

CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

There are now thirty Roman Catholic "parochial schools" in Brooklyn, all established to withdraw the children of Romanists from our public schools. They are to be increased as fast as possible.—How many there are in New-York City we know not, but the Church has the same policy here that it has in the neighboring city, and, in fact, throughout the country. The Jesuits recently opened, in one of our wards, a new and costly edifice for the purpose. They had previously arranged with the families of nearly a thousand children to have them taken from the public schools in the ward, and marched with banners to the new building. The long procession was led by priests, but the little fellows, as they passed their old school-house, could not restrain their American feeling, and gave three cheers for the deserted place.

This bad work is going on all over the land; and it becomes American citizens to judge of the bearings of Romanism on our social and political life by such indications. The design is, evidently, to break down the most approved, most salutary provision of American civilization and policy—the free public-school system. They will show that it is devoted to Protestant children alone—though they themselves will be responsible for the fact. They will then insist upon a division of the school funds between their ecclesiastical schools and the public, or (as they will call them) Protestant ones, or demand the abolition of the whole public education. They have said and done enough already to show that such is their aim. But they have been fairly admonished; the American people are too sensible not to have perceived their policy; and these ecclesiastical foreigners will yet have to learn that they are on the wrong side of the world for their tactics; that this is not Europe, with its mediæval obscurism to priestly dictation; and that they assail in vain the greatest fortification of American liberty and public order—the common-school.

The American people have been thinking of these things for some years, and have pretty generally settled some three propositions on the subject. First, that as education is essential to the very life of a free commonwealth, the State has an indefeasible right to secure it to its subjects. Second, that with our form of government and the equality of all religious before the law, the public education must not be trammelled by any religious partialities whatever; religious training must be left to families, their Sunday-schools and churches. Third, that taxation for the support of this indispensable interest of government must, like taxation for other public necessities, be general and impartial, and that no ecclesiastical or other pretension shall enable the citizen to evade it.

These postulates are fundamental in American public life, and the foreign ecclesiastics, who are aiming at the ruin of our public education, will not be allowed to gainay them. If they chose to establish schools for their own churchly ends, they must do so with the distinct understanding that they are not to claim the funds of the State for them, nor withhold for them the taxes ordained by the State for the common welfare in this as in other matters. Let them ponder this fact well, for on this rock they will be wrecked in the coming conflict which their defiance of the profoundest sentiments of the American people is hastening on. Their claim will be met at this point with a resistance and an indignation which will be national and overwhelming. It will make a crisis in their history in the New World.

The Romanists allege the importance of religious training as the reason for their opposition to the public schools. We all admit its importance; the strongest advocates of the common-school are the best advocates of religious training. With them it is not a question whether there shall be religious training, but where it shall be. They insist that it cannot be in the common-school; and that it should not be there even if it could. The few hours a day spent by the child there cannot afford opportunity for the scientific recitations and religious training besides. Religious ceremonies or lessons there must necessarily be of so cursory and superficial a character as to deprive them of impressiveness and value. Many if not most of the teachers must necessarily be crude in their religious ideas, and incompetent for any safe theological or religious training of children. Many of them will be likely to have theological opinions which parents could not approve. Evidently the common school is not then the place for such training, and

most intelligent Protestants would not wish the religious opinions of their children to be tampered with by the young, inexperienced instructors of these schools. They hold this training to be sacred to their families, their churches, and their Sunday-schools. Protestantism has competent provision for it in these means. If Romanism has not, then Romanism is alone responsible for the deficiency. Instead of violence to a great public means of enlightenment in wholesome secular knowledge, or of claiming a division of the public funds appropriated to this purpose, Roman Catholics should go to work to provide in their families, their Sunday-schools, and their church services, the training supplementary to that of the public schools, which Protestantism so abundantly possesses. This is the proper, the only admissible remedy for their alleged grievances.

