; He would say to those who would tempt him to do so: my kingdom is not of this world! With his broad sympathies he would not be over-particular about details. In the midst of the present literary, scientific, and economical excitement he would ever assert that but one thing is needful. He would doubtless, as of yore, travel from place to place; no more from Galilee to Jerusalem, but from Europe to America in a spirit of self-sacrifice for the sake of doing good. He would be everything to all men, would address monarchs, wealthy men, learned men, but the poor especially would have his most loving attention because they are sufferers, and because, in spite of appearances, they are nearer the kingdom of heaven. He would not only teach in synagogues and under the porticoes of temples, but in public squares and on the shores of lakes, in railway trains and steam packets, always in a language simple and adapted to the faculties of his hearers, blending in his expatiations the visible with the invisible. His life would thus be a busy life, fraught with occasional fatigue, but refreshed with constant meditation and prayer. Would that the men of the present day prayed more constantly! The battle of life being now harder on account of the many new paths opened up to our energy, we have a more pressing need of climbing the mountain and silently communing with God. When we are asked what ministers ought to do to meet the needs of the present day, methinks it is giving no useless advice when I urge them to give one hour a day to what the very Gospel has called the Ministry of Prayer.

Be this as it may, Jesus Christ, the living Jesus Christ of the Gospel, such is the ideal we must each of us try to aim at, in order to meet the intellectual and practical exigencies of the age. Let us become Christ-bearers, and we need not fear to be found wanting. This is no new device, you will say. Newer than one thinks. Would to God we needed not the advice! Let the Church—and the Church is represented by her ministers—let the Church return to her fountain, to Christ, and become the living manifestation of Christ. She may not christianize the world. That promise was never held out to her. But she will judge the world; she will show up the inmost thoughts and sift out God's people; she will gather in her folds those who have been elected for salvation, and will leave the rest of mankind without an excuse. Through her the Holy Ghost will convict the world of sin, of justice, and of judgment.

In the afternoon the Delegates were conveyed to Greenwood Cemetery and afterwards to Brooklyn, in carriages provided by A. T. Stewart, Esq. At Brooklyn they met in the Academy of Music, having first enjoyed an excellent dinner, furnished by the Brooklyn friends. Many speeches were delivered, the longest of which was by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, who was in every respect at home. Then Rev. G. M. Grant of Halifax said:

MR. CHAIRMAN: In responding on behalf of the Canadian delegates to your formal welcome, I think it is only fair to state for manifest reasons that no members attending the Alliance are more in accord with its hopes than those who come from Canada. Out of 240 delegates, some 50 are from Canada—an excess of representation, I have no doubt some may think, but we all who know what Canada is, think it small enough. Our nationality has been born so recently that we have scarcely had time to know ourselves as yet, and therefore we don't wonder at the ignorance of others. It is only six years ago that Canada was an inland province. Since then she has increased rapidly in population and resources opening mines, building colleges, railways and churches, and already we are hoping soon to outstrip you in the United States, and leave you second. [Applause.] We came to the Alliance for special reasons. Although large in body we are small socially and religiously, and in our crude condition we need that this unity of ours should be animated with one life, and we know there is no power on earth that can give that to a people except the Spirit of God fusing them into a common Christian life. One of the first fruits of the Alliance at this time has been the formation of an independent Canada branch with instructions to form branches over every part of the land, so that when the Alliance next comes to America it will come to Canada instead of the United States. [Applause.]

Rev. Charles Stovel of London "expressed himself as very grateful for the kindness which he had received and for the opportunity of showing his feelings in that regard. It encouraged him to look forward to better times to come. He thought the Alliance had advanced far in the unfolding of truths which will work when the assembly is over. He did not think that the influence would be lasting; they would only be so when all persons were bowing down before the throne of God, and obeying his edicts. Every man should believe in the Atonement which Christ had wrought and realize in his own soul that belief in the sal-

vation, and then spread it abroad and rejoice to see in the hearts of the multitude. Time was in England when they used to shiver at the thought of being brought in collision with America. He hoped that this meeting would make that impossible. [Applause.] He hoped that the influence of the meeting would be world-wide and that the union in Christ would come soon.

