

Evangelical Alliance

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.



PROTESTANT CHRISTENDOM

IN CONFERENCE

FLORENCE, ITALY, APRIL, 1891.

REPORTS FROM AMERICAN DELEGATES

MARBLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH,

TWENTY-NINTH STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE,

JANUARY 10th, 1892.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE FOR THE UNITED STATES.

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WILLIAM E. DODGE, Esq.

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REPORTS FROM THE WORLD'S ALLIANCE

IN CONFERENCE AT

FLORENCE, ITALY, APRIL, 1891.

Chairman, WILLIAM E. DODGE, Esq.

Reading of Scriptures and Prayer,

Rev. DAVID J. BURRELL, D.D.

Address, - Rev. PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., LL.D.

Address, - - JOHN PATON, Esq.

Address, - - Rev. C. A. STODDARD, D.D.

Address, - Rev. FRANK RUSSELL, D.D.

Address, - Rev. ANTONIO ARRIGHI.

BENEDICTION.

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSE-TO-HOUSE VISITATION.

PLAN OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

The new movement of the Evangelical Alliance has thus far been confined almost exclusively to cities. It is, however, no less needed elsewhere, and it is believed to be, with certain modifications, equally adapted to towns, villages, and rural districts.

When churches in the country are widely separated, the only practicable way to reach every family with any certainty is to divide the territory and let each church accept a special responsibility for the district in which it is located. This plan is being followed in some cities and may ultimately be generally adopted, though when churches have been located with little or no reference to geographical needs and often gathered close together, the original plan of the Alliance [see documents] is recommended.

The essential features of the modified plan may be stated as follows:

1. The churches of a community agree to divide the territory among themselves, no church taking more than it can work thoroughly. It is far better to work one-half of a city or township well than to half work the whole.

2. Each church holds itself responsible to carry the gospel, by repeated visitation to every non-church-going family in its district. The non-church-goers are more easily reached if the church-goers are included in the visitation, the object in calling on the latter being to arouse their interest and enlist their co-operation in influencing their non-church-going neighbors.

3. *It should be distinctly understood that the district does not in any sense limit the activity of the church accepting it or that of other churches. The district is not a parish with any exclusive rights. Boundary lines may be crossed either way.* The church accepting a district agrees to see that at least every family within that limit is reached by Christian influence. It is perfectly at liberty to reach as many more families elsewhere as it is able.

4. The invitations to church and Sabbath School are given in the name of all the co-operating churches, and notice of preferences is sent to the churches or pastors for whom preference is expressed. It is exceedingly important that a church should not discontinue its visits as soon as a preference is expressed for some other, but to continue its efforts in behalf of the preferred church until the family is thoroughly identified with it.

5. Each church is left perfectly free to adopt its own method of work. Some will leave the pastor to do it all [until he discovers that he can't]. Some will commit it to the officers of the church. Some will employ the paid service of missionaries, but it is to be hoped for the sake of the spiritual quickening of the churches, that the work will generally be done by the laity. In the latter case the church will select as many visitors as it pleases, and as many supervisors or none at all. The great object of supervisors is to secure the greater efficiency of the work without overtaxing the pastor.

6. The object of the visitation is not simply or primarily to obtain facts, but to establish friendly relations between those who are Christians and those who are not, to acquire a personal influence, and then to use that influence to do all possible good, seeking to win non-church-goers to Christ and his Church.

7. The co-operating churches meet statedly—once a month, or once in two months, or at least once a quarter—to report the work done, to devise and execute plans for meeting more effectively the needs which have been disclosed, and to profit by each other's experience.

The churches may be employing a half-dozen different methods, but this comparing of results will ultimately lead to the survival of the fittest.

Mr. D. L. Moody having seen something of the work of the Evangelical Alliance of Jamestown, N. Y., declared that that work enabled him to accomplish more there in one week than he could do elsewhere in a month, and then added: "You've got hold of the biggest idea in America."