Meanwhile we admit frankly that the public education does damage their cause, as they affirm; but the fault is not in the public education—it is in their cause itself. Free speech injures their cause in this country; but would they claim that this freedom shall be restricted by law? Our free press impairs their mediæval ideas and traditions, but will they have us shackle the press? The free school is doubtless a mighty power against them, and yet it says nothing against them: it discusses not their dogmas. Its mischief to them is that it is a fountain of light; that the purely secular intelligence it imparts strengthens the common-sense of the people, and dispels from the popular mind legendary beliefs, traditional superstitions, and obsequious deference to priestly authority in matters of opinion and conscience. Hence Romanism does lose vastly in this country. It would have, to-day, ten millions of population here, its journals tell us, if it had been able to retain its accessions by immigration alone; whereas it has, according to its best authorities, not half that number; and the Eaptists and Methodists singly exceed it in adherents. Its losses in the nation are indeed marvellous; and they are marvellous proofs of the leavening power of American thought.

The common-school doubtless exerts much of this power, though without a direct word on the Romish peculiarities. Every free and enlightened interest of the country exerts it more or less. Popery is the product of an obsolete age; every peculiar attribute of modern civilization is tacitly, if not openly antagonistic to it. The rationale of all its recent disasters in Europe, and its continual losses in this country, is seen in this one fact. But this fact its ecclesiastical authorities will not see. They insist on reversing modern civilization; they assume an astonishing audacity in the attempt; they proclaim new dogmas which the age can honestly treat only with indignation or sarcasm. They declare the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, of the Infallibility of the Pope, and all the preposterous postulates of the Syllabus. They revive the debasing legendary miracles and pilgrimages of the middle ages. And here in the new world they dare to lay hands on the most sacred interest of the Republic—the public school. It is, in fine, a determined fight between the dark ages and the nineteenth century. But the contest is desperate for Romanism. There can be no doubt of the issue, whatever calamities may attend the course of the contest. The disasters of the Church in Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Brazil show not only the intensity of the conflict, but its inevitable results. We do not fear then for our public schools finally; we believe that the attempt to break them down will be attended by one of the most disastrous reactions against Popery of modern history. But our confidence in their final safety arises from their timely defence by public opinion, especially the public press.—N. Y. Methodist.

THE BRITISH PILGRIMAGE.

The English and Scotch pilgrimage to Parry-le-Monial is over. It is now one of the facts of 1873 to which the future historian will point as a spasmodic ebullition of Romish superstition, or as a sign of the spreading infection of that superstition in its most irrational forms. The numbers of the pilgrims have been considerably exaggerated, those leaving England via Newhaven being under 600, and the total under 800. The sermon delivered by Archbishop Manning on the eve of the pilgrimage, has been sharply criticised; and he has been asked whether he himself believes the story told by the nun of Parry-le-Monial. His

reply is cautious, as his sermon was, and commits him only to the credence of the nun's own sincerity, and the subjective reality of the visions she reported. The most ardent Protestant may admit as much without believing that the visions were divinely vouchsafed, or were an actual presentation of the Saviour's person to the feminine devotee. The physical part of the theory the Archbishop does not meddle with—the pretended contact between the Redeemer's heart, "more glorious than the sun," and the heart of the visionary; but he well knows, that just as in the matter of images and relics, the less educated of the Roman Catholic laity will be sure to take that view of the wonder which is most gross, and therefore most calculated to excite their superstitious and semi-idolatrous veneration. It is the old distinction between the esoteric and the exoteric doctrines—the one for the initiated and the other for the vulgar—with the inevitable result of intensifying all that is most vulgar in the multitude, and all that is most fitted to hinder their growth in true knowledge and spiritual understanding. In the mind of one like Dr. Manning, who cannot entirely divest himself of his old Protestant impressions, there must be something dissatisfying in such a display of intellectual prostration. His sermon exhibited a great effort to throw around the pilgrimage the halo of sacred associations not in any way connected with it; and any qualms he might feel would be controlled by the remembrance that Papal credit was at stake, Mary Margaret Alouque having been raised to the rank of "Venerable" and "Blessed," and destined, as many deem, to the full dignity of canonized sainthood. The Marquis of Bute did not accompany the pilgrims; but this was probably owing less to scruples than to circumstances. A relative of mine was in Jerusalem some years ago, where the Marquis had just been crawling over the "holy places" (most of them perfect shams) upon his knees, saluting them with kisses. Our Punch makes fun of the pilgrimage, or rather the pilgrims, by a drawing, in which an aged pilgrim, dressed in his wayfaring attire, is contrasted with the pilgrims to the shrine of the French nun, who are stepping into first-class railway carriages—though it is now said that the gentlemen allowed their servants to ride in first-class carriages, while they occupied the second-class—no great mortification, if the report is true. It is an indication of the ubiquity of the modern press, that the only full accounts of the pilgrimage given to the general public, have proceeded from special news paper correspondents, who were Protestants, and who found their task far less perilous than the work which devolved on their colleagues, who had to inform Europe concerning the progress of the last great war.