On Thursday the 9th inst., there were two meetings in Association Hall. In the morning, the Rev. W. R. Freemantle, A. M., of London, read a paper on "The Church and the Nation," which, while moderate in its tone and guarded in its assertions, proved that the writer favoured Church Establishments, if the people were willing to sustain them. Ex. President Woolsey presented an Essay on "The attitude of the Government and Constitution of the United States toward Christians." Having given some valuable historical notices, and stated as his conviction that the voluntary system is preferable to all others Dr. Woolsey observed:

Having looked briefly at the main points of our subject we close with the inquiry, whether the United States can be called a Christian nation? Can a State or constitution be called a Christian one, which separates religious interest as far as possible from civil interests, although there may be a few vestiges of public respect for religion, such as chaplains of legislatures, fasts and thanksgivings appointed by public authority; religious instruction in the army navy, public prisons, hospitals and the like. Or in other words, when a community believing that religion in an independent sphere becomes purer and pervasive; that perfect equality between denominations is the only just and peaceful policy; that Christ's kingdom will grow and stand in its true qualities and in its power when unlettered by State law; provides for such a relation between State and Church or Churches—in its ground law or constitution does the instrument of Government of the State thus credited give origin to an unchristian State? We deny this. It is no more so than an academy of science is unchristian without a creed, or a mercantile firm without daily prayers in the counting-house.

In what sense can this country then be called a Christian country? In this sense, certainly, that the vast majority of the people believe in Christ and the Gospel, that Christian influences are universal, that our civilization and intellectual culture are built on that foundation, and that the institutions are so adjusted as in the opinion of almost all Christians to furnish the best hope for spreading and carrying down to posterity our faith and our morality.

"The law," he said, "has as little to do with Christianity, and Christianity with the law, as possible."

Ex-President, Dr. Hopkins, of Williams-town, Mass., submitted a paper on "The Sabbath made for man, and his right to protection in the use of it." At the close there was a short discussion between Mr. Williams of London, Secretary of the "Liberation Society" and the Rev. J. C. Menzies, of the National Scotch Church, Edinburgh, on the subject of Mr. Freemantle's paper, the former opposing, the latter defending Church Establishments. In the afternoon James Girdlestone, Esq., discoursed upon "Legislation on Moral Questions." A discussion followed, in which several members of the Alliance took part.

The second session met in St. Paul's Church, under the presidency of the Rev. Dr. G. R. Crooke, of New York, a Methodist Minister. Dr. Campbell, of New Brunswick, N. J., read an instructive paper on "The influence of Christianity on Civil and Religious Liberty."

In conclusion, he said, permit me to say that, as civil and religious liberty is the lesson of Christianity, so it can be gained and secured by Christianity alone. The noble boon is gained by that state alone whose citizens first become the freedmen of Christ and then for Christ's sake love their neighbor as themselves. No form of government affords an absolute guarantee for liberty, and no constitution will be a safeguard against corruption. That State alone has the assurance of permanence, whose citizens, Christ's freedmen, are consecrated into the master of self, and the love of one's neighbor. We have not yet attained. With more of Christ's spirit in the heart, we shall see a corresponding love of man, and a larger and more benign development of civil and religious liberty. Without that we shall have no advancement, but retrogression. I close with the words of Johann von Müller: "The Gospel is the fulfilment of all hope, the perfection of all philosophy, the interpreter of all revolutions, the key to all the seeming contradictions of the physical and moral world; it is life; it is immortality. Since I have known the Saviour everything is clear—with him there is nothing I cannot solve."