Evangelical

Alliance

File

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is familiarizing the Christian public with facts urgently needing to be known. It is opening new lines of activity, stimulating the dormant possibilities of churches and communities, adjusting opportunities and resources to each other, and by making available the unutilized resources of the laity, bids fair to make our generation an epoch in the history of American Evangelization."—Dr. C. H. PARKHURST, *Pastor Madison Square Presbyterian Church and Chairman of Chickering Hall Conference Committee.*

"There is in all our American Protestant Churches much confusion of the fraternal relation of church membership with the inevitable narrower relations of private society. The two relations, both of them right and good, are not even ideally one. Church membership should establish fraternal relations across distances of personal dissimilarity, which even under ideal conditions the companionship of private society cannot embrace in any one unbroken span. Christian fraternity does take into one span the utmost extreme of earthly conditions."—GEORGE W. CABLE, *In the Congregationalist*, 26th Sept., 1889.

"This is an age of consolidation, centralization, and more efficient organization in business, in politics, and in education; but the Church of Jesus Christ lags behind, too conservative in its methods to be efficient. In business little shops have given place to large stores, and where there were a hundred firms a few years ago in one line of business, there are now ten; and there are many instances in which all the business has come to a head in the control of one mind. But the Christian Church goes on in the policy of splitting up into little, half-starved feeble detachments. An army in these days marches in great hosts, a vast organism. But the army of the Lord is broken up into little companies, without an efficient organization or guidance."—Dr. C. A. BRIGGS, "*Whither*" p. 42.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

STATEMENTS TOUCHING ITS NATURE AND WORK

THE MOVEMENT MEETING THE DEMAND OF THE TIMES

A THOUGHTFUL ESTIMATE.—"I regard this as the greatest and most hopeful movement in behalf of Evangelical Christianity of modern times."—Dr. JAMES M. KING, *Pastor Methodist Church*, New York.

JUDGED BY A BUSINESS MAN.—"The work of the Alliance is much on my mind and heart. I am looking forward with confidence to a time when it shall be general, and the national organization shall be supplemented by a state organization in every state, and a local Alliance in every city. Then indeed will the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Am I expecting too much?"—EDWIN D. WHELOCK, Esq., Auditor Cin., Wabash and Mich. Railway in a private letter, Aug. 28, 1889.

AN EFFICIENT SYSTEM.—The Evangelical Alliance has perfected a method under which comparatively little labor is required for effectively carrying forward the vastly important work of the Alliance. It is assumed in the first place that the churches which favor aggressive Christian work will promptly and heartily endorse all wisely directed endeavor to benefit mankind. Therefore because the aim of the Evangelical Alliance is to bring about cordial and strengthening co-operation among the Churches, and a deeper appreciation of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, it is believed that unanimous indorsement is deserved, and more especially so since it plainly appears that through the co-operation proposed by the Alliance much larger work, far greater good can be accomplished with the forces at the command of the churches, than is otherwise possible.—*Standard Union*, Brooklyn Dec. 15, 1888.

A DENOMINATIONAL UTTERANCE.—More and more the work of preaching the Gospel to those to whom it is in the nature of good news must be, especially in our well settled communities, entrusted to and assumed by the laity. . . . Our churches should provide for systematic visitation of their parishes. When it is practical this visitation will best be accomplished by a united effort of all Christian churches of any town, ward, or other geographical district.

Your committee desire therefore to urge upon their brethren in the ministry, through the National Council the larger employment

and the more thorough organization of lay effort, either in the local church or in combination with other Christian churches for the increased extension of Evangelistic work of churches.—*From Report of Committee to Congregational National Council, 1889.*

ECONOMY OF FORCE.—Truly, the Lord is working among the churches. He is preparing them, we firmly believe, for the mightiest religious movement of modern times, *i. e.*, a concerted onslaught against sin and Satan. Hitherto the denominations have been working by themselves. Very much has been thus accomplished; but because of this independent action there has been, to use the words of the late Bishop Harris, "a wicked waste of power." The hour has now come for churches to work together. The times are fully ripe for an organized co-operation all along the line. And the providential agent to bring about this result is the Evangelical Alliance.