THE WAY TO HEALTH.

If a woman desires to retain the possession of a healthy organization, she must not remain inert and idle three-fourths of the time. The women who sit down by the fire to "keep quiet" and muse over novels while their physical health grows delicate day by day, and the mind morbid from lack of exercise and occupation, are more to be pitied than the overworked women of the land, who rise early in the morning refreshed after sweet sleep, and with glowing cheeks, quick step and glowing muscles, begin the task of the day. The workers live longer and enjoy more than the idlers. Women expect men to exert themselves, and rain or shine to go forth to arduous labor, and encourage them not to waste their time and strength by praising what they accomplish. Why not adopt the same plan in reference to themselves, therefore? That it would work well there can be little doubt, for health and happiness can surely be attained by cheerful activity.

A correspondent relates that in Austria unless a man can prove to the mayor and council of the town in which he was born, that he is able to support a family, no clergyman is allowed to marry him.

The friction of two minds of a superior class will educe from each other much finer thought than either could have produced alone.

A lady may always judge of the estimation in which she is held by the conversation which is addressed to her.

It is best not to dispute when there is no probability of convincing.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE CONFERENCE AT NEW YORK.

New York, Oct. 4, 1873.

My Dear Sir,—

I propose now to give you a brief account of the proceedings of the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance at this city.

The Conference was opened on Tuesday evening, the 2d inst., the Hon. W. E. Dodge presiding. Association Hall, where the meeting was held, belongs to the Young Men's Christian Association. It will seat about 1500 persons. On this occasion the hall was elegantly decorated. Back of the stage, among hangings of flowers and flags were arranged mottoes and names. In the center was the motto of the Alliance, "Unum corpus sumus in Christo," with the dates "1846" and "1873." Below this was another motto, "In Necessariis Unitas, In Dubiis Libertas, In Omnibus Caritas." Around these were ranged the names of Calvin, Luther, Edwards, Wycliffe, and Knox. Above all, upon the folds of the American flag, was the N. S. national motto, "E Pluribus Unum." Upon the balcony was the Greek word "Icthus," and below it that of "Bonyan." Opposite, upon the organ, the name of "Wesley" was placed. At the foot of the hall appeared the old Christian emblems, the letter P placed upon an X, with A to the left and O to the right. Flags of the different nations covered the entire front of the galleries.

The Hall was crowded to excess, and hundreds were unable to find seats. Very deep interest was manifested, sometimes approaching to enthusiastic excitement.

After an appropriate address by the Chairman, the Rev. Dr. Adams was called on to welcome the delegates on behalf of the Christians of the United States. Your readers will peruse that address with high satisfaction. (See first page). Replies were given by gentlemen of various countries.

Lord ALFRED CHURCHILL presented a document bearing the greetings of the London organization of the Alliance, and expressed briefly his pleasure at being selected for that purpose, and his thankfulness for the kind reception accorded to himself and his brother delegates.

Dr. STOUGHTON, of London, (Congregationalist), followed in a very cheerful and eloquent strain. He said: "As I entered this hall to night I heard a gentleman whisper in my ear: 'This, Sir, is the grandest meeting that has been held for ages and ages. This beats the Oecumenical Council at Rome.' [Laughter] Well, I began to think of it, and I found that that gentleman was about correct—as Americans generally are when they express their opinions. [Laughter] Why, as I thought I remembered that the Oecumenical Council was nothing but a gathering together of the members of a single church, and that the most sectarian church in existence; whereas we to night represent all kinds of Christian Churches—those churches being distinguished all of them, more or less, by the true spirit of Catholicity, and when we look at it in this way I think we may say this meeting beats the Oecumenical Council at Rome. [Applause] We do not meet to night, nor shall we meet together during the sitting of the Conference, to settle any great ecclesiastical questions or to propound any dogma. We shall only meet together that we may freely express our deep conviction in regard to these truths, which, as Protestants and Catholic Christians, we all may obey.