Dr. Curry, of Richmond, Virginia, then proceeded to discourse on "The Alliance of Church and State." He had argued that such alliance is an injury to the State—that it is a wrong to other denominations—that it is a wrong to citizens generally—and that it is a wrong to our holy religion—and he

was about to show that it is injurious to the denomination in alliance—and that it is unscriptural, when he was stopped. What followed is thus reported in the Tribune:

When he had read nearly the whole of his discourse, it was notified to him by the tinkling of the bell that the 30 minutes time allowed to speakers had expired, whereupon he stopped abruptly in the middle of a sentence, retired to his seat, and refused again to come forward, notwithstanding the audience, by their long and continued applause and cries of "Go on," unmistakably showed that they wished him to continue his address. This applause which had continued several minutes, was eventually stopped by the appearance of the presiding officer in front of the platform. He said:

"It should wish to know if the audience want the prolongation of this discussion. If you do so, it will leave deep and abiding wounds." I felt there was not held in his address a full recognition of the implied limitations under which we have assembled. I have, therefore, contented myself by notifying him that his time had expired. I now submit whether it is courteous or Christian that this discussion should be further prolonged in the line which it has thus far taken. [Applause.]

At the conclusion of the President's remarks, the Hon. Mr. Curry, who was received with great applause, said:

I will solve the problem of courtesy by yielding to the limitation which has been properly imposed, with the most earnest and emphatic protest against the implied censure of the Chairman that I have been discourteous or unchristian. [Applause.] I shall not go on. I was discussing a principle. The subject was assigned to me by Dr. Schaff, the subject of "Union of Church and State," and I have been most careful, as I thought, to confine myself simply to the discussion of the principle. I had only two more arguments to make, one that it was an injustice to the other denominations, and secondly I was going to engage in an argument to show what I think I should have been able to demonstrate, even to the satisfaction of the Chairman, should be differ from me, that it is unscriptural. [Applause.]

The President again stepped forward, amid considerable disturbance and cries of "Curry," "Curry." When quiet was restored, he said:

Let us remember that we are American Christians. I hold convictions which have been assented to by the speaker, and as profoundly as he does, for I am an American too. I love those truths, and at the proper place will take great pleasure in their propagation: But I like to think too that we are bound, and I am bound, by the rules of Christian courtesy. You will take my word for it—won't you?—that I have already been informed by one of the brethren from abroad that this line of discussion is painful, deeply painful. Do not invite your guests, then, dear friends, to the prolongation of a discussion which wounds and grieves them. Certainly we will show as Americans that when we invite a stranger to us, we can remember all the obligations of a just courtesy. [Applause.]

At this stage the Hon. Mr. Curry advanced a few steps as if about to reply, but did not do so, the President, without a pause, having continued his address by asking the congregation to sing the hymn,

"Je us shall reign where'er the sun Does his successive journeys run."

Immediately Mr. Curry put on his overcoat, and while the hymn was being sung deliberately and determinedly walked off the platform, and down the aisle to the front door, accompanied by many gentlemen who deeply sympathized with him, and warmly congratulated him on the excellence of his discourse.

Dr. Curry is styled "The Hon," because some years ago there was a member of Congress. His true title is, "The Rev. J. M. Curry, D. D., L. L. D., Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia.—His Methodist brother, the Chairman, was clearly wrong in charging Dr. Curry with discourtesy. The same subject had been discussed, pro and con, in the morning, in Association Hall, without bitterness.

The session was closed by a paper by Dr. Goodwin of Philadelphia, on "The Effects of Liberty on Christianity."

In the afternoon Dr. Hopkins repeated his paper on the Sabbath, and a discussion followed.

The third session met in the evening, in the Church of the Disciples. The subject was "Ministerial Support," on which several papers were read, and a lively discussion took place, to which I may call the attention of your readers hereafter.

These notices will require one more letter.

Yours truly,
J. M. CRAMP.

Wolfville, Oct. 28, 1873.

I think one always feels the better for looking any small evil of life straight in the face. It is wonderful how few evils are remediless if you fairly face them, and honestly try to remove them.—The Country Parson.