It is so simple, so scriptural, so well adapted to meet the crisis that is upon us, and to meet it fully and, withal, so evidently and irresistibly of God himself, that such study will, in every instance, turn an indifference, or a half-hostility into an earnest and even enthusiastic support.—*New York Observer*, on the Syracuse Conference, November 29, 1888.

SUPPORTED BY MANY LEADERS.—Noteworthy religious movements had a great impulse in assemblages of leaders in religious thought and work in the city of Syracuse the present week. The branches of the Evangelical Alliance were fully represented in the meeting, where were gathered some of the ablest and most devoted leaders of the Protestant denominations. The three days' interchange of views and experiences cannot but be of great benefit to the cause of evangelizing the people. The reports from localities as well as the plans and means of prosecuting the work of arousing the masses were very suggestive and will be fruitful.—*Standard*, Nov. 23, 1888.

FAIRLY LAUNCHED.—"The branch Evangelical Alliances of the State of New York have just closed a three days' meeting in Syracuse.

One object, and that the paramount one, of the Conference was plainly before it at the very beginning, it was to explain itself and justify its existence. It found in the gathering day after day, of earnest men and women a fit audience for this end.

Very rarely has a great cause rallied for its support a larger consecrated spirit, and more eloquent utterances than that which has characterized each meeting of this body.

The Evangelical Alliance is fairly launched upon a new sea of holy venture and enterprise. Here in New York as a State organization the Alliance proposes to test the practicability of an applied Christianity by church co-operation to the unchurched population in

city and town, in rural village and district. Shall it succeed? It is for the Christian men and women in this Empire State to shape the answer to this momentous question. Success here means success everywhere. Is it too much to believe the solemn declaration of Dr. Strong that this movement, if triumphant, will be looked back upon by the Church of the future as far reaching and beneficent in its results as those which have already followed the great Protestant Reformation under Luther. May God fulfill the glorious prophecy."—DR. SPALDING in *The Evangelist*.

IT SEEKS TO SAVE.—"This seems to be the most hopeful and important step taken by the Protestant churches in a century. Experience has proven that the churches must go to the men and women they seek to influence, as they will not come to the church of their own motion. If the movement inaugurated by the Evangelical Alliance becomes widespread and is persisted in, it will go far to answer the charge that modern Christianity is a failure."—*Philadelphia Times*, June 20, 1889.

MARKS A NEW ERA.—"I hail with joy this new movement on the part of the Alliance in favor of aggressive Christian work. I regard it as marking a new era. It has my fullest sympathy and prayers.—DR. R. S. MACARTHUR, *Pastor Calvary Baptist Church, New York.*

AN IMPORTANT STEP.—"The work the Alliance is doing is in my judgment one of the most important this century has known and may you be abundantly prospered in your undertaking."—REV. DR. ALBERT LAWSON, *in a private letter.*

A PATRIOTIC WORK.—"The noble work of the Evangelical Alliance commends it to the confidence and co-operation of every patriot as well as of every Christian."—DR. E. R. HENDRIX, *Kansas City, Mo., Bishop Methodist Church South.*

REFLEX RESULTS.—"The effect of this enterprise upon the life of the church can well be imagined. It has strengthened us in every way. Our morning Sunday School has been increased; our prayer meetings have been well attended; a hopeful spirit prevails in all our assemblies. The working force of the church has been of course very greatly increased.

Much of its latent power has been summoned into action. It has quickened the life of the church in every department."—From DR. GLADDEN's account in the *Christian Union*, of similar work in his own church.

A GREAT FACTOR IN CHRISTIAN PROGRESS.—"The Evangelical Alliance, in its new departure, promises to be a most important factor in the Christian life and aggressiveness of our country and times. It