His remarks on the nature and importance of Christian Union need not be quoted. All the speakers adverted to that subject, each in his own peculiar way. As one said this morning, *Uniformity* had been tried in vain, *unanimity* was unattainable, but *unity*—the unity of faith in Christ and of love to the Lord and of the brethren, was not only possible, but was actually manifested on this occasion.

Rev. Dr. FISCH, of Paris, expressed in a feeling manner his delight and comfort. "He had heard people say that the Evangelical Alliance was not a practical thing but he thought that it was one of the most practical measures that could be devised."

Rev. Dr. DORNER, of Berlin, referred to the absence of distinguished men of his own country, occasioned by death or sickness.

Rev. Dr. CHRISTLIEB, of Bonn, said: "The German delegates, especially in speaking in your own tongue, in which I feel like young David when he tried to march in the armor of Saul. We have had

time to see your great country, and it has given us an everlasting impression, which we shall carry home and which will prove very profitable in the great work of our lives. We have come here to further the objects of the Evangelical Alliance, and each has also some separate object. One wishes to examine your institutions, another your university life, your methods of preaching, the results of Christian liberty. You know very well that Germany has been for ages in some peculiar measure a country of spiritual troubles. We hope here to be strengthened in our faith by your sympathy and by the firmness of your faith. Having this joyful conviction we hope that Protestantism will ever be invincible against all human error. I know that there are many persons who believe that greater unity will come from this gathering, and are offering up their prayers for this. I know that there are times—and this is one—when Germany can also forget the other Germans and extend their hands to our French brethren." He then approached Dr. Fisch, the French delegate, and they shook hands, amid the "deafening applause" of the assembly, the gentlemen shouting huzzas, the ladies waving handkerchiefs, and everybody overborne by excitement.

The Rev. COHEN STUART, of Holland, the only delegate from that country, alluding to that fact, observed that though he was alone he was not alone, for they were all one in Christ.

The appearance of the Rev. NARAYAN SHESHADRI, of Bombay, once a high caste brahmin, and a pantheist, but now a Christian and a Christian minister, excited great curiosity. He was in his native dress, and wore a white turban. I give you the report of his speech, from the *Tribune*:—

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I appear to you this evening in a somewhat different position from my dear brethren who have preceded me. I appear as one of your own fruits. I have heard many prophecy that the missionary enterprise was a failure. My appearance among you gives the lie to that rumor. [Applause.] Instead of that, it has been a success—a success not only in my own case, but a success in hundreds and thousands of instances in my own land. There was a time when we had very little life among us. If England was getting old, India had been dead long, long before that. But there has now been a resurrection in that country, and we hope the time is coming when we shall have a resurrection through the whole length and breadth of that country. I came to this Alliance with the greatest expectations, and I have not the slightest doubt that these will be realized; not because I believe in the power of sympathy or that I believe in accidental circumstances, but I believe in the Bible and in its highest virtues. I am full of the most glorious hopes. In my country we have been divided into various sects—the Brahmins, the Warriors, the Mercantile, and the Servile Classes, but it was in the mind of our Father in Heaven that, as He was One, His children should be one, and his heart's desire is that we should be bound together in one bundle of love. [Applause.] We hope to unite nations upon nations, and individuals innumerable. How is that to be realized? By carrying out the object that our Association has in view. We hope that unity is not to be accomplished, but is already accomplished. There was a time when the missionaries were not allowed to set foot upon our land, but they have persevered until wonders have been accomplished. It seems to me that the Evangelical Alliance has that end for its great wish. It is not necessary that we should all be missionaries or ministers to carry out that end, but only that we should all be one in the Lord Jesus. When I go to my land I will carry this blessed truth with me. I was told when I left there that I would find castes here as there are there. I shall tell them by and by that though there are in some respects castes, yet they are all one in these grand eternal essential truths of salvation.

CHARLES REED, Esq., M. P., was the last speaker, and his observations were appropriate and well received.

I should have said that the DEAN OF CANTERBURY, (Dr. R. Payne Smith), read a letter at the commencement of the meeting, addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to himself, and expressing his high appreciation of the objects of the Alliance.

Dr. Angus, Rev. C. Stovel, Drs. Parker and Stoughton, and many more, of all denominations, are here. I have been delighted with the renewal of former acquaintances. More next week.

Yours truly,  
J. M. CRAMP.